

# Making songs in the GDR

Using the example of selected songs by Reinhold Andert.

What was the development and function of Reinhold Andert and his songs in the GDR?

## Reinhold Andert (\*1944)

- committed songwriter in the GDR
- member of the party SED, the singing group Oktoberklub and the organizational staff of the Weltfestspiele 1973
- intrinsically convinced of the freedom of art
- since 1973: freelance songwriter
- since 1980: ban on performing and publishing



Abb. 1

## Song culture in the GRD

- 1950s: party-affiliated music based on the songs of the 19th century; songs oriented to ideological norms
- 1960s: first Hootenannys initiated by Perry Friedman
- Kampagne 67: institutional music-making in singing groups
- 1968: mission statemente ‚GDR-concrete‘
- 1970s: people's needs lead to stylistic opening
- 1978: more repression and strict adherence to ideology

## Im Treptower Park (1973)

- created for the Oktoberklub; published on the record *Reinhold Andert* (1973) in a solo performance
- structured into six-bar phrases; harmonic progression in E-flat major
- melody: prime, second and third → repetitive and replicable
- coded text with many metaphors and critical and affirmative content
- expression of critical segments succeeds due to the preservation of a polite manner, stylistic ease and the open rebuke of the class enemy

## So ist ein Pionier (1975)

- created as a freelance songwriter; first published in 1975 as part of the *DT64 Politsongs*
- introduction with a recitative character; song with four verses; each divided by a refrain
- D-major; a pendulum movement from tonic to dominant; repetitive sequence of notes
- pioneer song; style of the GDR-concrete; symbolizes the desired virtues; seemingly educational character
- level of interpretation: motivation to act independently and to rebel against authority; formulated ironically and openly

## Anderts songs in the GDR

- had several functions in the GDR
- (1) early songs: superficially compatible with GDR ideology; double meaning; criticism of political practice; compromise between state endorsement and preserving his personal convictions
- (2) freelance songwriter: distancing from ideological norms; criticism were communicated more openly; humorous and ironic rhetoric
- demonstrated the ability to combine criticism of the system and acceptance using his rhetoric gift

## Anleitung für Liedermacher (1978)

- published in the songbook *Lieder aus dem fahrenden Zug* (1978)
- departs from Anderts' usual style; dispenses with a recurring refrain and a standardized rhyme scheme
- breaking away from the GDR-concrete style; describes the dilemma of the songwriters in the GDR
- harmonically in F-major and melodically simple → text in the foreground; association to a speech
- no complex coding; open criticism of political practice and the increasing control and censorship measures