



Monument of Ernst Thälmann in Berlin, Prenzlauer Berg, by Lew Kerbel.
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CATHERINE J. PLUM*

FEMININE HEROES, MASCULINE SUPERHEROES?

Antifascist Education and Children's Literature in the German Democratic Republic (GDR)

« The antifascist resistance fighter – he had thrown pamphlets everywhere, and was a communist, portrayed as a hero [...] and then it was of course astounding, when just a woman appeared and said, 'I did not fire a pistol. I did not stand on a barricade, nor did I travel abroad as a courier. There was also this false impression. »

Irmgard Klaus, 2001¹

Irmgard Klaus represents a large number of antifascist activists who supported fellow resistance fighters by providing food and shelter – work that may appear mundane, but was actually quite dangerous. As an East German teacher, school principal and historical eyewitness in the classroom, Klaus was also an astute observer of antifascist youth education in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the contradictions within the official antifascist narrative as it was passed on to youth through children's literature, classroom lessons and live discussions bridging generations. The quotation cited above reveals the gap Klaus perceived between students' image of a classic resistance fighter and the reality of a wide spectrum of antifascist activism carried out by youth and adults of different genders and ages. Denying this spectrum and the importance of supportive roles, all too often authors and educators led GDR youth to conceptualize communist activists in a stereotypical fashion, as male and engaged in armed resistance. The Communist Party leader and antifascist martyr Ernst Thälmann served as the ultimate example of resistance for the East German regime, which sought to privi-

* Assistant Professor of History, Western New England College, Springfield, Massachusetts.

lege resistance far above victimhood in its master narrative and collective memory of the Nazi period and the Second World War.

This essay explores a range of gendered images of communist antifascist activists presented to GDR youth. My research reveals the contradictions and inconsistencies in the official antifascist narrative, which a range of memory makers and intermediaries² constructed and shaped as writers, artists, teachers, and guest speakers. East German leaders fervently hoped that children would come to identify with antifascist resistance fighters and adopt them as their personal role models. However, a narrow definition and largely masculine image of antifascist resistance undermined such goals. A minority of published stories and live meetings with communist antifascist veterans featured female activists in a variety of roles offering students a more nuanced perspective. Children's books, stories and magazines often first presented examples of fictional and authentic girls and women for their supportive function and then examples of females in more active roles.

While scholars have published some preliminary research on Spanish Civil War veterans and antifascist memory, the Thälmann cult and typical narratives and characters in GDR children's literature³, there is little discussion of gendered depictions of antifascist heroes in fictional and non-fictional stories of resistance. This essay uses diverse sources including published stories and images as well as oral history interviews. Communist women and girls were not the only antifascist activists on the periphery of an often inconsistent master narrative and prescribed commemorative rituals⁴. However, a study of their placement in the hierarchy of resistance reveals some lost opportunities to pitch the antifascist narrative to the widest possible audience⁵. Communist officials demonstrated a concern for gaining the political trust and support of women and girls in particular because many perceived the female sex to be heavily influenced by apolitical mothers. Nevertheless, publishers like *Neues Leben* and *Junge Welt* failed to use many examples of girls and women in primary and supportive roles in their publications despite their availability and the often family-based nature of antifascist resistance.

PORTRAITS OF MALE ANTIFASCIST FIGHTERS

Publishers of youth literature in the 1950s and 1960s sought out stories of partisans fighting behind enemy lines, antifascist soldiers and message couriers to capture the attention of their youthful readers. The focus on military forms of resistance invariably resulted in the tendency to highlight masculine figures, particularly since communist leaders did not recruit women to fight in the Spanish Civil War and did not always encourage or allow women to participate in more active and military roles. As a veteran and indeed martyr of the Spanish Civil War,

Artur Becker was one of the antifascist fighters Stephan Hermlin featured in one of the first collections of resistance stories for young people, which came out in 1951⁶. Throughout the history of antifascist publications in the GDR, Becker remained a popular and frequently cited figure⁷. In the early 1960s the communist youth organization the Free German Youth (*Freie Deutsche Jugend*, FDJ) placed pressure on the publishing company *Neues Leben* to employ well-known authors to write more books on youthful heroes who fought the Nazis, including Artur Becker⁸. The efforts of the FDJ, the publishing house *Neues Leben* and the editors of the official youth magazines resulted in a large number of stories and articles on resistance fighters. For example, in the 1960s over one-third of the issues of the Young Pioneer magazine *ABC-Zeitung* (*ABC Newspaper*) for children in grades one to three included an historical story or contemporary article on how to commemorate antifascist fighters.

Becker represented the communist ideal as a dedicated soldier from the working class who demonstrated great courage and fortitude in the line of duty. The *ABC-Zeitung* published a story and image of Becker in late 1966, as seen in figure 1. The story describes how Becker volunteered to fight the fascists in Spain and fought with the Thälmann-Brigade. The narrator describes an episode from



Ursula Werner-Böhnke, « Merk dir seinen Namen », *ABC Zeitung* 11/1966.
Illustration by Hans Betcke. DR.

Becker's adventures in which Becker helps his Spanish comrade Rafaelo find a suitable position to fend off an enemy attack near Villaba-Halto. When enemy fire hits Rafaelo and his weapon, Becker provides first aid and then uses his skills as a metal worker to repair the machine gun quickly, just in time to help repel the attack. The author of this story emphasizes how Becker's courage and cleverness help in the struggle against Fascism. *ABC-Zeitung* illustrator Hans Betcke in turn depicts Becker after he has repaired the gun in a moment of decisive action as he targets the oncoming forces⁹.

The children's magazine *ABC-Zeitung* also featured fictional examples of male resistance figures who were sometimes even younger than Artur Becker. In the story « Peter and the Hand Grenades » (« Peter und die Handgranaten »), a six-year old boy finds himself in a concentration camp with his mother because of his mother's resistance activity. The author, Günter Ebenholz, refers to the mother and her resistance activities only in the vaguest terms. Peter functions as the hero of the story. He bravely agrees to help older communist prisoners by carrying the detonator part of hand grenades from one part of the camp to another. Because he is just a little boy, Peter is able to transport these weapon parts undetected. The message of the story is that no one is too young to help out with resistance. Although this story features a very young boy as a male figure, Peter plays a primary role and is connected to armed resistance¹⁰. Literary authors often intentionally selected youthful heroes with the hope that readers would more easily identify with them and grasp the implicit message that everyone can participate in resistance and contemporary support of the socialist cause.

In the various stories of antifascist activism, one is hard pressed to find an example of a male figure engaged in less glamorous support work for the resistance movement, such as providing food and shelter for comrades sought by Nazi authorities. One noteworthy exception would be the novel *Naked Among the Wolves* (*Nackt unter Wölfen*), which many young adults read¹¹. Based partially on a true story, author Bruno Apitz narrates the story of male prisoners hiding a small Jewish boy at Buchenwald. However, *Naked Among the Wolves* also features communist prisoners who collect weapons in preparation for a military-style battle with S.S. guards which provides a suspenseful conclusion to the novel, shortly before the arrival of U.S. forces at the end of the war.

In pedagogical settings, media and public culture, the communist party leader Ernst Thälmann functioned as the ultimate example of male resistance and sacrifice. Within the hierarchy of communist resisters, the position Thälmann occupied is so striking, that one can actually speak of a Thälmann cult. Indeed, Herfried Münkler has labeled Thälmann as « identification figure number one in the GDR, the most important martyr of socialism [...] »¹². » In his discussion of antifascist youth indoctrination in *Building the East German Myth*, Alan Nothnagle maintains that while hundreds of antifascists were honored « in school

names, on street signs, on commemorative plaques, and elsewhere, no hero received more attention than Ernst Thälmann¹³. » The son of a vegetable salesman from Hamburg, Ernst Thälmann rose from his working-class roots to become the leader of the German Communist Party (KPD) in 1925¹⁴. Thälmann was arrested in 1933, and after eleven years of incarceration, Nazi leaders ordered his execution, which took place at the political concentration camp Buchenwald in August 1944.

While the antifascist narrative presented official images of Thälmann and stock episodes from his life, the interpretation of Thälmann's role was not always as clear. The biographical stories children read often present Thälmann as a normal child of the working class with responsibilities at home who also worked hard to improve himself at school. Thälmann's very human responsibilities and concerns also appear in stories from his adult life, for in addition to being a communist leader, GDR youth learned that he was a father who wrote his daughter letters from his prison cell. In contrast, references to Thälmann's death and legacy sometimes took on a religious character, playing upon notions of sacrifice and expressing a sense of Thälmann's omnipotence and enduring presence after his execution. In this way, the study and commemoration of Thälmann did indeed become something of a children's religion as Nothnagle has pointed out¹⁵.

A number of literary texts refer to Thälmann's enduring spiritual presence. For example, the Thälmann Pioneer Oath used in the official communist youth organizations refers to Thälmann in the present tense. Children promised to « learn, work and to strive as Ernst Thälmann teaches. » Despite Thälmann's death, he continues to have the power to teach youth. Literary works also make the claim that Thälmann never really « fell » or was defeated by the Nazis, as seen in the phrase « Thälmann ist niemals gefallen¹⁶ ». Indeed in 1961 author Ingeborg Holtz-Baumert published a children's book with this very phrase as its title¹⁷. A poem entitled « Legacy » (« Vermächtnis ») also promotes the idea that Thälmann lives on in a spiritual sense. The poem accompanied a 1962 edition of the official magazine for communist youth group leaders and was intended for use in commemorative ceremonies. The text of the poem reads:

As if Thälmann could ever die.
Thälmann died and yet he is not dead;
For what he taught as he yet lived [...]
Lives as a reminder in millions of hearts,
Lives as knowledge in millions of minds.
Do you see the millions of workers' hands
Fearlessly reach for the heavens? [...]
Thälmann lives in all airwaves,
That awaken the love of peace in all people [...]¹⁸

References to the eternal spirit of Thälmann in this poem have clear religious undertones. Thälmann's presence is still discernible in the world of workers, their symbols, hearts and media airwaves. Additional literary descriptions of Thälmann play upon religious notions of sacrifice and promises fulfilled through sacrifice. For instance, a brochure on the Pioneer organization included in a 1983 edition of the *ABC Zeitung* depicts Thälmann as having « lived, fought and died » for contemporary citizens of the GDR, particularly the next generation¹⁹. Statements of this sort resonate with religious undertones. One can contrast references to Thälmann's superhuman qualities and enduring presence with other stories about Thälmann as a child and young man which emphasize his human characteristics. While the diversity of Thälmann stories holds contradictions, depictions of his wife and daughter are more transparent, suggesting inherently human emotions and sacrifices.

Thälmann's wife and daughter, Rosa and Irma Thälmann, gained some recognition based on familial ties and their own contributions to resistance, although Ernst Thälmann's story and commemorative rites connected to his memory dramatically overshadowed any emphasis on these two women. Rosa and Irma Thälmann experienced the fate of most women connected to resistance movements in that their own contributions and sacrifice lay outside of the lime-light, pale in comparison to that of the husband and father. Irma Thälmann's book *Memories of My Father (Erinnerungen an meinen Vater)* narrates her father's story. While the text emphasizes the role Irma played as a messenger on visits to her father in prison, the main focus is the father's biography, including episodes from his childhood and stories of Thälmann as a communist politician and leader²⁰. In another story, a group of communist women honor Rosa Thälmann on her husband's birthday in 1945 at the women's concentration camp Ravensbrück. However the main character explains to Rosa: « Our love first belongs to Ernst Thälmann, the head of our Party, who always knows what is right and acts for all people. But you too, Rosa, are a part of the Party, and by giving you gifts today, we also honor Ernst and the Party²¹. » Readers learned that commemorative rituals had already begun for a figure like Ernst Thälmann, who had already secured his position at the top of the resistance hierarchy.

PORTRAITS OF FEMALE HEROINES

As youth literature privileged heroes like Artur Becker and the super-heroic Ernst Thälmann, men responsible for high political and military resistance, other types of underground resistance work often associated with women occupied a much lower rank in the master narrative. Clearly resistance activists needed a support structure – individuals who could provide food, supplies, shelter, and childcare in some cases. In fact resistance work often incorporated and had a great impact

upon entire families in Nazi Germany and occupied nations during World War II. Women and women with children, in particular, could often serve as couriers and attract little attention²². Educational materials for young people included both factual and fictional examples of communist women and girls who resisted National Socialism. However, these female role models appeared in smaller numbers than their male counterparts and in a manner that tended to either obscure acts of resistance or feature females in supportive roles. Historian Alan Nothnagle argues that the real role models for girls in the Pioneer and Free German Youth organizations were male resistance fighters like Thälmann and Becker, even though there were occasional references to female resistance fighters²³. An examination of short stories published in the *ABC-Zeitung* in the 1960s reveals that at first the nature of women's resistance work was ignored or largely restricted to cases of behind-the-scenes support. Over time the number of examples of female resistors never reached the frequency of stories about their male counterparts, but feminine heroes gained greater attention and sometimes engaged in more dangerous resistance work.

In a story entitled « Maria and the Red Stars » (« Maria und die roten Sterne »), published in the *ABC-Zeitung* in October 1961, the protagonist Maria contributes to the communist resistance movement through her compassionate care for a little boy whose Jewish mother is being pursued by the Nazis for resistance activity. The mother's resistance is never clearly defined. Maria cares for the little boy and teaches him to draw a red star symbolizing communism. However, the Gestapo discovers Maria and sends her to Ravensbrück, a concentration camp for female political prisoners. Nevertheless, Maria perseveres, continuing to provide support and encouragement to the communist women interned at Ravensbrück²⁴. In other stories, the specific acts which brought about the incarceration of female communists remain unclear. For example in the story « A comrade tells the story of another 1 May » (« Eine Genossin erzählt: Vom anderen 1. Mai ») published in early 1960, a woman is incarcerated in the women's camp of Ravensbrück, but the author chooses not to explain the type of resistance work that resulted in her arrest. The main emphasis of the story is how communist prisoners celebrate a socialist Labor Day by singing a forbidden song of communist solidarity²⁵. While female protagonists often engage in activities that nurture and support fellow prisoners when incarcerated, male figures invariably try to fashion weapons in order to resist concentration camp guards, as seen in *Naked among the Wolves* and « Peter and the Hand Grenades ».

A female counterpart to the youthful hero Peter discussed above can be found in the *ABC-Zeitung* story « Radieschen and the Men in Boots » (« Radieschen und die Stiefelmänner »). This story features a little girl who assists her father's communist resistance efforts in two ways. Radieschen first warns her

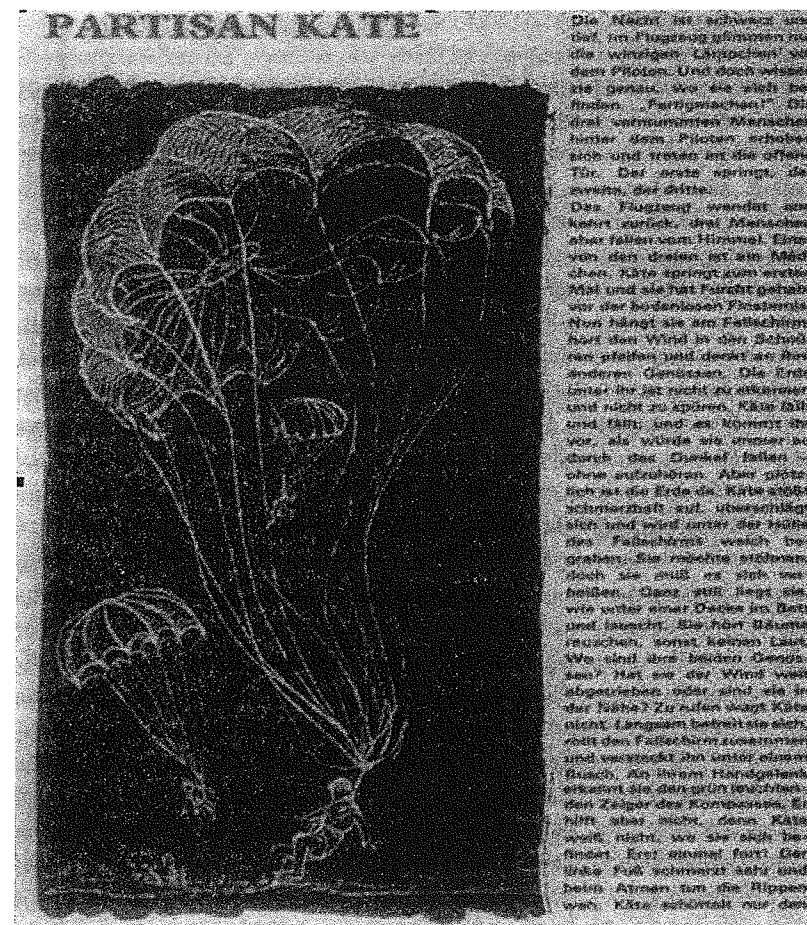
father in January 1934 when the SA begin to search residences in their neighborhood. When the SA are looking for evidence of illegal pamphlets and party documents the little girl screams to create a diversion so that the men will not see anti-Nazi pamphlets burning in the furnace. Secondly, Radieschen draws pictures with a hammer and a sickle and the words « the red front lives. » She travels to an area of the city where an SA march is taking place, and she lets the drawings fall from the window of a building as seen in figure 2. No one suspects that the little girl clutching her doll is the culprit²⁶. In children's stories, little girls could be exemplary heroines, but the little boys are placed in more direct danger, as seen in the story of Peter with his hand grenades.



Günter Feustel, « Radieschen und die Stiefelmänner », *ABC Zeitung* 9/1965.

Illustrations by Hans Betcke. DR.

The readers of the *ABC-Zeitung* in the 1960s finally met an authentic female resistance fighter engaged in highly dangerous and more military-style resistance when the magazine published a story about Käte Niederkirchner in September 1969 entitled « Partisan Käte ». Käte Niederkirchner was a young working-class girl from Berlin who became involved in a communist youth group and spent some time in the Soviet Union during World War II, before working as a partisan fighter. The story explains that the Nazis caught Niederkirchner while



« Partisan Käte », *ABC Zeitung* 9/1969. Illustration by Hans Betcke. DR.

on a mission and brutally tortured her before killing her. In the image that accompanies the story, seen in figure 3, readers see Niederkirchner parachuting into German occupied territory – an image that emphasizes action and movement, a highly active and dangerous example of resistance²⁷. While « Partisan Käte » is the most dramatic image of a female resistance figure I have found in magazines from the 1960s, neither she nor other women are depicted toting weapons. However, the *ABC-Zeitung* encouraged their readers to visualize Käte's counterpart, Artur Becker, as visibly armed. Towards the end of the GDR regime, the story of Käte Niederkirchner became more familiar to students, when a seventh-grade literature textbook included Stephan Hermlin's rendition of Niederkirchner's story as required reading²⁸. In earlier years this story was an optional part of the ninth grade curriculum for German literature²⁹.

ANTIFASCIST VETERANS AS STORYTELLERS

The transformation of male resistance activists into heroes and arguably superheroes – as in the case of Thälmann – was not lost on living veterans of the communist resistance movement, some of whom took an active role in antifascist youth education. Many former resistance activists were members of an organization called the Committee of Antifascist Resistance Fighters (*Komitee der antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer*, KAW). Over time the pedagogical work of the KAW increased with schools and the FDJ, particularly as resistance veterans transitioned into retirement. While the membership of the KAW declined over the years with the aging of veterans, in the year 1979 alone, representatives reportedly made presentations at 25 500 speaking engagements which reached some 1.2 million young people³⁰. Antifascist veterans engaged in a number of different types of activities in schools. When invited to work with an individual school class, the antifascist veteran might give a presentation, engage students in a question-and-answer session, offer assistance in a research or oral history project, or provide a tour of an historical site. Indeed the term « drei Generationen » meeting, a meeting of three generations, was sometimes used for after-school programs sponsored by the official youth organizations which promoted an intergenerational exchange. KAW representatives exposed young people to alternative stories, including more dynamic and detailed stories of women activists, and contradictions and inconsistencies within a master narrative shaped by multiple voices.

The fascinating story of resistance activist and educator Irmgard Klaus will be particularly useful in this discussion. As noted above, Klaus was not only a resistance activist; she was also a school teacher and then principal who visited classes and gave tours of Sachsenhausen as an historical eyewitness of the Nazi period and World War II. Irmgard Klaus grew up in a politically active family with ties to the Communist Party. As a teenager in the mid-1930s, Klaus was a member of an illegal youth sports club. Members of the group attempted to recruit young people into their organization who pledged not to participate in the Hitler Youth. They also tried to convince young men not to volunteer to serve in the army. Additionally, Klaus and her friends listened to illegal foreign radio broadcasts during the war. As a young woman lacking a police record, Klaus volunteered the use of her apartment for resistance work, providing financial, emotional and educational support to fellow resisters, including couriers. Her first husband died in the war as a soldier. As an undercover member of the resistance in the German army, his mission had been to convince soldiers to stop fighting. Klaus' second husband, Cäsar Horn also performed resistance work in the military and became connected to the Kreisauer Circle, known for the July 20th assassination on Hitler's life in 1944³¹.

Having heard Irmgard Klaus recount her story, I can imagine her in the classroom holding the attention of a youthful audience with some of the powerful personal details of her life under National Socialism. She explained to me that although it was safer to maintain different last names and addresses, when she became pregnant Cäsar Horn insisted that they marry. They had only been married for a little over an hour before he was arrested in the summer of 1944. Klaus was able to visit her husband before his execution and show him their son Michael, who had been born in an air raid shelter. During a visit with him, a conversation about the name she gave their son revealed to her the name of the person Horn suspected to have turned him in to the Gestapo. In the classroom, she used personal photos of her deceased husband and letters from their courtship to illustrate that he was an average young person with a family, friends and romantic ties whose life was tragically cut short. In the interview Klaus noted further that we tend to think of heroes as courageous individuals on their own, as if they were not associated with a family, but this is not true³².

With her humanistic portrayal of resistance, Klaus avoided presenting herself or her husband as a one-dimensional and extraordinary person with whom young people cannot easily identify. However, Klaus maintains that a hierarchy and heroization of resistance characterized antifascist publications and privileged cases of male, military-style resistance. Klaus admits that particularly among the well-known resistance fighters, there were more men than women. But she strongly contends that resistance should be defined broadly and believes that she was often invited to speak to students, not only as the widow of Cäsar Horn, but also as a female resistance fighter. According to Klaus, women's resistance activities were often different, but these women possessed just as much strength and courage. While men were more often imprisoned, women often kept open the channels of communication and resistance. She maintains that teachers sometimes reinforced an heroic image when they introduced antifascist veterans to their students. Some teachers and youth group leaders may have felt they needed to focus on the more dramatic cases of communist resistance, perhaps for the sake of their audience and to prevent anyone from questioning their political stance and interpretation³³. On the other hand, as the late antifascist veteran Fred Löwenberg pointed out in an interview, some teachers did describe former resistance fighters as average GDR citizens in their preliminary comments as they introduced visitors to their class³⁴. »

Reacting against the tendency towards heroization, many resistance fighters believed that antifascist education and commemoration focused too much on prominent personalities from the resistance movement and portrayed them as heroes, whereas it would have been better to focus more on the movement as a whole and its goals³⁵. According to former resistance activist Kurt Langendorf, the cult of heroes developed in the 1970s, when Erich Honecker took over as First

Secretary of the SED. Langendorf's chronology compares quite favorably with the increase in children's books on Ernst Thälmann and other leading resistance figures, and the widening of the tradition of naming schools after antifascist fighters and martyrs, most of whom were male³⁶. Langendorf believes that before the change in the administration, certain personalities had been put on a pedestal, but it had been more for their conduct as politicians than as antifascist veterans. In the 1970s, certain individuals received attention again focusing more on their antifascist past than their present role and functions³⁷. Honecker and his wife Margot Honecker, the long-standing Minister of Education, contributed to this development as Honecker attempted to gain legitimacy through his own antifascist biography and the invocation of other leading resistance figures.

CONCLUSION

In this essay I have analyzed gendered images of communist resistance activists in print literature and in the stories surviving veterans of the movement passed down orally to GDR youth. Many children's books and magazines such as the *ABC-Zeitung* promoted an image of resistance that privileged well-known acts of high political and military resistance to National Socialism, marginalizing the contributions of men and women in alternative and supporting roles. Some educators reinforced this heroization of resistance focusing on figures like Ernst Thälmann, whose contributions and legacy took on mythic proportions. At the same time, other teachers and former resistance figures shaped the official narrative by placing less emphasis on Thälmann and the cult of heroes and creating a more balanced and inclusive portrait of resistance. In this way my research reveals the contradictions and transformations within an official antifascist narrative that regime leaders could never fully control. Scholars can better understand the strength and limits of support for the regime among writers, teachers and veterans in the service of the SED state through an exploration of these tensions concerning educational goals, methods and control over personal and party histories. The overemphasis on a hierarchy of resistance resulted in a missed opportunity to fully engage female readers and students to the extent possible given girls' equal or greater interest in learning about antifascist resistance.

NOTES

¹ Interview with Irmgard Klaus, Karow, conducted by the author, 27 September and 4 October 2001. Taped copies of all interviews cited in this essay remain in the possession of the author and are available upon request.

² Iwona Irwin-Zarecka maintains that we cannot just focus on the text or the final product of memory that is consumed. She supports an analysis of collective memory that extends beyond the top layer of memory producers to include historians, writers, and educators who serve as « memory intermediaries. » Cf. Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*, New Brunswick, Transaction, 1994, p. 190-191.

³ Cf. Alan L. Nothnagle, *Building the East Germany Myth: Historical Mythology and Youth Propaganda in the German Democratic Republic, 1945-1989*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1999; René Börrnert, *Wie Ernst Thälmann treu und kühn! Das Thälmann-Bild der SED im Erziehungsalltag der DDR*, Bad Heilbrunn, Klinkhardt, 2004; Gottfried Uhlig, « Mit der Wurzel ausgerottet? Gedanken zur Bewältigung des Faschismus durch das Schulwesen der DDR », *Pädagogik und Schulalltag*, 46, 1991, p. 394-400; Karin Wieckhorst, *Die Darstellung des 'antifaschistischen Widerstandes' in der Kinder- und Jugendliteratur der SBZ/DDR*, Frankfurt/M., Peter Lang, 2000; and Christel Berger, *Traditionen der DDR Literatur: Gewissensfrage Antifaschismus: Analysen – Interpretationen – Interviews*, Berlin, Dietz Verlag, 1990, p. 197-219.

⁴ The official narrative also marginalized acts of resistance, protest and non-conformity of social democrats, Christians, non-communist youth, elites and members of the German military.

⁵ In this essay I employ Detlev Peukert's loose definition of resistance which requires a full rejection of the Nazi regime and an effort to undermine the Nazi system, but need not include actions that could feasibly bring down the regime. Cf. Detlev Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*, trans. Richard Deveson, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987, p. 84.

⁶ Stephan Hermlin, *Die Erste Reihe*, Berlin, Verlag Neues Leben, 1951.

⁷ Consider for example, Emil Kortmann, *Artur Becker: Das Lebensbild eines Helden der deutschen Arbeiterjugendbewegung*, Berlin, Verlag Neues Leben, 1956; E. R. Greulich, *Und nicht auf den Knien*, Berlin, Verlag Neues Leben, 1968; and Helga and Hansgeorg Meyer, *Forscher, Streiter, Wegbereiter*, Berlin, Kinderbuchverlag, 1988.

⁸ FDJ, « Vorschlag an den Verlag Neues Leben zur Veröffentlichung von Büchern zur Geschichte der Arbeiterjugendbewegung und der FDJ bis 1965 », 28 October 1960, Stiftung der Arbeiterparteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR [henceforth SAPMO-Barch] DY 24/10/850, p. 1-3.

⁹ Ursula Werner-Böhnke, « Merk dir seinen Namen: 'Arthur Becker' », *ABC-Zeitung*, 11, 1966, p. 2-3.

¹⁰ Günter Ebenholz, « Aus der Geschichte einer Arbeiterfamilie: Peter und die Handgranaten », *ABC-Zeitung*, 1963, 7-8, p. 6-7.

¹¹ Bruno Apitz, *Nacht unter Wölfen*, Halle, Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1958.

¹² Herfried Münkler, « Antifaschismus als Gründungsmythos der DDR: Abgrenzungsinstrument nach Westen und Herrschaftsmittel nach innen », in Manfred Agethen, Eckhard Jesse and Ehrhart Neubert (eds.), *Der missbrauchte Antifaschismus: DDR-Staatsdoktrin und Lebenslüge der deutschen Linken*, Freiburg, Herder Verlag, 2002, p. 90.

¹³ Alan L. Nothnagle, *Building the East German Myth*, op. cit., p. 115.

¹⁴ Wolfgang Benz and Walter H. Pehle (eds.), *Lexikon des deutschen Widerstandes*, Frankfurt am Main, Fischer, 1999, p. 400-401.

¹⁵ Alan L. Nothnagle, *Building the East German Myth*, op. cit., p. 117.

¹⁶ Cf. Marianne Nippe, « Ein Schiff fährt übers Meer », *ABC-Zeitung*, 7-8, 1961, p. 10-11.

¹⁷ René Börrnert, *Wie Ernst Thälmann treu und kühn!*, op. cit., p. 158, p. 165.

¹⁸ « Vermächtnis », *Beilage Kultur-Kalender to Pionierleiter*, 1962, SAPMO-Barch DY 25/319, p. 23. All translations are my own.

¹⁹ « Unsere Pionierorganisation Ernst Thälmann », *ABC-Zeitung* 9, 1983, p. 12.

²⁰ Irma Thälmann, *Erinnerungen an meinen Vater*, Berlin, Kinderbuchverlag, 1954.

²¹ « Die besonderen Geburtstagsgeschenke: Erlebt und erzählt von Maria Kuhn », *ABC-Zeitung*, 4,

1965, p. 5.

²² The familial connection here should not be surprising given scholarship on family-based resistance in France and female partisans in the Soviet Union during World War II. Cf. Margaret Collins Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1995, and Kenneth Slepyan, *Stalin's Guerrillas: Soviet Partisans in World War II*, Lawrence, University of Kansas, 2006.

²³ Alan L. Nothnagle, *Building the East German Myth*, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

²⁴ Ursula Werner-Böhnke, « Maria und die roten Sterne », *ABC-Zeitung*, 10, 1961, p. 4-5.

²⁵ « Eine Genossin erzählt: Vom anderen 1. Mai », *ABC-Zeitung*, 4, 1960, p. 2.

²⁶ Günter Feustel, « Radieschen und die Stiefelmänner », *ABC-Zeitung*, 9, 1965, p. 12-13.

²⁷ Günter Ebenholz, « Partisan Käte », *ABC-Zeitung*, 9, 1969, p. 6-7.

²⁸ *Lesebuch Klasse 7*, Berlin, Volk und Wissen, 1985.

²⁹ *Lehrplan für das Fach Deutsche Sprache und Literatur der Vorbereitungsklassen 9 und 10 zum Besuch der Erweiterten Oberschule (Präzisierte Lehrplan)*, Berlin, Volk und Wissen, 1967, p. 56.

³⁰ Tara Magdalinski, « Traditionspflege and the Construction of Identity in the German Democratic Republic, 1970-1979 », *Occasional Papers in German Studies*, Edmonton, University of Alberta, 14, December 1997, p. 22.

³¹ Interview with Irmgard Klaus, *op. cit.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Interview with the late Fred Löwenberg, conducted by the author, Berlin, 10 December 2001.

³⁵ Interviews with Irmgard Klaus and the late Fred Löwenberg, *op. cit.*; and interview with Kurt Langendorf, conducted by the author, Berlin, 19 September 2001. The work of historian Josie McLellan also supports this argument. Cf. Josie McLellan, *Antifascism and Memory in East Germany: Remembering the International Brigades 1945-1989*, Oxford, Clarendon, 2004.

³⁶ Cf. Catherine Plum, « Contested Namesakes: East Berlin School Names under Communism & in Reunified Germany », *History of Education Quarterly*, Winter 2005/6, p. 625-635.

³⁷ Interview with Kurt Langendorf, *op. cit.*