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The Quality of Life in the German Democratic Republic

Changes and Developments in a State Socialist Society

Edited by
MARILYN RUESCHEMEYER
and CHRISTIANE LEMKE

M. E. SHARPE, Inc.
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Culture and Gender

IRENE DÖLLING

I

The time structures of the human life process are sociohistorical structures translated into stable temporal segments, and processes of individual and communal life. The division of individual time into work time and leisure time, as well as the structure and internal relationships between the activities carried out in these two spheres, are the expression of specific social relations. Time structures also always display a gender-specific disparity. The transformation of social relations into the temporal dimension of individual activities or into gender relations consists of diverse and at the same time interrelated forms in which individuals produce and reproduce themselves in sociohistorically determinate ways. In the GDR, an average of 47.1 hours of housework per week per family has been a constant for about twenty years. About 70.7 percent of this work is done by women, and 13 percent by men.[1] Employed women with children have virtually no leisure time during the week and their free-time activities, hobbies, etc. often directly relate to the needs of other family members. Thus "leisure-time culture" is neutral with regard to neither age nor gender. Its analysis, therefore, requires a description of the essential social relations and conditions in which individuals manifest their lives. It also raises the question of whether, why, and how the fundamental social relations are manifested as gender relations, as fields of activities and temporal structures that are different for the two sexes.

II

Socialism is the first phase of the communist social formation. Economically it is marked by the absence of private ownership of the means of production, wage labor, and exploitation, or, in positive terms, by social ownership of the means of production, and the right and duty of all to work. The social objective of

production is the ever-greater satisfaction of the needs of all members of society and, over the long term, the establishment of social equality. The realization of this historical long-term goal is accomplished by socialism under material and technical conditions that objectively require the retention of the different forms of the Marxian "old social division of labor": the division of labor into predominantly physical or intellectual labor, into skilled and less skilled labor, and into decision-making, managerial, and practical activities. On the one hand socialism supersedes class society, although, on the other hand, it is not yet a society of real social equality: the existence of classes is a reflection of persisting social differences. The division of individual lifetime into work time and leisure time, into time for participation in social production and time for individual reproduction on one's own "private" responsibility is also a consequence of this, just as is the historical division of functions between the sexes—which at the moment is tending to disappear. Given these circumstances, how do the new socioeconomic relations of socialism assume significance for the behavior and everyday life of individuals? What concrete contradictory aspects of their way of life derive from the fundamental contradictions of socialist society—for example that between social ownership of the means of production and the participation of concrete individuals in social production within the forms of the "old division of labor," or in the exercise of a "particularized function"? To what extent are gender relations a concrete expression of these contradictions? In what (traditional or new) cultural forms are the relations between the sexes lived, practiced, and appraised? In what cultural forms do men and women live and "digest" what is new in their way of living and in what relation do the old or the new stand to one another?

Some aspects of these questions will be discussed in the following essay, which will deal more with women than with men, mainly because the changes that have taken place are more incisive and more conflict-ridden for women than they are for men.

First it is necessary to outline a few theoretical premises on which the discussion will be based.

1. The socioeconomic relations of society as such are not determinants of individual behavior but are mediated in the process of social and individual reproduction, in transformed structures, in cultural forms. One form of transformation of social relations is gender relations, which reflect social relations in a number of ways: in the gender-specific division of labor into social production and individual reproduction (in the family); in the social rating of activities exercised predominantly by men or predominantly by women; in the attribution of human properties to one or the other sex, as a devalorization, discrimination, or suppression of, say, the female sex. In the history of mankind, social (class) differences and conflicts have been made acceptable and livable for individuals by transforming them into social relations. This also applies to gender-specific norms, patterns, and strategies of male and female socialization.

2. Relations between the sexes are in practical terms reflected in the cultural forms, in particular in the norms, patterns, standards, and stereotypes that regulate and guide everyday life. These cultural forms are often historically older than the relations transformed by them at the level of relations between men and women. They have a relatively independent development and under certain circumstances can be functional for societies of diverse types.

3. Individuals become aware of changes taking place in social relations through cultural forms and react to these changes through cultural patterns of evaluation and interpretation familiar to them. In this way people give expression to their new experiences and in the process also modify the cultural forms themselves. Cultural forms can therefore convey totally different contents and different experiences, though their outward form is seemingly unchanged. The extent to which new changed (socioeconomic) relations assume their determining role in the everyday life of human beings is reflected in these modifications of handed-down cultural forms as well as in the production of historically new cultural forms.

4. Under socialism, gender relations are one form for the transformation of existing or newly generated social differences (not of social conflicts, as in class societies) at the level of personal relations. Gender relations are a form for the movement and development of social contradictions of the above type. In other words: they are a form of movement and development of relations that tend toward the abolition of the subordinate position of the female sex and toward the emancipation of both sexes as a concrete expression of the economic relations of social equality. This also means that the development of contradictions and conflicts at the level of gender relations takes a specific direction.

III

In his essay on the problems of the division of labor between men and women in social production and in the family, the author Hans-Jürgen Gericke observes: "Clearly, the shift that has so far been effected in the division of labor between society and family has contributed considerably to maintaining the old role patterns of the sexes and the old division of labor within the family. This situation is to the detriment of women and from it can be inferred the real social contradiction whose resolution will still require considerable effort, namely, the social contradiction between the almost complete integration of women into the social labor process on the one hand, and woman's dominant role in doing the work in the private household and in the family on the other."[2] Gericke describes *the* contradiction which at present is a fundamental determinant of the existence and the possibilities of development of working women in socialist society.

This contradiction, of course, also has consequences for men and children. At the least it calls into question the traditional division of functions between the sexes as well as the corresponding norms and stereotypes that are experienced at

the practical level by most women. Often these also no longer function.

The contradiction observed by Gericke is premised on a separation in time and place of the processes of production and individual reproduction. This is relatively new historically: it began with industrial production, i.e., with the emergence of capitalist society. A functional transformation of the family and the gender division of labor is a consequence of industrial production, and of the division of the lives of the producers into paid labor time and leisure time. The family sees its function as a production unit, which hitherto had been crucial for its existence and for relations between family members (to which in the broad sense all the members of the "entire household" belonged), steadily waning. As it loses its function as a unit of production, the family, now reduced to two generations, derives its social and individual importance first and foremost from its functions of reproduction of the producers and their family. Under conditions of private ownership of the means of production the socialization of production makes the reproduction of labor power (including the socialization of future producers) the "private affair" of the producers. This means that the producers, personally free, are also in charge of their labor capacity and hence are responsible for their education (insofar as this takes place within the family), and for the maintenance and adaptation of their labor capacity to the market situation. This tends to create a new functional division between the sexes: "a gender-specific division between the male producer or provider and the female, who utilizes what is provided to maintain and conserve labor power,"[3] between socially productive paid activities and unpaid housework. This division assumes a specific form in the cultural patterns of evaluation and interpretation: housework and raising children become a "private service," a "service of love" performed by the housewife for her family members. This cultural pattern is reinforced by invoking the "natural function" of women as mothers and their purported proclivity for specific "housewife" activities. The functional division between the sexes into production and reproduction assumed a universal social character in the 19th century, after first being developed and imposed as a bourgeois ideal for women in the family, and as a norm for the bourgeoisie when it was in the process of acquiring economic and political power. In a society governed by the law of surplus value production, the effect of the law of exchange must be nullified in certain areas, e.g., raising and providing for children, in order to ensure reproduction, which now becomes an individual function and a private responsibility. This necessarily calls for special strategies, norms, and forms for this "socialization" of girls and women (working women as well), so that "private" reproductive work functions as a "service of love."

The contradiction between "public production" and "duties in the private service of the family"[4] was not abolished with the establishment of socialist production relations. The development of the forces of production and the socialization of production are not advanced enough to accomplish this, a fact which on the whole persists under socialism, if at different levels. The contradiction

between social production and "private" reproduction acquires a new content on the basis of the new socioeconomic relations. It is no longer a manifestation of social *conflicts*, but of social *differences*, based in social ownership of the means of production. The cultural forms, patterns, etc., which were developed in capitalist society, i.e., the traditional divisions of functions between the sexes and the related rankings, are initially there to mediate this contradiction in the practical action of the individuals.

A peculiarity of this socioeconomic change in the content of the contradiction is that initially that which is new (socialist production relations) appears officially, in political programs, in propaganda, etc. as a radical break with the old. That is, radical changes in way of life, in relations between the sexes, and in claims for a meaningful life, etc. are derived directly from the new relations, and legal equality and the integration of women into gainful economic activity is crassly identified with women's emancipation. However, practical experience in building socialism showed quite soon that a comprehensive transformation in relations, down to the very shaping of daily life, is more contradictory and laborious. It became clear that the traditional cultural forms of, say, relations between the sexes, do not simply disappear or continue to exist in people's heads as an ideological "vestige." Rather what was found was that certain cultural forms are quite functional for the first stages of development of socialism, i.e., for undeveloped socialist relations, and are therefore reproduced on the new socioeconomic base. The view that the millenial problem of discrimination against women would be resolved with the integration of almost all able-bodied women into gainful employment, by corresponding measures in female and social policy, and with the proclamation and implementation of equal rights, proved to be one-sided. Equality of women, and even more broadly, the emancipation of both sexes from the onesidedness, limitations, and mentally debilitating effects of their hitherto contradictory existence presupposes a qualitative change in all social relations as well as in the subjective structures of women and men. For this to occur a long historical period is still necessary. At the same time, however, practical experience confirmed the postulate that the emancipation of women obtains a material foundation only when women are integrated into social production and "public affairs." From this perspective, major changes have without a doubt taken place in women's lives since the GDR came into being (1949), and these changes are often already taken as a matter of course.

How can these changes be described? What emancipatory effect does gainful employment have for women themselves and for men?

The first expression of the new socioeconomic relations was the juridical equality established between men and women: equal right to work, equal right to an equal wage for the same work, and equal right to education have been constitutional principles since the GDR was founded. They were introduced as early as August 1946 by the commander-in-chief of the Soviet military administration for the then Soviet occupation zone in his Order No. 253. In the same

Table 1

Educational Level of Employed Women in a Socialist Economy

Females employed with completed vocational training per 1,000 females employed

Year	Total	With higher education diploma	With specialized higher education diploma	Diploma as master craftsman	Skilled worker diploma
1971	491.9	24.3	56.7		410.9
1975	607.2	34.7	75.0	6.7	490.7
1980	740.7	46.9	140.0[1]	7.9	545.6
1984	802.9	55.9	162.6	9.5	574.9

1. After 1976 when specialized vocational training schools were recognized, some employed women with a skilled worker diploma in public health were classified as having a higher specialized education diploma.

Source: Report of the GDR Government to the General Secretary of the United Nations, "Frauen in der DDR. Bilanz der Erfüllung des Weltaktionsplanes für die Dekade der Frau—Zeitraum 1976–1985."

Table 2

Share of Female Students among Total Number of Students (in %)

	1950	1960	1970	1981	(1984)
Higher education	19	25	35	49	52.5
Vocational schools	25	29	49	73	83.2

Source: "Gleiche Chancen für Frauen?" *Panorama DDR,* Berlin, 1982, 76. The figures for 1984 were supplemented with data from the statistical yearbook.

process the German administrative and health authorities, as well as the trade unions, were enjoined to revise the official lists of occupations, which prohibited women access to certain occupations for various reasons. As a result, only occupations that might be injurious to women's health were left in this list.[5] The practical consequence of this was that in industrial branches—which had been traditionally dominated by men and in which there was a shortage of labor because of the war—many jobs, machines, etc. were modified so that women could work on them.[6] The juridical equality of men and women meant then, and still does today, that any social policy was committed to creating the appropriate conditions for the practical realization of equal rights. This took place in different stages, with different aspects emphasized in each. In 1945, only very few women

who were already employed or had just become employed because they had to feed themselves and their children had a vocational education. Since labor was needed everywhere, and skilled labor was often in short supply, the usual method for training these women was through trained specialized personnel or they were retrained to new tasks. In 1950, only about 5 percent of women in industry had a vocational certificate. A qualitative change occurred in the sixties and seventies, when the mechanization of agriculture and many hitherto manual jobs in industry, commerce, and the service sector eliminated the deficit in the vocational training of women. Today, the qualification gap between men and women in the age groups up to 40 has been closed (see Table 1). "At the end of 1984, 80.3 percent of employed women in the GDR had completed vocational training, with 57.5 percent as skilled workers and 21.9 percent with a higher or higher specialized education."[7]

"Over 99.9 percent of girls who do not choose continuing education were in a skilled worker occupation."[8] "Of 226 skilled worker occupations for 10th grade leavers, about 200 are accessible to girls."[9] Women are today very highly represented in occupations with higher or higher specialized educational diplomas. Women account for over 50 percent of university and technical school students, and over 80 percent of students in vocational schools (see Table 2). In some occupations, such as medicine or the educational system, they account for over 50 percent.

Considering also that women are increasingly more active in the political sphere as well (they account for between 36 and 42 percent of positions in communal, regional, and district representative assemblies, and almost 30 percent of all mayors and every second judge is a woman), and that they are represented at an average of 50 percent in trade union positions at all levels, we can say confidently that the social status of women has undergone a broad change. One effect of this, for instance, has been economic independence and a strong self-awareness. The realization of the right to work has tremendously broadened the horizons of women's experience and their social relations, and has brought them education and social recognition of skills and abilities which they could hardly have developed merely as housewives. Unlike "private" housework, occupational activity has given them the experience of seeing their work valued and recognized socially. "I was proud that my work was so respected, and so it also was fun for me. . . I had a responsibility and I knew why I was there,"[10] reflected a woman, now over 70, in her recently published memoirs. She had had to work very hard even as a child with farmers, began working after the war in a factory in Magdeburg processing vegetables, acquired a skill at the age of 40 and became a brigade leader. The material changes that took place in the life of women as a result of employment have had the consequence that traditional notions of male dominance, of the "woman's role" in marriage and the family, were at least called into question as were relations between the sexes. Another consequence is that women increasingly define themselves less in terms of their

function as housewife and mother, and they regard their jobs—at most only interrupted briefly after the birth of their children—as being just as important for their own self-affirmation and for their personal development. For the young generation as well, gainful employment of women is to a high degree a permanent component of their value system and life plans—in any case much greater in percentage terms than for boys.[11] Correspondingly, boys (like their fathers) see themselves in traditional terms as responsible for women and as material providers for the family.[12] Nonetheless, even among men, the overriding tendency is to regard female employment as a self-evident matter, which was by no means the case 30–35 years ago.

At the same time women (and in another sense their husbands as well) regard gainful employment as a contradictory issue to which they have ambivalent psychological reactions. The traditional concept of housework as "a service of love," e.g., as almost a natural duty, conceals differences from male employment, and has corresponding emotional overtones. Perhaps much more blatantly than a comparison with housework, the division of labor between men and women that is evident in social production makes it obvious that social equality between the sexes is not automatically established when a woman takes a job. The level of development reached by the forces of production still requires—and will require for a long time to come yet—that the division of labor be maintained. The consequent differences in requirements with regard to individual knowledge and skills, differences in trade, etc., affect men and women equally. But within these differences in the content of their job functions, a gender-specific division of labor also takes place: women are still concentrated in comparatively less qualified jobs, carry out practical and accordingly less well-paid activities, and gravitate to occupations which in their content correspond to "typical female" functions in the household and family (see Tables 3 and 4).

At present 30 percent of females receiving a secondary education diploma go on to obtain vocational training in a technical skilled occupation. After their training, however, these women take on assembly jobs more frequently than men with the same qualifications (in comparison to the dominantly male preparatory or maintenance jobs). They take jobs involving the feeding and simple operating of machines, or do assembly-line work. As a study by the trade union technical college showed, "Such jobs are regarded as women's jobs in enterprises and are reserved exclusively for female employees."[13] Although there is no legal basis for this, the traditional cultural pattern assumes a spontaneous regulative function here. A gender-specific division of labor is also evident among persons with higher education or a higher level vocational training. Thus "every fourth male, but only every tenth female with a higher education works in industry and construction. The vast majority of women with a higher education are employed in the non-producing sectors of the economy. . . . Over half of all males with a higher education have jobs in construction and industry, while only one-fourth work in the non-productive sectors where, in contrast, almost three-fourths of all

Table 3

Proportion of Females Employed in Total Number of Employed and by Economic Branch (in %)

Economic branch	Year 1970	1975	1980	1984
Industry	42.5	43.7	43.3	41.9
Productive crafts	40.1	38.7	38.0	37.4
Construction	13.3	14.9	16.2	16.3
Forestry and agriculture	45.8	42.9	41.5	39.4
Transportation, post and telecommunications	35.5	37.3	36.9	36.0
Retail trade	69.2	71.4	72.8	72.8
Other producing branches	53.7	54.2	55.1	55.0
Non-producing branches	70.2	72.3	72.9	73.2

Source: See Table 1.

Table 4

Proportion of Female Teachers in Higher Education—Professors and Lecturers (in %)

1971	1981
3.4	7.4

Source: Informationen des wissenchaftlichen Rates "Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft," vol. 2, 1982, 24 and 42.

women with higher education work. A sixth of women with higher education work in industry and construction, so reflecting a gender-specific polarization into technical and non-technical occupations."[14] The general trend is for the proportion of women to decrease the higher one goes in the managerial hierarchy. In other words, the social division of labor, objectively not ready to be abolished, persists in gender-specific forms that have evolved historically. This is encouraged by the traditional patterns and norms of "gender-typical" behavior (e.g., in the minds of managerial personnel, but also in the minds of women themselves, with regard to "typical" women's jobs). It is also promoted—and I will come back to this in the next section—by the fact that "private" reproduction is still predominantly the responsibility of women. One of the contradictory consequences of the gender-specific division of labor in social production is that while on the one hand through gainful employment women expand their experiences, their abilities, and their knowledge as well as their self-awareness, on the other

hand, the traditional notions of the subordinate, supportive, and auxiliary function of women are reproduced in their new area of activity in many spheres of work. So the corresponding cultural forms from the sphere of "private" reproduction remain functional and are passed on to the next generation. These considerations have occasioned a discussion as to whether this form of employment is truly able to broaden women's horizons, e.g., if one compares monotonous assembly-line work with the varied activities involved in housework, and especially in raising children. However, even when one enumerates the contradictory and often limited effects for the emancipation of women of many current occupations, the idea of returning to traditional female duties in the house and family is rarely mentioned. Being a housewife and nothing more is not a serious alternative for many women, even if a number of them, under the direct pressure of the stress of their jobs and their tasks in "private" reproduction, regard a brief interruption in their jobs as quick relief from their momentary situation. Over the long term, the contradictions of the gender division of labor can only be resolved by eliminating unskilled, one-sided monotonous jobs and creating jobs that are rich and varied in content. In addition to the economic and technical preconditions, the subjective attitudes of women will play a role in this: e.g., their positive experience in expanding their field of knowledge and activity, as well as the limited emancipatory impact of the gender-specific division of labor; their dissatisfaction with the progress made to date, as well as their interest in more meaningful jobs; their openness to technology and their willingness to continue their education. In the upcoming years, in the wake of the introduction of the new technology and new techniques (such as microelectronics and computer technology), it will be necessary in all productive and non-productive sectors of the economy to ensure that the level of vocational training achieved by women is fully utilized and that scientific and technical progress does not proceed at women's expense. Thus, the vocational availability of women must be increased by eliminating the still existing deficit in advanced vocational education. For example, at present "in industry the relative proportion of trained male skilled workers with an advanced qualification is two to three times as great as that of women."[15] Many firms—especially recently—provide special advanced training courses for women during working hours so that these courses create no additional burden. In addition, the state has made it incumbent on enterprises to ensure that when they introduce new technology, one-sided, stressful activities with low productivity, performed mainly by women, are abolished and that when new jobs with richer and more varied content are created, the "working conditions are a priori structured in such a way that women and mothers can also be employed in these jobs."[16]

To sum up, we can say that:

Today in the GDR over 90 percent of all women who can work do work. About 30 percent of these work in part-time jobs. Gainful employment for women has become a self-evident matter, a permanent component of the individual life plans of men and women. The traditional cultural pattern of the male as the producer

and provider and the female as the "user" and housewife has been broken. Although this form of the gender-specific division of labor has largely lost its value for individuals, it does not mean that the gender-specific division of labor and the associated norms and evaluation and interpretation patterns have lost their function and are disappearing. In social production differences in the content of jobs make for the continuation of the gender-specific division of labor—thus there remain functional and effective cultural forms in which social differences appear as "natural" differences between the sexes, as the "biologically conditioned," better aptitude of men for certain jobs, and the dominance of men over women. Women's claim to gainful employment and economic independence has freed itself from the traditional restriction to housekeeping and raising children, but for the most part they still seek to cash in on that claim in "typical" women's occupations. Although most men regard it as self-evident that their wives should work, it is just as self-evident to them that they should tend to have more qualified, richer, and better-paid jobs. Although women have to a certain extent penetrated into the "typical" male occupations and now even dominate quantitatively in some formerly "male domains" (e.g., medicine), the converse is not the case: there are hardly any men in the "typical" female occupations (e.g., nursery school instructors, kindergarten instructors). In other words, women have by now reached the level of men in the process of their emancipation, and have developed the corresponding "male" attributes, abilities, etc. However, only the barest rudiments are discernible in the contrary direction.

IV

Many women do not take advantage of the officially equal access to most occupations. Despite manifold social efforts to recruit women and girls for technical occupations or for managerial jobs, these opportunities are often not seized. This has a deep-rooted cause which does not rest primarily with the content of these jobs: namely, the burden of housework and caring for children remains a heavy one for women, and the traditional concepts of "sex roles" are tenaciously adhered to in the division of labor within the family. The level of development of the forces of production has had a negative effect in this domain: individual reproduction has not attained the degree of socialization that has been achieved in social production, and therefore continues to take place in essentially "private" form. Under these conditions, the traditional cultural norm that makes women responsible for caring for and raising children, and for the functioning of the household, has a material basis for its continued existence. This is also reflected in the fact that discussion is always of the "double burden"[17] of women, but never of men.

One consequence of this situation is that dominant factors in the structure of everyday life and in self-conception are different for men and women. Men define themselves mainly in terms of their activities as producers and in "public

Table 5

Children in Children's Institutions per 1,000 Children in the Various Age Groups

Year	Nursery	Kindergartens (children between the age of 3 and the beginning of school)	School nurseries (school children between the first and fourth grades)
1970	291	645	466
1975	508	846	642
1980	612	922	748
1984	692	all children whose parents desire	all first through fourth grade children whose parents desire

Source: See Table 1.

Table 6

Duration of Pregnancy Leave or Weeks Off with Continued Payment of Full Salary

1950	11 weeks (5/6)
1963	14 weeks (6/8)
1972	18 weeks (6/12)
1976	26 weeks (6/20)

Source: Die Frau in der DDR, Berlin, 1978, 181.

Table 7

"Baby Year" Regulations

1st or 2nd child: 12 months, with payment of 70–90 percent of income and job guarantee
3 or more children: 18 months at the above conditions

Source: See Table 2.

life." Although the family is highly valued in their life plans, alongside their occupations, their function as spouse and father is of subordinate significance in their self-conception. For women, on the other hand, the ability to reconcile occupation with motherhood and household duties is the determining factor in their self-conception. Often the contradictory nature of the demands placed upon them in these different domains gives rise to serious individual conflicts and the need to find compromise solutions.

The specific feminist and social policy of a socialist state will reflect the existing, and as yet insurmountable contradiction between socialized production and "private" reproduction. The aim of this policy is to create facilities for working women with children under existing conditions and then to gradually improve these conditions so that they "can make full use of their equal rights."[18]

The GDR has built a comprehensive and essentially well-functioning system of caring for and raising children while their parents are working (see Table 5).

Comprehensive social policy measures have been undertaken, especially since the early seventies. These include—in addition to lengthening the leave of absence for pregnancy, and the weekly days off—the introduction of the "baby year," a reduction in the work day for women with two and more children under the age of 16, a monthly paid housework day, and paid leave for single mothers to care for a sick child (see Tables 6 and 7).

Thus ever better conditions are being created for compatibility of job and motherhood. The most serious problem, however, continues to be housework and the time spent doing it. The average is still several hours more than the weekly normal working time of 43 hours. (There are also considerable time differences among women depending on their social position. Whereas women with a higher education are below the average, spending 36.2 hours per week doing housework, the time spent by housewives in farm households is much higher than the average due to private crop raising and stockraising.) The more extensive use of household appliances and improvements in services and in the range of consumer goods have so far brought about no qualitative change in the situation. This also means that the responsibility traditionally borne by women for the household and for children continues largely undiminished. Women continue to do two-thirds to three-fourths of the housework, and they are responsible for the larger share of caring for and raising children. Changes are indeed discernible in the division of functions within the family; especially among young people and couples in which both partners do shift work or one has a higher occupational qualification, one can find more egalitarian views and practices in the division of housework and a greater male interest in caring for and raising the children. But these have not yet become dominant trends and the present forms of the sexual division of labor in social production serve to impede the elimination of the traditional family division of labor in the home. For most women the consequence is greater physical and mental stress. They must continually alternate between types of activity that have extremely different requirements, and they

have little time for themselves. From this perspective, it is fair to say, as many do, that women are doubly burdened, even when from another perspective they regard their paid jobs as personally important and indispensable. Very many women with small children report that a reduction in their work day would considerably alleviate their situation—accordingly, a large number of women who are presently employed part time work 7–8 hours per day.[19]

For some time to come women will continue to experience a typical and crucial contradiction in their lives: they must acquire abilities and needs for two spheres, which in some cases have very different requirements, and must bring them into a relatively harmony with one another in their own self-conception. To feel responsible for the functioning of the household, for the emotional well-being of all members of the family, and for a harmonious, conflict-free family atmosphere, can thus stand in relatively stark contrast to the material requirements of their occupation, and to the interests of professional advancement and their own personal needs. The solutions that many women have chosen to meet these different requirements are marred by these contradictions, which include part-time work, temporary interruption in professional activity until the children are older, taking jobs beneath their acquired qualifications, near their homes, or without shiftwork, or foregoing their own professional development in favor of the development of their husbands. However, women at the top of the occupational ladder are less inclined to pursue such solutions; instead they look for ways to get as much out of their occupational opportunities as possible. Both the society in general and particular firms support them in this through such things as special promotional plans and individual work schedules. But for these women too the "double burden" is a problem with which they must cope individually.

If on the one hand women's focus on compatibility between occupation and motherhood, house, and home, may be seen as a demonstration that fundamental changes have taken place in their lives, on the other hand, it is also a very clear testimony to the contradiction in their ability to act which women and girls must develop differently from boys and men in the process of their "socialization." The socialization of girls continues to be highly, if not predominantly, oriented toward the family, and thereby reinforces the corresponding cultural forms and patterns especially in the informal and self-evident division (i.e., non-division) of chores within the family. From early childhood, the conditions of development within the family are still clearly different for girls and boys, and these differences lead to manifold different activities for young boy and girl adolescents. In many families, boys and girls are given contradictory orientations—on the one hand they learn about new egalitarian norms and value orientations of socialist society, yet they are still exposed to traditional influences,[20] and, we might add, this dissimilarity in orientations is experienced more deeply by girls. To be sure, the funds made available from the social consumer fund for social policy measures, for subsidizing children's institutions, and services, is tantamount to an indirect recognition of the work of "private" reproduction. But as unpaid "pri-

vately'' performed work, it is still associated with the implicit assessment that it is not ''real'' work. And so the specific mechanisms for the ''socialization'' of girls and women are still broadly operative, making them individually willing and able to fulfill these ''private'' reproduction functions ''voluntarily.'' Recent sociological studies have confirmed that there still exist clear gender-specific differences in the ''socialization'' process of the younger generation. Socialization in the family concentrates above all on cultivating the individual conditions for the exercise of ''private'' reproduction functions. Gender-specific divisions of functions and their traditional valuations are passed on and appropriated in the practical course of everyday family life. Unlike the activities carried out by parents at their jobs, which remain rather obscure to children for a relatively long period, the ''private'' work of reproduction and the valuations associated with it become visible very early, especially for girls, in direct family life, and, moreover, are practiced in play as well. Thus the traditional division of functions is passed on to children: today girls are still drawn much earlier and more regularly into household work than boys.[21] Furthermore, girls' activities soon acquire a predominantly personal orientation, one directed toward assuming the responsibility for the mental and physical well-being of all family members, correspondingly for seeing to it that the household work necessary for this is accomplished as harmoniously as possible, and for avoiding or diffusing conflicts in the family. A permanent concern for the well-being of others, seen as self-evident, as a proof of love and a partiality for one's intimate family, is considered to be a demonstration of feminine virtue. The highly personal orientation of the female socialization process—toward relations that have meaning and value in themselves because they are based in a seemingly unconditional love—has the consequence that a woman's own feeling of personal worth is dependent first and foremost on recognition by others in these direct ''social'' forms. The gender-specific peculiarities and consequences of women's socialization also have effects on their occupational activity, and on the methods they use to meet the standards of action required by their profession.

The occupational effects of the socialization of girls, especially in the family context, are manifested for instance in the fact that women concentrate in occupations that are highly person-oriented, i.e., they correspond with functions and demands within the family. Commonplace notions of what is a ''nice occupation for women'' or what is ''really no occupation for women'' probably even further reinforce the choice of person-oriented occupation, just as that choice evidently is also preprogrammed by a definite gender-specific definition of functions in the household. The fact that ''in the division of household labor, women are assigned the uncreative household chores, while men take over the practical aspects of work in the home''[22] must certainly have something to do with ''girls' lack of motivation for practical occupations.''[23] In the process, the attitudes and values acquired in the assimilation of the ''gentle'' feminine socialization patterns (traditional norms and ideals of ''femininity'') evidently produce internal resis-

tance within women themselves. This is seen in the prevailing notion that practical activities are for boys, so that it is "unfeminine" for girls to be interested in such things. However, probably more effective are more subtle behavioral regulations, based on the empirical perception that recognition, rewards, indulgence, and fulfillment of wishes can be had more rapidly and without great effort or conflict, if the traditional "feminine" tasks are performed as expected. The related tendency for demands and needs to be dismissed also necessarily engenders a defense reaction and anxiety vis-à-vis demands—and indeed possibilities of development as well—which go beyond the usual, the tried and proven, and the accepted.

The special training of girls for their future "duties in the private service of the family" has molded a basic posture which may be described as a "readiness for sacrifice," a readiness to forego one's own wishes and demands in favor of those of others. This traditional cultural pattern in women's socialization and its psychological consequences influence the concrete forms and solutions with which women today attempt to reconcile gainful employment with motherhood and household. Similarly, the job satisfaction of many women today is measured less in terms of job content, as is the case with their male colleagues, than in terms of factors such as work time, the transportation system, buying privileges within the firm, etc.—factors that are very closely related to the requirements of running a household and a family. Finally, women, especially those with a lower occupational qualification, have a pronounced interest in maintaining the traditional divisions of functions within the family to buttress their own sphere of influence and decisionmaking.

On the whole, it has been found that employment for women means another pace of life, another time schedule for all family members. Of course, it is not only women who experience their "double burden" as a point of conflict in family life; husbands and above all children do so as well. Children must adapt their schedules to that of their working parents, and their own way of using time is often in conflict with the way mothers or fathers use theirs. However, as I have attempted to show, these experiences have so far not resulted in a radical change in the division of labor between the sexes within the family. Rather, the predominant tendency at present is for women, often under the pressure of their husbands, to seek compromise solutions which not infrequently mean giving up their own development. Generous social policy measures thus have conservative effects as well, precisely because for historical reasons they have been aimed at relieving the situation of working women with children. For example, the shortening of the working day for women with two or more children under sixteen is sometimes taken by husbands as an argument for discarding new forms of the division of labor within the family. The first experiences with regard to the effects of the baby year on the division of labor within the family also betray a tendency toward a return to the traditional one-sided responsibility of women for the household. All these things make it clear that the indicated changes are undermining the tradi-

tional divisions of functions, cultural norms, and behavior patterns, so that they are perceived as out of line with the times. On the other hand, these changes are not so radical that they are breaking down these gender relations and the cultural forms in which they are practiced. The process of dissolving these relations and forms is by no means rectilinear. The contradiction in development can very easily result in an at least temporary revival of traditional forms.

V

But it would be very one-sided to see only the negative aspects of the above tendencies in present relations between the sexes. Experiences of their double burden, and improved conditions for caring for children, have given many women food for thought with regard to the importance of family security for a harmonious development of children, and the value of children for a happy and meaningful life of one's own. Because of their tasks and experiences on the job *and* in the family, women are more inclined than men to include the ability to raise children, the capacity for attentive, considerate, and loyal relations, and the demand for sufficient time to realize all this in their conceptions of emancipation. In a certain sense, their "double burden" has given women a lead over men in this respect. In contrast to their grandmothers and mothers, who saw gainful employment as a decisive step toward emancipation, and accordingly saw its reconcilability with motherhood as less problematic, many younger women today stress that they want both a job and motherhood. For them a harmonious partner relationship and children are at least as important, if not more important, as their professional development. The practical experience of the one-sided effects of a life direction predominantly oriented toward professional advancement is reflected in such valuations inasmuch as such an orientation has often entailed giving up important humanistic areas of life. Young women today have many experiences that their mothers and grandmothers had rather sparingly. Finally, such evaluations are also the expression of a negative experience of and with children who have received too little family care and attention.

If nowadays women emphasize their qualities of motherhood and caring, this must not be seen as a simple unbroken adherence to traditional functions and ideas of femininity. It also includes the idea of a unified harmonious development of individual needs and abilities. And this is an idea that embraces both men and women on an equal footing, one in which, over the long term, the one-sidedness of traditional male or female life contexts and the real or apparent privileges associated with them have been overcome. Women, and increasingly, men as well, find such a life worth striving for. Not a few men, especially among the younger generation, deem it a personal loss not to be able to spend as much time as their wives do with their children. Not infrequently social policy measures meant to alleviate the situation of working mothers have been popularly regarded as a partiality, a favoring of women, thereby overlooking to some extent their

double burden. Gainful employment and reproduction work perhaps ultimately could become equally significant and important for a meaningful life for both men and women once a shortening of the work day for both sexes becomes economically defensible and the "old form of the division of labor" is abolished. The goals of social policy are not at variance with this. For example, as society develops further, the goal is to move from offering special supports for women to providing *parental* supports, provided that at the same time the "special burden of women compared with men"[24] can be eliminated. Further, since 1986, men have also had a right to a "baby year," or may share it with their wives (hitherto for men this was possible only without pay, and so was scarcely used). Such changes should help to break down customary "sex roles," or at least not revitalize them, an effect that many measures designed to deal with the special situation of women unfortunately still have.

VI

One of the questions we posed at the beginning of this essay was how that which is new in social relations becomes visible and subjectively operable in relations between the sexes, and in the changes or modifications in the cultural forms that regulate and set standards for relations between men and women in daily life. Our presentation should have made clear that a look into daily life, into the forms in which people in the GDR conduct their day-to-day lives, will show no spectacular and radical upheavals. The contradictory conditions—which moreover exist throughout the world—in which socialist society in the GDR is currently developing and which is experienced in daily life as differences between the sexes have had the effect that transformations in "sex roles" and in relations between the sexes occur more in the form of modifications in customary cultural forms than radically and abruptly. These modifications are often so gradual that individuals scarcely notice them as change. Thus the large majority of men and women of all age groups regard marriage and the family as a form of life together worth striving for. Even the relations between those who live together without being married are not so terribly different from those developed in marriage. The fact that in the last few years the relative number of unmarried women has increased considerably from 13 percent in 1970 to 34 percent in 1983[25] is not a direct indication that marriage is disappearing as an institution. The economic independence of women, generous state support to single mothers, and the eradication of moral discrimination against them are certainly factors that have had a modifying effect on the traditional cultural forms in which men and women live together. However, there are also other causes: single mothers receive apartments and nursery places more quickly, which influences the decision not to marry or at least not to marry immediately.[26] In many cases single mothers live in stable communion with a man whom they frequently later marry. Even the large number of divorces[27] is no proof of a rejection of marriage—in most cases

the divorcée seeks and finds a new marriage partner.

Also, women do not carry out an unrelenting, voluble campaign against men's "patriarchal" behavior, instead they not infrequently adopt what appears to be an accommodating and approving stance with regard to the familiar patterns, e.g., they take on the bulk of housework. But often, within the traditional norms and behavioral patterns, they also evidence a change of conduct, a developed self-awareness and quite clear assessment of their abilities and of the compromises they continue to make. Thus it is often women who apply for divorce and who make attentive, considerate, and loyal relations, recognition of their claims and life goals, and equal status in the family, yardsticks for measuring their marriage.

On the whole, we find that the development of socioeconomic relations of socialism and the changes it has brought about in relations between the sexes, have not led to a radical shake-up in traditional divisions of functions, and in the norms and standards of "typical" male or female behavior. They have, however, made the traditional norms and practices in relations between the sexes more ambiguous with the result that they no longer function free of friction for either men or women. Rather, the changed life conditions are experienced by both sexes as conflicts of norms and in behavior. "A little" emancipation is generally rated positively today. However, a woman who pursues a professional career as ambitiously as her husband and demands of him a commensurate helping hand in the household and in raising children, or a woman who deliberately decides not to have children for the sake of her career, or a man who regards it as self-evident that he should take on the bulk of the housework while his wife is studying to acquire professional skills, or who stays at home when the children are sick and accepts that his wife earns more than he does—such persons must not infrequently expect the disapproval of the surrounding society.

Often new or modified modes of behavior exist side by side with traditional, unchanged behaviors, or the latter are employed and stressed more or less consciously to diminish friction and conflict with others, or to diminish uncertainty in identity, as when women who venture professionally into domains that were previously reserved for men stress "feminine" qualities in their external appearance and conduct, or when men stress "patriarchal" behavioral patterns among their colleagues in contrast to their own habitual behavior.

Measured in terms of the historical period of socialist development in the GDR, the changes that have taken place in relations between the sexes and in the cultural forms of regulating these relations have been great. Measured in terms of what must still be changed in the forms and norms of everyday behavior between men and women for the sexes to be able to experience their distinctiveness while still enjoying equal social rank and social status, these changes are only the very first steps and the very first fruits.

In an interview, Irmtraud Morgner drew up the balance sheet for the present situation: "In short: emancipation (and not only of women) is not a campaign

theme, but an epochal problem, according to Marx. It is certainly not a secondary contradiction, or a fashion which is today in and tomorrow passé."[28]

Notes

1. Alice Kahl, Steffen H. Wilsdorf, and Herbert F. Wolf, *Kollektivbeziehungen und Lebensweise* (Berlin: Dietz Publishers, 1984), 99–101.

2. Hans-Jürgen Gericke, "Sozialökonomische Probleme der Arbeitsteilung zwischen Männern und Frauen," in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates "Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft,"* no. 6 (1977): 15–16.

3. Kristine von Soden and Gabi Zipfel, *70 Jahre Frauenstudium*, Frauen in der Wissenschaft (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein Publishers, 1979), 69.

4. Friedrich Engels, "Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats," in *Marx Engels Werke (MEW)*, vol. 21 (Berlin: Dietz Publishers, 1973), 75.

5. This order was preceded by practical changes. Thus for example a point in the program of action of the workers of the Leuna works of January 25, 1946, was "equal wages for equal work in all departments without regard for age and sex." Cf. *Zur Sozialpolitik in der antifaschistisch-demokratischen Umwälzung 1945–1949*, Dokumente und Materialien (Berlin: Dietz Publishers, 1984), 101.

6. On this point see: Rosemarie Eichfeld, "Zu Problemen der Teilnahme der Frauen am gesellschaftlichen Produktionsprozess im Land Sachsen in den Jahren 1945 bis 1949," in *Studien zur Rolle der Frau im Arbeitsprozess im Sozialismus*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Produktivkräfte, vol. 14 (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Grundstoffindustrie, 1979).

7. Report of the GDR government to the Secretary General of the United Nations, "Frauen in der DDR. Bilanz der Erfüllung des Weltaktionsplanes für die Dekade der Frau—Zeitraum 1976–1985—'Gleichberechtigung, Entwicklung, Frieden,'" in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates*, no. 2 (1985): 22.

8. Ibid., 20.

9. Burkhardt Gericke, "Zu Stand, Problemen und Konsequenzen der beruflichen Orientierung der Mädchen," in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates*, no. 6 (1984): 7.

10. Wolfgang Herzberg, *So war es, Lebensgeschichten zwischen 1900 und 1980. Nach Tonbandprotokollen* (Halle, Leipzig: Mitteldeutscher Publishers, 1985), 174, 176.

11. Rolf Borrmann and Hans-Joachim Schille, *Vorbereitung der Jugend auf Liebe, Ehe und Familie* (Berlin: VEB Deutscher Publishers der Wissenschaften, 1980), 91ff.

12. This is also reflected in the fact that for boys earnings rank higher as a motive for choosing an occupation than for girls. See Ute Bruhm-Schlegel and Otmar Kabat vel Job, *Junge Frauen heute. Wie sie sind—was sie wollen* (Leipzig, Verlag für die Frau, 1981).

13. Joachim Schindler, Erläuterung "Zur produktivitäts- und persönlichkeitsfördernden Gestaltung der Arbeitsbedingungen berufstätiger Frauen und Mütter," in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates*, no. 1 (1985): 10.

14. Hans-Jürgen Gericke, 10.

15. Information on the study "Die berufliche Qualifizierung der werktätigen Frauen als beitrag zur weiteren Förderung der gesellschaftlichen Stellung der Frau im Prozess der Gestaltung der entwickelten sozialistischen Gesellschaft," in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates*, no. 5 (1983): 10.

16. Schindler, 11.

17. I consider the term "double burden" an unfortunate choice and use it here only because it has become entrenched and hence is generally understood. It connects with everyday experience insofar as it is still typical for women that their occupation is in

addition to their duties in the home and family. However, in my opinion the term conceals the fundamental importance of an occupation for the emancipation of women insofar as the latter is seen as an additional burden. (For more details on this point see Irene Dölling, *Individuum und Kultur* [Berlin: Dietz Publishers, 1986], 131ff.)

18. Erich Honecker, *Bericht an den VIII. Parteitag der SED* (Berlin: Dietz Publishers, 1971), 62.

19. Schindler, 17.

20. Bruhm-Schlegel, 85.

21. "Not only do boys get assigned a smaller number of regular chores in the family than do girls, but in general boys are given household chores less frequently, for a shorter period, and with less responsibility than girls." Otmar Kabat vel Job and Arnold Pinther, *Jugend und Familie. Familiäre Faktoren der Persönlichkeitsentwicklung Jugendlicher* (Berlin: VEB Deutscher Publishers der Wissenschaften, 1981), 65.

22. Bernhard Schneemann, "Soziologische Aspekte der Persönlichkeitsentwicklung von Frauen im Hinblick auf die volle Verwirklichung ihrer gleichberechtigten Stellung und auf ihre Teilnahme an der Arbeit im Mehrschichtsystem," in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates*, no. 6 (1977): 45–46.

23. Kabat vel Job, 72.

24. Anita Grandke, *Familienförderung als gesellschaftliche Aufgabe* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1986), 77.

25. See *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1983).

26. See Jutta Gysi, "Lebensgemeinschaften in der DDR," in *Informationen des wissenschaftlichen Rates*, no. 6 (1984): 64–72.

27. The number of divorces increased from 27,400 in 1970 to 50,300 in 1984, cf. *Report of the GDR Government to the Secretary General of the United Nations*, 52.

28. Eva Kaufmann, "Interview mit Irmtraud Morgner," *Weimarer Beiträge* 30, no. 9 (1984): 1501.

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