

of an Intra-German Monetary Union on February 6, 1990. The latter came one day after the Federal Chancellor, acting in his role as chairman of the CDU, had forged the electoral "Alliance for Germany" in the GDR, thereby paving the road to the CDU's electoral success in the East German election of March 18 and later in the all-German elections of December 2, 1990.

In his comment, Robert Gerald Livingston underscored Mertes's points about Kohl's activity as CDU chairman during the early months of 1990. Sometimes overlooked in historical accounts of German unification is the massive entry of the West German parties onto the GDR political stage, including the creation of the "Alliance for Germany" in early February, which was the key to the CDU's subsequent success not only in the March 1990 elections but in managing the unification process as a whole so successfully. For Kohl and his staff in the Chancellery did not bring Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the FDP's leader, Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister, into the deliberative process that resulted in the Ten Point program of November 28, 1989. In their dealings with the United States, the decisive supporter of unification among foreign countries, Kohl and his chancellery used their links to George Bush's White House to good advantage and did little to counter the distrust of Genscher and "Genscherism" that was rife in the American administration.

Livingston argued that the truly decisive period in accelerating the unification process was the first two to three weeks of January 1990. The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 was followed by a westward exodus of East Germans that imposed great housing and welfare burdens on municipalities in the Federal Republic. After a brief hiatus during Christmas, this outflow began again in early January. The cry of the East German crowds "If the DM doesn't come to us, we will go to it" carried an implied challenge that the Federal Republic had to face. Due to the pleadings of West German politicians at the municipal and state levels who feared the coming influx, the timetable implied in the Ten Points drafted by Mertes and his colleagues was greatly accelerated. In the end, the pace of unification escaped control.

Bernd Schäfer

INDIVIDUALITY AND EARLY MODERN AUTOBIOGRAPHY BEFORE 1750

GHI-sponsored panel at the Annual Conference of the German Studies Association, Washington DC, October 5–8, 2001. Moderator: Vera Lind (GHI). Commentator: Kaspar von Greyerz (Universität Basel). Panelists:

Thomas Max Safley (University of Pennsylvania), Tina Löffelbein (Universität Kiel), and Otto Ulbricht (Universität Kiel).

The rise of individuality in the second half of the eighteenth century is a well-known phenomenon. A new concept of individuality became the center of consciousness, perception, and reason. This transformation gave rise not only to a new culture of letter-writing, but also to autobiography as we know it. Many of the most famous autobiographies, ranging from Jung-Stilling to Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* belong to this period. As part of the anthropological turn, this development has led to a number of studies based on these autobiographies and other personal documents exploring gender relations, the division of work and, last but not least, individuality.

In contrast to these studies, this panel inquired about the status of individuality in autobiographies *before* the late Enlightenment. Few scholars working with autobiographies written before 1750 have dealt with this broad question. Instead they have investigated such subjects as marriage, attitudes to the body, the culture of groups, and social relationships. A number of studies have touched upon the subject, and although they have not denied traces of individuality they have often considered them negligible and not worthy of intensive study.

There seems to be good reason for this belief. Because society before 1750 was characterized by inequality, hierarchy, (enforced) religious uniformity and community orientation, one might tend to think that this left little room for expressions of the self, or that the repression of individuality was as all-encompassing as the repression that Clifford Geertz observed in Bali, where people were reduced to an impersonal set of roles. The important role of honor in early modern society, for example, suggests this. It is therefore not surprising that many scholars believe that early modern autobiographies reveal a universally depersonalized and public version of the self.

There are, however, a number of arguments that call such a view into doubt. It is well-known that interest in the individual increased during the Renaissance, as expressed, for example, in portraiture (and self-portraiture), or in admirable autobiographies like Montaigne's *Essais*. Self-consciousness likewise increased in Reformation Germany, where autobiographies appeared in rapidly growing numbers and are generally regarded as of higher value than those from the following century. Thus some studies concentrating on the sixteenth century have taken the problem of individuality more seriously and have devoted space to discussing the problem.

The question arises as to what is an adequate approach to the problem. It seems questionable that working with such crude dichotomies as

social personhood versus modern individuality, or in somewhat qualified terms, a depersonalized version of the self versus a unique, personal private self, is really helpful. This panel therefore investigated individuality in early modern autobiographies through a more subtle approach, namely, by assuming a certain degree of blending of the conceptions of persona and individual. This implies that one should look for degrees of individuality in the sources rather than full-blown individuality in the modern sense. Due regard to a possible difference where there should be no difference in autobiography, namely between the author, the narrating self, and the hero of the tale, is also helpful. When combined with appropriate attention to the distinction between public and private (some autobiographies were never intended for publication, others were published during the lifetime of their authors), this approach might lead to interesting insights into the question of an evolution of the self (not necessarily a linear one) or its sudden emergence at the end of the eighteenth century.

Thomas Safley presented a paper entitled "Individuality and Autobiography in Early Modern Germany: A Reflection on Merchant 'Ego-Documents.'" Analyzing the unpublished autobiographies of two merchants from late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth-century southwestern Germany, Safley scrutinized the connection between a specific social context, the emergence of autobiographical expression, and the emergence of individuality. These three elements have long been linked, and although the nature of the connection has been questioned, the connection itself has not. The two merchants, Caspar Koch of Memmingen and Matheus Miller of Augsburg, composed chronicles of their lives that differed substantially both in form and content. Though their writings can only be described as autobiographical, they share neither purpose nor intended audiences. Safley concluded that these differences suggest that each autobiographer wrote for individual purposes, but not out of a sense of individuality.

The second paper, "Master Johann Dietz: The Author as His Own Fictional Counterpart," presented by Tina Löffelbein, offered an in-depth analysis of the autobiography of a Baroque barber-surgeon. On first sight, this text appears to be constructed in contemporary stereotypes, in which the author is mainly part of the wider world and his individuality vanishes in the absence of introspection. But Tina Löffelbein showed how to detect the hints Johann Dietz is giving the reader as a proof of his singularity. On the level of content, for example, he repeatedly describes his emotions for the reader. Also, through a close look at Dietz's narrative strategies, Löffelbein revealed a very self-confident author, who turns religious terms (significants)—like the protection of God—into narrative

instruments in order to build up suspense for his story, in which he himself is the hero fighting his way over major obstacles.

In his presentation "The Body, Sixteenth-Century Autobiography, and Individuality," Otto Ulbricht traced individuality in autobiographies by looking at specific themes, in this case remarks about the body and its states during the process of aging. At least in theory, the ailments of the aging process can lead to the realization of the changeability of one's individual character, thus revealing a central characteristic of the modern understanding of individuality. However, it is well-known that sixteenth-century autobiographers tended to present themselves as unchanging figures from childhood to death. Ulbricht stressed that this point serves as a reminder of the many obstacles facing such an investigation. As the authors are not given to introspection and analysis of emotions, it seems important to start with a reduced understanding of individuality. Or to put it another way, lower levels of individuality (like self-consciousness and self-perception) and awareness of one's individual body are detectable in the implicit comments of the authors. Among numerous texts, Otto Ulbricht examined the autobiography of an old pastor who suffered from a kidney stone and was able to isolate traces of individuality in the expressions of pain. The pastor tried to build up familiarity with his illness, which he regarded as an unwelcome guest who dwelt within him and whom he would have to host for the rest of his life. But the pastor was also worried about how much he could complain in his writing. It seemed difficult for him as narrating self to find a balance. On the one hand, he insisted on writing about his pain, but on the other hand, he felt the need to justify why he wrote about it. This debate with himself indicates a deviation from given models—a degree of individuality.

After the commentator Kaspar von Greyerz pointed out the methodological difficulties of the connection between autobiography and individuality, including a critical evaluation of the literature (for example, Charles Taylor's book *Sources of the Self*) a lively discussion with the audience ensued, many of whom were experts on autobiographical writings from different disciplines.

Vera Lind
Otto Ulbricht

GERMANY IN THE COLD WAR SINCE THE 1960S

GHI-sponsored panel at the Annual Conference of the German Studies Association, Washington, DC, October 5–8, 2001. Moderator: David C. Geyer, (Department of State, Historian's Office). Commentator: Raimund