

# International Club, Wolf Biermann, and the Limits of East German Literary Politics.







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Andrea Orzoff

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## Abstract

The poet and singer-songwriter Wolf Biermann was a member of the East German chapter of PEN International, a UNESCO-affiliated global literary association. Unlike other East German literary organizations, DDR PEN members and leaders tried at least occasionally to protect Biermann even after he was expelled from East Germany in 1976. This article assesses DDR PEN's reactions to Biermann given its multiple functions as a representative of East German and Soviet bloc cultural diplomacy, an East German literary association hoping to protect some autonomous activity and free discussion, and an actor in a complex trans systemic (cross-Curtain) international environment.

**Keywords:** [Wolf Biermann](#), [PEN](#), [literature](#), [East Germany](#), [Heinrich Böll](#)

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