BOOK REVIEWS

Figurationen des ‚ganzen Menschen' in der erzählenden Literatur der Moderne. Jean Paul – Theodor Storm – Elias Canetti
by Thomas Bilda,

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Thomas Bildas Arbeit untersucht das Phänomen des Doppelgängers in seiner Verschiebung und literarischen Adaption als ästhetische Figuration. Nicht die motivischen Implikationen stehen im Zentrum der Untersuchung, sondern die Doppelgängerfiguration in ihrer strukturellen Spezifik von Spaltung und Verdopplung und die damit einhergehende Ausrichtung am Topos des ‚ganzen Menschen'. Ausgehend von Wolfgang Isers theoretischem Manöver einer Verknüpfung von Literatur und Anthropologie und dem Verständnis von Literatur als Wissensformation, die Wissen nicht (nur) abbildet, sondern zu allererst produziert, versucht Bilda, den „Beitrag der Literatur zum Wissen über den Menschen" (15) zu rekonstruieren und stellt seine Arbeit somit in den Kontext aktueller wissenspoetologisch ausgerichteter Forschungsansätze. Mit seiner Akzentuierung gerade nicht der motivgeschichtlichen, sondern der anthropologischen und vor allem poetologischen Dimensionen des Doppelgängers reagiert Bilda außerdem auf einen bisher wenig fokussierten Bereich der aktuellen Doppelgängerforschung. Unter Rückgriff auf Wolfgang Isers Konzept der literarischen Anthropologie und dem strukturellen Kurzschluss mit der ästhetischen Figur des Doppelgängers entwickelt Bilda seine Beobachtung von einer wesentlich doppelgängerischen Literatur, die er zu der These von der Doppelgängerfiguration als „modernes Paradigma der Fiktionalität" (15) zuspitzt. Anhand von Erzähltexten aus drei historischen Konstellationen demonstriert Bilda die Doppelgängerfiguration als flexible und taugliche Formation anthropologischer Wissensgenerierung.

Bildas umfangreiche und gleichermaßen griffige Studie gliedert sich in drei ausführliche Autorenkapitel etwa gleichen Umfangs, denen ein systematisches erstes Kapitel vorangestellt ist, das nach einer kurzen Darstellung der Motivgeschichte des Doppelgängers vor allem dessen zweistellige Figuration an der Grenze von Literatur und Anthropologie in einem Forschungsbericht problematisiert. Zu großen Teilen überzeugend stellt Bilda in diesem mittleren Teil des ersten Kapitels die janusköpfige Konstellation der Doppelgängerfiguration heraus, die – sich immer an der Folie des ‚ganzen Menschen' orientierend – zwar von den Darstellungsmöglichkeiten der Literatur abhängig ist, umgekehrt aber ein anthropologisches Wissen produziert, das in „den Raum empirischer Leserwirklichkeit" (29) zurückgedrängt wird. Im theoretisch-methodologisch ausgerichteten dritten Teil des ersten Kapitels entfaltet Bilda über die Auseinandersetzung mit Isers triadischem Literaturmodell und dessen Weiterentwicklung – die sich über Bildas Beobachtung einer Strukturäquivalenz zwischen Isers Verständnis von Literatur und der Figur des Doppelgängers ergibt – seine attraktive These vom doppelgängerischen Wesen der Literatur. Die literarischen Untersuchungen der Doppelgängerfiguration vor der Folie des ‚ganzen Menschen' eröffnet Bilda in einem dritten Kapitel mit überzeugenden Einzelanalysen zu Texten Jean Pauls. In einem stringenten Aufbau führt Bilda zuerst die für Jean Pauls anthropologische Figuration des Doppelgängers charakteristische Problematik des Leib-Seele-Dualismus anhand von Textauszügen aus dem *Hesperus* sowie an dem Roman *Die Unsichtbare Loge* ein, um dann die Möglichkeiten einer Überwindung anhand des *Siebenkäs* und der Erzählung *Die Doppeltgänger* auszuloten. Im Zentrum der ausführlichen Analysen steht die Dimension des Sich-Selber-Sehens, die Bilda als wesentliches Strukturmerkmal der Doppelgängerfiguration vor allem anhand von Jean Pauls literaturtheoretischem Text *Über die natürliche Magie der Einbildungskraft* herausarbeitet. Besonders erhellend ist die Betonung des Wahrnehmungsaspektes, der bei der Inszenierung der Doppelgängerfiguration als eine Form des (den eigenen) Leib-Sehens eine zentrale Rolle spielt. Gerade diese Qualität des Sich-Selber-Sehens,

so argumentiert Bilda einleuchtend, mündet in das Feld grundlegender subjektphilosophischer Fragestellungen. Anhand einer gelungenen Analyse des *Titan*-Romans kann Bilda zeigen, inwiefern Jean Paul die Möglichkeiten einer verbürgenden Selbstreflexion und mithin die Idee eines stabilen Subjekts problematisiert. Auffällig ist der durchgehende, wenngleich selten in profunde Analysen überführte, Verweis auf die poetologischen Konstruktionen der ausgewählten Texte, etwa, wenn die Figur des Sich-mit-geschlossenen-Augen-vor-dem-Spiegel-Sehens aus Jean Pauls Aufsatz *Blicke in die Traumwelt* als selbstreflexiven Praxis der janusköpfig strukturierten *Doppelgänger*-Erzählung ausgewiesen wird.

In einem vierten Kapitel befragt Bilda die strukturellen wie inhaltlichen Anwendungsmöglichkeiten des Doppelgängermotivs im Zeichen eines realistischen Schreibens Theodor Storms. In den zum Teil recht kurzen Einzelanalysen wichtiger und zunehmend wichtig werdender Storm-Novellen wie *Pole Poppenspäler*, *Ein stiller Musikant*, *Im Sonnenschein*, *Im Saal*, *Im Schloß* und *Ein Doppelgänger* geht Bilda dem doppelten Verdacht nach, dass die Doppelgängerfiguration bei Storm erstens als Adaption eines genuin romantischen Importprodukts angelegt ist und dass sie, zweitens, in ihrer Transformation wesentlich an der Emanzipation der realistischen Literatur beteiligt ist. In einer Verknüpfung von teilweise sehr genauen Textbeobachtungen mit poetologischen Reflexionen kann Bilda zeigen, inwiefern Storm das für die Doppelgängerfiguration wesentliche Strukturmerkmal der Spaltung und Verdopplung als selbstreflexives Gestaltungselement eines erinnernden Erzählens fruchtbar macht und die Frage nach dem ‚ganzen Menschen' zu einem sich in seinem Konstruktionscharakter selbst befragenden Erinnerungstext verschiebt.

Eine weitere Verschiebung erfährt die Doppelgängerfiguration im fünften und letzten Kapitel, das sich auf die Figuration der Verwandlung und deren ethischen Implikationen in der Literatur Elias Canettis konzentriert. In diesem Kapitel wird besonders deutlich, wie komplex die ästhetischen Dimensionen der Doppelgängerfiguration sind, wie Bilda sie vor allem anhand der *Blendung* entwickelt. In einer gelungenen Rückbindung an die beiden vorhergehenden Kapitel kann er zeigen, dass sich die Doppelgängerfiguration weder in Form tatsächlich gedoppelter Charaktere (Jean Paul) noch in der Form inszenierter Doppelwirklichkeiten ereignen muss (Theodor Storm), sondern eben auch und gerade in der mannigfaltigen Ausgestaltung des Verwandlungsprinzips. Konzentriert sich Bilda in einem ersten Schritt noch auf die tatsächliche körperlich-geistige Gespaltenheit der Charaktere in der *Blendung*, um auch hier die Möglichkeiten einer Überwindung „im Raum des Imaginären" (209) auszuloten, untersucht er in einem poetologisch ausgerichteten zweiten Schritt die konstitutive Bedeutung der Doppelgängerfiguration für die Bewegung der Verwandlung. Bilda beschließt das letzte Kapitel mit den ethischen Implikationen seiner Canetti-Lektüre, indem er die Analyse der sich wechselseitig beeinflussenden Prinzipien der Verwandlung und des Doppelgängers konsequent an die Fragwürdigkeit einer menschlichen ‚Ganzheit' im 20. Jahrhundert rückbindet und ihnen mit der Fähigkeit zur Verwandlung/Verdopplung des Menschen das ethische Ideal eines in diesem neuen Sinne ‚ganzen Menschen' zur Seite stellt.

Mit ihrer, wenngleich nicht immer konsequenten, Konzentration auf die poetologischen Dimensionen der Doppelgängerfiguration und der Verschränkung mit anthropologischen, psychologischen und ethischen Fragestellungen bietet Bildas Arbeit eine aufschlussreiche und weitestgehend überzeugende Untersuchung des literarischen Doppelgängers. Vor allem das argumentative Manöver, das aus Isers anthropologischem Index eine strukturelle Äquivalenz zwischen Fiktion/Literatur und der Doppelgängerfiguration entwickelt, leuchtet ein. Bemerkenswert ist die Aufmerksamkeit für scheinbar geringfügige Beobachtungen, die sich als poetologisch weitreichend entpuppen, so etwa die signifikante Differenz, die das t im Doppel(t)gänger markiert und die Konstellation gedoppelter Hochzeitsgang/gedoppelte Figur im *Siebenkäs* mit der Ganzheitvorstellung des Menschen verbindet.

Trotz des grundsätzlich überzeugenden theoretischen Aufbaus der Arbeit bleiben gerade in Hinblick auf die theoretisch-methodologische Durchführung zwei Aspekte kritisch anzumerken. Mehrfach betont Bilda die

theoretische Notwendigkeit einer Destruktion von Oppositionsverhältnissen als wesentliche Grundlage für seine These der Doppelgängerfiguration als Formation der Wissensgenerierung, so etwa, wenn er im ersten Kapitel seine Prämisse formuliert, wonach sich „die Fiktion in keinem Oppositionsverhältnis zur Lebenswirklichkeit mehr verorten“ (48) lässt. Merkwürdigerweise baut seine Argumentation aber gleichzeitig auf eben solchen Oppositionen auf, wenn er zum Beispiel für alle Einzelanalysen die Doppelgängerfiguration einzig „auf dem Feld der Literatur“ (46) realisiert sieht. Der Literatur kommt die Aufgabe zu, einzulösen, was in der „außertextuellen Wirklichkeit“ (47) nicht möglich ist. So kann die anthropologische Figuration in Jean Pauls fiktionalen Texten nur entschlüsselt werden, weil „der Mensch imstande ist, die Leistung […] einer Übertragung außerhalb der Literatur zu leisten“ (96), das Erzählen Storms realisiert, was dem „lebenswirklichen Zugriff des Menschen entzogen bleiben muss“ (161) und die Bedeutung der Doppelgängerfiguration für die ethische Poetik Canettis kann nur deutlich werden, wenn die Spezifik der Figurenproduktion als „Vermittlungsinstanz zwischen Fiktion und Wirklichkeit“ (183) beleuchtet wird. Dieser methodologischen Unklarheit wäre durch eine stärkere Einbettung von – und dies ist der zweite Kritikpunkt – vernachlässigten Studien vor allem dekonstruktiver Provenienz beizukommen gewesen, weil dies zu einer verschärften Befragung von Gegensätzen geführt hätte. Diese Vernachlässigung weiter Teile der Forschung überrascht insofern, als sie wichtige und zum Teil der vorliegenden Studie widersprechende Beiträge etwa zur Doppelgänger- oder Stormforschung als auch zu den für diese Arbeit grundlegenden aber nicht erläuterten Strukturen der Verdopplung und Spaltung (u.a. Joseph Vogl, Daniel Müller Nielaba, Christiane Arndt) bietet. Wenn es Bilda um die Verfolgung der Doppeltgängerfiguration als modernes Paradigma der „sich in der Selbstreflexion“ (15) überschreitenden Fiktionalität geht, was vor allem in den äußerst erhellenden Momenten der scheinbar geringfügigen Beobachtungen anklingt, wäre eine Auseinandersetzung sowohl mit theoretischen als auch mit Forschungsbeiträgen produktiver gewesen, die sich gerade der Dekonstruktion von Grenzen respektive Oppositionen widmen.

Bilda, Thomas. *Figurationen des ‚ganzen Menschen‘ in der erzählenden Literatur der Moderne. Jean Paul - Theodor Storm - Elias Canetti*. Würzburg: Königshausen u. Neumann, 2014.

Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm by Thomas Brussig,

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Present time Germany: the Berlin Wall never fell and the country is still divided. Right in the middle, an author named Thomas Brussig tries to cope with life in the GDR. Brussig’s latest work, *Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm* is his autobiography and at the same time an imagined life within a counterfactual German history, an invention of Thomas Brussig as a narrated figure and the pursuit of answers to the question “What if.” This novel describes the imagination of how life in Germany would look if history had taken other turns and Realsozialismus still existed.

The story covers the time period from 1964 (Thomas Brussig’s actual birth year) to 2014 from the viewpoint of an author in the GDR called Thomas Brussig. How many factual autobiographic elements are woven into the story is unclear, as Brussig flirts with historical facts and a motley chain of counterfactual events, holding the reader in suspense.

Ever since the German unification period in 1989/1990, the literary world produced many “Wenderomane” in terms of (family) stories that depicted life before and after “the wall fell,” trying to process the various facets of a unification of two countries. Many authors were said to have written the ultimate

"Wenderoman" (i.e., Thomas Brussig, Ingo Schulze, Uwe Tellkamp), but always lost the title when a new novel of the genre was published. The latest author holding that title is Lutz Seiler with his award-winning novel *Kruso.*

The topics of post-GDR-literature (literature that is written by authors born and raised in the GDR and depicting life in the GDR until the German unification) cover "Ent-Schuldigungen," ex-culpations, of past wrongdoings, condemnatory accusations, claimed-accurate historical post-documentation, personal memoires, collective memories and reminiscences, "(n)ostalgische" retrospections by means of humor, satire and plain, dry descriptions.

Especially Thomas Brussig, who gained worldwide acknowledgement in 1995 with his internationally acclaimed novel *Heroes Like Us* is one of the leading authors of post-GDR-literature, using humor as stylistic element for literary reappraisal of German-German history. More than anybody else, he shaped the representation of the GDR in literature and also made significant contributions to post-GDR-films (*Helden wie wir*, *Sonnenallee*, *NVA*), theatre (*Leben bis Männer*) and the musical landscape (*Hinterm Horizont*) for which he earned several distinctions. In 2001, he dealt with the East German Border Guard Law Suits in his monologue *Leben bis Männer*. In 2004 his magnum opus, *Wie es leuchtet*, was published, a 600-page novel of convoluted life stories on many social levels, where satire is used to depict the trials and tribulations throughout the unification period of Germany.

Brussig's newest novel deals with the GDR, again. It is a conception of a society where Reunification never took place. How would his life have continued, if socialism in East Germany never had ended? What would the political landscape look like? The question above all is: What happened after 1990? And how would the world look like through the eyes of a fictional character named Thomas Brussig?

Brussig plays with his own past life and designs a GDR economy that is based on "electrocracy" through wind energy. The GDR army is functioning as workforces for building wind turbines. Capitalism has reached the GDR that is navigated and monitored by the SED. Prominent figures like Richard David Precht, Jan-Josef Liefers, Daniela Dahn, Alexander Osang, Wolfgang Thierse, Abini Zöllner, Udo Lindenberg, Heiner Müller, Edgar Reitz, Petra Pau, Matthias Matussek, Oskar Lafontaine, and Sahra Wagenknecht appear but are attributed other biographies as in real life. Uwe Tellkamp even wins the Nobel Prize for literature at some point. These parts seemed to be the weakest points of the story, as they showed an overly artificial use of names.

The latest publication by Brussig uses once again the stylistic device of humor entirely "in brussigscher Manier". Delicately, he takes a humorous aim at himself: the fictional author Thomas Brussig in the novel thinks about writing a counterfactual story of Adolf Hitler, how the world would look like if Hitler would have been accepted to art school.

The work is distinguished entirely from his other works, nevertheless: On the one hand, he describes his life in the GDR, on the other, he imagines what would have happened to the author Thomas Brussig if the Wall, which would still divide Berlin and Germany consisted of a west and an east side, turning Thomas Brussig suddenly into a literary figure, rather than staying with autobiographical elements.

Brussig had already used counterfactual elements two decades ago in "Heroes like us", when he attributed the fall of the Berlin wall to the penis of his protagonist Klaus Uhltzscht. Nevertheless, with this work, Brussig did not claim to do a one-on-one interpretation of historical events, as Uhltztscht was an unreliable narrator asking for credibility. (And was it not David Hasselhoff who also claimed his "Looking for freedom"-song had attributed to the fall of the Berlin wall?) Even in *Am kürzeren Ende der Sonnenallee* (1999), the novel to the acclaimed movie *Sonnenallee*, Thomas Brussig uses counterfactual elements only to show an affectionate

memory of everyday life in GDR-Berlin as a teenager.

The laconic writing style of Brussig has become more elaborate throughout the past years, and the voice of Thomas Brussig, the protagonist of the novel is precisely playing with words and jokes and the seemingly blithe attitude once again forces the attentive reader to critically examine the statements made about the fictitious GDR of today to reconsider the German-German past.

When Daniel Kehlmann was recently interviewed by the German paper *Freitag* about his latest publication of poetic lectures at the Goethe-University of Frankfurt, Germany, he was asked if literature was still capable of overcoming the latest historical events. In his positive answer he cited Thomas Brussig's latest work as "wonderful novel" doing exactly such a job.[1]

The title "Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm" is an idiom from the GDR, which can be literally translated into "You cannot find it in a Russian movie," meaning something was such nonsense that you could not even find it depicted in a Russian film, which were said to be "crazy." Near the end of the novel, the figure Brussig writes about Simon Urban, a young author from Western Germany, who just wrote a novel called *Plan D*, in which he tells the story of a unified Germany, where people demonstrated for unification on the streets of Germany until it was achieved, without deadly sacrifices or victims. GDR-author Brussig wishes for such a reality, which seems to be out of reach. Urban uses also an avant-garde orthography, and Brussig calls the novel an "elaboration of a school dropout." It is ingenious by Thomas Brussig to use Simon Urban's *Plan D*, actually a counterfactual thriller from 2011 about a Germany that was also not unified, to show the desires of the fictional Brussig for a unified country. Reality is just a mere fiction in *Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm*.

Thomas Brussig has written a new roman à clef that enables reflections upon the German-German past once again with a blink of humor. Scholars may still argue about the greatest "Wenderoman," and we have to observe which work will remain in the literary canon in the end. With *Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm*, however, Brussig contributes to a new terrain of a still very fresh sub-genre of post-GDR-literature and adds autobiographical features to it, writing the perfect "Nicht-Wenderoman."

[1]Editor's note: Ulmer, Konstantin. "Das ist so ein Klischee." *Freitag, der Freitag* Mediengesellschaft mbh & Co. KG, 25 March 2015. 29 October 2015. Web.

Brussig, Thomas. *Das gibts in keinem Russenfilm*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2015.

Captain Berlin #1–3
by Jörg Buttgereit, et al.,

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Director Jörg Buttgereit's career spans several decades and genres, and his collaboration with *Weissblech Comics* adds another medium to his already diverse oeuvre--the comic book. With the initial taste presented to readers in a 10-page "issue zero" comic included with the DVD-release of *Captain Berlin Versus Hitler* (2009), Captain Berlin, Germany's self-proclaimed first superhero, sprang out of his filmic origins and away from the radio-dramas and the stage play that had been his arena. After originating in a 1982 short film, this character heavily influenced by genre classics and conventions of American comic powerhouses has finally arrived in the medium to which he owes much of his identity: the periodical comic book. Although the Captain has successfully spanned these other, perhaps more conventional genres, his debut on paper might be his most

effective appearance to date. With four successful issues already in print as of July 8, 2015, interest in the Captain's adventures has been strong from readers and critics alike.[1]

Captain Berlin, created by a cohort of scientists working underground in Berlin during the height of the Third Reich, has a clear mission in front of him: defeat the evil schemes of Adolf Hitler and bring the dictator to justice with the assistance of his initially rather uncertain uncanny abilities and his unstoppable "Ultrarevolver" (poignantly bearing many visual similarities to the Luger popular with his foes). Although his plan to bring his arch-enemy to trial are foiled at the last minute by the unfortunate timing of the explosion of a certain briefcase intended to end the regime through more violent means, Captain Berlin does not abandon his pursuit. Instead, he goes into hiding, waiting for decades until he spies another opportunity to act. Included in *Weissblech's* full-length first issue, this story offers new readers a prologue which introduces Captain Berlin's all-encompassing need to protect the German people and the powerful forces which would impede this humanitarian mission.

This zero-issue sets the tone for the subsequent tales in style, introducing its audience to its creator's fascination with what has long been considered B-culture: Asian monster movies, American superhero comics, and all manners of odd and often misunderstood but iconic pop-culture subgenres. Far from consigning the work to mediocrity, this return to and adaptation of the familiar serves to place the work solidly within familiar, beloved pantheons while offering something fresh: a superhero of German origin who, through his battles with a menagerie of foes both domestic and imported, establishes himself as both alternative and parallel to American comic book origin stories, many of which examine the Second World War from a decidedly different perspective. Whether pitted against the results of classically "Frankensteinian" mad science, a massive city-destroying mutation out of the celluloid of a Japanese *Kaiju* film, or against Hitler and his human minions, the Captain takes his mission seriously: he must protect the lives of the citizens of his home country, keeping their safety and liberty intact against unbelievable odds. Following in the footsteps of prior works, these comics integrate numerous visual and storytelling elements which will be pleasantly familiar to the informed reader and potentially intriguing to the uninitiated. Over the course of the four issues currently in publication, a two-story format has allowed multiple artists the opportunity to give the Captain their own unique treatment, but the introductory story drawn by Robert F. Engel serves as a gorgeous full color homage to his predecessors in the genre: the bold lines and mighty feats of the "Golden Age" superheroes. Even casual readers will recognize something of *Marvel's* Captain America in these pages: sound effects, art style, coloring, lettering, posing, composition, plot... Everything within this first story takes a tongue-in-cheek, loving look back at those formative years in comic book history while still establishing the Captain as a unique figure within the genre.

It is undeniable that the comics celebrate a gleefully self-aware pulp, reveling in comic book genre conventions and the traditions of other perhaps often marginalized genres such as the imported *Kaiju* films with which many comic fans (Buttgereit included) grew up. However, dismissing them as nothing more than these stylistic trappings would do a disservice both to the creative team behind the work and to potential readers. By using their insightful understanding of their medium and its history to best advantage, *Captain Berlin*'s creators offer their audience an astute look at the role and power of comics, pulp, and the often-derided superhero genre and its place in our cultural memory. Captain Berlin is, of course, "Retter der Welt, Superheld" and a vehicle for a celebration of beloved popular culture, but within the bright colors and flashy sound effects a poignant examination of genre, memory, and the process of overcoming adversity can be found.

[1] See, for example, Christian Neubert's 2014 review in *Der Tagesspiegel* and *Deadline* issue 50.

[Buttgereit, Jörg and Martin Trafford (w), and Trafford, Martin(p).] Captain Berlin #1 (October 2013), Weissblech Comics [Verlag Levin Kurio].
[Buttgereit, Jörg and Martin Trafford (w), and Trafford, Martin and Fufu Frauenwald (p).] Captain Berlin #2

(October 2014), Weissblech Comics [Verlag Levin Kurio].
[Kurio, Levin and Martin Trafford (w), and Trafford, Martin and The Lep (p).] Captain Berlin #3 (January 2015), Weissblech Comics [Verlag Levin Kurio].

Im Osten geht die Sonne auf? Tendenzen neuerer ostdeutscher Literatur **edited by Viviana Chilese and Matteo Galli,**

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Appearing more than twenty-five years after the fall of the Wall and the unification of Germany, *Im Osten geht die Sonne auf?* joins the ongoing discourse surrounding the existence of post-GDR literature. Specifically, it poses the question: what implicit or explicit distinctions, if any, still exist between works of East and West German authors more than a quarter century after the dissolution of the GDR, and what value remains in maintaining and discussing these differences? Following an introduction by editors Viviana Chilese and Matteo Galli, in which they lay out the recent trends and discussions regarding GDR- and post-GDR literature, this volume assembles eighteen essays under three headings: "Tradition und Gattung," "Kanonisierung," and "Themen und Tendenzen." This collection stands out through its response to recent tendencies in scholarship on the topic of contemporary literature to place the existence of a distinctive GDR literature in doubt and to largely avoid any discussion of characteristics or tendencies specific to writings of East German origin. Chilese and Galli present here a collection of essays that contend directly with the issues, themes, and trends that mark these literatures as unique and worthy of continued study and dialogue.

In the book's introduction by Chilese and Galli, the editors attempt to situate the volume within the context of East German studies and they address the somewhat contradictory tendencies in recent scholarship to vacillate between what seems to be an overemphasis of East German literature and its supposed superiority over its western counterpart, and a blanket declaration of a single, "gesamtdeutsche" literature that ignores these distinctions entirely. The introduction sets out to grapple with the question of how the works of East and West German authors differ and whether the classification of "post-GDR literature" can be justified as a useful or relevant term. In the introduction, the editors emphasize four major points that they believe set this volume apart from existing literature on the topic of East German writing. First of all, Chilese and Galli claim that this collection is the first that deals almost exclusively with authors whose oeuvre has been established only in the years following the fall of the Wall. They also maintain that the essays in the volume attempt to engage with the continuities and discontinuities between the authors of GDR- and post-GDR literatures and between the genres themselves. As a third point, the volume endeavors also to fill in the blanks in many contemporary anthologies of literary history and establish a so-called "mini-canon" of post-GDR literature as well as a set of criteria by which works and authors might be accepted into this canon. Lastly, the editors also offer a working definition for the category of post-GDR literature as a geographical, political, temporal, and thematic term that simultaneously emphasizes the scope of East German writing and also clarifies which authors and works might be indicated when discussing the genre.

As mentioned by Chilese and Galli, the essays in this volume examine East German literature as its own entity and the authors engage with the question of what makes these works unique. Following the editors' introduction, the book is split into three sections. In the first section, "Tradition und Gattungen," the authors attempt to situate the term "ostdeutsch" within the context of German literature, both before and after the fall of the Wall, and they look at the traditions and trajectories that shape literature after 1989. Wolfgang Emmerich discusses a gap in East German writing concerning the Holocaust and examines this absence both before and after 1989. In conclusion he argues convincingly for the existence of two separate literatures unique to the East

and West and informed by two very different types of collective cultural memory. Peter Paul Schwarz also looks at memory in his essay as he examines the complexity and the ongoing discursive formulation of the term "Ostdeutsche". Continuities and discontinuities between GDR- and post-GDR literatures are explored in the essays by Janine Ludwig, who expertly discusses the perceived marginalization of East German drama, Dirk Rose, who writes about the traditions of nature poetry, and by Andrea Jäger, who examines contemporary discourses surrounding the *Nachleben* of the GDR.

The second section of the book centers on an attempt to establish a kind of "mini-canon" for post-GDR literature which, as the editors point out, can be expanded to include other authors and works besides the ones mentioned. Thankfully, they also caution that there is a need to exercise care when declaring and naming a canon. The essays in this section focus on three main authors: Reinhard Jirgl, Ingo Schulze, and Lutz Seiler. Heribert Tommek, for example, discusses Jirgl's work in the context of Modernism, Post-Modernism and what he terms East-Modernism and looks at the ways in which the author can be seen as "avant-garde," but also how he fits in with the general tendencies of the post-GDR literary field. Schulze's work is explored in essays by Gerhard Friedrich and Cesare Giacobazzi. The latter looks at the continuation of the German literary tradition of the *Briefroman* and examines the differences between Schulze's picaresque novel *Neue Leben* and its epistolary predecessors. The relationship to the past in Seiler's work is the main topic in two essays, in Anna Chiarloni's discussion of memory in Seiler's poetry and in Michael Opitz' examination of an "audible past" in the author's texts.

The essays in the volume's final section concentrate on the themes and tendencies that have arisen in the last twenty-five years in East German literature. Francesco Aversa's chapter discusses the Atlantis mythologem in recent works, which appears directly in texts by Volker Braun, Uwe Kolbe and Ron Winkler, and indirectly in works such as Seiler's poetry collection *pech & blende* (2000) and in Kerstin Hensel's *Gipshut* (1999). In Tomas Sommadossi's essay, the author discusses the image of the GDR in fictional debuts from the East after the turn of the millennium and discovers a certain "disengaged engagement" in young authors such as Clemens Meyer and Antje Rávic Strubel that displaces politics in favor of more aesthetic and thematic freedom. Another theme mentioned widely throughout the volume is the portrayal of generations in East German writing, and Susanne Bach examines these in recent literature, focusing on Meyers' *Als wir träumten.* In Sibylle Goepper's essay, the analysis emphasizes the authors themselves and she discusses the position of those East German authors who were born and whose careers began before 1989. These "Hineingeborene," as she calls them, are caught in a vacuum between two epochs and two systems and, unlike writers such as Volker Braun who were born before the formation of the GDR and those, like Thomas Brussig, whose debuts occurred after 1989, these authors found themselves in an extremely unstable position after the fall of the Wall.

Through eighteen essays and a concise, but illuminating introduction, *Im Osten geht die Sonne auf*? deftly approaches the topic of East German writing after 1989 and demonstrates the continued need for the term post-GDR literature. In the face of cultural and historical trends that use the image of the former East German state as a projection screen for western civilization's lost values or that ignore the unique traits of the region's literary contributions entirely, the need to objectively examine these authors and their works is evident. In a critical engagement with a certain exoticized fascination with the East, this volume successfully reaches a subtler and more nuanced understanding of the literature and literary trajectories in the region after the fall of the Wall. Chilese's and Galli's collection is recommended to anyone interested in the authors, works, and trends that, even well into the 21st century, remain inextricably linked to the former German Democratic Republic and its legacy.

Chilese, Viviana, and Matteo Galli, eds. *Im Osten geht die Sonne auf? Tendenzen neuerer ostdeutscher Literatur*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2015.

Walizka
by Daniela Chmelik,

Devon Donohue-Bergeler
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Liza is a fluid character that defies categorization. Traditional identity markers like nationality and sexuality evade her. This fluidity allows her to function in multiple worlds, yet it also manifests through actions that indicate possible mental illness. She inflicts pain on herself and those around her, yet with the same lack of intentionality as a squirrel running to its fate as road kill. Through a stream-of-consciousness style first- person narration that is both banal and poetic, Chmelik portrays a troubled young woman's wanderings through Hamburg and Eastern Europe. Instead of a linear plot typical of the novel genre, the reader experiences dream-like accounts of parties and their aftermath ("Ich muss erst mal kotzen. Ich gehe aufs Klo und überlege und übergebe mich. Im Hinterhof zerbricht Geschirr." p. 7), broken relationships, and a road trip through cities on bodies of water, some with recent memories of conflict.

Liza's split identity seems to be hereditary. Her paternal grandmother, now suffering from dementia and in a nursing home, often talks of the forced relocation from East Prussia after the war. Oma plays the destructive Black Swan in the nursing home's rendition of Swan Lake, organized by Swantje, one of Liza's many ambivalent love interests. Liza spent much time with Oma and Opa as a child, both in their city garden and on the ocean. They spoke both German and Polish, which inspired the novel's title—meaning "suitcase" in Polish—and paved the way for Liza's year in Krakow and yet another unsuccessful relationship. As Oma dies towards the end of the novel, Liza remembers her maternal grandmother. Oma Rahel was a Crimean Jew who met her German husband at a Palestinian refugee camp and moved with him to Hamburg. When Frederick died, Rahel moved on towards New York. Like both of her grandmothers, Liza also seems to flee constantly, to be at home everywhere and nowhere.

While comparisons to Charlotte Roche's troubled anti-heroine in *Feuchtgebiete* may come to mind, this historical complexity, as well as the sensory description of travel locations, places *Walizka* thematically in the literary tradition of Max Frisch's *Homo Faber*. Yet, while Walter Faber sticks to emotionless, scientific prose, Liza's narration reads more like a Berlin Lesebühne or poetry slam, especially through repetition and variation in the final chapter, where life is both destroyed and affirmed. Chmelik's debut novel is likewise destructive and life-affirming in its depiction of a complex young woman's struggle through life.

Chmelik, Daniela. *Walizka*. Hamburg: asphalt & anders Verlag, 2012.

Afterlives: Allegories of Film and Mortality in Early Weimar Germany
by Steve Choe

Colton J. Ochsner
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The second volume in the Bloomsbury *Thinking Cinema* series, Steve Choe's *Afterlives* offers a meditation on how notions of life and death during the immediate aftermath of the Great War informed German filmmakers' and philosophers' reflections on survival and ephemerality. Thorough yet accessible, this book should interest scholars in film studies, history, and philosophy. Delving into the otherwise unrelated careers and private lives of filmmakers and philosophers, its author insightfully highlights the affinities between both

groups' modes of thinking in order to investigate the ontology of cinema. However, though innovative, this interdisciplinary approach inadvertently gives rise to shortcomings. The author's teleology, reiterating Kracauer's telos that Weimar cinema anticipated the allegedly inevitable ascent of totalitarianism in Germany, at times undermines the historical context he endorses.

Context is central to Choe's ontology of cinema. He insists, quite rightly, that 1919-24 formed the darkest era for the Weimar Republic, when it was plagued by the trauma of total war, extremist revolutions, military occupation, hyperinflation, and, above all, a ubiquitous experience of death. In film and philosophy, such unsettling experiences exacerbated the epistemological upheavals of modernity for a generation surviving total war. This postwar period was a watershed moment when the moving photographic image articulated ontological questions prevalent not only among filmmakers and philosophers but within Weimar society in general. This idea of the correspondence between filmmakers and philosophers shapes the book. Rather than transposing philosophical ideas onto readings of Weimar films, Choe cogently demonstrates in a series of case studies how the advent of consumerist cinema, not merely an affordable pastime, instructed its audiences on the "ethical and political dimensions of living and dying within our mass-mediated context" (16). Aware that a history, like a film, is an edited series of intersecting moments, not a monochrome narrative, Choe aims, with varying degrees of success, to navigate his study between analysis and intuition.

The book discusses seven films, largely neglected by academics, which all enjoyed extensive attention upon their theatrical premiers. Redolent of Germany's years of instability, their narratives, each containing fantastic elements, offered their original viewers allegorical portrayals of coping with loss and defeat. Choe divides his work loosely into two sections. The first three chapters, perhaps the most effective in contextual analysis, draw from a diverse treasury of primary sources and research which, hearkening to questions of being, explore the essence of "life" in film. Exploring the psycho-philosophical writings of Sigmund Freud, Karl Abraham, Walter Benjamin, and others, the first and second chapters relate Robert Reinert's *Nerven* (1919) as well as F.W. Murnau's *Schloß Vogelöd* (1921) and *Phantom* (1922) to postwar masculinities and experiences of departure, absence and melancholy, respectively. The third chapter links Martin Heidegger and Rainer Maria Rilke's ruminations on the illusions of temporality with themes of love, life, and death in the three *mise en abyme* of Fritz Lang's *Der müde Tod* (1923). In addition to their privy investigation of the directors and intellectuals in question, these chapters advance ontological assessments on the viewer's awareness of duration and transience.

The remaining two chapters shift focus to the ethics and problematics of film spectatorship. Chapter four analyzes select scenes in Paul Wegener's *Der Golem: Wie er in der Welt kam* (1920), highlighting the plot's racial-religious antagonisms in relation to Freud's death instinct and Martin Buber's I-Thou relation in order to understand the cinema itself as a "technological other." Compared to previous chapters, chapter four's content marginalizes Wegener's ideas on the technics of cinema. Given this filmmaker's additional roles in *Golem* as co-writer and lead actor, one wonders how a closer consideration of Wegener, or even co-director Carl Boese, could have aided Choe's ontological emphasis. Chapter five expands into an investigation of Buber's I-It relation alongside Ernst Bloch and Max Scheler's writings, elucidating how Lang's *Die Nibelungen* (1924) and Arthur Robison's *Schatten: Eine nächtliche Halluzination* (1923) underscore the politics of revenge. In contrast to its insightful emphasis on the director Lang, this chapter downplays Robison's own attitude toward his work for the hermeneutics of Bloch, but also the postmodern thinkers Michel Foucault and Bernard Stiegler. Similarly, Choe's emphasis on Kracauer's teleology here is, though suitable for discussing certain organizing principles like destiny and inevitability in filmic narrative, improper for examining the ontology of cinema in an intense historical context.

Both sections of Choe's book assert a claim regarding the ontology of cinema. Supplementing the theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Sabine Hake about the ontological similarities between filmmakers and philosophers, it suggests that film, though an ostensive record of the irretrievable past, aspires to the condition

of philosophy through allegorical self-reflexivity. This first premise relies on the contemporaneous perception of film's phenomenology. In the Weimar context, the filmic animation of inert, "dead" images by means of mechanistic projection allegorizes the onscreen characters as manifestations of the uncanny and the viewer's disavowal of his own existence. Second, and related to the first, is the premise that the moviegoer, via phantasmagoric identification with the characters, partakes in fictions through the lived experience of duration. Thus, the spectator found his ontological correlative *vis-à-vis* the moving image, propelling his conscious being, as it were, to the lifeless end of the celluloid spool.

Though this book convincingly argues that 1919-1924 was a historical watershed moment for German intellectuals, toward its end it becomes estranged from nonteleological argumentation. Not unlike Kracauer who, in the shadow of the Second World War, read into 1920s German film supposed national desires for a dictatorship, Choe applies the *Sonderweg* thesis, notorious for positing the alleged unavoidability of Germany's totalitarian takeover, to early Weimar culture its considerations on vengeance. While this author acknowledges, unlike Kracauer, the risks of transposing telos onto history, his ontology of cinema would have been better substantiated if it relied on messianic aspirations already prevalent during the years of instability, such as Benjamin's historiography or Pan-German philosophy, instead of retrospective theorizations. Though the latter chapters of Choe's book incorporate views concomitant with the films' expressions of loss and anxiety, their glib analyses, relying less faithfully on contemporaneous writings than previous chapters, fit less neatly with the rest of the book. In terms of composition, the text is riddled with errors in grammar (77, 196, 206) and in spelling and punctuation (180, 215), as well as occasional inconsistencies in citation (115) and verb tense.

In conclusion, one may ask whether the methodological problems discussed above distract from the positive features of this ambitious book. This reviewer says no, though the book's virtues do leave me wishing that all its chapters exhibited the same strengths consistently: an attention to historical context and a reliance on filmmakers' perspectives in order to ascertain the ontology of cinema. As for its virtues, this book extends beyond the "ontological potentialities" and ethics of cinema (vi). Its author proves able to reconcile multiple discourses, formal and informal. Above all, Steve Choe's unique approach to cinema demonstrates how the technical apparatus of the moving image, whether in early Weimar Germany or the postmodern global community, opens for scholars with diverse expertise serious interpretive challenges, rich analytical versatility, and intellectual opportunities in the ever-expanding dialogue on visual culture.

Choe, Steve. *Afterlives: Allegories of Film and Mortality in Early Weimar Germany*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014.

Kafkas Zeichnungen
by Friederike Fellner

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University of Basel

Oft bedauert man, dass sich philologische Schätze, in der Fachwelt gefeiert, nur schwer an ein breiteres Publikum vermitteln lassen. Im Fall von Kafkas Zeichnungen ist eher das Gegenteil der Fall: Obwohl von den Umschlägen der früheren Fischer-Ausgaben her ikonisch vertraut, war die wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung doch nur höchst zögerlich. Dabei hatte schon Max Brod in seiner Kafka-Biografie auf die "Doppelbegabung" des Schriftstellers, auf "Parallelen zwischen zeichnerischer und erzählerischer Vision" in dessen Werk, aufmerksam gemacht. Doch nach nicht besonders zahlreichen, verstreuten Artikeln rückte das zeichnerische Werk Kafkas erst in den Nullerjahren des 21. Jahrhunderts in den engeren Fokus der Literaturwissenschaften – mit der französischen Monografie von Jacqueline Sudaka-Bénazéraf ("Le regard de

Franz Kafka") und dem zunächst auf niederländisch, dann auch auf deutsch veröffentlichten Band von Niels Bokhove und Marijke van Dorst ("Einmal ein großer Zeichner"), der zum ersten Mal alle vierzig bis dahin bekannten Zeichnungen Kafkas enthielt.

Dass nun mit Friederike Fellners Dissertation zu "Kafkas Zeichnungen" erstmals eine germanistische Monografie zum Thema erscheint, wirft die janusköpfige Frage auf, weshalb es so lange gedauert hat, bis sich jemand der Zeichnungen in Buchlänge annahm – oder aber: ob die bisher verhaltene Resonanz der Forschung nicht eher damit zu tun hat, dass das Material für eine solche Unternehmung nicht schlicht zu wenig hergibt. Bezüglich eben dieses Materials ist kein Durchbruch zu erwarten: Fellners Buch enthält zwar drei bislang unpublizierte Zeichnungen, die aber keine neuen Erkenntnisse mit sich bringen. Es bleibt also weiter abzuwarten, ob mit der allfälligen Öffnung der Safes mit dem Max Brod–Nachlass eine Vielzahl weiterer Zeichnungen Kafkas zugänglich werden.

Fellner bemüht sich derweil um eine neue Herangehensweise an die Zeichnungen: Sie will die Bilder weder in den Stand kostbarer Kunstwerke erheben, noch sie als bloß illustratives und letztlich vernachlässigbares Beiwerk abtun; interessiert ist sie vielmehr an den wechselseitigen Bezügen zwischen Schrift und Bild im Kontext der "verschiedenen Funktionsfelder[], die die Zeichnungen Kafkas im Hinblick auf sein Schreiben verrichten" (30), so der gelegentlich hölzerne Ton der Arbeit. Drei solchen Funktionsfeldern gemäß ist nun auch ihr Buch strukturiert: In einem ersten Teil mit dem suggestiven Titel "Land vermessen" erhellen der Blick auf die von Kafka abonnierte Zeitschrift "Kunstwart" und der Vergleich mit Zeichnungen zeitgenössischer Künstler, von Klee oder Kandinsky, den kunstgeschichtlichen Kontext von Kafkas frühen Zeichnungen. Gegenüberstellungen, die aus der bisherigen Forschung oft schon bekannt sind, im Kontext von Fellners Argumentation aber jedenfalls verständlich machen, weshalb Max Brod den damals literarisch noch wenig erprobten Freund zunächst als Zeichner aufzubauen versuchte.

Wenn Fellner über das Biografische hinaus eine Engführung von Zeichnungen und Texten unternimmt, schießt sie indes oft über das Ziel hinaus: So ist es interessant, wie eine von Kafka auf der zusammen mit Max Brod unternommenen Reise durch die Schweiz skizzierte Brücke in den Reisetagebüchern von beiden geschildert wird und diese Beschreibungen dann in den Plan eines gemeinsamen Romanprojekts eingehen. Dies ist aber von einer, an dieser Stelle auch zitierten, Monografie von Hartmut Binder her bekannt („Mit Kafka in den Süden“). In Fellners anschließender Aufzählung, welche sonstigen Brücken im Werk Franz Kafkas vorkommen, ist der Bezug zur gezeichneten Brücke derweil längst verloren gegangen. Und ihr Fazit zum Kapitelende, Brücken fungierten bei Kafka als Übergänge in die Geschichten, ist dann ebenfalls dürftig.

Ein zweiter Teil, "Den Bau beobachten", will die Zeichnungen im Kontext von Kafkas poetologischer Selbstreflexion, als Teil und Spiegel seiner Schreib-Szene, beleuchten. Schien Kafka sein Zeichnen in jungen Jahren als eigenständige Disziplin zu verfolgen, so finden sich mit der einsetzenden Publikation seiner literarischen Texte Zeichnungen oft nur noch als illustrative Beigabe auf Postkarten oder aber als Rand- oder Zwischen-Gekritzel auf den Manuskripten. Fellner kann sich hier auf die faksimilierten und in diplomatischer Umschrift edierten Handschriften der Reuß/Staengle-Ausgabe stützen, ein Zusammenhang von poetologischer Selbstreflexion und Kafkas Zeichnungen wird aber nicht plausibel.

Auch hier beschränkt sich Fellner im Großen und Ganzen darauf, motivische Elemente aus den Zeichnungen herauszugreifen – etwa ein Pferd, einen balancierenden Menschen oder einen Torbogen – , um sich dann Fragen zu stellen, wie: Gibt es einen Zusammenhang zu den Pferden in "Ein Landarzt"? Steht der balancierende Mensch nicht für den prekären Schreibprozess? Und erinnert der Torbogen nicht an die Parabel "Vor dem Gesetz"? Vermittelt über solche rein motivischen Ähnlichkeiten kettet Fellner an jede Zeichnung einen Wust von damit oft nur sehr lose zusammenhängenden Textstellen aus Kafkas Werken.

Besonders ärgerlich ist, dass dabei nicht nur auf Bildlegenden, sondern sogar auf die Nummerierung der Zeichnungen verzichtet wurde. So ist auf den ersten Blick etwa nicht zu erkennen, dass eine bei Fellner auf Seite 63 abgebildete Lokomotive nicht von Kafka, sondern von einem sechsjährigen Mitreisenden in ein Sanatorium im Harz stammt. Und weil manche Zeichnungen von ihren Beschreibungen durch Seitenumbrüche getrennt sind, ist auch die Zuordnung von Ekphrasis und Bild nicht immer sofort zu leisten.

Spätestens im letzten Teil, mit dem Titel "Kanäle öffnen", der die Zeichnungen auf den Postkarten auf ihre Rolle im Kommunikationsprozess mit spezifischen Adressaten hin lesbar machen soll, ist auch ein größerer Argumentationszusammenhang verloren gegangen. Umso mehr wartet man daher auf ein abschließendes Fazit-Kapitel; doch Fellners Text bricht nach exakt 300 Seiten ab – nicht mitten im Satz, wie im Fall von Kafkas „Schloss"-Roman, aber ähnlich unvermittelt. So bleibt die zu Beginn aufgestellte Hauptthese, wonach ein auf den Austausch zwischen Bild und Schrift gelegter Fokus zu einer wechselseitigen Erhellung beitragen soll, dem Leser zur eigenen Beantwortung aufgegeben.

Tatsächlich stehen zumindest die Zeichnungen aus den Manuskripten mit den Texten teils thematisch in Zusammenhang und sind so, auf diesen ursprünglichen Kontext bezogen, in ihrer Motivik leichter zu entschlüsseln. Das war der Forschung allerdings bereits bekannt. Dass die Zeichnungen überdies im Gegenzug einen zusätzlichen Reflexionsraum für das Schreiben öffneten, kann Fellner nicht überzeugend darlegen. Sollte Kafkas zeichnerischem Werk größere Aufmerksamkeit zuteil werden, nämlich insofern als aus dem Brod-Nachlass tatsächlich eine Vielzahl unbekannter Zeichnungen öffentlich zugänglich würde, so hätte sich der von Fellner skizzierte Stand der Forschung wohl überholt. Bis dahin findet man in Fellners Studie eine materialreiche Darstellung der bisherigen Sekundärliteratur. Könnten sich die oft kargen Zeichnungen auch darüber hinaus als assoziationsreich erweisen, so mäandert dieses Buch jedoch in Exkursen von seinem Thema weg.

Fellner, Friederike. *Kafkas Zeichnungen*. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2014.

Selbstporträt mit Flusspferd by Arno Geiger

Frederike Middelhoff
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Being twenty-two represents a time we feel drawn between memories, spaces and identities of a childhood past on the one hand, the uncertainties, responsibilities and obligations of our present and future adulthood on the other hand. On the quest for their own 'true' self, twenty-two-year-olds struggle to negotiate where they belong, what they want and whom they want it with. What does it mean to be a male twenty-two-year-old in 21st century Vienna? Arno Geiger tries to give an answer to this question in his latest coming-of-age-novel, which follows the social tracks and emotional paths of Julian Birke, the protagonist of *Selbstporträt mit Flusspferd*, and simultaneously gives us a glimpse of a specific generation confronted with the implications of militant terrorism and climate change.

The *Porträt* is drawn by an older Julian, the first-person narrator, who is catapulted into his twenty-two-year-old self when he happens to meet Judith, the girl he had his first serious relationship with. Wondering how it came to pass that he and Judith feel and act so estranged, he leads the reader into the Vienna of 2004, into a summer that troubled and changed Julian's life, a summer representing his story of initiation.

The retrospective narrative sets in with Julian, then a third-year student of veterinary medicine, conveying

a sense of life probably familiar to most of those who are, or have been, twenty-two: "Zu diesem Zeitpunkt bin ich zweiundzwanzig. Der Umstand, erwachsen zu sein, gefällt mir außerordentlich. Aber ich weiß in Wahrheit überhaupt nicht, was ich will, einmal in diese Richtung, dann in eine andere, einmal alles, einmal nichts. Und immer fühlt es sich absolut richtig an" (10). Prone to mood changes and self-doubts, Julian all of a sudden not only has to come to terms with the fact that his three-year relationship with Judith has come to an end – which, although anticipated, completely throws him off course, – but also that Judith's father insists on having a reimbursement for the rent of the flat the lovers had shared without the father's knowledge. Julian's need for money makes him accept the job as keeper of the eponymous pygmy hippopotamus, "die Zwergin" (45 et passim), as Julian comes to call her, who temporally remains at the house of a retired zoology professor. The concatenation of circumstances leads Julian to a house in the suburbs of Vienna, detached from his urban academic existence, where he meets and falls in love with Aiko, the professor's daughter who turns out to be the complete opposite to Judith, the balanced, prudent high-rider. Of course this relationship (which is what Julian considers it to be) or affair (which is what Aiko considers it to be) turns out to be anything but uncomplicated…

All in all, Geiger's novel intermixes the rather clichéd ingredients of a young student's life: conflicts with the same and the opposite sex, with annoying and annoyed flat-mates in addition to anxieties about and anticipations of social identities and future prospects. Yet there is more to Julian Birke – and, in fact, the novel as a whole – than first meets the eye.

With the portrayal of Julian, Geiger tries to sketch a young man transcending the rather simplistic sociopolitical binary of (post)modern times between rebels and cowards, conformists and non-conformists, technophiles and technophobes, etc., which has determined many a coming-of-age protagonist. Yet Julian Birke is no Holden Caulfield either, i.e. a youth who does not manage to cope with norms, peers and the educational system. Even though the animal imagery in Salinger's (ducks in Central park) and Geiger's (pygmy hippo) novels both have several symbolic functions, Geiger does not illustrate a protagonist with a difficult family background – a youth failing to live up to people's expectations. The only expectations Julian cannot answer are, in fact, his own.

Still less could Julian be compared to a rich *Faserland*-Dandy, travelling through an entire country in search of a place to belong and a person to belong to. Julian Birke – and this is the book's unconventionality, which has led to reviewers calling the protagonist (and hence the book) a bore – is an average, small-town nobody, coming to the big city to be made into a 'new' self, to live a "selbstständige[s] und verwandelte[s] Leben" (93), just like so many others before and after him. This averageness and representativity, indeed, is what makes him so identifiable and sympathetic.

Moreover, it is his unwavering eco-political stance persisting throughout the ups and downs of his emotional states that many a reader will find appealing. Whereas Judith (the ex) – representative of the young optimistic, the undemanding and the content – considers Julian to be a self-conscious "Sonderling" (165), a pretentious hypocrite full of complexes who has nothing more to offer than pessimism, platitudes and some karate skills, the reader actually gets to know a pensive, sensitive, oftentimes rather naïve Julian, who, one the one side, strives for appreciation and self-esteem via various, rather clumsy and futile means, but who also, on the other side, finds himself unable to indulge in an either pleasure-seeking modus vivendi or a nihilistic, damnatory worldview. We encounter a young man who does not switch off and ignore the horrors of terrorism mediated by the news, who realizes there are more SUVs congesting the streets and polluting the country than any terrestrial organism can ever deal with – Julian derisively calls contemporary Man "Homo petrolensis" (168 et passim) –, and who strives to become a doctor in order to heal at least some of the wounds in an ecological system he constantly sees being violated.

Finding himself in the privileged West-European position to have the choice, Julian decides not to climb on the bandwagon of capitalism, hedonism and whateverism, even though the alternative seems still obscure to him. Yet far from being another neoliberal camp follower, Julian – and this might have been Geiger's intent – can be read as a proxy of a number of young people finding fault with the current state of affairs and attempting to do at least some good in this world, instead of contributing to its existential and intellectual decline.

Geiger manages to delineate an emotional and sociocultural panorama of life and death, Man and animal, youth and age, relationship and forlornness, individual and global concerns that enables the reader to become aware that not only pigmy hippos are an endangered species but also that the compassionate, dedicated type of the homo sapiens – as represented by the protagonist – seems to become a minority, moribund subspecies.

Despite the fact that the author sometimes cannot avoid ungainly, stilted portrayals of Julian's soliloquies and, at the close of the novel, slides into a rather pathetic mysticism due to 'hippo apotheosis,' he renders this *Selbstporträt* with great empathy and a powerful and stirring eloquence, the characteristics of which are familiar to those who have enjoyed Geiger's *Schöne Freunde* (2001) or *Der alte König in seinem Exil* (2011).

With his latest work Arno Geiger does not only prove to be an admirably versatile and voluble novelist, capable of rendering different sorts of characters as tangible personalities to be reckoned with, but also evinces his acute sense of the complexities and disturbances of youth and pop culture in the 21st century. Thus, young adulthood in 2004 is depicted as a phase in which personal uncertainties and idiosyncrasies merge with the imminence of climate change and terrorism, the subjective and collective experiences of which leave their marks and imprints on fictional, as well as real, identities of many a twenty-two-year-old in contemporary society.

Geiger, Arno. *Selbstporträt mit Flusspferd*. Munich: Hanser-Verlag, 2015.

Terror and Democracy in West Germany **by Karrin Hanshew,**

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Karrin Hanshew's book, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany*, gives readers a detailed case study of the violence perpetrated by Red Army Faction terrorists (RAF or Baader-Meinhof gang) and the threat to democratic legitimacy they inspired among West Germans during the seventies. The RAF was an extreme manifestation of the radical left intent on violently overthrowing what its members believed was a fascist West German state. The group and its followers carried out a series of high profile kidnappings, assassinations, bombings and bank robberies culminating in 1977 with a six week period of violence the media popularly referred to as the German Fall (*Deutscher Herbst*). The eruption of domestic terrorism in 1970s West Germany evoked Weimar's failed democracy and the Nazi dictatorship that replaced it. These dual memories fuelled contemporary German fears concerning the state's long-term survival. Hanshew's analysis transcends popular narratives of RAF violence and instead gives us new insights of the German Fall as a "transformative" event in the history of postwar Germany. From her perspective, the outbreak of radical violence demonstrated the state's abilities to contain domestic emergencies without undermining its democracy. More importantly, she argues that state responses to the RAF crisis actually helped citizens of the Federal Republic to realize their young nation "could survive both terrorism and the responses to it" (14).

Hanshew's thought-provoking book draws readers into the ongoing Enlightenment debate of how liberal

states balance the need for security while maintaining their obligation to protect the civil liberties of citizens. Hanshew insists 1970s West Germany provides a particularly relevant backdrop for this paradox, since it was a post-dictatorial nation-state still seeking its democratic identity. Indeed, readers familiar with twentieth-century German history will know its first experiment with constitutional democracy, The Weimar Republic, collapsed amid a variety of economic and political crises during the 1920s. Despite some successes, the Weimar Republic was often challenged by violent right and leftwing terrorism that ended in 1933 with Nazi rule. While many scholars have argued democracy was imposed on postwar West Germany by the Allied powers, Hanshew convincingly shows us that German agency was equally if not more important in forging its new democratic path. This was especially evident during the framing of West Germany's constitution, or Basic Law, in 1949, where the policy of "militant democracy" (*Wehrhafte Demokratie*) underscored the efforts of lawmakers to author a new constitution more resistant to radical party politics.

To be sure, militant democracy set West Germany apart from the older, well-established democracies in Britain, the United States, and France. Whereas the U.S. constitution emphasized the individual, the Basic Law aimed to uphold the common good of society as a whole. Thus, individuals or groups that acted in a manner which threatened the state's free democratic order were banned. The memories and experiences of lawmakers during the Weimar and the Nazi eras and their desire to avoid another descent into dictatorship shaped this particular philosophical approach. In other words, the framers of the Basic Law clearly believed Weimar democracy had been too liberal and attempted to outline a more moderate approach that still protected the state from extremism. According to Hanshew, militant democracy exposed tensions between West Germany's political parties who shared competing philosophical interpretations of its meaning. The CDU/CSU legislators advocated the authoritarian approach to state security grounded in the Hobbesian theories of Carl Schmitt and Karl Lowenstein, which favored a strong executive and coercive force. The SPD followed a more moderate track exemplified by the ideals of political theorist Karl Mannheim, which, according to Hanshew gave primacy to a positive approach of "social engineering, education, and planning" over negative heavy-handed responses (35). The crisis of domestic terrorism brought these underlying political tensions to the surface. Conservatives accused the ruling SPD of weakness while ironically leftists criticized its willingness to deploy stronger policing and national security measures. Although Hanshew tells us these debates were fuelled in large part by the media, the insecurities they expressed over democracy were real nonetheless.

The book also highlights civilian policing and its use by the state to fight domestic terrorism. West Germany's civilian police forces still suffered from an image problem associated with memories of their authoritarian legacies during the Weimar and Nazi periods, not to mention more recent public accusations of brutality surrounding clashes with student protestors. Yet, as Hanshew claims, the police gradually began shedding their role as West Germany's "domestic soldiers" during the sixties (116). It was the crisis of terrorism, she contends, that drove these internal reforms, especially in computer technology and intelligence gathering now considered central to modern law enforcement operations. This was also true for West Germany's border guard, the *Bundesgrenzschutz* or BGS, a paramilitary police force formed after the Korean War that was deployed along with other forces against the RAF. Indeed, West Germany's elite counterterrorism unit, GSG 9, was formed from the BGS in the aftermath of the 1972 murder of Israeli athletes at the Olympic games in Munich.

But whereas GSG 9 was clearly the most qualified force to confront the RAF, Hanshew argues the state was reluctant to deploy it because of public criticism and the negative legacies of Nazi commando-style police units. GSG 9 was publicly attacked in the press by the President of West Germany's Police Union, Werner Kuhlman, who likened it to the violent paramilitaries of the 1920s. What Hanshew overlooks, however, is that Kuhlman had already been a vocal opponent of the BGS since the early 1960s when the federal government gave its personnel combatant status. In fact, Kuhlman's rhetoric was not based on the public debates over counterterrorism as Hanshew's analysis suggests. Instead, he acted to protect the career interests of *Länder*

police unions whose members feared losing too much jurisdiction to federal forces such as the BGS. Nevertheless, GSG 9 primarily guarded public buildings and dignitaries until they were finally deployed in 1977 against RAF terrorists who had hijacked a Lufthansa passenger jet and murdered its Pilot, Jürgen Schumann.

According to Hanshew, SPD Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's decision to send GSG 9 to Mogadishu, where the hijackers were holding the passengers hostage, was the turning point in the German Fall. Operation "Fire Magic" was nothing short of miraculous as GSG 9 led by its dynamic young commander, Ulrich Wegener, stormed the plane killing all but one of the hijackers and rescuing all 90 passengers and surviving crewmembers. The successful operation, Hanshew argues, finally settled West German angst over the legitimacy of their democracy and more importantly the ability of the state to defend it. Operation "Fire magic" also quelled conservative criticisms of the SPD as weak and ineffective against terror. The men of GSG 9 were celebrated national heroes - young "rocker cops" in leather jackets that changed the negative image of policing associated with Germany's past. While the RAF and its splinter groups continued to intermittently plague West Germany during the eighties, the public debates over its democratic legitimacy ceased. Thus, Hanshew insists, the end of the German Fall also figuratively ended the postwar era and ushered in a new political climate beginning in the 1980s. The CDU of Helmut Kohl now embraced intellectuals while the extra-parliamentary left evolved into the moderate Green Party or the more radical anti-state *Autonomen* (252-54). Still, it was the lasting effects of the successful Mogadishu raid that legitimized future security policy, such as Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's decision to send German combat troops to Afghanistan after 9/11.

Hanshew's examination of the German Fall asks important questions about the nature of liberal democracies and security that are still particularly relevant in the contemporary post 9/11 world. In the end, she tells us that West Germany got it right. Its leaders found that delicate balance in spite of critics who argued that increased surveillance and policing were repressive. Hanshew claims, "However imperfect, Bonn had proved it was neither unsteady Weimar nor authoritarian Berlin…" (237). While her analysis is convincing, some may question the importance she ascribes to the German Fall as a "transformative" event in West Germany's postwar democratization. To be sure, questions over policing and its limits had already challenged lawmakers during the early 1950s. In response to the crisis of the Korean War, Chancellor Konrad Adenauer attempted to build a strong federal police force without parliamentary or Allied oversight. He ultimately failed to achieve his objective and thus settled on the BGS, which was strictly limited in size and jurisdiction by the *Bundestag*. The German Fall, I would argue, was one in a series of many challenges faced by the new West German state that reflected its transformation from dictatorship back to liberal democracy. These minor criticisms aside, Hanshew's important and well-written book contributes many new and valuable insights into our understanding of this pivotal moment in postwar German history. Graduate students working on any aspect of 1970s West Germany should not overlook this book.

Hanshew, Karrin. *Terror and Democracy in West Germany*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Kind, versprich mir, dass du dich erschießt. Der Untergang der kleinen Leute 1945
by Florian Huber,

Elisabeth Weiß
University of Osnabrück

Es schleicht sich Beklemmung ein, sobald man mit der Lektüre von Florian Hubers Darstellung des Kriegsendes beginnt. Diese Beklemmung lässt den Leser nicht los, während er durch die Kleinstadt Demmin in

der pommerschen Provinz, durch ganz Deutschland, aber auch durch die Jahre vor und während des Krieges geführt wird. Huber inspiziert das besiegte Deutschland und dessen Bürger: jene, die in Schweigen verfallen, jene, die fliehen, aber vor allem jene, die sich in den Tod flüchten, um der Rache der Besatzungsmächte zu entgehen, dem Führer und seiner Parole von „Sieg oder Untergang“ treu zu bleiben. Dieser Augenblick ist der Gipfel der moralischen Abstumpfung nach zwölf Jahren NS-Regime.

Für dieses ungewöhnliche Projekt dient Huber das zwei Stunden nördlich von Berlin gelegene Demmin als Ausgangspunkt seiner Analysen. Der Massensuizid am Vorabend des russischen Vordringens nach Pommern und der drei Folgetage ist der bekannteste und am besten dokumentierte Fall in Deutschland. Huber stellt in dem ersten Teil seines Buches „Vier Tage in Demmin“ minutiös exemplarische Schicksale dar und verbindet diese zum surrealen Schreckensbild der Leichen im Fluss oder der Erhängten auf den Dachböden. Unverblümt und gnadenlos lässt er die Geisterstadt aus dem April 1945 wiederauferstehen und zeigt nicht nur die Verzweiflung, sondern vor allem die durch all die Jahre der Naziherrschaft erprobte Einstellung des Mitmachens – viele tun es ihren Nachbarn und Verwandten gleich, wenn sie Zyankali oder die Waffe zur Hand nehmen. Demmin ist die Sackgasse des besiegten Deutschlands: Hier stranden die Flüchtlinge aus dem Osten, hierher setzt sich die Wehrmacht ab und sprengt die Brücken hinter sich, sodass die von mehreren Flüssen umgebene Provinzstadt zum Auffangbecken für die Rote Armee wird. Die Rotarmisten proben in Demmin ihren Siegeszug, der in Exzessen von Massenvergewaltigung und Brandschatzung ausartet. Diese Rache für die grausamen Verbrechen der deutschen Soldaten wird, durch die SS-Propaganda befeuert, von einer Befürchtung zur Realität.

„Demmin ist überall“ beweist Huber im zweiten Teil und führt den Leser über die Landkarte der Verzweiflung, auf der Menschen nur den Ausweg in den Tod als Vorwegnahme des Alptraumes erkennen können. Huber versteht es, einen Blick in die zerstörten Seelen des Kriegsendes zu werfen und beginnt ihre kollektive Biographie 1918: „Im Taumel der Gefühle“, so nennt Huber Kapitel III, beschreibt er das politische und moralische Klima nach dem verlorenen Ersten Weltkrieg und dem Versailler Vertrag, der in Deutschland zum Inbegriff der ungerechten Behandlung wurde. Zusätzlich belasten Inflation und Weltwirtschaftskrise das soziale Gefüge. Aufgrund dieser emotionalen Unterdrückung und Notsituation verliert die Demokratie an Zuspruch und die Menschen suchen nach einem Weg, ihren Nationalstolz wiederzubeleben und ausdrücken zu dürfen. Den Weg der Deutschen zum Nationalsozialismus schildert Huber durch detaillierte Analysen von Gemüt und Gedanken der Leute und verwebt so die historische Reportage mit einer Studie über die deutsche Seele.

Huber schafft es, auf sehr nachvollziehbare Weise den Sog der nationalsozialistischen Bewegung und deren Aufstieg darzustellen. Ohne jegliche Vorurteile widmet er den kleinen Leuten die Aufmerksamkeit und lässt ihre begeisterten Aussagen, beispielswese zum Fackelzug 1933, wertfrei stehen. Dieser Sog mischt sich im kollektiven Gedächtnis mit der Angst vor einem erneuten Krieg und führt, wie Huber einleuchtend erklärt, nicht zum Widerstand, sondern zum Schweigen. Dennoch wandelt sich der Blick auf den vormaligen „Erlöser“ Hitler, der zunehmend kritisch gesehen wird.

Huber, der preisgekrönte Historiker, Sachbuchautor und Dokumentarfilmer, zieht für seine Darstellung des Untergangs der kleinen Leute Tagebücher, Briefe, Berichte, Artikel und Erinnerungen heran, und stellt das Erlebte auf eine unbequeme und fesselnde Weise dar. Diese lebhaften und persönlichen Erlebnisse erwecken eine verstörende Nähe. Huber wird dort am klarsten und plausibelsten, wo er die realpolitischen Ereignisse, die Eckpunkte der Diktatur, neben die privaten und persönlichen Eindrücke dieser Momente und Bewegungen der Menschen stellt. Für Demmin lässt Huber noch sehr viele Zahlen und sich ähnelnde Schicksale sprechen und rutscht bisweilen in eine Aufzählung ab. Damit unterstreicht er zwar die Glaubwürdigkeit, doch überzeugt er vielmehr dort, wo er sich von den Quellen löst und sich aufgrund seiner Recherche zu Einschätzungen verleiten lässt. Huber erhebt keinen Anspruch auf die Vollständigkeit seiner Aufarbeitung und schafft es so, den „Sog des

Schweigens“ – wie auch das letzte Kapitel des Buches heißt – und die Vertuschung persönlicher Biographien seit jenem grausamen Frühling greifbar zu machen. Er spickt seine Quellenwiedergabe mit kleinen lyrischen Einwürfen und erweckt so einerseits das Bild einer paradoxen Welt von malerischer Schönheit der Umgebung und des Gemeinschaftsgefühls; andererseits zeigt er die Brutalität und Kühle des Regimes. Huber lässt dem Leser die Funktionärin aus der Hitlerjugend oder den nationalsozialistischen Lehrer so nahe kommen, dass die Frage nach Opfern und Tätern verschwimmt. Man sieht die einzelnen Stimmen im Meer von Eifer und Zugehörigkeit untergehen und weiß doch um ihr Verderben. Darin liegt die Tragik, die Huber durch seine Detailgenauigkeit fast literarisch ästhetisiert. Es fällt schwer, die Protagonisten für ihre Begeisterung zu verurteilen, da sie diese stets als altruistisches Motiv erklären können. Es gelingt Huber dieser Begeisterung sprechen zu lassen, ohne dass er in die Verherrlichung oder Banalisierung des NS-Regimes abrutscht.

Die Methode des leisen, fast literarischen Einfühlens scheint nach der Lektüre von Florian Hubers Sachbuch *Kind, versprich mir, dass du dich erschießt. Der Untergang der kleinen Leute 1945* der einzige Weg, die Selbstmordwelle mehr als nur oberflächlich zu verstehen. Huber vollbringt es, das lange Schweigen sichtbar zu machen und zu durchbrechen. Damit erarbeitet er eine einzigartige Analyse des Kriegsendes aus der Sicht der kleinen Leute.

Huber, Florian. *Kind, versprich mir, dass du dich erschießt. Der Untergang der kleinen Leute 1945*. Berlin: Berliner Verlag. 2014.

Tatort Germany: The Curious Case of German-Language Crime Fiction edited by Lynn Kutch and Todd Herzog,

Andrea Kreuter
University of Vienna

Up-to-date contemporary German-language crime fiction is a marginalized subject in scholarly works. A fact that can be traced back to the particular situation of the genre caused by two factors; 1) A very strict differentiation between high and low culture literature in German-speaking countries 2) The history of these countries in the 20th century. Nowadays the German crime novel may be considered up to date with German fiction in general, in means of style and themes, and with the international scene. Due to the lack of translations this development stays mostly unrecognized in other countries.

The aim of this volume is to show these changes of the genre and its importance for the scientific community. Therefore it concentrates on the three key factors, Place, History and Identity, which fostered this development and simultaneously reveal the cultural specifics of the genre in German-language literature, which is highly concerned with the current concepts of *Heimat* and identity.

The first part, Place, is dedicated to the development of the regional crime novel, which lays a specific focus on a particular location and has a certain vicinity to the so called *Heimatroman*, which engages in an idyllic, mostly uncritical representation of *Heimat*, a concept challenged by the events of a crime. Even in the scientific works concerning the crime novel this upcoming genre hasn't yet really been discussed. The authors of this section get involved in one of the first extensive scholarly discussion of these ongoing developments and changes in German-language crime fiction. In his contribution to crime fiction scholarship Kyle Frackman presents as characteristics of the genre a strong realism, dedicated to the locations and specifics of the region and the fact that the setting cannot be changed easily. The role of the location goes beyond a mere setting for the events. He links the genre to the *Fallgeschichten* (case stories) from 18th and 19th century, which satisfy contemporarily the excitement regarding the crime as well as the interest in the ultimate surroundings of

people. Regarding the relationship between reader and author, he favors a bilateral model and points to the difference, which has to be made between readers familiar with the regions and those getting to know the surroundings by the novel. Thereupon Sascha Gerhards is concerned with the current developments of the television series *Tatort*, which since 1970 has been a weekly feature of the TV-program in German-speaking countries. Like regional crime novels the *Tatort* episodes lay a strong emphasis on the setting, as they are situated in different cities depicting local specifics and regional customs. In more recent productions a shift to the global can be observed and the so called *Weltkrimi* concerns itself with international problems like the collapse of the financial system, neglecting the strong bond to the regional setting. The emphasis here lies on the potential of the crime novel and the concept of *Heimat* as a vehicle of critique. This tendency is incorporated in literature by the so named *Verarbeitungskrimi*, which aims to come to terms with the past and engages in a reworking of the period surrounding the Third Reich focusing on the historical instead of the local level. The following two articles of this part by John Sherman and Anita McChesney focus on Austrian crime fiction—another advantage of this volume considering the Austrian crime scene to an adequate extent. Sherman engages in an analysis of the Brenner mysteries by Wolf Haas. The seven novels may be seen as a critical portrait offering insights into the diversity and variety of contemporary Austria. He defines Haas as an unconventional author of crime novels, as much as the detective doesn't focus primarily on the investigation of the murder, rather on further discoveries revealing abysms of the society and thereby discussing current themes like the Nazi past, religion and homelessness, abortion as well as the question of identity. This first section is completed by Anita Mc Chesney's analysis of the regional crime novels by Haas, Komarek and Roth. Like in the *Tatort* episodes the concept of *Heimat* is used as a vehicle for social critique and not to enrich the popular image of Austria as an idyllic vacation spot. Instead the authors unmask the problems beneath the surfaces and even solve crimes which have been committed years ago, so finally leaving the reader with the open question, if the idyllic vacation spot has ever existed.

The second part, History, also consists of four contributions concerning the period of the Third Reich and the ensuing events. Magdalena Waligórska engages in an analysis of five crime novels confronting the Holocaust past of Germany published between 2006 and 2011. Common themes in the novels are the motif of a curse of the past, including the theme of collective guilt and the possibility of a Jewish vengeance, the unmasking of identities and retributive justice. There is strong indication that the crime novel creates an adequate distance to address this difficult period and offers the possibility of a critical discussion of the events and a *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coping with the past), it may also contribute to a relativization of the acts and the German guilt though. Subsequently Susanne Knittel discusses the possible contribution of regional crime novels in the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* focusing on two novels dealing with the euthanasia program in Swabia. Through the regional crime novel, the national crime is localized and literally placed on the doorsteps of the readers. A strong focus does not lie any more on finding a murder, but on the guilt and responsibility as well as the different degrees of perpetration and motivations behind a much greater crime committed by the whole community. Then Carol Anne Costabile-Heming investigates the case of the author Erich Loest in the GDR. After differences with the leading party he could not publish any more under his real name, then using a pseudonym to write crime novels and placing them outside the borders of the republic. Without any real knowledge of the places, the novels presumably not located in the ultimate surroundings just resembled them, and London bears analogy to Leipzig. The part closes with an analysis of the novel *Freudsche Verbrechen* written by Eva Rossmann from Tracy O'Brian. While psychoanalysis in the novel is sometimes referred to in an ironic way, the concept of trauma and the interweaving of personal stories (*Geschichten*) and history (*Geschichte*) on the other hand is discussed on a more serious basis. The protagonist's struggle finding out the truth about a crime committed during the Holocaust and a subsequent murder demonstrate the still current trend of denial, the fear of the unknown.

The third section, Identity, deals with gendered identity policies in the recent past. The three contributions all take a critical stance confronting the particular cultural handling. First Angelika Baier takes a look at the

representation of intersexuality in contemporary crime novels. The analysis of three examples reveals them as part of a critical examination of the stance of the community towards intersexual individuals. In the novels they are often traumatized during childhood and therefore share features with serial killers and in the end do not see a future for themselves in contemporary society. Afterwards Faye Stewart studies the processes of performing identity and gender in two novels by Thea Dorn and Christine Lehmann. The female detectives here enter in a male gay bar, which may be seen as a metaphor for male dominated places in society. The novels articulate a severe critique concerning the strongly gendered society and the acts of aggression, abuse and marginalization that come along with it. Finally Heike Henderson presents an analysis of the culinary crime fiction by Eva Rossmann. This subgenre focuses on the kitchen as central location, has mostly a female investigator as protagonist, like the anticipated readership and the crimes are set in the food sector in general. The problems described by Eva Rossmann are popular topics in Austria, not exclusively to the country though, like the bovine spongiform encephalopathy crisis some years ago, or the precarious labor conditions in supermarkets and restaurants. Thereby these novels challenge traditional gender roles in the contemporary Austrian society; foremost the protagonist herself, who likes to cook, though she doesn't want to be reduced to the role of a stereotypical housewife.

Altogether this volume aims to be a snapshot of recent developments in German-language crime fiction concerning the key factors of Place, Identity and History. This goal has been fully achieved and it is a set book for everybody interested in the matter. The prospective reader may await predominant well researched and written articles. Another strong point, beside the adequate consideration of Austrian crime fiction, form the multiple cross references throughout the articles underlining the relations between the different contributions and sections of the book.

Kutch, Lynn and Todd Herzog, eds. *Tatort Germany: The Curious Case of German-Language Crime Fiction*. New York: Camden House, 2014.

The Merchant Republics: Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg, 1648–1790 **by Mary Lindemann,**

Evan Johnson
University of Cincinnati

With the publication of her latest book, Mary Lindemann has produced a masterful comparative study of three of the most important commercial cities in continental Europe during the long eighteenth century. Through an impressive combination of archival and secondary material, she is able to posit a complicated but powerful connection between civic virtue and mercantile ethics in each of these cities and thus undercut the significant historiographic contention of J. G. A. Pocock that such forces were inherently opposed in early modern republics. By adroitly parsing the rhetoric and action of the inhabitants of these cities, Lindemann reveals a complex world of conflicting visions of ethics and virtue which operated within a generally accepted rubric: what is good for business is good for the city. She explores the striking similarities and differences between these cities and concludes that, despite the numerous points of friction within the social world of Hamburg, Antwerp, and Amsterdam during the eighteenth century, all three “exhibited a common tenor of life where the politics and economics, mercantile precepts and political ideals, flowed together in ways that forcefully and peculiarly shaped civic existences” (74). Despite changing economic and political fortunes over one hundred and fifty years, these cities retained a distinct belief in the importance of merchants to the existence of the republic and vice-versa. With clear, fluid prose, Lindemann presents a compelling new perspective on these communities and forces the reader to reconsider the relationship of commerce and politics

and the powerful durability of ideals in the face of corruption, economic disruption, and the shifting tides of history.

The Merchant Republics is divided into six thematic chapters, each actively comparing the three cities. This allows Lindemann to keep the similarities and differences of her subjects in constant view thus avoiding an over-simplification in favor of either commonalities or divergence. This is a delicate balance; she must constantly maintain the validity of grouping these three cities together while engaging with their distinctive features, particularly as their political and economic positions changed over time. Her first chapter is particularly focused on this task as she lays out, in broad strokes, the history of each city, noting the differences in size, internal politics, religion, and geopolitical situation. She deploys the metaphor of "topography" to illustrate her bird's-eye view of the political contours of each city and particularly focused on the layers of political involvement for different segments of society. She notes that while only a small number of citizens could fully participate in political life, a far larger portion of the population, including some women, had the ability to exert influence. In this she is careful to avoid writing a history of only elites, despite their importance in her narrative. This is a story of popular perception and political discourse so the actors come from across the social spectrum and the effects of economic and political dilemmas reverberated throughout society.

The second chapter lays the groundwork for the next four by examining the contours of these "merchant republics" in more detail and grappling with Pocock's influential study, *The Machiavellian Moment*, which argued for the incompatibility of civic virtue and commerce as the latter led to greed and undermined the republic. The existence of moralizing tracts warning of the dangers of luxury and vice seemingly contradict the actual behaviors and beliefs of the majority in these cities. Lindemann argues that the actual source of tension sprang from practical and particular incidents and problems not the whole of commerce. She argues throughout the book that the nature of republican governance in these three cities was never truly about theory or well-developed political philosophy. Instead, most political activity was reactionary—a response to individual circumstances and problems while framed within the rhetoric of traditional freedoms and liberties. Harmony and cooperation were vital rhetorical tropes though they often disappeared in the numerous political conflicts within these cities. Throughout the subsequent chapters she explores the tension between rhetoric and reality in the context of four threats to the vision of prosperous merchant republics. By unpacking corruption, dishonesty, speculation, and bankruptcy and seeking to understand what these concepts meant to the people living through this period, Lindemann is able to investigate the complex world of merchant republics and demonstrates that steadfast conviction that commerce was inherently virtuous and vital to the republic.

The Merchant Republics is a model of nuance as Lindemann engages with diverse sources in an accessible and compelling comparative framework. By acknowledging the limitations of her work and the complex relationship between prescription and practice in early modern Europe, she provides readers with a challenging evaluation of the political conviction of the citizens of eighteenth-century Antwerp, Amsterdam, and Hamburg. This study is an exciting accomplishment and will prove to be invaluable addition to the historiography of the region and contribute to several important scholarly debates over the nature of concepts like corruption, republicanism, luxury, and civic virtue. Though certainly a scholarly work, the prose is readable, her examples and stories are engaging, and the argument is clear enough to appeal to an audience beyond those familiar with the field. Whether read by those more attune to the historiographic debates surrounding commerce and government or those who are interested in politics and political philosophy, society, commerce, or simply want an example of strong comparative history, all should find this study to be a stimulating and informative read.

Lindemann, Mary. *The Merchant Republics: Amsterdam, Antwerp, and Hamburg, 1648–1790*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

„Wie man lieb gewinnt, was die Herrschenden bekämpfen“: Herta Müllers essayistische Untersuchung einer gebrechlichen Welt by Herta Müller, *Hunger und Seide,*

Lisa Schmidt
University of Waterloo

Spätestens seit der Auszeichnung mit dem Literaturnobelpreis im Jahre 2009 ist Herta Müller alles andere als eine Unbekannte im deutschen Literaturbetrieb. Diese und diverse andere Auszeichnungen attestieren ihr eine bemerkenswert verdichtete Sprache, die mit einer unausweichlichen Eindringlichkeit in die Welt der sozialistischen Diktatur des Ceaușescu-Regimes in Rumänien einführt, das sie persönlich als Mitglied der dortigen deutschsprachigen Minderheit und als Tochter eines SS-Veterans erlebt hat.

Ihr frühes Werk „Hunger und Seide“, erstmals erschienen 1995, fand bei Kritiken und Preisverleihungen bis heute eher weniger Beachtung. Zu Unrecht trat es bislang in den Schatten von aktuelleren Herausgaben wie *Atemschaukel* (2009), *Immer derselbe Schnee und immer derselbe Onkel* (2011) und anderen. Denn ihre Analyse der Mächte unserer Zeit, der politischen Ausbeutung des Schicksals, liefert einen erschreckend zeitgemäßen, tiefschürfenden Einblick in gesellschaftliche Trümmerlandschaften im Despotismus. Besonders ihre Beobachtungen staatlicher Bespitzelung besitzen eine bemerkenswerte Brisanz und Aktualität. Durch analytischen Scharfsinn gelingt es Müller, Parallelen zwischen mächtigen Gewaltregimes zu ziehen - so entlarvt sie den zwanghaften Charakter der sozialistischen Herrschaftssysteme in der DDR, Jugoslawien, dem nahen Osten und Kuba einer einheitlichen lebensfeindlichen Niedertracht, die Nazi-Deutschlands in ihrer manischen Selbstsicherheit in nichts nachstehen. Ihre Kritik trifft außerdem, und auch hier schließt sie beeindruckend genau an aktuelle Entwicklungen an, Feindseligkeiten gegenüber Asylsuchenden in Deutschland und mangelhafte politische Verhandlung über Einwanderungsgesetze. Hier wirft die Autorin deutschen Politikern Rückständigkeit und Heuchelei vor, die insbesondere ausländerfeindliche Jugendproteste in Deutschland vernachlässigt. Letztere, so Müller, bilden sich aus der Geisteshaltung des Herrenrassendenken heraus und nisten sich wie Parasiten in den Köpfen derjenigen Nation ein, die doch ihre Ersatzheimat werden sollte: „Ohnehin urteilt täglich, wer die Nachrichten aus aller Welt zur Kenntnis nimmt.“ So liefert dieses Werk auch eine gestochen scharfe Kritik an vermeintlichem deutschen Ordentlichkeitsbewusstsein, die die Lächerlichkeit eines krankhaften Kontrollzwangs und nationalen kleinbürgerlichem Misstrauen aufdecken.

In enger Anlehnung an ihre bemerkenswerte Biografie erzählt Müllers „Hunger und Seide“ von einer unbändigen Sehnsucht nach Heimat. Es zeichnet einzigartige sprachliche Bilder vom Widerstand gegen eine ideologische Invasion der Persönlichkeit durch strukturelle Bevormundung, und vom verzweifelten Versuch der Absicherung der eigenen Biografie und des politischen Protests gegen die Perversität der staatlichen Aushorchung in Ceaușescus Herrschaft über Rumänien. Mit einer bestechend scharfen poetischen Kraft rufen Müllers Essays zu Entschlossenheit, Trotz und Mut gegenüber abergläubischer Folgsamkeit im Unterdrückungsstaat auf. Für den Künstler ergibt sich daraus die zwingende Notwendigkeit, in der Konsequenz der eigenen Texte zu leben, um aus der Falle sprachlicher Doppelbödigkeit zu entkommen. Ihre Sehnsucht nach dem selbstbestimmtem Leben entblößt den unbändigen Hunger auf ein ungelebtes Leben, das wie ein schwarzer Schatten an der eigenen Existenz klebt. Eine bestechende Anschaulichkeit haftet ihren Beschreibungen des propagandistischen Wahnwitzes an, der einem längst überholten Einheitsideal nachläuft. Trotz aller Starrsinnigkeit erwächst aus dem Ekel vor dessen Gewalt und Armut ihre Entschlossenheit zur Rebellion. „Hunger und Seide“ erzählt davon, wie sehr der Handelswert einer bunten Plastiktüte steigt, wenn Grau nicht mehr nur Alltagsfarbe, sondern kollektive Grundeinstellung wird. Es beschreibt Starre und Scheintod eines ganzen Landes, das dem Zwang zu Tagesordnungen voll Verleumdung, Selbstmitleid und Untertänigkeit ausgeliefert ist. Und es lässt aufschreiben darüber, wie jede Sprache der Welt zur Mördersprache

wird, jede Dichtkunst Opfer skrupelloser Selbstherrlichkeit werden kann.

Unerschrocken, scharf und in beispielloser lyrischer Dichte entkleidet Herta Müller die deutsche Seele ihrer Selbstgefälligkeit, mit harscher Strenge verdammt sie die leeren Parolen, die weltkritische Diskussionen durchziehen, und fordert eine Auflösung der gespielten Munterkeit, mit der Missstände thematisiert werden: „Wenn in einem Land das Überleben zum Lebenssinn geworden ist, wird die Schönheit des Landes zum Schmerz." So wird die Unfähigkeit, psychologische Differenzen zuzulassen, auf paradoxe Weise zugleich Motiv für fremdenfeindlichen und sozialistischen Fatalismus – und liefert Müller den Grund, Utopien als misanthropische Unglücksschmieden zu entlarven.

„Hunger und Seide" wechselt zwischen Poesie, Gesellschaftskritik und biografischer Berichterstattung. Es sind genau die harten Sprünge zwischen heute und damals, zwischen Ostberliner „Ewiggestrigkeit" und rumänischer Schwermut, kurzgeschichtlicher Historienexempel und essayistischer Zeitkritik, die dieses Werk zu einer imposanten Kompilation machen. Sie folgt keinem Plot, sondern der Ordnung einer verzweifelten Sorge, der psychologischen Rückschau, in die sich gegenwärtige Erlebnisse einflechten.

Nicht zuletzt angesichts der kürzlichen Zwischenfälle in deutschen Flüchtlingslagern, der Aktualität auslandsfeindlicher Agitation und parlamentarischer Einwanderungsdebatte sowie der nicht überwundenen deutschen Schuldfrage wirkt Müllers frühes Werk erstaunlich aktuell und bildet damit ein wichtiges Werk zur Kritik sowohl an momentaner Weltgeschichte als auch historischer Kontinuität von Despotismus.

Müller, Herta. *Hunger und Seide*. Munich: Hanser Literaturverlag, 2015.

Tailoring Truth: Politicizing the Past and Negotiating Memory in East Germany, 1945-1990
by Jon Berndt Olsen,

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The assorted monuments to Communist heroes dotting the lands of the former German Democratic Republic, twenty-five years after its dissolution, are a testament to that state's ability to assiduously carve a coherent vision of its own history onto the national landscape. Or are they? As Jon Berndt Olsen's analysis of the evolution of official, state-sponsored attempts to construct commemorative sites and cultivate a particular narrative of history in East Germany from 1945 to 1990 demonstrates, these monuments are not examples of unfettered totalitarian power at work, but the products of negotiation and forced adaptation. *Tailoring Truth* displays a surprising plurality of voices and approaches involved in the construction of official East German memory culture, while also suggesting that the SED's inability either to retain absolute control over public representation of the past or reconcile different approaches ultimately hastened its dissolution.

Olsen argues that the history of the East German state's "memory-work," far from remaining beholden to an unchanging strategy, unfolded in five stages. In the immediate post-World War II period, memorial and museum projects sponsored by SED officials sought to legitimize the party based largely on its anti-fascist credentials and link it to the long-term development of a German working class. After 1949, the emphasis of memory projects shifted to establishing the place of the new East German state within the communist narrative of history as the culmination of the victorious struggle of the German working class. In the later 1950s and 1960s, the SED attempted to use memory projects to inculcate an emotional attachment to the state in younger

generations, who did not have a personal connection to the communist, anti-fascist figures of the 1930s and 1940s. As part of this program, the regime also began to appropriate and rework local and regional memory sites in order to integrate them within a class-based national history. In the fourth stage, covering the 1970s and 1980s, the SED responded to the normalizing of relations between East and West Germany by attempting to rehabilitate historical events and figures previously deemed "reactionary" – most prominently Martin Luther, Frederick II, and Bismarck – because of their supposed contribution (however unintentional) to the rise of the German working class. This move greatly expanded the number of historical figures and events available for the regime's memory projects, and therefore the potential to create connections between diverse individuals and the state, but it also blurred the previously clear distinction between the East and West German visions of history. In the fifth and final stage of East German official memory work, authorities sought to preempt challenges to the regime's legitimacy during the 1980s by reasserting control over the public representation of such classic communist heroes as Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Ernst Thälmann, and Rosa Luxemburg. Its inability to do so without resorting to brutally silencing opposition foreshadowed the fate of the regime in 1990.

Olsen is concerned with a broad spectrum of memory projects in East Germany, examining museums, festivals, and monuments as well as exploring the entanglement of strategies for such public displays with trends in historical scholarship. Each stage in Olsen's narrative is illustrated with three case studies of attempts by the east German state to construct a memory "framework" with respect to a given historical figure, place, or event. These case studies illuminate the constant negotiation between state and non-state actors involved in the development of such frameworks. Olsen is particularly interested in the relationships between the state officials who conceived and directed various memory projects and the artists commissioned to carry out the creative work. As Olsen shows, these two groups were mutually dependent on one another: the SED was in possession of the bulk of the economic and political resources available in East Germany and therefore uniquely capable of providing artists with institutional support, yet the party's ability to manifest its power was always contingent on cooperation with sculptors, painters, and museum directors.

The unique political position of East Germany – as a communist state under the tutelage of the Soviet Union, in direct competition with another Germany – made memory projects there particularly fraught with ideological and cultural tensions. In his accounts of party memorial projects, Olsen adeptly illustrates the conflict between, on the one hand, the SED's desire to craft a memory landscape that would fuse the East German nation together, and on the other, its eagerness to apply the leading Soviet approach. After facing resistance from East German artists with their own vision for particular memory projects, officials often resorted to calling upon Soviet artists instead. Tellingly, the last major monument in Berlin commissioned by the SED, a sculpture of Ernst Thälmann, was, much to the chagrin of East German art critics and sculptors, created by a Soviet artist. Presented by Erich Honecker as marking the achievement of all of Thälmann's goals in and through the East German state, Olsen interprets this moment as, rather, a demonstration of "the party's chronic inability to relate to the general public's perception of the past" (201).

In Olsen's narrative, the SED never managed to effectively control the memory landscape of East Germany, and the shifts in official strategy that he documents appear fundamentally reactive. Olsen is inconclusive on the question of whether this memory work was also *productive* of new relationships and ways of understanding the past and present. Indeed, Olsen's book gives little evidence of emotional ties between East German citizens and the official memory projects he describes – and yet there must have been some, as the reaction of residents to the proposed removal of various GDR-era monuments in Berlin after 1990 discussed in his afterword demonstrates. As Olsen himself acknowledges, his study largely relies on official documentation, supplemented by a few sources "from below" – such as anonymous comments on museum exhibitions – when possible. As a result, in this study he is not able to explore the power the memory projects he discusses may have had for East German citizens. In this respect, his study brings us no closer to one of his stated objectives of helping scholars understand how the GDR was able to last as long as it did. Nevertheless, *Tailoring Truth*

provides a useful overview of the state's fitful attempts to communicate and embody its vision of its own history.

Olsen, Jon Berndt. *Tailoring Truth: Politicizing the Past and Negotiating Memory in East Germany, 1945-1990*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2015

Buch gegen das Verschwinden by Ulrike Sandig,

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With her second collection of short stories, Ulrike Almut Sandig leads the reader into various realms of disappearance. Whereas *Flamingos* (2010) consisted of eleven fairly realistic short stories, *Buch gegen das Verschwinden* is a breathless, daring engagement with poetic language at the level of narration. The six stories in the collection are thematically linked by disappearing people. A child wanders away from a vacation house only to return unscathed hours later. A widower forgets that his wife has died, and through his memories of her, he is able to re-call her into being. A woman loses her hiking partner during a snowstorm. However, because they have only just met and his body is never recovered, there is no proof that the man had even been there with her. Sandig's collection is about disappearance, yet it is also about experience, memory, and the aesthetics of narration.

The opening story, "Gegen das Verschwinden" begins with the narrator asking the reader to consider, for example, this particular RV driving on the highway towards Rostock. The reader is further asked to consider the occupants of the recreational vehicle—perhaps a man is driving with his pregnant girlfriend and his young son to visit a childhood friend of his. The distanced and contemplative narration highlights the universal characteristics of the small family. At the same time, the subsequent abrupt and disorientating shifts in focalization make clear that the story can only be about this set of characters. The narration progresses linearly, unfolding the three underlying stories—the road trip, the man's deteriorating relationship with his childhood friend, and the narrator's diegetic telling of the story to her father.

"Gegen das Verschwinden" introduces the aesthetic stakes of the collection—storytelling as well as the construction and deconstruction of a story. Sandig employs poetic techniques, eschewing at times the rules of grammar while favoring the subjunctive tense. This mode of narration is more effective in some stories (e.g. "Gegen das Verschwinden," "Die blauen Augen deiner Mutter," and "Tamangur.") than in others (e.g. "Geburtstagsgeschichte" and "Über unsere Abwesenheit"). In the story "Tamangur," the main character Eva has only read about hiking in Tamangur. Her longing to experience an adventure leads her to Arno, a Swiss native who claims to have first-hand knowledge of the area. As they hike, the two encounter a blinding and deafening snowstorm. When Arno falls behind, Eva continues on to safety. She calls for help; however, Eva cannot remember with any certainty if Arno had even spoken to her during those final moments, let alone if he had told her to keep going.

While Arno's existence is documented by the one photograph Eva has of him, there is no proof, aside from narration—Eva's story to the authorities and the narrator's retelling of the story to the reader—of Arno's presence in Tamangur. There is also no proof of his disappearance: "Es gibt Dinge von so unwahrscheinlicher Natur, dass die Leute sie einfach nicht glauben. Das stimmt nicht, sagen sie dann, als wären sie dabei gewesen. Aber sie waren nicht dabei und können es nicht wissen. Schreibt man diese unwahrscheinlichen Dinge aber auf und nennt sie eine Geschichte, dann glauben die Leute alles" (137). It is the poetics of narration that provide

credence to experience irrespective of the uncertainty of memory.

With this collection of short stories, Sandig further showcases her engagement with the post-reunification lyric scenes in Leipzig and Berlin, with their avant-garde and post-modern multi-medial productions centered on narration, storytelling, and performance. Born in East Germany in 1979, Sandig graduated from the Deutsches Literaturinstitut Leipzig in 2010. As a student, she published several collections of poetry with Connewitzer Verlag. Between 2007 and 2009, Sandig also co-edited the Leipzig based literary magazine. While living in Leipzig, she worked on the public poetry projects *augenpost* and *ohrenpost* with Marlen Pelny, with whom she also created the spoken word-music album *Märzwald* (2011). Firmly located in a landscape of shifting media, forms, and genres Sandig's work continues to grow in aesthetic dexterity and extra-diegetic importance.

Sandig, Ulrike Almut. *Buch gegen das Verschwinden*. Frankfurt am Main: Schöffling & Co., 2015.

French Colonial Soldiers in German Captivity during World War II by Raffael Scheck,

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Raffael Scheck's *French Colonial Soldiers in German Captivity during World War II* is a well-argued and comprehensively researched account of the experience of the roughly 100,000 servicemen from France's colonies during their time as prisoners of Nazi Germany. Scheck writes in a clear, straightforward style that manages to elucidate the byzantine complexities of wartime diplomacy. At the same time, he crafts an engaging narrative that gives voice to a group of men whose story, until recently, has been largely forgotten. His work belongs to a wave of POW studies that have enriched scholarship on the Second World War over the past two decades but rarely include the perspective of France's non-European prisoners. In this book, Scheck examines the experiences of the relatively well-studied West African troops and also directs his attention to the Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian soldiers, who made up the majority of France's colonial forces. His account brings together French colonial history, questions of race and national belonging, the politics of occupation, and the history of everyday life during the Second World War. Entering into these larger discussions, Scheck reinforces the growing consensus that a desire to preserve its empire was a major motive behind Vichy policies. In colonial matters, collaboration could often give way to competition. In addition, Scheck complicates the assumption that German authorities were driven solely by ideological considerations in their treatment of prisoners. He also questions the one-sided portrayal of colonial soldiers as victims that characterizes their public memory.

Over the course of nine chapters, Scheck traces the prisoners' story from their initial capture in 1940, to their brief internment in Germany, relocation to centers throughout France, and ultimate liberation in 1944. Along the way, Scheck examines the role of the numerous actors who shaped their story. These include the Vichy and Gaullist governments, the United States, a variety of relief agencies, authorities in Germany, the Wehrmacht, and French civilians. One of the many strengths of the book is Scheck's ability to locate the everyday history of the prisoners within this larger constellation of political dealings, economic shifts, and national aspirations.

The study's wide scope is a testament to the breadth and depth of Scheck's research. Previous histories of colonial troops or French soldiers captured by Germany have tended to rely exclusively on French sources. In contrast, Scheck brings together files from the French government with the documentation of American

officials, who monitored the condition of French prisoners early on, materials from the German Foreign Ministry and the German Armed Forces, which operated the camps, and the records of aid organizations such as the Red Cross. Taking advantage of this varied source base, Scheck skillfully triangulates his evidence to substantiate, and in some cases discredit, both contemporary and historiographical claims.

In addition to institutional accounts, Scheck has endeavored to include as much as possible the voices of the prisoners themselves, as expressed firsthand through interviews, memoirs, and other writings. Unfortunately, however, these remain scarce, not least due to the fact that most colonial troops were illiterate. Likewise, few direct accounts from camp guards are available. Despite these source limitations, Scheck still manages to capture a sense of what captivity was like on a day-to-day basis, while also illuminating large-scale developments.

Scheck makes a number of interrelated arguments regarding the treatment of French colonial POWs and their complex, often tense relationship with the country, for which they had fought. One of his most surprising claims is that, despite the abysmal conditions of the first camps and the widespread killing of French colonial prisoners by German troops immediately after capture, a story documented in the author's previous book, *Hitler's African Victims* (2006), the German treatment of colonial prisoners improved vastly by late July, 1940. Indeed, throughout the war, Scheck contends, the Germans generally adhered to the stipulations of the Geneva Convention for this group of captives. There were occasional instances of abuse or discrimination, and colonial troops experienced long delays when releases were promised, but German, American, and French sources, along with the statements of POWs themselves, all attest to relatively humane treatment overall. This finding is indeed very puzzling, given the status of non-whites in the Nazi racial hierarchy and in light of extensive scholarly research on the Wehrmacht's systematic starvation of Soviet prisoners.

Scheck's explanation for why colonial soldiers were treated fairly well is appropriately complex. He emphasizes the fact that Vichy, as well as other outside powers, took an active interest in the prisoners' fates. At first, the U.S. was designated the "protecting power" for French prisoners. When Vichy took over this role in November 1940, it considered the treatment of its POWs—including colonial soldiers—a matter of national prestige. Consequently, French authorities became heavily involved in inspecting camps, requesting improvements, lobbying for releases, and putting an end to any abuses. Working in tandem with French inspectors were the International Red Cross and a number of smaller aid organizations.

Aside from effective diplomatic and humanitarian intervention, the fact that most of the colonial prisoners ended up being held in occupied France also improved their situation. Relief groups could reach them relatively easily, compared to the white prisoners who were typically kept in Germany. They also benefited from close proximity to friendly civilians, including a colorful group of French women who acted as "godmothers" for them by sending supplies. Labor considerations, discussed in chapter 6, were another reason for the mild treatment. Scheck points out that the Germans recognized the importance of the colonial POWs for overcoming critical manpower shortages. Captives were put to work to revitalize French agriculture and forestry, increase industrial production, including armaments, and construct fortifications, despite the fact that war-related work was forbidden under the Geneva Convention. Due to the nature of the French economy, colonial prisoners tended to work in small detachments, which encouraged a relatively cordial relationship with their guards—initially German troops and later Frenchmen. As a result of these factors, Scheck contends, colonial prisoners' experiences in captivity, on the whole, compared favorably to those of white French and British prisoners.

A further reason for the tolerable conditions has to do with another of Scheck's central arguments, which is that colonial soldiers found themselves in the center of a struggle between Vichy authorities and German leaders for colonial influence. German propagandists took an early interest in the fate of colonial prisoners, especially North Africans, whom they targeted with extensive propaganda in the hopes of creating a potential

base of support for German ambitions in the region. While these efforts bore more fruit than many scholars have assumed, Scheck argues, in the end their most significant effect was to prompt a concerted campaign by French officials to ensure that colonial prisoners would remain loyal to Vichy. Fearing that the pride and integrity of the French Empire were at stake, they included pictures of Marshal Pétain on food packages and continually lobbied the German government to liberate colonial captives.

As he traces the politics of race and occupation, Scheck also makes an important contribution to the history of daily life under German rule, a subject that has attracted a good deal of scholarly attention in its own right. Scheck devotes two chapters (7 and 8) to the more immediate experiences of the captives, including material life, leisure, intra-camp disputes, and frequently successful escape attempts. In addition, he highlights their largely positive dealings with civilians, including relationships with French women. Occasionally these blossomed into marriages that provoked fears of miscegenation in the French Colonial Ministry. Scheck's discussion of these relationships and the host of legal complications that accompanied them is one of the book's most fascinating sections, revealing private and state attitudes toward gender, race, and class.

Scheck's final argument, which appears throughout the book and especially in its last chapter, is that the experience of captivity nurtured colonial prisoners' hopes for equality and engendered resentment against the French state. While under German control, prisoners often blamed Vichy for delayed releases or other forms of discrimination, unaware of the fact that these were actually the result of German policies. After their liberation, de Gaulle's provisional government assembled all former colonial prisoners into crowded, poorly sanitized camps for repatriation, where they were subjected to military discipline and expected to accept their status as subordinate to whites. This treatment, which continued a well-established pattern of paternalist racism on the part of French authorities, provoked a series of violent confrontations between former prisoners and French police. At the same time, colonial veterans cherished their largely positive relationships with white French civilians.

Although its size and complexity may not make it suitable for undergraduate reading lists, Scheck's work represents a significant contribution to our understanding of the experience of captivity during World War II and its relationship to international affairs and French identity. Scheck's work will be of particular value to scholars interested in the diplomacy of occupation, the important role played by colonial concerns in French national politics, and the experience of everyday life during the war.

Scheck, Raffael. *French Colonial Soldiers in German Captivity during World War II*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Visionen der Zukunft um 1900: Deutschland, Österreich, Russland edited by Sergej Taškenov and Dirk Kemper,

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The fin-de-siècle has proven to be a rich era for analysis, despite intense study for several decades. Sergej Taškenov and Dirk Kemper's new book *Visionen der Zukunft um 1900* expands the geographical scope of the fin-de-siècle by studying writers from Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. Taškenov and Kemper offer a fascinating fourteen-chapter edited volume that illustrates the extremely varied expectations and hopes for the future. The authors examined range from giants like Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka, or Fyodor Dostoyevsky to more obscure figures like Grigorij Zereteli and Michail Prischwin. As is natural for such a wide range of authors, *Visionen der Zukunft* shows a remarkable degree of both fear about the current (at the time) world, and

hope for a future utopia. While it is not surprising that Austro-Hungarian authors were pessimistic about the state of the Habsburg Monarchy and that Russian authors hoped for fundamental change within their state and society, non-specialists may be surprised to see similar cynicism towards the outwardly vibrant Wilhelmine Germany. Many writers were convinced that modern society was declining, decadent, and sorely in need of revitalization. *Visionen der Zukunft* is a good primer on literary hopes and fears, as well as suggestions for this revitalization.

Several of *Visionen der Zukunft's* findings mirror and confirm longstanding portrayals and problems of the turn of the century. Taškenov and Kemper's introductory essay examines the wide spectrum of attitudes towards Jews, and the inherent feeling of ambivalence about modernity tied to assimilated Jews in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia. This is a familiar theme from Carl Emil Schorske and Steven Beller. Michael Hagemeister's essay on visions of the future in Russia expands on this ambivalence towards Jews, examining the myriad Russian writers influenced by the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* some of whom believed the Jewish-influenced world order was a dystopian anti-Christ which needed to be replaced by a renewed Christian utopia. Other problems of modernity discussed in *Visionen der Zukunft* include the fin-de- siècle's newly threatening female sexuality, psychiatric uncertainties, and questions of diversity.

Regression of civilization was a common fear among fin-de- siècle authors. One of the most interesting chapters - Maria Kiseleva's - compares the fears of regression of Dostoyevsky, Kafka, and Robert Musil. These authors used insects as metaphors for the horrors of loose and ill-defined identity, a common fear in the modern era. Taškenov's chapter expands on these fears of identity by discussing problem of nerves, nervousness, and psychology in the works of Hermann Bahr. While nerves were a uniquely turn of the century obsession, there were other ways that the society could regress. Henrieke Stahl shows Russian author Andrej Belyjs's belief that human civilization was a rhythmical rise and fall, with increasing spiritual highs and lows as history progresses.

In order to establish the longed-for future utopia, turn of the century writers suggested a wide variety of solutions to societal ills. Thomas Mann, among others, saw closer relations between Russia and Germany as the solution to Europe's malaise. Russophilic Germans saw Russian spirituality as a needed revival for Europe and somehow even managed to see common anti-Catholic trends within German Protestantism and Orthodoxy. Unsurprisingly, many writers saw poetry, literature, and art as some of the best solutions for the ills of modernity. For example, as described by Aleksander Michajlovskij's chapter, Stephen George's circle of poets and intellectuals actively saw themselves as political writers with roles as leaders and revelators.

Visionen der Zukunft offers interesting starting points for analysis and further discussion. Perhaps most fundamentally, the book forces one to reconsider what a vision is. The various contributors look at a wide variety of visions ranging from literary fantasy, to religious musings, to psychological predictions, to scientific predictions. This variety helps to illustrate the richness and depth of fin-de-siècle literature and culture. Recommended.

Taškenov, Sergej and Dirk Kemper. *Visionen der Zukunft um 1900: Deutschland, Österreich, Russland*. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2014.

The Inner World (video game) by Studio Fizbin

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As Europe's second largest market for interactive computer entertainment software, Germany is home to a wealth of game development studios including Bigpoint, Gameforge, and arguably the largest and most well known, Crytek. Among these big names are a number of smaller, independent studios, whose products easily rival those of the larger companies in quality and popularity, for whom Studio Fizbin and their game *The Inner World* is an excellent example. Taking their name from a card game made up by Captain Kirk in an episode of *Star Trek: The Original Series*, Studio Fizbin won the award for *bestes deutsches Spiel*, beating *Crysis 3* and *Giana Sisters*, at the 2014 German Video Game Awards for their product *The Inner World*.

The Inner World is a 2-D point-and-click graphic adventure game based heavily on dialogue and puzzle solving. Available on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, and Android (tablet only), the game offers players eight to ten hours of interaction with the unique inhabitants of the fictional world, Asposien. The beautifully hand-drawn animation gives the player multiple levels of depth to explore in each area and simultaneously defines the game's cartoonish charm. *The Inner World* is available with both German and English dialogue and the player may switch between them within a single game from the title menu. The voice acting in both languages, as well as the wordplay in the writing, are superb; both of which contribute heavily to the rich development of the protagonist, Robert, his sidekick, Laura, and the myriad of other characters they encounter along their adventure. It is apparent at a few points in the game that some idioms were translated directly from German to English rather than using their native English equivalents (ex. Robert can refuse to harm another character on the grounds that he would “have a bad conscience” rather than because he would “feel guilty” or “feel bad”), but these in no way take away from the quality of the game's experience.

The Inner World tells the story of Asposien, a civilization existing on the inside of an earthen bubble, which has always relied upon the induction of wind currents for all of its needs. Fifteen years prior to the beginning of the game's narrative, however, the wind mysteriously stopped, ending the utopian existence of the Asposer and giving the evil wind monk, Conroy, the opportunity to seize power for himself with the promise of appeasing the gods. *The Inner World* presents a sort of dystopian rendition of Dr. Seuss' Whoville from *Horton Hears a Who!*, and continues the Seussian inspiration through the names and designs of the non-human characters (der Schrof, die Wollmaus, etc), and a tailor who loves to knit and appears as only arms protruding from a barred window recalling the Onceler in Suess' *The Lorax*.

The game's plot follows Robert as he searches for a medallion stolen from his adopted father, the evil wind monk Conroy, by a mischievous pigeon named Hack. Following the trail to the pigeon's owner, Laura, Conroy catches up with them just in time to reveal his evil nature to Robert, of which Robert had been until this point blissfully and cartoonishly unaware. Robert and Laura team up to find Laura's father, who has been abducted by Conroy, and ultimately discover that the “wind gods,” the Basylien, are nothing but mechanical creations at the control of Conroy, which he uses to turn to stone those Asposer with flutes or other wind instruments for noses. At first Robert believes he is the only one with a flute nose, but comes to find out that this distinguishes him as the current heir to the Asposian throne, and it is the music made by the royal family's nose orchestra that conjures the winds that power the civilization. Robert's journey is not just one of a prince reclaiming his rightful place, it is also one of overcoming personal naiveté, gaining skills, and bettering himself, ultimately appearing as an interactive, cartoon *Bildungsroman*.

Robert's journey out of naiveté is matched by Laura's transition from an abrasive, sarcastic thief into a

kind and headstrong girl who ultimately reciprocates Robert's feelings for her. Laura's original abrasiveness comes from her frustration and fear surrounding her father's disappearance, but through rescuing her father and watching Robert's dedication to helping her, she is eventually able to overcome her negativity and display a profound emotional change. Even more strongly affected by Conroy is the split character of Steve/Pete, who operates the reception area and acts as tour guide at the now defunct royal family's court. Steve appears as a physical person, who often provides bits of relevant information, but without context or understanding. Pete, however, is Steve's reflection (in a mirror, a polished shield, and a wash basin) and provides much more helpful information and context surrounding the royal family, the court, and the *Windkapelle*. Through dialogue, Robert learns that the fractured personality of Steve/Pete came about through Steve's guilt at having let Conroy enter the *Windkapelle* and ultimately turn the royal family to stone with his mechanical Basylien. Once Robert kills Conroy by turning his own creation against him, he is then able to free the Asposer from the stone that encapsulates them with a different version of the Basylien. By returning the royal family to life, freeing the rest of the Asposer, and ridding the world of Conroy, Robert takes his rightful place at the Asposian royal court, alleviates Steve's guilt and thereby helps Steve to reabsorb Pete as part of his own identity.

The gameplay is overall very smooth and well-crafted, although there are some brief issues with dialogue and scene transition in the Android version (played on a 2013 LG Nexus 7). The puzzles build in complexity from beginning to end, with those in the second half of the game proving to be rather intricate and requiring a mix of interactions with objects and other characters in particular orders and contexts. The puzzles are logically designed, and require that the player approaches and thinks through them from the less-restricted perspective inherent in cartoon animation; that is to say, the feasibility of combining or using acquired items is not limited by real-world physics or practical issues. Should the player run into difficulties, the help menu offers clear step-by-step hints that easily get gameplay back on track.

The Inner World is overall a fantastic game. For a 2-D animated game by a small, relatively new game design firm not only to win the prize for *bestes deutsches Spiel*, but in doing so also to beat the newest installment of the larger and, in computer gaming circles, legendary franchise *Crysis*, speaks volumes about the quality and universal appeal of *The Inner World*. The content and complexity are appropriate for a multi-generational audience, with the game situating itself as an heir to the Seussian animation and wordplay that have existed in popular culture since the mid twentieth century. Layered on top of this cartoonish charm is commentary on political morality, the effects of psychological trauma, and an underlying causative relationship between clean, renewable energy and universal happiness and prosperity.

The Inner World. Ludwigsburg: Studio Fizbin. 2013.

Nachts sind das Tiere
by Julie Zeh

Simone Pfleger
Washington University in St. Louis

Juli Zeh's publication of *Nachts sind das Tiere* is the author's most recent intervention into a variety of discourses that are circulating in contemporary German society, such as the lack of the public's interest and/or involvement in democratic governance on both a local and a national level, the dangers in the age of digitalization, and the collection of personal data of Germany's citizens. Akin to her previous non-fictional works, among them *Alles auf dem Rasen: Kein Roman* (2006), *Die Diktatur der* Demokraten (2012), and *Treideln – Frankfurter Poetikvorlesungen* (2013), *Nachts sind das Tiere* is a collection of 39 short essayistic pieces, all of which were originally published in either German or English between 2005 and 2014. Some of the

texts appeared in renowned German newspapers such as *Die Zeit*, *Die Welt*, or the *FAZ*, others in magazines like *stern*, *FOCUS*, or *Cosmopolitan*, some are talks or lectures, and a few others are first published in this very collection.

Evincing Zeh's role as author, lawyer, and arbiter of public opinion, the texts comment on issues such as (individual) freedom, surveillance, and network politics, and testify to the writer's political commitment and outspokenness. In the author's typical candid manner, Zeh, for example, describes feminists as antagonistic, confrontational, and even militaristic women with "kurze[r] Igelfrisur" (18) and "unlackierten Fingernägel[n]" (13), ascribes a stench of "Randgruppe" to hackers, and proclaims that whoever does not agree with her opinion did not understand a single one of her essays and was "offensichtlich während des kompletten 20. Jahrhunderts auf einen anderen Planeten verreist" (71).

Being most likely all too familiar to the avid Zeh reader, the author's style in *Nachts sind das Tiere* is straightforward, sarcastic, and trenchant, and her observations of the *Zeitgeist* are astute and profound. Many of the claims in the essay collection call to mind both Zeh's open letter to the German chancellor Angela Merkel in which the author demands the resolution of the NSA affair—including 78,000 signatures in support of her demand—as well as her key role in the foundation of the global initiative "Writers Against Mass Surveillance" with other writers such as Ilija Trojanow and Eva Menasse which called for the necessity to save democracy in the digital age and was endorsed by more than 220,000 supporters worldwide.

In *Nachts sind das Tiere*, Zeh critiques those citizens who are more involved in debates about the soccer world cup than pressing national socio-economic and political issues, such as debates around Hartz-IV, and urges her readers to demand time to read, reflect, and react. She proposes, for instance, a new tax model that would allow each citizen to distribute a portion of their wage and income taxes themselves based on which department(s) they wish to support. In this vein, Zeh's ideal—and potentially idealized—citizen is able to take time out of their daily life to engage with (inter)national politics in its various facets: a claim that is well-received and support by a number of like-minded thinkers, but less popular among the vast majority of Germany's politicians and intellectuals.

With its main focus on democracy in the digital age, Zeh argues in *Nachts sind das Tiere* that subjectivity and individuality have radically changed in the twenty-first century. According to the author, hatred, rejection, and condemnation are now directed toward individual beings such as tax delinquents, schmoozers, and terrorists. Through the accumulation of data, these people can be discerned from the ostensibly law-abiding and righteous general public, and concomitantly rendered powerless and incapable to act.

Zeh further attacks politicians and the media who propagate the belief that criminal acts can be predicted through collecting excessive amounts of data. However, in many of the essays in *Nachts sind das Tiere*, Zeh stress that neither the circulation and perpetuation of prejudices nor the collection and archival of information can ultimately prevent us from the many moments of contingency of life. Rather than preventing illicit acts from happening, the use of public surveillance techniques limit personal freedom and the right to privacy and self-determination.

In this vein, the fear of terrorist actions motivates, what Zeh calls, the conversion of "Iwan" to "Islamist" and "Kommunismus" to "Gottesstaat" (71): in other words, the transition from communism as the alleged state enemy number one for democratic nations of the twentieth century to radical Islamism as the most frequently cited transnational archenemy of the Western hemisphere of the twenty-first century.

Highlighting the unproductive nature of such thinking, Zeh's essay collection points to what is at stake when both hysterical media spectacles and a general sense of "Politikverdrossenheit" (18) lay hold of Germany's

society. That is, shifts that often masked performances and expressions of state authority and sovereignty that are deeply entrenched in propagandistic polemics and generalizations which do not concur with Germany's acclaimed support of a non-violent quest for universal human rights.

Thus, the publication of *Nachts sind das Tiere* fulfills (at least) a twofold purpose: it can be understood to function as a type of archive of Zeh's journalistic and essayistic writing of the last roughly ten years, but it also serves as an appeal to the reader to become a conscientious citizen who interrogates Germany's current political, socio-economic, and cultural landscape, and champions their rights.

Zeh, Juli. *Nachts sind das Tiere*. Frankfurt am Main: Schöffling und Co. Verlag, 2014.