

## BOOK REVIEWS

### ***Horst Janssen: Ein Leben***

**by Henning Albrecht,**

Dr. Ursula Baer

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In his seven hundred page biography *Horst Janssen*, Henning Albrecht set out to introduce the Hamburg artist in a new way to the world. Most notably, the biographer wanted to avoid following previous authors' path, namely, to focus primarily on the shocking, the enfant terrible and on Janssen's alcoholism and violent outbursts. To do that Albrecht follows the classic "Bildung" and life structure, 'development' (early years, school, studies/apprenticeship), 'mastery' and 'decline.' He frames the artist's life journey with two chapters that are more analytical. The introductory chapter offers some explanations and insights into why Janssen was the person he was and traces many of the artist's struggles back to his early years: that Janssen was illegitimate, never met his father, was mainly raised by his grandparents, spent three years in the "Nationalsozialistische Erziehungsanstalt" (National Socialist Residential Institution for Education) in Haseldünne and was initially left to fend for himself when the school closed its doors in 1945. The last chapter focuses on Janssen's work and why his large oeuvre vanished from the public and critics' attention after his death in 1995. The biographer includes many and at times long citations, which give voice to the artist himself as well as to people in his life. The book's one hundred pages of endnotes and the long list of interviewees and of people who generously allowed him access to collections of the artist's art, writing and correspondence, listed under "Dank" (Acknowledgements) attest to the extensive research Albrecht undertook for his Janssen biography. Albrecht's consistency in focusing more on Janssen's work and less on the disasters of his private and professional lives is the book's strength as well as its weakness.

Albrecht, the historian, succeeds in making the emerging Hamburg art scene after World War II come alive and creates with these beautifully written sections a source for anyone interested in the history of post-war Hamburg and its artists. The main chapters of the biography follow Janssen's journey as an artist and introduce readers to his vast oeuvre of drawings, etchings, pen and ink drawings, letters, other writings and books. Albrecht groups Janssen's creations into early works, landscapes, self-portraits, flowers, erotic art and letters and organizes them around the artist's relationships with women. The biography contains many black and white and color reproductions of Janssen's work, which help bring his art closer to today's generations of readers. True to his intention of introducing a new picture of Janssen, and in defense of his skill as a serious artist, Albrecht includes detailed and at times lengthy descriptions of Janssen's techniques. He particularly elaborates on what the artist called "Kopieren" (copying) and argues that Janssen's copying was in fact an inventive and new approach to old techniques and motives. Albrecht's discussion of Janssen's conscious decision to follow a more traditional approach in a time when conceptual art and avant-garde dominated the art world, of Janssen's apparent disdain for artists such as Warhol and Beuys as well as of the modern art world's dismissive classification of Janssen's art as decorative, offers a glimpse

into what defined and shaped twentieth-century art. Despite the modern art world's critical assessment of Janssen's work, his art was very popular during his lifetime. Janssen's work hung in the city's public buildings, and in law and doctor offices, and was shown in more than a thousand exhibitions in Germany and internationally. Some considered him to be one of the biggest "Zeichner" (draughtsman) of the twentieth-century, second only to Picasso. Out of fear of not having enough time to focus on his work, Janssen rejected offers that would have brought him closer to the established art world. He withdrew, for example, from the opportunity to illustrate Günter Grass's *Die Blechtrommel* (*The Tin Drum*) and declined in 1965 a position as art professor at the 'Hochschule für bildende Künste' (University of Fine Arts), Hamburg. Janssen, readers learn, was a dedicated and prolific artist and businessmen and generously gifted friends, lovers and supporters with his art. He, however, also destroyed many of his works. Albrecht closes his prologue by calling Janssen an *artiste maudit*, damned and blessed with exceptional skills, an *enfant terrible*, a social cretin and one of the greatest artists of the twentieth-century. He concludes his biography by briefly summarizing how Janssen burned bridges with galleries, collectors and museums. He points out the artist's self-chosen isolation and focus on tradition, his animosity toward other artists, his aggression and alcoholism as well as "schlechte Kritik" (Albrecht 2015, 588) (bad critique) by critics are the reasons why the artist and his work were almost completely forgotten after Janssen's death. Albrecht went to great lengths in this biography to ensure that Janssen's art is not overshadowed by the scandals for which the artist was well known throughout his life. The remaining question to be asked is, to what end?

Historian and biographer Henning Albrecht, I argue, missed in this book an opportunity to reintroduce Horst Janssen and his work within today's knowledge and critical discourses about patriarchal, heterosexist and ethnic-racial structured Western societies. To be clear, Albrecht does mention that all of Janssen's love relationships seemed to follow the same pattern and included violence. The biography's sections that are dedicated to intensive work phases Janssen experienced when he was in a relationship, or grieving the loss of one, do each include a comment about the violence Janssen committed against the respective partner. Albrecht also points out that the artist opined, "seine Partnerin habe seine Gewalt gefälligst zu ertragen" (Albrecht 2015, 110) (his female partner has to endure his violence) and mentions that Janssen enjoyed inflicting fear and was a great manipulator. He also recounts how the artist scared his former partner Birgit Sander into giving up the gallery she and others had built, and does not shy away from reporting that the artist repeatedly stole from his aunt who continued to support him unconditionally. However, all this and other information are too often delivered in brief and at times one-sentence statements without any further comments. Another example of this approach is the Klaus Pinkus affair. It is a great relief that Albrecht reprints the full response of arts dealer Pinkus to Janssen's public accusations and defamation as readers have at that point in the biography read over two hundred pages of how the people in Janssen's life and of Hamburg let the artist get away with pretty much everything. However, the biographer's two brief comments, namely, that Janssen found in Pinkus his match and that the artist was not really a Nazi, are inadequate when considering that Janssen shouted in public that Pinkus, 'the Jew,' 'the swine,' has made money off his work. The only explanations Albrecht offers throughout the book for Janssen's violent actions and speech are that the artist was an alcoholic, immature ("a big kid"), a prescription drug addict and was un-familied as a child and youth. Albrecht's desire to show another side of Janssen led the biographer to omit discourses that have been developed

and widely taught to confront the Holocaust and patriarchal structures, or any information on the emerging discourse dealing with the history of the hundreds of thousand of people who were in the last century in Western societies un-familied due to heterosexist, patriarchal and ethnic-racial structured and politically guided compulsory government-welfare measures. In doing so, Henning Albrecht missed in his Horst Janssen biography an opportunity to introduce this challenging yet undoubtedly gifted artist to a new generation and to start the vital discussion on what it meant to be not only an artist but a great artist, under what conditions and at what price that title was bestowed and about society's fascination with this type of usually male artist in the Western world. The discussion of these questions and the inclusion of pertinent discourses would have made the biography great and a 'Reader' for anyone interested in twentieth-century art, culture, history and society.

Albrecht, Henning. *Horst Janssen: Ein Leben*. Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 2016.

### ***Between Yesterday and Tomorrow: German Visions of Europe, 1926-1950***

**by Christian Bailey,**

Dr. Cindy Walter-Gensler

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The early post WWII period has largely been considered the beginning of modern European integration, with the process initiated by individual statesmen and events including various European treaties. By focusing on the preexisting roots of debates and discourses about Europe dating to back to the interwar years, however, Christian Bailey not only problematizes the foundational myth of European integration as a linear process taking place only after 1945, but also challenges the impression that merely a few political leaders were primary initiators of this process. To make his case, the historian focuses on civil society associations such as cultural journals and political organizations, as well as grassroots movements across the ideological spectrum and how these groups helped to integrate Europe as a means of dealing with the problematic redrawing of the European map, the weakness of interwar democracy, and shifting the balance of power away from the nation-state toward local and regional leaders.

After laying the theoretical and methodological groundwork in his introduction, Bailey first analyses the cultural journal *Merkur: Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken* in chapters one and two. In particular, the author highlights the magazine's two editors' background, working for the *Neue Rundschau* and the *Europäische Revue* in the 1920s and 1930s, to demonstrate how the legacy of European unity debates between 1918-1933 reached far into the Cold War era's public discourses. Moreover, Bailey's compelling examples taken from the literary field show that the ongoing support of European integration spanning from the interwar years into the post-1945 period relates to Germany's political left and right both fearing that Europe could be dominated either by the US or Soviet Union. Hence, the historian offers a new perspective on the roots of Third Force sentiment in Europe, clearly preceding the onset of the

Cold War and not tied to single statesmen, but rather linked to transnational networks and the (largely conservative) social elite.

In chapters three and four Bailey then considers how the *Internationaler Sozialistischer Kampfbund* (IKS), an interwar splinter group of the SDP, adapted its internationalist perspective of the interwar years to the early post-WWII period. Most importantly, the author illustrates how members of the IKS became influential figures in the SDP after 1945 and went on to shape the party's policy toward European integration as a means to reunite West and East Germany. This contrasts with much previous scholarship, viewing the SDP's *Ostpolitik*—particularly as voiced by Kurt Schumacher—in opposition to rather than in accordance with an integrated Europe. Along these lines, Bailey's case study exemplifies why and how socialists supported a Third Force Europe after WWII while opposing the European integration policy of the CDU during this time. At the same time, the author outlines how the commitment of numerous SDP politicians to a united *Mitteleuropa* was rooted in debates to overturn the national political order since the end of WWI.

Chapters five and six then turn to the rival political groups *Das Demokratische Deutschland* and *Freies Deutschland*. Despite reflecting opposite sides of the political spectrum (Christian-centered and communist, respectively), both organizations operating out of Swiss exile advocated the federalization of Europe as a means of promoting regionalism in reconstructed Germany to constrain parliamentary democracy and the political power of individual political leaders. The reasons therefore, as Bailey posits, can be attributed equally to the Weimar experience as well as being exposed to Swiss political culture. Building on recent research by historians Michael Gehler and Wolfram Kaiser, however, Bailey illustrates particularly the importance of these groups' transnational experience in reconsidering the non-linear history of European integration. In this context, the scholar also explains why European integration nevertheless came to be seen as primarily as a series of negotiations between individual statesmen, when in fact the political developments leading to an integrated Europe were based rather on an unusual degree of cooperation across party lines.

*Between Yesterday and Tomorrow* and its innovative perspective thus clearly enriches our understanding of the history of modern European integration and belongs on the bookshelf of every scholar interested in this topic. However, the book has its limitations. Most importantly, it does not entirely live up to its goal of showing how the integrationist agendas outlined in this work have permeated the German *Zivilgesellschaft* in shaping the public opinion regarding European integration. As Bailey highlights in his introduction, he set out to investigate not major political players, but rather civil society bodies as agents influencing the public's attitude toward Europe. Yet the historian frequently focuses in his research on well-known politicians, for instance Wilhelm Hoegner, who was the Minister President of Bavaria for most of the late 1940s and 1950s. Likewise, the elitist literary and cultural magazines discussed in chapters one and two cannot truly be classified as civil society bodies influencing public opinion on a large scale.

Nevertheless, Bailey compellingly demonstrates European integration as a non-linear process starting well before 1945 and supported by more than a few political leaders. In addition, and perhaps surprisingly, Bailey's research also contributes to re-thinking the concept of *Heimat*. His discussion in chapter six of how to overcome the ideologies of nation-states by focusing on the idea of a regional *Heimat* in post-WWII Europe as argued for by various social groups might thus inspire academic interested in cultural and literary studies, as well. Hence, the study offers new wide-ranging findings not only relevant for historians, but also for the larger German Studies community, and so is highly recommended.

Bailey, Christian. *Between Yesterday and Today: German Visions of Europe 1926-1950*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2016.

### ***Revisiting the "Nazi Occult": Histories, Realities, Legacies***

**By Monica Black and Eric Kurlander**

Simone Boissonneault

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This curated collection of articles, structured chronologically beginning in the decades immediately prior to the second world war and extending through the war into contemporary times, is an attempt at its core to examine the roots of the academic and pop-cultural connection between Nazism and the occult. While framing the collection in the introduction with the admonition that there is no direct connection to be drawn between occult trends and traditions of the Weimar era and Nazism, the volume posits that the influences and echoes of these trends on the Third Reich should not be ignored. In a concise introduction, Monica Black and Eric Kurlander briefly place the articles in this volume in the context of prior work in the field while addressing the need for more examination of the roles of the occult in the development of the Third Reich and in the development of our contemporary understanding of the events during and preceding the second World War. Walking a line between stark denial and flagrant embellishment of the role of occultism in Germany and in the development of the Third Reich, the essays in this collection attempt to establish a new historiographical perspective on interactions between Germany and the occult through examinations of a wide array of media.

The volume's initial three articles encompass inquiries addressing the tensions between philosophies of the occult and the Enlightenment in Germany around the turn of the 20th Century by examining particular occurrences in the decades leading up to the rise of the Third Reich. First is Peter Staudenmeier's examination of the role played by esoteric thinkers in the development of philosophies of rationality in the decades before and after 1900. Scientific developments emerging during this period were often led by thinkers open to the "grand vistas of unprecedented possibility" offered by a confluence of social and economic conditions. Reacting against heightened materialism, numerous thinkers worked to develop esoteric worldviews and new spiritualities in the context of the rapid pace of modernity. Immediately

thereafter, Perry Meyers addresses the widespread embrace of monism in the wake of immense social, cultural, and technological changes that came during the Wilhelmine era. By looking in particular at the works of two thinkers and intellectual publications, he establishes an image of German intelligentsia as a force using a variety of esoteric philosophies in an attempt to discover a solution to the perceived incongruence of spiritual and physical understandings of human life. This blending of spirituality and scientific discovery, the article posits, led to the establishment of a “priestly class of scientists” and to assertions of German cultural superiority which would later be manipulated by Nazi partisans in their quest to control the thought of the population. The third entry in the book’s first chapter is John Ondrovik’s article addressing the actions of terrorist Max Hoelz, an almost mythical figure appearing in 1920s Saxony to lead uprisings in 1919-20. Although only briefly active in Germany, Hoelz became a figure of some legend in the area, appearing representative of what Ondrovik identifies as a period of tribulations both seen and unseen--difficulties obtaining resources after the first World War and a sudden rise in violent crime. In this context, Hoelz’s anti-military exploits and his ability to apparently “disappear” created a figure more capable of manipulating the uncertainty created by war and economic turmoil than the everyday citizens subject to the constant change and worry of a turbulent time. The final segment of this first chapter comprises Jared Poley’s examination of Siegfried Kracauer’s seminal works and the events during the Weimar period that created Kracauer’s beliefs about the links between politics, culture, and spirituality. Through Kracauer’s work, Poley offers, we can foresee Weimar culture’s self destruction in the very turbulence that is so often romanticized today.

Following these explorations, the second set of articles picks up during wartime with Fabian Link and J. Laurence Haré’s picture of the Third Reich’s archaeological excavations of a Viking settlement at Haithabu. As part of Himmler’s research into German heritage, these excavations serve as exemplary of the fine line between scientific exploration and the so-called “pseudoscience” of occult study as the researchers involved were serious scientists tasked with finding evidence of some inherent German ancestral superiority. The authors thereby point to the political implications of the term “pseudoscience” and its repercussions. The next article, written as a collaboration by Uwe Schellinger, Andreas Anton, and Michael T. Schetche, looks at the apparent contradictions between occultism and Nazi ideology as exemplified by a number of particular naval experiments in order to determine the compatibility of the two and the possibility for researchers of the occult to flourish under the rule of the Nazi government. The final article of the examination of the second chapter addresses the sway held by the stigmatic Therese Neumann, a figure granted significant reverence during her life--this extended through the Weimar and into the post-war era. Michael O’Sullivan contextualizes Neumann’s emergence as a widely-known religious figure and examines evidence of the relationship between the Nazi regime and her very public brand of spirituality as a concrete example of the broader and often uneasy relationship between the National Socialist government and religious or esoteric thinking.

Finally, light is shed on postwar actions encompassing intersections of National Socialist ideologies with occult or esoteric philosophies, beginning with the 1949 emergence of mystic Bruno Gröning whose mixture of Catholic and occult messages and large following fostered

concerns about the rise of another cult of personality in Germany immediately post-war. Monica Black connects Gröning's rise to the tradition of interest in spirituality and occultism in Germany in addition to attributing it to the turbulence and fear of the immediate post-war period. Secondly, Anna Lux examines the impact of the parapsychologist Hans Bender, a spirit hunter and erstwhile professor of parapsychology who was a popular figure after the war. Due to his use of mass media, Bender's face and message was widely accessible and which, as Lux argues, served to legitimize and popularize parapsychology. Jeff Hayton addresses a medium on the rise when he analyzes Nazis in contemporary popular culture through the use of video games. In this medium, "the Nazi" has existed from the earliest days as an adversary representative of ultimate, unquestionable evil and depravity, a connection often cemented through a concurrence with supernatural subject matter: the "Nazi zombie", for example, has at this point become a genre trope. As Hayton asserts, however, the reduction of Nazi atrocities to fantasy violence (often to the complete exclusion of real-life atrocities such as the Holocaust) is problematic to say the least. Finally, Oded Heilbronner scrutinizes connections between *völkisch* ideologies as laid out by early esoterics and contemporary European neofacist rock groups whose music idealizes images similar to those held aloft by the "occult- and pagan-Germanic musings" of Himmler (271). Through these romanticized musical visions of a constructed past, neofacist rock music has helped to perpetuate a number of "alternative histories" that in turn sustain Third Reich imagery as a form of rebellion.

The articles contained in this collection span a significant period of time and a diverse array of topics, but do so with a clear and coherent red thread--the German traditions of science and spirituality which, far from being mutually exclusive, often intersect throughout German history. To this day, the public perception of these intersections remains central to many popular depictions of World War 2 and National Socialism, and this text offers valuable insights into the roots of these traditions as well as contributing a fresh perspective to long-standing scholarship in the field.

Black, Monica and Eric Kurlander. *Revisiting the "Nazi Occult": Histories, Realities, Legacies*. New York: Camden House, 2015.

### ***The Challenge of Surrealism: The Correspondence of Theodor W. Adorno and Elisabeth Lenk***

**By Susan H. Gillespie,**

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The core of the book is a correspondence between a teacher and a student. Of course these particular people are quite exceptional: the teacher was the philosopher Theodor Adorno, one of the founders and leading members of the Frankfurt School of critical theory, and the student was "one of Germany's most original and interesting woman scholars" (vii) Elisabeth

Lenk, who actively promoted both the Frankfurt School and Surrealism as intersecting movements.

The book was originally published in German in 2001 to recognize this relationship. Now for the first time in English, the correspondence was translated by Susan H. Gillespie and published by University of Minnesota Press in 2015. The correspondence runs from page 55 to page 185 in the book, and extends from November, 1962 until August, 1969, at which point the exchange ended due to Adorno's death.

The correspondence offers a remarkable record of a close academic friendship and there are at least two reasons to look at this relationship more closely. First, the letters introduce the reader to a very personal, almost intimate side of Adorno, a side that is usually obscured by the gravity of his academic writing. More importantly, the correspondence gives an insight into a usually concealed part of the academic context: the dialogue between a leading academic and his/her doctoral student. The correspondence reveals that such a relationship can provide an informal setting in which the creative inclinations of aspiring scholars may be shaped by their mentors. For anyone who has ever been a Ph.D. student in any field this book will ring a bell, as it is relevant to the issues and questions all advanced teachers and students face.

Apart from that, *The Challenge of Surrealism* will be interesting to anyone who wants to explore Surrealism and especially the links between Surrealism and the Frankfurt School. As noticed by Rita Bischof, a scholar of Surrealism and former student of Lenk's, the work features the perspectives of different generations on Surrealism and Critical Theory. Adorno's view is that of someone who was himself growing as a young scholar at the time of the emergence of Surrealism and Critical Theory both, whereas Lenk's view is that of a young scholar a generation later who is struggling for a job, and trying to find her ground in the unstable world of academics. Both meet at the intersection of Surrealism and Critical Theory, and for both it was a profitable meeting in many senses.

The book explores Lenk's and Adorno's controversial perceptions of Surrealism within the correspondence and with supporting essays and creative texts. The scholars come to look at the issue not only from very different stages in their careers, but also from different places. Lenk was in Paris at the very forefront when the movement experienced rediscovery by André Breton and his *groupe surréaliste* in the 1960s. She offers her view of Surrealism as a "political matter," (3) a force that attempted "to break up the darkness of the present." (37) Her perspective is much closer to Walter Benjamin, "who saw surrealism as a response to the 'crisis of intelligentsia, more precisely, of the humanist concept of freedom.'" (viii) By contrast, Adorno at first seemed somewhat remote from Surrealism. In his essay, Adorno focuses more on surrealism's "affinity with psychoanalysis," (33) and developed its connections to dreams.

Along with Surrealism and politics Adorno and Lenk's correspondence features topics



that range from networking to scheduling appointments, personal experiences, and formal university events. The collection takes advantage of the fact that both scholars observed and were involved in the groundbreaking social and political events of their time and were in contact with a great number of prominent people among them Jürgen Habermas, Ingeborg Bachmann, and Herbert Marcuse.

Apart from the letters, there is a good bit of supporting material included in the book which helps to clarify and to contextualize the importance of the correspondence. To frame the discussion are the enlightening “Introduction” by Rita Bischof, two new translations of Walter Benjamin’s poetic article “Surrealism: Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia” and Adorno’s critical essay “Surrealism Reconsidered,” and in the conclusion of the first section, Elisabeth Lenk’s “Critical Theory and Surreal Practice.” Altogether these essays raise the question of, as Lenk puts it, “whether surrealism – whatever its practitioners may have thought – was and is not precisely the practice that is appropriate to critical theory; and whether, on the other hand, critical theory was and is not precisely the theory towards which surreal practice was oriented.” (41) The supporting material is very helpful for understanding the issues raised by the correspondence.

Following the correspondence itself there are several more texts by Lenk: her “Afterword” to a work by Louis Aragon and her “Introduction” to a work by Charles Fourier. In contrast to the previous essays, these works do not seem to contribute to the argument as much as they demonstrate Lenk’s witty and charismatic writing skills.

Ultimately *The Challenge of Surrealism* features a few shorter pieces by “Castor Zwieback,” the pseudonym of Adorno and his friend Carl Dreyfus who co-authored these texts. There is something quite charming about these texts. They are clearly the work of young, enthusiastic readers wanting to participate in Surrealism in some form. What would have supported the overall argument and made the texts even more relevant would have been Elisabeth Lenk’s response to these pieces. At this point, the nature of her feedback remains unknown and requires further investigation.

The book makes a significant contribution to research on both the Frankfurt School and Surrealism. Furthermore, it provides valuable insight into the turbulent waters of the academic world, especially the highly charged relationships between doctoral students and their supervisors. This collection should be consulted by at least these two groups and will be relevant for research and teaching alike.

Gillespie, Susan H. *The Challenge of Surrealism: The Correspondence of Theodor W. Adorno and Elisabeth Lenk*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.

## ***Taking Stock of German Studies in the United States***

**Edited by Rachel J. Halverson and Carol Anne Costabile-Heming**

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*Taking Stock of German Studies in the United States* is a fresh and updated take on the status of German programs in the twenty-first century. The book begins with an introduction by editors Carol Anne Costabile-Heming and Rachel J. Halverson, a note by Frank Trommler, and is divided into four major sections: I. Curriculum, II. Initiatives, III. Research, and IV. The New Millennium. The essays collected in this book seek to provide solutions to the current challenges that the instruction of German as a foreign language faces in the United States today and is meant to serve as a useful resource to any educator looking for advice to keep their German program thriving in spite of these challenges in the new millennium.

The Introduction by editors Costabile-Heming and Halverson, is a comprehensive and detailed examination of the present state of, a brief history of, and future course for German Studies in the United States. The first part, from which the Introduction takes its name, "Introduction: Challenges and Opportunities for the Study of German," acclimates the reader to the present state of German Studies in the United States. Costabile-Heming and Halverson list statistics from the Modern Language Association (MLA), the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) that report the state of German programs in the United States "from Kindergarten through postgraduate study" (2) in the new millennium. However, despite "an overall increase in the number of language learners studying German at all levels" (2), many German programs in the United States are seeing a decline in enrollments and in some cases, even closing. Costabile-Heming and Halverson then track the roots of these challenges facing German Studies in the second part, "Previous Assessment of German Studies in the United States" from the 1970s to present-day. Issues of concerns in the 1970s and 1980s included the need to find "what is specifically American" (4) about German Studies to differentiate it and establish its identity as a discipline separate from the German *Germanistik*, the 1990s were what the editors call a "wake-up call" for German Studies, when Germanists John Van Cleve and A. Leslie Wilson attributed "the enrollment crisis in American Germanics" to be "a teaching problem" (4), and the remainder of the nineties and into the 2000s saw Germanists taking initiatives to address these issues and redefine German Studies in the United States. In the search for a new identity, the fields of Technology, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Globalization (or the "dominance" of the English language (7)), began to frequent conference papers. Finally, in the third part, "German Studies in the New Millennium," the editors provide their statement of purpose: to collect essays that provide a "positive perspective" on the future of German Studies and "propose concrete and successful ideas to strengthen the study of German at the local, regional, and even national levels" (8). The book is dedicated to Helene Zimmer-Loew, who served as Executive Director of the AATG in 2012 from 1985-2012.

Following the Introduction, the editors include a note by Frank Trommler titled "German

Studies: The Short Version,” which builds on the third part of the editors’ introduction. Much like the editors, Trommler praises Helene Zimmer-Loew’s service to the AATG and her accomplishments during her nearly thirty year career. Trommler also embraces Technology and Cultural Studies, arguing that the Internet has given students “unprecedented access to German, Austrian, and Swiss websites for classroom and home work,” (23) and arguing that Cultural Studies, “help [to] situate and explore the individual languages” taught at the high school and college levels in the new millennium (25). Trommler’s review of German Studies in the United States since the 1980s is very positive, and his outlook for the future is optimistic.

The first section of the book “Part I: Curriculum,” features two essays by Lynne Tatlock and Albrecht Classen which focus on the essential role of curriculum in peaking and maintaining students’ interest in German. Both Tatlock and Classen have excited their students about the German language by appealing to them first through German culture. Tatlock’s essay is an account of her experiences during “The Making of Modern Europe,” a unique curriculum which succeeded at Washington University in St. Louis for ten years from 2001 to 2011. This program which “focused on the tense Franco-German relations in the age of European nationalism (1789-1914)” was led by German, French and History professors and open to students who had previously taken German or French as high school students. These students then “enrolled simultaneously in either a German or French [language] course appropriate to their abilities” (35). Classen’s essay focuses on the crucial role of Medieval Studies in German Studies and how its relevance is equal to that of “modern and postmodern approaches, such as film studies, *Migrationsliteratur* (literature by immigrants) and[...]Weimar literature”(52). In this essay Classen shares his success stories in engaging students through Medieval Studies and the German language using the *Nibelungenlied* and Hartmann von Aue’s *Der arme Heinrich*. Tatlock and Classen’s unique curriculums indicate that there is still a healthy interest among students in German language and culture.

The second section, “Part II: Initiatives” features four essays by Kathleen Condray, Gregory H. Wolf, Rachel J. Halverson, and Regina Braker, who prove that it takes true initiative to advocate for German programs across institutions of higher education in the United States, if German departments are to survive in the twenty-first century. To this end, Condray shares the steps that the University of Arkansas has taken to save its German department from elimination, which includes offering coursework suited to the needs of engineering and business majors, implementing the Goethe-Institut B1, B2 and C1 exams into their advanced curriculums, and assisting students with internships (73). Wolf’s essay asks the question: “What and how should we teach?” in order to have a thriving German department (89). The answer he poses is rooted in “translingual and transcultural competency” (90) where “[l]anguage and culture are inextricably intertwined” (95), which is how Wolf has been able to operate as a “one-person program” at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois (94). Halverson’s essay shifts the focus to professional development. Her essay focuses on the “EIKK- Die Entwicklung von interkultureller Kompetenz im Kontext” (104), a seminar for professionals to gain “a common understanding of intercultural understanding of foreign language instruction [...] pedagogical goals, and methods for assessing achievement of cultural understanding” (105). Regina Braker’s essay shares her experience seeking cultural understanding and equivalency between the CEFR

(Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) system A1-C2, and the system of the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) at the KEFKO Seminar in Leipzig. Much like Condray, Braker comes to the conclusion that the A1-C2 examinations should “inform” American teachers “of the kinds of tasks [they] need to engage in to prepare [their] students as they develop language skills and cultural insights” (127). Although these contributors are writing from different perspectives, the common theme to be found in these four essays is advocacy. It is only by advocating for German Studies, that the discipline will continue to flourish and not be subjected to elimination at the university level.

The third section, “Part III: Research,” features four essays by Aleidine J. Moeller and Sheri Hurlbut, Kurt Buhanan and Glenn S. Levine, Teresa R. Bell, and Traci S. O’Brien. These essays focus on the research necessary to develop a strong educational curriculum for students of German at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, in order to train well-rounded future educators in German Studies. Moeller and Hurlbut’s essay focuses on the “impact visionary leadership can have on a field of research” (137). In response to benefits of the Internet, professors developed the “on-line master of arts degree in German Language Pedagogy” offered through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, also known as GOLDEN (German Online Distance Education Network), with coursework focusing on training teachers in “education” (138). Buhanan and Levine’s essay “*Woher und Wohin?*” focuses on how far German Studies has come since Helene Zimmer-Loew started as executive director in 1985 during the “mature Cold War mode” (155), and the direction that German Studies is moving towards in the twenty-first century. Their essay compiles research from 1986-2011 on German pedagogy and provides articles for reference on “teaching and learning of German grammar” (174-179), “teaching with and through German-language literary works” (180-189), and “teaching German and German Studies” (190-193). Similar to Condray in Part II: Initiatives, Bell’s essay focuses on the amount of research necessary in order to retain a German program. Her essay is a unique study which “compare[s] and contrast[s] teachers’ perceptions of effective teaching practices with those of their students” (201). Bell believes that this kind of research involving both student and teacher participation can only encourage students to “consider continuing their study of German at more advanced levels” (211). O’Brien’s essay focuses on the pedagogical training of graduate students. His research is based on his belief which demands that equal attention must be paid to the full professional development of the graduate student in “three major roles: FL [Foreign language] teacher, future FL colleague and continuing FL learner” (226). The rest of his essay focuses primarily on this last point and the need for a “clear definition of advancedness” (238), of which the ACTFL’s OPT (Oral Proficiency Interview) may not be the most effective evaluation. The theme linking these essays in Part III: Research, is conducting the necessary research to make improvements in order to survive.

The fourth section of the book, Part IV: The New Millennium features two essays by Lynn Marie Hutch and Martin Hagel and William Collins Donahue. Hutch links the closing of programs and falling enrollments in part to “the financial crisis that began in 2007 and deepened in 2008” (251). She introduces the idea of a “collegiate consortium” that has been effective for German Studies throughout Pennsylvania for “exchanging research within the discipline, course sharing, or pooling pedagogical resources (254). Kagel and Donahue support Hutch’s claim attributing

closings and falling enrollments to the financial crisis in 2007-2008. Their thesis, however, is that in order to survive in the twenty-first century, “German Studies will [have to] change and that, in fact it *should* do so” (272). Kagel and Donahue’s idea of change would be developing an “undergraduate major/minor” called “Transnational European Studies” and they lay out their “proposal” in this essay (272).

*Taking Stock of German Studies in the United States* is an important resource for both current and prospective professionals in the field of German Studies. The Introduction and thirteen essays included offer an exchange of knowledge and ideas that may be valuable to a professor working to reinvigorate their German Department or to a new PhD, whether fresh on the job market or newly employed. In conclusion, the editors Rachel J. Halverson and Carol Anne Costabile-Heming have succeeded in collecting essays that are an honest and unapologetic reflection of the status of German programs while providing a hopeful and optimistic outlook for the future of German Studies in the United States.

Halverson, Rachel J. and Carol Anne Costabile-Heming, eds. *Taking Stock of German Studies in the United States*. New York: Camden House, 2015.

### ***Red Vienna, White Socialism, and the Blues*** **by Rob McFarland**

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The relations between Europe and the United States of America have been a central theme for the humanities for an extensive period of time, especially when it comes to understanding the role played by intellectuals who have, for numerous reasons, fled their homes in the Old World in order to establish themselves in America. Such a relationship has been described in various forms, some more harmonic and complementary, while others stress the incompatibilities or even violent clashes existing between the society and the ways of living in Europe and in the U.S. Rob McFarland’s book provides us, in a flowing prose, with his approach to the subject by following the footsteps of Ann Tizia Leitich from her hometown of Vienna until her arrival in Boston and eventual set up in the core of America’s biggest city, New York City.

But who exactly is Ann Tizia Leitich, most of us might still be wondering, and why is it worth to get acquainted with her life and work? McFarland is well aware of Leitich’s situation of relative anonymity, when one compares her status to other German speaking intellectuals – such as Walter Benjamin or Siegfried Kracauer, only to name two of the most famous – who came to the U.S. and wrote their own impressions about this country, or others who, never being able to come to the U.S., still wrote their remarks from across the Atlantic Ocean. Nonetheless, while Leitich’s popularity today might be regarded as somewhat circumscribed, McFarland relates

how she at one point shook hands with the 30<sup>th</sup> president of the U.S. Calvin Coolidge and his wife at a reception in the White House. Her texts, published in the liberal *Neue Freie Presse*, were also widely read in Vienna and Austria, having Stefan Zweig and the chancellor of the Austrian Republic Ignaz Seipel among her devoted readers, for instance.

McFarland's answer to such a question, as well as his primary reason for writing this book, is that Leitich, experiencing *in loco* everything America had to offer "from the deserts of Arizona to the jazz clubs of Harlem" (6), was able to provide her fellow Austrians with a much more nuanced view than many of the apocalyptic critiques who saw in America the decay of the German *Kultur* in favor of an American *Zivilisation*. This thesis is present already in the very title of the book, in which the colors of the American flag intertwine with the words "Vienna" and "socialism" as to visually represent such an integration.

According to McFarland, Leitich hoped to inject new energy in the old structures, which would be able to revitalize Europe's culture in general, which was in crisis in the end of the First World War, and Austrian in particular, which was somehow disoriented with the increasing dismantle of the House of Habsburg. In doing so, Leitich would act as a privileged mediator between Europe and America and develop her ideas of a cultural synthesis between them, according to which both locales would benefit from their fusion, without falling into the traps of a cultural pessimism. According to McFarland, this would indelibly mark the works of many German speaking intellectuals since Immanuel Kant and Ferdinand Tönnies, but especially in Oswald Spengler's famous *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*. The fact that Leitich was also a woman is not neglected by McFarland, who explores her insights regarding the important role that women play in the masculine dominated industrial society of the U.S.

In the first chapter, the author explores the conflicts encountered by the daughter of the Austrian *Bildungsbürgertum* that renounces her social destiny in Europe in order to make a living in America. At the age of thirty-four and two weeks prior to achieving eligibility for a pension as a teacher in her hometown, Leitich, who was brought up in the traditional ways of the Viennese educated bourgeoisie, faces a personal crisis that goes along with the critical situation of Austria as a whole and decides to leave for the U.S. to work as a domestic servant in Chicago. She worked in many different jobs in the United States of America – such as nanny, cashier, secretary, etc. – and even took university classes at Des Moines University, but it was through her typical Viennese style *feuilleton* writings that she eventually made a name for herself. In her many articles, Leitich explored a wide variety of subjects that analyzed the American way of living and, by rejecting Spengler's binary opposition between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*, was able to find a way out for her personal as well as for European crisis as a whole.

The second chapter deals with Leitich's articles and insights about movies and mass culture in America, made possible by her inside position working at a New York based department of Metro-Goldwyn film studios. In keeping with Vienna's Social Democrats and their particular version of Austromarxism, Leitich defended the idea that mass culture was able to

transform the lives of the people traditionally excluded from the spheres of high culture and therefore give birth to new humans. McFarland argues that such a position is not without its contradictions, since Leitich was in many ways reticent toward the masses, still sometimes trapped within the prejudices of her traditional upbringing. Utilizing a typical Bourdieusian framework, McFarland argues that Leitich maintained a position typical of her class of condescension towards the proletariat and its so-called low culture. However, she was still able in many articles to refuse such class prejudices and analyze film – as well as other manifestations of mass culture, such as jazz, magazines, radio and dance – as a type of art worthy of its name.

In the third chapter, McFarland reconstructs the debate over Americanism that took place especially in German speaking countries during the 1920s and 1930s. He analyzes how America was portrayed by many scientists, literati, and journalists, among which Stefan Zweig, the famous Viennese feuilletonist Felix Salten and, evidently, the role played by Leitich herself. Leitich attempts to refute Zweig's argument about the monotonization of the world brought by Americanism and tries to reveal the unseen potentiality embedded in technology as a tool for the democratization of art and culture.

The following chapter is dedicated to the debate over industrialism and mechanization and their respective roles within capitalist and socialist societies. The ideas of Henry Ford and Frederick Winslow Taylor were read in distinct ways by several branches of the Left in Europe and, in the German speaking world, a particular kind of reading gave birth to the so-called “white socialism”, as opposed to a violent and oppositional “red socialism”. Leitich witnessed such debates closely and also made her contribution by adding an element that was usually missing: gender. In her articles at the time, argues McFarland, Leitich proposes a new reading of the binomial *Zivilisation/Kultur*, according to which men in America represent the ideals of *Zivilisation*, whereas women embody the *Kultur*.

In the fifth chapter, McFarland turns to Leitich's articles and novels about Chicago, a city she sees as the ultimate symbol of America: conjugating business, rationalism and standardization on one side and music, art, and beauty on the other, Chicago is described in such way in Leitich's writings that it appears to be the personification of the puzzle America represented.

The sixth and final chapter discusses how Leitich analyzed two genres of American music: Jazz and the Blues. While she still looked at Jazz, according to McFarland, through the eyes of a condescending and often racist typical member of the Viennese *Bildungsbürgertum*, she saw in the Blues hope for cultural potential in America. McFarland also describes how Leitich slowly stopped writing feuilletons for the *Neue Freie Presse* as well as other German newspapers, how she got married to an Austrian, returned to her country and gradually lost touch with the daily events that took place in the U.S. She also gradually abandoned the feuilleton form and increasingly started writing in other forms, such as novels, and eventually turned into a recognized interpreter of Austrian history, becoming an established historian of the Viennese

and Austrian culture.

In the epilogue, McFarland inserts Leitich's personal history within the global history of the relationship between Austria and Nazi Germany. He shows us how Leitich was able to introduce her writings, as well as her personal life, as representatives of the anti-Nazi heroine *par excellence*, which fitted harmoniously within the vision of Austrians as victims of Germany's *Anschluss*, even if Leitich herself never had substantial problems during the national socialist years in Austria and, as we all know, not all Austrians were only victims in this picture.

Before the end of the book, McFarland still provides his readers with a chronology of Ann Tizia Leitich's life, as well as a selected bibliography from and about Leitich, for those who wish to dig deeper into her life and writings.

McFarland's *Red Vienna, White Socialism, and the Blues* does an excellent job of reconstructing the life and writings of Ann Tizia Leitich and of examining her role as a mediator of two alleged extremes, Austrian *Kultur* and American *Zivilisation*. However, one thing should be noted. In his effort to make Leitich stand out as a better interpreter of Americanism than her fellow German speaking intellectuals, McFarland ends up drawing a long line of "misinterpretations" that stretches from Kant, Spengler, Tönnies, all the way to Kracauer and, ultimately, the Frankfurt School. By doing so, he evaluates in a reductionist fashion the works of the Frankfurt School, not realizing that they never fell into the traps of condescension that affected many of their earlier colleagues – a mistake usually made by Bourdieusian theoreticians. A reading of the texts in which Adorno criticizes Spengler, or Marcuse's political engagement in the U.S., for instance, would suffice to undo such common and reductionist view of their works. That does not however eliminate the merits of the book, which remains an insightful analysis, and is well worth the read.

McFarland, Rob. *Red Vienna, White Socialism, and the Blues*. New York: Camden House, 2015.

### ***Broom Service***

**by Andreas Pelikan and Alexander Pfister**

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*Broom Service* is a board game created by Andreas Pelikan and Alexander Pfister and published by Ravensburger Spieleverlag and Alea in 2015. The game is designed for two to five players age ten and up, can be completed in 45 to 75 minutes, and carries the prestigious *Kennerspiel des Jahres* award. In the game each player controls two witches who fly about the countryside delivering potions. Along with these two witches, represented by wooden pawns, are druids who also deliver potions and gatherers who help the player acquire more resources,



neither of which are physically represented on the game board as the witches are. In this review, I will be evaluating the game specifically with regard to the physical presentation of the game itself and its artwork, the gameplay and rules, and the emergent effects on the players.

The game's box is tall, somewhat narrow, and of average depth and features a purple background with an inset window that depicts a witch on a broom flying across the countryside delivering potions by parachute. While the inset image is both colorful and packed with exciting action, the purple frame around it unfortunately serves to dampen the dynamism of the witch in the foreground. The art on the box, the game board, and cards are colorful, lively, and of excellent quality adding to the player's sense of immersion within the game's theme. Each player receives ten cards featuring four witches (forest, mountain, prairie, and hill), three gatherers (root, fruit, and herb), two druids (peak and valley), and one weather fairy. Each character card contains an image of the character, his or her name (e.g. Drizzelda the Weather Fairy or Torie Nado the Prairie Witch), and two options that the player may choose from: cowardly and brave. Each witch corresponds to different types of land on the game board and allows a player to fly to that area with similar rules for the druids, although no pawns are moved.

The board itself is double sided with one side geared for standard play and the back allowing more seasoned players to scale up the difficulty and complexity. The art is similar to a high quality comic book and is incredibly attractive increasing the enjoyability of the theme and the replayability. The pawns, score trackers, and potion bottles have a quality feel to them as they are painted wood rather than plastic and the cardboard pieces are printed with bright, colorful images. While the tactile and visual aspects of the game will keep players coming back, the game's box is unnecessarily large for the contents within. The board itself is significantly smaller than the box in both height and width, resulting in a lot of wasted space, and while the rules book fits the dimensions of the box perfectly, making the rules book and game box smaller in all dimensions to fit the board size and the accompanying pieces would have significantly decreased the wasted space and materials both inside the box and on the shelf.

The rules of *Broom Service* are explained over twelve large pages that consist mostly of text with few pictures. The basic game is covered by the first nine pages with the remainder being devoted to more advanced play options. On the right of each page there is bold text summarizing each section, which may lead the player to believe that it will function as a quick start guide; however, this not the case. The bold text is only intended as refresher information for seasoned players. This heavy reliance on text is rather surprising and disappointing given the international market of Eurogames and their focus on language-independence within the games themselves.

Despite the lengthy text, the rules are rather simple: A game consists of seven rounds and each round is led by the player who went last in the previous round or the oldest in the case of

the first.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of a round, each player chooses four of the ten cards they have to be their hand for the round. A number of bewitched cards are revealed that decrease points earned by using various characters, and a conditions card is revealed that puts into effect a new rule for the round. The leading player chooses one card from their hand and reveals it stating either "I am the *brave...*" or "I am the *cowardly...*" forest witch, peak druid, root gatherer, etc. Each subsequent player must follow suit and reveal that card if he or she has it in hand. Cowardly actions are affected immediately, while brave actions must wait until the end of the round and may be stolen by subsequent players. With this risk comes reward as brave actions score points with the witches and druids and net more resources from the player's gatherers. Players reveal the cards corresponding to the area that they would like to travel to (the prairie witch goes to the prairie, etc.) and players may only move to areas adjacent to the one they are currently in. The player with the highest score at the end of seven rounds wins. Given that this explanation, simplified as it may be, of the basic rules covers a single paragraph, *Broom Service* would do well to have its twelve pages of rules presented more concisely with a quick start guide added for beginning players.

While many of the game's mechanics are typical to Eurogames, choosing brave or cowardly actions is a unique twist that keeps all players in the game and participating until the end, but may leave players frustrated with their brave actions being stolen by players following suit each round. Competition between players is largely indirect as they work against one another for the ability to deliver resources to various towers and earn victory points. The sheer number of options for where to deliver potions also means that players can potentially carve out their own territories and may not even compete over them at all. Further, while round towers may only receive one potion, square towers can receive multiple. Although the rules restrict how often a single player can deliver to any given square tower, there is no way to keep track of this and the rule itself is not well explained. While it is possible not to compete with other players over towers, one could play very aggressively and actively seek to prevent fellow players from delivering potions to certain, more profitable areas. Like many other Eurogames (*Settlers of Catan* and *Carcassonne* come to mind right away), competition and strategy are only as fierce or passive as the players make them and emerge from the group dynamic of the players themselves rather than being embedded within the rules.

While the basic mechanics of the game are rather simple, an emergent strategy soon develops, whereby players take into account where other players are at any given time, what resources they have, and what cards are currently bewitched in order to choose the cards for their hands that are most likely to succeed in maximizing the number of brave options per round. Through this strategy, players are incentivized to keep away from other players' territories and land their pawns in land areas of a different type from other players at the end of each round. One becomes not only an accountant of one's own resources, but also of those of other players

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<sup>1</sup> Determining the first player in the first round by age is a standard way to choose, but is wholly unimaginative and does not add to the immersion. Other methods, such as the hairiest player going first in *The Grizzled* or the last one to have been sick in *Pandemic* (nominated for *Kennerpiel des Jahres* in 2009) offer much more creative ways of solving this issue. The authors of *Broom Service* could have made the determiner be the last player to have been in the mountains, forest, prairie, or hills or any number of other, more creative options.

and one begins to try and predict the movements of the other players so as to choose the cards that will net the most point and resource gains. One is also incentivized to make heavy use of overlapping witch and druid cards (the peak druid can go to both the hills and mountains, which overlaps with the hill witch and mountain witch cards) to try to ensure that at least one brave action may be taken in a round, if not multiple. The bewitched cards add further interest as they are intended to dissuade players from using their equivalents, but that dissuasion itself can incentivize other players to use them in order to get the brave action at a reduction of 3 points.

Overall *Broom Service* is an excellent game with high replayability. Between the emergent strategy and the scaling complexity, this game offers something to those new to board games as well as to the most seasoned connoisseur. Only a few small elements do not work in the game's favor, namely the box size and its dynamism dampening background, the unnecessary length and text reliance of the rules book, a lack of a round counter, and a similar lack of a way to keep track of potion deliveries to square towers. These, however, are minor issues in an otherwise well-conceived and implemented game definitely deserving of the *Kenner Spiel des Jahres* prize. While some games produce interest and fun for the players in the actions allowed by the rules themselves, the best games structure their rules to allow for interest and fun to emerge from the players' interactions with the game and with one another guided by the bounds of the rules and *Broom Service* does just that.

Pelikan, Andreas and Alexander Pfister. *Broom Service*. Newton, New Hampshire: Ravensberger, 2015.

***Die Fliegen***  
**by Tex Rubinowitz**  
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In den 1990ern hatten Hörbücher ihren Höhepunkt erreicht. Für motivierte Deutschlernende damals, die schon von Janosch gehört hatten oder sogar Fans waren, gab es die einmalige Gelegenheit, die gesprochene Version seines Roman für Erwachsene *Schimanski: Die Kraft der inneren Maus* auf CD (Deutsche G, Universal, 1996) unterwegs zu genießen. Gerade weil für viele Menschen der Name Janosch mit guten, unterhaltsamen Geschichten verbunden wird, konnte man sich auf eine lustige, mit vielen metaphorischen, sogar ironischen Gedanken versehene Geschichte freuen, die einem die Sprache bereichern könnte, insbesondere beim wiederholten Abspielen. Das Buch, das im stereotypischen ‚Wilden Westen‘ spielt, weckte sicherlich das Interesse seitens der Zuhörer über die Auswahl eines vergangenen, sehr spezifischen amerikanischen Milieus. Es stellt sich zunächst einmal die Frage, was es eigentlich an dem Wilden Westen ist, das so viel Ansehen für moderne, deutschsprachige Autoren einen beliebten Rang hat. Egal welche Antwort, das Cowboy-Dasein bietet etwas an, das funktioniert, wenn es um hartnäckige Einzelgänger geht.

Für Tex Rubinowitz' Neuerscheinung *Die Fliegen* aber, passen statt Kakteen und Stetsons vielleicht Brennnessel und Carmen-Miranda-Obsthut besser ins Konzept, um weitere, ganz unwillkürliche Bilder im Kopf zu wecken, denn Cowboy-Requisiten sind hier total unnötig. In knappen 36 E-Book-Seiten wird es dem Leser schon im ersten Kapitel klar, dass das Gegenteil von Cabaret einfach zu viel Cabaret ist und die wenigen Textstellen, die auf ein mögliches aber nicht kohärentes Abenteuer hindeuten, werden von der darauffolgenden Dosis Meta-Referenzen unterbrochen, die auf der Stand-Up-Bühne halbwegs funktionieren könnten.

Einst hatte Kulturkritiker Theodor W. Adorno zwischen richtigem und falschem Lachen unterschieden; auch der Spaß der Kulturindustrie war für ihn ein heikles Thema. Adornos Theorie nach war das, was dem Publikum zugeliefert wird, dank unserer Massenkultur vorschrittmäßig und ohne echte Selbstreflektion; von einer Art Erkenntnis ist gar nicht die Rede. Für *Die Fliegen* ist das leider der Fall, da die Überhäufung des literarischen Rate-Mal-Spiels einfach ablenkt und kontraproduktiv ist. Was sich hinter der Explosion vom US-inspirierten „name dropping“ alles verbirgt, erlebt man nur wiederholt als kommunikativen Fehlschlag seitens der Hauptperson, der am Ende der Erzählung den Namen Tex Rubinowitz verliehen wird. Ob das mit Absicht ist, können Online-Interviews bestätigen. Gelungen und auch sehr willkommen wären Illustrationen, die vielleicht die nötige Verbindung zwischen Autor und Selbstironie besser darstellen könnten. Max Müller, Musiker und Zeichner hat sich schon für Rubinowitz engagiert (*Irma*, Rowohlt Verlag, 2015) Dass *Die Fliegen* nur aus 36 Seiten besteht ist verwirrend und eine Erleichterung zugleich.

Für seinen Text *Wir waren niemals hier* aus *Irma* wurde Tex Rubinowitz 2014 mit dem Ingeborg-Bachmann-Preis für Literatur ausgezeichnet. *Irma* markiert vielleicht den ersten Schritt in eine erfolgreiche, wenn nicht etwa chaotische Richtung. Das Groteske und viel Selbstironie spielen auch hier eine Rolle; der Einfluss der Anarchie in *Die Fliegen* ist aber eine Portion größer.

Der Vergleich mit Janosch am Anfang der Rezension war nicht ganz ohne Zweck: Durch seine (damals) originelle Landschaft erreicht Janosch eine Art parallele Welt, durch die sich seine Hauptfigur bewegt. Hätte Rubinowitz sich auch für eine Welt entschieden, wo seine Handlung stattfinden würde, ohne dies mit verrückten Bildern zu komplizieren, dürften Leserinnen und Leser die Fehlkommunikationen im Leben des Ich-Erzählers befolgen und sich nicht als Opfer eines Alptrahms fühlen. Ironie ist eine prekäre Sache. Bei Janosch ist der Cowboy in seinem Roman tatsächlich eine verwegene Maus; bei Rubinowitz stemmt sich die Hauptfigur gegen alle Vorwürfe, eine Maus zu sein.

Rubinowitz, Tex. *Die Fliegen*. Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 2016.

## ***The Politics of Magic: DEFA Fairy-Tale Films***

**By Quinna Shen**

Melissa Sheedy

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Within the last quarter century after the fall of the Wall and the dissolution of the GDR, countless pieces have been published focusing on the legacy of the East German film company DEFA (Deutsche Film-Aktiengesellschaft), with special attention paid to its place in German national film heritage. Quinna Shen joins this discourse with her 2015 monograph *The Politics of Magic: DEFA Fairy-Tale Films*, and her book distinguishes itself through its focus on fairy-tale adaptations among the DEFA corpus of films. In *The Politics of Magic*, Shen provides a cultural history of over forty feature-length, live action films spanning from the immediate postwar period to German unification. Within this expansive exploration, the author gives special attention to the complex interactions between GDR cultural politics and the embedded ideology in these films. With an eye to the ways in which the fairytale as a genre played either a subversive or supporting role in East Germany, Shen explores the value of these fairy-tale films as both didactic and entertaining media for children and for adults, and she shows how they differed structurally and thematically from their western counterparts.

While the fairytale as a genre and its function and reception in the GDR have been treated in depth, and while DEFA films in general are well represented, there exists a considerable gap in the scholarship regarding the fairy-tale films specifically. In light of their significance in both East and West Germany and their enduring legacy after the fall of the Wall, Shen's volume identifies and answers the call for a detailed treatment of these distinctive and popular films. Through the theoretical lens of narrative analysis and through supporting considerations of aesthetic and formal characteristics of these films, the author offers an in-depth examination which helps bridge this gap in fairy-tale and film scholarship.

Following an introduction in which Shen deftly lays out the cultural and historical significance of DEFA fairy-tale films along with their critical and popular reception in the GDR, the author approaches these films in a more or less chronological order in five chapters. The first chapter, "Inheriting the Humanist Tradition," centers on the first two fairy-tale adaptations produced by DEFA, Paul Verhoeven's *The Cold Heart* (1950) and Wolfgang Staudte's *The Story of Little Mook* (1953). Shen grounds her analysis in a discussion of the balance between realism and the fantastic and she demonstrates how magic in the films is de-emphasized in favor of human agency. Returning to the complicated relationship between GDR cultural politics and fairytales, she reinforces here the ways in which these films were made to satisfy the demands of socialist realism, and yet managed to stay true to the highly-valued humanist tradition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Chapter 2, "Entangled in the Cold War," also engages with the reception of fairytales in the GDR with its exploration of film portrayals of power, exploitation, and transformation that

resonated with socialist ideas of worker oppression. In her discussion of cinema of the 1950s and 60s, Shen examines political allegory and class conflict as depicted in the DEFA fairy-tale films of this era and also analyzes how the sociopolitical context of these years and of the Cold War specifically are reflected and at times indirectly legitimized in these films. In describing the censorship of even those films that staunchly supported the party line, she demonstrates the complicated and fluctuating whims of the SED, which were not always apparent to filmmakers.

Shen continues her discussion of the Cold War in chapter 3, “Love is Real Wealth,” and focuses on developments as the conflict endured beyond the 1960s. She identifies the themes of love and work in these films, which often play out within the aristocracy or royalty rather than in the working class. In discussing how the inclusion of the aristocratic circle in these films could still be in keeping with socialist ideals, Shen shows how many of these adaptations subvert the traditional fairy-tale formula of achieving wealth and status by ending instead in a social “demotion” of the protagonist. Here, the author also compares the DEFA fairy-tale films with their West German and Disney counterparts, with an eye to different gender and power relation representations. While this type of comparison is not the primary focus of this monograph, her treatment here nevertheless adds depth to her discussion of East German fairy-tale films and helps make the book accessible to readers who are less familiar with GDR cinema.

As mentioned, Shen’s writing deals substantially with the reception of fairytales and fairy-tale films in the GDR, and she returns to this focus in chapter 4, “Ambiguity between Conformism and Resistance.” The focus of discussion in this chapter is the only banned DEFA fairy-tale film, *The Robe* (1961). Here, she begins to concentrate on the more insidious role of films marketed towards children as a medium for potential political critique. While fairytales had been successfully integrated into the cultural politics of the GDR, this chapter shows that they also serve as a unique vehicle for internal critiques disguised as harmless tales.

In the book’s final chapter, “A Sign of the Times,” Shen covers films of the last decade of the GDR, the 1980s. As she demonstrates, these films begin to move away from the traditional Grimm tales and they begin to treat Romanticism more broadly, featuring adaptations of works by E.T.A. Hoffmann and Bettina von Arnim, for example, and focusing on themes of women’s emancipation, environmentalism, and peace. In this chapter, the author demonstrates the connections these films established to concurrent political movements and issues as well as to their more experimental nature in general, thus even further distinguishing themselves from West German and Disney fairy-tale films.

*The Politics of Magic* sets out to provide an unprecedented overview of almost 40 years of DEFA fairy-tale films, while situating them within the constantly fluctuating sociocultural and political contexts in which they were produced. More than a mere list of works or of themes, this volume links these films through shared values and critiques, and traces an overarching aesthetic and ideological development throughout 40 years of DEFA filmmaking. In so doing, Shen provides valuable insight into these films’ critical reception and impact. In

describing the effort made in producing these “countertales” to transform the original folk- and fairytales into stories suitable for the big screen, Shen establishes a clear connection between the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the GDR. However, she makes no attempt to gloss over the uneasy relationship between the regime and the source material. Through a subtle and deft handling of this often tense dynamic, the author provides a foundational overview of fairytale and fairy-tale film reception in East Germany. This volume is recommended to anyone interested in fairytales, DEFA films, and the complex relationship between the cultural politics of the state and these tales. Shen’s treatment of the topic endeavors to reconceptualize these films not merely as state-sanctioned, simplistic propaganda, but rather as creative works with true aesthetic and historical value. She also shows them to be separate from their Disney and West German counterparts, not only through their structural disenchantment of gold and royalty, but also in their enlightened and fresh portrayals of female characters. Through her discussion of DEFA fairy-tale films’ shared traditions and the careful tracing of ideological developments throughout the years, Shen demonstrates the true cultural value of these films and shows them to be worthy of our attention, both as representations of the former East German state and also as works of art in their own right.

Shen, Quinna. *The Politics of Magic: DEFA Fairy-Tale Films*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2015.

### ***Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World***

**Edited by Quinn Slobodian**

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International socialist solidarity was central to the political paradigm of the communist regime of East Germany. Solidarity campaigns and missions of aid to friendly countries were a staple of the GDR (German Democratic Republic). *Comrades of Color* is an important investigation into the lived experience of international solidarity for both the giver and the recipients of East German solidarity, filling lacunae in the historiography of East German internationalism and foreign policy. The result is an accessible book suitable for both research and teaching. Featuring incisive investigations into grand reconstruction projects in war-ravaged Asian countries, solidarity and aid campaigns in East Germany, and the experience of the 'comrades of color' in the German homeland of 'Real Existing Socialism,' the volume advances three main interrelated arguments. First, East German internationalism was more a product of self-interested objectives than altruism and socialist amity; second, there were continuities in racist thought from the pre-1945 period in the East German state and society, that were not subjected to a public debate, which created in turn awkward inconsistencies between propaganda and lived reality; and third, actual solidarity between East Germans and 'comrades of color' could and did exist, mostly from interpersonal relations not mediated by the state.

Quinn Slobodian dissects the GDR's paradoxical attitude towards race. The East German government argued that racism did not exist in the country, but held on to the belief in real existing difference between human beings. East German solidarity stood on two shaky pillars: the mistaken argument that racism had been excised from the country, and an "uncritical cult" around allied people of color in 'Third World' countries (32). The result was that the propaganda lauding equality and comradeship between peoples did little to inform actual contacts between East Germans and foreigners, while racial prejudice in East German society remained.

Young Sun Hong's chapter shows how the East German reconstruction of the war-destroyed North Korean city of Hamhung stalled due to conflicting visions for socialist modernity. East Germany aimed at integrating North Korea further in the socialist bloc and showcasing its technological prowess, while North Korean leader Kim Il Sung envisioned nationalist *juche* autarchic development and a continued push for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. Pyongyang rejected East German apartment blocs modeled after socialist realism, insisting on increased speed of production and housing units at the expense of western luxuries such as high roofs and private bathrooms. The East Germans cancelled the project early, but for all the problems that emerged, Hong is careful to emphasize the relations that existed between workers from both countries, which accounted for real expressions of solidarity.

Gregory Witkowski's chapter analyzes the work of the three most important East German aid agencies: the state-run Solidarity fund, the protestant *Brot für die Welt*, and the catholic-run *Not in der Welt*. Since socialist states such as the GDR distanced themselves from Western charity, and two of the organizations were run by churches operating in an officially atheist state, how did these programs fit in the GDR's political paradigm? As Witkowski shows, the agencies followed official precepts to educate donors and provide solidarity to suffering peoples of the 'Third World.' In his analysis of posters goading potential donors to give, the author finds that GDR charity recreated western liberal types of charity in its portrayal of Third World victimhood, the main exception being when it came to display images of idealized 'Third World' inhabitants in the process of building socialism. GDR religious charity was also remarkably similar to its Western counterpart in that it presented East Germany as a part of the industrialized world, and East German citizens as part of a privileged minority, with responsibilities towards the deserving mass of sufferers in underdeveloped nations.

Bernd Schaefer investigates the close relations that formed between East Germany and Vietnam. The Vietnamese relied on East German expertise for everything from the training of Vietminh cadres to printing paper currency and minting coins. Moreover, unlike the North Koreans, the Vietnamese did appreciate the East German style of building and reconstructing. The GDR's largesse, however, created expectations that the increasingly bankrupt state could not provide. One way to help spur the Vietnamese economy while ensuring some sort of repayment led to the import of Vietnamese temporary workers to boost the flagging GDR economy, which led in turn to racism against Vietnamese workers on East German soil. East Germany's heavy investment in Vietnam's nascent coffee industry (today a major source of



income for the Southeast Asian country) was done with an eye towards covering its commodity needs from a friendly country, and heightening domestic morale.

Simon Steven's chapter on black South African anti-Apartheid activist William 'Bloke' Modisane's experiences in East Germany takes a biographical approach that serves to bring the view of one of the 'comrades of color' to the volume. Modisane's negative experiences as a person of color in mid-sixties GDR, that reminded him of white South African racism, show how little the official discourse of solidarity with black South Africans had percolated in the East German population. This issue is further explored in Sarah Pugach's contribution that demonstrates that "the GDR was more a site of ambivalence and inconsistency than tolerance when it came to questions of race" (132). Relations between African male students and German women made East German authorities apprehensive, throwing into relief the ambivalence of state officials towards race and miscegenation. East German officials believed that mixed-race unions were incompatible with socialist morals (in clear continuities with pre-1945 notions), and sought to limit these unions whenever possible, a stance that belied the alleged absence of racism in the GDR. Stereotypes of lecherous African men and immoral German women became a staple in the lingo of state officials and East German citizens alike. At the same time, East Berlin needed to maintain both its image of anti-racism and anti-fascism and good relations with African countries, which led to uneven decisions on the matter. Moreover, East Germany did not compromise on its strict pro-natalism, as it considered the offspring of mixed race relations to be legitimate and valuable members of East German society.

Katrina Hagen's uses the extensive campaign on behalf of Angela Davis in the early 1970s to explore East and West German attitudes towards black female sexuality and new left radicalism. International solidarity played a central role in the GDR's repertoire for international legitimation. It was meant to show that while fascism and racism were extinct behind the 'anti-fascist defensive wall,' they remained alive and well in the capitalist west. GDR officials were wary of Angela Davis' ties to Herbert Marcuse and the Black Panther Party, whose radical take on Marxism differed much from the state socialist version. Hagen highlights the similarities in East and West German apprehension towards Angela Davis and African American anti-racism activists. GDR media followed in the footsteps of its counterparts in the United States and West Germany, in highlighting Davis' looks and exoticism to increase the campaign's appeal while eliding her potentially explosive political message. Although the "Free Angela" campaign was widespread, it did not trigger a wider debate on domestic racism in East Germany, and served merely as an "outward and highly politicized expression of a state-mandated anti-racism" (179).

The toxic effects of this missed debate and lingering apprehension towards people of color showed in the failure of the "School of Friendship" project. Jason Verber examines the genesis and demise of an East German institution supposed to strengthen East Berlin's ties with the newly decolonized nation of Mozambique by ensuring that the upcoming elites were trained according to Marxist-Leninist precepts. But problems plagued the project: East German teachers questioned their Mozambican counterpart's ideological solidity, sexual mores and attitude towards abortion, while East German and Mozambican youths' brawls became more violent and

vicious as the decade matured.

A similar ambivalence is obvious in the collaborative cultural work between the East German state's film studio DEFA and China in the 1950s and with Vietnam in the 1980s. Quinn Slobodian emphasizes the limits of international solidarity as East German filmmakers clashed with their Chinese counterparts over aesthetical representations of Chinese socialism and the unequal relation between European and Asian socialist countries. The trope of cultural difference and the resulting limits of camaraderie also loom large in Evan Torner and Victoria Rizo's analysis of the 1988 East German/Vietnamese co-production *Dschungelzeit*, a movie based on the experiences of Germans who left the French Foreign Legion in the late 1940s to join the Vietminh. Nothing survived of the original plans that envisioned an equitable film co-production that would serve to overcome national differences in favor of socialist unity. Instead difference, mistrust, and the recreation of North–South relations of inequality and subservience dominated the production of *Dschungelzeit*.

Christina Schwenkel's contribution takes the most positive attitude towards GDR relations with the Global South, by focusing on the affect of solidarity and its enduring legacy in Vietnam. In the reconstruction of the city of Vinh, warm human relations between East Germans and Vietnamese working to rebuild the war-ravaged city led to 'affective solidarities.' Official GDR slogans were not always devoid of meaning. Even more than twenty years after the fall of the wall, inscriptions remembering East German labor in Vinh remain alive as well as goodwill from the Vietnamese who worked side-by-side and benefited from East German solidarity.

Finally, Jennifer Ruth Hosek and Victor Fowler Calzada's collaborative essay investigates the enduring legacy of East Germany in Cuba with fascinating insights on the reception of movies about surveillance in East Germany and on its collapse in 1989/90, in a country that still subscribes to state-socialism and single party rule. The chapter poses that the GDR's extensive relations with Cuba were part of the larger fabric of German–Cuban relations, but tells us little about how those relations developed between 1959-1990.

*Comrades of Color* fulfills its purpose of eroding the myth of East German provincialism, by demonstrating the intensity of the GDR's relations with fellow socialist states in the Global South. These intense relations, led in turn, to the arrival of these 'comrades of color' in East Germany, which confronted a population accustomed to cultural homogeneity with diversity, which in turn led to racial stereotypes and conflicts. The volume also manages to "provincialize East Germany," which in spite of its affirmation of socialist internationalism and solidary altruism, remained a relatively developed European country, where continuities of European and German racism and feelings of superiority towards underdeveloped nations existed, in spite of extensive propaganda to the contrary.

One criticism that can be made is the little attention paid to Latin America,

excepting the last article. A discussion of the extensive campaigns on behalf of the Chilean and Nicaraguan left would have been an important addition. How did Latin Americans, with their diversity of 'races,' fit into the racial chromatism of East Germany? The contributions highlight the negative effects of GDR relations with its allies in the Global South, with the conspicuous exception of Vietnam. This reviewer was left wondering whether East Berlin's relationship with Vietnam could not have been 'provincialized' further. How might Vietnamese dependency led to structures reminiscent of North American and Western European relations with the Global South, which in turn, decreased Hanoi's ability to criticize East German conceptions of socialism? Finally, given the emphasis on continuities and discontinuities with pre-1945 racism in Germany, can we be sure that Russians, Poles, and Romanians were not seen also as "comrades of color" in the eyes of the East German population, if not by the state? But these are minor flaws, considering the important contribution that this volume presents. Featuring an accessible style of writing, and with the added benefit that the chapters can be read on their own, this collection is an indispensable tool as much for courses on German and Global history, as it is for any scholar researching on post-1945 German history.

Slobodian, Quinn, ed. *Comrades of Color: East Germany in the Cold War World*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2015.

### ***Der goldene Handschuh***

**By Heinz Strunk**

Gernot Waldner

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Am Anfang und am Ende dieses Romans stehen Tatsachen. Zu Beginn wird in nüchterner Ermittlungsprosa berichtet, wie die Leichenteile mehrerer Frauen zufällig gefunden werden und die Polizei einen Mordfall aufnimmt ohne den Täter zunächst zu fassen. Am Ende werden die letzten Lebensjahre des Serienmörders Friedrich Paul Honka abgehandelt, als läse man eine Krankenakte, die sachlich mit einer tödlichen Lungen-Herz-Erkrankung endet. Heinz Strunks Roman spannt einen Bogen vom Tod der Opfer zum Tod des Täters und stellt sich damit die Aufgabe, dem wieder Leben einzuhauchen, was zwischen den Toten vorfiel. Seinen Ausgang nimmt der Roman in der titelgebenden Hamburger Trinkerkneipe „Der goldene Handschuh“, einem an der Schwelle zwischen Leben und Tod situiertem Sozietop, in dem von Gewalt, Drogen und dem Rotlichtmilieu gezeichnete Protagonisten ihre Nächte dem Verfall entgegen fristen. Strunk lässt bei seiner auf Recherche basierten Wiederbelebung also keinen Phönix aus der Asche steigen: in einer Szene wird ein Aschenbecher mit Bier gefüllt und in einem Zug geleert. Doch auch diese Kneipe, in der zumindest die Hoffnungslosigkeit gleich verteilt zu sein scheint, gehorcht einer hierarchischen Ordnung. Die Nähe zur Bar und die Spitznamen der Gäste bestimmen, wer in der untersten Unterschicht zu den Oberen gehört. Einer von diesen Untersten, die Luft nach oben wittern, ist Fritz Honka. Seine niedriger stehenden Opfer sind in die Jahre gekommene Prostituierte, denen er Korn und Logis anbietet, wenn sie sich ihm dafür bedingungslos unterwerfen. Der zweite Teil des Buches handelt von einer dieser von Sadismus und Spießertum geprägten Beziehungen, von der Suche nach einfachem Glück, nach warmer

Suppe, mediokrer Freizeit, sicherem Einkommen und orientierenden Routinen. Manche Schlagerplatten werden zehnmal nacheinander abgespielt, um dem Leser die unbeweglichen Konturen dieser Glücksvorstellung einzuprägen. Trotz kontinuierlicher Annäherungen an das Kleinbürgertum, schafft es Honka nicht, sein Leben zu stabilisieren. Vergangenheit, Geilheit und Abhängigkeit holen ihn immer wieder ein und aus diesen und glücklicherweise auch aus zufälligeren Gründen kommt es im abschließenden Teil des Buches zu den brutalen Morden, die bis heute Honkas lokalen Nachruhm begründen. Die Kneipe, in der er seine Opfer kennen lernte, nennt sich inzwischen „Honka-Stube“, zwei Hamburger Bands widmeten ihm makabre Lieder und ein Theaterstück zum Frauenmörder von Altona beschloss die Versuche, aus Fritz Honka eine kleine Ikone der Gegenkultur à la Charles Manson zu machen. Obwohl vor allem die Legende des Serienmörders für die Vermarktung erhalten musste und auf dem Cover des Buches entsprechend eine Zeichnung von Honka zu sehen ist, drehen sich weite Teile des Romans nicht um den Serienmörder, sondern um eine adelige Reederfamilie namens von Dohrens. Auch in diesem Erzählstrang stehen männliche Protagonisten im Zentrum: der dem Ressentiment der Kriegsverlierer verfallene Großvater, der ebenso wie Honka gewaltbereite und alkoholranke Vater und der durch einen genetischen Defekt entstellte Sohn, ein den ersten Hormonschüben ausgelieferter Teenager. Durch diese Parallelhandlung wird der Roman von zwei sozialen Extremen bestimmt und der Leserin wird selbst überlassen, ob damit Rückschlüsse auf die ominöse Mitte der Gesellschaft zu ziehen seien. Konzeptuell gewinnt der Roman durch die zweite Handlungsebene eine gebrochene Anthropologie. Die Welt der von Dohrens ist zwar in ähnlicher Weise von Gewalt- und Alkoholexzessen geprägt, im Gegensatz zu Honka bietet sich hier jedoch ein ebenso abstoßendes wie vollendetes Bild sozialer Routine und selbstgewisser Identität. Gegen Ende des Romans berühren sich beide Erzählstränge fast, als Vater und Sohn von Dohren zufällig im Goldenen Handschuh landen. Der Roman vermeidet aber den direkten Kontakt, lässt beide Welten nebeneinander stehen und stellt so den Leser abermals intellektuell auf die Probe, wenn der Sohn der Reedersfamilie den Serienmörder ansieht und sich die zentrale Frage des Romans stellt: Wie kann man denn zu so einer Person werden? Schließlich wirken die von Dohrens auch wie eine mildernde Geste inmitten dezidiert schonungslos erzählter Realität. Nach vielen Seiten mit zum Sex zweckentfremdeten Bockwürsten und brutalen Schlägen ins Gesicht weiß man sich kurz versichert, beim Lesen nicht nur den Serienmörder anzuglotzen sondern auch die Perversionen der Oberschicht vorgeführt zu bekommen. Natürlich liegt kein wirklicher Trost in diesem ästhetischen Ausgleich, zumindest wird aber die Frage evoziert, woher denn das Gefühl von verhältnismäßigem Trost stamme, wenn man den Gewalttaten von Privilegierten zusieht.

In beiden Teilen des Buches scheint Strunk mehr zu montieren als zu erfinden, er folgt, wenn man so will, der Zweckentfremdung, wie sie an der Bockwurst vorexerziert wird. Nicht nur die Akten des Falles Honka sondern auch historische Details, popkulturelle Referenzen und milieuspezifischer Jargon vermitteln den Eindruck, sich nahe an einer ernüchternden Realität zu befinden, die sich selbst nur betrinken kann, um sich zu ertragen. Die Position des Erzählers gerät dabei relativ flexibel, deckt aber nicht alle nahe liegenden Perspektiven ab. Politische und historische Kontexte sowie persönliche Schicksale werden allwissend aufbereitet um einen ebenso kantigen wie verlässlichen Eindruck davon zu geben, wie die Charaktere zu dem wurden, was sie nun zu tun fähig sind. Stellenweise wechselt der Erzähler auch in die subjektive Perspektive, lässt sowohl Honka als auch die von Dohrens vernichtend über ihre Eindrücke

urteilen, deren Genese davor noch objektiv vermittelt wurde. Da die subjektiven Eindrücke aber größtenteils wieder an Zitate erinnern, wird ein Gefühl von Subjektivität stets ausgespart und die Frage nach der Identifikation mit der Hauptfigur, wie gesagt, geschickt einem Teenager in den Mund gelegt. Trotz diesen klugen Verzichts mangelt es dem Roman keineswegs an Charakteren. Im Gegenteil: mitunter sind sie es, welche die schönsten Momente des Buches ausmachen. Wenn etwa ein Trinker sich selbst mit in unterschiedlich gefärbte Liköre getauchten Tampons behängt (170), die Selbstgewissheit der Oberschicht ausschließlich mit negativen Attributen charakterisiert wird – Campingplatz und Sonderangebot beschrieben ihn nicht (64) – oder Fritz Honkas Bruder auftritt, eine an Kalendersprüchen und Anekdoten überschäumende Frohnatur, deren zentrale Einsicht darin besteht, dass jedes Ding zwei Seiten hat, um schließlich selbst im Delirium auf seine dunkle Seite zu fallen. Wird aber Honka selbst beschrieben, so fehlt die lustvoll groteske Perspektive. Wollte man daraus eine Kritik machen, so könnte man dem Roman einen protestantischen Duktus vorwerfen. Was aus den Akten dieses Lustmörders nämlich beklemmend plausibilisiert wird – *sola scriptura* – sind die von Misogynie und Sadismus gezeichneten Morde. Auf einen Versuch, der individuellen Lust an diesen Morden literarisch Raum zu geben, hat Strunk verzichtet. Wo der Sohn der Reedersfamilie die von ihm gequälten Frauen „Freundchen“ nennt und literarisch innovative Passagen, wie etwa ein Fragebogen für Alkoholiker, auftauchen, sucht man bei Honka solche Elemente vergeblich. Am Lustmörder interessiert mehr der Mord als die Lust, dieses Wort von Karl Kraus trifft auch auf diesen Roman zu. Honka wirkt stellenweise eher lustlos, nicht nur in der Szene, in der er sich selbst, wie im Rahmen eines erzählerischen Gnadenaktes, kastrieren will. Wie diese Szene mit den historischen Fotos, die Honka lächelnd in einer SS Uniform zeigen, zusammen gehen könnte, sei dahin gestellt. Strunk selbst scheint sich in Interviews auf die historisierende Lesart seines Romans festgelegt zu haben. Etwas mehr Mut die zuvor erwähnte Lust zu gestalten, wäre dem mehr als lesenswerten Roman aber zu wünschen gewesen und hätte ihm vielleicht auch die eine faktische oder die andere sozialrealistische Länge erspart.

Strunk, Heinz. *Der goldene Handschuh*. Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 2016.

### ***Amon: Mein Großvater hätte mich erschossen***

**By Jennifer Teege**

Corrina Peet

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While browsing her local library in Hamburg, Germany, the unsuspecting Jennifer Teege (1970), then 38 years of age, stumbled upon a book that would forever change her world. In the opening passage of her memoir *Amon: Mein Grossvater hätte mich erschossen* (2013), Teege recounts this decisive moment; the moment at which she realized the book she had found was her biological mother's biography, and that her grandfather was Amon Göth, the sadistic Nazi commandant of the Płaszów concentration camp near Kraków, Poland; the same Göth--the reader is reminded--who was famously portrayed by Ralph Fiennes in Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* (1993).

Born out of her desire to answer the many questions that arose in the wake of this fateful

discovery, Teege's text escorts the reader through her personal journey to understand her grandfather's role in the Holocaust, her beloved grandmother's relationship with him, and why her family chose to keep such a dark secret. Interspersed throughout Teege's text are journalist and co-writer Nikola Sellmair's commentaries about Teege's reactions and emotions as she uncovers her past. Moreover, Sellmair contextualizes Teege's writings by expounding upon her mother's family history, providing historical information related to Göth and the Holocaust, and by referencing academic research on relevant topics such as psychology.

Immediately after discovering she is a blood relative of the murderous Göth, Teege falls into a deep depression. She is consumed with questions about what personality traits and physical characteristics she may have inherited from her grandfather, and is also compelled to obsessively research the details about his involvement in the Holocaust. Furthermore, she is burdened by the prospect that her family history could negatively impact her relationships, particularly those with Israeli friends, whose grandparents perished in the Holocaust. While Teege's initial distress surrounding these questions is genuine, one cannot help but wonder if the severity of her anguish is to a degree dictated by collective German guilt regarding the Holocaust. As Sellmair mentions, even those members of the third generation who are unsure about the role their ancestors played in World War II and the Holocaust maintain this guilt, and therefore tend to unrealistically envision their ancestors as victims or members of the resistance. In light of this, it is feasible that Teege's depression was, at least in part, tied to the guilt associated not only with her knowledge about her biological grandfather's participation in the Holocaust, but also with the fact that Göth is, thanks to *Schindler's List*, well known by many as the brutal commandant of the Płaszów concentration camp. With this in mind, there are moments of Teege's narrative, especially when she pays what seem to be almost obligatory visits to Auschwitz and to the Płaszów memorial, that feel a bit dramatic. That being said, however, Teege does not dwell on Göth and the associated guilt throughout her narrative, but rather shifts her focus to questions surrounding her adoption, her relationship with her biological mother, and in particular, on her relationship with her deceased grandmother--Amon Göth's mistress.

Although Teege, the daughter of Monika (née Göth) Hertwig and a Nigerian man, was adopted by a German family at the age of seven, she did have intermittent contact with her biological mother and grandmother as a young child. Teege explains that the relationship with her mother was always distanced and tense. Until her adoption, she was raised in an orphanage and only ever saw her mother sporadically. Very occasionally, Teege's mother would pick her up for a visit, but would remain cold and withdrawn for the duration. Moreover, Teege feared her mother's husband; an abusive alcoholic. The only solace she seemed to have during such visits was the time spent with her grandmother, Ruth Irene (née Kalder) Göth. Although Teege does not remember her as a doting grandmother, but rather as a strict and disciplined woman, she does recall that "Irene" was a well-dressed and had a big heart. Teege loved Irene and explains that she always felt safe and secure in her presence. For Teege, the memories of her grandmother are the most difficult to reconcile. How could someone she remembers so fondly have been so in love with the brutal Amon Göth? How could her grandmother have stood by as he killed countless innocents, and how could she have kept a photo of him hanging in her apartment until the day she died? Plagued by these questions, Ruth Irene Göth emerges as Teege's main preoccupation, and ultimately, takes the narrative's center stage. Sellmair's

interjection of interview excerpts in which Ruth Irene Göth professes her love for Amon, as well as the inclusion of the photo of her as a young woman in Płaszów, both underscore Teege's bewilderment, and generate the reader's own questions about the complicity of the partners and family members of Nazi criminals, or, in the case of the German reader, engender thoughts about the Nazi legacy—a point that is also driven home when Teege explains that her adoptive German parents' were unable to emotionally engage with her regarding her biological family's dark past.

While at times the text reads somewhat disjointed due to the shift between Teege's thoughts and Sellmair's commentary, it is written in an uncomplicated language and is generally a swift read. The reader becomes easily engaged with Teege's experience and emotions, yet is also left with unanswered questions related to Teege's African roots, and the general history of Afro-Germans. While the title suggests that she, due to her African heritage, would have been murdered by her grandfather, she neither expounds on the position of Afro-Germans in Nazi Germany, nor goes into detail about the paternal side of her family. A more detailed exploration of these topics would further contextualize Teege's narrative, tie it into the premise of the text, and, ultimately, make it a richer read.

Teege, Jennifer. *Amon: Mein Großvater hätte mich erschossen*. Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 2013.

### ***Berlin Replayed: Cineman and Urban Nostalgia in the Postwall Era***

**By Brigitta B. Wagner**

Bruna Della Torre de Carvalho Lima

University of São Paulo

There is something dissonant about Berlin. Every big city in the world has its element of chaos, its facet of disharmony, its highlights of contradiction. But just as people do, cities bring a certain something that somehow it identifies them as unique. Whoever has been to Berlin as a tourist may have noticed it, but it seems that this dissonance is also – and perhaps even more intensely – present to Berlin's inhabitants, as Brigitta B. Wagner shows us through her stimulating book.

Even though it was written by a film historian, a filmmaker and a curator, *Berlin Replayed* is not a book limited to those strictly interested in German Cinema and quite on the contrary presents a piece of German history and geography narrated by images that can be of interest for anyone in German Studies. German politics and the tensions between East and West Germany are also a main subject of the book.

Wagner traces an overview of Berlin's representations starting, in the first chapter, with Walter Ruttmann's urban cross-section film *Berlin: Symphony of a great city*, from 1927. Berlin has been represented many times and under many aspects, but almost every representation

reports, either purposely or not, to Ruttmann's film and its craving for a *Weltstadt* status for Berlin.

The ideal Berlin and the representation of Weimar Republic's modernity and Berlin's desire of being a great *Metropolis* is also present in Wagner's reconstruction. In Chapter 3, of the iconographic and cinematographic history of *Potsdamer Platz*, once the main symbol of Berlin's modernity and then almost destroyed because of the war and one of the most ambiguous symbol of Berlin's stretched reunification – where one can find nowadays the monument in honor of Karl Liebknecht standing next to the Sony Center architectural statement of capitalism's victory. Starting with a Potsdamer Platz representation as a construction site in 1944, the "Berlin International Film festival" of 2001 proposed the theme "Do you remember?" for the audience to reflect on. Wagner attempts to relate moving images to actual places and history finds its best configuration in this chapter with the interpretation of Wim Wenders' *Der Himmel über Berlin* (1987). While the character Homer portrays us a colorful, lively and welcoming Potsdamer Platz, the camera shows us a destroyed site, which is not recognizable to its former visitors. "So this can't be it, can't be Potsdamer Platz", Homer exclaims.

The question that arises from this discussion is: how can one represent a city that has changed so much?

The *Invisible Shape of things past* project created in 1995, made it possible to virtually represent the analogy to the mind Freud once formulated as the history of Rome. That is, according to the founding father of psychoanalysis, the unconscious could be comprehended as if Rome's every single construction since its beginning could cohabit the same time and space. New media made it possible to represent this and in that sense we could re-discover Berlin's history. The question that remains is consistent with that of Walter Benjamin and Theodor W. Adorno in their 1930s debate: does the new technology allow us to also represent history and not just geography?

In the second chapter, Wagner approaches the 1950s generation and the split of Germany, Berlin and German cinema in two sides in constant strain. It is curious to rediscover the existence of a pre-Wall, but still divided, cinema, once the attention is commonly drawn to the post-Wall cinema of the reunification. Wagner's choice of analyzing the young pre-Wall movies was very happy once it could show both similarities and differences between the East and West construction of these new Germanys and of the new generation that was growing with them. Movies such as *Die Halbstarken* (1956), representing the West, and *Berlin – Ecke Schoenhauser*, (1957) and *Eine Berliner Romanze*, (1957), representing the East, are not only interpreted but also scrutinized by Wagner in order to explore the picture of the youth divided between capitalism after the catastrophe and socialism in construction through an also divided Berlin, which serves as a scenario to the teenage dramas and adventures.



Last but not least, the final chapter investigates the contemporaneous representations of Berlin by the X-films of New Berlin, especially *Run Lola Run* (1998) and *Goodbye Lenin* (2003) that soon drew international attention. The way Wagner reconstructs *Run Lola Run*, brightly guiding us through Berlin's *Straßen* and *Plätze*, is beautifully done and makes the reader realize how distracted one usually perceives films' scenarios by showing Berlin as an important character of the movie. It is worth to review both movies after Wagner's investigation of Berlin's apparitions not only in the new frenetic, capital of electronic music in the first, but in the reconstruction of the East and the nostalgia of a lost dream in the second. Her descriptions are informative and very enjoyable at the same time.

Those searching for an accurate analysis of German cinema or the urban nostalgia after the fall of Berlin's wall are not going to find it in Wagner's book, despite of its indication in text. The author is much more interested in rewriting the filmic history of Berlin's aspirations to be a great city. This allows her to design a panorama of the construction of Berlin's image through a very troubled century, to say the least. Cinema, nostalgia, tensions between East and West, reunification, all play the role of structuring axes in the book, but Berlin is the main theme.

If one thinks, though, of Berlin's divided history, there is something missing in Wagner's book. If *Run Lola Run* shows the new desire for a capitalist electronic and virtual modernity and *Goodbye Lenin* tries to represent the arising phenomena of urban nostalgia for socialism after the reunification, on one side, there are also many tensions remaining from this process and the reader wonders why *Die Fetten Jahre sind vorbei* (*The Edukators*) from director Hans Weingartner from 2004 and *Der Baader Meinhof Komplex* by Uli Edel from 2008 were not included in the postwall era of German Cinema. Both of them represent, among others, Berlin's image.

When Wagner reconstructs the East and West dispute for Berlin's image and the challenges of Berlin's reunification, especially in the second and the fourth chapter, the quarrel is presented as if it were polarized between capitalism and socialism. But the movies quoted above show something very interesting that could be included in Wagner's analysis. Berlin's split was not just an effect of the fight between capitalism and socialism in the Cold war. The *Baader Meinhof* movie shows that the West Berlin was also split between those who were for liberal capitalism, on one hand, and remaining Nazis, on the other – just remember that one of RAF's targets were former Nazis that were again in powerful political and economic positions after the loss of the war. *The Edukators* also shows a representation of a divided country between rich and poor and the impotence of the left after the end of the socialist utopia. So, the postwall era is not as reunified as *Run Lola run* and *Goodbye Lenin* show. If it is easier to deal with the communist past, as a dream gone bad, it is much harder to handle the true nightmare, and many times the taboo, of Nazism and the catastrophic consequences it brought to German society. Berlin's dissonance has to do with all this phantasmagoria that surrounds the city.

As George Orwell once wrote, "who controls the past controls the future". That is, the

history of our past will immediately impact not only our imagination but also the construction of the future [city] itself. In the present days, we could argue that Cinema can be considered not only part of history, but one of its builders; telling the history of a divided city and its aspirations through its filmic representations, therefore, has a much more important role to play than mere entertainment. Wagner's book can help us see that.

Wagner, Brigitta B. *Berlin Replayed: Cinema and Urban Nostalgia in the Postwall Era*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015