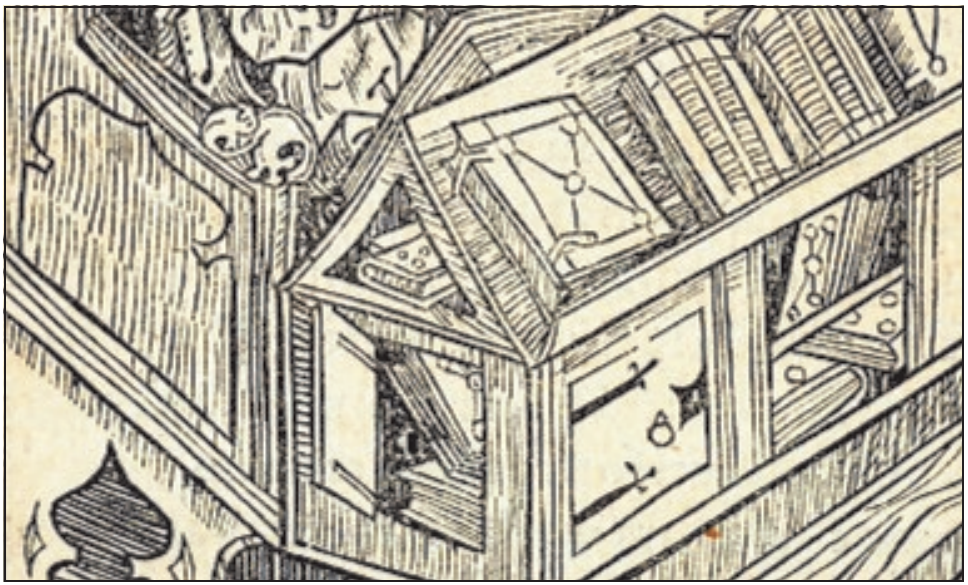
FOCUS
ON GERMAN STUDIES

BOOK REVIEWS



ARNO SURMINSKI. *WINTER FÜNFUNDVIERZIG ODER DIE FRAUEN VON PALMNICKEN*. HAMBURG: ELLERT & RICHTER VERLAG, 2010. 336 PP. € 19.95

Arno Surminski is one of the most prolific German authors of fiction and nonfiction about the history of East Prussia and the flight and expulsion of its ethnic German population in 1945. A child refugee from East Prussia whose parents died in Soviet captivity after the war, Surminski has produced novels abounding with his memories of violence, forced migration and lost *Heimat*. Yet unlike so many of the *Heimatbücher* and documentations of *Flucht und Vertreibung* produced by the German expellee community over the past 65 years, Surminski has consistently resisted instrumentalizing his nostalgia and trauma for *Vertriebenenpolitik*. His latest novel, *Winter Fünfundvierzig oder die Frauen von Palmnicken* goes a step further to directly confront the exculpatory and revanchist tendencies of the German expellee discourse. Though perhaps not of the same literary quality, *Winter Fünfundvierzig* could be compared to Grass's *Im Krebsgang* and Tanja Dücker's *Himmelskörper* (2004). Not only does the sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff* take on a comparable symbolic importance in Surminski's novel, but he attempts to reconcile competing discourses in German memory culture, albeit from the opposite point-of-view. Where Grass and Dückers incorporate stories of German suffering into a master narrative of German perpetration, Surminski has placed the Holocaust at the center of the competing victim narrative of *Flucht und Vertreibung*.

Winter Fünfundvierzig could best be described as *Ostpreußenroman* meets *Väterliteratur* in that it embeds a story of coming to terms with a father's complicity in the Holocaust – *Die Frauen von Palmnicken* – within the story of German suffering at the end of the war – *Winter Fünfundvierzig*. Just as the *Ich-Erzähler* Max Broders has buried his father, he is suddenly confronted with the words of a stranger: "Ihr Vater hatte keine Schuld" (12). Max had known relatively little about his father's experiences during the war, but never considered his potential involvement in war crimes. After a series of chance encounters with the *Fremde*, however, he learns that his father was in the *Waffen SS* and had

participated in a massacre of Jewish women on the shores of the Baltic Sea at Palmnicken (Yantarny). In spite of the *Fremde*'s insistence to let his father rest in peace, Max's obsession with the truth takes him on a journey deep into his father's lost *Heimat* and dark past.

The novel offers a collage of experiences and fates at the end of World War , which are juxtaposed against contemporary perspectives by means of shifting narrative perspectives and times. In the present, Max tells his story of piecing together and coming to terms with his father's past as he visits historical sites and debates the *Fremde*, Poles, and Russians on the issue of personal and national guilt. Simultaneously, a third-person, omniscient narrator traces the stories of several *Zeitzeugen*. Following two East Prussian families the reader encounters the expected symbols and motifs of *Flucht und Vertreibung*: the massacre at Nemmersdorf, long treks in the snow, the constant threat of dive bombers, the sinking of refugee ships in the Baltic Sea, the recruitment of old men and boys into the *Volkssturm*, mass rape, and deportation. These stories of German suffering, however, revolve around and are interconnected with the story of four young Jewish women, three of which are murdered as they are transported and marched from Lodz to Auschwitz to Stutthoff to Palmnicken from 1944 to 1945. Though we never explicitly read anything about Max's father and his exact role in the massacre, we know that he participated.

Many scholars have argued that Grass had always dealt with German suffering, particularly *Flucht und Vertreibung*, going all the way back to *Die Blechtrommel* (1959). Surminski's work has always found a place for German culpability, going back to his first novel, *Jokehnen oder Wie lange fährt man von Ostpreußen nach Deutschland?* (1974). What was new about *Im Krebsgang* and what is new about *Winter Fünfundvierzig* is that the subtext – the competing narrative of German suffering in the case of Grass and German perpetration in the case of Surminski – is suddenly foregrounded. If Grass is credited for reminding mainstream German society that Germans were victims, too (though by no means *innocent* victims), then Surminski should be praised for reminding the expellee community of their geographical ties to the sites of the Holocaust, something that is almost unanimously ignored in expellee literature.

Of course, approaching recent history from the perspective of the expellee remains problematic. *Winter Fünfunfvierzig* is full of subtle comments and covert criticisms that maintain the expellee bias. The stereotypes of the violent and vengeful *Russe* and the innocence of German civilians are preserved. Contemporary Poles and Russians in the novel find the German obsession with history and guilt to be absurd, while Max too easily "comes to terms with" his father's guilt: rather than attaining a critical balance, his fond memories of his father eventually dominate his father's dark past. Max disagrees with the radical position of the *Fremde*, that there is no need to mourn one's own victims, but he never defeats the argument that all sides were equally guilty. Though the Holocaust is thematized centrally, it is equated to the violent acts of the Allies. Finally, Surminski implies that the massacre at Palmnicken was forgotten, not because the perpetrators hid their guilt, but because the Soviet Union hid the documents. In the end, in stead of reconciling the victim narrative and the perpetrator narrative, *Winterfünfundvierzig* resurrects the parallel narratives of German suffering and Jewish suffering of the 1950s, in which all nationalities and ethnicities fall victim to the 20th Century and Germans merely need to overcome their guilt and memorialize their crimes in order to rejoin the international community.

Michael Ennis, University of Cincinnati

THOMAS HETTCHE. *DIE LIEBE DER VÄTER*. KÖLN: KIEPENHEUER & WITSCH, 2010. 224 PP. €17.50

Einem Entwicklungsroman gleich beschreibt der Autor Thomas Hettche die Verzweiflung, den Hass und die Schuldgefühle eines entrechteten Vaters, welcher versucht, sich in die Gesellschaft, vielleicht vielmehr, in eine entzweite Familie einzugliedern und seinem Kind und sich selbst gerecht zu werden. Sowohl das Motiv getrennter Eltern, als auch das Phänomen von Schuld und Versagen, von Identität und Integrität des von seinem Kind entzweit lebenden Vaters, welcher sich darüber hinaus selbst verlor, sind zentrale Themen in dem Roman *Die Liebe der Väter*. Im Mittelpunkt steht ein Vater, der nicht lieben kann, weil er nicht lieben darf, da der Entfaltungsfreiraum seiner Liebe von der Mutter seiner Tochter, aber auch von dem Gesetz bestimmt wird. Gelungen bespricht Hettche brisante Fragen rund um das Thema Erziehung, elterliche Pflicht und Verantwortung: Vaterschaftstests, Gesetze und Rechte, Drogenmissbrauch und Rausch, Sexualität und Pubertät, Generationenkonflikte und Selbstfindung. Aber auch Literatur und Wirtschaft umfassen den Wunsch eines Vaters, Vater sein zu dürfen und machen den Text dadurch zu einem gesellschaftskritischen Werk der deutschen Literatur des 21. Jahrhunderts.

Ein Aufenthalt auf Sylt mit seiner Tochter Annika hat therapeutische Wirkung auf Peter, den Ich-Erzähler und Protagonisten des Romans, der selber seine Kindheitssommer dort verbrachte. Anfangs unbewusst stürzt der distanziert ängstliche Vater sich in kritische Erinnerungsarbeit und durchläuft dramatische Höhen und Tiefen auf dem Weg zur Entwicklung eines neuen väterlichen Daseins, wobei er sich im Kreise von Freunden, Bekannten und Fremden, sowohl mit seiner Vergangenheit als auch mit seiner Gegenwart konfrontiert sieht. Diese schmerzvolle Auseinandersetzung führt zu Hoffnung auf Heilung und Stabilisierung der Vater-Tochter Beziehung.

Unsicherheit, Angst und Wut bestimmen Peters Verhältnis zu seiner Tochter, deren Leben er nicht mit gestalten darf. Annika, die ihm zwar nun räumlich so nah ist und doch so entfernt und fremd, wird von Peter immer wieder über ihre Mutter definiert und fungiert gleichzeitig als Puffer, Auslöser und Empfänger seiner ambivalenten Emotionen. Es ist

ein Wechselspiel von Hass und Liebe. Trotz der Sehnsucht nach seiner Tochter, sieht Peter häufig den Distanz fordernden Blick der Mutter in ihr und überschreitet letztendlich die Grenzen der zuvor lediglich imaginierten Gewalt.

Die ständige Angst, Annika könne ihn verraten – verraten, dass er als Vater versagt hat – versagen musste; die ständige Ungewissheit, ob sie wisse, dass er sie liebt; die ständige Panik, da zu sein, wenn sie ihn braucht: absurde Vatergefühle, die sich in Peter entwickelt haben, weil er gehemmt wurde, fast gelähmt, eine Vater-Tochter Beziehung zu entwickeln. Die väterliche Aufgabe, die nicht erfüllt werden kann, muss doch gesellschaftlich erfüllt werden soll – ein Paradox, mit welchem zahlreiche Väter leben und welches sie im Netz der Vaterliebe ohne Rechte gefangen hält (169).

Durch die ausdrucksvolle Beschreibung der Atmosphäre und die meist parallele Darstellung von Menschen und Natur, vermittelt der Autor ein Gefühl von Nah und Fern, von Vertrautem und Fremdem und bildet somit eine Brücke zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Die Auswahl des Schauplatzes dieser Geschichte scheint perfekt, verdeutlicht man sich die Gefahr des Untergangs, welche die Insel Sylt mit all den sie umgebenden Naturgewalten birgt und die darin reflektierte Vater-Tochter Beziehung, welche ebenfalls bedroht ist (15 ff.).

Ein gesellschaftskritisches Buch mit einschneidendem Realitätsausschnitt. Enttäuschend ist, dass es am Ende des Buches zwar zu einem vertrauten Gespräch zwischen Vater und Tochter kommt, jedoch zu keiner intensiveren Aussprache. Peters Entwicklung ist nicht abgeschlossen, doch scheint es auch nicht Hettches Absicht zu sein, rechtlosen Vätern einen Lösungsvorschlag zu offenbaren. Vielmehr ist die Intention dieses Buches, eine allgegenwärtige Problematik zu besprechen und das „Schicksal“ alleinerziehender Mütter abwechslungsweise aus der Perspektive der Väter zu betrachten. Das Buch birgt so mit eine alternative Annäherung, um dieses Thema kritisch zu beleuchten und das Schicksal vieler Väter aufzuzeigen ohne dabei das Schicksal der Kinder außen vor zu lassen.

Melda Ina Baysal, University of Maryland

CASPAR BATTEGAY, FELIX CHRISTEN, WOLFRAM GRODDEK (HRSG.). *SCHRIFT UND ZEIT IN KAFKAS OKTAVHEFTEN*. GÖTTINGEN: WALLSTEIN VERLAG, 2010. 260 PP. € 24.90

Die 15 Beiträge (plus Einleitung) der Anthologie *Schrift und Zeit in Franz Kafkas Oktavheften* gehen auf eine Konferenz an der Universität Zürich aus dem Jahr 2008 zurück, die – so heißt es in der einleitenden Erklärung der Herausgeber dieses Bandes – versucht habe „wichtige Fraktionen der unübersichtlichen Kafka-Forschung ins Gespräch zu bringen" (7). Tatsächlich überrascht die dicht gedrängte Stimmvielfalt dieser angestoßenen Kommunikation (und letztlich ist es wohl nur der Geduld ihres Materials geschuldet, dass die 260 Seiten dieses Buches nicht in alle Richtungen auseinander fliegen.) Die Versprechen klarer Koordinaten, gegeben a) durch Titel – Autor=Kafka, Werkausschnitt=Oxforder Oktavhefte, Topoi=Schrift und Zeit – und b) durch Buchklappentext – „Dieser Sammelband widmet sich [...] ganz dem handschriftlichen Zusammenhang der Oktavhefte." – entpuppen sich als leere verlegerische Notwendigkeiten. So widmen sich z.B. ‚nur' drei Beiträge *ganz* dem handschriftlichen Zusammenhang: Malte Kleinworts *Kafkas Querstrich – Der Schreibstrom und sein Ende*, Uta Degners *„Was ich berühre zerfällt". Gesichter der Handschrift in Kafkas Oktavheften* und auf spezielle Weise auch Alfred Bodenheimers *Kafkas Hebräischstudien. Gedanken zur Magie der Mitte und zur Fragmentierung sprachlichen Denkens*. Neben Sandro Zanettis Beitrag *„Da-sein und Ihm-gehören". Leben und Gesetz* handelt es sich bei den genannten Artikeln auch um die einzigen im Sammelband, die ihre Funde durch den Abdruck der entscheidenden Manuskriptseiten augenscheinlich machen. Letzterer untersucht die Seiten des Oktavhefts 6 (F), welche Kafka als Vokabelheft für seinen Hebräischunterricht verwendet hat. Ausgehend von den aufeinander zulaufenden Wörtern – den deutschen, geschrieben von links nach rechts, in der linken Spalte des *vocabulaire* und den hebräischen, geschrieben von rechts nach links, in der rechten Spalte – die sich in der Mitte der Seite doch nie berühren, entwickelt Bodenheimer die Idee der „Magie der Mitte". Die Leerstelle zwischen den Vokabelspalten wird ihm zur schriftbildlichen

Entsprechung des Dilemmas der Unübersetzbarkeit, „die geradezu unumgängliche konstitutive [...] Kluft zwischen den Sprachen, die durch das Studium des Hebräischen eher markiert als gefüllt oder überbrückt wird." (219) Bei dem angeschlossenen Versuch, das Schriftbild des *vocabulaire* mit der Brückenmotivik in Kafkas Werk zu verbinden, bleibt Bodenheimer wohl nicht zu unrecht tentativ.

Uta Degner dagegen widmet sich vor allen Kafkas Handschrift in den Oktavheften 4 (D) und 5 (E). „Die besondere Wandlungsfähigkeit [...], ihre ‚Instabilität' und Variabilität, die entsprechend der ‚Schreibszene' ihr Gesicht wechselt"(67) „entkoppelt"(8) die Texte und das Schreiben in den Oktavheften von jedem publizistischen Kalkül. Die Hefte werden damit für Degner zu einem unreglementierten Schreibraum, in welchem das Bruchstückhafte, das Zerfallen der Text*ein*heiten und des linearen Erzählens nicht etwa als Ausdruck des bei Kafka (scheinbar) stets vom Scheitern bedrohten Schreibens gelesen werden darf. Vielmehr ist Degner die Fragmentierung Anzeichen einer kreativen Selbstreflexion Kafkas, die sich ganz dem Thema des durch die eigene Hand verursachten Zerfalls verschreibt. Über die Isotopie der Koppel, auf der sich das Pferd so frei bewegen kann, wie Kafkas Schreiben in den Oktavheften, gelangt Degner zur Seite 10r des Hefts 5 (E), auf der sich ein äußerst interessantes, von Kafka mit großen jägerzaunartigen Maschen durchgestrichenes Fragment in Gedichtform über ein trabendes Pferdchen findet. Dieses Fragment alleine – besonders im Kontext der umliegenden, nicht gestrichenen Textstücke – hätte wohl eine ausführliche Analyse verdient. Die Verbindung, die Degner aber zwischen Kafkas Pferdchen und Ferdinand de Saussures *Course de linguistique générale* zu etablieren Versucht, vermag das gestrichene Fragment nicht so recht zum Sprechen bringen. Zwar stimmt es, dass das postume Erscheinen Saussures linguistischer Theorie und Kafkas Fragment in einem zeitlichen Zusammenhang stehen (1916), doch dass die bekannte Grafik, mit der in Saussure das Verhältnis von *signifiant* und *signifié* veranschaulicht werden soll – auf der einen Seite die Darstellung eines Pferdes, auf der anderen das lateinische Wort *EQUOS* – in direktem Zusammenhang stehen könnte mit dem gestrichenen Reittier Kafkas, wird allein dadurch unwahrscheinlich, dass Pferde auch schon vor 1916 in Kafkas Aufzeichnungen regelmäßig in Erscheinung treten.

Malte Kleinwort stellt – Ute Degner ähnlich – in seinem Beitrag zu *Kafkas Querstrich* das für Kafka angenommene Ideal des stringenten Erzählens bzw. das dazu korrespondierende Ideal des Produzierens, d.h. das Modell des „Schreibstroms", in Frage. Zunächst aber gibt Kleinwort den Lesern einen nützlichen geschichtlichen Abriss zur Entwicklung jenes Schreibmodells, das sich seit den 70er Jahren als so überaus wirkungsmächtig in der Kafka-Forschung erwiesen hat, an die Hand. Gegen dieses Paradigma führt er dann letztlich ‚nur' Kafkas Querstrich ins Feld. Kleinwort erkennt in den manchmal kurzen, oftmals zeilenlangen Strichen, die den Inhalt der Manuskripte zu strukturieren bzw. unterteilen scheinen, nicht die Markierung einer Unterbrechung des Schreibstroms, die potentiell das Schreiben als Ganzes zum erliegen bringt. Er belegt, dass der Querstrich in vielen fällen Ausdruck eines Zauderns ist, das letztlich das Schreiben selbst erhält: „[D]er Querstrich [rettet] gerade durch seine unterbrecherische Wirkung Schreibimpulse, die im Kontinuum einer Aufzeichnung [i.e. im Schreibstrom] verlorengegangen sind oder verlorengegangen wären" (47). Für das Oktavheft 5 (E) verdeutlicht Kleinwort letztlich gar wie der Querstrich von seiner unterstützenden Funktion zum Gegenstand der Produktion selbst wird. „Aus seiner Überpräsenz erwächst [...] keine Abwehrhaltung, sondern eine Arbeit am Querstrich. Die fortwährenden Abbrüche, Blockaden und Grenzziehungen verschieben die produktiven Energien vom Abgegrenzten auf die Grenze selbst" (51). Gegenüber diesem Argumentationsgang, wohl eingebettet in die Geschichte des eigenen Forschungsfeldes, erscheinen, gegen Ende des Beitrages, Kleinworts Ausflüge zu Benjamin sowie die Entwicklung eines Modells für die manchmal schwer nachvollziehbare Veröffentlichungspraktik Kafkas zu Lebzeiten weniger fundiert.

Alle anderen Aufsätze widmen sich Kafkas Manuskripten und seinem Schreiben in einem weniger *hand*greiflichen Sinn, was den größeren Teil nicht weniger lesenswert macht. Allerdings lassen sich die Beiträge in ihrer erwähnten Heterogenität nur schlecht in generische Untergruppen einteilen, die es erlauben würden, hier, in dem stark begrenzten Schreibraum einer Rezension, den Inhalt der Anthologie umfassender darzustellen. Festhalten lässt sich aber, dass sich quer zu der Anordnung der Beiträge im Buch so etwas wie ein *Jäger Gracchus*-Komplex finden lässt: Marianne Schuller untersucht in *Zur Unzeit des Schreibens.*

Sinndichte und Sinnentzug in den Jäger-Gracchus-Aufzeichnungen die Spannung, die zwischen der heraufbeschworenen Fülle an literarischen und mythischen Traditionsbeständen und der dem Schreiben vorausgehenden und vorausgesetzten Leere entsteht. Martin Endres *Chronographie des Todes. Die utopische Zeitlichkeit des Schreibens* spürt einem utopischen Schreibraum nach, der sich für Kafka nur in der paradoxen Konstruktion eines anderen Selbst – dem Jäger Gracchus – für den Augenblick des Schreibens auf- und er-schließen lässt. Besonders lesenswert in diesem Komplex erscheint aber Davide Giuriatos Beitrag *„Kinderzeit" . Zu Franz Kafkas Jäger Gracchhus*. Giuriato entdeckt in den Kinderfiguren, die spielend am Kai von Riva oder als Spalier für die Bare des untoten Gracchus in den Fragmenten in Erscheinung treten, eine poetologische Reflexionsfigur: „Kafkas Kinder [spielen] ein Spiel, das an den Grenzen des Subjekts, der Zeit und der Kunst stattfindet und das ebenso zerstörend wie produktiv wirkt" (117).

Darüber hinaus sind auch die Beiträge von Rainer Nägele (*Beistrich. Erkenntnismoment im Jetzt des Schreibens*), Caspar Battegay (*„Durch den Stich [...] unversundbar werden." Blut und Schrift bei Franz Kafka*) und Andreas B. Kilcher (*Geisterschrift. Franz Kafkas Spiritismus*) schlichtweg eine empfehlenswerte Lektüre. Nägele konstatiert, dass sich die Wahrheit in Kafkas Texten stets in einem singulären Jetzt des Schreibens ereignet aber nicht überzeitliche Gültigkeit haben kann. Battegay stellt Kafkas Schreibakt in Zusammenhang mit jüdischen Vorstellungen des Blutes sowie der traditionell-religiösen Beschneidungszeremonie. Erstaunlich sprechende Verbindungen stellt schließlich Kilcher zwischen der Modererscheinung des Spiritismus – dem sich auch Franz Kafka, trotz ironischer Distanz, nicht gänzlichen entziehen wollte – in der Prager Gesellschaft Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts und den geisterhaften Gestalten und unheimlichen Gerätschaften, die in den Oktavheften ihr Unwesen treiben.

Vor dem Hintergrund einer ausgeuferten und immer noch ausufernden Kafka-Bibliothek innerhalb der Literaturwissenschaft muss eine Rezension in Anbetracht einer Veröffentlichung, die diesen Textkörper erweitert, vor allen Dingen eine Frage beantworten: Ist die Evidenzkraft bzw. der Forschungsimpuls der veröffentlichten Beiträge stark genug, um die (durch sie selbst verursachte) zunehmende Unübersichtlichkeit des Forschungsfeldes rechtfertigen zu können? Die

Antwort im Falle von *Schrift und Zeit in Franz Kafkas Oktavheften* muss eindeutig „ja“ lauten. Gerade die Vereinigung so unterschiedlicher Beiträge, wie man sie in dieser Anthologie vorfindet (und die, so könnte man argumentieren, in ihrer Heterogenität eine angemessene Entsprechung des ebenfalls heterogenen Inhalts der Oktavhefte verkörpert), verdeutlichen die Lebendigkeit des Forschungsfeldes und das Potenzial, das sich noch in der Untersuchung von Kafkas Manuskripten verbirgt.

Benjamin M. W. Brand, Brown University

JAIMEY FISHER AND BARBARA MENNEL, EDS. *SPATIAL TURNS: SPACE, PLACE AND MOBILITY IN GERMAN LITERARY AND VISUAL CULTURE*. AMSTERDAM: RODOPI, 2010. 469 PP. €94.00

Jaimey Fisher and Barbara Mennel's edited volume *Spatial Turns: Space, Place and Mobility in German Literary and Visual Culture* is a welcome contribution to the burgeoning interest in space in German culture. While the "spatial turn" of the last two decades has largely influenced the social sciences and humanities, it has only recently become a methodological approach in German studies. Fisher and Mennel's work aims to expand on this recent trend, gathering together a diverse selection of contributions from German studies scholars that reflects the breadth and richness of an exploration of space. Rather than focusing on a "spatial turn" in the singular, their approach to this collection is one of plurality—an investigation of multiple spaces and multiple spatial turns. Their work embraces not only a variety of approaches to the issue of space but also "queries the historical narrative that asserts a progressive arc from pre-modern via modern to post-modern spaces" (10). By tapping into this historical trajectory, *Spatial Turns* challenges us to rethink earlier canonical texts not often analyzed under the rubric of spatiality and trace this trajectory through to current artistic endeavors. Though they state that the focal point of their volume is indeed literature, in keeping with their emphasis on a plurality of spaces and spatial analyses, this work incorporates film and new media into its framework as well.

Spatial Turns is divided into four thematic sections: "Mapping Spaces," "Spaces of the Urban," Spaces of Encounter," and "Visualized Space." Pursuant to the editors' desire to provide a historical narrative of spatial turns, the essays in each section are ordered chronologically according to their subject matter. The introduction to the work both outlines the editors' formal and methodological approach and presents the reader with a brief account of various theories on spatiality. These range from German theorists, most notably Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer, to the work of Henri Lefebvre, Edward W. Soja, David Harvey, Doreen Massey and Gillian Rose. While this is by no means a comprehensive overview of the myriad spatial theories and theorists, Fisher

and Mennel hit on the main players and emphasize particularly Soja's interest in the "imaginary social functions of space" and Massey's and Rose's focus on space and gender. Indeed, one or both of these concerns is at the core of each of the essays, enough so that the editors do not have a separate section devoted to either. Their introduction thus provides those with a background in spatial studies a clear theoretical guide to their work and newcomers to the field with enough information to understand what is at stake and entices them to delve further into the subject.

The first section, "Mapping Berlin," explores the influence of new conceptions of space from geography and geology to cartography and travel guides on the production of space in literature. "Spaces of the Urban" then moves into the realm of the city, exploring the gendered construction of city spaces and the dichotomy of urban and rural spaces as well as Berlin's new role as a "global" city. The third section, "Spaces of Encounter," widens the view investigating German negotiations of global spaces. These range from Goethe's fascination with the Middle East in his *West-östlicher Divan* to questions of Jewish identity, Zionism, and German-Turkish spaces in the works of Fatih Akin and Emine Sevgi Özdamar. "Visualized Space," the final section of the volume, queries spaces through the lens of film, photography, and other new media such as Google Earth and HyperCities. As with the preceding sections, the essays in "Visualized Space" also tackle such diverse issues as gender, globalization, and German history, from Arnold Fanck's Weimar mountain films to post-war and post-wall Berlin.

This volume is certainly ambitious. It attempts to bring together numerous discourses on space in general and from Germany in particular, so much so that it seems to lack a clear red thread that ties it all neatly together. While this could be leveled as a critique against Fisher and Mennel's project, its breadth and daring is precisely its strength. In contrast to recent German scholarship, namely Doris Bachmann-Medick's *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierung in den Kulturwissenschaften,* which the editors set up as a foil to their work, that locates Germany's interest in space only after 1980, *Spatial Turns* takes a broader historical view of space in German culture. Similarly, while David Clarke and Renate Rechtien's recent volume *The Politics of Place in Post-War Germany: Essays in Literary Criticism* expands the field to encompass the immediate post-war years, it is also limited by its temporal frame. This is not to

say, however, that these works have not contributed to the study of space in a German context. Rather, *Spatial Turns* challenges us to revisit and rethink earlier periods of German history and artistic production under the lens of spatiality and explore the history of a German concern with space. It does this by both historicizing space and spatializing history, thereby emphasizing the importance and interrelation of history and space. Further, by including such a wide range of discourses and media this volume points to the very richness of spatial analyses, which are often treated independently.

Spatial Turns compiles a panoply of essays that are sure to appeal to numerous scholars working in different time periods and on various issues. At the same time that there is something for everyone in this volume, allowing one to pick and choose, the essays also work together to establish a historical narrative on the development of thinking spatially and the influence this has had on German art and society. It brings together not only diverse subject matter such as gender, globalization and post-colonialism, German-Turkish relations, architecture and geography, to name a few, but places these in dialog with one another to paint a larger picture of the importance of a spatial approach to German aesthetics and to suggest new directions for German studies—one that is Janus-faced, looking both forward and backward. In this sense, *Spatial Turns* is not a comprehensive overview of spatial methodologies applied to a German literature and film, but it does not claim to be. Fisher and Mennel's work opens the field and encourages us to continue thinking of spaces in the plural with their own histories. *Spatial Turns* is a critical volume for anyone interested in spatial theories and their application to aesthetic analysis. It addresses where the field is, has been and what it can continue to contribute to German studies. As Doreen Massey states in *For Space*, "*For* the future to be open, space must be open too" (12, author's italics).

Kirkland Alexander Fulk, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

NOTES

[1.] Doris Bachmann-Medick, *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierung in den Kulturwissenschaften* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2006).

[2.] David Clarke and Renate Rechtien's, eds., *The Politics of Place in Post -War Germany: Essays in Literary Criticism* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 2009).

[3.] Massey, Doreen. *For Space*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2004.

WHITE, JOHN J. AND ANN WHITE. *BERTOLT BRECHT'S FURCHT UND ELEND DES DRITTEN REICHES: A GERMAN EXILE DRAMA IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM.* ROCHESTER: CAMDEN HOUSE, 2010. 262 PP. $75.00

Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches is, as the authors of this book-length study point out, something of an oddity among both Brecht's anti-fascist writings and his entire theatrical output. It is clearly not a *Lehrstück*, but nor is it an obviously epic piece. The documentary nature of the scenes (all based on factual sources and eyewitness reports) has even led to it being considered Brecht's most realist, Aristotelian play, most notably by Georg Lukács, who hurried – precipitately, as it turned out – to welcome Brecht into the socialist realism fold after reading one of the scenes ("Der Spitzel"). The resulting "Realismusdebatte" is one of the topics with which the book deals. In part, it revolved around the question of montage as a valid dramatic technique, and Brecht's comments on the subject provide the authors with evidence for one of their central assertions, namely that *Furcht und Elend* is not a collection of one-act plays for a director to pick and choose from, but rather a "montage of semi-autonomous scenes" (150). Of course, given the circumstances when Brecht was writing, it was inevitable that individual scenes and shorter groups of scenes would be published or performed separately, but the study argues that the material has a unity and that the selection and order of scenes is not arbitrary. To justify this claim, the different versions of the play (both as printed and in various stagings) are discussed, with particular attention being given to Slatan Dudow's 1938 Paris production (called *99%*) and *The Private Life of the Master Race*, the 1944 American production translated by Eric Bentley.

Two of the principal linking methods employed by Brecht – the authors argue here – are the use of "Furcht" and "Elend" as unifying themes and framing devices. The significance of the short poems that introduce and comment on each scene is surely obvious to anyone familiar with Brecht's work, and one cannot argue with the authors' preference for the original frame of "Die deutsche Heerschau" rather than the war-time "Chorus of the Panzer Soldiers" (used in Bentley's version). The latter is undoubtedly a powerful metaphor for the all-devouring Nazi war-

machine as well as being an effective theatrical device, but it weakens the play as a whole by forcing a repeated refocusing from the Eastern Front to pre-war Nazi Germany and back. As for "Furcht und Elend," I many may consider it as boringly formulaic: that ordinary people are afraid and miserable under a dictatorship is hardly the kind of insight for which one studies literature. In fact, the full title contains a typically Brechtian ambiguity: it is not purely a matter of "Furcht und Elend *im* dritten Reich," for the regime itself is also paranoiacally afraid of the people it supposedly rules, and this fear means its supporters can never be fully happy. The same idea is expressed in Brecht's poem "Die Ängste des Regimes":

Aber auch die Braunhemden selber
Fürchten den Mann, dessen Arm nicht hochfliegt
Und erschrecken vor dem, der ihnen
Einen guten Morgen wünscht.

The fact that Brecht chose "Volksgemeinschaft" (in which two SS men stray into a potentially threatening working-class district) as the play's opening scene suggests he wanted to emphasize the same point before going on to treat more predictable scenes of fear and misery.

The other scenes, in contrast, focus on the workings and effects of *Alltagsfaschismus* across all sections of society (the English title catches this nicely) and it was in this that Brecht saw the play's importance. The historical, social, artistic, and political contexts are explored in detail here, and the chapter on "Brecht and Fascism" could be useful to anyone with a more general interest in that topic, especially as it doesn't hide the inconsistencies and inadequacies of Brecht's slightly heretical Marxist understanding of Nazism.

The particularly documentary and contemporary nature of the scenes reveal Brecht's urgency to get the play produced and staged. Such an urgency may explain one of the play's main weaknesses: it was constantly being superseded by events.

Another weakness is that the play does not offer a convincing indication of how resistance to the Third Reich could have or should have been attempted. The authors, White and White, valiantly argue that the resistance element becomes more and more important as the play progresses through the various scenes, though whether the play ends on a positive or negative note remains dependent on the individual spectator or reader.

The notion of "the pattern of growing opposition from scene to

scene" brings back the question of the play's unity. The arguments summarized above lead one to the conclusion that the play needs to be performed in its entirety. The authors' case in support of this is convincing (based on Brecht's own comments, one must stress), although their only suggestion as to how to do so (given the play's length) is to perform it over two evenings.

As I have mentioned, the authors are at pains to correct some of the most prevalent misconceptions about *Furcht und Elend* and to defend its aesthetic viability. The most interesting of the Whites' analyses seeks to demonstrate the use of *Verfremdung* and epic techniques in apparently realist scenes, using Brecht's theoretical writings for support. At times one demurs – can one really call this *Verfremdung*? Isn't it just irony? Part of the problem of course in answering such a question is the volume and evolving nature of Brecht's writings and comments on theatrical practice. But one can concede to the authors that there is certainly more to the play than just Aristotelian *or* Socialist Realism.

All in all, it would be hard to complain about any critical study of a play given little detailed attention in comparison with the rest of Brecht's work. John and Ann White have assembled one that is wide-ranging, detailed, and closely researched. Its reassessment of *Furcht und Elend des dritten Reiches*, as well as the detailed bibliography and many references in the footnotes to further reading, will certainly be of use to those who follow.

Bruce Gaston, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg

GISA WESZKALNYS. *BERLIN, ALEXANDERPLATZ*. NEW YORK: BERGHAHN BOOKS, 2010. 224 PP. $60.

Alexanderplatz can seem empty, forgotten, and bare. Many visitors will recall their first approach, as the Berlin airport bus comes to a stop on the square's vast western flank. For locals, the experience of Alex—as they affectionately call it—is closer to that of the Berlin mythologists, of Döblin and Fassbinder. In anthropologist Gisa Weszkalnys's *Berlin, Alexanderplatz*, locals describe the square not as empty but as an *active* place of contest. In the endless talk about this specific material object ("Alexanderplatz"), both before and after reunification, debates open onto the social, cultural, and political state of Germany. This set of concerns unfolds in the case of Alexanderplatz because of its time as, chronologically, the locus of a working-class modernity during the Weimar Republic, the centre of socialist GDR and the centre of a reunified Berlin Republic.

Concerned with the period of selling Alex that began with reunification, Weszkalnys's text is a kind of ethnography of urban planning. I say "a kind of" because she does not solely situate herself in state offices surrounded by maps and models. Her extended understanding of planning necessitates a broad ethnography because "urban planning has been concerned not merely with buildings, streets, and squares but also with the constitution of urban life and the city dweller" (68). So, she takes a job in a pub on Alex and later tags along with an organisation of youth social workers; she sits in on the meetings of various planning-cum-architectural citizen groups. By offering rich empirical detail, she can "interrogate certain quotidian practices of citizenship defined not in relation to national belonging, but in relation to a belonging to place, involving specific notions of entitlement" (39).

In the first chapter proper, "Constructing a Future Berlin," Weszkalnys's concern is with Alexanderplatz as an emblem of Berlin. Urban planning, as with much of the city at the time of reunification, was in a reflective mode regarding the transformation of Berlin. Various visions of the city were conjured and sold: Berlin was a European city, a revived metropolis, a global "hub." The first two characterisations provide a narrative that conjures Weimar Berlin—leapfrogging the city's division, or invoking it as an aberration in the city's "natural" historical path. The

"global city," meanwhile, pegs Berlin as a place that joins capitalist, urban "networks." The city's characteristic "voids" were, for planners and investors, places of potentiality, investment, and imagined prosperity. Yet perhaps the biggest "emptiness" of all was the emptiness of Alex—which is precisely why the space becomes a metonym for Berlin's past, present and future.

Weszkalnys takes up the immediate past in the following chapter, "The Disintegration of a Socialist Exemplar." Here, Weszkalnys outlines what the she thinks are two central terms for the reputation of Alex after reunification: order and disorder. The urban planner in Germany, since the nineteenth century, has been concerned with spatial order and social reform. Alex is the perfect example of this: throughout the twentieth century, it was a case study of attempted interventions in "the social" through planning; each plan for Alex "projected an ideal of the organisation of the city and urban life" (69). Central here is disorder and the way it is thought about, experienced, governed, and materialised. For ex-GDR subjects, contemporary Alexanderplatz is a place of symbolic disorder and disintegration. It is said to mirror the disintegration of the GDR state and the failures of subsequent FRG governments. Former GDR citizens would invoke to Weszkalnys the official designation of 1990s Alex as a "dangerous place" in order to narrate a story of decline. These complaints suggested a specific, foreclosed concept of "the social": a conception of society, "underwritten by past and present legal and state practices [of the GDR]," which was "reflected in the materiality of the square" (88).

The seeming impossibility to translate plan to site is Weszkalnys's concern in the next chapter, "Promising Plans." Here we look into a very specific moment in the project: the point at which failure began to seem to be a real possibility. But Weszkalnys wants to interrogate this "failure," for "failure is not absolute; it is not a matter of intentions and results but of contingency, accommodation and adjustment" (p113). She notices that planners never invoked this troubled period as a failure, but rather a time of anticipation and postponement: endless reports, drawings, models, images, legal documents, publications and meetings were evidence of *something* going on. For planners in the state offices, their expertise and conscientiousness was in contrast to the caprice of market forces and opportunistic developers. There is here interesting ethnographic material as to the split between private and public personas of

Berlin administrators—and, beyond that, material addressing questions of expertise (as bureaucrats) and experience (as users of Alex). In the book's concluding pages, Weszkalnys defends her choice of study on these grounds: "my ethnographic interest lay in showing how it is these planners' efforts to embody a view that is distinct, rational and comprehensive—in keen awareness of their own humanity and the relevance of experientially grounded knowledge—makes them fascinating subjects" (163). What's more, by focusing on the *process* of planning rather than the *product*, Weszkalnys suggests the ways different domains of experience and expertise came to meet in these discussions and reports.

"The Object of Grievance" turns to the residents of Berlin for some answers to the obdurate presence of Alex, this planning "failure." It is here that Weszkalnys sets out her notion of a "citizenly engagement with place" (114). This means, in part, the way people rationalise their perspectives on place by using the terms of expert debate. Engaged as *citizens*, people were invested in a debate that figured not only political rights—the possibility to contribute a "voice" to the decision—but also the selection of a design that "would sustain the kind of urban sociality they saw dissolving around them" (134). The account here is placed within the context of the way debates over urban planning—and other government decisions—now involve a moment of summoning the citizens. We get accounts of various public discussions and participatory events about Alex—public gatherings which allow participants to form images of each other and themselves. In such events, people infuse their purportedly rational statements with values, memories and a sense of belonging. *Heimat*, autochthony, social property, experience, responsibility—these common thematics all suggest entitlements and obligations toward Alexanderplatz. The question was one of belonging: how do people belong to Alexanderplatz and how does Alexanderplatz belong to them?

The last major chapter, "A Robust Square," concerns a different set of engagements with Alexanderplatz than that of the self-consciously citizenly actor. Here, Weszkalnys meets a group of social workers at Alexanderplatz and the adolescents they counsel. Weszkalnys notices that in their discussions, a different figure of "the social" is taken up by the planners and the social workers. Planners sought a "robust," plain square that was effectively neutral, a backdrop to varied uses. In contrast, the

youth workers wanted a "social robustness" where the desires of different users were to be built into the urban design (138). Accordingly, the social workers believe young people, a significant presence at Alex, should be involved in planning spaces. They had some success in this, including an invitation to contribute to the 2004 competition for the square's design. In line with Weszkalnys' interest in the various forms of sociality at play in competing claims, she notices that youth workers mobilised the category of "young people" in order to stake a claim for a "kind of social diversity which, in turn, has come to stand for a particular kind of public sphere" (139).

In her conclusion, Weszkalnys notes that "planners now manage space in relation to society, imagined as an aggregate of private interests, and the idea is that consensus can be found through rational debate" (p164). She doesn't suggest that the Berlin planning authorities are particularly novel in their approach to the city or Alex, but she does note a self-awareness about the task of fixing Berlin's urban form. And yet one of the curious effects of the FRG takeover of the GDR public space at Alexanderplatz was a new order of messiness: "the plans to revamp Alexanderplatz into a space of planned order, a promise of economic prosperity and a stepping stone towards 'real' unification appeared to transform an unfinished construction of the GDR state into the unfinished construction of another, the FRG" (165).

To account for this ongoing messiness, Weszkalnys suggests that place is an assemblage, in the post-humanist, Latourian sense. Planning offices, living rooms, podium discussions and Alexanderplatz itself—these are her sites and they entail diverse agendas, technological regimes, practices, things, and people. Consequently, Weszkalnys comes to dub this assemblage, "Alexanderplatz multiple" (164). The fear of most citizens in the book is that the multiplicity of Alexanderplatz will be reduced to just one reality—the economic realm, an Alexanderplatz that is commodified, bought and sold. That process may be underway and felt to be inexorable, but it is not complete. *Berlin, Alexanderplatz* is a work that suggests this urban space remains open to many types of occupation. Twenty years on, development is still proceeding very slowly.

In these closing pages of her argument, it becomes clear just how deeply Latour has influenced Weszkalnys' work. She refers throughout to the "hybrid" forms of engagement with Alexanderplatz. Likewise, her

terminology of Alexanderplatz as an "object" chimes with that of Latour. In this context, an "object" bundles into it the network of relations of actors who experience and claim Alexanderplatz. But rather than simply taking up a Latourian approach, Weszkalnys actually overcomes some of the weaknesses identified by critics in Latour's work—his flat ontology, a blindness to asymmetries of power, the reticence on qualitative differences in the relationships within networks, an inability to narrate historical change. Weszkalnys notices the way sociality changes—or is reconstructed—as Alex shifts from a socialist place to a capitalist place, from a public place to a place on the market. Alex is a qualitatively different object in 1989 and 2010. Students and scholars of Berlin's recent history are enriched by this book, which has much to say about the *process* of reunification. Weszkalnys' book sets out clearly the role that planners—and their allies and adversaries—played in this transformation of Berlin's symbolic eastern heart. After reading Weszkalnys, Alexanderplatz comes to be not a barren emptiness but rather a fertile ground, not a site of failure but one of persistence.

Ben Gook, University of Melbourne

CLAIRE BERGMANN, TRANS. RICHARD BODEK. WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE CHILDREN? A NOVEL OF A GERMAN FAMILY IN THE TWILIGHT OF WEIMAR BERLIN. ROCHESTER: CAMDEN HOUSE, 2010. 126 PP. $24.95.

Originally published in 1932, and then banned in 1938 after appearing on the Nazi Party's *Liste des schädlichen und unerwünschten Schrifttums*, Claire Bergmann's novel *What Will Become of the Children?* represents the book's first appearance in mainstream literature since World War , thanks to Richard Bodek's new translation.

Bergmann writes with sentience about the tenuous social and political situation of her world — Weimar Germany in the interwar period and just before the Nazi Party's rise to power — that, as a reader, it is difficult to remember that she in fact wrote *What Will Become of the Children* in 1932, not after the war, with the benefit of hindsight. Indeed, in his introduction, Bodek notes that the only review to criticize the novel after its publication did so because it was too journalistic in tone, and not enough like fiction.

The text is, in fact, heavily based upon a framework of dates, current events, and references to the popular culture of the time — dutifully footnoted by Bodek for the lay reader — and situates Bergmann's characters, Pitt Deutsch and his family, within the period's political and cultural discourse in such a way as to make the story ring nearly allegorical. The reader can hardly overlook the constant references to "the Deutsch family" and "Herr Deutsch" that sprinkle the text, and although Bodek does not include a translation of Bergmann's foreword to the 1932 edition of her novel, it is unsurprising that in it she states that the Deutsch family is meant as "nichts weiter als ein ... Spiegel der Zeit über eine etwas größere Spanne" (quoted in Kracauer's review of the novel, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, cited but not quoted in Bodek's introduction to the 2010 translation).

Because the bulk of the story focuses on Pitt Deutsch's seven children, Bergmann is able to infuse each of their lives with a different facet of life in Berlin in the late Weimar period, and in so doing, seems to amplify the death rattle of Germany's democracy uncannily for a writer of the time. In her narration of Pitt Deutsch's life before World War I, Bergmann switches from past to present tense, giving her descriptions of life in Berlin, begin-

ning in 1911, a documentary feel, and drawing the reader into the political and social issues debated by her characters. Jürgen and Helmut, the two youngest sons, still in school, join the Nazi party and debate its "politicized" views with their older siblings, especially Max, the academic, and Elsa, the "New Woman," in lengthy scenes, which often read less like believable dialogue and more like dueling newspaper editorials.

While Bergmann's delicate and perspicacious descriptions of the many facets of Weimar life and politics are to be commended, it is nearly impossible for the modern reader, knowing that Hitler's fateful rise to power was already well under way at the time Bergmann was writing, to read *What Will Become of the Children* as an aesthetic work. Bergmann's work has a quasi-Brechtian quality about it that posits each of the Deutsch children as a product of his or her social situation. One gets the sense that the reader is hardly meant to feel sorry for the self-pitying, unemployed Peter or the rambunctious and ill-behaved Helmut, even after he is shot in the street while out carousing with some of his Nazi Party comrades. Though the novel is infused with a sense of foreboding of the impending death of the Weimar Republic, the members of the Deutsch family remain inaccessible, modeling clay to be slashed at by fate and mere vehicles for the expression of various competing political views.

The translation provided by Richard Bodek also inhibits the possibility of any emotional connection with the characters, since Bodek's priority as a historian clearly lies with the work's historical significance rather than its literary qualities. His stilted language neither passes for old-fashioned, nor flows for a contemporary reader, and in combination with his footnotes, which clarify popular culture references or situate the text within the context of major political events of the time, the novel reads even less like a work of fiction and more like a modified historical narrative.

This is not meant to denigrate the work or its intellectual value; it is a rare work in terms of the almost uncanny understanding of her time that Bergmann demonstrates. Yet *What Will Become of the Children?* hardly lends itself to aesthetic interpretation. A sort of intellectual and cultural time capsule, Bergmann's novel would, for the time being, be better situated in an undergraduate course on Weimar culture rather than in the echelons of major cultural productions of the time.

Elizabeth Gordon, The Ohio State University

FERDINAND VON SCHIRACH. SCHULD. MUNICH: PIPER VERLAG, 2010. 208 S. €9.30.

Ferdinand von Schirach's debut, *Verbrechen* (2009) was widely acclaimed, and his second work, *Schuld* was highly anticipated. *Verbrechen* aimed to capture the moments in which crimes occur: "all our lives we dance on a thin layer of ice… the ice won't bear the weight of some people, and they fall through." In *Verbrechen* "guilt always presents part of the problem (ix)." It seems a logical conclusion, then, that von Schirach's second work, *Schuld* now examines this "part of the problem" more closely.

Schuld, like its predecessor, is a collection of stories based on the author's experiences as a defense attorney. While he changes the names of his characters, von Schirach does not fictionalize his characters or his role — the stories are told from the perspective of a first-person (yet often omniscient) narrator. The first story, "Volksfest," introduces the reader to the problem of guilt and the law. One of the first cases of the *Ich-Erzählers* career involves a seventeen-year old girl who was violently raped by several musicians at a folk fair. Since the perpetrators were all wearing costumes, the girl cannot identify any of them, and there is no other evidence that could lead to a conviction. Unsurprisingly, the case is dismissed as none of the accused confesses. As a young defense attorney, the narrator is inspired by an ideal form of justice, but despite winning the case for the defendants, he and his fellow attorney feel guilty, realizing that "*von jetzt an nichts mehr einfach werden würde* (18)."

With hauntingly minimalist prose, von Schirach describes guilt in both the moral and legal sense. He exposes the many moral grey zones in the German legal system by telling stories of victims and offenders: a fourteen-year old boy is brutally tortured by his classmates; a thug steals the wrong Porsche and angers two criminal organizations; a guilty husband protects his wife's legal career and a judge looks the other way so a battered woman can lead a normal life and be a mother to her daughter again. The premise of the book, a quote from Aristotle: "*die Dinge sind, wie sie sind*," is both true and misleading. Only by giving his characters' stories a voice, are things shown for what they truly are, such as the old man who claims to have led a heroin cartel in order to protect the actual culprit's pregnant girlfriend. Schirach's portrayals of the "guilty" cross

class and ethnic lines, but he especially attacks the middle class façade of respectability, as in the case of the aforementioned musicians, who are described as "*ordentliche Männer mit ordentlichen Berufen* (7)," or the nice car salesman and good neighbor who transforms into a wife-battering sadist when he returns home from a day of smiles and handshakes. Von Schirach never glorifies the narrator's role as defense attorney or legal aid and the *Ich-Erzähler* almost becomes a sideline to the actual core of the story. His role can be compared to a Greek chorus: commenting on the story, explaining the legal ramifications, but leaving the verdict of right and wrong to the reader.

In his short story "Vor dem Gesetz" (1914), Franz Kafka described the situation of those who are outside the law, their helplessness and their hope to one day gain access to a society governed by the rule of law. This helplessness is reflected in many of von Schirach's stories — especially those dealing with immigrants or minors — and the ways in which they have become guilty. While Kafka's protagonist remains a nameless resident of the countryside, von Schirach's characters all have a story that needs to be told, a life that led to the cracking of the ice — the way to guilt, so to speak.

In the past few years, the practice of law has received much attention in Germany, mostly in the form of attention-seeking, garish, carnival-like reality TV shows. Von Schirach's quiet tone and matter-of-fact prose is a welcome break, which provides a glimpse into the rather unglamorous world of a criminal defense attorney. What distinguishes his stories from a mere memoir or a collection of entertaining tales is their "everyman" character. Confronted with the forces of good and evil, as well as the grey zone in between: "everybody could become a murderer," as von Schirach declared upon accepting the Kleist-Prize in 2009. Ferdinand von Schirach's *Schuld*, then, not only gives an accurate portrayal of the German legal system beyond TV judges, but also of German society at large.

Verena Hutter, University of California, Davis

ALINA BRONSKY. *DIE SCHÄRFSTEN GERICHTE DER TATARISCHEN KÜCHE (THE FIERIEST DISHES OF TARTAR CUISINE)*. KIEPENHEUER & WITSCH, AUGUST 2010, 336 PP. €19.50

In her novel *Die schärfsten Gerichte der tatarischen Küche*, Alina Bronksky eloquently introduces the readers to the world of female minorities within the Soviet Union and Germany. Bronksky, the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize winner for her first novel *Scherbenpark* (2008), masterfully presents yet another fascinating multicultural and multidimensional fictional novel.

The story centers on Rosalinda, a strong and independent Tatar woman living in the Soviet Union, who feels neither entirely home in the Soviet Union, nor later in Germany. She constantly struggles between her wish to maintain her individuality and remain true to her heritage and various social expectations. Rosalinda's family suffers from her desire to control her own life and the life of her family members; Rosalinda knows best and obsessively holds herself, her daughter and granddaughter to extremely high standards in all aspects of life, including personal appearance, etiquette, and education. Her unique individuality is what makes her different, even if this means facing conflict within her family and society.

Bronsky also addresses the role of a woman within the Soviet and German societies respectively – all her female characters in this novel are perfectly capable of living financially and emotionally independently, but the social stigma within the Soviet Union still forces women to take on a role of the wife. Rosalinda, however, does not adhere to these constrictions and enjoys being a woman in her own untraditional way. Her unorthodox way of life and interaction with her family members, however, leads to isolation; yet, the story presents a surprising ending.

In addition to the feminist discourse, Bronsky skillfully discusses other critical topics ranging from multicultural discourse within the Soviet Union in the 1970/80s and Germany in 1990/2000, to criticism of the Soviet Union's integration policies of minorities through assimilation into Russian culture. She also describes the anti-Semitic tendencies within the Soviet Union, which consequently forced Jews to immigrate to

Jerusalem. Bronsky depicts in minute detail the lack of religious tolerance within Soviet Union, the struggling Soviet economy in the 1980s and its negative impact on its people. The weak Soviet economy, poor living conditions, shortage in proper housing, food and hygiene products, etc. compel Rosaline to go to great lengths and use unethical methods to obtain permission to immigrate to Germany. However, after the arrival in Germany, Rosalinda, her daughter and granddaughter face new and unexpected challenges. Bronsky vividly describes the immigrants' struggle with proper integration into German society, a country in which speaking the host society's language becomes a major factor in virtually every aspect of one's life. The discourse about immigrants' positions within Germany point to the current issue in German integration policies regarding immigrants. For instance, as a teacher from the Soviet Union, Rosalinda is reduced to a domestic assistant in Germany due to poor German language skills.

Having moved from the Soviet Union to Germany myself, Bronsky fascinated me with such a true depiction of the life of minorities within the Soviet Union and immigrants from the Soviet Union in Germany. The strength of the book is Bronsky's great ability to combine multiple languages, introducing the reader to various cultures within the Soviet Union and Germany through the use of terminology in several languages, and expose the reader to physical and psychological condition of minorities living between cultural borders. Just as Bronsky's novel *Scherbenpark*, this book is a brilliant example of a crosscultural literary work that should be included in reading lists for individuals studying Intercultural Communication and Cultural Studies in general.

Regina Ianozi*, *University of Maryland

BENJAMIN RUTTER. HEGEL ON THE MODERN ARTS. CAMBRIDGE: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2010. 282 PP. $85.00.

Any writing on Hegel that manages to avoid echoing his often elliptical and impenetrable prose is laudable, but Benjamin Rutter's book does more. Not only does it present Hegel's aesthetic theory with admirable clarity, it also pursues a multi-layered argument about Hegel's view of modern (post-romantic) art. Rutter's fluency with Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics* allows him to make ingenious connections. From Hegel's commentary on Dutch painting to his praise of Goethe's *West-Östlicher Divan*, Rutter brings together disparate moments from the 1820s lectures and establishes a unified image of Hegel's attitude on post-romantic art. This unity originates in Rutter's presentation, for, as Rutter shows, Hegel's own attitude is not so discernibly cohesive. Rutter's ability to maintain a line of argumentation amid Hegel's own vacillations and seemingly contradictory statements might be his greatest strength. He eschews the pitfall of mimicking Hegel's style and confidently guides us through a dense and voluminous body of aesthetic theory.

Rutter's discussion of Hegel's aesthetics unfolds in a sequence of arguments that build on one another. The introduction succinctly brings Rutter's work into the arena of contemporary debates on the relevance of the novel, drawing predominantly from James Wood's writings on fiction. Chapter 1, "The problem of a modern art," gives an overview of scholarly approaches to Hegel's vision of artistic development, while at the same time establishing a set of terms and concepts that support the explanatory momentum of the book. Chapter 2, "Painting life," continues this mix of scholarly commentary and instructive elaboration with Hegel's ideas on painting and evaluative criteria for the arts. It also shows Rutter's talent for integrating historical and biographical evidence as he discusses the production and reception of Dutch genre painting. In the following chapter, "The values of virtuosity," Rutter deals with some of Hegel's abstract and paradoxical concepts on language, specifically through the figure of the poet. The penultimate chapter, "The lyric," provides explanations of Hegelian genre theory in general terms that lay the

groundwork for the final chapter's detail-oriented treatment of poetry and prose. Chapter 5, "Modern literature," brings the entire book together in Rutter's close readings of two poems from Goethe's *West-Östlicher Divan*. Rutter introduces the cycle of poems early in chapter 1 and draws references from it throughout. With the conceptual and terminological pieces in place, the poetry analysis stands as a *tour de force* of Rutter's talents: thorough scholarship, careful argumentation, and well-crafted prose.

Rutter does all of this with eloquence and moments of panache. The book is full of memorable sentences, for example, this sentence on the tension between prose and poetry in chapter 1: "It is clear to Hegel that the struggle against a world of prose is not the struggle to write poetry at all, but to write a poetry that struggles" (59); or this one on the difference between epic and lyric in chapter 4: "Epic poems give us a world, but in the lyric the world is a sort of prop" (199). Such sentences help the reader hold Hegel's concepts in place, while enabling Rutter to further juxtapose and question them with references to contemporary cultural products. Disney films and TV sitcoms do not distract from Rutter's argument, but rather contribute to his command of an expansive and expanding Western canon from Aristophanes to Jerry Seinfeld. Flaubert, Dickinson, Joyce, and Woolf (just to name a few) give literary weight to Rutter's claims about the direction of art after Hegel's lectures. Rutter's tone strikes a friendly balance between abstract philosophical discourse, cultural criticism, and rigorous academic research.

What remains troubling about the book is a handful of significant oversights. Rutter has heavily documented his work both with in-text citations and extensive footnotes. On the positive side, the annotations not only demonstrate his thorough research, but they additionally keep the reader's interest piqued. The footnotes often include gems of tangential information: note 96 in chapter 5 provides a clever commentary, via Oscar Wilde, on Kant's taste for Alexander Pope, for example. However, the display of meticulous scholarship makes absences all the more apparent. In a book that deals so extensively with the relationship between painting and poetry, some discussion beyond a brief mention of Lessing's *Laokoon* is to be expected, even if that discussion is an explanation as to why Rutter does not pursue an extensive comparison between Hegel and Lessing. Given the scant attention to Lessing, it is not

surprising that David Wellbery's book, *Lessing's* Laocoon: *Semiotics and Aesthetics in the Age of Reason*, is not included in the select bibliography. Wellbery's study would be a valuable addition to Rutter's work for two reasons: it raises issues of language and visual representation that would be of interest to anyone examining Hegel's semiotic differentiations in the arts. Moreover, Wellbery clearly delimits his field. For example, in his introduction he explains his exclusion of Kant, a figure in the history of aesthetics whose absence, Wellbery acknowledges, must be addressed. Rutter might have taken more time in his introduction to share some of his restrictive guidelines that enabled him to create such a well-structured book. Without some explicit mention of these choices, the lack of Lessing does seem like a flaw.

Criticism about what an author might or ought to have included can easily veer into sheer contingency. Like all authors, Rutter had to make decisions as to what to exclude from his study, yet the overall impression of the book is that Rutter graciously and competently tries to include as much as possible, by which I mean "include" in a broader sense: Rutter includes a wealth of research, analysis, and references, but he also includes the reader in the progression of his thinking through Hegel's aesthetic philosophy. Reading Rutter on Hegel, one forgets how alienating Hegel's texts can be. He makes Hegel seem approachable, funny, and at times even tender. This quality makes it difficult to disparage too much about possible ill-considered omissions. Still, for all the book's structural and rhetorical strengths, it does leave something to be desired in terms of theoretical complexity. Here Rutter's tone comes to his aid. He is not pretentious. He does not aim to do more than he does, which is provide a solid overview of Hegel's lectures and provide a cohesive sense to Hegel's views on post-romantic art.

My final comment is a recommendation for both possible future readers of Rutter's monograph and the author himself. This book makes an excellent companion to Eva Geulen's *The End of Art: Readings in a Rumor after Hegel*, which begins with the stunning claim: "The end of art is a rumor." Whereas Rutter lends Hegel wholeness and stability, Geulen situates Hegel in a disputed tradition of misunderstandings. Together they create an image of Hegel's legacy in aesthetic theory that at once secures (Rutter) and destabilizes (Geulen) his integrity.

Hegel on the Modern Arts is a necessary addition to any library with collections in intellectual history, aesthetic theory, or German literature and philosophy. Both advanced undergraduate and graduate students will benefit from Rutter's lucid explanations and synthesis of Hegel's *Lectures on Fine Arts*. Courses that deal directly with Hegel's works or, more generally, with issues of aesthetics and the modern period in the arts should include the book as recommended reading. Rutter's style and tone make his book one of those rare scholarly works that speak both to an academic and a general audience.

Japhet Johnstone, University of Washington

WILFRIED MEICHTRY. *HEXENPLATZ UND MÖRDERSTEIN. DIE GESCHICHTEN AUS DEM MAGISCHEN PFYNWALD*. MÜNCHEN: NAGEL & KIMCHE, 2010. 160 PP. € 17.90

Wilfried Meichtry, seines Zeichens Germanist und Historiker, hat in dieser kleinen romantisch-magischen Geschichte seiner Geburtsstätte Leuk im Wallis ein Denkmal gesetzt. Er bleibt auch in diesem Buch seinem Leitthema treu: er gesellt zu seinen vorherigen Werken ein weiteres Portrait der walliser Leute, Landschaften und Geschichten. Immerwieder greift Meichtry Geschichten auf, die vom Lokalkolorit des Oberwallis leben. Dass der Autor mit seinen Literaturhistorien den Nerv der Zeit trifft, zeigen die zahlreichen Auszeichnungen, die ihm für sein Werk verliehen wurden (z.B., 2002: Kulturförderpreis des Kantons Wallis, 2007: Buchpreis des Kantons Bern, 2010: Rünzi-Preis). Schon in der Erzählung "Du und ich – ewig eins" (2001), folgt er dem bewegenden Leben einer Leuker Familie und stellt die außergewöhnlich liebevolle Beziehung des Geschwisterpaares von Werra über den Verlauf, und durch die Wirren des 20. Jahrhunderts hindurch, dar. Auch in der Doppelbiographie zu Iris und Peter Roten ("Verliebte Feinde", 2007) weiss der Autor mit einer ungewöhnlichen Liebesgeschichte unter Einbeziehung tatsächlicher zeitgeschichtlicher Dokumente das Leben im Oberwallis des 20. Jahrhunderts festzuhalten. Sein neuestes Buch über den Pfynwald erinnert jedoch eher an eine volkskundlich-volkstümliche Schatztruhe, die lose aneinandergereihte Sagen und Legenden vorstellt, die als durchgehenden roten Faden nur die Erzählerin Maya aufweisen.

Tief im geheimnisvollen, in unzähligen Legenden, Sagen und Geschichten verewigten Pfynwald, steht, auf dem Hexenplatz von Leuk, ihr kleines Haus; in vergangenen Zeiten war dieser grossflächige Föhrenwald berühmtberüchtigt für seine zahlreichen Räuberbanden, die Händler und Reisende in dem dunklen Dickicht des Waldes um deren Habe erleichterten. Das heutige Naturschutzgebiet in den Alpen zwischen dem Oberwallis und dem Unterwallis dient als Kulisse für Meichtrys Spurensuche nach dem Wahrheitsgehalt der Legenden, die ihm seine Grossmutter Maya als kleinem Bub erzählt hat.

Am Beispiel des Lebens seiner Grossmutter beginnt er zu begreifen, was es heißt, lange an einem abgelegenen Flecken zu leben und sein Leben an Nachbarn und Freunde und die eigenwillige und herbe Natur gewöhnt zu haben. Verschrobene Einsiedler, charmante Schmetterlingsjäger, eigenbrötlerische Sonderlinge, Dorfskandale, Grosswildjäger ebenso wie Wilderer, Schätzevergrabende Gutsherren, Heeresführer und sogar blutrünstige Monster werden in diesem Kaleidoskop der Charaktere vor dem Hintergrund des mystischen Waldes portraitiert. Liebevoll gezeichnete Figuren lassen die Einzigartigkeit dieser verwunschenen Heimat anklingen, ohne deren Schwächen und Untaten auszusparen. Im Mittelpunkt stehen die Figuren von Meichtry selbst und seiner Grossmutter Maya, die in ihrem kleinen Haus auf dem Hexenplatz das Epizentrum der Kindheitserinnerungen des Autors bildet. Ihre Lebensgeschichte ist ebenso Bestandteil dieser Geschichte wie Familienschicksale, Kümmernisse und Alltäglichkeiten der Bewohner Leuks. Geschickt gibt er der Geschichte Authentizität durch Realia wie Zeitungsausschnitte von der Bestienjagd im Oktober 1946, oder Photographien der einst im Pfynwald gefundenen (und jetzt im Landesmuseum Zürich befindlichen) Goldmünzen samt Schatzkiste.

Meichtry hat in dieser Hommage an seinen Geburtsort eine eindrucksvolle Milieustudie entworfen, die mit einem leicht melancholischen Ton dem Gefühl des Bedauerns Ausdruck verleiht, dass nicht mehr ist was einmal war, und so den Leser in Bann zieht ihn und für kurze Zeit aus dem eigenen Alltag herausreißt. Gelungen und empfehlenswert ist diese faszinierende Sammlung von Erzählungen, die in zehn kurze Kapitel unterteilt kurzweiliges Lesevergnügen bietet, ohne zu anstrengend und langatmig zu wirken!

Susanne Kies, University of Maryland

EVA MENASSE. LÄSSLICHE TODSÜNDEN. KÖLN: KIEPENHEUER & WITSCH, 2009. 256 PP. 18,95 €.

Mit ihren Protagonisten hat Eva Menasse kein Mitleid. In sieben Kapiteln erzählt sie sieben weitestgehend voneinander unabhängige Episoden; Trägheit, Gefräßigkeit, Wollust, Zorn, Hochmut, Neid und Habgier – diese Sünden begehen ihre Figuren und können doch nicht auf Erlösung hoffen.

Angelehnt an die im katholischen Glauben verurteilten unverzeihlichen Verfehlungen präsentiert Menasse ihre *Lässlichen Todsünden* als einen Querschnitt durch die österreichische Gesellschaft. Der Geschäftsmann, der in einer Spelunke eine Frau kennenlernt, die nicht zu seinen Kreisen gehört, und die er benutzt, um Abstand zu Frau und Kindern zu bekommen – um am Ende doch in der heimischen Wohnung zu enden. Es ist seine Trägheit, die ein Ausbrechen aus den vorhandenen Strukturen verhindert. Ein junger Kneipenwirt, ein gealterter Universitätsprofessor, die Spätaussiedlerin und Herr von und zu – sie alle eint die Sünde.

Oftmals erkennen die Figuren im Roman ihr Fehlverhalten, können damit aber nicht umgehen, es nicht abstellen. Sie sind Opfer ihrer Triebe. Cajou, gesetzter Adeliger mit junger Geliebten „wollte büßen und hatte keine Ahnung, wie“ (158), die junge Lehrerin Fiona sieht bei sich allzu oft „[…] Gejammere und Feigheit. Und sie konnte aus tiefstem Herzen hassen und strafen, auch sich selbst, wenn sie sich einer dieser Todsünden überführt zu haben glaubte“ (35). Die Bestrafung in Form von Selbstverletzung folgt auf dem Fuße. Die Verstümmelung zieht sich als Motiv durch die Episoden; das Verlangen nach Kontrolle und die Angst vor Kontrollverlust zeichnet die Akteure aus. Sie verharren in dieser Angst und „höhnische[r] Selbstbeobachtung“ (108).

So wie in Menasses Debütroman, *Vienna* die Anekdoten der Familiengeschichten durch wiederkehrende Details verknüpft sind, sind es in *Lässliche Todsünden* Orte und Personen, die die sieben Kapitel verbinden und ein Netz der sozialen Bindungen – oder vielmehr Zusammenhänge – erschaffen. Geschichten und Personen sind beinahe alters- und zeitlos. Gelegentliche Anspielungen ermöglichen es dem Leser, ein weiteres Teil in das Puzzle der Gesellschaft einzusetzen.

Fionas Ende in „Gefräßigkeit“ ist, wie in alle anderen Teilen, ein offenes, die Absolution erteilt die Autorin nicht, die Figuren sind in ihren Sünden scheinbar gefangen, und doch erfährt der Leser beinahe beiläufig, dass Fiona gestorben ist. Die Schwester, Protagonistin in „Zorn“ und porträtiert einige Jahre später in „Neid“, erwähnt es.

Der auktoriale Erzähler, der in sechs der sieben Geschichten auftritt, verrät nicht zu viel. Es werden viel mehr Handlungsweisen gedeutet, Aktionen interpretiert, als dass der Leser die Gedanken der Sünder erfahren würde. Die Ausnahme bildet Kapitel sechs, „Neid“, in dem Stefan die Rolle des Ich-Erzählers übernimmt. Diese Abweichung verwundert, lässt sich aus der Textstruktur und dem Inhalt nicht herleiten. Die Sprache ändert sich nicht, Orte wie der Blaubichler und Figuren wie Ilka und Rument sind Fixpunkte. Der pensionierte Germanistikprofessor mag als Anspielung auf Menasses Lehrjahre gedeutet werden, doch die Verbindung ist brüchig.

Die Sprache in *Lässliche Todsünden* ist eine einfache. Menasse scheint das komplexe und teilweise komplizierte Beziehungsgeflecht nicht noch belasten zu wollen. Der Stand und die Bildung der Figuren haben keinen Einfluss auf die Darstellung. Mit Wortschöpfungen wie „Seelenblähungen“ (222) gestaltet Menasse die teilweise primitive Sprache poetisch. Wie schon in *Vienna* nutzt die Autorin typisch österreichische Ausdrücke, um die Figuren ihrer Heimat eindeutig zuzuordnen. Doch das Idiom ist nicht zu aufdringlich, vielmehr beiläufig. So bedarf es – anders als noch im Debütroman – keines Anhangs, der Bedeutungen erklärt.

Menasse bewegt sich aber klar in der österreichischen Kunst- und Kulturszene. Franz Gregor ist für die einen der Dichter, der gerade mit dem Staatspreis ausgezeichnet wurde, für die anderen Studienkollege oder merkwürdiger Mitarbeiter des Universitätsprofessors. Im Bücherregal der jungen Geliebten stehen Werke von Thomas Bernhard. Die Anspielung auf den Kritiker des Wiener Kulturbetriebes der 1950er und 1980er Jahre scheint Hinweis auf Menasses Einstellung zum österreichischen Kulturzirkus. Sie geht mit ihren Landsleuten, wie schon in *Vienna*, hart ins Gericht. Im ganzen Roman sind Affären und Sex die Schwerpunkte. So wie es auch in Bernhards „Holzfällen“ und Jelineks „Klavierspielerin“ anklingt, dient der Geschlechtsverkehr oftmals auch zur Demonstration der Macht, zur Demütigung des Gegenüber.

Weniger prägnant als in *Vienna* sind die Anspielungen auf Nationalsozialismus und Antisemitismus. Während dort die jüdische Versippung aber dominantes Thema und Anlass für die Anekdoten ist, wird es in *Lässliche Todsünden* nur gestreift. Keiner der Protagonisten ist (mehr) direkt betroffen – es geht um den Vater, der als Sozialist der Verfolgung ausgeliefert war. Cajou, dessen Leben der Leser für den Roman untypisch in drei Unterkapiteln als „Hochmut" im größten Umfang kennenlernt, will sich selbst von der Sünde lossprechen, Neffe eines hohen Nazifunktionärs gewesen zu sein. Beinahe erscheint es als Erlösung, dass sein Vater mehr jüdische Arbeiter auf seinem Land angefordert hat, als er brauchte, um deren Leben zu retten. Sein Ehebruch wiegt da nicht mehr so schwer.

Durch den gesamten Roman zieht sich auch das Motiv der Reise. Die Protagonisten scheinen dem Wiener Leben entfliehen zu wollen, mehrere von ihnen zieht es nach Italien. Ganz in der Tradition Goethes scheinen sie dort, fern den Zwängen der Heimat auf der Suche nach der eigenen Identität und Bestimmung zu sein. Menasse gönnt keiner ihrer Figuren die Selbstfindung, sie alle kehren nach Hause zurück, im gleichen, sündhaften Verhalten. Doch auch wenn sie keine göttliche Erlösung erfahren – Religion spielt in Menasses Roman keine Rolle –, so erlässt ihnen doch die Autorin ihre Sünden; die Sünden die ihre Figuren nur stellvertretend für gesamte Gesellschaft begangen haben.

Alina-Louise Kramer, Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe Universität Frankfurt am Main

WIEBKE BUCHNER. *"DIE GOTTESGABE DES WORTES UND DES GEDANKENS". KUNST UND RELIGION IN DEN FRÜHEN ESSAYS THOMAS MANNS.* WÜRZBURG: KÖNIGSHAUSEN & NEUMANN, 2011. S. 372. €48.00

The global concern with faith and authority in the early twenty-first century reverberates in Wiebke Buchner's work on Thomas Mann. Her dissertation-based analysis of his writings deals with an underestimated aspect of Mann's work, which is of particular significance in the discussion of religion and legitimacy. Wiebke explores the fascinating dialectics where Mann's evolving poetics distance themselves from Richard Wagner's and Stefan George's combinations of art and religion. While containing a decidedly religious rhetoric to elevate the standing of Mann's art, these early essays distinguish themselves from his theologically-oriented later works in that they are characterized by "die metaphysischen Überzeugungen der Romantik, Schopenhauers, Wagners und Nietzsches, [...] also [...] der romantischen Tradition und [ihr]es Dreigestirns [...]"(12).

Buchner's analysis of aesthetically-motivated religious rhetoric in Mann's early essays deserves attention from and promises to be inspiring for everyone interested not only in Thomas Mann, but in the legitimatization of art as well. The scope of Buchner's research addresses Mann's texts and context, the wider use of religious imagery and metaphors, as well as the influence of Richard Wagner, Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche upon Western philosophy, theology, spirituality, literature, and the arts.

Buchner observes that Mann's early essays revolve around the aesthetic and mystical ideal of existence embodied by Friedrich Nietzsche, in whose thought are subsumed Schopenhauer's mysticism and a critical assessment of Wagner's aesthetics (24). This mystical aesthetic entails a de-ideologization of Wagner's conception of *Gesamtkunst* and *Bayreuther Tempelkunst*. Mann's own ideas reflect an awareness of the unavailability of any sort of transcendental redemption following Schopenhauer's concept of *Alleinheit* or of the power of art "die Suche nach Sinn und Ganzheit zu gestalten" as in Nietzsche's intent of *Umwertung* (25). Nietzschean revaluation legitimizes the ethical and mystical

place of art in the overcoming of ideology and redemptive teleology. Buchner's *Die Gottesgabe* dexterously displays this interplay of forces in Mann's early essays.

After presenting these intentions and considerations in the introduction and in the section, "Religion – Kunst – Kunstreligion", Buchner exposes "Kunstreligiöse Redeweisen und Denkfiguren in Thomas Manns Poetik." Here, she focuses in turn on creativity and critique in Mann's first published essays, as well as the the association of art with religion. She then continues in a discussion of Mann's relationship with Wagner's aesthetics and provides a brief survey of combinations of art and religion in early twentieth century literature. Buchner goes on to address the question of morals and artists, the special connection between literature and spirituality, and the ideal of the artist as a saint. She concludes this section of "Kunstreligion" with reflections on on Mann's "[e]thische Poetik und ästhetische Anthropologie" (235). The appendix includes a detailed research overview on romantic metaphysical influences in Mann, particularly from Wagner, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. As condensed in the title of the conclusion, Buchner contends is that Mann's early essays challenge the dichotomy of ethics and poetics in an aesthetic conception of existence.

The considered texts by Mann range from short articles and essays until 1905, the novella *Tonio Kröger* (1903), the notes on the essay *Geist und Kunst* (1908-09) and the essays *Über Fiorenza* (1904, 1908) and *Zu Fiorenza* (1912), where literature is associated with sainthood. *Bilse und ich* (1906) and *Im Spiegel* (1907) are discussed in relation to their conception of "Kunstreligion" (58). Other works examined include those polemically engaging with the ideologically-laden mystical aesthetics espoused by Wagner and George. This text exposes a "Moraltheorie der künstlerischen Existenz", where religious symbols are poetically rearranged (169). Buchner's book weaves together and outlines in an accessible manner Mann's early reflections on art as mystical.

This argumentation offers a timely reflection on the place of religion and ethics in a remarkable case of modern Western culture, the significance of which cannot be neglected in the context of early twenty-first century global concerns with fundamentalism and Western secularization. Attention is also paid to Schopenhauer's integration of Eastern philosophy and spirituality as echoed in Mann's Nietzschean reflections on

being (160). The book provides an accurate illustration of Mann's deployment of religious and ethical notions to emphasize and define the importance of creativity, which constitutes a dimension where morality and modernity can have a fruitful encounter, potentially also across the borders between the West and the rest.

Mattia Marino, Bangor University

TOBIAS HOCHSCHERF, CHRISTOPH LAUCHT, ANDREW PLOWMAN (EDS). DIVIDED, BUT NOT DISCONNECTED: GERMAN EXPERIENCES OF THE COLD WAR. NEW YORK: BERGHAHN BOOKS, 2010. 266PP. $95.00

The product of the symposium 'Two Nations, One People? The German Cold-War Experience' that took place at the University of Liverpool in 2006, exemplified by this collection of essays, explores the role that the division of Germany played in the politics, culture and society of the two Germanys at certain points throughout the Cold War. The German experience of the Cold War was extraordinary. No other state was faced with a mirror image of itself as a member of the opposing bloc nor did any have to contend with the rivalry and inevitable comparisons that this entailed. Offering an interdisciplinary approach to how Germans experienced the conflict, the case studies presented here span a range of topics, from East and West German historiography to sports and science fiction.

In the first chapter, Thomas Lindenberger proposes that in no other country did the 'Cold War predicament' - the influence of the bipolar world order and the fear of absolute destruction - maintain such a presence in everyday life as in Germany. Considering Germany's situation on the European border of the two opposing blocs, Lindenberger stresses that regarding the two Germanys as a border region of the Cold War is key to examining and understanding the German experience of the conflict. He defines border regions as places which serve to separate, but also places where interaction between neighbouring entities inevitably occurs. His conclusion that the two German states were never completely divided, but rather always politically, culturally or socially connected in some way, sets the tone for what follows.

The following three chapters show how both Germanys contested the Cold War through the appropriation of history. Jon Berndt Olsen investigates how the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) in East Germany put a socialist slant on Martin Luther's legacy (having previously denounced him for not supporting the peasants during the Peasants' War in 1525) in time for the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of his birth in 1983. Matthew Stibbe's stimulating analysis of East and West Ger-

man historiographies of the First Word War produced between 1945 and 1959, shows how the SED blamed their left-wing rivals, the German Social Democratic Party (SPD), for encouraging the conflict based on the latter's approval of war credits in 1914. Bill Niven's excellent examination of the memory of the Nazi Past, 1949-1970, argues that both Germanys did their best to mire their rival in allegations over the Nazi past. He also contests that the Cold War directed the memory of the Nazi past sideways, not backwards, by encouraging Germans to consider their cousins in the East or West as the bearers of the guilt for the Second World War.

Examining the effects of the Cold War on German politics, Quinn Slobodian offers striking insight into how the Cold War predicament produced an unlikely partnership between the labour movement and conservative government in West Germany. The Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB) actually followed the conservative state line abroad (while often opposing government policy at home), aggressively fighting communist influence in the Third World and discouraging workers' strikes and indiscipline. This stance continued until the late 1960s when a détente between East and West encouraged the DGB to pursue a foreign policy more analogous to its activities at home. Sheldon Anderson also examines German Cold War politics in his analysis of Polish-East German relations, 1945-1962. He concludes convincingly that the alliance of East Germany and Poland in the Warsaw Pact did not resolve historical enmity between the states, resulting in a 'cold war' within the Cold War.

The motif of the border in politics and culture is the focus of the following chapters. Michelle A. Standley considers West Berlin as a tourist destination. In the early stages of the Cold War, the marketing of the city by Berlin's Travel Bureau had more than a whiff of propaganda about it, with West Berlin portrayed as the home of 'freedom.' However, the détente of the 1970s and the rise of the 'new urban traveller' for whom Cold War tourist attractions (such as the Wall) were on the itinerary, but not the reason for travelling, led to the relegation of the conflict to the status of white noise for tourists in the city. Andrew Plowman looks at the satirical treatment of the West German army in magazines and novels after the 1960s. He finds that the issues of defence of the border and opposition to reform the army into a more democratic organisation were most often targeted for this satire.

Turning the focus towards the East, Sean Allan follows with an examination of East German filmmakers and the Berlin Wall. He not only analyses several East German films featuring the Wall, but also considers how East German actors and film crews reacted to its erection.

The next two chapters address confrontation and interaction between the two German states. In his study of East versus West German Olympic sporting rivalry, 1968 to 1972, Christopher Young shows adeptly that both sides regarded sport as a means of demonstrating the superiority of their societal system. Each state was spurred on by the goal of humiliating the other, and since unification, German medal tallies have not reached the heights that the separate German states achieved.

Rosemary Stott presents analysis of West German film imports to the GDR, concluding that fluctuations in the level of such imports provide a barometer for cultural relations between East and West Germany. Stott also states that a thaw in relations in the 1980s only goes part of the way to explain an increase in the number of screenings of West German films in East Germany. With the majority of East Germans regularly watching West German television, viewing tastes in both Germanys converged, compelling East Germany to import more West German films.

The final chapters focus on how various forms of media represented the German Cold War experience. Inge Marszolek explores visual representations of the 'male hero' in photographs and posters from the two Germanys and identifies a stark asymmetry between them. The SED called upon the muscular bodies of the working class hero, the victorious Soviet soldier and the anti-fascist resistance fighter. In contrast, West Germany found the image of the male hero contaminated by propaganda images from the Nazi period. Gradually, though, a new male hero did appear in the West in the form of POWs returning from Soviet captivity. This new hero was one who had remained decent in the face of severe hardship. Tobias Hochscherf and Christoph Laucht examine the TV drama *Die Luftbrücke* (The Airlift, 2005) as the most prominent example of German 'histo-tainment' in recent years. They discuss its impact on popular memories of the Berlin Airlift in 1948-9 and in respect of the concept of 'prosthetic memory,' that is, one's acquisition via an historical narrative of a personal memory of an event through which one did not live. They find that since German unification, such programmes have turned West German Cold War narratives into highly subjective united

German foundation myths. In a stimulating examination of East German science fiction novels, Patrick Major considers the texts and how they were (or were not) censored. He argues convincingly that in most cases, authors criticized present conditions in East Germany by creating future worlds where similar problems existed. Interestingly, Major writes that censors recognized this, but still allowed the texts to be published, apparently to promote a limited public sphere. James Chapman rounds off the volume with his look at filmic treatment of Berlin during the Cold War. He shows adeptly how films such as *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (Martin Ritt, 1965) and *Funeral in Berlin* (Guy Hamilton, 1966) helped to package the German Cold War experience for wider consumption and shape the image of Germany as the front line.

Such collections of essays often feel a tad disjointed; however, the notion of the two Germany's as 'divided, but not disconnected' does run through many of the works presented in this volume, holding the collection together. Although the editors acknowledge that a number of chapters focus on one German state more than the other, they state that such chapters do keep the broader interpretative framework of the Cold War in view. However, in such chapters, one does sometimes feel curious about how the other Germany approached or dealt with the matter at hand. More specifically, in chapters that address visual material such as travel brochures/posters in Michelle A. Standley's contribution, or images of the 'male hero' in Inge Marszolek's piece, it would have been helpful to include reproductions of such material. Nevertheless, Hochscherf, Laucht and Plowman have brought together an interesting and varied range of subjects and scholars that deals with the Cold War from the level of high politics down to citizens' everyday lives. The comparative and interdisciplinary nature of the volume makes it a valuable contribution to our collective understanding of German experiences of the Cold War.

Richard Millington, University of Liverpool

JULIAN PREECE, FRANK FINLAY AND SINÉAD CROWE. *RELIGION AND IDENTITY IN GERMANY TODAY: DOUBTERS, BELIEVERS, SEEKERS IN LITERATURE AND FILM.* BERN: PETER LANG, 2010. 253 PP. £32.00.

As the editors indicate in their introduction, this volume originates from a colloquium held in Swansea in July 2008, which was centered on the theme of religion in contemporary German culture and society. The context of current Western intellectual discourses on religion is well known. Such discourses are often preoccupied with a continued or renewed presence of religion in public life that challenges a once prevalent view of religion and (post-) modernity as wholly incompatible. This perspective is also often coupled with the legacies of Huntingdon's *Clash of Civilizations* rhetoric and of 9/11, whereby the politics of post-colonialism and neo-colonialism are invoked to support or challenge this purported incompatibility. This publication, while itself issuing from a fresh impetus to engage with questions of religion and faith (albeit an initially reluctant one, the editors tell us), does not, however, tackle the familiar political terrain head on. Rather, its contributors seek to examine the relevant issues through the lens of cultural production, assuming that "novels, plays, poetry, and films explore questions of faith and non-faith as well as transcendence and its lack in ways which other forms of discursive writing cannot" (1).

The papers in the volume do not cover the conceptual field of "religion" comprehensively, but focus on the three major monotheistic world religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, i.e. on those faiths that are most prevalent in German culture. While the text is not explicitly divided into sections that cover the different faiths, the articles are thematically linked in this way, with engagements with Judaism appearing first, followed by those with Christianity and then finally with Islam.

Several themes emerge from the papers on Judaism, some of which are expected and others less so. First, the authors demonstrate that the question of what it means to be Jewish today, and more specifically what it means to be both German and Jewish, is still significant in the cultural sphere, even if contemporary public debates about religion tend to focus on other groups. In fact, Andrea Reiter argues convincingly that it is pre-

cisely this new 'invisibility' of Jews in public discourses about integration increasingly dominated by discussions of Islam or 'immigration' more generally that has enabled Jewish intellectuals and writers to identify themselves as Jewish, thus becoming 'visible' in a different way (50). This new visibility is characterized, so it seems from the papers in this collection, by a new willingness of authors and filmmakers to explore the multiplicity of Jewish identities in Germany and beyond. While both Mona Körte and Matthias Uecker emphasize the performative aspect of Jewish identities in the works they analyze – what Uecker refers to as 'Jewish drag' (42) – Reiter and Stuart Parkes respectively question the apparent contradictions of Jewish-German identities by situating them in the discourse of nationhood and diaspora or by framing them with the question of what constitutes anti-Semitism. What emerges from the authors' engagements is that, although narratives of Holocaust memory are clearly present, Judaism is once again on the agenda as a religious and not only a cultural or ethnic identity. However, to what extent a general trend towards religious re-identification with Judaism is able to assist Jews and non-Jews in negotiating the plurality of Jewish identities in all their facets is in no way presented by these authors as a "clear-cut case" (66).

Sinéad Crowe's article on religion in the theatre of Werner Fritsch also deals explicitly with Holocaust memory, this time invoking Christianity as a framework within which to examine questions of guilt and atonement. As Crowe points out, though, while Fritsch's work generates a "religiose tenor" (142), in dealing with insights into individual conscience and consciousness it actually "reproduces several features of the postmodern consumer culture [it] purports to resist" (146). What Crowe shows explicitly – that narratives drawing on the heritage of Christianity in Germany tend to display an element of internal secularization – is echoed more or less directly in the other articles in this section. So, while Stefan Neuhaus' contribution clearly presents the literary engagements with Christianity he offers as situated in a Lyotardian meta-discourse of privatization and individualization, other insights are more subtle. For instance, Alex Schalk's examination of religious motifs in contemporary literature explores this tension in two main ways, which arguably sit somewhat uneasily together. While his discussion of Lorenz Schröters *Das Buch der Liebe* hints at possibilities of transcendence in a consumer

culture that are not only spiritual, this is situated among examinations of texts by East German authors that seem deliberately to focus on questions of worldly transcendence through the lens of the religious. While the group of texts Schalk analyses arguably differ substantially enough in terms of genre and converge sufficiently on a thematic level to warrant parallel discussion, doing so neutralizes the potential for the author to adequately examine the part played by narratives of social and political transcendence in the post-socialist literature that, it seems to me, do reside there. This is particularly pertinent in the case of Fritz Rudolf Fries' novel, which is rich in religious and political allegory. It also seems slightly odd in this context that Schalk should refer to Ernst Bloch's influence on Hartmut Lange (113), but not on Fries, who was taught by Bloch in Leipzig and whose work resonates most obviously of the authors discussed with Bloch's writings on religion.

Nevertheless, the multiple possibilities of transcendence hinted at in Schalk's contribution resonate with Robert Gillett's essay, which stands out in the volume, not only because it is the only contribution dedicated exclusively to poetry, as the editors acknowledge (4). Through a sensitive and stimulating analysis of Thomas Rosenlöcher's poetics, Gillett manages to expose the dialectical relation between the religious and the secular. Exemplary is his treatment of the role of angels in Rosenlöcher's work, the dissident position of which, Gillett argues, "has to do with, and is expressed in terms of, an openness to transcendence" (127). The decidedly profane character of Rosenlöcher's angels – one of which is identified by his hat as a railway worker – enables the poet to couch questions of social emancipation and critiques of both "socialist technology and capitalist greed" (123) in terms of spiritual transcendence, a skill that Gillett highlights elegantly.

The final five papers in the volume deal with Islam in contemporary German culture and here again—as in the essays on Judaism—the diversity of identities in a postmodern world becomes a central theme. Examining the ways in which various critics have tried to conceptualize the role of Islam in a globalized world, Monika Shafi rightly criticizes a tendency to identify Islamic culture with Arab culture in a negative way. However, her engagement with Hans Magnus Enzensberger, for example, arguably does not go far enough in explaining the way in which Islamic terrorism can be seen as a "product of the global economy" (171)

in the same way as others whom Enzensberger might class as 'radical losers', such as disaffected youths from other ethnic and religious backgrounds. This oversight does not jeopardize the quality of Shafi's argument, but it could be seen at a subtle level to reinforce a tendency to equate discussions of terrorism with discussions of Islam of which Enzensberger stands accused. However, her analysis of Ian Buruma's *Murder in Amsterdam* offers a nuanced view of the multiplicities of Muslim and Dutch, and Dutch-Muslim, identities that echoes Andreas Reiter's contribution on Anna Mitgutsch.

Shafi's brief but insightful presentation of Ilija Trojanow's literature as a "necessary complement to problem-based representations of Islam" (181) is taken up in more detail by Julian Preece, who explores notions of layered identity via Trojanow's embedded biographical exploration of Richard Burton. Just as Matthias Uecker posited that Jewish identity is 'performed' in various contexts, Preece shows the reader how, in their deliberate blurring of the lines between fact and fiction, performances of Islam by people perceived as non-Muslims can highlight the difficulties of locating identity in any single facet of a person's being.

Unsurprisingly, common themes emerge from the articles in this volume, in particular how to differentiate between 'religion' and 'culture' or 'ethnicity' and how multiple identities are constructed in a context of increasing social plurality. Yet as a whole, the work goes well beyond obvious or generalist representations of religion. While minor inconsistencies in certain arguments have been highlighted here, these should not detract from the impressive contribution this volume makes both to cultural criticism in German studies and to a sincere and serious engagement with religion in contemporary Germany and beyond. Fundamentally, the volume earnestly questions the possible conditions for the transcendence of religious differences while not undermining distinctions that individuals and groups draw between themselves and others on the basis of religious identifications. As Peter Laemmle, cited in this volume by Mario Fuhse, has said, 'Ich glaube, uns kann nichts retten, es sei denn, der sorgsame Versuch, uns und andere kennenzulernen' (198).

Catherine Moir, University of Sheffield, UK

NOTES

[1.] C.f. Susanne Shanks, 'From Reflection to Speculation, from Memory to Fantasy: Exploring Local Identity in East German Narratives' in *German Monitor. Local/Global Narratives*, (17), pp. 81-97.

[2.] For example, Shafi notes that 'Enzensberger assumes that losers will not try to change or to escape their lot', a point with which her phrasing indicates she possibly disagrees. However, as Shafi also acknowledges, Enzensberger's radical losers could conceivably include individuals such as the perpetrators of the Columbine high school massacre, who can also be seen as suicide terrorists, but whose motives for their actions are presumably quite different from those of Islamist actors.

MICHELLE MATTSON. *MAPPING MORALITY IN POSTWAR GERMAN WOMEN'S FICTION: CHRISTA WOLF, INGEBORG DREWITZ, AND GRETE WEIL*. ROCHESTER: CAMDEN HOUSE, 2010. 212 PP. $75.00

Insightful and well-written, *Mapping Morality in Postwar German Women's Fiction* from Michelle Mattson delivers a fresh, new approach to exploring Christa Wolf, Ingeborg Drewitz and Grete Weil's works from a twenty-first century perspective. The appeal of Mattson's book lies in the novelty of her approach as she seeks to outline how these three women writers ground their *Vergangenheitsbewältigungen* in familial structures. Mattson seeks to examine how the individual remembers and reflects on past events and how these reflections influence present-day moral responsibility. She expands on these issues by including a deeper look at how the three writers situate their characters within history and how the protagonists' respective positions in history influence their sense of moral responsibility. Mattson's literary analysis of Wolf, Drewitz and Weil is grounded in the theoretical framework she outlines in the first two sections.

In her first chapter Mattson looks at the way individuals position themselves both diachronically and synchronically in history and in the world in general through their memories. She draws on the theories of several well-known scholars of memory, such as Halbwachs and Nora, in order to establish the connection between individual and collective memory. Mattson highlights the importance of examining the interplay between characters and the ways in which their surroundings shape their acts of memory. The author goes on to discuss feminist ethics, focusing specifically on how relationships and caring for other people influence the individual as a moral being; furthermore, she elucidates how the interconnectedness of individuals impacts their relationships and shapes their thought processes. Mattson's talent lies in connecting the two theoretical discourses, feminist ethics and discourses on memory, and then applying them to the works of three important, German women writers of the postwar period.

The description of the aforementioned literary works as "moral laboratories," in which ethical theories can be tested, is illustrative of the way

Mattson approaches her literary analysis (54). In her chapter on Christa Wolf's *Kindheitsmuster* and *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, Mattson dissects exactly how Wolf achieves a vivid, mnemonographic portrayal of collective and individual memory through the use of geographic, political and historical triangulation. With this triangulation Wolf successfully superimposes a geographically distant conflict, a historical episode and a moment in the character's present. Mattson then connects this triangulation with the theories of memory and feminist ethics outlined in her first two chapters; thus establishing a sound argument for Wolf's construction of her characters' memory and what this means for the characters' sense of moral responsibility.

Mattson takes a clear position on the merit of Ingeborg Drewitz's work as a means of examining how moral responsibility is negotiated in familial structures. Her readings of *Gestern war heute* and *Eis auf der Elbe* focus on Drewitz's rendering of different generations of women, all of whom struggle to come to terms with their roles in history. The works of Drewitz are included in Mattson's argument because they demonstrate the importance of acknowledging that history is not outside of us but rather permeates memory and is consequently vital to the formation of identity.

The third case study deals with Grete Weil's novels *Meine Schwester Antigone* and *Der Brautpreis*, and this chapter brings a completely different perspective to Mattson's literary "moral laboratories," as these works explore the historical rupture the Holocaust brought about and how, out of these fissures, new discourses on morality emerged. Using Mattson's theoretical framework, the reader is provided with an interesting reading of Weil's narratives. The discussion of how Weil's characters negotiate their identities and recalibrate their moral compasses as Holocaust survivors is compelling and adds depth to Mattson's mapping of postwar moralities.

Michelle Mattson's book provides a detailed and unique analysis of the landscape of postwar morality. Her choice to examine three writers of different backgrounds and approaches enriches her assessment of literary works as "moral laboratories." Drewitz, Wolf and Weil's works differ from one another in many respects, but ultimately, they are similar in their approach to morality in that they all use the past as a means to look into the future while acknowledging how this future can be shaped by our

present-day sense of moral responsibility. Mattson's work looks to the future as well. Although she concedes that there remain many different ways of looking at postwar morality, her book provides a solid launching point for future discussions about individual and collective memory and how they shape our morality.

Wonneken Wanske, The Ohio State University

JANA F. BRUNS. *NAZI CINEMA'S NEW WOMEN*. CAMBRIDGE: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2009. 286 PP. $85.00

The problem of identifying a cohesive sense of an ideological aesthetic in Nazi cinema is compounded by the sheer diversity of public engagement the various incarnations of the *Reichsministerium* undertook from 1933 to its destruction in 1945. Not only are there ambiguities of purpose for the cinema, but also, contrary to popular assumptions, cinema was not employed solely as a tool for recognisably direct propaganda. Although the notable exceptions to this have become iconic reminders of the abuses of cinema, such films as Veit Harlan's 1940 *Jud Süß* or Fritz Hippler's hate-fuelled *Der ewige Jude* are relative rarities when considered in the context of what was produced at the film studios during the Third Reich. Jana Bruns sets out to explain just how popular entertainment, and more especially the roles of three non-German female stars, played an integral part in the mechanisms of culture and 'gender ideology' (9) in the Third Reich.

Joseph Goebbels realised that cinema entertainment and escapism was a far more potent means of establishing a sense of cohesion and solidifying normative values for the Nazi regime than any direct didactic messages that espoused an overtly national socialist worldview. To this end, by the time the main German film studios of Terra, Tobis and UFA had been merged under the sole body of UFI by the *Reichsministerium* in 1942, the 'dream factory' was in full swing offering extravagant revue films and melodramas starring a cast of familiar faces. Occupying pride of place in this treasure trove of stars, Jana Bruns identifies the three key actresses, Marika Rökk, Zarah Leander and Kristina Söderbaum as embodying the complex intersections of ideology and the image during their careers in the Third Reich. Bruns' choice seems a logical and a good one, especially the inclusion of Marika Rökk, the "Queen of Revue Films" – a frequent and unwarranted omission in other film histories concerning the period (53).

Bruns' stated aim is to take a step away from an exegesis and critique simply based on the films featuring her triumvirate of stars and undertake an analysis of their roles within the contexts of the industry in which they found themselves. Indeed, Bruns is adamant that simply close readings and subsequent extrapolations about the nature of gender as presented on

the Nazi silver screen do little to illuminate the field. Her critiques of previous scholarship that fails to adequately place the films and their stars within a broader cultural and historical context of the German film industry under the Nazis are well-made.

The book is divided into four main chapters. After a concise and well -argued introduction, Bruns opens her work with an analysis of the workings of the film industry under the *Reichskulturkammer*. She traces the financial and ideological trajectory from 1933 that saw the purging of Jews from the industry and the reforming of the censorship practices to the final '*Gleichschaltung*' of the industry under the auspices of a nationalised UFI monolith. Although much of this chapter relies on Klaus Kreimeier's seminal 2002 work, *Die UFA Story: Geschichte eines Filmkonzerns* there is significant and apposite archival research which lays a good foundation for the subsequent three chapters on Rökk, Leander and Söderbaum. By designating each star with a specific set of attributes that both conformed with and undermined Nazi gender policy, Bruns aims to expose a set of more or less "productive tensions" which they embody **.(12)**

Chapter two reveals how Rökk's exoticism and carnival-esque sexuality did not always sit well with critics. To this end, Bruns identifies her as a star whose effusive character lent itself to the purposes of the state in that it allowed for a ready conflation of her personal identity with the star on the screen. Accordingly, her domesticity was, one cannot help but feel, retroactively shored up by press releases about her plans for marriage, children and a homey Hungarian kitchen (69). Bruns places Rökk's career in the Third Reich under a guiding principle for a desire to imitate Hollywood musical culture, something Bruns argues was not an easy fit (107). Nonetheless, a film such as *Die Frau meiner Träume* **(1944)** undoubtedly marks an extraordinary and unique achievement in risqué mass escapism late in the war. It offered the kind of seductive sexuality onscreen that would make the film the most popular 'trophy film' in the Soviet Union in 1946 and unable see the light of day in the Hays Code-restricted United States until decades later.

In the third chapter, Bruns turns her attentions to the Swedish-born Zarah Leander. Bruns' central claim for Leander is that "her stardom was more ideologically serviceable than other scholars have claimed" (112), a challenge to Rentschler's more cursory analysis. Bruns locates Leander

in the constellation of Third Reich stars as a proto-Garbo—an obsession of Goebbels. The paradoxical position of such an aloof personality in an ideological atmosphere so hostile to the concept of privacy yielded its share of tensions. Leander's difficult and potentially scandalous private life has perhaps made her the focus of more attention, but it is in her screen persona that Leander is cast by Bruns as the nexus of the problematic of sex and sacrifice in the National Socialist worldview. This tension, Bruns claims, was at least as productive as it was destructive within the ideological space of Nazi cinema. Starting with her creation as a screen myth, Bruns traces her establishment as the strong and sensual female lead, exempt from the conscriptions of entertaining at the front or with other such public vulgarities. Bruns is quite emphatic that Leander, earning vast sums of money and exceptionally prolific on screen, was a key ally of National Socialism despite her unquiet self-exile to Sweden in 1943 (170).

In her final chapter on Kristina Söderbaum, Jana Bruns tackles perhaps the most quintessential Nazi film star, infamous for her marriage to Veit Harlan and roles in his films such as *Jugend, Jud Süß*, *Das unsterbliche Herz*, and *Kolberg*. Bruns takes the perhaps lesser-known *Das unsterbliche Herz* and the infamous *Jud Süß* as vehicles for establishing her analysis of Söderbaum as a paradoxical and yet productive embodiment of femininity in Nazi cinema. This chapter stands out as the most nuanced and insightful of the three, simply by virtue of the fact that Bruns deftly employs her brand of reception theory. Where other analyses have tended to take the high profile and loaded legacy of Söderbaum's most famous roles in the direct propagation of the Nazi war machine and virulent anti-Semitism, Bruns uncovers a star whose entertainment films where also immensely popular and fostered a sense of identification with female audiences not achieved by either the flamboyant Rökk or the icy Leander. Bruns argues that ideologically, Söderbaum's near-perfect embodiment of the Aryan woman as "a star whose persona approximated Nazi gender orthodoxy" also ameliorated the "seditious potential" of Rökk and Leander (230) .Although this conclusion seems a little too easy, Bruns makes the interesting point that the artifice of Rökk and Leander, standing at dramatic opposites, did not possess the innocence of Söderbaum. Her designation by the press as not so much an actress at all but rather someone possessed of intense and intuitive

authenticity offers a rejoinder for the paradox of "split consciousness" posed by Bruns in her introduction (4).

Jana Bruns offers a new and insightful contribution to the growing field of study of the role and nature of cinema during the Third Reich. Bruns builds significantly on more superficial works offered by other authors such as Antje Ascheid and Susan Tegel who have written extensively about female leading stars at UFA/UFI and National Socialism and the cinema respectively. Her methodology stands as a good counterpoint to Erica Carter's *Dietrich's Ghosts* and offers the opportunity for fruitful further debate. That Bruns's work, and indeed any scholarship in the field owes a debt to Eric Rentschler's groundbreaking 1996 work, *The Ministry of Illusion* almost goes without saying, and, for now, the primacy of his scholarship in the field remains uncontested. The limitations that result from Bruns' particular historiographical approach in assigning specific determinate ideological weight to her three subjects whilst resisting the trend of considering that there be such a thing as a cohesive general determinacy of ideologically constituted cultural practice under the Nazis, is perhaps, an unresolved question worthy of further attention. Notwithstanding, her book is well-written, closely-argued and accessible. The engagement with the complexities and historical contextualisation of the three women as cultural vehicles is both new and illuminating. Notably, the inclusion of Marika Rökk in the debate is most welcome and long overdue. Bruns has certainly produced a work of high calibre. For this alone it should be regarded as a good contribution to a field often beset by simplified accounts and unnecessary conjecture. The price as it stands is somewhat prohibitive, but I would be surprised, given its obvious appeal to a wide range of readership, if it does not get a paperback printing in due course.

Danny Wolpert, University of Cambridge