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C. Bradley Scharf: Politics and Change in East Germany: An Evaluation of Socialist Democracy

Peter W. Krawutschke
Western Michigan University

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publications. The editors' aim is to ask the question whether "East Germans under a socialist system are, indeed, developing a consciousness of being a new and separate German nation." They admit that they have not provided a definitive answer but that does not prevent this from being a valuable book for classroom use.

Each section (on foreign policy, the economy, mass propaganda, and so on) is preceded by a balanced introduction which puts the piece in perspective. Helpful footnotes annotate the text itself where names or terms might be unfamiliar to the undergraduate. Most useful of all are the half-dozen questions for discussion at the end of each of the twenty-three chapters, which help the student to reflect critically on what he or she has just read.

The pedantic or self-congratulatory language of East European officialdom is of course extremely dull. But if students are to gain real insight into the ways of thought of one of these societies, then such a text book as this may be the best way to convey that to non-German speakers. Some of the passages will cause American students to think about their own society, which is always salutary. There is, for example, a chapter criticizing the sensationalism of the "bourgeois scandal press."

The liveliest parts of the book, because they are written with a passion absent from the official pronouncements, are those which are critical of the regime. A dissident GDR scholar writes of SED members as disillusioned idealists, opportunists, or fools. The longest chapter in the book is the only one given over to a writer from the FRG, Horst Krüger, who describes a sentimental journey to his hometown in the GDR. It is a powerful evocation of the continuities and discontinuities in the history of the place. One of the most vivid images which comes across is the sheer boredom of life there now, and the accompanying mood of resignation among the inhabitants.

Most of the sources used for the extracts are fairly recent, though only one is as late as 1980. A couple of passages, including the one on the role of women in GDR society, come from the mid-1960's. The editors might have selected rather more contemporary reports, so that the book would not date so quickly. On the whole, though, this innovative attempt to bring the GDR directly into the classroom is to be recommended warmly.

Geoffrey J. Giles
University of Florida

Politics and Change in East Germany: An Evaluation of Socialist Democracy. By C. Bradley Scharf. Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984. xii+219 pages. \$27.-; \$11.95(pbk).

The approach taken in this book to discuss the German Democratic Republic was needed and long overdue. It is a well-written, complete, and, above all, fair introduction to the intricate structure of one socialist democracy. This book should be included in the general collection of every college and university library, and it should be required reading in courses dealing with the Central European Area and particularly in those "German Life and Culture" courses which usually deal almost exclusively with the Federal Republic of Germany.

Having commenced with the conclusion of this review, a few particulars ought to be added. The author's goals are to evaluate the GDR in its own terms since it "is in many aspects an anomaly, but no more so than is the Federal Republic"; to place the GDR into a comparative study of universal political phenomena--one might even call them "political constants"; and to counterbalance the superficiality and simplification of many GDR interpretations in the West. Mr.

Scharf accomplishes all three goals. Reading his chapter on "Social and Political Differentiation," for example, this reader suffered the momentary illusion that his university served as a basis for discussing "universal political phenomena."

This is a carefully written and produced book. It contains a thorough index, a map of the GDR (source?), eight tables and charts, and only a few proofreading errors in the bibliographic entries. The bibliography, incidentally, is quite complete and is brought up-to-date to 1983. Missing are: Lützkendorf: Die DDR (1980); Bundesrepublik Deutschland und DDR. Die beiden deutschen Staaten im Vergleich (1981); and Frikke: Die DDR-Staatssicherheit. Entwicklung, Struktur, Aktionfelder (1982).

It is a reader-friendly book. The titles of all German bibliographic entries are accompanied by excellent English translations, and the text, when necessary, includes German lexical sources; e.g., "county party leadership (Bezirksparteileitung-BPL)" or "monitor (kontrollieren)."

One only wishes that there existed a companion volume on West Germany.

Western Michigan University
Peter W. Krawutschke

Stephan Hermlin: Äußerungen 1944-1982. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau-Verlag, 1983. 12,80 M

Der Aufbau-Verlag hat unter der Betreuung von Ulrich Dietzel diese einen Zeitraum von fast vierzig Jahren umfassende Auswahl aus Stephan Hermlins essayistischem und publizistischem Werk vorgelegt. Ein gelungenes Buch, bringt es doch gerade für die Auslandsgermanistik oftmals schwer zugängliche Texte des nun 70-jährigen Autors in einer handlichen Arbeitsausgabe zusammen. Es wäre durchaus besser gewesen, wenn

der Herausgeber gleich neben der Überschrift die Jahreszahl des jeweils wiederabgedruckten Beitrages von Hermlin angegeben hätte. Das würde eine erste Orientierung um vieles erleichtern. Im "Nachweise"-Teil finden sich dann die erwünschten Jahreszahlen.

Neben einer Reihe von abgedruckten Reden, auf mehreren Schriftstellerkongressen gehalten (1947, 1956, 1961, 1978, 1981), sind Beiträge des streitbaren Antifaschisten Hermlin vertreten, die plastisch die Phase der antifaschistisch-demokratischen Umwälzung in der DDR widerspiegeln. So etwa in: "Offener Brief an Aragon". Interessant ist in diesem Zusammenhang auch der Radiovortrag über den ehemaligen Marburger Romanisten Werner Krauss, der ja bekanntlich seinerzeit Ernst Bloch nach Leipzig holte.

Alle Beiträge vermitteln neben der thematischen Auseinandersetzung einen Einblick in die gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen, unter denen das jeweils für den Tag Geschriebene nicht in seiner Hohlheit stehenbleibt, sondern Hermlin als den gewohnt kritischen erscheinen läßt. Zur Absetzung Peter Huchels als Chefredakteur von "Sinn und Form" (1962) äußert Hermlin beispielsweise: "Eine bittere, für die Verantwortlichen beschämende Epoche begann".

Es fehlen die selbstkritischen Beiträge eines DDR-Bürgers die Anfeindungen Lukacs' und Blochs--beide wären 1985 hundert Jahre alt geworden--und solche Biermanns Ausbürgerung betreffend. Wann wird es möglich sein, auch darüber in der DDR sozialistisch-humanistisch zu schreiben?

Magdalene Mueller
Washington University

einst war ich fänger im schnee. Neue Texte und Bilder aus der DDR. Lutz Rathenow, Hrsg.
West-Berlin: Oberbaum Verlag, 1984. 115 Seiten.