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Fritz Rudolf Fries: Die Väter im Kino

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Hacks's work in this area. Part One is particularly valuable since it contains a synopsis of each major work. The reader may or may not be interested in the analyses of the works, particularly those in Part Two. The book can also help to inform about Peter Hacks in general, not just as the author of children's literature. Another very valuable part of this study is its exhaustive bibliography. It includes critiques of children's works by Hacks, theoretical works on children's literature by Hacks, 66 entries of children's literature by Peter Hacks (multiple editions of the same work are listed), translations by Hacks of children's literature, and translations of Peter Hacks's children's literature.

Thomas Di Napoli not only undertook extensive research on Peter Hacks and his entire body of work, but personally interviewed and corresponded with him for clarification about his work for children. This is a major work of research and analysis and an invaluable tool for anyone interested in children's literature and/or in Peter Hacks.

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Fries, Fritz Rudolf. *Die Väter im Kino*. Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1989.

Fritz Rudolf Fries is best known for his novel *Der Weg nach Oobliadoob* which, although first published (in the Federal Republic) in 1966, was to appear in the GDR only in 1989. Fries was born in 1935 in Bilbao in the Basque country and moved with his family in 1942 to Leipzig. The reader can clearly see that the writer's personal history has also informed his latest novel *Die Väter im Kino*.

In his *Nachwort*, Fries writes that the novel describes the preparations for the film version of his 1974 novel *Das Luft-Schiff* (directed by Rainer Simon), but adds that the description is based on a free adaptation spiced by the author's imagination. The central protagonist of the novel is the inventor of airships, Franz Xaver Stannebein, the (fictive) author's grandfather, taken from *Das Luft-Schiff*. At its basic level, the novel traces the biography of Stannebein from his stay in the Basque country to his return to the Germany of the Third Reich where, upon submitting his ideas about air travel to a Reich ministry, he is declared insane and incarcerated. Until the end of the war, authority rests with the women of the family.

However, the novel is thematically and formally more complex than pure historical biography: the narration of Stannebein's life and family is alienated by the interpolation of exchanges between the first-person narrator and his *Dramaturg*, Hiob, in their discussion of the film, an ironical-satirical critique of orthodox socialist realism, and by the fact that it is not Stannebein's life itself which is being narrated but Simon's film. Part of the challenge of the novel derives from this multilayered character and self-reflective style reminiscent of a major trend in prose literature in the GDR since the early 1980s.

The title indicates a number of themes explored in the novel: one is the patriarchal world as the world of authority ("Ordnung gehört zu unserer väterlichen Autorität," narrator, 266). The biography of Stannebein's family coincides with the high tide of totalitarianism (Hitler, Stalin, Franco, Mussolini) and war which is described as the "Vater aller Dinge" (64).

Fries also explores the theme of history and its appropriation (by means of memory, film, and literature). The narrator's account of Stannebein's family history clearly deviates from official historiography here: he and Hiob invent hypothetical characters mixed from history and phantasy. Hiob describes film as "eine zentristische Kunst, jedes Ausschere aus der heiligen Bannmeile der Hauptfigur verletzt die Proportionen..." (210)—in other words, a world of order which the narrator describes as a "Vater-Kunst par excellence."

The comments of the narrator on memory greatly assist in a reading and understanding of the novel: "Was ist Erinnerung? Seit Anbeginn der Welt stirbt die Erinnerung mit den Toten. Solange wir leben, versuchen wir Erinnerung weiterzugeben, am Leben zu halten, und was dabei herauskommt ist der Roman dieser Welt. Verkommt Wahrheit durch zu große Vergegenwärtigung zu einem Kino von der Welt? Oder ist Fiktion das Elixier, das uns allen genießen läßt, was vor unserer Zeit war, doch ohne den Stachel der Verantwortung?" (20). Barely two years after the revolution in the German Democratic Republic, Fries's appeal for resistance to the "Sog der Auslöschung" could not be more appropriate.

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Fries, Marilyn Sibley, ed. *Responses to Christa Wolf. Critical Essays*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989. 418 pp.

This volume represents the first critical anthology in English on Christa Wolf, intended primarily for readers whose access to Wolf's works is in English. Consisting of twenty essays by a stellar team of British, American, West and East German scholars, with an introduction by Marilyn Fries, the collection reflects the breadth, depth, and diversity of current interest in the author. Though the volume appeared before the events of 1989-90, after which GDR writers in general and Wolf in particular became the targets of vicious attacks in West Germany, I would venture to say that these studies, read in the light of the "Wende" and the many controversial questions it has raised, promise in Wolf's words, "to render the blind spot of this culture visible" even more poignantly than could have been anticipated at the time the book was planned. Its value as a compendium of diverse reader responses to Wolf is of course somewhat diminished by the fact that it could not cover the more recent works: *Störfall—Nachrichten eines Tages* (1987, English edition 1989) *Sommerstück* (1988), *Was bleibt* (1990), or *Im Dialog* (1990, published in the GDR as *Reden im Herbst*).

The twenty essays include contributions by Christa Wolf herself (the often-cited 1974 conversation with Hans Kaufmann on "subjective authenticity"), Hans Kaufmann, Joyce Crick, Christiane Zehl Romero, Sara Lennox, Karin McPherson, Helen Fehervary, Myra Love, Heinrich Mohr, Andreas Huyssen, Rainer Nägele, Anne Herrmann, Sandra Frieden, Hans-Georg Werner, Brigitte Peucker, Judith Ryan, Ute Brandes, Heidi Gilpin, Laurie Melissa Vogelsang, and James I. Porter. Of these, six have previously appeared in German (dating back as early as Mohr's 1971 *Basis* essay on *Christa T.*, Huyssen's 1974 article on Bloch and Wolf, and Werner's 1977 study of *Unter den Linden*) but all appear here for the first time in English, in most cases in revised versions. Wolf's conversation with Hans Kaufmann is the exception;