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Marilyn Sibley Fries, ed.: Responses to Christa Wolf. Critical Essays

Nancy Lukens
University of New Hampshire

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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.

Judith H. Cox
Birmingham-Southern College

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.

Colin B. Grant
Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh

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;

it is included in the 1988 British collection of Wolf interviews, *The Fourth Dimension*, but certainly warrants inclusion here as a keystone of Wolf's (anti-)poetics.

The contributions vary greatly in length, scope, and theoretical approach, appropriating discourses of feminism, deconstruction, cultural theory, psychoanalysis, comparative literature and aesthetics, biography/autobiography. References to Gilbert and Gubar, Bakhtin, Derrida, and other critical theorists abound, helping to locate Wolf within current critical frameworks. A particular strength of the collection is that it illuminates from numerous methodological perspectives Wolf's interconnectedness with other major thinkers and writers (the German Romantics, from Hoffmann, Gündert to Bettina von Arnim; Theodor Storm; Bloch, Benjamin, Wittgenstein, Brecht, Seghers, Woolf, Bachmann, and Kaschnitz). This is especially true of the essays by Fehervary, Lennox, Huyssen, and Crick. At the same time, the book establishes the distinctness of Wolf's voice as she has evolved and radically widened her "vision-scope," her term from the fourth Frankfurt Lecture on Poetics (1983). Continuities between Wolf's critical-theoretical writings and her major creative works emerge with a clarity that is hard to achieve in works of narrower scope.

A certain degree of redundancy in the discussion and citation of key Wolf passages or concepts by the authors of quite differently oriented analyses is far outweighed by the striking resonance among the various contributions, which I think results not only from the quality of the scholarship presented, but also from effective clustering and cross-referencing by the editor. Four essays are single-text studies of *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, (Mohr, Huyssen, Nägele, and Herrmann); three focus on the "improbable tales" of the *Unter den Linden* trilogy (Kaufmann, Werner, Peucker); three on *No Place on Earth* (Frieden, Brandes, Ryan), and four on *Cassandra* (Ryan, Gilpin, Vogelsang, Porter). Four treat Wolf's use of dream, fairy tale, and myth (Peucker, Ryan, Werner, Brandes). Others offer more comprehensive analyses in terms of a "female tradition" (Romero), "female subjectivity" (McPherson), the "citadel of reason" (Love), the "female dialogic" (Hermann), and "quotation as authentication" (Brandes).

Apart from the absence of Wolf's publications since *Störfall* and the critical literature since that date, Fries's 17-page bibliography will be quite useful to Germanists and non-Germanists, specialists and novices alike, as it includes separate listings of Wolf's works in English translation and critical literature in English on Wolf as well as a selective listing of her untranslated works. The bibliography also lists theoretical and other works cited in the essays. The comprehensive and error-free index provides an excellent cross-referencing tool.

This is an invaluable addition to the resources available in English on Wolf, contemporary literature, feminist theory, and literary criticism in general. I would recommend it as a text in graduate courses in German, women's studies, comparative literature, and literary theory. My only wish would be for a sequel volume including analyses of the later works and taking into account the controversy since the appearance of *Was bleibt* (1990), with all its inherent challenges to the paradigm of literary study in general.

Nancy Lukens
University of New Hampshire

Just, Gustav. *Zeuge in eigener Sache*. Berlin: Buchverlag Der Morgen, 1990. 210 S.

Gustav Just, "Arbeiterjunge, Soldat und Offizier unter Hitlers Fahne, Neulehrer in der Sowjetzone, Apparat-Mitarbeiter der SED sechs Jahre lang, Generalsekretär des Deutschen Schriftstellerverbandes, ein Jahr lang Redakteur des Sonntag" (20) und dann, nach dem politischen Prozeß "gegen Walter Janka und andere" im Frühjahr 1957, für vier Jahre Häftling in Bautzen. Nach langem Schweigen veröffentlichte Just im letzten Jahr der schon gewendeten DDR seine Tagebuchaufzeichnungen aus den fünfziger und sechziger Jahren, die durch Kommentare aus dem Jahre 1989 sowie Erinnerungen an den wichtigsten politischen Schauprozeß der DDR sowie an seine Haftzeit ergänzt wurden.

Bei Luchterhand und im ostberliner Buchverlag Der Morgen gleichzeitig herausgegeben, war es zur Zeit seines Erscheinens für Leser in der DDR ein wichtiges Buch. Es konfrontierte sie mit ihrer Vergangenheit und ihrem Land, das sie erst jetzt richtig kennenlernten. Es war ein Stück Wiedergutmachung an einem Mann, der vier Jahre seines Lebens für eine andere DDR gegeben hatte. Und es schien eine Gegengeschichte zur Misere und den Verbrechen des realen Sozialismus zu erzählen, die Geschichte der wahren Kommunisten und Sozialisten, die, wären sie nicht im Zuchthaus gelandet, sondern an die Macht gekommen, einen ganz anderen, humaneren Weg zum Sozialismus gegangen wären. Es war also auch ein Versuch, fünf Minuten vor zwölf eine positive DDR-Identität herzustellen, geweiht durch die Opfer des Stalinismus, die Abweichler, die Ketzer, Revisionisten und Märtyrer, Dissidenten in den eigenen Reihen, die im Laufe der vierzig Jahre DDR entweder zum Schweigen gezwungen wurden oder in den Gefängnissen verschwanden. Für "Janka und andere" waren es wegen "konterrevolutionärer, staatsfeindlicher Tätigkeit" insgesamt 25 Jahre: zehn für Wolfgang Harich, fünf für Walter Janka, vier für Gustav Just, 3 1/2 für den Mitangeklagten Richard Wolf und 2 1/2 Jahre für Heinz Zöger. Die Urteile des in Leipzig in gleicher Sache geführten Prozesses gegen Erich Loest und andere waren ähnlich hart.

Man hätte es sicher auch früher wissen können, aber nach den Büchern von Just, Walter Janka (*Schwierigkeiten mit der Wahrheit*), Erich Loest (*Durch die Erde ein Riß*) und Herbert Crüger (*Verschwiegene Zeiten*), die nach der Wende in der DDR erhältlich wurden, konnte man nicht mehr davon reden, daß der Stalinismus einen Bogen um die DDR gemacht oder daß die real-sozialistische "Verirrung" erst in den späteren Jahren des Honeckerregimes begonnen hätte, während die frühere DDR so etwas wie eine Enklave des enthusiastischen Aufbaus einer besseren Gesellschaft gewesen wäre. Freilich gab es keine Massenverhaftungen und Massenerschießungen wie im Gulag der Sowjetunion, aber die "Zahl der ... Opfer ist fast unermeßlich. Und es sind nicht nur Schriftsteller, Künstler, Ärzte und andere Intellektuelle. Es sind ebenso Handwerker und Gewerbetreibende ... Arbeiter und Bauern," wie Christoph Hein in seinem Vorwort zu Justs Buch bemerkt (11).

Gustav Justs Aufzeichnungen sind karg, was seine Person betrifft. Man erfährt kaum etwas über seine Familie, seine Freuden und Ängste. In einem Nebensatz nur erwähnt er einen Sohn und eine Tochter. Fast erschrickt man, als man erfährt, daß er gebratene Ente mag. Es geht in seinen Aufzeichnungen vor allem um Meinungen, Diskussionen, politische Freundschaften und Feindschaften, Hoffnungen,