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Ian Wallace, ed.: Christa Wolf in Perspective

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resistance was the betrayal of people's private lives: "Eine Freundschaft, Liebe verraten, indem man sie entdeckt. Was Stasi-Schnüffler auch taten" (78). One of these "Schnüffler" was her one-time husband, whose emotional betrayal was matched only by his physical abusiveness. In other episodes the irony is situational, as in the story of a Moroccan friend who, in December 1989, sought asylum in the GDR because of his impending expulsion from the Federal Republic, only to be "greeted" by a Taxi driver spouting Nazi slogans and racial epithets.

The most compelling part of this tale of self-revelation comes in the later chapters. Following the birth of her first child midway through the text, an increasing number of the short chapters are addressed to this daughter in the second-person, and gradually, the apparent purpose of the telling shifts, lifting it out of the mode of self-justification. Increasingly, the reader finds herself thrust into the middle of an intimate family story. The personal and the political converge in a startling way when, on the occasion of the monetary unification of July 1990, the daughter is picked up by the police and subsequently committed to the psychiatric ward of a hospital. From this point to the bitter end, the narrative acquires a note of urgency, as the narrator struggles to grasp the unraveling of her daughter's life. Struzyk does not go so far as to claim that unification is responsible for the apparent suicide, but in order to explain this personal tragedy, she turns to an elegiac rendering of her daughter as a rebel against the norms of a society that, in an ultimate irony, calls her insane. For Struzyk, who casts her own life as a struggle against the insanity of the social order, this daughter seems to represent the consequences of living out her own values. The text does not descend into a macabre, self-pitying lament. Moving away from the pointed barbs of earlier chapters, Struzyk wrestles instead with the open questions of a time between times, acknowledging losses without attempting final answers:

... Steinekarren die Versuche mit der Ärztin zu reden
Du wärst ernsthaft krank weil Du damals als Du in
die deutsch-deutschen Binsen gegangen bist Dich
nicht entscheiden konntest gehst Du zurück in ein
zum Vergehen verurteiltes Land wo Deine Freunde
sind oder bleibst du in der Zukunft die Dir so schal
und fremd erschien. (166-167)

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Wallace, Ian, ed. *Christa Wolf in Perspective. German Monitor. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, 1994.*

In his preface to *Christa Wolf in Perspective*, editor Ian Wallace notes that "a volume devoted to the work of a major writer requires no justification." Indeed, academic research on Christa Wolf and her works is not only justified, it is also needed. Especially now, post-*Wende*, and post-"*Fall Christa Wolf*," when GDR literature and Wolf alike are regarded with some suspicion, balanced perspectives on Wolf's biography and writings are indispensable.

But the thirteen essays of this volume are striking not so much for their fresh perspectives on Wolf as for their range of perspectives. Wallace has gathered articles that assess themes and motifs, as well as articles that approach Wolf's works from distinct theoretical perspectives. Some essays in the collection focus on the links between the early and later Wolf, between Wolf and socialist realism, between Wolf and romanticism. Still others attempt to come to terms with *Was bleibt*, and the discovery that Wolf had been a *Stasi* informant in the 1950s. The volume also features an assessment and transcript of a question-and-answer session held with Wolf after a *Dichterlesung* held at the German School in London in 1992.

Of all the essays, those that emphasize the intertextuality (and intratextuality) of Wolf's *oeuvre*, and there are several, provide the most interesting interpretations. Georgina Paul's essay on Wolf's "Brief über die Bettine," Renate Rechten's on the Faust theme, Ricarda Schmidt's on religious metaphors in Wolf's works, and Brigid Haines's on *Störfall* all connect elements of Wolf's *oeuvre* to the political, cultural, and literary contexts in which she wrote. Together they provide an account of her work that is as dense and detailed as it is broad and varied.

Anna Kuhn's "'Zweige vom selben Stamm'?" Christa Wolf's *Was bleibt, Kein Ort. Nirgends, and Sommerstück*" is exemplary for its chronological and thematic grounding of *Was bleibt*. Kuhn draws attention to the ways in which *Was bleibt* is intricately connected to other texts written by Wolf in the late 1970s, at a time when Wolf was engaged with both contemporary political dilemmas and texts of German Romanticism. Kuhn, Peter Graves ("The treachery of St. Joan: Christa Wolf and the *Stasi*"), and Christopher Colton ("*Was bleibt* – eine neue Sprache?") offer aesthetic analyses of *Was bleibt* that are removed from the biographically reductive arguments that surrounded its publication.

Christa Wolf in Perspective is also notable for its inclusion of Martin Kane's "'Das Grauenhafte des bloß Schematischen' (Franz Kafka): Christa Wolf's 'Kleiner Ausflug nach H.' in the context of her early writing." In the only essay of adequate length or substance that

BOOK REVIEWS

features this short story – which was written by Wolf in 1971 and published in the West but not the East in her *Gesammelte Erzählungen* – Kane juxtaposes a summary of “Kleiner Ausflug nach H.” with a detailed review of the political circumstances and Wolf’s critical writings of the 1950s. In doing so, he attempts to understand and ultimately exonerate her from her involvement with the *Stasi*. However, Kane’s essay lacks a more thorough analysis of the text itself, which he merely holds up as indicative of Wolf’s satiric distance from the ideological and literary dogma that characterized that period in GDR history.

The circumstances that confronted Wolf and Wolf scholarship in the early 1990s appear to have influenced the overall tone of the volume: defensive, hopeful, tentative. Each essay does its part to vindicate Wolf from critics and even her own past. Each also looks to a future in which Wolf vindicates herself with literary endeavors. But the volume as a whole remains necessarily tentative. It is, and can only be, the very beginning of the re-reading of Wolf post-*Wende*, post-“*Fall*.”

Wallace rightly offers little justification for the volume. Wolf is certainly due the scholarly attention afforded by this collection of essays. But, unfortunately, Wallace also neglects to provide a cohesive structure for the collection. While each of the essays is evidence of thorough scholarship and of an enviable command of the breadth and depth of Wolf’s *oeuvre*, the collection as a whole lacks a noticeable organization or direction. Wallace has failed to provide his reader with the structure, or introduction, necessary to explain the impetus behind the collection, if not to justify it. Nonetheless, *Christa Wolf in Perspective* represents a welcome addition to scholarship on Christa Wolf.

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Walther, Joachim. *Sicherungsbereich Literatur. Schriftsteller und Staatssicherheit in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*. Berlin: Ch. Links, 1996. 88 S.

Eine Reihe von Dokumentationen zum Umgang der Stasi mit DDR-Schriftstellern und ihrer Literatur ist bereits erschienen, herausgegeben vor allem von den betroffenen Literaten selbst: z.B. Reiner Kunzes *Deckname Lyrik* (1990), Erich Loests *Der Zorn des Schafes* (1990) oder Stefan Heyms *Der Winter unseres Mißvergnügens* (1996). Nun aber legt der als Schriftsteller und Dokumentarist bereits bekannte Joachim Walther (z.B. *Bewerbung bei Hofe*, 1981; *Protokoll eines Tribunals*, 1991) diese Studie zur Verflechtung von Stasi und Literatur in der DDR vor. Sie unterscheidet sich von den obengenannten Dokumentationen dadurch, daß der Ansatzpunkt viel breiter angelegt ist und die Studie auch auf Schriftsteller als Täter eingeht. Die Aktenfälle zwangen Walther zu einer dreijährigen Forschungsarbeit; daraus ergab sich trotz mancher Aktenvernichtung eine Dokumentation, die man nur als umfassend und wissenschaftlich genau beschreiben kann. Erschienen ist die Studie im Rahmen einer wissenschaftlichen Reihe Analysen und Dokumente der Gauck-Behörde.

Die “Einleitung” behandelt zunächst einmal ethische Aspekte der Literatur, bevor Walther das Ziel der Studie umreißt, nämlich “eine inhaltliche, strukturelle und personelle Überblicksdarstellung des vernetzten Repressionsapparates auf literarischem Gebiet” (15), wobei die Betonung auf den 70er und 80er Jahren liegt. Die Methode ist, “neben der strukturellen Analyse und inhaltlichen Beschreibung dessen, was war, vor allem die individuellen Werdegänge innerhalb der einst gegebenen Strukturen nachzuerzählen, wie sie die Akten, keinesfalls vollständig, offenbaren” (16).

Der erste Abschnitt trägt die Überschrift “Der Auftrag” und behandelt die kulturpolitische Funktion des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit (MfS). Es folgt ein historischer Exkurs, der den Wandel der repressiven Methoden im Sicherungsbereich Literatur beschreibt. Was die 50er und 60er Jahre betrifft, kommt Walther zum Fazit: “Wer nicht zu Kreuze kroch oder sich dem Zugriff durch Flucht über die offene Grenze entzog, wurde verhaftet und verurteilt” (71). Später in den 70er und 80er Jahren löste die “leisere und verdecktere Repression ... das demonstrative Machtgebaren von SED und MfS ab” (84).

Der zweite Abschnitt ist mit “Der Apparat” übertitelt. Hier geht Walther auf die verschiedenen Phasen in der Struktur- und Personalpolitik im Sicherungsbereich Literatur ein. Im Zentrum stand hier eine “Operativgruppe”, die im Januar 1976 aus dem Referat IV der Abteilung 7 in der Hauptabteilung XX hervorging und 1981 zur Abteilung 9 umbenannt wurde (HAXX/9). Vor