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## Volker Braun. Der Stoff zum Leben 1-3

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interessante Weise die geschichtlichen Bedingungen nach, die das Erscheinen des Romans beeinflussen. Am Beispiel des französischen Schriftstellers Victor Hugo weist sie auf die Möglichkeit des Dichters, auch als ethisch bewußter Zeitgenosse zu agieren. Hugo hatte 1878 der Gründung einer internationalen Schriftstellervereinigung beigewohnt und bei dieser Gelegenheit die deutlichen Worte gesprochen: "Haß dem Haß! Krieg dem Krieg!" (31). Suttners Roman von 1889—an anderer Stelle ein Indiz für die "neuere bürgerliche Friedensbewegung" (44)—"wandte sich gegen den Krieg als ein von Menschen gemachtes und verantwortetes Unheil, gab mit dieser Aufklärung des Lesers eine historisch realisierbare Perspektive" und "schuf Grundlagen weiterführenden Denkens" (27). Die wertvolle Rolle, die diese Aufsatzsammlung in den heutigen Friedensdiskussionen spielen kann, wird bereits in diesem Aufsatz impliziert: "Als während der achtziger Jahre im Abwehrkampf gegen atomare Raketenstationierung sich eine qualitativ neue weltweite Friedensbewegung herauszubilden begann...war anfangs die Tendenz zu spüren, angesichts der historisch neuartigen Bedrohung menschlicher Existenz alles ganz anders, ganz neu machen zu müssen, auf das hundertjährige Erbe organisierter Friedensarbeit verzichten zu können. Die damit verbundenen Verluste wurden bald erkannt. Auch Erinnerung stärkt unsere Kräfte" (43).

Henning Müller beschäftigt sich dann unter der Rubrik "Verführung durch Krieg" mit der "Ernst Jünger-Renaissance im Konservatismus der achtziger Jahre" (130ff.). Müller widerspricht dort Rolf Hochhuths Behauptung, daß Jünger "niemals Wegbereiter der Nazis" war, wie man es an seinen Schriften ablesen könne (138). Jüngers Renaissance trifft in den achtziger Jahren auf einen ausgeprägten Konservatismus, und "Jünger steht diesen konservativen Vordenkern nicht nur für Begriffe wie 'Postmoderne' oder 'Verteidigung des Mythos,' sondern wird auch zum Gegenspieler der demokratischen Schriftstellergeneration [Böll, Grass, Hochhuth und Walser]...zur Gallionsfigur der 'Tendenzwende' gegen angebliche 'Kulturrevolutionäre'" (134). Mit der Jünger-Renaissance und dem "Historiker-Streit" befinde man sich in der BRD, Müllers Ansicht nach, wieder in einem Prozeß, in dem die "Grenzen zwischen Rechtskonservatismus, Rechtsextremismus und Neofaschismus [zunehmend] verschwimmen" (142).

Der "Verantwortung des Individuums" gewidmet sind u.a. die Überlegungen von Eberhard Dieckmann über "eine nicht gehaltene Rede Lew Tolstois" von 1909 und Vincent von Wroblewskys Frage, "Hat man den Krieg, den man verdient," wo Sartres Position zur Friedensproblematik erläutert wird. So werden in jenen Arbeiten die Beziehungen von bedeutenden Schriftstellern zu verschiedenen Friedensbewegungen etwas näher betrachtet, z.B. Tolstois Führungsfunktionen innerhalb der "Friedensgesellschaft von Chicago" (144). Aber auch seine Beeinflussung durch die Lektüre von Suttners Roman *Die Waffen nieder!* (144) und (am entscheidendsten wohl) sein Mut zur Anklage werden hervorgehoben. Tolstoi erwähnte schon damals, "wie Regierungen Argumente bereithalten, um begrenztes Töten zu rechtfertigen, wie mit dem Hinweis auf Anarchie Regierungen und Staaten ihre Macht über andere ausüben und damit auch den Sinn ihrer militärischen Gewalt begründen, die Existenz ihrer Armeen" (146). Er empfand es als unsere "Pflicht, den Massen des Volkes, die die Armeen bilden, zu erklären, daß ohne sie Krieg unmöglich wird" (146). Die Rolle des Individuums für Krieg und Frieden beschäftigte auch Sartre, wie Vincent von Wroblewsky erläutert. Die persönlichen Eindrücke vom Krieg und deutscher Kriegsgefangenschaft waren mitbestimmend für seinen Einstellungswandel vom unbeteiligten Existentialisten zum

involvierten, verantwortungsbewußten Friedensforscher (180ff.). Sartre opponierte außerdem gegen die Kriege in Algerien, Vietnam und gegen die Atombombenabwürfe über Hiroshima und Nagasaki (183).

Am interessantesten für Literaturwissenschaftler sollte schließlich das letzte Kapitel sein, wo die "Macht der Literatur" untersucht wird. Es glänzt bereits durch die zahlreichen Hinweise auf die verschiedensten Werke der Friedensliteratur. Ein zusätzliches Attribut ist dabei die Integration vieler Frauenstimmen zum Thema Frieden. Das Schlußkapitel wäre also auch gut mit der Überschrift "europäische Autoren und Autorinnen zum Thema Frieden" erfaßt worden. Erwähnung im Kontext der Friedensthematik finden französische, deutsche, englische, polnische—ja selbst chilenische Dichter kommen u.a. zu Wort. Überhaupt ist hier einer der stärksten Züge des Buches zu erkennen, nämlich das deutliche Bestreben, internationale Perspektiven in den Vordergrund zu bringen. Zu den schwächsten Zügen des Buches zählen hingegen die mitunter eindeutigen ideologischen Stellungnahmen, die unnötigen Ballast erzeugen. Vermissen tut man wiederum ein paar Hinweise auf Günter Grass, der doch immerhin zu den führenden Köpfen der Friedensbewegung zählt. Sein Roman *Die Rättin* (1986) und dieser Sammelband sind schließlich beide durch die Nachrüstung amerikanischer Raketen auf europäischem Boden (NATO-Doppelbeschuß) beeinflusst worden. Nichtsdestoweniger werden bereits diejenigen Forscher hier fündig werden, die nur die dokumentarischen Angebote dieser Essaysammlung nutzen wollen. Zudem erkennt man über die Lektüre, daß es an der Zeit ist, eine umfassende, historisch und philologisch fundierte Geschichte der Friedensliteratur anzugehen—und das ist nicht wenig!

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Braun, Volker. *Der Stoff zum Leben 1-3*. Frankfurt/M: Suhrkamp, 1990. 111 pp.

This latest volume of Volker Braun's poetry unites the first two parts of a poetry cycle begun in the 1970s with newer lyrical texts. Covering a time span of more than a decade, these poems provide key insight, exposing the realities of life in the GDR. In this collection Braun strives to present *Stoff* and *Material*, which serve to guide his readers through the complexities and contradictions of socialist life.

In examining the chronology of the texts one finds that the poems lead the reader down a path of disappointments and illusions. This collection of poems serves as a representative portrayal of the ongoing process of coming to terms with the reality of socialist life. It demonstrates Braun's increasing disillusionment with socialism as it existed at the time in the GDR.

The ten poems which comprise "Der Stoff zum Leben 1" originally appeared in *Training des aufrechten Gangs*. In this 1979 volume Braun scrutinized the GDR's political practices and condemned the continuation of hierarchical power structures. These poems present Braun's musings on historical events and periods. In encouraging his readers to reassess the past, he also urges them to project into the future. The poems point out the flaws of the present system, but Braun's vision of the communist ideal remains a viable alternative. Braun instructs his readers to learn the lessons of

history, to search for solutions to society's problems, thereby eradicating stagnation and avoiding historical repetition.

The eleven poems which comprise "Der Stoff zum Leben 2" originally appeared as part of *Langsamer knirschender Morgen*. The poems of this 1987 collection relate Braun's increasing disillusionment and resignation. Although Braun still retains his utopian ideals in this segment, his vision for the future entails sacrifice. He turns his attention to the Third World, a sign that Braun recommends forsaking the socialist system in its current form.

In the concluding portion of this cycle, poems such as "Manhattan," "Die Gewißheit," and "Tiannenmen" demonstrate the intense internal conflict which Braun experienced during the late 1980s. The juxtaposition of New York and Beijing, centers of the two political ideologies at odds, indicates that Braun is grappling with extremes. Despite the problems of capitalist New York, the extreme violence which occurred in Beijing in 1989 does not serve as a positive contrast. Perhaps the ultimate representation of Braun's disillusionment is expressed in "Material XII: Die Gewißheit." A blank page greets the reader following this title. The austerity of the page indicates that there are no certainties in life, sharply deviating from Braun's earlier ideals. Previously Braun merely expressed criticisms in order to aid in the attainment of the communist utopia. But the total void of language points to a loss of vision. For him there are no certainties anymore and Braun is skeptical about the proper choice between capitalism and socialism.

The poems in this collection indicate Braun's growing disenchantment with the GDR's socialist system, representative of the growing discontent in the GDR, which culminated in the peaceful revolution in November 1989. The first segment is typical of the optimism of the 1970s; the second segment represents the turn to utopianism in the early 1980s, which the inconsistencies of socialist ideology and real life provoked; the final segment expresses the undeniable disillusionment which provoked the peaceful revolution. This volume thereby serves as a distinctive sampling of the changing attitude toward ideology in literature and life in the GDR from the mid-1970s until the summer of 1989 and, of particular interest to Braun scholars, presents the various stages of Braun's development in a compact medium. The message of the poems echoes the sentiments of Braun's Rimbaud speech (1984) in which he claimed: "Ernüchterung ist die Arbeit unserer Literatur."

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Di Napoli, Thomas. *The Children's Literature of Peter Hacks*. DDR-Studien/East German Studies, vol. 2. New York: Peter Lang, 1987.

Thomas Di Napoli states that the main purpose of his study of Peter Hacks's children's literature was to bring that literature to the attention of a wider audience. He feels that it has failed to receive the attention "it so richly deserves," since previously not a single study had existed on this aspect of Hacks's career. In analyzing these works Di Napoli hoped to place them in Hacks's oeuvre as well as in the "overall scheme of his country's literature," so that one is in a better position to critically evaluate Hacks's place in literature. Di Napoli believes that critics have not provided an accurate and

objective assessment of Hacks's position in modern German literature due to their inadequate knowledge of his complete work.

This study is divided into two parts. Part One traces Hacks's career and development as a children's author from the 1950s through the 1980s, with a chapter devoted to each decade. Di Napoli begins with Hacks's years as a student in Munich where he met people who encouraged him to write for children and where his efforts in this area seem to have been prompted more by economic factors than by a strong attraction for that type of literature. Di Napoli posits the idea that Hacks's eventual and initial embrace of children's literature was prompted after he had moved to the GDR by a protracted political controversy that had erupted over a couple of his adult dramas. Children's literature might be seen as a "refuge from such controversy and [...] as a viable medium for the conveyance to children—and thereby indirectly to adults—of socio-political and literary ideas dear to him." Di Napoli also discusses influences on Peter Hacks's career, especially that of Fred Rodrian of the Kinderbuchverlag, and the author also provides the reader with Hacks's own views about his themes and influences. In addition to tracing and analyzing Hacks's commitment to writing for children, the first part of the study provides a synopsis and analysis of over 20 of Hacks's children's works, including poems, dramas, *Märchen*, story collections, etc., even some that are (or were) unpublished. Occasionally, when common themes occur, the works are compared to Hacks's works for adults. Extensive discussion can be found of *Meta Morfoß*, *Armer Ritter*, and *Liebkind im Vogelneest*, among others.

Part One offers some discussion on the development of children's literature in the GDR and of what Thomas di Napoli sees as Peter Hacks's lead in that development, along with general analyses of various aspects of children's literature in general (e.g. the purpose and value of conflicts).

In Part Two, Di Napoli analyzes these works again, but from a thematic viewpoint. He discusses the *dramatis personae* (children, animals, dwarfs, adults, and gods) and the themes of change and transformation, and education (the word Di Napoli uses for the means by which the characters are transformed or emancipated). Part Two provides the reader with additional information on Peter Hacks's ideas: what Hacks thinks of the Child and the relationship between the adult poet and the youthful audience, his view of his themes and role as an author of children's literature, and his "philosophy" of poetry, or more accurately, Di Napoli's view of Hacks's philosophy of poetry as seen in his children's literature. This view is contained in the chapter entitled "The Poetry of Progress." The final chapter is entitled "Love, Peace, and Harmony" which Di Napoli calls the final theme in Hacks's children's work ("this search for a wondrous world of peace and harmony, ruled by love") and the one to which all others lead. Here too Di Napoli occasionally compares the works to Hacks's works for adults, pointing to the different treatments of some of the themes in the two categories of literature.

The book is made more attractive by the inclusion of 40 black-and-white illustrations from various publications of Hacks's works. The illustrations provide the reader with examples from a large number of GDR illustrators as well as with their interpretations of the texts/characters in Hacks's works. Many of these illustrations, however, are disturbingly placed sideways on the page.

Both parts of this study of Peter Hacks's children's literature would be useful to anyone wanting to know more about