

Das Bundesministerium für innerdeutsche Beziehungen in Bonn veröffentlicht ein Merkblatt "Reisen in die DDR". Obgleich dieses 51-seitige Büchlein hauptsächlich für Westdeutsche und West-Berliner gedacht ist, enthält es nichtsdestoweniger auch für Amerikaner interessante Tatsachen und Hinweise.

(F. H.)

BOOK REVIEWS

Manfred Jäger : Sozialliteraten.

Funktion und Selbstverständnis der Schriftsteller in der DDR

(Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag, Düsseldorf, 1973); 240 Seiten, ISBN 3-571-09289-9

Jäger's theme is the process of emancipation (and, to some extent, of disillusionment) of the GDR authors within the framework of the accepted new social order. The term "Sozialliteraten" is not used in a polemical sense, but refers to the "relative autonomy of literature" in the GDR. The most important chapter of this volume is "Auf dem langen Weg zur Wahrheit. Fragen, Antworten und neue Fragen in den Erzählungen, Aufsätzen und Reden Christa Wolfs." These 90 pages include a general discussion of topics such as optimism, spontaneity, the typical, positive and mixed heroes, naturalistic and symbolic writing, the "language problem", literary traditions, and West Germany reception of GDR literature. As for Wolf's work, Jäger emphasizes structural, thematic, and ideological continuity, while acknowledging differentiations in several respects. In addition, this book contains interesting portraits of the poets Kunze, Braun, and Biermann, an extended essay "Brecht und sein Theater im schwierigen Milieu der DDR", another essay on Wolfgang Harich, and one on the GDR reception of Peter Weiss. The wide thematic range of this book is underscored by the last item: "Das ganz neue Lachen. Die Funktion von Humor und Satire in der marxistischen

Theorie des Komischen und in der Praxis des politischen Kabarets der DDR."

Jäger's method is close interpretation of selected passages. In trying to detect underlying inner tensions and hidden conflicts, he uses a sort of textual psychoanalysis. At times, his admitted "Lust zum Pointieren" leads him to bold paraphrases and overinterpretations. Thus, Mayer's problematical "slave language" metaphor is not illuminating with respect to Biermann's Dra-Dra, even if Jäger speaks of emancipated slaves. In the somewhat abstract essay on Harich, the reviewer would have liked to find a broader discussion of the objects of Harich's polemics, e.g. of Heiner Müller.

Despite such occasional shortcomings Jäger's book as a whole is a major contribution in the field of GDR research -- it is a pleasure to read stimulating, and well documented (251 footnotes on the Christa Wolf chapter alone give an idea of his thorough research and documentation)

(Theodor Langenbruch)

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Basis V, which will appear in June, 1975, carries a number of articles on GDR literature, among them Helen Fehervary's "Hölderlin und Marx in der DDR", Andreas Huyssen's "Auf den Spuren Ernst Blochs -- Nachdenken über Christa Wolf" and Paul Michael Lützeler's "Goethes Faust und der Sozialismus."

Theodor Langenbruch's Dialectical Humor in Kant's Novel "Die Aula" (Bonn: Bouvier Abhandlungen zur Kuns Musik- und Literaturwissenschaft No. 163, 1974) will be delayed until early fall.

Ernestine Schlant's "Prose Fiction in the GDR during the last Decade" will appear in Modern Fiction Studies, Summer 1975. Offprints are available from the author.

Edited by Hans-Jürgen Schmitt, Zur Funktion einer sozialistischen Literatur in der DDR will soon be published by Metzler Verlag, Stuttgart.

Literatur und Literaturtheorie in der DDR, edited by Peter Uwe Hohendahl and Patricia Herminhouse will be published by Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, in late summer, 1975. Contributors include: Jost Hermand, "Wandlungen der Modernismus-Debatte in der DDR"; Patricia Herminhouse, "Das Bild der Frau im Roman der DDR -- ein geschichtlicher Überblick"; Peter U. Hohendahl, "Ästhetik und Sozialismus: zur neueren Literaturtheorie der DDR"; Paul Michael Lützeler, "Von der Arbeiterschaft zur Intelligenz: Zur Darstellung sozialer Mobilität im Roman der DDR"; Silvia Schlenstedt, "Lyrik und Leser in der DDR"; Frank Trommler, "Kulturpolitik in der DDR und die kulturelle Tradition des Sozialismus"; Robert Weimann, "Kritische Aneignung des Erbes: Zur Weiterentwicklung unserer Realismus-Theorie"; and Jack Zipes, "Brecht oder Wolf: Zur Tradition des Dramas in der DDR."

DISSERTATIONEN

W. Clark Kenyon, "The Poetry of Gün-ter Kunert", University of Iowa, (Department of German, Room 2, Schaeffer Hall, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52240). Contains much original material from Kunert, survey of critical literature and complete bibliography of works by and about Kunert in addition to analysis of Kunert's nine volumes of poetry and his theoretical writings.

Marc D. Silberman, "Literature and the Working World: A Study of the Industrial Novel in East Germany", Indiana University (1312 North Washington, Bloomington, Indiana 47401). Typological study of eight representative novels concerning the years 1951 to 1973.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Gad Ben-Ami, "Arnold Zweig and Zion-ism" (University of Wisconsin-Madison dissertation), Department of German, 818 Van Hise Hall, Madison, Wisconsin 53706.

Edith A. DuPose, "Ulrich Plenzdorf's "Die Neuen Leiden des jungen W." " (University of Florida M.A. thesis) 106 N.W. 12th Terrace, Gainesville, Florida 32601.

Nina Khinoy, "Social Roles and Relationships in the Short Story of the Year 1970" (New York University dissertation -- a comparison between the GDR and the Federal Republic) 653 E. 14th St., New York, N.Y. 10009.

Rainer Mägele, "Bert Brechts Lyrik im Kontext der Moderne" (A study of Brecht's poetry as a major contribution to the development of modern poetry and as an alternative to one-sided concepts which usually accept only esoteric and hermetic poetry as "modern"), Department of German, The Johns Hopkins University Baltimore, Md. 21218.

A translation of the plays of Heiner Müller into English is being undertaken as a cooperative venture by