

BOOK REVIEWS

Aufbruch in eine andere DDR: Reformer und Oppositionelle zur Zukunft ihres Landes. Ed. Hubertus Knabe. Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowolt, 1989.

Links, Christoph and Hannes Bahrmann: *Wir sind das Volk: Die DDR im Aufbruch--eine Chronik.* Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau; Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1990.

Oktober 1989: Wider den Schlaf der Vernunft. Berlin (West): Elefant Press; Berlin DDR: Neues Leben, 1989.

As Wolfram Kempe states in *Oktober 1989: Wider den Schlaf der Vernunft*: "Den historischen Augenblick erkennt man daran, daß die Ereignisse schneller sind als die schnellsten Wörter und Sätze" (187). One year after the events of Fall 1989 began to accelerate, the pace of changes continues to outrun our ability to comprehend and digest them. Thus much of what these three works document has long been overtaken by another reality. Nonetheless, their urge to articulate the moment captured vividly that brief period in history bracketed by the slogans, "Wir sind das Volk" and "Wir sind ein Volk."

However, the record of words and deeds preceding 9 November 1989 has taken on another significance. Hubertus Knabe rightly argues that the people who ought to have given expression and insight to the crisis in GDR society, by virtue of their position--"die Intellektuellen und Künstler, die Wissenschaftler, Schriftsteller und Journalisten"--did not proclaim publicly their solidarity with the political dissatisfaction of the populace until such action no longer represented a personal risk (*Aufbruch* 11). However, this observation does not justify the increasingly black-and-white judgements about the past role of various GDR citizens, particularly those in the intellectual/artistic community, that would label anything short of emigration or obvious civil disobedience as *Wendehals*-behavior. The controversy over Christa Wolf's book, *Was bleibt*, provides only one example of such excesses. Thus it is more vital than ever to recall the context of the events preceding the watershed dates of Fall 1989, lest incremental stages of change and the significance of subtle acts of moral courage become obscured.

Each of the three texts listed above takes a different approach to the documentary task. *Wir sind das Volk*, the most comprehensive overview, summarizes the significant events for each day from 7 October to 17 December, first in detail, and in brief outline in the appendix. The viewpoint of its GDR authors emerges in their occasional commentary and in the choice of details and quotations. However, their predominantly matter-of-fact presentation emphasizes documentation over opinion or analysis. The authors underscore benchmark events and selectively provide relevant background information, but leave it to the reader to establish the causal links in the transition. Their accuracy suffers only the occasional inconsistency; the Leipzig demonstration of 23 October (est. 300,000 participants) is listed as the largest protest demonstration in the GDR, and that of 30 October (est. 200,000) as the largest since World War II.

More notably, this chronicle of events remains compelling, even after a year and countless media reports. The sheer succession of extraordinary deeds and revelations day after day successfully evokes the moments of tension, confusion, and euphoria. Interspersed with photographs, it also provides an invaluable reference work for use in conjunction with other documentary texts, such as *Oktober 1989* and *Aufbruch in eine andere DDR*.

The subtitle of *Oktober 1989, Wider den Schlaf der Vernunft* echoes Volker Braun's speech ("Gegen den Schlaf der Vernunft"), given at the reading by GDR authors on 28 October 1989, in East Berlin's Erlöserkirche. Indeed, this collection of letters, personal accounts of police detainment, journal entries, interviews, news items, position papers, and short literary texts Published by New Prairie Press, 1990

testify to the vitality of those whose words and deeds contributed to the end of the old regime. Mostly from the period of early September to 8 November, the selections capture, as the brief editorial statement notes, "Stimmungen und Rhythmen" of those three months. Unfortunately, the editorial collective has not been consistent about supplying the dates, background information about contributors, and sources. The arrangement of the table of contents does not make it fully clear which texts stem from the same forum (Volker Braun's, for instance). The haste of the publication process also shows in the number of typographical errors. Nonetheless, the range of topics, positions, and contributors (including many GDR literary artists) plus the large-format photographs of demonstrations, creates a fascinating resource.

A combination of analysis and personal reflection characterizes many of the thirty-two essays found in *Aufbruch in eine andere DDR*. Editor and contributor Hubertus Knabe (who also wrote *Schwerter zu Pflugscharen--Friedensbewegung in der DDR* under a pseudonym) invited "Weggegangene und Dagebliebene, Parteien- und Oppositionsvertreter, Wissenschaftler und Schriftsteller" to describe what they saw as the cause of the upheaval and how they imagine the future. Organized into five sections ("Abrechnung," "Aufbruch," "Opposition," "Für eine andere DDR," "Deutsche Identitäten"), the essays address political, economical, and cultural dimensions of the Fall 1989 events, as well as such phenomena as sexism, homophobia, and nationalism. The final entry gives a brief chronology of events from 11 August to 15 November.

Reiner Schedlinski's essay, "gibt es die ddr überhaupt?" (an expanded version of an article first printed in the *tageszeitung* on 7 October), also appears in *Oktober 1989*. A noteworthy contribution to both volumes, the essay offers one of the most succinct analyses of the phenomenon GDR and its disintegration, within the context of what it meant to be a GDR citizen. Other contributors to *Aufbruch* include Wolf Biermann, Jürgen Fuchs, Olaf G. Klein, Lutz Rathenow, and Konrad Weiß. In its totality, this collection provides valuable depth and causal connections for the data and documents contained in *Wir sind das Volk* and *Oktober 1989*.

In conclusion, these three texts still remain worth attention, as the record of a brief time span, and as a basis for comprehending the events that have followed. Moreover, these documents crystallize facets which are essential to recapture if a process of *Gegenwartsbewältigung* is to bring psychological health and political maturity to the unified Germany.

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Brandt, Helmut, ed. *Friedrich Schiller: Angebot und Diskurs. Zugänge. Dichtung. Zeitgenossenschaft.* Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1987.

For the 225th anniversary of Schiller's birth, the Friedrich Schiller-Universität Jena hosted an international conference devoted to him and his reception. This volume is comprised of a selection of forty papers from that conference. The papers are grouped under four main categories: general, drama and theater, poetry, and reception by contemporaries.

Within the compass of a brief review, it is not possible to discuss in much detail the wealth of information and diversity of viewpoints included. Virtually all aspects of Schiller's work are examined; several of the dramas, such as *Die Räuber* and *Don Carlos*, are the object of two and three papers. If any of the dramatic texts is under-represented, it is *Wallenstein*, although Schiller's interest in history and the philosophy of history is a major theme throughout the volume. Without disparaging any of the contributions, several might be singled out as particularly

noteworthy. Christa Bürger advances the state of the discussion of Schiller's prose narratives ("Schiller als Erzähler? Von der Kunst des Erzählens zum Erzählen als Kunst," 33-48). Thomas Höhle's report on the Helvetic Republic as part of the context for *Wilhelm Tell* is brief but illuminating ("Die Helvetische Republik [1798-1803] als zeitgeschichtlicher Hintergrund der Entstehung und Problematik von Schillers *Wilhelm Tell*," 320-328). Gisela Horn tackles the poem "Die Künstler" from a socio-economic perspective, offering another approach to a neglected text ("Schillers Gedicht 'Die Künstler': Entwurf zwischen 'ökonomischer Schriftstellerei' und menschheitlicher Poesie," 382-392).

Overall, the section on Schiller's poetry is the least satisfactory. Neither Jochen Golz nor Günter Mieth refer to Theodore Ziolkowski's *The Classical German Elegy* (1980) in their examinations of "Spaziergang." And it is evident that Schiller's poems, unlike his dramas, have quite fallen out of fashion. Taken as a whole, the volume is a benchmark of the state of Schiller scholarship to the mid 1980's, internationally as well as in the GDR. The reception of Schiller has always registered the shifts in German political history, and it will be interesting to observe whether and how the changed conditions in the GDR will affect the discourse on Schiller and on Weimar *Klassik*. One might speculate, for example, that Schiller's fascination with conspiracy and intrigue in the making of historical events might now be discussed more openly. It may also be possible to move away from a dogmatic insistence upon Schiller as an unassailable beacon of the humanistic tradition and to see some of the authoritarian implications of his position.

The book has been carefully printed. It has an index of names and of references to Schiller's texts, which will enhance its durability as a standard volume.

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Eke, Norbert. *Heiner Müller. Apokalypse und Utopie*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 1989. 387 pp. 59 DM.

The nine chapters of Norbert Eke's volume on Heiner Müller (a shorter version of his dissertation for Paderborn) provide insightful commentary on Müller's aesthetics as well as interpretive readings of six plays (*Der Auftrag* 1979, *Quartett* 1980, *Verkommenes Ufer Medeamaterial Landschaft mit Argonauten* 1982, *Bildbeschreibung* 1984, *Wolokolamsker Chausee* (I and II) 1984-85, and the classic, *Hamletmaschine* 1977).

Focusing primarily on various aspects of the problem of *Erinnerung*, this analysis responds to most of the traditional directions of thought in Müller scholarship. Eke gives his own mark of originality to some of the much discussed topics--such as Müller's theory of theater, his relationship to the concept of revolution--by sometimes veering from a generally accepted argument (e.g. downplaying the aesthetic heritage of Artaud). Although Eke's analysis displays a firm background in critical theory, his discussion might have benefited from consideration of Ingeborg Hoesterey's definitive work on the subject, *Verschlungene Schriftzeichen* (1988).

It is hardly a critique to claim that Eke's work suffers only from having been concluded too soon, i.e. without having accounted for certain seminal studies that were published just before or simultaneously with this book. For example, the author's brief reference to the Benjaminian concept of *Eingedenken* would have profited from access to Frank Hörnigk's article on precisely that topic in *Heiner Müller Material*, ed. Hörnigk (1989). Similarly, Eke's discussion of Müller's understanding of history should have considered John Botterman's excellent dissertation on the subject (1987). The hint of incompleteness is probably most disturbing in the chapter on *Wolokolamsker Chausee* I and II. One wonders

why the remaining three segments (published in 1986, 1987, and 1988; manuscripts available earlier) were not accounted for, given that the five parts were written to comprise a complete unit, and that the content of the latter three affects the interpretation of the initial two segments.

An important contribution of this volume is its bibliography, the most complete one on the works of this playwright since Marc Silberman's *Forschungsbericht* of 1980. Eke's 100-page bibliography proceeds from a list of every publication of each of Müller's plays, followed by a comprehensive ordering of all performances according to place of production (the GDR, the FRG and other German speaking countries, and all others). Sources for critical reviews of both the publications and the stage productions are arranged chronologically. This painstaking bibliographical ordering can aid the Müller scholar in a number of ways. For example, sources for all twelve publications of *Der Lohndrucker* (1956) are made accessible in one handy reference. Eke's record locates 58 reviews of this play (through 1981), which had been performed only eight times before the critically and popularly successful production of Deutsches Theater in 1988 (Berlin/GDR).

Eke's bibliography offers a complete list of sources for Müller's poetry, prose, speeches, essays, reviews, and journalistic writings, material which has received relatively little scholarly attention to date. One can appreciate the inclusion of less common bibliographical categories, such as Müller's translation of plays by other writers, or his comments on his own works, in addition to a detailed section on interviews, in which Eke sometimes names every participant in a group discussion. Because the category of secondary literature is extensive but not exhaustive, Eke invites information about any overlooked reference.

Scholars will eagerly await the expanded version of this edition, which unfortunately covers works only through the autumn of 1987, just when the easing of censorship in the GDR brought five plays to the stage for the first time in that country. The subsequent period has been marked by a noticeable surge of scholarship on Müller. Of course a bibliographer cannot be held responsible for material appearing after the completion of a manuscript, but, as Eke's book was not published until 1989, an update would have been appropriate, i.e., an appendage to the bibliography as well as an afterword for the text.

Although an occasional proofreading error can be found (e.g. 269; paragraph 2, sentence 2: the first Bek should read Müller), Eke's eloquent style makes reading this work a pleasure. This impressive volume will no doubt whet the appetite for an updated edition and for more input from Norbert Eke in the rapidly expanding body of Müller scholarship.

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Studies in GDR Culture and Society 8. *Selected Papers from the Thirteenth New Hampshire Symposium on the German Democratic Republic*. Ed. Margy Gerber et al. Lanham: University Press of America, 1987. 206 pp.

This collection of revised papers from the 1987 GDR Symposium on the social, political, and cultural experience of GDR "Alltag" reminds scholars of the *Endzeitstimmung* present in the subtexts of the cultural artifacts of the everyday before the fall of 1989. A reading of these articles demands that GDR scholars rethink the assumptions and perceptions of GDR scholarship within the context of the events and consciousness that precipitated the dissolution of the GDR state. The articles include interpretations of the social phenomenon of *Alltag* either as mediated in literary and related texts, as displayed in industry and leisure time, or as interpreted in social research. The articles present an inter-disciplinary view of GDR culture.