

BOOK REVIEWS

The Counter-Cinema of the Berlin School

By Marco Abel

Simone Boissonneault

University of Cincinnati

Although integral Berlin School directors have been active since the early 1990s, only recently has this cinematic movement begun to receive widespread academic interest in the United States. With the publication of numerous influential articles such as “Intensifying Life: the Cinema of the Berlin School” (available online through Cineaste <http://www.cineaste.com/articles/the-berlin-school.htm>), Marco Abel has been at the forefront of this increased attention.

While the “Berlin School” label has been applied to the works of directors such as Christian Petzold, Thomas Arslan, and Angela Schanelec, it remains difficult to create a definitive list of Berlin School characteristics: the movement as composed of filmmakers whose works bear distinctive personal style and technique. Following the thread developed in his previous treatments, Abel delves more deeply into the nature of the Berlin School, first contextualizing and then closely analyzing works of key filmmakers in an attempt to pinpoint unifying characteristics that define an often seemingly disparate body of work.

In order to define the Berlin School, Abel first examines the historical and political contexts in which the first group of filmmakers began to work.

Emerging during a period of widespread international accolade for the German film industry sparked by a number of heritage films focused on events leading up to and following World War 2, the initial offerings from the aforementioned filmmakers differed greatly from the widely successful but less artistically innovative films that continue to define Germany directly through sensationalized depictions of the recent past. Abel argues that the “Berlin School” label, created by critics and sometimes applied to filmmakers who actively resist such classification, describes a “counter-cinema:” rather than meticulously searching for German identity in events of the recent past, these films instead attempt to create new narratives and new images for a contemporary Germany by distancing audiences and thus asking them to examine the concept of “Germany” anew. In his intricately constructed analyses of major works by all three first-wave directors, as well as the five directors widely viewed as the second-wave of the movement, Abel isolates the ways in which these directors, though in many ways often stylistically and thematically divergent, work toward this goal. Unlike the recent wave of historical drama, these films eschew oft-repeated, expected images of resolved events and neatly packaged stories to inspect a Germany characterized by senses of mobility and transformation which leave problems unresolved and questions unanswered.

It is through this lack of resolution and the “untimeliness” of the films, Abel argues, that a collective Berlin School “itinerary” can be established—through their very aesthetic

stylization, they depict a Germany that could be, as opposed to a Germany that was or is. This “future perfect” is shown through the struggles of characters attempting to find something – be it work, a home, an identity – which, in remaining largely unfulfilled, depict a sense of continual transition. Although the directors do maintain distinctly divergent methods, Abel’s close readings of their films outline the ways in which the attempt to map “the very sociopolitical, economic, cultural, and emotional forces that have paralyzed post-wall Germany” is realized in an effort to create a body of films that, rather than purporting to speak for Germany, instead prompts its audience to reconsider what Germany is or could be.

Abel, Marco. *The Counter-Cinema of the Berlin School*. Rochester: Camden House, 2013.

***Modern German Thought from
Kant to Habermas: An Annotated
German-Language Reader***
**Edited by Henk de Berg and
Duncan Large**

Jason Doerre

Trinity College, Hartford

It would not be an overstatement to claim that the German language is unsurpassed in producing critical, philosophical, and theoretical texts that are central to the disciplines of the humanities and social sciences. For many in the field of German Studies, it is reassuring to see how essential modern German thought is in the North

American academy; however, this does not come without its pitfalls. Witnessing the re-territorialization of such ubiquitous German thinkers as Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud to other disciplines, that fail to properly consider the historical and cultural context, often proves to be a painful sight for German Studies scholars. Even more ghastly is the thought that how these thinkers and their texts have been abstracted from their original habitat of the German language. Specious translations into English have led to serious problems of interpretation with some German thinkers. Notable are early inferior translations of Nietzsche, which Walter Kaufmann sought to remedy in the postwar years, or the neologisms James Strachey used for simple German terms in his standard translation of Freud’s works which altered their meaning in English forever (imagine if he had translated das Ich as “the I” instead of “ego”!). Henk de Berg and Duncan Large’s annotated German-language reader, *Modern German Thought from Kant to Habermas* is an excellent resource for putting the German language back into the study of German thought, and this effort alone is worthy of praise and attention.

Annotated German-language readers were a longtime staple for English-speaking students of German, but have all but disappeared from the publishing market in the last decades. This is highly unfortunate, because as de Berg and Large have proven, works such as this can still be an immensely effective tool for learning important but difficult texts. In addition to the annotated primary selections from the twelve chosen thinkers that constitute the backbone of this reader, there is also an introductory chapter to German thought, brief

summaries of the life and work of each thinker, and condensed, but thorough, bibliographical guides for further reading. For the most part, the authors chosen for this work are seemingly predictable: Hegel, Feuerbach, Schopenhauer, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Benjamin, Lukács, Horkheimer and Adorno. Without question, each one of these figures are worthy of inclusion in an overview of modern German thought, but one is immediately left wondering why some were included, while other seminal figures in German thought such as Fichte, Weber, or Wittgenstein were omitted. Nevertheless, de Berg and Large do address this obvious imperfection in the introduction to explain that the final selections and exclusions depended upon space and copyright issues.

For annotated collections such as this, the true value lies in the quality of the annotations and the authors do not fail to deliver in this aspect. The process of selecting which terms to annotate and explain with the hope of guiding the reader through these challenging texts will inevitably have varying degrees of effectiveness with different readers, since each user will approach these texts with a different set of vocabulary and philosophical knowledge. At times, the annotations for terminology in the essays seem somewhat uneven. For example, in the Nietzsche excerpt, there is an annotation to explain the term “*Asketen*” but on the same page there is not one to explain the Nietzschean term “*Degenereszenz*” and how this fits into his philosophical project (170). Overall, however, the annotations are highly thorough and informative. The authors state the intended audience for the book to be students of German, or those from related fields with a command of the language, or scholars who might

not be fluent but wish to read in the original. This assessment is more or less accurate, but this reviewer would add that some of the texts ineluctably demand a higher level of language proficiency and philosophical knowledge than others. Selected texts by Feuerbach and Schopenhauer might be understandable to one, while those by Adorno, Horkheimer, and Heidegger might not be so intelligible to that same reader despite the guidance provided through the annotations. This raises the question whether or not it would be beneficial to organize such annotated readers not by chronology but by difficulty level. The lexical annotations are effective in clarifying some words and phrases that a dictionary might not be able to explain, and most insightful are the many annotations that highlight connections and dialogue between thinkers across time and language, which would otherwise not be understood by the non-expert. For example, in a Freud piece there is an annotation that effectually explains his use of the term “*Fetisch*” and how Marx uses the same term (204). De Berg and Large also justify the importance of editions such as this by providing annotations for terminology in the texts that expound upon errors or misinterpretations in published English translations of the works.

Modern German Thought from Kant to Habermas would be especially valuable as a course book in a graduate-level or an advanced upper-division undergraduate course. Still, this book also has much to offer to scholars who are interested in reading the included thinkers in the original language or are seeking an in-depth look at one of the selected texts. De Berg and Large have done phenomenal work thus far, and one can only hope

that their efforts to promote reading philosophical texts in the language of the *Dichter und Denker* will be fruitful. This is a positive first step, but it would be encouraging to see more readers such as this one. Even better would be a second or third volume of this work that contains other important thinkers not included in the first edition.

De Berg, Henk and Duncan Large, eds. *Modern German Thought from Kant to Habermas: An Annotated German-Language Reader*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012.

West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt

By Timothy Scott Brown

Amanda Randall

The University of Texas at Austin

Timothy Scott Brown's nuanced study of the West German "1968" aims to rectify the persistent reductionist tendency in writings about this world-historic conjuncture, namely, its reduction to the idea of "protest" represented in a "single frozen tableau—a decontextualized confrontation between university students and the police" (2). This limited framing of "the global sixties"—a term Brown uses interchangeably with "1968"—is in part due to the lack of critical distance among the voices that dominate the narrative: the veterans of the student movement, i.e. the 68ers themselves. A generation removed from the cultural-political moment in question, Brown (Ph.D. 2000) is personally well

positioned to pursue this line of critical historiography, in which he reshapes the narrative to incorporate additional actors and activities—the underground press, visual and music artists, international students, transnational popular culture—as well as further, more abstract sites of confluence between the personal and the political, including affect, representation, subjectivity, and agency.

While West Germany's 1968 was a significant movement and historical moment unto itself, in line with other recent studies, Brown's treatment considers 1968 in the broader contexts of German-German relations and the states' entanglements in broader First World-Second World tensions. Moreover, he expands the analytical scope to a fully global scale by examining how social movements happening at the same time around the world intersected with the West German case in West German space. Following such transnational vectors as the presence of Third World university students in the Federal Republic and the adaptation of US-American protest practices and aesthetics, Brown reveals how a global imagined community of youth concerned with the common problems of authoritarianism and democratic legitimacy took shape on the ground in West Germany.

Brown eschews chronology for recursion in elaborating the complex interplay of global and local elements via eight thematic chapters that present different frames for reading 1968 across several parallel narrative threads. Emblematic figures, collectives, cultural products, and events of the West German antiauthoritarian movement emerge and recede, with each return layering new, multi-axial dimensions onto the standard account.

When at times the story seems to ramble into rich details of heretofore unexamined elements and connections, icons of 1968 – Rudi Dutschke, Benno Ohnesorg, APO (extraparliamentary opposition), and so on – serve as guideposts in an artfully crafted narrative fabric woven from eloquent prose. The result is a text that is both richly structured and a pleasure to read, both elements that make the book especially appropriate for an instructional setting.

The first two chapters (“Space” and “Time”) outline the contours of the spatial and historical imagination of 1968. While Berlin and 1945 are hardly downplayed in their roles as central nodes of countercultural confrontation, Brown presents a more comprehensive map of the diverse discourses and actions of APO, the SDS (Social German Student League), and other “scenes.” In this, he unpacks not only the structure and logic of countercultural visions of West German authoritarianism on the one hand, and of utopian humanistic socialism on the other, but also how these countercultural collectives envisioned their own place in revolutionary movements—both those of their own national and cultural history, and those occurring contemporaneously in other parts of the globe. Brown furthermore reveals how, at the same time the West German student movement railed against the parent generation’s retreat from recent history, both sides mobilized revisionist historiographies as means of legitimating their respective actions and claims, and delegitimizing those of the other.

The modes of representing and transmitting the antiauthoritarian imagination are treated in the third, fourth, and fifth chapters (“Word,” “Sound,” and “Vision”). Within an overarching frame of the

politicization of art / the art of oppositional politics, Brown maps the cultural productions politics (including journalism, literature, music, theater, and film) that arose from the interface of organized youth revolt and more loosely defined subcultures, as well as their respective flows in the transnational circulation of political aesthetics and actions, in particular West German borrowings from US-American counterculture and Third World democratic movements. Moreover, the author fruitfully juxtaposes countercultural production with the modalities of mass culture and its confluence with conservative establishment discourse.

The final three chapters (“Power,” “Sex,” and “Death”) fall under the common theme of organization. Together, they also trace the later ideological divergences and resulting decline of the 1968 movement. Chapter six (“Power”) examines the subjective and collective features of mobilization: strategies, both theoretical and practical, for recruiting and forming a revolutionary subject, and the mechanics of protest tactics including mass demonstrations, art-actions, and other forms of “spectacle,” a concept that movement leaders adapted from the Frankfurt School criticism of consumer capitalist society. Chapter seven (“Sex”) considers confluences and dissonances between the antiauthoritarian movement on the one hand, and the sphere of sexuality, which Brown takes to encompass the sexual revolution, the women’s movement, and the movement for homosexual rights, again with an eye to intersections with international iterations of such struggles over the politics of everyday life and the intimately personal.

The last thematic chapter (“Death”) maps trajectories of violence and radicalization surrounding and stemming from the student revolt. With the flashpoint of authoritarian violence that was the murder of Benno Ohnesorg – and its recent conspiratorial reframing in terms of German-German relations – having been covered thoroughly in previous chapters, Brown turns his attention here to the case of the assassination attempt on Rudi Dutschke in April 1968, and the subsequent discussions of “counterviolence” as a possible legitimate response of the left to this assault on the student movement. The bulk of the chapter is dedicated to the left-wing radical RAF (Red Army Fraction), but while Brown recounts Dutschke’s own valorization of Third World urban guerrilla tactics, he is careful not to draw a direct line from the theoretical debates within leftist student organizations and the actualization of such violence in RAF terrorism. Moreover, Brown leaves the last word on 1968 not to the RAF, but rather to the by then dispersed, undogmatic and pacifistic left scenes, who concluded the antiauthoritarian revolt with the TUNIX Conference (a word play on “tu nichts” - “do nothing”) of 1978. Organized in response to the German Autumn, but more generally to the ideological splintering of the protest movement in general, the conference-cum-festival was meant as a forum for advocating and actualizing a transition from protest to creativity. Instead of the RAF marking the death of the global sixties, Brown closes the chronology on a positive note by positing TUNIX as a bridge to new initiatives of the alternative movement into the 1980s and beyond.

While Brown is explicitly concerned with the dynamics of what he calls the “active international” within the West German antiauthoritarian movement, he balances this perspective with a thorough consideration of the problems of self-organization and cognitive dissonance faced by the participants. In a country, and a world, that has been divided into poles of East and West, communist and capitalist, how does a leftist West German find a voice and a space for a third way? But even these issues, Brown reveals, are implicated in patterns of action and discourse that reach beyond the West German scene, as students pursue and promote a “socialism with a human face” (36). Brown furthermore succeeds in overcoming the binary of establishment and opposition, first by adopting a more balanced look at the dynamics of both sides, and second by revealing how each side was in fact more disjointed than the standard historiography would have it.

In situating his study as a contribution to the presently limited Anglophone scholarship on 1968, Brown efficiently collates the substantial number of Germanophone studies already produced, especially in the flourish of research completed around the fortieth anniversary of the movement. However, Brown’s book is anything but a simple translation or transfer of that work for an Anglophone audience. His analytical approach is a unique and much needed contribution to the body

of knowledge of 1968, one that may serve as a model for further critical re-readings of other fields of culture in that watershed moment in West German and world history.

Brown, Timothy Scott. *West Germany and the Global Sixties: The Antiauthoritarian Revolt, 1962–1978*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Generic Histories of German Cinema: Genre and Its Deviations
Edited by Jaimey Fisher

Ervin Malakaj

Washington University in St. Louis

Generic *Histories of German Cinema: Genre and Its Deviations* contends that German film studies, as a discipline, has for decades been dominated by two primary scholarly approaches: 1) an interest in expounding familiar historical epochs and 2) an interest in auteur studies that trace the work and impact of individual directors. While recent years, in addition, saw an increase in the study of popular film, according to Jaimey Fisher’s argument in the introduction to the volume, little of that scholarship focuses explicitly on genre as a heuristic category that helps bring popular and art cinema into discussion with one another. The contributors to the volume not only understand the lack of focus on genre studies in German film studies as a cause for the rift between scholarship on popular and art cinema, but also seek to “illuminate German film studies anew” by adapting genre studies in order to “help develop a broader context in which the links and relations

among art and auteur and popular cinema become clearer and more illuminating” (4). By working across traditional historical periods, individual essays in this volume seek to track the formation and transformation of genres in German film history and elucidate continuities and ruptures that help paint a better picture of the dynamics of film’s aesthetic, production, circulation, and consumption in the German context. In doing so, the volume not only addresses a lacuna in scholarship in German film studies, but also contributes extensively to genre theory, in presenting the unique case studies available in German film history.

The volume is divided into an introduction by Fisher and twelve individual chapters that address the following genre traditions in German film history: the early horror film (Gerd Gemünden), the essay film (Nora M. Alter), the science-fiction film (Lutz Koepnick), the UFA musical (Eric Rentschler), the war film (Fisher), the crime film genre and the Edgar Wallace production trend (Sascha Gerhards), the lasting effects of the early horror film across historic periods (Kris Vander Lugt), the adaptation films of Bernd Eichinger (Hester Baer), the thriller (Steve Choe), the return of the Heimatfilm genre in the 21st century (Paul Cooke), the romantic comedy (Antje Ascheid), and the yearning for genre in the films of Dominik Graf (Marco Abel). In addition to the individual chapters, the volume is organized quasi-chronologically, in that it is divided into three sections: the first section treats the 1920s and 30s and includes the first four chapters; the second section encompasses chapters 5-7 and covers the 1940s, 50s, and 60s; and the final section, chapters 8-12, covers the 1980s to the present. This division

does not suggest that the individual chapters dwell only on particular decades when discussing a particular film genre—on the contrary. The chapters discuss genre across periods and often reach back to the origins of a particular genre in order to trace its development over time.

Fisher's introduction situates the volume among scholarship in German film studies and US genre theory. He provides an overview of genre theory by first locating its origins in literary theories since antiquity that treat genre broadly, and secondly by expounding the influence of German cultural critics, especially the work of Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Siegfried Kracauer, upon genre theory as it developed in Anglophone film studies. Fisher provides an extensive overview of genre studies in relation to the developing focal points in film theory of the twentieth century and offers an analysis of genre theory in relation to auteur theory, structuralist and post-structuralist approaches to film studies, and, finally, the return to history in recent film studies. An insistence on traversing familiar historical periods in order to understand better the vagaries of German film history, by focusing on the genre theory that is laid out in the introduction, is executed well in the chapters of the volume. Koepnick's chapter on the science-fiction film, for example, traces the lasting impact of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* on the science-fiction genre and compares this film and its cultural legacy to Lang's earlier science-fiction production, *Frau im Mond*, which did not have the same effect on subsequent filmmaking. Cooke similarly discusses the return of the Heimatfilm in the recent decade, in his chapter, and traces its roots in the 1950s and 60s, offering a

succinct history of one of the most well known German film genres, while in addition providing original readings of recent popular films. Baer's approach to the quasi-genre of the literary adaptation film takes the career and impact of director and producer Bernd Eichinger as a starting point and shows that his stature in the film industry of the 1980s helped shape the famous literary adaptation film trends of the 1990s.

Choe's chapter remains the only one in the volume to reach back to the sensation films of the 1910s in order to explicate their place in the long history of the thriller in the German context. The early period (pre-1918), however, warrants its own study with regard to the formation of specific genres and its reliance upon scenarios from the western literary canon in, for example, the cinema of attraction. Nevertheless, the volume remains an extraordinary contribution to German film studies. The chapters are short, but succinct in presenting the complex history of familiar genres and they belong on the reading list of students and scholars alike. The volume, no doubt, will engender a host of inquiries into the rich history of German genre cinema.

Fisher, Jaimey, ed. *Generic Histories of German Cinema: Genre and Its Deviations*. Rochester: Camden House, 2013.

***Remembering Africa: The
Rediscovery of Colonialism in
Contemporary German Literature.***

By Dirk Göttsche

Vanessa Plumly

University of Cincinnati

Even before the centennial anniversary in 2004 marking the mass genocide that German colonizers perpetrated against the Herero and Nama in German South-West Africa — present-day Namibia —, activists, historians, and scholars were casting new light on German colonialism, which had been all but written out of German historiographies post-WWII and to a large extent overshadowed by German atrocities committed during the Holocaust under National Socialist rule. Over the past twenty to thirty years, the acknowledgement of German colonialism in Germany’s cultural memory, or rather the lack thereof, and the more recent integration of the subject of colonialism into Germany’s historical narratives have become fruitful topics of research initiated by anti-colonial, anti-racist, and postcolonial scholars and activists in and across disciplinary fields. Maureen Maisha Eggers’ (et. al) volume on theoretical critical whiteness *Mythen, Masken und Subjekte: Kritische Weißseinsforschung in Deutschland* (2009), David Ciarlo’s analysis of colonial images in *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany* (2011), and Susan Arndt and Nadja Ofuatey-Alazard’s linguistic evaluation of the German colonial inheritance in *Wie Rassismus aus Wörtern spricht: (K)Erben des Kolonialismus im Wissensarchiv*

deutsche Sprache. Ein kritisches Nachschlagewerk (2012) are just a few of the more recent publications in the ever-expanding corpus on German colonialism and its legacy. Dirk Göttsche’s *Remembering Africa: The Rediscovery of Colonialism in Contemporary German Literature* is, therefore, a timely addition to this budding canon of works, which seeks to assess the centrality of Germany’s colonial past in more recent cultural texts of the literary vein.

Immediately striking, however, is Göttsche’s choice of phrasing in the title, “the rediscovery of colonialism,” and the employment of this phrasing throughout the text. Colonialism itself was a venture that claimed to “discover” new territories, among other things, but of course these territories had been in existence and inhabited prior thereto. Thus, the employment of the word rediscovery in the title slips precisely back into colonial language and its paradigms and can be interpreted as if the historical acts of colonialism—the repercussions of which never ceased to impact Germans of Color—are something that must first be found again, rather than something that have always been and that have continued to be present; in fact, such remnants have been made all the more present in their very absence from German historiographies. This absent presence or silencing of colonialism, despite its echoing in the present, is analogous to the simultaneous visibility and invisibility of Afro-Germans and Germans of Color in German society. While this formal aspect of the text should be questioned, the content of the text rectifies this slippage to a great extent.

Remembering Africa attests to the fact that while colonial amnesia in white German discourse is very slowly becoming a ghost of the German past, the

haunting specter of (German) colonialism is undeniably gaining visibility in the German literature of the present, albeit in all of its ambiguities/ambivalences (continuing to prompt fear, fascination, and desire), despite the self-proclaimed postcolonial agendas of most of the authors writing in the literary genre tackled here, the historical novel.

The entire monograph is an expansive and extremely thorough survey of approximately fifty German-language historical novels written by white German, Austrian, and Swiss authors, all of which approach colonialism and colonial memory and which can be found in the practical index located at the back of the text. Some are well-known bestsellers such as Ilja Trojanow's *Der Weltensammler* (2006), and others are perhaps lesser-known works such as Hardy Krüger's memoir *Eine Farm in Afrika* (1970), which Göttsche reads as a forerunner to Rolf Ackermann's *Die weiße Jägerin* (2005). The strengths of Göttsche's monograph undoubtedly lie in the transparent theoretical analysis and solid textual interpretations throughout. Focusing more specifically on various modes of narration and perception, cross-cultural and transcultural exchange among and between characters, as well as thematic content in relation to the construction of colonial memory discourses in the selected works, Göttsche's main premise is that, despite their attempts to be anti-racist and anti-colonial in their content and having adopted the postcolonial perspective or gaze (Lützeler), the vast majority of these historical novels, nevertheless, return to exoticist tropes and topoi developed prior to and during colonialism and serve, in some cases as latent and in others as manifest, remnants of the

persisting colonial imaginary in Germany. Göttsche hails Uwe Timm's *Morenga* (1978), one of the first texts on German colonialism to draw critical attention, as an archetype to which all future historical novels on the topic can be and often are compared. According to Göttsche, Timm's novel offers up an incisive critique of colonialism via an interrogation of the historical documents he incorporates in his work.

Beginning with an excursion into the theoretical underpinnings of his analysis, Göttsche views the evolving academic discourse of the 1970s and 1980s as the point of departure for a critical encounter with the topics of anti-colonialism, postcolonialism, and neo-colonialism. After briefly recounting the early theories of Bhabha, Said, and contemporary memory scholars, such as, Michael Rothberg, Göttsche proceeds to identify the points in historical remembrance that he views as having brought colonialism to the fore in memory politics in Germany — German reunification and the centennial anniversary of the Herero genocide, in addition to postcolonial work undertaken by Afro-Germans.

The second chapter, which forms the core of *Remembering Africa*, categorizes a large percentage of the texts examined and their analyses according to the geographical regions and countries of Africa in which German colonialism is being addressed in the novels. While this may seem like a logical way to divide the texts for a differential assessment, it also runs the potential risk of missing the overlap in the ways in which they are constructed and the manner in which each approaches the topic of colonialism. Göttsche, however, prevents any such comparative loss by referring back to texts that

incorporate similar themes from the differing geographical regions in his literary mapping of German colonialism in Africa.

Also noting a renewed interest in the topic of European colonialism in general over the past decades in German literature, Göttsche chooses not to limit his evaluation to historical novels dealing solely with German colonialism. Importantly, he highlights the similarities and differences among the colonial projects of various European nations as well as the diversity in and among the African nations, which they colonized. Moreover, rather than trying to force a one-size-fits-all analysis, Göttsche points to the heterogeneity of the approaches taken to addressing colonialism in these German historical novels. This allows for a more nuanced reading of how memory and competing memories are actively produced and narrated. All of the aforementioned elements form the body of chapters three, four, and five.

Göttsche's discussion of transgenerational postmemory as outlined in chapter five in relation to novels such as Chirstof Hamann's *Usambara* (2007) is particularly interesting, given that similar modes of memory have been employed in historical novels on the German Holocaust, many of which also examine familial inheritance in the historical archives of the past. Thus, transgenerational postmemory is utilized across the genre of the historical novel with regard to German cultural memory, regardless of the historical era or topic of focus. Furthermore, Göttsche analyzes novels that interrogate historical parallels and/or continuities in German history. Looking at texts that read colonialism in connection with other German pasts, including the East German author Manfred

Gebert's *Welwitschia mirabilis* (2008) that interrogates GDR history alongside colonial history and Stephan Wackwitz's autobiographical narrative *Ein unsichtbares Land* (2003), parts of which are derived from his grandfather's memoirs and comparatively assesses Wilhelmine and Nazi Germany, Göttsche elucidates points of convergence and divergence in the course of history as written into historical novels.

Taken as a whole, Göttsche's contribution to the field of German postcolonial memory studies in *Remembering Africa* is a meticulous and multifaceted monograph of fundamental value to scholars looking for an introductory overview of and comprehensive investigation into the most recent German-language historical novels available concerning (German) colonialism in Africa and the politics of memory as written by white German authors. A selection of its chapters would serve as excellent secondary reading material for university courses approaching German colonialism and/or cultural memory production. Moreover, the text is accessible to those who have no background in the German language, as all of the quoted citations are provided to the reader in English translation.

Nevertheless, an analysis or statement on the politics of memory in connection to writing from a position of privilege — that is to say from a place where white authors are able to speak and be heard (i.e., the reception of many of these works in Germany and beyond) — and also what this means in relation to the ambivalent content of these novels and the way in which it was conveyed would have enhanced the conclusion of this monograph. This would have further highlighted the colonial attitudes that persist in the realm of white German

cultural production and German mainstream consumption/reception and seems to be a missed opportunity. Instead, Göttsche maintains in his conclusion that: “the ‘postcolonial project,’ as Bhabha puts it in *The Location of Culture*, of critically rereading and rewriting colonialism (has been left) almost exclusively to white ‘mainstream’ authors from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland” (424). While this claim may be an accurate statement in reference to historical novels, Göttsche fails to acknowledge that cultural producers of Color in Germany are contributing to the “postcolonial project” elsewhere, most often in spheres outside of this genre (as it may not be the best-equipped for conveying the polyphony of these (hi)stories and their necessary critiques), such as in academic or theoretical essays, in lyrical poetry, in theater, in spoken-word performances, musical productions, and historical exhibitions or, as is most discernible, via activist protests in the public sphere that call for a critical engagement with German cultural memory as it is tied to colonialism. Although much more analysis needs to be undertaken in this broader domain, Göttsche’s book — the first of its kind to tackle colonialism and memory politics in historical novels — is a very inviting point of departure from which future investigations of this sort can and should commence, and indeed already have.

Göttsche, Dirk. *Remembering Africa: The Rediscovery of Colonialism in Contemporary German Literature*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2013.

***Germany and the Black Diaspora:
Points of Contact, 1250–1914***

By Mischa Honeck, Martin

Klimke, and Anne Kuhlmann

Kevina King

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

According to the editors of *Germany and the Black Diaspora* the “historiographical negligence” in regards to Blacks in Germany before the nineteenth and twentieth century is due to Germany’s “political and academic establishment and mainstream histories in which black voices are either subdued or reduced to freak occurrences” (4). This historiographical and national amnesia was first challenged by Black Germans themselves in 1986 who drew great attention to their presence in Germany, German history and contemporary affairs with the publishing of *Farbe bekennen: Afro-deutsche Frauen auf den Spuren ihrer Geschichte* later published in 1992 as *Showing Our Colors: Afro-German Women Speak Out*. While the editors acknowledge this important work, which was of paramount significance in directing attention to the role that race played in Germany’s past, they also draw on various other scholarly works about Black Germans and understand their volume as a historiographical expansion of these studies. Peter Martin’s groundbreaking work *Schwarze Teufel, edle Mohren: Afrikaner in Geschichte und Bewusstsein der Deutschen* and Hans-Werner Debrunner’s *Presence and Prestige, Africans in Europe: A History of Africans in Europe Before 1918* are of particular importance for this study, since they along with *Farbe bekennen* insisted that Blackness

be recognized in Germany from the Middle Ages onward. Like those works, *Germany and the Black Diaspora* not only contributes to the field of Black German studies and enriches German history and historiography, but it also advances a broader notion of the Black Diaspora. Much like Tina Camp's work *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* and Fatima El-Tayeb's *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*, the editors locate Germany's positioning as central to the Black Diaspora instead of regarding it as marginal.

This historical anthology aims to delineate the myriad encounters between white and Black people across the centuries, mainly in Germany, but some contributors also direct their focus on the German reception of Black Americans. As such *Germany and the Black Diaspora* challenges the far too widespread assumption about Germany's historical relationship with Black people, namely, that since Germany was a latecomer to colonization, Germany's history rarely intersected with that of Black history or itself can be viewed as a part of that very history. The vast chronological span of this study necessitates the transnational, trans-epochal, interdisciplinary, and transcultural approach the editors and contributors take. This methodology is not only reflected in the various contributions to this book, but is also illuminated by the sources the contributors draw upon to shape their arguments.

Some contributors like Paul Kaplan and Kate Lowe base their research on the cultural transfer of Black images in art history via paintings and altar pieces and juxtapose the real presence of Blacks in German lands during the Middle Ages to the fictitious notion, i.e. the construction, of Blackness.

Other contributors, like Anne Kuhlmann and Rashid S. Pegah, base their research on the vast and still expanding field of court history. Their contributions illuminate the various roles Blacks played in noble courts and principalities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By drawing on journal entries, church, court, and military records, Maria Diedrich, on the other hand, investigates the individual life stories of former Black American slaves and their families and how they arrived in Hesse between 1782 and 1783 in the wake of the American Revolution. The approach that Mischa Honeck, Kendahl Radcliffe, and Robbie Aitken take in their respective nineteenth and twentieth century-focused contributions to this collection highlights the transatlantic entanglements between white Europeans and antebellum Americans (white and Black) and their travel to Germany and Africa, and reciprocally investigate African travel to Europe and German lands. Crucial sources here are newspaper, conference, and travel reports, as well as government documentation and personal letters.

Germany and the Black Diaspora adds to our growing knowledge of the Black German experience. While specialists in the Black German field will not find this volume tremendously groundbreaking, it should be on the reading list of anyone interested in (Black) German history and (Black) diaspora studies, since this anthology offers the English reader a valuable first glimpse into the interlacement of both.

Honeck, Mischa, Martin Klimke, and Anne Kuhlmann. *Germany and the Black Diaspora: Points of Contact, 1250-1914*. New York: Berghahn, 2013.

***Fiktionen und Realitäten.
Schriftstellerinnen im deutsch-
sprachigen Literaturbetrieb.***

**By Brigitte E. Jirku and Marion
Schulz**

Lina Fisher

University of East Anglia

F*iktionen und Realitäten* is part of the Inter-Lit series of books concerned with post-1945 women writers published in collaboration with Stiftung Frauen-Literatur-Forschung. Jirku and Schulz have previously edited several volumes on different aspects of women's writing, including performativity in autobiographical writing, and the influence of Ingeborg Bachmann on other writers. The present book offers a multi-faceted critical examination of the position of women writers in the German-speaking territories from the 1950s to the present day. The book's strength lies in the variety of angles from which this subject is explored.

The editors acknowledge that this is not the first investigation of the conditions under which women writers work. However, the book makes available vital information regarding different aspects of the situation of German-speaking authors, from inequalities in obtaining monies to fund writing, to biases regarding whose books are selected for reviews. Because of the breadth of its 17 chapters, the book provides a useful resource for scholars of post-1945 German literature and its reception. It is also relevant to readers with an interest in German women's writing, or specific authors whose cases are presented here, such as

Ingeborg Bachmann, Ilse Aichinger, Friederike Mayröcker, Geno Hartlaub, Annemarie Schwarzenbach, Elfriede Gerstl or Ruth Landshoff-Yorck. In addition, the book would be of interest to those engaged in research on the way in which the German literary environment has been affected by political and societal developments. Because of the large number of articles included in the collection, this review cannot comment on each of them, but rather aims to give an overview of pertinent points and the coherence of the volume.

The main argument presented by the editors in the introduction is that the work of female authors is valued to a smaller extent than that of male authors. This is clear when one considers, for example, writers' yearly income disparities as well as the fact that major literary prizes are more often awarded to male authors. The different chapters present many facts to prove this point, but occasionally do so to the detriment of in-depth arguments. Some articles are surprisingly short and leave the reader wanting more details and more convincing conclusions. Nevertheless, the book on the whole manages to achieve a balance between case studies of specific authors and broader trends.

Most of the contributors are scholars of German literature at universities in Germany, Austria, Switzerland or Belgium, with the exception of Smith-Prei and Stehle who are North-American academics, and Miedtke who is the director of Bremen municipal library. The volume is divided into five sections on literature as business, conceptions of femininity, the literary marketplace, border crossings, and the media age. It is difficult to see a clear difference between section I, entitled 'Der Literaturbetrieb', and section III, 'Der

Literaturmarktplatz' as the chapters in both sections deal with subjects that seem to fit equally well into both of these categories. Closer examination reveals that whereas section I examines the business aspects of literature, such as sales figures, section III is concerned with the broader reception. Although these subjects run the risk of appearing rather dry to those more accustomed to focusing on the content of books, the articles in these sections in fact present interesting insights into the finer details of publishing conventions and attitudes.

Häntzschel's study gives a comprehensive overview of the cold reality faced by women authors with regard to publications as well as reviews in the 1950s. Schneider, on the other hand, explains the social and political context that led to the formation of women-centered institutions and women-led publishing houses in the 1970s. Häntzschel's and Schneider's chapters thus usefully complement each other. Schneider's analysis of the importance of the low-priced paperback for feminist writing and the maximization of established publishers' profits is particularly interesting.

The inclusion of Miedtke's chapter in the volume is unexpected as it does not examine writers per se, but instead presents statistics and strategies pertaining to the different ways in which female and male visitors use Bremen municipal library. Although the analysis of visitors' interests and library staff's careful plans regarding the laudable aim of gender equality among visitors is fascinating, some strategies could have been examined more critically. This applies, for instance, to the example of the media selection 'for boys' (82). Miedtke does

not give examples of the items included in this selection (or, in fact, details of its impact on visitor numbers, which are used as an indicator of community engagement here), but the designation of certain books as more appropriate for children of one gender seems unfortunate when one considers the fact that many aspects of children's lives, such as toys and clothes, are already subjected to an increasingly rigid binary gender system. Although Miedtke concedes that this selection could also be accessed by girls, the example itself as well as its inclusion in a volume otherwise concerned with the effects of gender-defined roles on women is surprising.

The book usefully combines examinations of the reception of women's writing and case studies of specific authors with the investigation of practical issues. Examples of the latter are Miedtke's contribution as well as Elisabeth Roters-Ullrich's analysis of the real-life constraints faced by women authors. She provides a survey of the variety of initiatives designed to encourage development opportunities and collaboration among women, but also highlights the factors that often make it difficult for them to engage with these services and networks. Among them are the necessity for paid employment and the detrimental impact this has on writing activities, as well as the demands placed on women by family life. She further notes another obstacle in the fact that events, prizes and projects of high prestige are often dominated by male authors. Roters-Ullrich thus paints a gloomy picture, but articles like hers are necessary as they draw attention to unequal situations.

The collection primarily centers around authors from Germany, Austria and Switzerland,

and the two chapters by Geipel and Ludwig examine the work of female authors in the German Democratic Republic. While Geipel gives an overview of the risks taken by dissidents, Ludwig analyses the role of literature in the GDR both as an instrument for the education of society as well as a site of regime-critical discussions. Her analysis of the tensions experienced by women writers caught between relative economic equality and the encouragement of traditional roles within the family, the need to connect with their readership by thematizing common struggles and a reluctance to take on an educational role, implicit permission to push the boundaries and pressure not to veer too far towards criticism, is particularly informative and gives a nuanced picture of GDR feminist writing.

Rude-Porubská presents a valuable overview of the different expectations placed upon female and male translators. The translator's invisibility has been a central concern of translation scholars during the past two decades, and Rude-Porubská demonstrates successfully that female translators are expected to be less visible than their male colleagues. In addition to her chapter, which explicitly looks at the position of female translators, other chapters (Schneider, Roters-Ullrich, Wedel) also acknowledge the importance of translated books for the development of feminism in the German-speaking territories. Translation issues are often ignored outside the field of translation studies, and the emerging interest of scholars of modern German literature in translation shows that this discipline has much to offer to literary and cultural theories. The references to translation demonstrate the depth of engagement of the present book with a

range of fields relevant to an investigation into the role of women in literature.

Not surprisingly, the section on feminism in the media age includes a chapter on Charlotte Roche's and Helene Hegemann's recent publications. Both authors have been widely discussed in the German- and English-language media, and Smith-Prei and Stehle echo Germanists' increasing interest in the ways in which critics emphasize the physical appearance of young female authors and draw comparisons with their fictional characters. The analysis presented here adds another dimension to the debate by examining the authors' public appearances as feminist performance art.

Fiktionen und Realitäten is thus appropriately titled: its chapters discuss feminism in fiction and highlight inequalities in the German-language literary environment. The book references themes and viewpoints prevalent in German literary scholarship at the moment and expands upon them. The range of perspectives and the level of detail presented here make this a very useful book for scholars interested in a variety of aspects of women's writing as well as those new to the field.

Jirku, Brigitte E. and Marion Schluz. *Fiktionen und Realitäten. Schriftstellerinnen im deutschsprachigen Literaturbetrieb*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013.

***Religion, Reason and Culture in
the Age of Goethe***

**Edited by Elisabeth Krimmer and
Patricia Anne Simpson**

Michelle Reyes

University of Illinois at Chicago

Religion, Reason and Culture in the Age of Goethe provides a new and refreshing perspective on the relation between religion and reason as it evolved during the German Enlightenment. The focus of this edited volume is threefold: it argues that this period was not absent of religion, but rather was infused with a plurality of religious beliefs and rational thought; it examines the various ways in which literature and philosophy engaged with this plurality, on the one hand distancing themselves from institutionalized Christianity, while on the other hand continuing to invoke a variety of religious frameworks; and finally, it analyzes the varying results of these new expressions.

The collection begins with an exploration of major Enlightenment concepts. In the first essay, Claire Baldwin argues that at the heart of human experience in Christoph Wieland's "Gedanken über den Freyen Gebrauch der Vernunft" and his fictional biography, *Peregrinus Proteus*, is a combination of critical reason and religious desire. Tom Spencer, conversely, considers how Johann Gottfried von Herder's philosophy reconciles theology, rationalist metaphysics and natural science in his ruminations on death and immortality.

The next section focuses on how Schiller and

Goethe critically engaged with religion as an institution. Jeffrey L. High considers the political role of religion and its civilizing effects in Friedrich Schiller's "Die Sendung Moses", both in the past and the present. Elisabeth Krimmer examines how Johann Wolfgang von Goethe renegotiates Immanuel Kant's religious categories of "Kirchenglauben" and "Vernunftglauben" in Faust, while Jane K. Brown argues that Goethe rewrites the religious narrative of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte* into more secularized forms in his works, *Die natürliche Tochter* and his "Novelle".

The third section singularly addresses the role of Catholicism. Two of the essays are concerned with its iconography. Helmut J. Schneider argues that, on account of the lack of *Anschaulichkeit* in both Protestant and Enlightenment rhetoric, Heinrich von Kleist utilizes the visible power of Catholic imagery in a variety of his works to illumine his search for the meaning of life. Patricia Anne Simpson, conversely, ponders the new image of Madonna posited in Friedrich Hölderlin's poetry and its purposes for his new "mythology". Lisa Beesley provides a different perspective, exploring the relationship between historical and literary Catholic conversion narratives and madness.

The fourth and final section provocatively evaluates how traditional binaries are conflated in certain philosophical treatises. John H. Smith first considers how Gottfried Leibniz' monadic vitalism is foundational to understanding Baruch Spinoza and then how this concept is refashioned in the works of Friedrich Schlegel and Friedrich Schleiermacher. Frederick Amrine goes a step further to argue that the philosophical thought of

Spinoza, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Gilles Deleuze are deeply connected at the point of intellectual intuition.

This edited volume covers a vast amount of ground and incorporates many essays that are relevant beyond Enlightenment studies alone, such as High's discussion on the historical-political stages of civilization and Amrine's link to Deleuzian philosophy. Taken as a whole, it presents many literary and philosophical perspectives that promote new understandings of eighteenth century concepts, as well as of modern concepts in general.

Krimmer, Elisabeth and Patricia Anne Simpson,
Eds. *Religion, Reason and Culture in the Age
of Goethe*. Rochester, New York: Camden
House, 2013.

***Frauen dichten anders. Deutsche
Dichterinnen vom Mittelalter bis
zur Gegenwart.***

Edited by Marcel Reich-Ranicki

Renate Fuchs

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

When Marcel Reich-Ranicki died on September 18, 2013, his portrait appeared on the front pages of many daily papers. It was a tribute to a man who, having survived the Warsaw ghetto, would become Germany's most prominent contemporary literary critic and would have an unprecedented impact on postwar German writing. In fact, no one communicated to an entire society the importance of literature as well as he did.

And so it is a gift for all to receive in the year 2013 yet another edition of his book *Frauen dichten anders* especially because it emphasizes the importance of women's writing. In the afterword, the editor Reich-Ranicki, addresses what he refers to as "risky" subject of women authors. He begins with the mention of Ruth Klüger's book *Frauen lesen anders* which clearly served as an inspiration for the title of his own book and, at the same time, underlines the importance of such a "banal" fact that indeed women not only read differently but also write differently. Women, according to Reich-Ranicki, react differently to the world around them, and this is precisely that "risky terrain" he mentions. If one were to ask whether literature and art were exclusively male domains, the answer would definitely be "no!" Unfortunately in the past, the number of female writers was quite small especially in Germany, where, in contrast with England, France, or Poland, it took a long time until the literary public sphere accepted them without reservations. Reich-Ranicki explains how in the works of numerous German female authors the subconscious and irrational elements dominate, rather than the intellectual ones. Hence, feelings and metaphysical worldview are in the foreground of their works. On one hand, one should beware of the tendency to assign women's writing to some specific rigid category, warns Reich-Ranicki, on the other hand, one may not ignore all the idiosyncratic marks of their poetry. To end this chain of confusing contradictions, he contends that ultimately richness of female poetry is best demonstrated with individual poems.

The anthology draws together two hundred fifty poems from sixty-four German poetesses.

Despite this, Reich-Ranicki forewarns, the edition is by no means complete. The chosen poems are to be merely accepted as examples or suggestions for further reading, and – most importantly, they must be understood as a form of advocacy for the poetry of women – “and not although, but because they compose poems differently.”

Reich-Ranicki opens his anthology with an anonymous poem – presumably written by a nun – from the 12th century entitled »Dû bist mîn«. In contrast with, for instance, Susan L. Cocalis’s book *The Defiant Muse. German Feminist Poems from the Middle Ages to the Present. A Bilingual Anthology*, Reich-Ranicki’s publication does include the earliest instance of women’s poetry even though it is uncertain whether the poet was indeed a woman.

It must be noted that only first forty-eight pages out of the total of two hundred forty six are dedicated to women authors who wrote until the end of the 19th century. The last author mentioned in that part of the book is Friederike Kempner (1836-1904), a German-Jewish poet from the Prussian Province of Posen (today Poland). If one were to compare poems chosen by Marcel Reich-Ranicki with the ones proposed by Gisela Brinker-Gabler in her book entitled *Deutsche Dichterinnen vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart. Gedichte und Lebensläufe*, one would see that Brinker-Gabler not only provides short biographical sketches, but also focuses much more on the years before the 1900s. The authors omitted by Marcel Reich-Ranicki can be then found in Gisela Brinker-Gabler’s book, for instance, Elisabeth von Branschweig-Lüneburg (1510-1558), Margaretha Susanna von Kuntsch (1651-1716), Sophie Mereau (1770-1804), Louise

Aston (1814-1871), Louise Otto (1819-1895), Ada Christen (1839-1901) and several others.

The authors who are very well represented in the Marcel Reich-Ranicki’s anthology are Else Lasker-Schüler (1869–1945), Nelly Sachs (1891-1970), Marie Luise Kaschnitz (1901-1974), Rose Ausländer (1901-1988), Ilse Aichinger (1921-), Ingeborg Bachmann (1926-1973), Sarah Kirsh (1935-2013), just to name a few. Several poems from each of the authors are featured and they address a variety of themes, such as, love, war, philosophy, metaphysics, nature, urban setting, and the weather. To be sure a great number of contemporary authors are introduced, however there are some feminist writers missing who bluntly challenge oppressive gender roles and openly concern themselves with sexual issues. By way of illustration the poem of J. Monika Walther (1945-) “Die Frau, die Sich im Koitus mit Bewegt” might be mentioned. Her poems are to be found in Susan L. Cocalis’s publication that focuses on feminist poetry informed by the sensibility that the sexes are unreservedly equal.

Because of the chronological order of the poems, the anthology walks the reader through German history or that of German-Jewish writers. Furthermore, apart from political upheaval the reader is confronted with a growing self-awareness of the poetesses and their clear naming and labeling of violence they encounter or experience. For instance, the descriptions of domestic violence in the poems of Hertha Kräftner is much more pronounced when the author does not stylize herself as a victim and does not celebrate her powerlessness, but rather observes events in an unrestrained manner. The poems of women speak

about ill-fated love and resistance against it and describe how to bear up against pain. Confrontation with the pain, whether due to social circumstance, war, or persecution, can be countered with hope. The poem “Masada” by Daniela Danz (1976-) speaks to that effect when it describes the last stand in the First Jewish Revolt against Rome, which took place on the mountaintop of Masada, the site of a palace-fortress completed by Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.E.). Rather than allow themselves to be taken prisoners and thus enslaved, the Jews chose to commit mass suicide so that when the Romans entered the fortress, they found only seven survivors. The poem lends itself to a feminist interpretation, as many of those who died were women and children.

The anthology ends with the poem “nebel” by Nadja Küchenmeister (1981-) who treats the theme of deeply unhappy love. Reich-Ranicki not only begins the anthology with the love poem but also closes it with the poem on the same topic. If one were to compare both pieces of poetry, one could see how the approach to the theme has progressed.

With the “Literary Quartet,” a television show launched in 1988, Marcel Reich-Ranicki set out to interest a larger public in reading, and he indeed turned critical literary cogitation into a popular pastime by reaching millions of viewers. Let us hope his edition of poems written by women will reach millions of readers of both genders.

Reich-Ranicki, Marcel, Ed. *Frauen dichten anders. Deutsche Dichterinnen vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 2013.

Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes.

By Maria Stehle

Kevina King

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

The notion that Germany has changed drastically since unification and is ready to be a global player again rests on a conception of a fundamentally new Germany, one that has left its Nazi past and Cold War division behind, and emerged into a new era as a peaceful and multicultural nation. Maria Stehle, in *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes* interrogates this notion and reveals the tensions between such views and the realities of a country that still struggles with “racist discrimination [defining] understandings of space and belonging” (3). She illuminates these issues by examining cultural products that engage with the trope of the “ghetto”, and uses the problematic and contested term as a “political and highly rhetorical term” (12). To be clear, the depictions from the mid-1990s to the early twenty-first century in film, fiction, and music that Stehle draws on in her work have to be understood as “reactionary” or as efforts “to connect German cityscapes to images of global cities: the ghettos of the world” (2). Some depictions, “respond to the experience of exclusion with defiance,” while others “deconstruct the idea of the ghetto and instead develop a vision of a multicultural, transnational cityscape” (2). Stehle frames her analyses of these German “ghettos” theoretically by using Arjun Appadurai’s concepts of “mediascape” and

“ethnoscape”, while focusing on cultural productions made by minorities to describe the complex process of how these “ghettos” are in constant flux and contestation, but still correlate to their fictional “image circulation” and their “social realities” (3).

Stehle’s first chapter following the introduction focuses on two literary works by Feridun Zaimoglu from the 1990s: *Kanak Sprak* (1995) and *Koppstoff* (1999). Both written within a “political landscape in flux . . . Zaimoglu’s texts offer commentary on this [German] project of national redefinition; beyond a national identity,” (20) and, as Stehle asserts, reflect German “cityscapes” as territories that have to be claimed and owned in order to respond to racially motivated exclusion. She argues that Zaimoglu’s protagonists do not necessarily project racism out of the “ghetto,” but that the “ghetto” in his texts serves various functions, all related to the creation of space, investigating “how borders of the ghetto are defined, who defines them, and who defends them in late 1990s Germany” (56).

The second chapter illuminates the importance of what is perceived as the “ghettocentric films of the 1990s and the early-twenty-first century” (66). Not dismissing these films as mere confirmations of stereotypes of the urban spaces in other cities could lead to a helpful understanding of the need for a “transnational circulation of cinematic images” (67). In this chapter Stehle analyzes six films in which she identifies similarities in events and conflicts. *Kurz und schmerzlos* (1995), *Dealer* (1999), *Kanak Attack* (2000), *Ghettokids* (2002), *Knallhart* (2006), and *Chiko* (2008) are all examples of the importance of this genre, since it offers, as she delineates, “a range of perspectives on the politics of space, identifications, and representation in the ghetto; in spite of their rather similar topics, they depict many different Germanys” (120).

The last chapter of this work discusses how various German hip-hop and rap music artists “create ghetto soundscapes” (129). Stehle investigates artists such as Ecko Fresh, Bushido, Cora E, Samy Deluxe, Lady Bitch Ray and King Orgasmus to complicate the different perspectives and meanings of “ghetto.” While the authors and directors Stehle analyses in the previous chapters depicted the “ghetto” as an imagined or real physical place, the artists in Stehle’s third chapter rarely define the “ghetto” as “a physical or actual ghetto. Their descriptions of the physical space of the ghetto often serve a different function: the ghetto is a public space to own and to control, but it is also a concept to collapse, reverse, and deconstruct” (175).

With the question of space and belonging is at the core of her study, Stehle convincingly argues for a consideration of the “ghetto” as a challenge to provincialism, racism and nationalism that employs transnational and transcultural frameworks to actively create alternative spaces for the so-called other. She successfully combines Arjun Appadurai’s “scapes” by contextualizing these discussions within a contemporary German cultural scene that reflects Germany’s problematic political and social developments. The real accomplishment of this work, however, is that Maria Stehle has managed to elucidate the complex overlapping of racialized, gendered, and classist exclusions. A “ghetto” voice not only bears, but also perpetuates a response to a stratified system “entrenched in national narratives” (185).

Maria Stehle. *Ghetto Voices in Contemporary German Culture: Textscapes, Filmscapes, Soundscapes*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012.

Translingual Identities. Language and the Self in Stefan Heym and Jakov Lind.

By Tamar Steinitz

Simone Stirner

University of California, Berkley

Tamar Steinitz's work *Translingual Identities: Language and the Self in Stefan Heym and Jakov Lind*, makes an important contribution to the critical reception of the two modernist writers and to the study of translingual literature and the phenomenon of translingualism in general. What links the two authors Heym and Lind is their decision to write in a language other than their mother tongue, choosing English rather than German as a means for artistic expression. Both Heym and Lind fled Nazism. Exile for them did not only encompass a geographical move but a move from one language to another and with that a crossing over into a new linguistic identity. In close engagement with a number of works by the two authors, Steinitz explores the nature and consequences of this linguistic switch. Her main focus in this investigation is, however, less the linguistic aspect of the works, but rather what she sees as the psychological effects of the translingual shift – a schizophrenic, fragmented condition in Lind's case and a "productive doubling of perspective" in the work of Heym (81).

The introduction gives a brief, yet dense and multi-faceted overview of the phenomenon of translingualism and its discussion in literary

criticism, philosophy, and psychology. It situates the two lesser known writers next to other examples of translingual authors including Vladimir Nabokov and Joseph Conrad and sets up a theoretical background for what will be a driving argument for the rest of the study: language constructs individual consciousness. Adopting a new language therefore involves a move towards a new discursive identity (3). The first chapter investigates the autobiographical writing of the Austrian Jakov Lind (1927-2007). Building on the notion of schizophrenia, Steinitz analyzes how Lind's "creation of a false self in a foreign language, becomes a coping strategy throughout his life" (57). Lind's autobiographical writing in a newly adopted language is an attempt to create a unified self, to artistically forge a new, unbroken identity. Yet, according to Steinitz, the "psychic split initially caused by traumatic and repressed events" proves resilient and cannot be overcome (57). The writing of Stefan Heym (1913-2001) exhibits a different way of responding to the challenges of translingualism. In her reading of Heym's novel *The Crusaders*, Steinitz arrives at the conclusion that Heym – as opposed to Lind – manages to overcome the psychological, translingual split by freeing himself from any national identification and assuming the positive role of a mediator between nations, cultures, and languages instead. The third chapter places Stefan Heym next to Jakov Lind and examines different ways of authorial self-fashioning (e.g., *The Writer as Madman*, *The Writer and Truth*, *The Writer as Translator*) that reflect the writers' relation to language. This comparative analysis confirms for Steinitz the conclusions of the previous chapters: "Heym, unlike Lind, is able to

split his self between two languages and cultures without, by and large, suffering a crisis of identity, as his identity is not bound with nationality or with language: it is bound with an idea and an ideal” (130). The fourth chapter continues this comparative approach, now focusing on the way in which both authors rework the figure of the Wandering Jew that reflects, in Steinitz’s eyes, their own translingual trajectories. Again, Heym and Lind emerge as two opposite models. In Lind’s work, Steinitz recognizes the Wandering Jew as a disintegrative figure; in Heym’s work he appears as a figure of redemption. This opposition between the positive/productive and negative/destructive effects of translingualism, which Steinitz identifies on various levels in the writings of Lind and Heym are, for her, not particular merely to the authors in question, but can be read more widely as archetypes: “translingualism as loss as opposed to translingualism as an opportunity, and fragmentation versus mediation” (187).

While these models are convincing in and of themselves and open up new and productive perspectives on translingualism, the way they map perfectly onto the two authors might, in the end, bring to light some limitations of the study. Steinitz does not problematize these models or elucidate how the authors may challenge this neat opposition. Can the picture really be that black and white? Is there nothing in Heym that complicates the image of the mediator between languages and cultures, no instance where traces of the experience of a loss surface? And with regard to Lind, are there no moments in his work where new opportunities emerge from within the experience of loss and fragmentation? Lind’s autobiography “fails to

reveal a real self”, according to Steinitz (57), yet this conclusion is drawn from the content of the work only and does not, for instance, engage with the complexities of its language. Admittedly, Steinitz specifically notes that her focus lies on the psychological effects of the move to a new language and not on the linguistic aspects of the two authors’ writings. In a study that focuses on translingual identities, however, the absence of engagement with the linguistic and stylistic dimensions of the works is to my mind a shortcoming, despite the author’s disclaimer. The fact that the linguistic dimension can contribute significantly to an understanding of the translingual aspects in a given work is proven by Steinitz herself. Her discussion of Lind’s *Travels to the Enu* convincingly shows how the German language underlies and influences the English narrative tale by way of intertextual relations to a German work (104). In the context of the study as a whole, however, such a language-centered analysis remains the exception. Thus, while the content of the narratives might support Steinitz’s reading of Heym and Lind as two opposing models with respect to the translingual condition, the question of whether the picture she draws is also supported by the language of the texts remains open.

Steinitz takes a psychologically informed approach to translingualism. This is revealing as it places the question of subjectivity, linguistic identity, and trauma productively in the centre of the discussions of this phenomenon. Yet at times, the pathologizing of the authors’ conditions seems forced. Steinitz insists on the concept of the “psychic split,” a medical state that is not the result of a conscious, willed act, but rather the effect of conditions outside of a subject’s control. This

acknowledges the fact that historico-political circumstances violently triggered the shift from German to English in both authors. Lind's move to another language is, in this sense, "an expression of a psychic split caused by the trauma of war and the loss of family and home" (22). At the same time, however, the concept of the "psychic split" seems to undercut the agency embedded in the move from one language to another. The implied passive suffering of the subject risks obstructing the understanding of the translingual move as an active, political choice taken by the author.

This being said, Steinitz's study offers new ways of thinking about Stefan Heym, Jakob Lind, and translingualism in general. It is convincingly informed by a historical and biographical contextualization of the authors and draws on a wide range of theoretical positions to support its arguments without overly "theorizing" the object of her study. Steinitz manages to draw attention to Heym and Lind, whose work has largely and unjustly gone unnoticed by critics. It constitutes an important contribution to the scholarship on the two authors. And finally, in moving beyond the national paradigm, *Translingual Identities* joins the emerging strand of modernist studies that challenges this still pervasive national mode, creating an awareness for the interstices, the moments of border-crossing and literary transfer within modernist literature not only on a geographical scale, but also in the realm of language.

Steinitz, Tamar. *Translingual Identities: Language and the Self in Stefan Heym and Jakob Lind*. Rochester: Camden House. 2013.

Huck Finn: nach Mark Twain.

Graphic Novel

By Olivia Vieweg

Alex Hogue

University of Cincinnati

At first glance, Olivia Vieweg's translation of Mark Twain's novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* into German and adaptation into a graphic novel points to a universality of appeal among great works of literature. Vieweg's adaptation, however, is not merely a retelling of a classic story. Rather, she accomplishes the feat of relocating the story to Germany and in doing so, skillfully adapts the critiques of the antebellum South in Twain's novel to the reunified East.

Vieweg's *Huck Finn* is set in Halle an der Saale in 2013, twenty-three years after reunification, a timeline that adds to the applicability of the story for modern times, given Twain's original setting of the mid-1880s, some twenty years after the end of the American Civil War. This parallel is strengthened by the way Vieweg adapts the social criticisms of Twain's time to contemporary Germany. While Twain's book is full of American Southern regionalisms, the language of Vieweg's characters reflects youth culture and slang more than regional dialect, but is diluted with enough standard German to be intelligible to any reader.

In the graphic novel, Finn is under the care of a widow in the city who sends him to school, helps him learn to read, and lovingly cares for him as if he were her own. Finn's father, the only surviving

member of his family, and is described by Finn as “jetzt fast fünfzig Jahre alt, hatte fettige Haare und stank fürchterlich. Sein Gesicht hatte keine Farbe ... Es war so weiß, dass man allein vom Anblick krank werden könnte” (27). While he is initially sober, he soon returns to the bottle and to his abuse of Finn.

Juxtaposed to Finn is the Asian prostitute Jin, who works at a brothel called Mississippi. The analog for the escaped slave Jim in Twain’s work, Jin flees the brothel when she learns that the owner, Maik, is planning to sell her to another brothel in Köln. While Finn’s motivations to run away center on his boredom in the care of the widow and his fear of his father, Jin’s are for her own safety and to gain her freedom. The comparison of human trafficking in the sex trade to slavery in the American South is a telling one, and combined with parallels in the stories’ timelines, as well as the fact that Halle was the site of several legal battles against the sex trade in the early to mid 2000s underscores the critiques of racism and human trafficking present in both the late nineteenth and early twenty-first centuries.

Along their way from Halle to Hamburg, Finn and Jin come into the company of the Krüger family, who with their yoga, plentiful organic food, and open hospitality make Finn feel that this is the family he had been missing his whole life. Jin, however, is further objectified by the male members of the Krüger clan, and leaves them to try and rebuild the raft she and Finn had been using. Finn soon learns of the Krüger’s thirty-year feud with a neighboring family, the Schäfers. When the two families finally come to an all-out gunfight over two members of their families who have fallen in love, Finn escapes and is reunited with Jin. Just as in

Twain’s novel, the feuding families serve to reinforce the critiques of entrenched and unquestioned beliefs. Neither family remembers how the feud began, but both readily kill members of the other without question.

Vieweg’s *Huck Finn* skillfully and successfully adapts Mark Twain’s novel to the German contemporary context, and in doing so loses none of the story’s original satire, thoughtfulness, or meaning. The picaresque tale is particularly well suited to the graphic novel format, which conveys elements of Twain’s narrative visually in a muted palette of reds and browns, which underscores the bleakness of the societal elements that the story critiques. Vieweg’s work, like Twain’s, serves to remind the economically and socially powerful that just because positive change has occurred, even twenty years later, the circumstances of life for all have not necessarily improved as much as one would like to believe.

Vieweg, Olivia. *Huck Finn: nach Mark Twain. Graphic Novel*. Berlin: Suhrkamp. 2013.