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A Companion to the Works of Thomas Mann (review)

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question. These essays remind us that nineteenth-century-German literature was neither sleepy nor sleeping through the events of the day; it simply experienced its own kind of wakefulness.

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—Gail Finney

A Companion to the Works of Thomas Mann.

Edited by Herbert Lehnert and Eva Wessell. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2004. xviii + 345 pages. \$90.00.

A companion can be either a friend or a *vade mecum*, a person who accompanies you or a book that you carry around and consult. This volume is appropriately entitled a companion, since you can treat it as one in both these senses: you'll like it, you can trust it, and you'll frequently refer to it because it is so useful.

It comprises seventeen chapters that, taken together, discuss all of Mann's major novels, most of his short fiction, and many of his essays and other writings. The front matter includes a helpful list of his works, a list divided into narratives, selected essay collections in German and in English, diaries, and collected works. The dates of composition and publication are given for each work. Most, though not all, of the English translations are mentioned, too. The back matter includes a select bibliography as well as an index. The bibliography lists about 150 primary and secondary sources. The index lists names, subjects, works, and places ranging from "Adorno" to "Zurich."

Four of the chapters, counting the introduction, are by Herbert Lehnert, one of the book's co-editors. These are the first and last two chapters. They accordingly frame the book and lend it Lehnert's stamp. The introduction explains Mann's main themes and narrative traits, noting that his style may seem conservative or realistic but that his fictional worlds are anarchic or unstable; that his fiction transforms, and does not directly depict, experiences such as his unconsummated homoerotic relationships; and that his ironic resistance to ideologies has helped his work endure well beyond its initial audience of *Bildungsbürger*. Lehnert's chapter on Mann's beginnings and *Buddenbrooks* reinforces these points, stressing his sibling rivalry with his brother Heinrich, his debt to Nietzsche's *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, and his condition as a social and sexual outsider. Lehnert takes *Die Betrogene* to be about both coping with the prospect of death and wishing for sexual liberation. He reads *Königliche Hoheit* and *Der Erwählte* as quasi-comedies symbolic of Mann's sexual and artistic concerns.

Lehnert's co-editor Eva Wessell, like four of the other contributors, writes about one of Mann's other major novels. Wessell treats *Der Zauberberg* together with his "war essays." She explains how Mann remained true to his initial idea of writing a humorous account of German nonalignment and how he did not allow Settembrini and Hans Castorp to become mouthpieces for the political agenda of *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*. Peter Pütz tells how *Joseph und seine Brüder* blurs spatial, temporal, and other conceptual boundaries according to the novels' shared principle of "mutual penetration," "reciprocal exaltation," "poeticized eroticism" (175), and "universal transitoriness" (177). Werner Frizen remarks on the main characters of *Lotte in Weimar*, tying Mann's deconstruction and deflation of Goethe to the accounts of him given by Lavater, Riemer, the novelist Ludwig Häberlin, and the psychoanalyst Felix Aaron Theilhaber. Hans Rudolf Veget, in what may be the most substantial chapter

of this volume, comments on the historical context of *Doktor Faustus*; its structure and design; Mann's ambivalent treatment of the Faust myth; Leverkühn's ultimately cosmopolitan music; Mann's debt to, as well as his differences with, Adorno; and his omission of German anti-Semitism. Vaget thus reads *Doktor Faustus* as prescient, profound *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. Egon Schwarz draws connections between the author and the title character of *Felix Krull*. Both are narcissistic artists, he writes, who become representatives of society. Hans-Joachim Sandberg discerns different connections between Mann and the hero of the novel he planned but never wrote about Frederick the Great. Initially seeing himself as similar to Frederick, and hoping that some of the king's fame might rub off on him, Mann later changed his mind about greatness and largely abandoned this plan.

Most of the other contributors analyze Mann's shorter fiction. Erhard Bahr explores the extremes suggested by the "theme of art and its religious valorization" (64), linking them to the "conflict between art and society" (65) in stories and novellas written between 1902 and 1904, as well as in *Fiorenza*. Wolfgang Lederer treats the topic of love in Mann's early stories. He notes that Mann drew a line between eros and sexus and did not desire to act out homosexually. In a comment typical of his pithy style, Lederer calls *Wälsungenblut* "a palace rebellion staged by the 'trapped' husband" (88). Clayton Koelb incorporates his comments on *Death in Venice* into a chapter-by-chapter summary of its plot. Among other things, he stresses that many of its supposed events are part of Aschenbach's "mythic-erotic fantasy" (108). According to Helmut Koopmann, autobiographical stories such as *Wie Jappe und Do Escobar sich prügelten* or *Das Eisenbahnunglück* are narrated from an ironic distance and tell of the times in which they were written. Jens Rieckmann thinks that *Die vertauschten Köpfe* and *Die Betrogene* foreground the loving, longing, and desirous gaze of their various characters and of their author alike.

Two other contributors raise issues that transcend individual works or genres. Manfred Dierks describes how Mann and his fiction symbolically "represented" his readers. According to Dierks, this relationship of author and audience reflects Mann's fantasy of being a prince and, later, of being a Goethean *Nationaldichter* and preceptor of his people. Seemingly democratic, Mann was still narcissistic, Dierks argues, and his politics, accordingly, tended to be authoritarian. His ambivalence about his public role as a writer, moreover, is implied by *Mario und der Zauberer*. Hannelore Mundt shows the complexity of Mann's female characters. His early works "attest to a remarkable sensitivity to women's oppression in patriarchal society," she explains, "and to the misogynist portrayals of women that were rampant in art during his time" (272). Mundt stresses such sensitivity in many of Mann's later works as well, remarking that his female characters are often masks for, though not wholly determined by, his own need for social and sexual liberation.

This book was written for readers who do not necessarily know German. Alas, some of its contributors seem not to know English as well as they might. (Five chapters were written in German and translated into English.) Stylistic infelicities—incorrect prepositions, unnecessary articles, and odd diction—result from differences between the two languages. There aren't too many real clinkers. English-speaking readers, however, may have trouble understanding things like Joseph's being called an "economist" (16). Other mistakes are rare and mostly minor. The first page of the foreword, for example, incorrectly states that *Death in Venice* was published in *Die Neue Rundschau*

in 1911. The correct date, given everywhere else in the volume, is 1912. The month of its publication is once, moreover, wrongly given as June of the latter year (137).

The virtue of this book lies less in providing new information or new interpretations than in giving reliable and readable accounts of Mann's works. It also introduces readers to current scholarship on those works. It thus accomplishes exactly what it is meant to do. It does so, moreover, in admirable breadth and depth. Its contributors also avoid the extremes of being obvious or outrageous. Given the current state of German Studies in general, and what is often the state of research on Mann in particular, that's no mean feat.

The notes on the fourteen contributors to this volume explain that Herbert Lehnert grew up in Lübeck, "where he attended the same school that had tormented Thomas Mann fifty years earlier—even teaching there for a while" (323). He, along with his co-editor Wessell, has done Mann's readers a genuine service. That school, it seems, has finally made amends for inflicting such fateful anguish.

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—Ellis Shookman

Body and Narrative in Contemporary Literatures in German: Herta Müller, Libuše Moníková, Kerstin Hensel.

By Lyn Marven. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. xi + 282 pages. \$95.00.

Im Kontext der reichhaltigen Forschungsliteratur zum Thema "Körper" in literarischen Texten zeichnet sich Marvens Studie dadurch aus, daß sie ihre Aufmerksamkeit zu gleichen Teilen auf die in Figuren und Handlungen dargestellte Körperlichkeit—in Genette's Begrifflichkeit: *histoire*—und auf die Untersuchung des "Textkörpers," also der erzähltechnischen Strategien—bei Genette: *discours*—richtet, sowie deren komplexe Beziehung zueinander. Die Arbeit besteht aus einer längeren Einleitung in die sozialhistorischen und politischen Kontexte sowie in die nutzbar gemachten Theorien, drei ungefähr gleich langen Kapiteln, die jeweils dem Werk der untersuchten Autorinnen gewidmet sind, einem kurzen, zusammenfassenden Schlußkapitel, sowie ausführlicher Bibliographie und Index.

Marven begründet ihre Auswahl der Autorinnen mit ihrer Herkunft aus den früheren Ostblockländern und der Existenz unter einem totalitären, repressiven Regime, die schließlich zum "Trauma der Entortung" (Bronfen) führt. Zusammen mit geschlechtsspezifischen Erfahrungen beeinflusst dies die dargestellten Körperbilder sowie die Erzählstrategien, die traumatische Erlebnisse auch auf der formal-diskursiven Ebene umsetzen. Feministische Theorien von Adelson, Weigel, Irigaray, Kristeva, Butler und Bronfen zum Nexus von Körper und Text werden auf ihre Brauchbarkeit abgetastet. Der Begriff des Traumas wird schließlich als die allem zugrundeliegende Erfahrung gesehen, die dann im Werk Herta Müllers als Reaktion auf die Repressionen relativ direkt ihren Ausdruck findet. Hysterie wird als performatives Ausagieren des Traumas definiert und als häufiges Thema sowie Grundstruktur der Texte Moníkovás gesehen. Und das Groteske, im Unterschied zu Trauma und Hysterie eine literarische Form, wird als Hensels bevorzugte Methode betrachtet, traumatische Erfahrungen zu repräsentieren oder ihren Effekt subversiv zu unterlaufen und abzuwehren.

Traumatische Symptome, die aus der permanenten Überwachung durch die rumänische Staatssicherheit resultieren, zeigen sich in Herta Müllers Texten in der