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## Introduction

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## INTRODUCTION

With this appearance of the *UDR*, it is the third time an issue of the journal has published the papers of the Heinrich Böll Seminar of the Modern Language Association of America. For cooperation in this effort to publish important recent criticism of the work of Heinrich Böll thanks are due to the organizer of the 1975 seminar, Professor Gertrud Pickar of the University of Houston, and to the participants in the seminar: Professors Theodore Ziolkowski of Princeton University, Evelyn Beck of the University of Wisconsin, Ralf Nicolai of the University of Georgia, Ehrhard Bahr of the University of California, and Robert Conard of the University of Dayton. (Prof. Conard's article "Heinrich Böll's Essays as Art Forms: An Interpretation of 'The Moscow Bootblacks' " will appear in a future issue.) And for his continued support of this Böll-project special appreciation is due Professor Lawrence Ruff, editor of the *UDR*.

Theodore Ziolkowski's article analyses the role of the narrator in the novel *Group Portrait with Lady* and the relationship which exists between the narrator, the heroine of his report, and the events he relates. With the help of the terminology established by André Jolles, Ziolkowski determines the novel to be a variation of the traditional "simple forms" of legend and saga, neither a life of a saint nor a family chronicle, but the account of an *advocatus dei* in a canonization process. This article by Ziolkowski suggests a valuable new way of approaching Böll's novel and of understanding the uncertain relationship that prevails between the narrator, his characters, and his material.

Evelyn Beck approaches one of Böll's most popular novels, *The Clown*, from the standpoint of modern feminism. She finds the hero Hans Schnier, who is often praised by critics for his humanist attitudes, to be unknowingly an exploiter of women, in his own way, even a sexist. The essay further demonstrates that Marie, Hans' girl friend and victim of a male dominated society, begins to exert her own personality in the course of the novel by leaving Hans. One must, however, ask if Marie, in leaving her common-law husband, is not merely succumbing to another set of male values, those propagated by the Catholic clique which influences her decision. This short essay is important for two reasons. It points out the need for more criticism of Böll's work from a feminist point of view and the need of an overall study of Böll's female figures since the publication of *Group Portrait* and *Katharina Blum*.

Ralf Nicolai's article also treats *The Clown* but analyses Hans Schnier from the perspective of Kleist's famous essay on marionette theater. Nicolai finds that the structure of the novel as well as Hans' personality can be explained by applying Kleist's insights into the nature of marionettes to the behavior and the actions of Böll's clown.

Ehrhard Bahr reads Böll's novel *Acquainted with the Night* (*Und sagte kein einziges Wort*) as an exposition of the relationship between money and love. Although the novel shows how a necessary minimum of money is needed to sustain familial love, it also illustrates how Christian love can on occasion abrogate the money relationship. Bahr, though, goes deeper to demonstrate that While Fred and Käte's marriage suffers under miserable social and economic conditions, ultimately their crisis is not a material one, but a loss of ethical and religious substance. When at the end of the novel, Fred returns to his family, he rejects a society determined by money and reclaims a life in which love dominates. Bahr calls this conclusion in contrast to Socialist Realism, Catholic Realism, and claims that despite the positive aspects of the denouement, it approaches religious banality and offers an insufficient solution to the problems of poverty.

In addition to the seminar papers two other articles on Böll are offered. Gertrud Pickar explains how the subtle and consistent use of the colors green, white, red, black, purple, gold, and silver in the novel *Billiards at Half-past Nine* supports the dividing symbolism in the work between pacifism and violence, life and death, renunciation and mammon.

Henry Glade, an American Germanist and Slavist, and Konstantin Bogatyrev, a Soviet translator of German literature, have produced an extraordinarily interesting document of literary and political significance. By analysing the Russian translation of Böll's *Group Portrait*, they reveal the role which literature plays in the Soviet Union and the subjects in literature which pique the Soviet censors. The Russian translation is replete with deletions, mistranslations, expurgations, and alterations relating to sex, language, religion, politics, and history, resulting in what appears to be one of the most bowdlerized translations of recent record. Perhaps the Soviet Union's signing of the Universal Copyright Convention since the publication of *Group Portrait* will permit Böll and others to have their works appear in the Soviet Union in the form they wrote them.

1975 was the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Thomas Mann. Hence, it seems only fitting that the *UDR* should publish some recent criticism of this great German writer. Walter Morris traces the image of teachers through Mann's work and concludes that the prevailing negative image of pedagogues simply reflects Mann's own experience in school. Sol Gittleman attempts to give a final answer to the problem of "The Jewish Question" in Mann's work. Mann, Gittleman believes, unconsciously reflected the attitudes and stereotypes of his time.

John Fitzell and Christoph Schweitzer both interpret poems by well-known German writers: the one, Wilhelm Busch, neglected in literary criticism, and the other, Goethe, more present in secondary literature than any other German writer. Fitzell demonstrates Busch's use of folklore and psychology in the poem "I know a Tale That's Nice and Deep," and Schweitzer provides a new interpretation of "Das Göttliche," a poem which is seldom long absent from the interest of the critics.

Concluding this issue are two articles which treat literature from vastly different

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points of view. Jost Hermand's article employs socio-political criteria to explore the relationship of agrarian mythology to Germany's national policy and to discuss the influence of Blood and Soil ideology on art and literature and its connection with fascism. Frank Ryder's article challenges the validity of previous psychological interpretations of Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* by defining the boundaries within which psychological interpretation is valid and beyond which it is not. Ryder bases his analysis on the distinction between person and persona and analyses the critical error of considering literary characters as real people. It is an article worthy of study by any scholar who has in the past or intends in the future to discuss literature from the standpoint of psychology.

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Konstantin Bogatyrev, Russian writer and translator of Rilke, was attacked by unknown assailants on Monday evening, 26 April, in front of his Moscow apartment building. He is still semi-unconscious in very serious condition in the intensive care ward of a Moscow hospital suffering from a skull fracture. The attack has not yet been explained.

