Werk

Titel: Shakespeare und die Frühe Neuzeit ...inszeniert

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matiken funktioniert und zur symbolischen Bewältigung des (kolonisierten) Anderen dient (S. 46–58). Der zweite Hauptteil setzt sich mit geschlechtsspezifischen Semantiken von Kleidung, Textilien, Garn auseinander. Wenn auch einige der einführenden Gesichtspunkte hier nicht neu sind – etwa die weibliche Gegenkultur des gemeinschaftlichen Spinnens von Garn und Erzählungen –, so verknüpfen sich in der Folge diese Lektüren textiler Ideologeme zu einem überaus anregenden kulturellen Gewebe. Penelope etwa wird in der Renaissance systematisch von einer Weberin zu einer Spinnerin 'herabgestuft', denn ihr Weben beruht auf Täuschung und eignet sich weniger als das 'primitivere' Spinnen für die Einschreibung als domestizierende "female textile virtue" (S. 108). Wie Penelope werden auch andere weibliche Vor- und Gegenbilder ideologisch appropriiert oder gegengestrickt (Eva, Maria, die Parzen, Philomela und Procne). Diese Aspekte weiblichen textuellen Wirkens werden noch ergänzt um genaue Lektüren der Motive, die durch Stickereien, 'häusliche' Texte von Frauen, in öffentliche Räume transportiert werden. Zu diesen beiden Beispielen ließen sich mühelos weitere addieren: die Phobie vor mit gelber Stärke verfremdeter Kleidung, die in der Zeit des Commonwealth als Propaganda gegen die angebliche höfische Verwahrlosung unter James I. dient; die verschiedenen Versionen der Griselda-Geschichte mit ihren Ent- und Verkleidungen der Protagonistin, die deren absolute Unterordnung oder Widersetzlichkeit indizieren; die (Bühnen-)Kleidung von Geistern, die sich in Rüstung oder Leichentuch ihrer Erinnerung und Besitzansprüche vergewissern, wobei die Kleidung der Verstorbenen als Speicher ihrer Identität figuriert... Spätestens hier beginnt die Rezension, den Aspektreichtum der Studie über Gebühr zu reproduzieren. Festzuhalten bleibt, daß *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* bei weitem nicht nur wegen seiner klugen Shakespeare-Lektüren zum Lesen empfohlen wird.

Joachim Frenk

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Anthony B. Dawson / Paul Yachnin, *The Culture of Playgoing in Shakespeare's England: A Collaborative Debate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 215 pp. – ISBN 0-521-80016-1 – £ 37.50 (hb.).

If Anthony Dawson's and Paul Yachnin's business were fruit-mongering, the former would be describing the taste and the rituals of apple-cake, whereas the latter would be discussing marketing strategies and the economic situation of fruit farmers, and the product of their debate would feature in a glossy magazine: "The apple – divine prop or life-style accessory?" In fact, they teach English Literature and have collaborated on "an account of the cultural conditions of theatrical pleasure" (p. 1) in early modern England. At the centre of this pleasure lies the involvement of the playgoers – individually or collectively – in the theatrical event, and it is the authors' radical disagreement about the nature of this involvement that brings their slightly stilted and self-conscious collaboration to life.

The volume is divided into four parts, and each author contributes one chapter to each part. While Dawson focuses on the immediacy of performance and aims to reconstruct sixteenth-

century contexts of theatrical representation, Yachnin argues from the position of a Neo-Marxist critical of the project of historical reconstruction and maintains that, since we inevitably see the past with modern eyes, the early modern theatre should be situated in the political and cultural formations it helped to shape. In the first part, "Participation vs. populuxe: two theories of early modern theatre", Dawson adapts Debora Shuger's view of the prevalence of religious "habits of thought" (*Habits of Thought in the English Renaissance*, 1990) and argues that the presence of Hamlet on the playhouse stage was perceived to be both real and unreal at the same time, in analogy to Anglican teachings on the non-substantial but nevertheless real presence of Christ at the Lord's Supper. While for Dawson the early modern theatre was thus virtually real, for Yachnin it was virtually prestigious in that it afforded playgoers insights into (representations of) aristocratic speech, style and affairs. Wedged between court and commerce, the theatre flourished by offering the common playgoer hand-me-down (that is, second-hand and reported) versions of nobility, in which they were allowed, for a couple of hours, to play at courtliness themselves. Meta-theatrical lessons in role-playing took the sting out of privilege, paradoxically both by showing the skull beneath the skin beneath the silk and by teaching playgoers lessons in improving what Norbert Elias has called their "social habitus". The second part, "Theatrical pleasure and the contest of vision", focuses on the rival pleasures of spectacle and interiorisation. Both authors begin by discussing Elizabethan views on sensual perception and its rather hysterical denunciation by anti-theatricalists. Yachnin then proceeds to argue that the theatre was moving away from the essentially Aristotelian understanding of the materiality of sight to a more psychologised, and thus more modern, concept of vision, in which there is a firm and almost non-negotiable distinction between exterior and interior. Dawson stresses the power of theatre to enchant, to draw the playgoers into the represented action and to elicit a 'felt' response. In the third part, "Objects of wonder and desire", Yachnin offers a close reading of *Othello*, arguing that the significance of the handkerchief results from tensions between its modes of production, the possibility of its reproduction, and its meaning as a fetishised commodity to its possessors. Dawson rehearses the iconoclastic attack on images and suggests in readings of *Dr Faustus*, *Bartholomew Fair* and *The Tempest* that stage props and *tableaux* are better understood in terms of religious iconography than of commodification. The fourth part, "National pastimes", is perhaps the strongest in that both authors draw together the various strands of their theoretical arguments to elucidate plays in performance. Historical memory, and thus national feeling, Dawson argues, results from a meta-theatrical awareness of layers of narrative in plays that seek to reconstruct traumatic events of the past, as seen in *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*. Yachnin foregrounds the theatre's journalistic function in shaping the public sphere by trading in court gossip, most notoriously in *A Game at Chess* but also less obviously in *All's Well*.

The volume has no bibliography, which leads to even more confusion in the footnotes than is usually the case. There are few back references to works already mentioned, but, instead, the references are cited in full in each new chapter, thus blurring the impression of sustained argument. The similarity between Yachnin's position and Douglas Bruster's *Drama and Market in the Age of Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1992), for instance, is first pointed out on page five, the same point is made in a footnote on page 102, and there are two more references to Bruster, each seemingly the first in the whole volume.