

which he gave to the inner self was applauded as an antidote to the growing politicization of literature. One reviewer was unhappy with *Das Glasperlenspiel* because the ending was not Christian; another was confident that the novel would soon be forgotten; every reviewer overlooked the crucial symbolism of the novel's ending. Few reviewers succeeded in balancing admiration with informed and critical understanding. Such reviewers, chiefly writing after 1945, acknowledged Hesse's integrity, his defence of genuine individualism against conformity and manipulation, and his aesthetic merits, but at the same time pointed to the disturbing implications of his deep-rooted aversion to reality and his abstract and unhistorical presentation of human problems. Hesse helped to perpetuate the romantic (and Hesse's favorite authors were all romantics) prejudice that the outer world can only disappoint and that the inner world is the only one worth taking seriously. His readers, and they have been usually young ones, were – and as North America shows – are still influenced by his denigration of reality and his advocacy of private, rather than both private and public, solutions to life's problems. His involvement in the public conflicts of his day was limited to occasional and vague appeals for love and reason. His antipathy towards any kind of practical participation was so great that, for instance, he brusquely rejected a request from Max Brod in 1948 to make a public appeal for a cease-fire in Palestine. In many ways, Hesse, despite his grief at the disasters and sufferings of his fellow Europeans, chose to be a stranger to his age. He persisted in his belief that a love of Mozart and Lao Tse was incompatible with an involvement in political and economic programmes. Whether it be by design or accident, it appears to this reader both very appropriate and representative that the final review, written in 1961, emphasizes with approval this intrinsic Germanness and the timeless quality of Hesse's writing: "It forms a bridge between the babbling of village fountains in southern Germany and the world of Buddhism".

Professor J. C. Fewster

KEPPLINGER, HANS MATHIAS

Real Culture and Culture of the Media. Literary Careers in the Federal Republic

[“Realkultur und Medienkultur. Literarische Karrieren in der Bundesrepublik”]

München u. Freiburg: Verlag Karl Alber, 1975; 207 pp.

How does one become famous? Does one acquire a well-known name more quickly as a literary man who enters into the daily political battle as a

journalist? Or does one get more rapidly talked about by one and all if one tries to become successful as a journalist through literary work? There have certainly never been any doubts concerning the fact that the second path, which leads via criticism, exercised via essays, possibly to literary work, is the more tedious and protracted. There result from the thorough study by Hans Mathias Kepplinger on "Real Culture and Culture of the Media, Literary Careers in the Federal Republic", following seminars in Mainz concerning sociology and publicity, views which take us further into this subject.

It can be recorded as a discovery that contemporary authors who, beyond their novels, stories, plays and – naturally – only really beyond their collections of poetry, gain status before the public as commentators and agitators and thus influence political and cultural events not only achieve a greater sale of their books, but also an amazingly wide recognition in circles of the population not consuming literary products.

During the last decade the only possibility of advancing into the lists of best-sellers was to lean on the intensity of advertising of publishers suitable therefor and ready to make such advance payments. The criticism which has frequently been produced of the constant publication of lists of bestsellers in the daily press, weeklies and bookshops by no means leads, if one follows Kepplinger's theoretically based investigation carried out with socio-empirical methods, to the desired aim of being awarded a "doctorate" as a literary "personality within contemporary history" or even of being given the opportunity to prepare a thesis possibly leading to a "doctorate".

Kepplinger has with good understanding discovered material which lay open for an interpretation of such, admittedly suspected, but previously not clearly revealed relationships. He has subjected the report by the "Spiegel" on 70 authors of the 47 Group, which took place during the period from 1960 to 1971, to a quantitative analysis of content and has reinforced it by a few "ex-post-facto experiments" in a sound way.

His procedure led to surprising results, the details of which do not all create the impression of being brand new. This applies, for example, to the observations that writers – apart from exceptions – appear most productive between their 35th and 50th year, that numerous authors are forgotten even in their lifetime, that former favourites of the public, even Nobel prizewinners, even disappear from national histories of literature in time. It was of course merely a matter of secondary concern for Kepplinger to report on such matters.

His intention was in fact to probe into the course of very recent literary careers in the Federal Republic. In essence, he evaluates them "as results of the combination of multifarious and highly variable individual capabilities

and social dispositions". Put in a different way by Kepplinger: the author needs an agility of an unparalleled character in the face of all possible topical exigencies, i.e. a considerable skill which has nothing in common with the former image of the poet writing in his attic. A full receptiveness to cultural and political conditions shows itself to be unavoidable as an addition to literary talent.

The editor of the Berlin journal "europäische ideen", Andreas W. Mytze, had distinguished literary men and journalists answer the following question in the 8th issue for 1975: "Why do cultural journals die?" If the answers are attempted to be summarised in a single sentence, then it appears that they, precisely as far as the highly reputed older examples are concerned, only seldom understand how to move with the times or, where possible, to run ahead of them. This sounds trite, but remains dismal for all that.

Those answers coincide partly with the experiences obtained by Kepplinger in others ways, namely via his analysis. The publicistic, i.e. public success of contemporary authors is related directly to their political commitment. Those who know, like Günter Grass or Heinrich Böll, who appear in Kepplinger's examples as leading figures, how to arouse attention in an extra-literary way become prominent. How long they are able to produce an impact depends on their relevant powers of endurance. In Kepplinger's individual study, applied to the "Spiegel", and what is more both on the basis of its literary criticism and its general political and cultural reporting, such talents achieved "fame" easily and rapidly. To use his own words: "The more often the authors stir up conflicts and become the subject of conflicts, the more often they become the subject of conflicts, the more often they become visible as personalities." This does not of course mean that their complete works would be read with sustained attention.

Kepplinger has chosen as a theoretical starting-point two terms previously coined by the Bonn psychologist Erich Feldmann. They were in his previous contributions on mass communication (cf. Erich Feldmann: "New Studies on the Theory of the Mass Media", Basle, 1969). It is a matter of "real culture" as a world of reality and "culture of the media" as its substrate created artificially in accordance with its authority. Kepplinger's borrowing does not however lead to a relapse into traditional, theologically or paedagogically executed and morally intended criticism of civilisation. He treats the "principles of selection" of the mass media with unusual precision.

Those who, as writers, recognize them in good time and know how to utilize them arrive at that success which finally is reflected in material form. For the result reads: "The degree of being known of a writer bears a measurable relationship to his publicistic success."

Since, moreover, "the judgment of a writer" takes place under the same

conditions, it is not merely a matter of thanking Kepplinger or his revelation of the literary-political-publicistic conduct of more or less well-known contemporary authors. Rather should such courses of recognition or sinking into oblivion be examined on the basis of the essays in the daily press, weekly journals, monthly reviews, quarterly professional journals, as well as in radio and television programmes, which impart culture from a critical point of view; by which the ability to classify of literary scholarship in its judgements likewise relatively restricted, is still not at all approached.

Professor Dr. Wilmont Haacke