34), wie auch ihr Verhalten in den Affären um Walter Janka und Paul Merker (44-45); selbst *Das siebte Kreuz* hat 1990 für ihn an Glanz verloren (46).

Bei Stefan Heym und Christa Wolf scheint er allerdings über sein Ziel hinaus zu schießen und beide Autoren weit unter Wert zu verkaufen, um bei seiner Rabatt-Metapher zu bleiben. Zugegeben, er preist Christa Wolfs Roman *Nachdenken über Christa T.*, hat aber anschließend kein gutes Wort mehr für sie; 1987 billigt er dieser "DDR-Staatsdichterin" nur noch "bescheidene künstlerische und intellektuelle Möglichkeiten" zu (186). Mit "Staatsdichterin" prägte Reich-Ranicki bereits 1987 die Formel, die drei Jahre später im Streit um Christa Wolf eine so zweifelhafte Rolle spielen sollte. Bei Stefan Heym ist in der Tat manches recht kolportagenhaft, doch sein *König David Bericht* ist gewiß mehr als nur eine "Offenbachiade" (73). Jurek Becker scheint dagegen entgegen aller Beteuerungen einen gewissen Rabatt zu genießen; mit vier Aufsätzen sind ihm neben Kunert und Seghers auch die meisten Beiträge gewidmet. Reich-Ranicki kann zwar nicht umhin, Beckers *Boxer*-Roman als "mißlungen" zu bezeichnen, doch schließt seine Besprechung nicht mit bissigen Bemerkungen, wie sie sich zuhauf in seinen Aufsätzen über Christa Wolf finden, sondern mit einem "respektvollen, . . . zuversichtlichen Gruß" an den "Dichter Jurek Becker" (266).

Insgesamt bietet Reich-Ranickis Buch eine Reihe von guten und treffsicheren Einblicken in wichtige Werke und Autoren der DDR-Literatur. Zuweilen stören unnötige Wiederholungen, der herablassend-ironische Ton sowie ungenügende Quellenangaben, bewußte Kokettierung mit Bildung und manch gewollte Preziosität im Stil, doch zumeist ist das Buch sehr lesenswert und informativ. Hervorzuheben sind besonders die einfühlsamen Aufsätze über Günter Kunert und Sarah Kirsch. Auch im Rückblick braucht Reich-Ranicki kaum etwas von seinen Artikeln über Hermann Kant zurückzunehmen, die er 1966, 1972 und 1977 den Romanen *Die Aula*, *Das Impressum* und vor allem *Der Aufenthalt* gewidmet hat. Kant wird hier charakterisiert als "routinierter und raffinierter Produzent hochwertiger literarischer Konfektion," als "Spaßmacher und Schlitzohr, dem man nicht über den Weg trauen konnte," der aber auch ein "ernstes und ehrliches Buch" zu verfassen in der Lage war (133). Für einen schnellen, informativen und lesenswerten Ein- und Überblick in und über wichtige Werke und Autoren der DDR-Literatur kann man Reich-Ranickis recht flott geschriebenes Buch unbedingt empfehlen.

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Rüddenklau, Wolfgang. *Störenfried. DDR-Opposition 1986-1989.* Berlin: Basisdruck, 1992. 386 pp.

At the outset of this text we learn that *Störenfried* is a codename the GDR secret police assigned to all actions intended to undermine the East Berlin peace movement after January 1988. The book's editor, Rüddenklau, is one who experienced the *Chikanerie* of the State first-hand, having been arrested in conjunction with the *Zionskirche-Affäre* for his work in the Umwelt-Bibliothek Berlin and as editor of one of the Eco-pax organizations' key publications, *Umweltblätter*.

The editor provides self-analytical and, in part, self-critical profiles of diverse underground cultural and intellectual opposition groups in the 1970s, followed by summary histories of their evolution through the years 1986, 1987, 1988, and 1989. Each overview is then followed by a selection of original *tamizdat* or *samizdat* documents, that is, items published by the groups themselves without the formal sanction of the state. The documents represent a wide sampling of grassroots/local opposition groups; they range in form from the programmatic appeals and manifestos of newly established groups, to op-ed pieces from diverse underground *Blätter*, to analytical treatises on specific political events, (e.g., reactions to the Luxemburg demonstrations, Honecker's 1987 visit to Bonn, the 1988 ban against the importation of the Soviet journal *Sputnik*, and the 1989 International Monetary Fund summit in Berlin-West).

Though individual segments of the East German opposition movement were quite intricately involved with the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the relationship was by no means a consistent one; their interaction was sometimes manipulative (from both sides), at other times synergistic. The same applies to specific representatives of the two groups—as demonstrated by conflicting references to Stolpe, now the SPD Minister-President of Brandenburg. Both agents of change have come to be seen in an entirely different light since formal unification, largely as a consequence of old actors jockeying for influence, relegitimation and retribution under the new political system. Rüddenklau is quite successful at rendering the ostensibly weak nature of the underground's *Widerstand* comprehensible to outsiders, even though the highly detailed documents occasionally leave the reader wishing for a substantial companion text on *Who's Who in the GDR-Opposition* (he does provide an annotated *Namenverzeichnis* for more than 90 activists at the end). The author offers a feel for the contrasting "political cultures" of local peace, environmental, human rights and *anti-fa* groups stretching from Uckermark to Dresden, though he

admits that the work is Berlin- and church-heavy in its focus. In the fine tradition of participant-observation, Rüddenklau captures the day-to-day problems and interactions typical of various groups as they were perceived and played out *at the time*, not as they are being rewritten with the help from the revelations and reverberations that have ensued since unification.

An extremely useful reference text for anyone attempting to de- and re-construct the ebbs and flows of her favorite movement, *Störenfried* nonetheless possesses a disturbing undertone for sympathetic outsiders, especially for those of us who had hoped that the "real revolutionaries" would eventually triumph during the breath-taking weeks and months of 1989. Rüddenklau discloses (but does not harp on) personality conflicts and disruptive tendencies towards *Selbstdarstellung/Selbstprofilierung* that rendered specific groups unfit for more effective collaborative action, e.g. the *Initiative für Frieden und Menschenrechte*. By telling the story of opposition like it was, rather than as it might have been, he preserves a very special place of GDR history *ganz unten*.

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Schirdewan, Karl. *Aufstand gegen Ulbricht*. Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag, 1994. DM 14,90 ISBN 3-7466-8008-5

On the cover of this diminutive AtV paperback a picture of a cold Walter Ulbricht in topcoat and hat, all in brown tones, Ulbricht in a three-quarters frontal view, eyes squinting off into the distance, head back, lips tightly set as usual; and below him a black-and-white inset of a warmer Karl Schirdewan, a smaller photo, full front view, bald head slightly down, eyes wide open and facing the camera directly, a kind of implicit challenge to the First Secretary. History's loser standing up against the apparent winner. That contrasting view of the central characters is maintained throughout this memoir from beginning to end. But the reader concludes: the truth of Schirdewan's position is vindicated, this is how he took his stance in the vicissitudes of history, and this is the first time we can read about it directly and personally.

The author is Karl Schirdewan, born 1907 in East Prussia, soon an orphan, at age 16 a member of the German Communist Party, then secretary of the Communist Youth Organization, regional director in more than one location, and in 1928 a member of its Central Committee. Having worked illegally in Saxony and in northern Germany in the youth organization and also in leadership positions within the German Communist Party itself, Schirdewan was arrested by Gestapo agents in 1934. From that year until liberation by American tank troops during his death march in April 1945, Schirdewan was subjected to confinement and torture in prisons and concentration camps. He became a member and a secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party and in 1953 a member of the Politbüro—only in 1958 to be relieved of all duties in the Party.

The life of Karl Schirdewan is instructive in itself. His is a consistent story of a communist in continual opposition: sometimes in opposition to legitimate government, sometimes in opposition to Hitler's aberration, sometimes in opposition to persons supposed to be comrades. In this book Schirdewan does not sketch the whole backdrop from fascism to leftwing radicalism, but concentrates on the period between 1953 and 1958, that is, from the year of Stalin's death and the reforms of the 20th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to Schirdewan's dismissal from GDR Party leadership.

Schirdewan considers himself to have been a loyal advocate of the revolutionary workers' movement, both early in his life and throughout his public career. As a consistent opponent of fascism, he contended illegally against Hitler and held that same anti-fascist position as GDR party functionary.

Yet in 1958 at the 35th meeting of the Central Committee of the SED he was slandered as revisionist. With Erich Honecker bringing charges on the basis of Ulbricht's rigid concept of a monolithic leftwing conservatism, the meeting degenerated into distortions of fact and defamations of character: "Eine politische Dekadenz breitete sich aus. Es war wie eine Inquisition aus dem Mittelalter. Die politische Unkultur, wie sie wohl so niemals in der Parteigeschichte stattgefunden hatte, wucherte bis zum Exzeß." The lesson Karl Schirdewan draws from his personal history is that rigid dogmatism can all too easily lead to unfortunate conclusions. Under Lenin, Schirdewan argues, there existed a degree of rational discussion such that party leaders could express contrary opinions and nonetheless be heard. Dissidents under Stalin, however, were delivered to the executioner; Schirdewan depicts Ulbricht as following that pernicious pattern (143-44).

Schirdewan perceives the difference between himself and Ulbricht as one of style or method or process, rather than of substance though, of course, their differences resulted in substantive antinomies on matters of principle. Student and worker