

## NONTRADITIONAL FEATURES OF HEINRICH BÖLL'S WAR BOOKS:<sup>1</sup> INNOVATIONS OF A PACIFIST

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Heinrich Böll, recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1972, has treated the theme of war throughout his literary career. Like a number of other prominent and controversial German authors such as Wolfgang Borchert, Gerd Gaiser, Ernst Jünger, Hans Hellmut Kirst, Theodor Plievier, Erich Maria Remarque, and Hans Werner Richter, Böll published works dealing with World War II soon after its conclusion. These include *Der Zug war pünktlich* (1949), *Wanderer, kommst du nach Spa...*(1950), and *Wo warst du, Adam?*(1951). Unlike most other contemporary German writers, however, he returned to this theme with two books in the 1960's: *Als der Krieg ausbrach. Als der Krieg zu Ende war* (1962) and *Entfernung von der Truppe* (1964). In fact, war continues to be such a significant factor in his more recent works that at least one scholar also regards *Gruppenbild mit Dame* (1971) as a war novel,(2) and there are references to the Second World War even in Böll's latest novel, *Fürsorgliche Belagerung* (1979).

This continued interest in World War II stems at least in part from Böll's recognition of the fact that the physical, political, moral and spiritual consequences of any war continue to influence the lives of the survivors and their descendants long after hostilities cease. As he states in the essay, "Bekanntnis zur Trümmersliteratur," "the havoc wreaked in our world is not solely external in nature and not so minor in significance that one can expect to repair the damage in a few years." (3) A former soldier in one of Böll's first short stories, "Die Botschaft" (1947), comes to the similar conclusion that "the war would never be over, never, as long as a wound it had caused was still bleeding somewhere." (4)

Although Böll's numerous descriptions of the Second World War have changed somewhat through the years,(5) they are both similar to one another and also in some basic respects not unlike

those of other contemporary German writers. Most of the more impressive German books of World War II, Böll's included, are rather pessimistic in nature. In most of them there is neither any glorification of war nor any sense of national purpose or mission. (6) There are no traditional heroes, (7) and few traditional acts of heroism. Even Ernst Jünger, whose World War I journal, *In Stahlgewittern*, glorifies heroism, self-sacrifice, comradeship and the officer's code of service, finds nothing heroic in World War II, which he regards as little more on both sides than scientifically planned extermination of creatures no longer deemed human. (8) Comradeship, the one remaining ideal of such novels of World War I as Erich Maria Remarque's *Im Westen nichts Neues*, is rarely depicted. (9) The protagonists are usually common soldiers of low rank. (10) Most of the characters are isolated individuals, who are caught up in a repulsive mechanical process (11) which leaves them lonely, desolate, and helpless. (12) These works are usually characterized by descriptions so realistic that they at times approach the gruesome. (13) They are set for the most part in the last years of the war, when the inevitability of defeat and the terrors of the National Socialist state were becoming increasingly apparent to the more perceptive of the fighting men; and the moral dilemma in which they eventually found themselves constitutes a major theme in these works. (14)

In spite of such similarities between Böll's works and other German descriptions of the Second World War, however, his war books and war stories, terms employed by both Böll scholars (15) and Böll himself, (16) are unique in many respects. In fact, they are so unlike those of other contemporary German authors, that two such prominent authorities as Alfred Andersch (17) and Ingeborg Bachmann (18) feel justified in denying that these terms are applicable: they assert that none of his works are true war books.

In contrast to most authors of German war literature since 1945, for example, Böll rarely depicts actual combat. (19) Instead, he ordinarily employs settings far from the front: trains and train stations, hospitals, barracks or isolated garrison posts, bars and bordellos. Perhaps it is in part a desire for realism that dictates Böll's choice of setting. As he states in the essay, "Im Ruhrgebiet," support troops outnumber combat troops ten to one, (20) and frontline combat is not the typical experience of members of the armed forces in time of war. In any case, Böll avoids the frenzied activity

that characterizes most other war books; he stresses situations in which the men are exhausted, have no useful tasks to perform, and are inactive.

Eventually the forced inactivity and resulting boredom have their effect. Many of the men approach total passivity, a state uncommon in other German war books.(21) And passivity characterizes the manner in which they experience combat on those rare occasions when it is depicted by Böll.(22) Most German authors of World War II describe battle as a relatively organized struggle in which the soldiers of both armies attempt to defend themselves by annihilating one another. For Böll, however, combat is a situation of absolute chaos and senseless confusion. A typical example is provided in the short story, "Wiedersehen mit Drüing," in which a fatally wounded German recalls the moments before his injury. He sees himself and other soldiers in his mind's eye as they receive their food and coffee near the front:

And suddenly this silent and dismal game in the bottom of the valley was illuminated by a reddish flame, which was followed by screams, moaning and the frightened neighing of a wounded horse; and new dark red flames burst forth from the earth again and again; there were evil smells and noise; then the horse screamed; I heard how it moved and then raced away with clattering harness; and a new, short wild bombardment enveloped that person that must have been me.(p. 386)

In Böll's other descriptions of combat, bullets and shells also strike their targets unexpectedly; flashes are seen; explosions are heard. There is a barrage of impressions on the senses, but the various incidents occur without warning and seem totally unrelated to one another.

More than most other authors, then, Böll portrays battle as an irrational series of events.(23) And it is rendered doubly irrational, because it occurs without an apparent enemy. In reference to the short story, "In der Finsternis," Wilhelm Johannes Schwarz comments that the enemy is not mentioned at all.(24) This statement also applies to Böll's image of war in general. In contrast to most other war books, there are in his works scarcely any encounters with enemy soldiers, to whom the Germans can attri-

bute an attack and against whom they can defend themselves. Occasionally the sounds of battle are heard or enemy tanks or planes appear, but there is little indication that they are controlled by human beings. It is as if they had a life of their own.(25)

In the few scenes in which enemy soldiers do appear in Böll's war books, they are depicted in precisely the same manner and find themselves in precisely the same ominous situation as the Germans, whereas most German books of World War II distinguish the individual soldiers of one side from those of the other. When he indicates in the short story, "Wiedersehen in der Allee," that the screams of the wounded between the lines reveal the true face of war, he refers to screams "in two different languages"(p. 403). In *Wo warst du, Adam?* he describes two Americans on guard duty: "they... passed one another like caged animals that have developed a precise rhythm for passing one another,... they... looked rather tired"(p. 274). Like the Germans, these men are depicted in a noncombat situation. They, too, are exhausted. They, too, have become robots, mechanically carrying out their functions, animals caught in the trap of war.

Thus Böll chooses not to distinguish between victor and vanquished among individual soldiers; and unlike most other German authors of recent war books, he considers the experiences of all soldiers to be so similar that he fails in many ways even to distinguish between the Allied and the German sides in World War II. He then follows this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion and, in perhaps the most significant difference between his war books and those of other contemporary German authors, equates World War II with previous wars. He does so on a number of occasions. The porter in the radio play, "Eine Stunde Aufenthalt," for example, makes a significant confession: "sometimes I confuse the wars with one another."(26) All wars are the same to him. In *Wo warst du, Adam?*, Frau Susan contemplates dirty soldiers and tired officers she will never see again, as they cross a bridge at the beginning of World War II (pp. 247-248). Later she recalls World War I: "At that time two soldiers had gone over the bridge, covered with dust, on foot and on horses, with dirty baggage wagons, soldiers who never came back..." (p. 252). She observes the soldiers quartered in her inn, sitting, eating, drinking, playing cards, walking about listlessly with their rifles (p. 252). One of them reminds her of her husband,

who had been drafted and taken away in World War I, "to do nothing, to wait, doing nothing, until he was shot dead"(p. 255), which is precisely the situation of the soldiers she is observing.

Böll's most obvious statement concerning the basic similarity of all wars, however, is made in "Abenteuer eines Brotbeutels." In this short story he relates the experiences of the various owners of a haversack, who suffer or die senselessly in World War I, a nameless South American conflict, and World War II. The similarity of their experiences and the fact that most of those who come into possession of the haversack are related to one another or associated in some other manner indicate that these wars are fundamentally alike.

It seems, then, that when Böll portrays the Second World War, he is not interpreting this conflict alone; he is also using it as a model and revealing his conclusions concerning the true nature of war in general.(27) In this respect, too, his works differ from those of most other German authors of World War II. As has been pointed out by Helmut Günther, one of the major authorities on German books of the Second World War, "The war books published after 1918 dealt with war in general. War was accepted as a great experience or damned as being insane and criminal. The books about the Second World War deal with this war, with Hitler's war."(28)

Böll does, however, face the specific moral problems of the Second World War squarely as is shown, for example, in two of the nine chapters of *Wo warst du, Adam?*, the pivotal fifth chapter, which treats the tragic love of the German soldier Feinhals for the Hungarian Jewess Ilona, and the seventh chapter, which depicts Ilona's transportation to a concentration camp, her inhuman treatment by her captors and her subsequent death at their hands. Böll does not, however, choose to support the view of most other German authors of World War II that many of these problems were unique to that conflict--a stand on their part which implies that some wars are less immoral than others.

This nontraditional feature of Böll's war books is like all others in one significant respect: each of them emphasizes negative aspects of war. The settings he employs reveal its adverse consequences. Trains and train stations are scenes of separation of soldiers from their loved ones and familiar environments; hospitals are sites of suffering and death; in barracks, isolated garrison posts, bars and bordellos the men succumb to fatigue, boredom

(29) apathy and alcoholism. By dwelling on boredom and apathy, which are not such major themes in other German war books, he exposes the debilitating features of even those periods of rest and relaxation which may be regarded by some as positive interludes during wartime. By emphasizing the confusion inherent in combat and the passivity of the soldiers, Böll stresses the complete helplessness of men in battle. By ordinarily avoiding any reference to enemy soldiers, he emphasizes the inhuman, mechanical nature of modern war. By making little or no distinction between the situations of German and Allied soldiers and refusing to accept the premise that war can have meaning for at least some of the combatants, Böll suggests that, whether defensive or aggressive, it is innately immoral. By equating World War II with other wars, he indicates that all wars are equally absurd and evil.

Scholars have recognized in the past that some of these original properties of Böll's war books assist in exposing the evils of war, although they have not commented on the total spectrum of their nontraditional features. Henri Plard, for example, states that by avoiding descriptions of actual combat, Böll prevents his characters from experiencing the emotional and physical relief which action may provide.(30) In this way he is able to further accent the frustrations of a soldier's existence. By describing combat as total chaos ("confusion," as Böll frequently calls it), (31) Hans Schwab-Felisch perceives that Böll avoids "giving meaning to something meaningless,"(32) which is a possibility if combat is depicted as a logical series of attacks and counterattacks.

The fact that the nontraditional features of Böll's war books do stress the negative nature of war makes them quite consistent in this respect with the more conventional characteristics of these works, which have been previously discussed. It is also of decisive significance in clarifying his motives in writing such relatively unorthodox works. Böll's emphasis throughout is obviously on the absolute evil, the total pointlessness, senselessness, and absurdity of war:(33) his descriptions of war are both motivated and marked by intense pacifism.

To be sure, Böll's intent is not understood by all. His failure to differentiate between the Allied and the German sides in World War II, for example, has been severely criticized in the DDR, where there are suggestions of fundamental error on his part for seeming to equate the "Fascist war of imperialism and aggression" with the "war of liberation of the nations." (34) Böll is not,

however, attempting to rehabilitate the Nazi war effort or those who directed it.(35) Nor is he unaware of the differences between the Allied and the German causes during World War II.(36) Rather he is employing literary license to make a statement which is basic to his pacifistic philosophy: all wars at all times are immoral, because they cause needless suffering for such large numbers of ordinary individuals who have little or nothing to gain from the war.

The words "ordinary individuals" represent the key to an understanding of Böll's pacifism and his view of war. As Bernd Balzer has noted, the individual is absolute in Böll's value system--not as a type or representative of a group or class, but in every case as a unique, special human being.(37) In addition, Böll's tendency to champion the cause of the "little man," the average human being, has often been noted,(38) and he admits that he identifies with such persons.(39) When Böll treats war, therefore, it is in terms of the impact it has on individual human beings who are for the most part without special influence, resources or insight--individuals who feel utterly helpless in a menacing, apparently chaotic world. And, most significantly, he always describes war through the eyes of such persons.(40)

When war is depicted from the limited, egocentric point of view of essentially impotent and isolated individuals, rather than from a broad national or ideological perspective, it can only be seen negatively. From this standpoint all wars are, indeed, alike; they are no more than composites of countless, seemingly meaningless individual tragedies. Human beings are killed and maimed, both physically and psychologically, family ties are broken, deprivation and suffering are commonplace. And such tragedies do occur on all sides. As Böll states: "To be one of the victors is also a terrible thing."(41) The revealing statement he makes concerning Wolfgang Borchert's view of war also applies to his own:

The foolish enthusiasm associated with flags, the crack of gun salutes and the banal heroism of the memorial marches--all of this is so meaningless to the dead. . .The flags, gunshots and music should not cause us to forget that our brothers have died. History may record that a battle was won at X and lost at Y, won for A or lost for B. The truth. . .is that both kinds of battles, the victories and the defeats, were massacres, that

flowers no longer bloom for the dead; no one bakes bread for them any more; the breeze doesn't blow for them any more; their children are orphans; their wives are widows, and parents mourn for their sons.(42)

Böll concludes that long after a war has made the world temporarily safe from Communism, Fascism, imperialism or any other ideology, it is still wreaking inexcusable havoc in the lives of the average, innocent citizens of all the participating countries.

By emphasizing the extensive, long-lasting suffering caused by war, Böll makes a strong case for pacifism with regard to past and potential future wars in which the moral credentials of the various participants were or are similar. The question as to whether pacifism represents a suitable reaction to Hitler is a more difficult one, however--especially since Böll and many of his characters were members of the German armed forces during the Second World War.

In this regard it is interesting to note that passive resistance characterizes the stance of the protagonists of most of Böll's war books and stories. The men rarely resort to violence to defend themselves in combat. Some, such as Andreas in *Der Zug war pünktlich* and *Schmölder in Entfernung von der Truppe*, do not even have weapons, and those that do rarely fire them. Many doubt that any possible course of action can save them in the chaotic whirlwind in which they find themselves; they merely drift with the unpredictable flow of battle and endure the various ordeals to which they are subjected. Others employ various means, ranging from feigning illness to disobeying orders and even desertion, in an effort to avoid dangerous or burdensome duty. Still others are somewhat more forceful in their nonviolent opposition. In "Als der Krieg ausbrach," for example, Leo makes use of his position as a switchboard operator to interrupt calls, cross lines, join in the conversations himself unexpectedly and generally create considerable confusion during the initial stages of the German invasion of Poland. Had large numbers of Germans rejected violence and embraced passive resistance of the kind described by Böll, the Nazi war machine would scarcely have been able to inflict such great damage on the rest of the world.

Böll's advocacy of passive resistance and his abhorrence of vio-

lence are not, however, limited to the German side during World War II. In his opinion all killing in time of war is immoral, regardless of the provocation. In *Der Zug war pünktlich* Andreas concludes that "every death in war is murder..."(p. 98), and a short time later Olina, a member of the Polish underground, comes to the similar conclusion that "it's all so senseless. Only the innocent are murdered, everywhere. By us too"(p. 101). "We, too, murder only the innocent... only the innocent..." (p. 102). In Böll's opinion, "One... always kills one's brother" in war.(43) His recommendation, even for the inhabitants of the countries invaded by German troops during World War II, would seem to have been passive resistance of the kind he observed, with approval, among the Czechs during the Russian occupation of their country in 1968: "permanent, consistent opposition--without weapons."(44)

Would passive resistance in reality have been a viable alternative for the inhabitants of these countries during World War II? At first one is tempted to answer in the negative, but further reflection gives rise to a thought-provoking question. Would significant numbers of Germans have allowed themselves to participate in the various atrocities which have been documented, including the "final solution" to the Jewish question, if they had been met with passive resistance rather than fierce armed opposition? In this regard it must be remembered that many of the worst German atrocities were acts of frustration, retaliation or desperation committed at a time when it was obvious that only the most radical measures could possibly bring victory or even delay the total devastation that defeat would inevitably represent for the German nation.

Might nonviolent opposition have been the best course of action for all concerned in the Second World War? One can only speculate concerning this possibility. But the results of the war, as it was actually fought, are only too well known. Millions lost their lives, among them many "innocent human beings (who) were killed as sacrifices for the deaths of other innocent human beings."(45) In addition, the lives of millions of survivors were ruined, and in some respects "we have all been injured by the past."(46) In Böll's view, the human cost of even a defensive war, such as that fought by the Allies in World War II, is so immense that it cannot be justified; alternative courses of action must be explored.

It is in large measure because of such beliefs that Böll has

become involved in various social and political controversies since the 1950's. In recent years he has opposed all policies, movements and tendencies in West Germany that he feels might increase chances for future wars, e.g., rearmament, the draft, cold war rhetoric; and he has supported those which he feels might assist in preventing war, e.g., rapprochement with the East, freedom of speech, student protest, draft resistance and radical agitation of all kinds. Consistent with his pacifistic beliefs, however, he rejects acts of violence.(47)

For Böll, the dedicated pacifist, war must be prevented; all wars are totally negative at all times for all of those who become involved in them. In making this statement in his war books he employs means common to many German authors, but when he feels that it assists him in further emphasizing his message, he transcends the format of the contemporary German war book. And he does so in a number of respects so significant that it is even possible to argue, as do Bachmann and Andersch, that none of his works are war books in the traditional sense.

#### NOTES

1. For the purposes of this paper, the term, "war books," is defined as works in which the experiences of soldiers during wartime are treated as main themes.
2. Arpád Bernáth, "Zur Stellung des Romans 'Gruppenbild mit Dame' in Bölls Werk," in *Die subversive Madonna: Ein Schlüssel zum Werk Heinrich Bölls*, ed. Renate Matthaei (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1975), p. 43.
3. *Erzählungen, Hörspiele, Aufsätze*, 4th ed. (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1961), p. 343. All translations in this paper are my own.
4. *Heinrich Böll: 1947 bis 1951* (Köln: Friedrich Middelhaue Verlag, 1964), p. 371. All subsequent parenthetical references are to this collection of Böll's early works.
5. See W. Lee Nahrgang, "Heinrich Böll's War Books: A Study in Changing Literary Purpose," *MLN*, 88 (1973), 1011-1019.
6. Hans Schwab-Felisch, "Die Literatur der Obergefreiten: Neue deutsche Kriegsrömane und Kriegstagebücher," *Der Monat*, 4 (1952), 645.
7. Reinhard Baumgart, "Unmenschlichkeit beschreiben: Weltkrieg und Faschismus in der Literatur," *Merkur*, 19 (1965), 38.

8. *Strahlungen*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Heliopolis-Verlag, 1949), p. 250.
9. Schwab-Felisch, p. 645.
10. Rolf Schroers, "Was lehren die Kriegsbücher? Der Krieg in der Literatur," *Neue literarische Welt*, 4 (1953), 7.
11. Franz Schonauer, "Sie kämpften im Dunkel: Der Zweite Weltkrieg in der deutschen Literatur," *Zeitwende*, 25 (1954), 189.
12. Klaus Betzen, "Deutung und Darstellung des Krieges in der deutschen Epik des 20. Jahrhunderts," *Der Deutschunterricht*, 14 (1962), 58.
13. Gerd Schulz, "Der Krieg in der Literatur," *Der Jungbuchhandel*, 8 (1954), 263.
14. Schonauer, p. 189.
15. E.g., James H. Reid, *Heinrich Böll: Withdrawal and Re-emergence*, ed. R.W. Last, *Modern German Authors, New Series, I* (London: Oswald Wolff, 1973), 26-27, and Arnold Bauer, "Nachtrag," in *Heinrich Böll*, Hermann Stresau, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1968), p. 89.
16. E.g., Heinrich Böll and Christian Linder, *Drei Tage im März* (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1975), p. 64.
17. "Christus gibt keinen Urlaub," *Frankfurter Hefte*, 6 (1951), 941.
18. Rev. of Heinrich Böll, *Wo warst du, Adam?* (Opladen: Friedrich Middlehaue Verlag, 1951), *Wort und Wahrheit*, 7 (1952), p. 624.
19. There are, of course, also other exceptions to this general tendency. Ernst Penzoldt's short story, "Zugänge," for example, is set entirely in a military hospital.
20. *Aufsätze, Kritiken, Reden*, 2nd ed. (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1967), p. 41.
21. While passivity is often depicted in modern German war literature as a short-lived reaction to overwork or overexposure to combat (e.g., Hans Werner Richter's novel, *Die Geschlagenen*) it is an all-pervasive attitude in many of Böll's war books and stories.
22. Although the characters in *Als der Krieg ausbrach*. *Als der Krieg zu Ende war* and *Entfernung von der Truppe* are active rebels in comparison with those in the earlier war books, they, too, are passive in combat situations.
23. Böll is, of course, not the only contemporary German author to depict war in this manner. In the novel, *Kimmerische Fahrt*, for example, Werner Warsinsky describes World War II through the hallucinations, dreams and memories of a former soldier who has emerged from the war mentally deranged.
24. *Der Erzähler Heinrich Böll: Seine Werke und Gestalten*, 2nd ed. (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1968), p. 17.
25. Another war book in which enemy soldiers rarely appear is Theodor Plievier's novel, *Stalingrad*. But Plievier's reason for deviating from the general tendency is not the same as Böll's. *Stalingrad* was written in Russia during the war, where

Plievier, a socialist, had sought refuge from the Nazis. Because Plievier could not depict the Russian army in the totally positive manner required by the Russian government, he chose not to depict it at all.

26. *Erzählungen, Hörspiele, Aufsätze*, p. 243.

27. Albrecht Beckel, among others, also recognizes the representative nature of Böll's war books. He suggests that Böll's image of war is in part an allegory depicting the more general situation of the helpless individual caught up in the midst of the conflicting social forces of this century, *Mensch, Gesellschaft, Kirche bei Böll*, eds. Albrecht Beckel, Hugo Reiring, and Otto B. Roegele, Fromms Taschenbücher "Zeitnahes Christentum," 39 (Osnabrück: Verlag A. Fromm, 1966), pp. 59-60.

28. "Die Freiheit im Zweiten Weltkrieg," *Die Sammlung*, 8 (1953), 566.

29. Boredom is, of course, a major theme in many of Böll's works, especially the early ones.

30. "Mut und Bescheidenheit: Krieg und Nachkrieg im Werk Heinrich Bölls," *Der Schriftsteller Heinrich Böll: Ein biographisch-bibliographischer Abriß*, ed. Werner Lengning, 4th ed. (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1973), p. 48.

31. E.g., *Wo warst du, Adam?*, Heinrich Böll: 1947 bis 1951, p. 174.

32. "Der Böll der frühen Jahre," in *In Sachen Böll: Ansichten und Einsichten*, ed. Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 2nd ed. (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1968), p. 218.

33. Wener Welzig, among others, shares the opinion that Böll views war as an absolute evil which is pointless and senseless, *Der deutsche Roman im 20. Jahrhundert*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1970), pp. 165, 166.

34. Frank Wagner, "Der kritische Realist Heinrich Böll--Die Entwicklung der 'Krieg-Frieden'-Problematik in seinen Romanen," *Weimarer Beiträge*, 7 (1961), 102.

35. One of Böll's many condemnations of the crimes of the Nazis is made in "Wie das Gesetz es befahl," his review of H.G. Adler's *Der verwaltete Mensch*, in which he states that to refer to such persons as Hitler, Goebbels, Göring, Himmler and Eichmann with the terms "criminals" and "murderers" would seem to him to be too kind and to be an insult to ordinary criminals and murders, *Einmischung erwünscht: Schriften zur Zeit* (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1977), p. 128.

36. In the *Frankfurter Vorlesungen*, for example, he comments that his opinion of the National Socialist state was such that he wished for its downfall every day of its twelve-year existence, (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1968), p. 86.

37. "Humanität als ästhetisches Prinzip: Die Romane Heinrich Bölls," in Heinrich Böll: *Eine Einführung in das Gesamtwerk in Einzelinterpretationen*, ed.

Hanno Beth (Kronber/Ts.: Scriptor Verlag, 1975), pp. 4-5.

38. E.g., H. M. Waidson, "Die Romane und Erzählungen Heinrich Bölls," in *Der Schriftsteller Heinrich Böll: Ein biographisch-bibliographischer Abriß*, p. 36.

39. *Drei Tage im März*, p. 101.

40. Rainer Nägele also notes that Böll describes events through the eyes of the "little man," *Heinrich Böll: Einführung in das Werk und in die Forschung* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1976), p. 77.

41. *Eine deutsche Erinnerung: Interview mit René Wintzen*, trans. Annette Lallemand (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1979), p. 19.

42. "Die Stimme Wolfgang Borcherts," in *Erzählungen, Hörspiele, Aufsätze*, p. 353.

43. "Schwierigkeiten mit der Brüderlichkeit," in *Neue politische und literarische Schriften* (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1973), p. 157.

44. "Der Panzer zielte auf Kafka," in *Neue politische und literarische Schriften*, p. 37.

45. "Heldengedenktag," in *Aufsätze, Kritiken, Reden*, p. 479.

46. "Der Schriftsteller und Zeitkritiker Kurt Ziesel," in *Aufsätze, Kritiken, Reden*, p. 307.

47. The views and actions of Böll must be distinguished from those of some of his characters, who do occasionally commit desperate acts of violence (e.g., Katharina Blum, who eventually murders her tormentor). Böll is fully cognizant of the fact that essentially moral human beings can be driven to acts of violence, but while he is in complete sympathy with such persons, he rejects their actions. When discussing the story, *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*, he asserts that "naturally one cannot restore one's integrity through murder, even of the most despicable beast," *Drei Tage im März*, p. 67. In commenting on some of the social changes that he considers necessary in West Germany, he states that it would be senseless to attempt to achieve these changes through acts of violence, "Radikale für Demokratie," in *Neue politische und literarische Schriften*, p. 18.