

An Introduction to the Works of
Peter Weiss

Olaf Berwald

An Introduction to the Works of Peter Weiss

The plays and prose works of the German writer, director, and political activist Peter Weiss (1916–1982) have been immensely influential in the shaping of European modernism in the second half of the twentieth century. Weiss's writings are driven by the desire to find creative responses to the question of how an artist and writer who makes use of a wide variety of techniques of artistic expression can also participate in political activism. Combining exploratory aesthetic openness with an uncompromising ethical drive, Weiss's literary works, especially the plays *Marat/Sade* (1964), *The Investigation* (1968), and *Hölderlin* (1971) as well as his novel *The Aesthetics of Resistance* (1975–81) continue to provide vital points of reference for any discussion of culture and politics in our times. Olaf Berwald's study serves as a comprehensive introduction to Weiss's work and vision. The introductory chapter outlines Weiss's life and work in exile. Three chapters provide detailed discussions of Weiss's theater work, from his early grotesque plays and the documentary dramas from the 1960s that address Auschwitz, Angola, and Vietnam, to his most complex plays, in which intellectuals are staged as outsiders. The subsequent four chapters discuss Weiss's prose works, which include his autobiographical novels from the early 1960s, essays and notebooks on art and politics, and his summum opus, *The Aesthetics of Resistance*, one of the most important European novels of the twentieth century.

Olaf Berwald is Assistant Professor of German at the University of Tennessee.

Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture

Edited by James Hardin
(*South Carolina*)

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKS OF

Peter Weiss

Olaf Berwald

CAMDEN HOUSE

Copyright © 2003 Olaf Berwald

All Rights Reserved. Except as permitted under current legislation, no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval system, published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast, transmitted, recorded, or reproduced in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

First published 2003
by Camden House

Camden House is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620 USA
and of Boydell & Brewer Limited
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK

ISBN: 1-57113-232-5

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Berwald, Olaf.

An introduction to the works of Peter Weiss / Olaf Berwald.

p. cm. — (Studies in German literature, linguistics, and culture)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 1-57113-232-5 (alk. paper)

1. Weiss, Peter, 1916 — Criticism and interpretation. I. Title.
II. Series: Studies in German literature, linguistics, and culture (Un-numbered)

PT2685.E5Z578 2003

832'.914—dc21

2003001570

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

This publication is printed on acid-free paper.
Printed in the United States of America.

Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction	1
1: Subversive Slapstick: The Early Plays <i>Der Turm, Die Versicherung, Nacht mit Gästen, and Mockinpott</i>	11
2: The Choreography of Documents: <i>Die Ermittlung, Gesang vom Lusitanischen Popanz, and Viet Nam Diskurs</i>	22
3: Staging Writers as Outcasts: <i>Marat/Sade, Trotzki im Exil, Hölderlin, Der Prozess, and Der neue Prozess</i>	33
4: Scenarios of Stagnation: Early Prose	69
5: Autobiography and Fiction: <i>Abschied von den Eltern, Fluchtpunkt, and Rekonvaleszenz</i>	82
6: Poetics and Politics: Essays, Open Letters, and Fragments	99
7: Perception as Resistance: <i>Die Ästhetik des Widerstands</i>	107
Works Consulted	131
Index	161

Acknowledgments

I WOULD LIKE to thank the editors, Jim Hardin and Jim Walker, for their patience and their generous feedback throughout the writing process. I have thoroughly enjoyed our productive dialogues. The University of Tennessee has supported my research with a Professional Development Award. Thanks are also due to the friendly staff at the Academy of the Arts' Peter Weiss Archive in Berlin. At the University of Tennessee, I am very fortunate to work with colleagues with whom I share symphilological friendships, both in and beyond the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literatures. Amy Billone, Department of English at the University of Tennessee, has read a final version of the manuscript. I want to thank her for her kind suggestions and for our conversations.

I am very grateful for the trust and support of my teachers and mentors during my formative years in Germany and the United States: Joachim Knape, the late Paul Hoffmann (Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen), the late Robert Asch (Tufts University), Helga Bister-Broosen, Alice Kuzniar, Siegfried Mews (all University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), and Klaus Weimar (Universität Zürich).

Finally, this book is one small way to thank Wilhelm, Frieda, Jörg, and Manuela Berwald, as well as Luciana Camargo Namorato, meu amor.

O. B.
Knoxville, Tennessee
June 2003

Introduction

IN SEARCHING FOR AN ART OF writing capable of confronting the violent beginnings of the new millennium, it is indispensable to study the literary oeuvre of Peter Weiss (1916–1982), whose plays and narrative works have helped to shape European modernism in the second half of the twentieth century. Weiss's literary works explore how a writer can assume social responsibility while working toward multifaceted modes of artistic expression. Combining aesthetic openness with an uncompromising ethical drive, Weiss's literary works, for example his plays *Marat/Sade* (1963) and *Die Ermittlung* (1965, *The Investigation*), and especially his novel *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands* (1975–81, *The Aesthetics of Resistance*), provide vital reference points for any discussion of culture and politics in our times.

Peter Ulrich Weiss was born during the First World War, on November 8, 1916, in Nowawes, near Potsdam. He was the son of Eugen Jenö Weiss (1885–1959), a Slovak Jewish textile entrepreneur, and the Swiss actress Frieda Franziska Weiss, née Hummel (1885–1958). In 1917, the Weiss family resided in Przemyśl (Galicia) but returned to the Potsdam area the following year. In 1919 his family moved to Bremen, and lived there until moving on to Berlin in 1929, where they remained until 1934.

In August 1934, Weiss's sister Margit Beatrice Weiss died in a car accident, an event whose impact permeates much of Weiss's visual art and literary works. He immigrated with his family to England in 1935 to escape Nazi persecution. Until 1936, they lived in Chislehurst, near London. In 1936, Weiss studied at the Polytechnical School of Photography in London. In a storage room in Little Kinnerton Street, Weiss, together with his friends Ruth Anker and Jacques Ayschmann, organized an exhibition of his paintings in 1936. Later that year, the Weiss family left England and moved to the Czech town of Warnsdorf, where Weiss's father had been offered a lucrative business position. Weiss studied painting at the Art Academy in Prague from 1937 to 1938 under the noted artist Willi Nowak (1886–1955). Seeking a career as a painter, Weiss participated in an exhibition hosted by the Prague Art Academy in 1938.¹

From 1937 until 1962, he corresponded with the German writer Hermann Hesse (1877–1962), who had left Germany in 1912 and settled in Montagnola, Switzerland. In the late 1930s, Weiss visited Hesse several times and contributed illustrations to some of his minor works, including the novella “Kindheit des Zauberers,” which was published with Weiss’s illustrations in 1974.² Hesse’s prose, which earned him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1946 and gained worldwide cult status among young readers throughout the second half of the twentieth century, not only explored the suffocation of individual desires by authorities and the resulting alienation from society, in such novels as *Unterm Rad* (1906, *Beneath the Wheel*) and *Steppenwolf* (1927), but also provided room for imaginative journeys. Hesse invented harmonious societal as well as personal maturation processes in his novels *Siddharta* (1922) and *Das Glasperlenspiel* (1943, *The Glass Bead Game*). In a letter to Weiss from January 1937, Hesse suggested some poetological principles whose impact on Weiss’s literary works were considerable and remained evident even in his final writings. Hesse recommended exercises in stylistic precision and soberness, and admonished the twenty-year-old writer that every word had to be able to stand for itself and that a writer was responsible for each of his words. While dissuading Weiss from absorbing stylistic and thematic influences, Hesse emphasized the constructive and experimental character of the writing process, which he likened to drawing and building.³

Because it was impossible to gain a permanent visa in Switzerland, Weiss returned to Berlin. In January 1939, he joined his family in Swedish exile in Alingsås and worked for his father, who now owned a textile factory. He moved to Stockholm one year later and hosted an exhibition of his paintings.

Weiss’s paintings from the 1930s included *Selbstporträt zwischen Tod und Schwester* (1935, *Self Portrait between Death and Sister*), *Das große Welttheater* (1937, *The Great World Theater*), *Gartenkonzert* (1938, *Garden Concert*), *Im Hof des Irrenhauses* (1937–38, *In the Courtyard of the Mental Institution*), *Jüngling am Stadtrand* (1938, *Young Man on the Outskirts of the City*), *Der Hausierer* (1940, *The Peddler*), *Jahrmakrt am Stadtrand* (1940, *Fair on the Outskirts of the City*). Many of his paintings were destroyed or disappeared during the escapes from the Nazis. In 1941, Stockholm’s Mässhallen showed an exhibition of Weiss’s paintings.

German-Jewish emigrants were not received warmly in Sweden, and the material conditions for survival were very limited. Weiss worked as a farmhand and as a lumberjack in northern Sweden before he began to

work as a graphic designer in his father's factory in 1943. In the same year, he engaged in productive dialogues with Swedish modernist poets who formed the "Fyrtiotalisterna" ("writers of the 1940s") circle. Between 1944 and 1946, Weiss's paintings were shown in five exhibitions in Stockholm.

Weiss's personal relationships with women during the 1940s were short-lived. His marriage to the painter Helga Henschen, with whom he had one daughter, Randi Maria, lasted only from 1943 to 1944. For several years, Weiss lived with the Danish artist Le Klint. In 1949, he married Carlota Dethorey, the daughter of a Spanish diplomat, when she became pregnant. Weiss divorced her in the same year, soon after the birth of their son Paul. Since 1952, Weiss lived with Gunilla Palmstierna, a Swedish artist and stage designer whose parents were psychoanalysts. Her Russian-Jewish mother had studied with Freud. Palmstierna spent most of her childhood years in Rotterdam and managed to board a flight from Berlin to Sweden at the end of the Second World War. Weiss spent the rest of his life with her. They married in 1964, and their daughter Nadja was born in 1972. Gunilla Palmstierna-Weiss was responsible for the stage design of most of Weiss's plays. Their creative teamwork lasted until Weiss's death.⁴

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, Weiss's paintings, for example *Obduktion* (1944, Autopsy), *Apokalypse* (1945), *Der Krieg* (1946, War), and *Der Reiche und der Arme* (1946, The Rich and the Poor Man), addressed the themes of death and destruction in an intensified manner, with a new focus on social contexts of violence. Some paintings from this time period, such as *Adam, Eva und Kain* (1946) and *Odysseus* (1946) make free use of mythological and biblical configurations. Cain forces his parents to pull a plow, and Odysseus, exhausted and mourning, rests for a moment in the face of debris, a dead woman, or a fallen statue of a woman, sculptured heads whose eyes seem to be alive and in fear.

In 1945, Weiss contributed several illustrations to a poetry volume by Gunnar Ekelöf (1907–1968), an influential poet of Swedish modernism who encouraged Weiss's art and writing.⁵ Weiss spent part of the year in Paris. His first book, the Swedish prose poem volume *Från ö till ö* (From Island to Island) was published in 1947. Having received Swedish citizenship in 1946, Weiss visited Berlin one year later as a journalist for a Swedish newspaper and wrote a series of articles about the destroyed city. He also visited Paris again in 1947. In 1948, Weiss wrote his first major work in German, *Der Vogelfreie* (The Outcast). German publishers, among them Peter Suhrkamp, rejected the manuscript, and

Weiss privately published a Swedish version in 1949, which served as a film script for his movie *Hägringen* (1959, The Mirage). Under the pseudonym “Sinclair,” an allusion to Isaak von Sinclair, Friedrich Hölderlin’s friend, and to Hesse, who had used the same pen name for his novel *Demian* (1919), *Der Vogelfreie* was published under the title *Der Fremde* (The Stranger) in 1980. In 1948, Weiss’s Swedish prose collection of haunting impressions of postwar Berlin, *De Besegraden* (The Defeated), was published. His Swedish short stories “Ur anteckningar” (Journal Notes) and “Den anonyma” (The Anonymous Man) were published in 1948 and 1949. In the same year, *Rotundan*, an unpublished Swedish version of Weiss’s first play, *Der Turm* (The Tower), whose original German text was published in 1963, premiered in Stockholm. In 1953, Weiss privately published his Swedish narrative *Duellen* in Stockholm.

In close cooperation with Palmstierna, Weiss began to produce, direct, edit, and sometimes even act in sixteen mostly short, experimental movies, which, like his literary works, address the unconscious as well as social issues and put into question sharp distinctions between surrealism and a documentary style. He co-founded the “Arbetsgruppen för film” (Working Group for Film), the most important Swedish avant-garde film group. His films include *Studie I / Uppvaknandet* (1952, Waking up), *Studie II / Hallucinationer* (1952), *Studie III* (1953), *Studie IV / Frigörelse* (1954, Liberation), *Studie V / Växelspel* (1955, Interplay), *Ansikten i skugga* (1956, Faces in the Shadow), and *Ateljéinteriör* (1956, The Studio of Dr. Faust), his only color movie. *Ingenting Ovanligt* (1957, Nothing Unusual) was commissioned by an insurance company and documents a traffic accident, which echoes the lethal car accident of his sister, the traumatic childhood event that Weiss repeatedly worked through in his early paintings. Other movies from the 1950s include *Enligt Lag* (1957, In the Name of the Law), a documentary collage of a juvenile prison, and *Vad ska vi göra nu då?* (1958, What should we do now?), a work that was commissioned by the Swedish Social Democrats’ youth organization. Weiss’s only full-length movie, *Hägringen* (1959), was based on his novel *Der Vogelfreie*. His last documentary short films are *Bag de ens facader* (1960, Behind the facades), a documentary about new apartment developments in Denmark, *Två Kvinnor* (1960/61, Two Women), which approached the theme of lesbian love, *En Narkoman* (1960/61, A Drug Addict), and two film essays on Swedish artists, *Anna Casparsson* (1960) and *Öyvind Fahlström* (1960).⁶ Weiss also wrote a concise narrative on the history and theory of experimental film. In 1956, his Swedish book *Avantgardefilm* was published.

In the same year, Weiss wrote the Swedish novel *Situationen*, which remained unpublished. In 2000, a German translation made the work accessible to German readers. In 1960, Weiss published *Der Schatten des Körpers des Kutschers* (*The Shadow of the Coachman's Body*). Written in 1952, this experimental prose work employed a collage- or filmlike style. Weiss illustrated this book with his own collages, which incorporated medical scenes and disembodied limbs. In the same year, Weiss's paintings were exhibited in Aleby. In 1960, Weiss wrote the poetic essay "Der große Traum des Briefträgers Cheval" (The Great Dream of Cheval the Mailman), which densely describes and interprets an eclectic and phantasmagoric architectonic experiment as a manifestation of the unconscious.

In 1961, Weiss's autobiographical novel *Abschied von den Eltern* (*Leavetaking*) appeared, together with collage illustrations, in which a shipwreck, wild animals, naked bodies, and agitated survivors as well as onlookers form tableaux of ambivalence. His novel *Fluchtpunkt* (*Vanishing Point*), which many read as a sequel to *Abschied von den Eltern*, was published in 1962. In the same year, Weiss wrote an essay and speech on August Strindberg, "Gegen die Gesetze der Normalität" (Against the Laws of Normalcy) and participated in a meeting of the influential German postwar writers' group, "Gruppe 47," in Berlin.

In 1963, the narrative *Das Gespräch der drei Gehenden* (The Conversation of the Three Walkers) and the play *Nacht mit Gästen* (Night with Guests) were published, and Weiss's paintings were exhibited in Berlin. Weiss and Italo Calvino shared the Charles Veillon award for their experimental prose works. In 1964, he traveled to Auschwitz and regularly attended a trial against Auschwitz officials in Frankfurt, during which he took extensive notes in preparation for a drama. His most famous play, *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung Jean Paul Marats dargestellt durch die Schauspielgruppe des Hospizes zu Charenton unter Anleitung des Herrn de Sade. Drama in zwei Akten* (The Persecution and Murder of Jean Paul Marat Performed by the Acting Group of the Hospital in Charenton Directed by Mr. de Sade), premiered in Berlin in 1964. In the same year, Peter Brook directed the play in London, and one year later on Broadway.

In 1965, the City of Hamburg's important Lessing Prize and the Swedish Workers' Movement's Literature Prize were awarded to Weiss. He published several poetological essays in which he outlined his view of the role of a politically alert and undogmatic writer, including "10 Arbeitspunkte eines Autors in der geteilten Welt" (10 Practical Guidelines for an Author during the Cold War), "Laokoon oder Über die Grenzen

der Sprache” (Laocoon, or On the Boundaries of Language), which he delivered as his Lessing Prize acceptance speech, and “Gespräch über Dante.” In the same year, Weiss wrote the Auschwitz essay “Meine Ortschaft” (translated as “My Place,” 1967) and his drama about the Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt, *Die Ermittlung. Oratorium in 11 Gesängen*, premiered simultaneously in East and West Germany. Throughout his life, Weiss maintained an ambivalent relationship to his Jewish heritage. Not only did he refuse to see himself as a victim, but he rejected the importance of any national or ethnic categories for his personal identity.⁷

In the same year, Weiss provided an illustration for a volume by the Swedish author Artur Lundkvist (1906–1991). This collage depicts an anonymous nocturnal cityscape with a winged female mythological figure, which is observed by a lunar eye.

In 1966, the prestigious Heinrich Mann Prize was awarded to Weiss, and Peter Brook directed the movie version of *Marat/Sade*. Also that year, Weiss’s drama *Die Versicherung* (The Insurance), written in 1952, premiered in Sweden, and he gave an autobiographical and antimilitaristic speech in English, “I Come out of My Hiding Place,” at Princeton University. In 1967, *Gesang vom Lusitanischen Popanz* (Song of the Lusitanian Bogey) premiered in Stockholm. This play was aimed against colonialism in Angola. In the same year, Weiss received the Carl-Albert-Anderson Prize in Stockholm and traveled to Cuba with a group of French artists and writers, including Marguerite Duras and Michel Leiris.

Together with Jean-Paul Sartre and others, Weiss actively participated in the Russell tribunals against international war crimes. To show his solidarity with the Vietnamese people, Weiss traveled to communist Vietnam in 1968. In the same year, Weiss’s play *Diskurs über die Vorgeschichte und den Verlauf des lang andauernden Befreiungskrieges in Viet Nam als Beispiel für die Notwendigkeit des bewaffneten Kampfes der Unterdrückten gegen ihre Unterdrücker sowie über die Versuche der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika die Grundlagen der Revolution zu vernichten* (Discourse on the Progress of the Prolonged War of Liberation in Viet Nam and the Events Leading Up to It as Illustration of the Necessity for Armed Resistance against Oppression and on the Attempts of the United States of America to Destroy the Foundations of Revolution) premiered in Frankfurt. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a large number of open letters by and interviews with Weiss, in which he vehemently criticized the war in Vietnam, appeared in international newspapers.

The play *Wie dem Herrn Mockinpott das Leiden ausgetrieben wird* (How Mister Mockinpott Was Cured of His Sufferings) premiered in Hanover in 1968, and Weiss’s “Notizen zum dokumentarischen Thea-

ter” (The Material and the Models. Notes towards a Definition of Documentary Theatre) were published in the same year. Weiss, who joined the Swedish Communist Party in 1968, nevertheless refused to confine his critical remarks to centers of capitalism. In open letters from 1967 to 1977, he attacked socialist countries for attempting to silence critical intellectuals and artists such as the Czech playwright Pavel Kohout (b. 1928) and the East German songwriter and poet Wolf Biermann (b. 1936), and he protested against the violent end of the “Prague Spring.” In 1970, Weiss offered his play *Trotzki im Exil* (Trotsky in Exile) as his contribution to the socialist countries’ celebration of Lenin’s birthday. The play premiered in Düsseldorf and earned him the status of persona non grata in East Germany, since Trotsky, Lenin’s designated successor who was forced into exile and killed in Mexico, still was a taboo subject for official communist historiography.

Weiss suffered a heart attack in 1970. During the period of recovery, he wrote the journal *Rekonvaleszenz*, in which he juxtaposed political alertness and unconscious fears and desires. Parts of these autobiographical reflections were first published in Weiss’s *Notizbücher* (1981–82). In 1971, Weiss had controversial discussions with GDR officials. Refusing to hold back his criticism of dogmatic fossilizations in the GDR and other socialist countries, he insisted on the nonconformist role of art. In the same year, his drama *Hölderlin* premiered in Stuttgart. In 1972, his daughter Nadja, who was named after the protagonist in André Bréton’s novel *Nadja* (1928), was born. In preparation of what would become his novel *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands*, Weiss conducted a series of interviews with resistance fighters and their families throughout Europe. In 1972 and 1973, Weiss participated again in the Russell tribunal. This public forum investigated war crimes that had been committed in the Vietnam War. In the same year, Weiss visited the World Youth Games in East Berlin.

One year later, Weiss traveled to Spain, Amsterdam, Paris, Zurich, and Lisbon and joined a writers’ conference in Moscow. In 1975, he visited East Berlin in order to gather material for his last novel, *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands*, whose first volume appeared in 1975. That year, Weiss also visited Paris and Amsterdam and attended rehearsals of his play *Der Prozeß* (The Trial), which premiered in Bremen and Krefeld. In 1976, Weiss met with his colleagues Martin Walser and Max Frisch in Zurich. Between 1976 and 1980, exhibitions of Weiss’s paintings, drawings, and collages were organized in Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, and France. In 1977, he visited an exhibit of his works in Munich.

In 1978, the second volume of *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands* was published. Weiss received the Thomas Dehler Prize from the West German government. In his acceptance speech with the programmatic title “Verständigung” (Peaceful Communication), he sharply criticized West Germany’s anticommunist laws, which led to the unemployment of thousands of left-wing intellectuals. In the same year, Weiss met with his fellow writers Max Frisch, Christa and Gerhard Wolf, and Hans Magnus Enzensberger in Stockholm. He traveled to Paris in 1979 and in 1980. In 1981, the final volume of *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands* was published, and the Cologne Literature Prize was awarded to Weiss. In 1982, Weiss rejected honorary degrees from both East and West German universities. His last play *Der neue Prozeß* (*The New Trial*), dedicated to Franz Kafka, premiered in Stockholm, under the direction of Weiss and his wife. On May 10, 1982, Weiss died in Stockholm.

In the year of his death, Weiss was honored with four literary awards: the Bremen Literature Prize, the Georg Büchner Prize, the De Nios Prize, and the Swedish Theater Critics’ Prize. In 1982 and 1983, exhibitions of his paintings were shown in Switzerland, Germany, and Sweden. In 1998, Fredric Jameson and his colleagues organized a Peter Weiss Conference in which Gunilla Palmstierna-Weiss participated. During the conference, most of Weiss’s experimental films were shown, his collage works were exhibited, and his last play, *Der neue Prozeß*, premiered in English.

Weiss’s main work, *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands*, has a complicated reception history. Like the dramatist and novelist Hans Henny Jahnn, a major author of European modernism whose emphasis on sexuality and the body had a major impact on his work, Weiss found himself bewildered by a Cold War dilemma of reception mechanisms in both East and West Germany. East Germany often exercised censorship on theater performances of Weiss’s plays and hesitated to publish his books, while West German newspaper critics often attacked his texts because of the author’s political convictions.⁸

Weiss’s literary works, which have been translated into many languages, in France, for example, by the philosopher Jean Baudrillard, are increasingly becoming more accessible to a worldwide readership. Some of his plays continue to enjoy international success. Except for *Die Ästhetik des Widerstands*, all of his major works have been translated into English. Weiss inspires readers and theater audiences to expose themselves to political and psychological questions without seeking refuge in conventional ways of fabricating easy answers. For Weiss, a committed fight against regimes of torture and oppression is never dissociated from

intellectual and aesthetic curiosity that dares to think and feel without any prescriptions. Weiss's works bring politics and creative projects into a mutually challenging dialogue.

Notes

¹ Raimund Hoffmann, *Peter Weiss: Malerei. Zeichnungen. Collagen* (Berlin: Henschel, 1984).

² On Hesse's influence on Weiss, see Matthias Richter, "‘Bis zum heutigen Tag habe ich Ihre Bücher bei mir getragen’: Über die Beziehung zwischen Peter Weiss und Hermann Hesse," in *Peter Weiss*, edited by Rainer Gerlach (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1984), 32–56.

³ Hesse's letter to Weiss from January 21, 1937, is published in Raimund Hoffmann, *Peter Weiss: Malerei. Zeichnungen. Collagen* (Berlin: Henschel, 1984), 163: "[. . .] das möglichst genaue, präzise, nüchterne Nachzeichnen durch Worte [. . .] bis jedes Wort feststeht und Sie für jedes Wort eintreten können. [. . .] ein verantwortliches Dichtertum [. . .] mit grosser Strenge im Wort, und grosser Vorsicht im Anlehnen an Vorbilder. [. . .] ein richtiges Zeichnen und Bauen mit den Worten probieren, so bewusst und nüchtern wie möglich, man lernt da nie aus, die Aufgabe ist mit jedem Satz wieder neu."

⁴ See Arnd Beise, *Peter Weiss* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2002), 18.

⁵ For the impact of Swedish intellectual life on Weiss see the important monograph by Anne Bourignon, *Der Schriftsteller Peter Weiss und Schweden* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1997).

⁶ See Hauke Lange-Fuchs, *Peter Weiss und der Film: Eine Dokumentation zur Retrospektive der 28. Nordischen Filmtage Lübeck vom 30. Oktober bis 2. November 1986* (Lübeck: Nordische Filmtage Lübeck, Senat der Hansestadt Lübeck, Amt für Kultur, 1986). See also Andreas Schönefeld, "Die filmische Produktion des multimedialen Künstlers Peter Weiss im Zusammenhang seiner künstlerisch-politischen Entwicklung in den späten 40er und 50er Jahren," in *Peter Weiss: Werk und Wirkung*, edited by Rudolf Wolff (Bonn: Bouvier, 1987), 114–28.

⁷ Weiss's ambivalent relationship to being a Jewish writer is carefully examined in three recent articles. See Irene Heidelberger-Leonard, "Jüdisches Bewußtsein im Werk von Peter Weiss," in *Literatur, Ästhetik, Geschichte: Neue Zugänge zu Peter Weiss*, edited by Michael Hofmann (St. Ingbert [Germany]: Röhrig, 1992), 49–64; Ingo Breuer, "Der Jude Marat: Identifikationsprobleme bei Peter Weiss," in *Peter Weiss: Neue Fragen an alte Texte*, edited by Irene Heidelberger-Leonard (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994), 64–76; Julia Hell, "From Laokoon to Ge: Resistance to Jewish Authorship in Peter Weiss's Ästhetik des Widerstands," in *Rethinking Peter Weiss*, edited by Jost Hermand and Marc Silberman (New York etc.: Lang, 2000), 23–44.

⁸ *Notizbücher 1971–1980. Band 2* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1981), 758–59: "Der komplizierte, paradoxe Prozeß, in den ich mit meiner Arbeit, seit Jahren in wachsendem Grad, verwickelt bin: in der BRD, wo ich eine starke gesellschaftskritische