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Das Strassburger Eulenspiegelbuch: Studien an entstehungsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen der ältesten Drucküberlieferung. Jürgen Schulz-Grobert. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1999. x + 424 pp. DM 108. ISBN 3484150831.

The year 1973 represents a caesura in *Till Eulenspiegel* research with the publication of Peter Honegger's *Ulenspiegel: Ein Beitrag zur Druckgeschichte und zur Verfasserfrage.* Based on a

partially preserved, heretofore unnoticed acrostic ("ERMAN B") constructed from the initials beginning *Historien* 90–95 of the 1515 Strassburg edition, Honegger ascribed to the Brunswick tax official and chronicler Hermann Bote the authorship of *Till Eulenspiegel.* Since then Bote's authorship of *Till Eulenspiegel* has come to be considered among scholars as likely, if not certain. But with the publication of Jürgen Schulz-Grobert's *Das Strassburger Eulenspiegelbuch,* 1999 must now be regarded as a second caesura in *Till Eulenspiegel* scholarship. Schulz-Grobert argues that scholars' pursuit of a phantom Low German original, and their "fixation" on Herman Bote as its author, have directed scholarly attention away from the role the editors in Strassburg played in its production. While TB scholarship to date is in agreement that a Strassburg editor had a hand in the final version of the book, Schulz-Grobert argues that the circle of humanists and literati associated with Grüninger's press in Strassburg were alone responsible for producing the book. There is no need to assume the existence of a Low German original, he states, nor does the "ERMAN B" acrostic, possibly a product of happenstance, necessarily point to Herman Bote's authorship. Schulz-Grobert ascribes to Bote the dubious honor of being one of the first recipients of the "Strassburg Eulenspiegelbuch." Disputing Cordes' 1502 dating of Bote's *Weltchronik* (Brunswick ms.) as too early, he argues that Bote's marginal note regarding the death of "Ulenspeygel" in Mölln in 1350 could well have been added *after* the first Strassburg edition had been published.

Another issue of dating sure to create a stir among *Till Eulenspiegel* scholars concerns the two fragments of *Till Eulenspiegel* owned by Honegger and Bernd Ulrich Hucker. Evidence for the 1510/11 dating of these fragments is unsound, argues Schulz-Grobert, and until more compelling evidence is put forward, scholars should assume the 1515 edition is the oldest. We can only hope that this provocative challenge will lead Hucker finally to make his *Till Eulenspiegel* fragment accessible to scholarly examination.

Schulz-Grobert begins his study with a discussion of the "myth" of the Low German original. The geographical specificity of the book does not offer compelling grounds for assuming a Lower Saxon author, he argues. The small towns mentioned (Ampfleven, Kneitlingen) lay on the late medieval route between Magdeburg and Brunswick, and would have been known to any traveler. Moreover, the characterization in the first *Historie* of Arnold Papenmeier, abbot of Saint Ägidien, as "wirdig" cannot be reconciled with Bote's own unflattering description of the man in his *Schichtboik,* but rather suggests the perspective of an outsider. From a linguistic viewpoint a Low German author is equally unnecessary, maintains Schulz-Grobert. Evidence of a Low German substratum in *Till Eulenspiegel,* put forward most thoroughly in 1893 by Christoph Walther, is overstated. On the other hand Schulz-Grobert finds competence in Low German in the publishing houses of the Upper Rhine of a sufficiently high degree to account for the smattering of Low German in *Till Eulenspiegel.* He maintains that those involved in producing *Till Eulenspiegel* in Strassburg, familiar with regional differences in dialects, added in the Low German to give the work local color and the appearance of authenticity.

Schulz-Grobert prefers not to name a sole author of *Till Eulenspiegel* in Strassburg, but examines the circle of literati in Strassburg, including Geiler von Kaysersberg, Brant, Wimpheling, Bebel, Pauli, and Murner, and their ties to Grüninger's press. But he directs special attention to one of Grüninger's *Korrektoren,* Johannes Adelphus Muling. Well connected both to the Strassburg literati and to Grüninger's press, familiar as author and translator with the texts to which we find parallels in *Till Eulenspiegel,* Muling emerges in Schulz-Grobert's study as the key figure among the Strassburg "fathers" of *Till Eulenspiegel* .

With this circle of literati in mind, Schulz-Grobert argues systematically for an inter-

pretation of *Till Eulenspiegel* as a work of the educated class, "ein gelehrte[r] literarische[r] Scherzartikel." Its underlying structure is determined not by the vernacular *Schwankroman,* but by the biographical vita-structure of medieval hagiography, whose theoretical basis lies in the classical rhetorical tradition of the encomium. By assuming a Strassburg author one can also more easily explain allusions to international (Latin, Italian, French) sources in *Till Eulenspiegel.* A large part of Schulz-Grobert's study is devoted to documenting these sources and tracing their mediation through works printed in southern Germany, or through more immediate connections with the literary circle in Strassburg. These have been overlooked in recent scholarship, argues Schulz-Grobert, because they cannot be made to square with Bote's own limited intellectual horizon. Possibly the most valuable part of this study is found in the lengthy appendix, where for each *Historie* the author has provided a catalogue of international literary parallels

Schulz-Grobert has pushed the pendulum of *Till Eulenspiegel* scholarship back to Strassburg. He has presented a wealth of information on the conditions surrounding the book's production in Strassburg, which will be a valuable resource for future *Till Eulenspiegel* scholarship. But just as Honegger overstated the case for Bote's authorship (Bote himself was to have written the High German text printed in Strassburg), so Schulz-Grobert has coupled his compelling Strassburg thesis with a too strident denial of the Low German original. The pendulum probably should settle somewhere between the two extremes, closer to the compromise formulated by Lappenberg (to whose 1854 study Schulz-Grobert's work is significantly indebted), who *both* attributed *Till Eulenspiegel*'s authorship to a Strassburger *and* argued that a Low German original served as the source for at least part of the Strassburg *Till Eulenspiegel* book.

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