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# Murder and Suicide Revisited: Becher's Literary Treatment of a Youthful Tragedy

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The final poem of *Die Gnade eines Frühlings*, Johannes R. Becher's first book of verse, is entitled "Darstellung." The poet displays himself in front of "das Volk," who will judge him:

Er bebt. Soll seine Scham entschleiern . . .  
"Alle meine Schamgebundenheiten  
Wollen überwunden an mir niedergleiten!"—  
Da ward es Licht!

The poet, by putting himself and his shame on exhibit—by the public confession of publishing his work—is bathed in a cleansing light and can overcome his guilt.

Forty years later, Becher reflected in his diary upon his youthful attraction to the confessional elements of Catholicism. He recalls his fascination with the Virgin Mary and quotes the portion of the "Hail Mary" which begs for intercession on the part of poor sinners: "Pray for us now and in the hour of our death" (*GW* XII: 213). His attraction to the acknowledgment of sin and to the necessity to confess should come as no surprise to those familiar with the autobiographical and often frankly confessional nature of much of Becher's work.

One single traumatic event in Becher's life begged more than any other for confession. It is an incident which stands between the adolescent, would-be poet Hans Becher and the concrete beginnings of Johannes R. Becher's career as a writer: his suicide pact with Fanny Fuss on Easter Sunday, 1910. Becher's need to come to terms with this horrible affair, in which he killed Fanny and nearly succeeded in killing himself, shapes all of Becher's earliest work. And for the remainder of his life and career he returns regularly to Fanny's death, alluding to it, portraying it, and reinterpreting it according to his current needs. To be sure, it is only one

of many autobiographical episodes of a confessional nature that recur frequently in Becher's work—the theft of money from his grandmother, the suicide of his brother, and many examples of his difficult relationship with his father, complete with murderous fantasies, all come to mind. But the nearly successful suicide pact provides at the same time both the most extreme episode and the one which allows us best to observe the literary uses to which Becher put his poetic confessions.

Although the Fanny Fuss affair is by no means a well-kept secret, critics of Becher's work—especially in the East—have tended to mention it in passing, rarely assigning it the significance it should be given.<sup>2</sup> One reason for its relative neglect—apart from the fact that it does not fit very well into the Becher hagiography—may be that until recently only a few details about the actual suicide pact were well established. Now, after the publication by Rolf Selbmann of documents about the episode found in the possession of Becher's school, the famous Wilhelmsgymnasium of Munich, it is possible to compare the actual event with Becher's later literary treatments of it.<sup>3</sup> One can look at the changes over time in Becher's literary confessions about the pact, and interpret how the portrayal of this extraordinary personal experience served the poet at different stages of his artistic and ideological development.

This study will examine works from four different periods in Becher's career: works written in the first few years after Fanny's death, especially the youthful novel *Erde*; the poem "Mädchen" from Becher's Expressionist period; the poem "Abschiednehmen," which stems from Becher's proletarian-revolutionary phase during the Weimar Republic; and an episode of the novel *Abschied*, which he wrote during his exile in the Soviet Union.<sup>4</sup> First, however, I shall describe the attempted suicide pact as it emerges from the newly available documents.

The academic year of 1909/1910 was a difficult one for Hans Becher. In his final year, with the *Abitur* and a projected military career before him, Becher found himself in constant conflict with his family and at school. His consuming passion was poetry, which he read voraciously, especially Hölderlin and Richard Dehmel. Although his father had forbidden him to waste his time writing, he had been churning out his own verse for several years. By April of 1910, he had produced nearly 500 poems, plays, and stories, and had visions of himself as an unrecognized genius like Kleist. The previous year, he had begun a correspondence with Dehmel, who, although he found promise in Becher's youthful efforts, had counseled patience and suggested Becher find someone his own age with whom he could share his enthusiasm for poetry. Since his schoolmates were indifferent or hostile to his poetic efforts, Becher turned to a young woman he had encountered in January 1910, Franziska (Fanny) Fuss, who ran a cigarette store near the *Kosttor* in Munich. In his rela-

tionship with her, he found an escape from the lack of understanding that he felt surrounded him. In February of 1910, he wrote on the manuscript of one of his poems: "In Schwermut hingeschrieben. Mit allen Verhältnissen überhaufen konnte meine kranke Seele bei der gesunden Welt keinen Trost finden. Ich suchte ihn bei einer Kranken und habe ihn auch gefunden" (Selbmann, *JbdDSG*, p. 528).

The woman with whom he found this consolation, Fanny Fuss, was seven years older than Becher and probably had been a prostitute. At the time Becher became involved with her, she was engaged to an engineer for the local electrical works who had set her up in the store in order to provide her a respectable living. Unhappy with her engineer and unwell—she was tubercular—Fanny showed great enthusiasm for the young, naively romantic youth who turned all of his poetic attention to their passion. They could not keep their relationship a secret from her fiancé, who first threatened to expose Becher and then to shoot him. Becher tried to break off the relationship—on the 14th of April, 1910, he wrote her a farewell letter—but he could not. It is not clear when they made the decision to kill themselves, but their preparations were thorough. They obtained a pistol, probably with Fanny's money; on April 16 Becher rented a room and, again using Fanny's money, paid a month's rent in advance.

Becher's decision to take his own life appears to have been, at least partially, the product of an adolescent literary fantasy. In his several suicide notes, he portrayed himself both as hero and poet. He believed that the noble sacrifice of his own life would rescue an unhappy woman. As he wrote to his parents: "Ihr dürft nicht traurig sein. Durch meinen Tod rette ich ein Mädchen von einem unsittlichen Bündnis. Es ist der einzige Weg. Ich bin ihn gegangen" (Selbmann, *JbdDSG*, p. 529).

At the same time, Becher wanted to be sure that he would be remembered as a poet. One of his suicide notes was to a newspaper, the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*. In it, he echoed the message to his parents, but also included a letter the Munich poet Karl Henckell had written him, in which Henckell had called him "ein Dichter." In a suicide note to Henckell, he said he had lived and died as a poet, asked him to say a few words at his grave, and expressed his desire to have his head wound with a garland of flowers (Selbmann, *JbdDSG*, p. 525f.).

Becher and Fanny spent the night of April 16 together in the room Becher had rented. Significantly, given the overtly sexual nature of many of Becher's literary versions of the event, subsequent medical examination indicated that they had not had sexual intercourse, although it seems certain that they previously had been lovers. About 8:30 the next morning, Becher shot Fanny in the chest and turned the gun on himself. He tried to shoot himself through the heart, but succeeded only in wounding

himself severely. The shots were heard by other tenants of the house, who broke into the room and called for help. Both Fanny and Becher were alive when they reached the hospital. Fanny Fuss died during the night, and Becher, after three months in the hospital and subsequent psychiatric care, survived.

Becher was not prosecuted for Fanny's death; under paragraph 51 of the criminal code, he was held not to have been of sound mind and was thus not held accountable for his actions.

Becher's poetic production was barely interrupted, but was, understandably, profoundly affected by his experiences. Significantly, his first publication was a hymn entitled "Der Ringende: Kleist-Hymne." It was originally part of the manuscript of *Die Gnade eines Frühlings*, but was published separately in November, 1911 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Kleist's suicide. Kleist is evoked as a godlike, inspirational force. The young poet sees himself at the side of the dying Kleist: "Traummatt schob ich meine Hand unter sein Haupt und wachte." He then unites his own soul with that of the fallen poet: "Deine Seele, schlummernde Seele / War wie das Meer: oh du meine Seele, oh du deine Seele!" (*GW* I:12). Having himself survived, he clearly feels he must carry on Kleist's "struggle."

For the next several years, his poems and prose reflect his need to interpret, to come to terms with the horrible reality of Fanny's death and his own survival. For no matter how he interpreted his deed, either his sense of guilt or his anger with Fanny for being the source of that guilt express themselves in almost every mention of her.

In 1914, Becher published a fragment from a planned novel *Wir Gespenster*, probably written in 1912 or 1913. A passage from it serves to illustrate the power of that guilt and anger which haunted him in the direct aftermath of the pact:

Meine erste Frau mußte ich erschießen, um frei von ihr zu kommen. Aber irgendwie blieb sie doch haften; in manchen Träumen und beim Anblick gewisser Gesichter oder Gegenstände; in gewissen Worten. Das rechnet sich als die wichtigste Tat meines jetzigen Lebens.

The narrator, beset by guilt, has no defence against the beatified, martyred vision of his victim:

Von da ab fühlte und handelte ich abseits . . . Dann—verschütete ich Wasser, zerbreche ich Gläser, beschmutze meinen Anzug, trete in den Straßenkot oder spucke zu kurz, mich selbst an—: das ist es, diese Kugel in der Brust, dieser geradezu fanatisch gewordene Selbstvernichtungstrieb . . . Dieser Frau gegenüber bin ich wehrlos. Grenzenlos schuldig ihr gegenüber fühle ich mich, das hindert mich. Ich finde keinen Ausweg . . . Sie angreifen?! Wie sie beschützt ist! Gleichsam von dem Streif einer überirdischen Krone ihr

Haupt umschlungen, leuchtet ihr kurzgeschnittenes Gelbhaar; blaß und zerrissen ist ihr Gesicht, voller Narben, Striemen und Falten; zerstoichen ihr Körper, zerschlagen . . . *An ihr müßte ich zum gemeinen Mörder werden.* (GW IX:165–166)

In the works we will look at closely, there are distinctly different portrayals of the suicide pact. In the earliest example, *Erde*, the poet is still in the throes of his anger and guilt, and he tries hard to justify the event in quasi-religious, mystical terms. In subsequent works, as Becher grew away from the event in both time and maturity, the portrayal of the suicide pact becomes less clearly an exercise in self-justification and denial of guilt. In the 1914 poem “Mädchen,” Becher introduces a social element. He narrates the event fairly accurately, emphasizing the solidarity of the victims with all outsiders who defy social conventions. In “Abschiednehmen,” first published in 1929, Becher uses the suicide pact to illustrate the futility and decadence of resisting bourgeois society without proletarian class consciousness. And, finally, from his Soviet exile, in Becher’s socialist *Bildungsroman* titled *Abschied*, the suicide pact becomes a plan, fantasized but not carried out, which serves as a sign for how desperate the protagonist’s need to change has become.

*Erde* has been, somewhat understandably, virtually ignored in the literature about Becher.<sup>5</sup> Prose was never Becher’s metier, and this very immature effort contains some particularly embarrassing writing. Nevertheless, because it is steeped in what Becher later called the “Todestrunkenheit meiner Jugend” (GW XII:219), it serves us well here. *Erde* tells the story of the young artist Rolf Rainer, his life, loves, and, ultimately, his death in the aftermath of a suicide pact with a woman named Ev. In this novel, Becher does not include the more prosaic elements of his experience with Fanny. This is not the suicide pact of a schoolboy and a former prostitute. Instead, we see an artist reaching for the most extreme experience available. He sees martyrdom and ecstasy—both sexual and aesthetic—in death and trumpets his vision like a prophet. He portrays his victim with great ambivalence, combining violent and sadistic sexual imagery with a virtual apotheosis of the dead lover, in some instances to the point of identifying her with the Virgin Mary.

Explaining his desire to die, Rolf Rainer spells out his vision of transcendence, sex, and death:

“Wir wollen sterben. Wir wissen von der Welt . . . Was fehlt uns? Einzig das Ziel: nach der grenzenlosesten Durchkostung unseres Geschlechts die blutige Umarmung des Todes in letzter brünstiger Ekstase. Dies blieb uns. Dies allein von allem. Von allem nur noch der Tod. Der Tod . . . Er ist mein letztes Problem, das ich nun restlos in mir gestalten will. Er ist der vollste Inbegriff meiner Kunst, meiner Religion. Er, der Endzustand alles Gegensätzlichen, ist der Urquell der Kunst, ist die Kunst. Denn wie ich es

verstehe, ist die Kunst der denkbar größte Gegensatz zum Leben." (*GW IX:92f.*)

One of the novel's most striking features is the sadistic tone of Rolf Rainer's sexual encounters with his lovers. An example to serve for many others would be a scene with a lover, Constance. When he enters her, he tells her that his phallus is a dagger with which he will stab her in the heart, and he describes at some length how she will weaken and die (*GW IX:52*).

At one point in the text, Rolf Rainer uses the image of "die sprudelnde Quelle der Qual" (*GW IX:93*) for the woman's sex. This hostility toward women is doubtless a direct consequence of Becher's feelings of anger and guilt toward Fanny. That Becher was profoundly disturbed in his feelings about women can be seen from a letter he wrote to his friend and publisher Bachmair on April 4, 1912:

Zur Zeit bin ich von einer eigenartigen Krankheit befallen: sobald ich an eine Berührung mit einem weiblichen Körper denke, überkommt mich ein solcher Ekel, daß ich mich oft direkt übergebe. Meine Leute merken bis jetzt davon noch nichts. Ich sehne mich nach einem geschlechtslosen Zustand.<sup>6</sup>

The actual description of the suicide pact bears only superficial resemblance to Becher's own experience. Rolf and Ev return to town from a mountain retreat where he had been working, in order to fulfill their vision—more properly his vision—of dying together at the height of their sexual pleasure. The night prior to the deed combines violent sex and Rolf Rainer's lengthy incantations—kneeling above his exhausted lover—of a poem in which the Virgin Mary is part of a mystical and transcendent sexual experience.

When the time comes to die, it is "in Gottes Namen" that Rolf does "das Unerbittliche, höhnisch und kalt." And his victim murmurs, as he pulls the trigger, "ich liebe dich." Whereupon Rolf turns "die bleierne Notwendigkeit" on himself (*GW IX:102*). The two lovers lay wounded, but conscious for a long time, struggling with doubt and the fear of death. Rolf Rainer sees Ev's eyes break; he survives for a time, only to die a few weeks later.

In *Erde*, Becher clearly needs to justify his terrible deed by turning the experience into a poetic apotheosis. The final passages of the book describe Rolf Rainer as Christ-like figure, "der die Dornenkrone des Heilands trug in den Stürmen seines Bluts" (*GW IX:108*). Unwilling or unable to portray the actual event, Becher does manage, using cruel sexual imagery, to express the anger he must have felt towards Fanny as the source of his guilt.

The next re-creation of the suicide pact which we shall examine forms the first section of the poem "Mädchen." In addition to a portrait of Fanny, the poem portrays the women Becher encountered as he became an active part of the coffeehouse bohemia in Munich and Berlin, the milieu in which the Expressionist poet Johannes R. Becher was formed. The poem was published in the collection *Verbrüderung* in 1916:

Franziska

Du Engel ihm vom Zigarettenladen!  
 Ein Ingenieur pflückt dich als Bräutigam.  
 Wir dürfen nachts im Raum der Gärten baden.  
 Wenn orgeln sonntags gute Bettler am  
 Geblühten Weg, mit Karussells beladen,  
 Der Isarstrom verzweigt in grünen Bändern—  
 Die Augen sich mit dessen Schein berändern.

Doch bald—: er explodiert mit Bombenschritten  
*Ein neuer Vater!* in dem Schlafgemach!!  
 Der Faust entrasseln paukende Gewitter.  
 Und tausend Väter kollern heulend nach!  
 Gepeitschte aller Welt in uns erzittern.  
 Rückflüchten wir. Es brennt die heimlichste der Lauben.  
 Sie wollte nurmehr—aus—dem Browning glauben.

Dein Jüngling schrie durch jene finstere Nächte  
 An seine Mutter. Auch sie—: fühllos kalt.  
 Sie wird kein Wort in solche Zuckung sprechen.  
 Doch deß Gehirn durchrauscht soviel an Wald,  
 Gebirg, Veranden: überwölbt von Bächen  
 Azur, inmitten bunt die Sonne platzt.  
 O, Frühjahrsregen an die Fenster kratzt.

Die läßt ihn nicht. Hoch seine Schulter kriecht  
 Sie wie Gewürm. Du kannst mir nicht entfallen!  
 Da—: in die Brüste ihr die Kugel sticht.  
 Und draußen muß man mit dem Frühstück lallen.  
 Bald löscht auch er.—Bis groß die Tür ausbricht:  
 Schutzleute stehn enorm mit Riesenbeilen,  
 Behelme Götter sich im Raum verteilend.

(GW I:278.)

Here Becher gives Fanny her own name and circumstances. She is the angel from the cigarette store: "Ein Ingenieur pflückt dich als Bräutigam." There is no longer a mature poet but rather a "Jüngling," who cries through the dark night for his mother. The idyllic love affair is threatened by a new element—the father figure. This theme is found not only frequently in Becher's work, but it pervaded Expressionist poetry and drama: the conflict with the father as representative of order, society, and law.

Because Becher's own father was a public prosecutor and because his relationship with him had always been strained, this figure takes on special importance in Becher's work. The father bursts into the bedroom: "Der Faust entrasseln paukende Gewitter." The poet and Fanny, their love forbidden and denounced, feel like all those cast out and degraded by society: "Gepeitschte aller Welt in uns erzittern."

Fanny desires solace in the only refuge apparently left to her—death: "Sie wollte nurmehr—aus—dem Browning glauben." It is clearly at her insistence that the deed is done: "Die läßt ihn nicht. Hoch seine Schulter kriecht / Sie wie Gewürm. Du kannst mir nicht entfallen." But although the poet also "löscht," the door is broken down, and "Schutzleute stehn enorm mit Riesenbeilen, / Behelmte Götter sich im Raum verteilend." The father figures—the protecting state—interfere and prevent the poet's escape.

There is nostalgia in this poem for the lost love of Fanny, and there is considerable bitterness against those who, in the name of society or the state, made that love impossible. There is a sense of "them vs. us" and an identification with those outside social acceptability, something which characterizes much of Becher's Expressionist poetry.

Another version of the suicide pact was written while Becher was at the head of the Bund Proletarisch-Revolutionärer Schriftsteller. As with most of Becher's poetry of this period, "Abschiednehmen" (1929) has a clearly didactic function. It begins with the declaration that the poet had not been born a communist, that his father had chosen an officer's career for him, and wonders if he, the poet, could even recognize the man he had been.

The incident with Fanny appears as one of a number of examples of a decadent, rebellious youth. She is a dancer and a prostitute, called Little Lunch. There is no description of the motivation for the deed, merely a matter-of-fact declaration:

Wir suchten den Ostersonntag uns aus.  
 Ich erschöß sie und schoß dreimal auf mich.  
 Sie ist wie ein Fisch aus dem Bett hochgeschnell,  
 Little Lunch,  
 Durchbiß sich die Zunge.  
 Ich habe ihre Augen verglasen sehn.  
 Ich ließ sie bluten. Sie ließ mich schrein.  
 Wir ließen einander im Sterben allein.

(*GW* III:224)

The poet spends a year convalescing and awaiting his own death. He finds no solace in repeated visits by a priest. He later goes to Berlin, where—as Becher had done—he hears of his younger brother's suicide

and tries to kill himself again. He tries various experiences to engage his bored and cynical mind. One day he encounters a column of workers and is disquieted by the power that seems to flow from them. He tries to flee them, but is eventually caught up by them:

Ich floh vor dem Strom. Ich konnte ihm nicht entkommen.  
Der Eiserne Strom hat mich in seine Mitte aufgenommen.  
Er begann zu glühen, flüssiges Feuer weit.  
Es verbrannte in ihm meine Vergangenheit.

(*GW* III:226)

Caught up in the powerful stream of the proletariat, the poet sees his past—and his guilt—burned away. The feeling of solidarity and belonging provides an absolution the church could not give him.

The autobiographical novel *Abschied*, written in Soviet exile in the late 1930s, portrays a Becher-like protagonist Hans Gastl and an encounter with Fanny very similar to Becher's own. Hans Gastl, also a schoolboy when he meets Fanny, has long believed that things must change, for himself and for society: his personal catchword is *Anderswerden*. He is hostile to his father, the public prosecutor, and to the state represented by him, and yet sees himself drawn into the web of its influence and conventions. At the same time, he feels drawn by the stirring power of the proletariat, personified in a classmate Hartinger, but believes he cannot be a part of it. His suicide pact with Fanny represents the most concrete in a long series of suicidal fantasies. He yearns for death to resolve what he feels he cannot resolve in life. Fanny, engaged to her engineer for economic reasons, but still working as a prostitute for her pimp, also hopes for release in death. In the course of their initial meeting, they fantasize about death, and when they sleep together that night, Gastl dreams that she is pulling him over the edge of the Großhesseloher Bridge in Munich.

Later they decide to die together. During the day before the appointed suicide, Gastl spins out a detailed fantasy of what will transpire. His vision corresponds well with what we know of the real event: Gastl sees himself shooting Fanny in the chest, turning the gun on himself, firing three times, losing consciousness, and awakening to see uniformed men burst into the room. In summarizing his fantasy, Gastl alludes to Becher's own recovery: "Das gemeinsame Sterben, bei dem ich am Leben geblieben war, weil ich danebenschoß, geschah den ganzen Tag über." In reality Gastl does not have the chance to join Fanny in death; her pimp murders her on the day before their planned rendezvous of death.

Hans Gastl learns from his unrealized plan that he needs to learn how to live: "Ich brauchte einen, der ein standhaftes Leben mich lehrte. Vor dem Sterben für Großes ein Leben für Großes mich lehrte." The

suicide pact represents a significant step in Gastl's development toward the realization that the class-conscious proletariat and its representatives offer such a model for a life both different and better.

The traumatic events of Easter 1910 never passed out of Johannes R. Becher's consciousness and continued to intrude into his literary work throughout his career. As we have seen, however, the nature of that intrusion changed. In the earliest writings, Becher was obsessed with the guilt and anger associated with the all-too-recent tragedy. In the later references, one can observe the gradual objectification and generalization of the event, as Becher begins to associate his personal experiences with broader social phenomena. Thus, an examination of recurrent references to Johannes R. Becher's suicide pact with Fanny Fuss can serve to highlight and illustrate a number of significant stages of his literary and ideological development.

<sup>1</sup> Johannes R. Becher, *Gesammelte Werke*, 18 vols. (Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1977), 1:38 (subsequently referred to as *GW*, followed by a Roman numeral for the volume and by the page number).

<sup>2</sup> An early GDR assessment of Becher's youthful work, for example, makes no mention at all of the suicide pact; cf. Günter Hartung, "Bechers frühe Dichtungen und die literarische Tradition," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena* 10, Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe 3 (1960/61): 393-401. Manfred Müller, "Weltuntergang und Jüngstes Gericht: Zur Motivik in der Lyrik Johannes R. Bechers 1911-1924," *Weimarer Beiträge* 25 (Special Issue No. 2, 1968): 5-24, disposes of it in one clause of a brief parenthetical sentence. Bodo Uhse's biographical essay in *Johannes R. Becher: Bildchronik seines Lebens* (Berlin, 1963) 20, mentions the incident in a short paragraph which was excised in a subsequent reprinting; cf. *Johannes R. Becher: Leben und Werk* (Berlin, 1971) 8. Alfred Klein's afterword to the first volume of the *Gesammelte Werke* mentions the pact and suggests without elaborating that Becher's first two books, *Die Gnade eines Frühlings* and *Erde*, had been devoted to "die Deutung des Geschehenen" (*GW* I:577.) The most extensive discussion of the event in GDR literature—a few paragraphs and a brief inclusion of the suicide pact in the discussion of the early poems—is found in Horst Haase, *Johannes R. Becher: Leben und Werk* (Berlin, 1981) 16-19.

<sup>3</sup> Rolf Selbmann, "Ein mißlungener Selbstmord und die Literatur des Expressionismus: Johannes R. Becher als Schüler des Wilhelmsgymnasiums und sein autobiographischer Roman *Abschied*," *Jahresbericht des Wilhelmsgymnasiums München* (1984/85) 88-112. Much of the same material, reworked and expanded, appeared as Rolf Selbmann, "Selbstmord als Literatur; Zur geschichtlichen Einordnung des expressionistischen Dichterbewußtseins bei Johannes R. Becher. Mit einem dokumentarischen Anhang," *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schiller-Gesellschaft* 30 (1986): 511-532 (subsequently referred to as Selbmann, *JbdDSG*).

<sup>4</sup> There are a number of other texts within Becher's work with clear references to Fanny's death. The poems in *Die Gnade eines Frühlings* (1912) (*GW* I: 15-38) and the volume *De Profundis Domine* (1913) (*GW* IX: 115-151) belong to the first period examined here. The 1913/14 poem "Toten-Messe" (*GW* I: 108-113) is one of Becher's early Expressionist poems. The 1937/38 poem "Zigaretten" (*GW* IV: 247) was written while Becher was working on *Abschied*. There are also several rather wistful references to Fanny in Becher's 1950 diary *Auf andere Art so große Hoffnung* (*GW* XII; see especially pp. 212 and 638.).

<sup>5</sup> Notable exceptions are two articles by August Obermayer: "Der im Monismus aufgehobene Dualismus: Zu Johannes R. Bechers Roman *Erde*," *Sprachkunst* 13 (1982):

63–82; and “Johannes R. Bechers Roman *Erde*—ein Produkt des Jugendstils?,” *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* 17 (1985): 106–129.

<sup>6</sup> Johannes R. Becher, *Gedichte 1911–1918*, Paul Raabe, ed., (München, 1973) 197. A fictionalized account of this same feeling can be found in the novel fragment *Wir Gespenster* (1914): “Weit ab von jeder Frau setzte er sich im Café, auf der Straße wich er ihnen weit aus. / Sie verursachten ihm Brechreiz” (*GW IX*:165).

## **ERRATA**

In the Index for Volume 80, 1988, a number of specific errors inadvertently crept into the final production phase of Issue 4. On page 535 the article by Jürgen Eichhoff should be entitled “Editor’s Introduction.” Also on page 535, the article by Hildegrad Binder Johnson is in Issue 3. On page 536, Henry J. Schmidt’s “Response” is to William H. Rey; Prof. Rey’s name is also misspelled on the cover of the issue. In the review of Bohnen, Hansen, and Schmöe’s book *Fin de Siècle*, Schmöe’s first name is misspelled; it should be, of course, Friedrich. On page 539, Hans-Herbert S. Räkel’s middle initial is missing. The review of Rüdiger Steinlein’s book was written by Wolfgang Paulsen. On page 540 the review by Ruth E. Lorbe of Ralf Sudau’s book is located in Issue 2, page 247 (not Issue 1, page 142). The review of John W. Van Cleve’s book by Thomas G. Sauer was not printed in this volume; it will appear in a future issue. Finally, the Note regarding the AATG is in Issue 4, page 412. We regret these errors.