



"Peter Schult ... ah ... that name doesn't ring a bell ... "

Research experience on the life and work of Peter Schult

When Hans Magnus Enzensberger finished his biographical novel about the Spanish anarchist Buenaventura Durruti, he admitted that it would be impossible to write a scholarly biography about an anarchist.¹ This book does not go that far: it is primarily about Peter Schult and his role in the (sexual-) political discussions of the 1970s and 1980s and their long-distance impact until today. And he has already found his place in one novel: In Gerhard Seyfried's "Der schwarze Stern der Tupamaros" (The Black Star of the Tupamaros) a "Christoph Graf" appears, behind whom Peter Schult is partly hidden.²

Unlike the Spaniard Durruti, Schult already lived out anarchist theory in the capitalist present, in relation to all life situations. Not only was he difficult to classify politically, but his "private life," which he always understood as an expression of his political goals, was also at odds with conventional classifications.

Peter Schult has been dead for barely more than 20 years. Contemporary historians generally dare to approach historical personalities only when the last contemporary witness who could still know something has died and a "value-free-objective" file exegesis can no longer stand. With Schult, on the other hand

1) Hans Magnus ENZENSBERGER: The Short Summer of Anarchy. Buenaventura Durutti's Life and Death. Roman (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1972) p. 14.

2) Gerhard SEYFRIED: Der schwarze Stern der Tupamaros (Frankfurt

am Main: Eichborn 2004), first mention p. 11. I thank the author for the kind reference.

The number of people "affected" is so large that many files are still blocked in the state archives. However, this can also be seen as an opportunity to explore history beyond the "written word" from the pens of biased representatives of the state apparatus. Moreover, Schult's "Visits to Dead Ends" is an extensive self-description that invites critical reception.³ However, historiography, like all aspects of the reception of history, is subject to certain politically motivated cycles. At a time when the former representatives of a violent upheaval are struggling as a "new center" against the heirs of those politicians who, through their extreme diimmon, began the radicalization of the West German left in the 1970s,⁴ a critical reappraisal of these years is not called for. This part of contemporary history receives only scant attention, apart from the occasional TV report. The reasons for this are obvious and can be linked to the questions about the life and work of Peter Schult.

In the face of failed socio-political utopias (full employment, social safety net, equal rights), awakening a "healthy popular feeling" and encouraging expressions of will for a >strong hand are among the simplest ways of deflecting the anger of the electorate against extra-parliamentary siindenbi:icke.⁵To this end

3) Peter SCHULT: Visits to Dead Ends. Aufzeichnungen eines homosexuellen Anarchisten (Mi.inchen: Trikont 1978, 2nd edition Frankfurt am Main: Foerster 1982, 3rd edition Hamburg: Manner schwarm 2006). See also Tomas VOLLHABER: Das Nichts. The Fear. The Experience. Untersuchungen zur zeitgenossischen schwulen Literatur (Berlin: Verlag rosa Winkel 1987) pp. 69-119.

4) Lutz TAUFER: Thoughts against the Walls. In: PIZZA (ed.): Odranoel. Die Linke zwischen den Welten (Hamburg: Libertare Assoziation 1992) pp. 59-122, here p. 87.

5) Hermann HELLER: Rule of Law or Dictatorship? In: Mehdi TOHIDI-

a kiinstlich geschiirte hysteria against "child migrants", a public health campaign in the matter of HIV/AIDS, the Gleichschaltung of social minorities and simultaneous honor of adaptation efforts of the representatives of these minority states.⁶

Peter Schult was a Padophile/Paderast, anarchist, protagonist of the "Red Help" in the 1970s, a key figure of the undogmatic left. He was close to the anarchist counterpart of the RAF, the "Bewegung 2. Juni", and at the same time moved in the environment of Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Joschka Fischer, Otto Schily and many others. His opponents in those years were up-and-coming politicians from conservative or economically liberal parties, who today, in view of a life like Schult's, would call for "cutting away" and castration. It is not surprising, therefore, that Schult has not received any attention in the reception of contemporary history. Historical research is inextricably linked to the allocation of funds, so that generally only what is politically desired is researched. Peter Schult is not one of them. This demands a particularly precise approach from a historian who resists this mixture of neglect of eyewitnesses, blind trust in files, renunciation of "gray literature" and orientation toward political guidelines. Contemporary witnesses often tend to confuse their romantic view of historical events with the actual events, and they tend to reject critical inquiries from younger contemporaries. Why should people who "weren't there at all" be able to explain a process

PUR (ed.): Der biirgerliche Rechtsstaat, vol. 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1978) pp. 159-176, here p. 169.

6) See with regard to padophilia Katharina RUTSCHKY: Sexual Abuse as Metaphor. Uber Krisen der Intimitat in modernen Gesellschaften oder vom Umschlag der Aufklarung in Mythologie. In: Katharina RUTSCHKY / Reinhart WOLFF (eds.): Handbuch sexu eller Missbrauch (Hamburg: Klein 1994) pp. 13-31, here p. 14.

better and more objectively than the protagonists of the time?

Already during the first phase of collecting literature and interviewing contemporary witnesses, I was struck by the extent to which models of thought and social utopias that were topical in the 1970s can still dominate the memory. Human ruins of German anarchism, formerly active as advocates of "free love," position themselves as gifted child shooters, communists formerly active in this field have not only long since converted to the Griines, but only remember positive statements in favor of Peter Schult. In between, there are former confederates who usually do not have time to answer questions about their self-praise. The bibulous historiography of the political left is a mixture of leadership cadre romanticism and avoidance of biographies that do not correspond to the usual classification patterns of the "born revolutionary".⁷ What remains in the end as "revolutionary" is kitsched up without limits.⁸ Only two very small groups of people make truly objective arguments: on the one hand, representatives of the "revolutionary" attitude that was very much in vogue among the liberal educated elite in the 1970s.

"do-gooders," who, out of their exaltation of the state's repression of non-violent protest from the left, have joined in with

7) Primo MORONI: *Erlebte Geschichte - Militante Linke und Geschichtsschreibung*. In: IG Rote Fabrik (ed.): *Zwischenberichte. Zur Diskussion über die Politik der bewaffneten und militanten Linken in der BRD, Italien und der Schweiz* (Berlin: ID-Verlag 1998). S. 11-22, here p. 15. See also Imma HARMS: *Der Zwang zur Geschichtsschreibung. Polemics against the Vitrinization of One's Own Past*. In: Bernd HDTTNER / Gottfried OY / Norbert SCHEPERS (eds.): *Vorwärts und viel vergessen. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung neuer sozialer Bewegungen* (Neu-Ulm: AG Spak 2005) pp. 13-26.

8) Gerhard HENSCHTEL: *Das Bloken der Lammer. Die Linke und der Kitsch*, 3rd edition (Berlin: Edition Tiamat 1994) pp. 150-151.

The second group consisted of men and women who are still trying to live the dream of an anarchist utopia today.

-Oberspitzte ki:innte one formulates that many at the March <The representatives of the "68er" generation, who achieved fame, power and prestige through state institutions, have the same amnesia about their own history that they blamed on their own fathers in the wild years between 1967 and 1976. Thus, to this day, former lawyers from the RAF, spon tis who have turned into gryphons, their next departures and dogmatic antagonists, but also members of the following generation of politicians, such as the "gay civil rights activist" Volker Beck and his administrati ve homunculus Gunter Dworek, suffer from chronic vocal cord paralysis as soon as the name "Peter Schult" is mentioned. Is it fear of their own courage in days gone by? Or the fear of disappointment? In 2001, Alice Schwarzer thought she could detect in incidental remarks by Daniel Cohn-Bendit from the mid-1970s an affinity to padophilia on the part of the former street!)en campaigner and paragon.⁹ It is striking that the name Peter Schult was not mentioned in this context. Was this because Schult had always sought an offensive confrontation with the women's movement and had not infrequently triumphed over his antagonists instead of bowing to the will of the self-appointed Amazons?¹⁰

9) Alice SCHWARZER: Alice im Mannerland. Eine Zwischenbilanz (Ki:iln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch 2002) p. 136.

10) On the difficult research situation concerning the new women's movement, see Ilse LENZ/ Brigitte SCHNEIDER: Neue Frauenbewegung and social movement research. Views of a Research Project. In: Bernd HDTTNER / Gottfried OY / Norbert SCHEPERS (eds.): Vorwärts und viel vergessen. Beiträge zur Geschich te und Geschichtsschreibung neuer sozialer Bewegungen (Neu-Ulm: AG Spak 2005) pp. 57-70.

Economic changes can also affect the ability to remember. I wrote several letters and e-mails to Bruno Gmiinder, the head of the gay publishing house, without success. Unfortunately, he apparently no longer remembers his involvement in the Red Help Munich and his socio-political commitment at that time. Perhaps it was because the gay movement at that time had called for the destruction of the capitalist-pornographic subculture in order to create a new revolutionary-socialist gay man. But history is not only shaped by contemporary witnesses.

In order to blur contours, it also requires helpful archivists who lock away relevant files, dispose of them or do not respond to inquiries. This is understandable, since non-governmental document collection agencies are often dependent on public subsidies. Of course, priorities have to be set. Party-political archival ties of the political left are no different here. All the files on Peter Schult, on debates about youth sexuality, and on women/pado disputes in the

The "Archive Griines Gedachtnis" by Biindnis90/The Griines seem to have fallen victim to a concerted lobotomy. The remnants of the self-proclaimed "revolutionary aristocracy" of 1968 did not want to be disturbed in their subjective navel-gazing.¹¹

The former conservative antagonists of today's "new center" behave in a very similar way; in their search for a new profile in the post-Kohl era, they want to forget their popular disenchantments of the past as quickly as possible. The party press and politicians' speeches, which were so reactive to moral issues in the 1970s, are often hard to find in the archives, and the party foundations show considerable shortcomings in documenting earlier discussions.

11) Franz SCHNEIDER: Dienstjubiläum. In: Franz SCHNEIDER (ed.): Dienstjubiläum einer Revolte. "1968" und 25 Jahre (München: von Hase & Koehler 1992) pp. 9-79, here p. 18.

standsliicken on. It must have been burning in archives, newspaper offices and some heads, *ignis sapiens* was at work.¹²

Thus, the only thing left for the interested historian to do is to carefully evaluate the available sources (letters, diary entries, recordings of meetings) and to interview as many contemporary witnesses as possible in order to gain a comprehensive picture of Schult's life. In addition, the reading of contemporary journals as well as the overviews of the 1970s that have been published in the meantime have been undertaken. In addition, in recent years individual case studies have been made by former protagonists or historians about political groups or individuals of the 1970s. However, these are often linked to contemporary political objectives and are of rather dubious scientific quality. The situation is even worse for the 1980s. In this decade, the emancipatory Griines and the remaining West German communists began to normalize abruptly. Today, no one really remembers the debates of that time. The reason often given is that those years were not so long ago and therefore no one wanted to say anything about them. The most credible excuses come from people who don't want to talk about the 1970s because they simply can't remember them. It was all so long ago, you were part of a larger whole in which you believed and to which you devoted your life.

12) *Ignis sapiens*" (Oat.: "wise fire") refers to the inexplicable absence of files in archives. *Ignis sapiens* seems to have been particularly active in German archives during the Second World War, even if they were never bombed. Thus, the very files from the years 1933 to 1945 that historians are very interested in are often missing. Even within correspondences, letters or records are often missing, while the leaves next to them do not even show traces of burning. This is a clear sign of *ignis sapiens*.

... How the excuses in German history resemble each other.

Peter Schult had already had an astonishing career as a drug dealer, foreign legionnaire and politician in the years before 1970. Actually, there should have been enough files on these stages of his life. One could also expect social historians to have published at least partially informative studies. But from the mid-1950s onward, Schult moved outside society, frequented subcultures, and exhibited behavior that was beyond the scope of historiography, both then and now. He changed workplaces frequently, was not unionized, and did not want to be part of the "system. As a result, the interested researcher has to resort to literature that is generally not part of the main selection of historians: criminological assessments of social fringe groups, medical literature, novels, subjectively colored literature of Christian revivalism, and anarchist pamphlets. The impressively swollen literature on labor history is of little use, since this union-sponsored research does not deal with the subproletariat, whose inner life would be interesting for understanding Peter Schult's biography. At least some files from the years after 1945 have been preserved in state archives. At the same time, there is a relatively broad literature on protest movements, state repression, and the development of the Federal Republic's (Spic£) biirgtariat in those years, so that the external environment around Peter Schult can be relatively well discerned. There are no contemporary witnesses here, since most of them are already deceased or untraceable. There is always some piece missing to complete the puzzle. Therefore it is quite possible that in the following chapters errors are contained, today still living persons were misunderstood, deceased ones experienced a misinterpretation and some firmly established world view gets cracks. I would not be surprised if the criticism to be expected

came precisely from those who could remember nothing at all before. But all this is to be added to a discussion about Peter Schult, about youth sexuality and conformism, about the happy hara-kiri of social movements and similar topics.

not stand in the way.

This book is divided into two parts: In the first and most extensive chapter, I trace the history of the medical pathologization of homosexual padoophilia in Germany. The following chapters describe Peter Schult's life "between the fronts" of the German post-war society up to the bosom of the revolutionary movements in the wake of the student revolt of 1968 and the anarchic and political situation for Schult.

christ and padosexual ideal of life decisive years

During this time, Schult developed a broad socio-political commitment, whereby his sexuality more than once led to profound disagreements within the political left spectrum. The sexual theories established at that time

are sometimes still considered today, mid-1970s gekniipfte

Loyalty relationships continue. It therefore makes sense to devote a separate chapter to this exciting period. But even after Schult's death, the debates continued, his long shadow lingering in many respects. In the course of the

years, there have been astonishing changes in the political positioning of certain arguments or acting persons. The historical Riickschau thus opens up new insights into these discourses.

I would have liked to ask some contemporary witnesses, former (path) travelers or antagonists. But there was a lack of willingness to cooperate, which I find very unfortunate.

At this point, however, we would like to thank all those who enabled, accelerated, or optimized the present book with hints, tips, comments, and criticism.¹³

13) Of course, I alone bear the responsibility for the use of the information given to me.

First of all, I would like to thank the Basis-Buchladen in Munich, whose team not only reawakened additional eyewitnesses, but always kindly assisted with information. Axel, Steffi & Co also put me in touch with Helmut Strobl, who for the first time described Schult's last years to me in a vivid and informative way and made it possible for me to get in touch with other contemporary witnesses (e.g. Otto Frick). I would also like to thank Volker Schlondorff and Margarethe von Trotta, who gave me access to unique source material and spoke to me with great openness. Armin Witt, Karl Heinz Roth and Gerhard Seyfried are to be mentioned as constant counterparts, friendly discussion partners, helpful contemporary witnesses and inquisitive listeners. Interesting information was also provided by Jutta Ditfurth, Christian Schmidt, the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Humane Sexualität (AHS), employees of the archive of the Gay Museum who are immune to authoritarianism, and a number of people from Schult's direct environment who prefer to remain unnamed.

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14) Florian MILDENBERGER: The Question of Guilt. In: *Gigi. Zeitschrift für sexuelle Emanzipation* 39, 2005, pp. 20-23.