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Contents

ARTICLES

Robert Cowan

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**The Fatality of Romanticism vs. the Metaphysics of Sexual Love:
Wagner's Love Letter to Schopenhauer and the Break-Up with
Nietzsche**

The issue of whether chastity or sexual union leads to transcendence in Richard Wagner's final opera *Parsifal* (1882) was one of the precipitating factors in Friedrich Nietzsche's break with him. But an unfinished and unsent 1858 letter to the composer's hero Arthur Schopenhauer, entitled "Original Konzept: Metaphysik der Geschlechtsliebe," sheds light on how Wagner's views of immanence and transcendence changed from the late 1850s to the early 1880s. His Grail knight, who is both a holy fool and a pure-blooded warrior, suffers from the contradictory impulse to surpass his material form and yet be an exemplar for a degenerating Europe. Wagner's fusion of Eschenbach, Schopenhauer, and Gobineau creates a racialized metaphysics that is only theorized, though. *Parsifal* becomes the leader of the Grail knights, but how he will re-connect with those of us who are "all-too-human" to help us heal our spiritual lives remains to be seen. (RC)

Yahya Elsayghe

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Lübeck versus Berlin in Thomas Manns *Buddenbrooks*

From early on, *Buddenbrooks* has been received as a 'German' novel in an unequivocal and unqualified sense of the term. Why, then, is the German unification of 1871 almost completely absent from the narration? Why does the city of Berlin play such a subordinate part in it? Why does the name of the capital occur only in dubious, if not fatal, collocations? Why, on the other hand,

are the historical data of Lübeckian institutions manipulated so massively? Why, for example, is the tenure of a new head of school aligned with the founding date of the Second Empire? And why does the narrator avoid referring to 'his' city by its proper name? These and some other questions are to be examined on the basis of a socio-historical contextualisation of the text. As a result of its re-reading the novel will prove to be far more Lübeckian than German. (YE; in German)

James N. Bade

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The Magic Mountain of Weimar Politics: The Impact of the Assassination of Walther Rathenau on Thomas Mann's *Der Zauberberg*

Thomas Mann's *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, while not totally anti-Republican, had gained Mann a substantial following in conservative quarters distrustful of the Weimar Republic in the immediate post-war years. The assassination in 1922 of the German Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau, however, caused Mann to re-think his public political stance. Confronted with the extremist terrorism of the radical right, and the realisation that his views may have encouraged this political extremism, Mann resolved to henceforth put all his weight behind the new Republic. Nowhere is the impact of the assassination of Rathenau on Thomas Mann more evident than in the composition of *Der Zauberberg*. The chapters written after the death of Rathenau reflect the fundamental shift in Mann's political attitudes, and the *Schnee* chapter may be seen as an urgent appeal to the readership of the time for an end to terrorism in order to usher in a new era of humanitarianism. (JNB)

Derek Hillard

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Ernst Jünger's Literature of Pain, or the Troubles Of Detaching Mind from Feeling

Ernst Jünger's treatment of pain, emotion, and the body in the 1930s ("On Pain") mark a shift from his earlier treatment. Whereas the early works (*Wäldchen 125, Feuer und Blut*) featured more complex models of emotion, body, and mind in terms of unity and extension, the later work reveals a model of neat separation so as to allow for sacrifice and greater control of pain, affect, and technology. The early work explored the material world as an extension of the body, while "On Pain" imagines the body as a vessel. This puts it starkly at odds with embodied descriptions to be found in work of the philosophical anthropologist Helmuth Plessner as well as contemporary views in the sciences. Jünger's attempt in "On Pain" to disembody consciousness and negate feeling is contradicted not only by the mind's reliance on the body but also on his reliance on tropes of emotion. (DH)

Michelle Ricci Bell

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Refiguring Authenticity in Irina Liebmann's Biography *Wäre es schön? Es wäre schön! Mein Vater Rudolf Herrnstadt*

This article analyzes Irina Liebmann's 2008 biography as it reframes the life of her father, Rudolf Herrnstadt, GDR pressman and politician. Although a

departure from fictionalized treatments of his life, this biography nonetheless makes great use of the novelist's tools to heighten our understanding of Herrnsstadt. Specifically, I suggest that underlying formal and thematic approaches common to *Wäre es schön?* and post-Holocaust literature is a shared concern for exploring notions of authenticity in historical retelling. The generational divide that demands the meticulous, critical treatment of an individual's past simultaneously elicits questions unexplorable with authenticating facts alone. This alternative kind of authenticity admits to the value of traces that may be inconsistent with long-proclaimed truths, and to the mediated quality of evidence. This form of authenticity supports Liebmann in her quest to characterize her father's story in terms of the world as she—both daughter and interlocutor—understands it. (MRB)

Tilman Venzl

94

Wie aus einer deutschen Jüdin eine Jüdin in Deutschland wird. Literarische Erinnerungspolitik in Lotte Paepckes *Unter einem fremden Stern* (1952)

The literary texts of the German-Jewish author Lotte Paepcke (1910–2000) have been read predominantly as historic accounts of a survivor of the Shoah, while their artistic merit has been all but neglected. In this article, her wartime autobiography *Unter einem fremden Stern* (*Under a Foreign Star*) of 1952 is analyzed from the viewpoint of literary criticism. The focus lies on the formal aesthetic aspects, the retrospective reflections on the questions of German-Jewish integration, guilt and reconciliation, the references to Buber's theology of the Fall of Man, and the consequences for Paepcke's later stance on the German politics of Holocaust memory. (TV; in German)

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