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ARTICLES

Laura Anna Macor

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Die Herausforderung der Sprache. Die umstrittene ‘Bestimmung des Menschen’ (1748—1800)

This article deals for the first time with the history of the concept ‘Bestimmung des Menschen’ from a linguistic point of view. Since its coinage in the 1730s and its official introduction in 1748, it assumed a central role which it maintained until the very end of the 18th century. In fact, it represented a central issue not only from a general theological and philosophical perspective, but also from a genuinely linguistic one. For the noun ‘Bestimmung’ was assumed to mean different things, depending on whether it was applied as a general religious or Christian—and precisely protestant—term, or in the ethical or logical realm. Not least thanks to this linguistic potential, its charm survived both Criticism and Idealism. (LAM; in German)

William H. Carter

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Administration and its Vicissitudes: Contingency, Crisis, and Failure in Justus Möser’s “Kurze Geschichte der Bauerhöfe” and Goethe’s *Faust II*

This essay argues that Möser’s “Kurze Geschichte der Bauerhöfe” in *Patriotische Phantasien* (1774) provides Goethe with a literary model of administration that he reverses with the land reclamation project in *Faust II*, where Faust’s individual ambitions counter Möser’s example of collective effort on behalf of the common good. The sea is central to both texts. In Möser’s story, property owners prudently protect their land from watery encroachment. Faust,

on the other hand, famously seeks to win land from the sea at any cost. The texts also differ in their approach to contingencies—judicious in Möser, violent in *Faust II*—as well as their critique of administrative practice. With respect to the latter, Möser focuses on administration in general, while Goethe emphasizes Faust's role as the senior administrator. In the end, however, both texts find common ground in the catastrophic failure of their respective projects. Drawing on correspondence, literary texts, "political fables," and official writings as well as the discourses of mining and political economy, this article examines Möser's contribution to the representation of contingency, crisis, and failure in *Faust II* in order to show how Goethe combines the practical with the aesthetic and the economic in his "Hauptgeschäft." (WHC)

Julian Reidy

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"Das ganze Haus". Wilhelms Riehls *Die Familie* (1855) und Thomas Manns *Buddenbrooks*

This article deals with the complex relationship between Thomas Mann's first novel *Buddenbrooks* and the study *Die Familie* (1855) by the conservative historian Wilhelm Riehl. It attempts to show that Riehl's thinking might have had a much stronger influence on *Buddenbrooks* than previously assumed. The article also seeks to clarify the attraction this particular source appears to have held for the young Thomas Mann: his fascination for Riehl may be part and parcel of a complex governing Mann's early work that only recently started to attract scholarly attention, namely Mann's attempts to come to terms with the reconfiguration of the relationship between 'center' and 'periphery' in a newly unified German Empire. (JR; in German)

Peter Morris-Keitel

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Entlarvung eines Mythos: Zu Arnold Zweigs Novelle „Der Spiegel des großen Kaisers“ (1926)

Arnold Zweig's relatively unknown short story, "Der Spiegel des großen Kaisers" (1926), gives the reader unique insights into the political and economic activities of the last emperor of the Staufer family, Friedrich II (1194–1250), including aspects of his private life. Friedrich II came to some prominence in the 19th century when historians and authors wrote numerous works about him, thereby creating the image of a mythological figure of a supposedly great, yet forgotten German leader. Arnold Zweig's goal with this short story, however, appears to be to debunk this myth by pointing out the history of Friedrich II which in many respects was not much different from that of other medieval emperors and thus does not deserve any uncritical glorification. In addition, Arnold Zweig sharply distances himself from Stefan George who in many of his works expresses a naïve admiration of the emperor, overlooking, for example, Friedrich II's abuse of power and his anti-Semitism. (PM-K)

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