

# M

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## Contents

### ARTICLES

**Gianluca Paolucci**

**Moderne Mysterien: Carl Friedrich Bahrds „Deutsche Union“  
zwischen Geheimnis und Öffentlichkeit. (Mit einigen  
Anmerkungen über Schillers *Don Karlos*.)**

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The government ban of the Bavarian secret society of the Illuminati in 1785 and Frederick William III's succeeding to the Prussian throne in 1786 marked a changing of the political atmosphere in Germany, giving rise to a wave of conservatism, especially in Prussia. Taking the Order of the Illuminati as model, in 1786 the enlightened theologian Carl Friedrich Bahrdt founded in Halle the "Deutsche Union", a correspondence society with the aim of recruiting liberal-thinking authors, of seizing the German editorial market, and of promoting the formation of an enlightened public opinion. Analyzing archival sources and Bahrdt's works (from the *Briefe über die Bibel im Volkston* to *Zamor, oder der Mann aus dem Monde*), the essay singles out the ideological fundamentals of the media politics of the secret society in the light of Bahrdt's conception of a rational Esotericism (*vernünftige Esoterik*); it highlights the concrete and intellectual differences from and similarities to the previous experience of the Illuminati; it focuses a wide concept of Illuminatism, which can also be interpreted as a modern media theory. At the end, the article demonstrates to what extent Illuminatism influenced the German classical literature of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by re-reading Schiller's *Don Karlos* (1787). (GP; in German)

**Tom Spencer**

**Revelation and *Kunstreligion* in W.H. Wackenroder and Ludwig Tieck**

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I argue that *Herzensergießungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* and *Phantasien über die Kunst*, co-authored by Wilhelm Wackenroder and Ludwig

Tieck, employ a “proto-theological” strategy to defend the meaningfulness of the idea of revelation in the romantic age. On the surface, these works argue for a natural affinity between art and religion due to a common dependence on supernatural inspiration. In the eyes of many scholars, however, the various markers of a modern sensibility in the text call into question whether the idea of *Kunstreligion* can or is even meant to be viable. Against this suspicion, I suggest that the scholarship has not adequately appreciated the total, and quite modern, strategy for representing divine action in these texts. Instead of being grounded in specific religious images—such as Rafael’s vision of the Madonna, which can be explained away as metaphor—the concept of divine action can most reliably be inferred from a more general quality of the text, namely the unsystematic heterogeneity of divine phenomena that it represents. When intuitive certainty of the divine is combined with an irreducible diversity of forms, we are pushed beyond the realm of rational-scientific competency and into a “proto-theological” realm viable even in modernity. (TS)

**Kristina Mendicino**

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**Writing Coincidence: Brecht’s and Marlowe’s History Play**

Although the importance of writing to Brecht’s dramaturgy and dramatic theory has been repeatedly suggested in recent Brecht scholarship, less attention has been devoted to the ways in which writing works in the poetic and dramatic texts that he wrote. Through a close analysis of his and Lion Feuchtwanger’s adaptation of Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II*—another drama in which writing plays a crucial role—I trace the implications of writing for the status of biography, history, and decision in the text. (KM)

**Jameson Kismet Bell**

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**Theatricality of Media: The Ethics of Adapting *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* to the Motion Picture**

This article uses the concept of theatricality to explore the relationships among literary, cinematic, and broader cultural codes presented in Heinrich Böll’s *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum* and von Trotta and Schlöndorff’s cinematic adaptation. Through Erika Fischer-Lichte’s minimal yet concise definition of theater as signs of normalized cultural signs, I use the concept of theatricality to explore the diverse media in which these meta-signs are employed and arranged to both support and critique the authority of normalized cultural signs. Along the way I sketch a possible ethics of media, namely, if one can outline the possibility of translating codes and signs between various media, then one can create a means by which to critique the institutions of power dictating proper performance of the codes of the medium. (JKB)

**Wolfgang Lueckel**

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**From Zero Hour To Eleventh Hour?—German Fiction of the Nuclear Age Between 1945 and 1963**

This essay investigates five German literary post-war dystopias by Oskar Maria Graf, Hans Henny Jahnn, Hans-Helmuth Kirst, Gilbert Merlin, and Hans Wör-

ner, depicting global nuclear war. Although not recognized as canonical *Nachkriegsliteratur*, these pieces offer remarkable evidence that the years after 1945, leading up to Germany’s economic miracle, were suffused with tremendous pessimism that not only questioned the validity of the Zero Hour, a democratic reboot after 1945, but also anticipated the dawning Cold War and its potential for total destruction. Through an innovative narrative technique that dismantles the coordinates of time and space, these texts explore new realms and also accomplish an early productive confrontation with the Third Reich and its aftermath during a time that lacked a more substantial public debate about Germany’s past. Their deep moral skepticism suggests that the world has been irrevocably changed through modern science and that our entire civilization is at stake. (WL)

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