

# M

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## Contents

### ARTICLES

**Jens Loescher**

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#### **How to See Through Swammerdam's Microscope**

This article deals with the 'paper work' of the seventeenth-century microscopist Jan Swammerdam: drawing as part of experimental practice rather than mere documentation. In the "Biblia Naturae"-corpus of the *Nachlass*, Swammerdam's *raison d'recherche* is the position he takes against the theory of spontaneous generation in larval transmutation. Drawing what he sees beneath the microscope Swammerdam adds certain elements to the image of the specimen in 'layers.' Nevertheless, this is not the old chestnut of a preponderance of theory overruling 'realistic' representation. Rather, microscopical observation must rely on experimental cognition as an intermediary between plain sensual input and 'how to see.' It turns out that this kind of experimental cognition depends crucially on the 'paper work' of the microscopist rather than on her skill handling the technical device. Surprisingly, this is equally true for later stages of microscopy, as this article demonstrates for the 20<sup>th</sup>-century neuroanatomists Ramòn y Cajal and James Papez. (JL)

**Lena Heilmann**

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#### **Literature and the Fear of a Suicide Epidemic after Fanny von Ickstatt's Fatal Fall in 1785**

On January 14, 1785, witnesses watched in horror as seventeen-year-old Fanny von Ickstatt tumbled off the *Frauenkirche* in Munich and fell to her gruesome death. Ickstatt's sudden and highly visible suicide perplexed the public, captivated the attention of newspaper presses, and led to a short-lived media sensation, all of which exacerbated pre-existing fearful attitudes concerning suicide's increased presence in texts. News of Ickstatt's death dovetailed with a

cultural anxiety about how printed descriptions of suicide might glamorize the act and contribute to a suicide epidemic. Narratives and reports of Ickstatt's suicide offered a new moment in eighteenth-century Germany as authors, philosophers, and historians now re-considered the purported "suicide epidemic" along gendered lines. This article traces competing discourses pertaining to Ickstatt's suicide in order to offer a broader understanding of the multi-faceted conversations regarding suicide and gender roles in eighteenth-century Germany. (LH)

### **Henrik Sunde Wilberg**

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#### **Translation as Subversion: Ludwig Tieck's *Don Quixote* and the Poetic Logic of Jena Romanticism**

This article sets out from a hitherto overlooked connection between literature and philosophy in the Jena Romantic period. In Ludwig Tieck's translation of Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1799) there is a direct interpolation of a major philosophical concept: the Spanish *hazaña*—describing the undertakings of the hero, meaning "heroic deed" or "exploit"—is translated as *Tathandlung*, the neologism Fichte had forged in the first *Wissenschaftslehre* (1794). This gives rise not to an abstract question of poetry's relation to thought but a complex constellation of responses within the literary politics of Jena Romanticism, from the place of Fichte to the role of translation, as well as the theory of the novel, in which, in the quarrel over *Don Quixote*, the Romantic "transcendental poesy" becomes subverted. I show that Friedrich Schlegel responds with a strategy in which one of the professed collective and collaborative ideals of Romantic thought—symphilosophy—comes to exclude Tieck's position, applying the framework of Plato's *Ion*. The *ironic* position Schlegel claims can thus, I argue, be constructed as a response, in Platonic terms, to the un- or even anti-philosophical rhapsode—the *ionic* position—perceived in the poetic practice of Tieck. (HSW)

### **Ivan Boldyrev**

69

#### **Spekulative Poesie: Geheimnis und Geschichte in Hegels *Eleusis***

Hegel's poem *Eleusis* (1796) implies a paradox in trying to combine a critique of language as inadequate for expressing the Absolute with a plea for keeping a secret. Dialectics suggests that the secret is the poem itself in its performance. I show that *Eleusis* envisions a certain view of history that entails a pessimistic relation to actuality and a utopian longing for the new community of those who keep secrecy. Unearthing the Christian inspiration that drives the development of the main ideas to be found in *Eleusis* helps to demonstrate that it is on this community enacted by the poem that the secret of the Eleusinian mysteries and, generally, the destiny of the Absolute, would further depend. In an intersubjective and thus truly dialectical way the poem should open itself towards interpretations that could ruin its initial message. This fragility remains a distinctive feature of Hegel's speculative poetry and lends it the hope of remaining a 'secret as secret.' (IB; in German)

**Thomas Rendall**

85

**Thomas Mann’s Dantesque *Zauberberg***

Of the many parallels to Dante in *Zauberberg* the most intriguing occur in its presentation of the hero’s love for Clawdia Chauchat. Castorp’s comically elaborate courtship resembles Dante’s courtly service to Beatrice, and the eventual broadening of his sentiments also resembles, in a more serious vein, the transformation of Dante’s love from *eros* to *caritas*. When Dante is finally reunited with Beatrice at the top of the mountain of Purgatory, she is accompanied by a mythological animal representing Christ, and when Clawdia after long absence returns to Hans, she also has a new lover explicitly associated with the Saviour. As Dante ultimately recognizes the spiritual nature of his love, so Hans agrees with Clawdia to be bound by a newly chaste affection in mutual service to Peeperkorn. Dante’s transformed love leads him to the presence of God, and whatever hope remains at the end of *Zauberberg* seems also to rest on the possibility of a love which can somehow go beyond the purely material and selfish. (TR)

**Robert Craig**

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**“Ist die Schwarze Köchin da? Jajaja . . .”: Mimesis and Günter Grass’s *Die Blechtrommel***

*Die Blechtrommel* (1959) has inspired widely divergent readings, not least in respect of the aesthetic grounds that the novel offered for the social hope in the wake of Auschwitz. This article re-visits it against the backdrop of Grass’s own recognition of the post-war author’s—personal and collective—sense of complicity; and in that connection it considers how *Die Blechtrommel* embodies the dialectic of hope and despair more broadly characteristic of Grass’s sense of post-war literary and political engagement. Its contention is that Theodor W. Adorno’s conception of “Mimesis,” as it is developed in *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1944) and *Ästhetische Theorie* (1970), can provide a compelling account for Grass’s aesthetic and ethical achievement. The article examines the senses in which Oskar embodies the dynamic of Mimesis, staking as he does a subversive ethical claim for his notorious drumming and sing-shattering. It then turns to showing how Grass’s portrayal of the “bodily” reveals it as a meeting point of complicity, shame, and guilt—but also a faintly utopian site for a new social order. By thinking through these insights precisely with Mimesis in mind, we might begin to do justice to the elusive moment of hope in Grass’s work. (RC)

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