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ARTICLES

Caroline Weist

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Castration and Critique: Resisting Rehabilitation in Ernst Toller's *Hinkemann*

While serving a sentence for treason after WWI, playwright and veteran Ernst Toller wrote his tragedy *Hinkemann*, which tells the story of a soldier who has returned home after being castrated in combat. In part because of Toller's leftist politics and German-Jewish identity, his play and the wounded soldier at its center have typically been viewed as a heavy-handed critique of Germany and its nationalist militarism, broadly conceived. In light of archival research on the relationship between Toller and prominent sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, however, this article argues that the play should be read as a critique of a much more specific target: wartime Germany's aggressively normative, gendered rehabilitation system. It frames Toller's play with Butler's notion of "critique," and then reads it alongside medical literature of the period in order to present *Hinkemann* as an interrogation of how lives are made unlivable by a system supposedly meant to save them. (CW)

Stefan Hermes

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Ende gut, alles gut? Soziokulturelle Assimilation und unzuverlässiges Erzählen in Theodor Storms *Pole Poppenspüler*

Pole Poppenspüler is one of the few novellas by Theodor Storm which features, at least at first glance, a happy ending. However, this does not at all justify the harmonizing interpretations the text has received for decades, which tend to ignore the problematic character of Storm's intradiegetic narrator. My article addresses this shortcoming by resorting to the narratological concept of unreliable narration: thus, it can be shown that the socio-cultural assimilation of the

female main character only seemingly leads to the resolution of all conflicts. (SH; in German)

Paul Thompson

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“A walker’s approach [. . .] is a phenomenological one”:

W.G. Sebald and the Instant

This article employs a phenomenological approach to appreciate three works of W.G. Sebald in English translation—*The Rings of Saturn*, *The Emigrants*, and *Austerlitz*. Max van Manen’s concentration on the “pre-reflective” nature of lived experiences (*Qualitative Health Research* 27.6 [2017]: 812) and Gaston Bachelard’s focus on the disruptive instant provide an insight into threshold experiences in Sebald. In *The Rings of Saturn*, the step-by-step progress of the *Wallfahrt*, Bergsonian *durée*, and the concentricity of planetary rings are disrupted by immediate experience. In *The Emigrants*, eidetic memory is shown to be a product of the present, not a recollection of the past, and encounters with the “Butterfly Man” to be more important than his identity, whilst in *Austerlitz* memory is theatrical or cinematic. As a result of this analysis, it emerges that phenomenological concepts of place, event, object, and vector express how Sebald’s narrator and denizens encounter reality. (PT)

Simone Pfleger

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Libidinal Economies: Sexual Fantasies and Deferred Pleasure in Barbara Kirchner’s *Die verbesserte Frau*

The fulfillment of sexual fantasies and libidinal pleasure plays a central role in constructions of desire, power, and narratives of self-optimization and freedom in three of the main characters in Barbara Kirchner’s crime novel *Die verbesserte Frau* (2012). This essay focuses on the figure of the *Prototyp*, a woman who, against her will, has undergone neurological reprogramming to experience feelings of pain as pleasure. As figures in the novel negotiate their relationship with and desire for the *Prototyp*, they experience stultification and deferral of the gratification of their corporeal longing and excitement. While one might assume that this type of relationality is negatively connoted, the text demonstrates that under particular circumstances some of the characters are able to forge connections to others, even if they are embedded in exploitative structures and those bonds are not permanent. (SP)

Merten Kröncke

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Zufall in Erich Maria Remarques *Im Westen nichts Neues*

This paper examines the representation of chance in Erich Maria Remarque’s *Im Westen nichts Neues* (1929). Three theses are presented. First, chance is particularly present in the novel, both in terms of the frequency of thematizations of chance and the episodic structure of the text. Second, chance assumes several important functions, such as letting the represented events appear particularly realistic. Third, the depiction of chance undergoes meaningful development, namely from the representation of “luck” to the representation of “bad

luck.” Overall, it is shown that chance can be used as a fruitful interpretive category which can contribute to a deeper understanding of *Im Westen nichts Neues*, but also of war literature in general. (MK; in German)

Juliane Schicker 479
Musical Imagery and the Canon in Sighard Gille’s Gewandhaus Mural *Gesang vom Leben*

Visitors to the Leipzig Gewandhaus in Germany can still admire its mural *Gesang vom Leben* by painter Sighard Gille today, but scholarship about this East German painting has been limited regarding its iconography and socio-political commentary. Such analysis, however, can help remember and reinterpret the German Democratic Republic and shed light on relationships between music and the fine arts. Through musical imagery, Gille commented on actually existing socialism by means of a dual approach including criticism and support of the system. Gille articulated his vision for the country by linking socio-political concerns with artistic expression and by alluding to controversial topics in the GDR’s (artistic) history. While positioning the Gewandhaus as closely tied to its locality and musical history, Gille also offered criticism of the musical canon as disseminated by GDR musicologists and performers. In this way, the artist becomes an agent in the development of socialism and its art. (JS)

REVIEW ARTICLE

Christiane Arndt 507
Neuerscheinungen zum Thema *Fontane und Medien im Fontanejahr 2019*

(McGillen, Petra, *The Fontane Workshop: Manufacturing Realism in the Industrial Age of Print*, 2019.—D’Aprile, Iwan-Michelangelo, *Fontane. Ein Jahrhundert in Bewegung*, 2018.—Delf von Wolzogen, Hanna und Andreas Köstler, Hrsg., *Fontanes Briefe im Kontext*, 2019.—Trilcke, Peer, Hrsg., *Text + Kritik Sonderband Theodor Fontane*, 2019.)

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- Begemann, Christian** und **Davide Giuriato**, Hrsg., *Stifter Handbuch. Leben – Werk – Wirkung* (Vance Byrd) 544
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Errata for Issue 112.2

Clara Ervedosa's article, "The Perpetrator is a Southerner": "Südländer" as Racial Profiling in German Police Reports, omitted the following footnote: "This work was supported by Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia [SFRH/ BPD/1011155/2014, UID/SOC/50012/2020]"

Page 342 had an incorrect price listed for *Heine and Critical Theory* by Willi Goetschel (London: Bloomsbury, 2019). The correct information: \$102.60 hardcover, \$35.96 paperback, \$28.76 e-book.

We apologize for any inconvenience.