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**studi
germanici**



«Quaderni dell'AlG»

Verità e menzogna

a cura di

Gabriella Catalano e Federica La Manna

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2018**

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Abstracts

Mathias Mayer, *Wille, Zwang, Kunst? Zu Moral und Ästhetik der Lüge*

Lying may be characterised as a phenomenon which tries to hide itself. It is difficult to identify lies because the liar knows very well about truth and tries to use his wilful deception. Lies, one could say, are functioning while supposing to be true. The following text, in the form of a lecture, tries to give insight into possible definitions, into the history and several fields of lying. We will be looking at experiences in the area of philosophy and of religion, of the laws and of linguistics. The history of lying starts with its favourite myths, the fall of Adam and Eve on the one side, and Ulysses and his inventions on the other side. Is there a process of learning to lie, what does lying mean in everyday life, is lying a form of art? How can literary texts transport truth? What are the connections between aesthetics and the intention to analyse lies? What is the borderline between non-reality, lies and aesthetic truth?

Jörg Meibauer, «*Du willst die Wahrheit?*» *Raffaella Cerullo (Lila) als tollkühne Lügnerin*

In lying research, there are numerous attempts at clarifying the notion of «lying while saying the truth». A particular striking instance for this can be found in Elena Ferrante's novel *Storia del nuovo cognome* (2012). In chapter 75, Raffaella Cerullo (Lila) deceives her husband Stefano Carracci about her having an affair with Nino Sarratore by telling Stefano the truth. From the perspective of the narrator Elena Greco (Lenù), she is a foolhardy liar. The episode is analysed within the framework of Neo-Gricean pragmatics, proposing that a deceptive conversational implication is part of the total act of lying. The reader is invited to reconstruct Stefano's interpretation in the fictional context and to share or reject Lenù's evaluation of Lila's risky move.



Gianluca Paolucci, *Dire la verità nel Settecento tedesco: i Briefe über die Bibel im Volkston di Carl Friedrich Bahrdt e il Don Karlos di Schiller*

In the last courses held at the Collège de France, Michel Foucault questioned the concept of *parrēsia*, which means to speak frankly, to speak the truth without dissimulation, exposing oneself to the risk of persecution, even to the risk of death. If Foucault reflected on the localization of the *parrēsia*, demonstrating how the veridical practices change according to place, time and context (for example, under a tyrannical regime), the present essay intends to identify the forms of veridiction emerged in Germany in the late eighteenth century – a period which was characterized by the permanence of absolutism – starting from the analysis of Carl Friedrich Bahrdt's *Briefe über die Bibel im Volkston* (1782) and Schiller's *Don Karlos* (1787). Both works concern with the problem of *parrēsia*, i.e. with the question whether the truth can be communicated openly in an illiberal regime, exposing it to the danger of persecution or censorship. At the same time, starting from the consideration of the concepts of 'accommodation', which was introduced in the eighteenth century in the context of biblical hermeneutics (i.e. the capacity of the message of God and the Holy Scripture to 'adapt' to the cultural level and spiritual faculties of the believers), and 'pia fraus' (the concealment of truth and the use of 'fairy tales' on religions for civilizing purposes), these works are interpreted as strategies of indirect transmission, 'accommodation' and reformulation of the truth through aesthetical and fictional means, according to medial strategies that seem to have been motivated by the peculiar political and social situation of Germany at the time.

Bettina Faber, «*Mein einziges, mein höchstes Ziel ist gesunken, und ich habe nun keines mehr –*». *Kleist auf der Suche nach der verlorenen Wahrheit*

In the so-called «Kant-Krise» Kleist seems to have abandoned both every hope in objective truth and his previous proposal concerning «the sure way to happiness». Thus, it is not surprising at all that critics often treat him as one of the foremost pioneers prior to modernism, as his literary work and his more indirect allusions, with reference to his poetical method, are seen to radically depart from previous aesthetics and philosophical models and to move towards their transposition «in an extra-moral sense» as presented later by Nietzsche. This article, in contrast, attempts to demonstrate that Kleist underwent a complex process of intellectual struggle which allowed him to rediscover a «strong» concept of truth by redirecting the problem towards the extreme subjective difficulties in discovering an *access* to it. All his texts trace with



great investigative intensity the encoding and decoding of semiotic lines of a truth in the sphere of concrete reality and action. Following these clues, a closer reading of Kleist's last short story *The Duel* tries then to highlight what is, perhaps, a key to understand the intention of his entire poetry, as something far from being relativist. Indeed Kleist appears to suggest, even through his most exaggerated textual fiction, that although randomness is all around, there is a chance of achieving a quite different dynamic of justice and truthfulness through inter-subjective confidence and commitment, endangered as they may ever be.

Jelena U. Reinhardt, *L'inganno del bianco e nero. Max Reinhardt e Hugo von Hofmannsthal*

The long collaboration of Max Reinhardt with Hugo von Hofmannsthal was essential for their artistic development: a considerable part of Hofmannsthal's plays would be unthinkable without the impulse and the influence of the theatre director, as well as some of the most brilliant moments in Reinhardt's repertoire are marked by works created by the playwright. Moreover, this partnership has given rise to a significant renewal of theatrical language, which starts from the shared background of Vienna and then develops, at least in a first phase, in Berlin. By analysing their common work and reflections on theatre, it can be shown, how this radical change mainly takes place on a visual level, within which the ideas of truth and lies, inevitably perceived in a different way in the two cities, assume a very peculiar role. Since ancient times, the metaphor of truth is connected to light, however, the introduction of electric lighting in theatres, redefining the gestures of seeing, consequently modifies the concept of truth and revolutionises the forms of its representation. In particular, Reinhardt proposes a mainly visual style: he moves from the supposed true copy of reality, which portrays the world as a black and white picture in the manner of naturalists, to a reality that contemplates also dreams and imagination, whose truth is depicted through the language of colours.

Massimiliano De Villa, «*Mit unserm Widerspruch, mit unserer Lüge*»: *verità e menzogna in Martin Buber*

In the thought of Martin Buber the dialectics between truth and lie is a pivotal theme. The first traces of this subject matter are scattered in his writings on the Jewish Renaissance and on Jewish mysticism from the early 20th century. These writings bear the witness of Buber's confrontation with Nietzsche's philosophy, one of the most important sources of the former's early production. In its first part, the article deals with Bu-



ber's own formulation of the nexus of truth and lie in the conceptual line which connects Nietzsche (especially as regards his philosophical essay *On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense*), Fritz Mauthner and Gustav Landauer with reference to the mystical phase of Buber's early career. The article then moves on to analyse Buber's treatment of the two concepts in the dialogical phase, as regards above all his rewriting of Hasidic tales after the dialogical turn and the famous essay *Bilder von Gut und Böse* (*Images of Good and Evil*, 1952) which investigates the origins of good and evil in the Bible. In this book Buber points out that the conflict between good and evil experienced by the first humans in the cosmogonic myths – a conflict which still exists in our souls today – parallels the battle between the opposing principles of truth and lie.

Marco Castellari, *Modello, Verità, Menzogna. Max Frisch, Andorra e il teatro postbrechtiano*

After first detailing the historical and aesthetic position of Max Frisch' *Andorra* (1961) and briefly discussing the model-play with a special focus on the structural and thematic saliency of 'truth' and 'falsehood', this essay contends that *Andorra* marked a significant milestone in pseudo- and post-brechtian theatre facing the problem of representation in the second half of 20th Century. Frisch critically adopts and updates Brecht *Modell*-notion as a way of re-discussing the tension of individual and social, 'true' and 'false' identity and memory in German-speaking Drama about antisemitism, thus opening to the likewise post-brechtian, diverse scenic re-enacting of personal and collective traumas in Peter Weiss' *The Investigation* (1965) and in George Tabori's *The Cannibals* (1968).

Rita Svandrlik, *La verità come crepa o come fuoco fatuo: Was wahr ist e Ein Wildermuth di Ingeborg Bachmann.*

According to Bachmann, the task of the writer is to seek the truth in the «dark prison of the world», where darkness always bears reference to the historical situation. Various lyrics by Bachmann present an anti-phrastic dynamic between obscurity, understood as the condition of both creative activity and search for the truth, and its contrary, light; this is the case with the poem *Was wahr ist*, where the question of truth is posed by the title itself. In this essay, Hans Blumenberg's metaphorology is the starting point to propose an analysis of poetic truth as inseparable from the form in which it is expressed. Bachmann's poetic form is pervaded by cracks and fissures, as evoked in the last stanza of *Was wahr ist*; fractures become a recurring motif also throughout the author's prose production up to and including *Malina*. In the short story *Ein Wildermuth*, a meta-



phor of fracture is found when the protagonist shouts and retreats into silence after having understood that truth, always contingent and never absolute, is as elusive as an ignis fatuus («Irrlicht»). Here, Bachmann uses an unconventional variant of the metaphorical matrix of light, as the first constituent of the German compound word emphasizes notions of vagueness, erring, and wandering.

Peggy Katelhön, Manuela Caterina Moroni, *Inszenierungen direkter Rede in mündlichen Interaktionen*

In this paper, we analyse four different linguistic devices that participants use to contextualize direct speech in German everyday conversations. Three of them are so-called quotative constructions (*nach dem Motto, von wegen, ich so/sie so*) whereas one device is a prosodic one. We show that each device is specialized for specific types of direct speech. Our main claim is that humans use direct reported dialogue in everyday conversation not only to give information on what someone (or themselves) has said or thought, but also to accomplish interactional activities such as evaluating the participants of the reported speech and making their own speech more appealing by inventing dialogues and scenes which never took place. Based on an analysis of German spoken-language corpora, we argue that most instances of direct speech do not serve to report true dialogues (or dialogues speakers believe to be true), but rather can be viewed as a way of lying for a good purpose, specifically to make conversation more lively and appealing.

Claus Erhardt, *Lügen wir, wenn wir höflich sind? Eine pragmatische Annäherung an Lüge und Aufrichtigkeit*

This study faces the question of whether politeness is to be considered a form of lie. The idea of associating polite behaviour with a lack of sincerity is suggested by a common-sense-view as well as by literature (e.g. Goethe). The text discusses this common-sense-view and attempts to underpin it through an analysis of the use of the words *politeness* and *lie* in German. It then focuses on a scientific approach to the problem by questioning what it means as regards pragmatics and the theory of communication if the condition of sincerity and the maxim of quality were systematically undermined as would be the case if one states that polite utterances, hence a certain part of everyday communication, are at least partially lies. To find an answer to this question, it is obviously necessary to outline a definition of lie as well as of politeness. The study, therefore provides a review of a several scientific approaches to lying followed by an overview on recent discussions in the field of politeness

theory. Politeness is found to be an aspect of communication aimed at the management of relationships; in this function, it does not have any propositional content. Therefore, it cannot be considered a lie in the sense of an assertion the speaker believes to be false. The study comes to the conclusion that the sincerity of polite utterances does not refer to the propositional content, but to the speaker's attitude. In this sense it might be a lie, but it is not necessarily such.

Federica Ricci Garotti, *La pubblicità non mente? Rapporto tra verità e menzogna nei testi pubblicitari italiani e tedeschi*

Can Advertising be completely honest? Does the language of advertising use to lie? As a matter of fact advertising must have an influence on the audience, attract them through language manipulation or types of claims that appeals to consumers. Since advertising must reach people from a wide variety of cultural origins, which role do cultural differences play in advertising, in order to persuade customers? Are the persuasion strategies in advertising global or cultural-centered? In order to answer to the mentioned questions this paper is going to analyse: i) which language strategies or techniques of advertising tend to band the truth in order to have an impact either directly or indirectly on the consumers and ii) which language and discourse differences between advertisement techniques in two different types of cultures could be identified (Italian and German). To do so, a corpus of 30 advertisements in German and Italian has been chosen and subsequently compared. The researcher has tried to analyse the diversification of the advertising techniques applied for the persuasion of different audience. The semantic features, rhetoric strategies as well as the type of speech acts in German and Italian advertising have been taken into consideration. The study came to this conclusion that German advertising use more information than emotional features focusing on the product more often than on the consumers. Otherwise, commissive and expressive speech acts are more used in German advertising than in Italian ones. Furthermore, Italian advertising presents a more direct approach of persuasion while German advertising use a glamorous rhetorical lexicon, which leads to a greater illocutionary force and tends to band the truth in order to get the attention of the customers.