

Abstracts

Manfred Frank, *Hölderlin and Novalis' Philosophical Beginnings (1795)*

The ‘constellation research’ founded by Dieter Henrich carefully reconstructed Hölderlin’s philosophical beginnings, uncovering educational preconditions that apply just as much to his somewhat younger contemporary Friedrich von Hardenberg (who later called himself Novalis). But this parallel has never interested constellation research, which may not be called at all blind to early Romanticism. Yet both Hölderlin and, even more so, Novalis arrived at their first philosophy influenced by Reinhold’s *Grundsatzphilosophie*. Over time, especially in their encounter with Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer, they came to doubt the idea of the derivability of true propositions (*Urtheile*) from a supreme ‘principle’ secured by evidence. This doubt subsequently led them to tackle Fichte’s *Wissenschaftslehre*, in which they saw an idealistically exaggerated new version of Reinhold’s elementary philosophy. This is what my article aims to illustrate on the basis of the most significant textual findings.

Stefano Franchini, *The Exorbitant Beast. Remarks on the Historical Anthropology of the Ape*

The rise of Darwinism gradually gave the ape an unprecedented anthropological centrality – not only in biological sciences, but also in the philosophy of history and in literature. In Darwin’s age, however, specific traditional characteristics were associated with the definition of the ape, attributing a social value that cannot be taken for granted to the animal. By means of an investigation into the use of the term *Affe* in many German compounds, this article shows how the construction of modern ‘bourgeois’ self-consciousness took place in rapport with the coeval symbolic and projective representation of the ape. Due to its anthropomorphic nature, the ape works *ipso facto* as a deforming mirror of human beings. In the eyes of the bourgeois,

this anthropological mirror cannot but return an image that is always imperfect (irrational, ridiculous, childish, grotesque), far from the ideal of self-discipline on which the so-called ‘civilisation process’ rested, and still rests.

Fabian Lampart, *The Metropolitan Lyric Poems of the Postwar Period. Heinrich Böll’s Cologne Trilogy and Other Poems*

Heinrich Böll was known in German postwar literature primarily as a committed intellectual and author of novels and short stories. Less visible were his poems, which are neither among the great lyrical texts of postwar literature nor exclusively occasional poetry – although occasional poems make up an important part of Böll’s body of work. The writer of poems also expresses concerns typical of Böll as an author in general, such as themes of everyday life, social problems, or issues of religion. This is particularly evident in the poems written between 1968 and 1984, in which he speaks of his hometown of Cologne. Changes of the postwar decades are thereby problematized within the horizon of Cologne’s history. Böll thus delivers a noteworthy attempt to update the tradition of metropolitan poetry beyond National Socialism and the postwar period.

Elena Agazzi, *Die Stimme hinter dem Vorhang by Gottfried Benn and Die Box by Günter Grass. Late Style and Generational Gap*

The framework for this unprecedented comparison between one of Günter Grass’s final works, *Die Box* (The Box: Tales from the Darkroom, 2008) and Gottfried Benn’s *Die Stimme hinter dem Vorhang* (The Voice Behind the Curtain), a *Dialogendrama* published in 1952, is provided by some of Edward Said’s considerations on ‘late style’ in artistic work. By reconstructing – with the aid of some comments on Grass’s text – the reasons for the staging of a dialogue between a father and his children (present in a different way in Benn’s work), this article reveals an interesting epochal cross-section of the two periods in which these works appeared. Thanks to a specific device that acts as a medium between the past and the future – in Benn’s case the *Sonntagszeitung* and in Grass’ case the photographic device known as *Agfa-Box* by his friend Maria Rama – they activate a ‘radar’ vision on reality and a diagnosis on the artistic-self characterized by lights and shadows. The points of contact between the two works are thus evident.

Vittorio Hösle, *The Late Fruit of a Precocious Mind. Jugend, gestern* by Albert von Schirnding

The essay analyses Albert von Schirnding's autobiographical text *Jugend, gestern. Jahre – Tage – Stunden* (2015) and defends its high artistic value. The depiction of the youth of a Catholic aristocrat born in 1935 and exhibiting great talent early on, who later withdrew from literary circles into quiet work as a teacher of ancient languages at a Bavarian *Gymnasium*, makes the content, the complex interweaving of the documentary and fictional dimensions as well as the integration of the author's early diaries from the 1950s with his reflections sixty years later make the form of the book enticing both for historical and aesthetic reasons.

Vincenzo Gannuscio, *Lexical Strategies of Anti-Hegemonic Identity Formation in the Populist-Conspiratorial Rhetoric of the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD)*

Since its entry into politics, the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) has programmatically positioned itself against the 'old parties' and against a political 'oligarchy' which, in the party's view, holds the power for decision-making. This clear stance against a supposedly secret collective is a recurring theme in the party's communication, which appears to indicate that this position against the established decision makers is of fundamental importance for the party's identity formation. Based on this, the article will describe some of the terminology used by the AfD for its anti-hegemonic identity profiling. The article will also examine whether the conspiratorial tone echoing in these statements is also present in the content of the campaign communications.

Francesca Fabbri, *On the Trail of Arthur Schopenhauer in Weimar. The Young Philosopher and the Ducal Library*

The Weimar period played an essential role in the development of the young Schopenhauer; not only for the opportunity to meet and debate with Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, but also for the cultural impressions that the residential town proposed at the time – especially the ducal (albeit public!) library, which owned the best editions of the classical authors and their translations. Moreover, the proximity of the University of Jena and the vigorous activity of Friedrich Justin Bertuch's publishing house, open to the Eastern world, also played important roles. The young Schopenhauer seized upon these opportu-

nities: his research and reflections remain documented in the library's loan registers, presented and discussed here for the first time in the context of his short stays in the town.

Maurizio Pirro, *On the Early Italian Reception of Stefan George. Correspondence between Robert Boehringer and Leone Traverso (1935-1939)*

In the Robert Boehringer collection kept in the Stefan George Archiv in Stuttgart, there is a series of letters that draws a detailed picture of the Italian reception of Stefan George's poetry in the aftermath of his death. Leone Traverso, who tried to present himself as the most suitable translator of German Symbolism thanks to his works on Rilke and George, wrote to Boehringer, who was the testamentary executor of George's estate. Torn between the need for a vaster circulation of the poet's work and the need to make sure that strict stylistic criteria for its translation were met, Boehringer ensured Traverso considerable support in dealing with publishers and other personalities close to the George-Kreis. He also instructed some experienced readers (e.g. Leonello Vincenti) to assess the young translator's work. After staying in close contact between 1935 and 1936, Traverso's impatience and a few missteps on his part led Boehringer to lose interest in the project, which would eventually see the light in 1939 as part of the poetry series by Guanda.

Sabine Hoffmann, *Critical Feedback in International Video Conferences on Training Teachers of German as a Foreign Language*

This article deals with how teachers of German as a foreign language negotiate negative or critical feedback among themselves in international video conferences. After a brief overview of the state of the art in research on negative or critical feedback in teacher training, the concept of collegial feedback in the Erasmus+ project LEELU (www.leelu.eu) is presented, providing the data basis for this empirical study. Sequences were selected from the video conferences that took place during the training and were examined by a multimodal microanalysis. The aim of the study is to reveal how foreign language teachers with varied knowledge of German give critical feedback and react to it. The emerging patterns of action should contribute to a better knowledge of feedback competencies in order to support teachers of German as a foreign language in further digital training.