ARTICLES

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Spectators, Ramblers and Idlers: The Conflicted Nature of Indolence and the 18th-Century Tradition of Idling

The 18th century could be argued to present a threshold opening to a society of leisure. This insight is confirmed by a number of social developments and by a variety of discourses focusing both positively and negatively on the spread of leisure among an increasing segment of the population and the increased amount of available free time, its abuses and opportunities for self-improvement. More people from diverse social classes had the time to divert themselves at a variety of cultural and social events, and the range of available distractions and leisure activities also increased over the century. Many traditional sites of leisure, such as the theater or opera, opened themselves to a wider stratum of English society; others, like the amusement parks, were new creations that targeted a populace bent on self-improvement and entertainment in nearly equal measure.

Among the discourses about these developments, early modern (Puritan) notions about the sinfulness of idleness and the necessity of constant labour remained prominent despite the increasing secularization of British society. Besides insights into the moral duties and values of work, such discourses frequently inflected their criticism of the laxity of current mores with class-related prejudices and preconceptions which indicated that leisure was perceived to be a privilege of the higher classes:

[…] There is one thing that more remarkably distinguishes Persons of Rank from the Commons, and that is our Natural Contempt of Business. Now the Vulgar, like a Hackney-Horse, never stir abroad without something to do; and they visit, like a Merchant upon Change, for their Profit more than their Pleasure. But it is a Reproach to the Honour of a Well-bred Woman, to have anything in her Head but the Fashions, or to know any Fatigue but in Idleness. (Burnaby 1700, Act III, Scene i; all bold emphases in this essay in the original)

If indulged in by servants and the working population, leisure turns into "idleness." This attitude persists in the deployment of the lexemes leisure, idleness and laziness (sloth). What one enjoys oneself is merited leisure; what servants do is merely idleness:

The idleness of the natives is excessive; for instance my ayah will dress me, after which she will go to her house, eat her dinner, and then returning, will sleep in one corner of my room on the floor for the whole day. The bearers also do nothing but eat and sleep.

1 See, for instance, Walton (1983); Brewer (1997); Jordan (2003); Borsay (2006).
2 See Coke and Borg (2011).
3 A typical instance of this Puritan attitude towards idleness can be seen in the "Homily against Idleness" (1835).
when they are not pulling the pankhas. [...] I knew not before the oppressive power of the hot winds, and find myself as listless as any Indian lady is universally considered to be; I can now excuse what I before condemned as indolence and want of energy – so much for experience. (Parkes 2002 [1850], 19)

As I have shown elsewhere (Fludernik 2014, 142), the *nouveaux riches* come in for ridicule since their mercantile background, with its emphasis on work and no play, unfits them for the enjoyment of aristocratic leisure. Mr. Watt in Fanny Burney's *A Busy Day* (1801-2) is a parody of the *parvenu* who finds himself incapable of handling the excess of free time which his wealth has thrust upon him;

I can't divert myself no way! Ever since I left off business, I've never known what to do. They've made me give up all my old acquaintance, because of their being so mean, and as to our new ones, it's as plain as ever you see they only despise me: for they never get up off their chairs, if I ask them how they do in their own houses; and they never give me a word of answer I can make out, if I put a question to them. (Burney 1984 [1801-2], 83)

At the same time, the 18th century is the period in which problems of the availability of free time become particularly pressing in a manner anticipating today's overwhelming demands caused by the work place and the social media:4

> [H]e, who cannot persuade himself to withdraw from *society*, must be content to pay a tribute of his time to a *multitude of tyrants*; to the *loiterer*, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the consulter, who asks advice which he never takes; to the boaster, who blusters only to be praised; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whose happiness is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himself know to be vain; to the economist, who tells of bargains and settlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances; to the usurer, who compares the different funds; and to the *talker, who talks only because he loves to be talking*. (Johnson 1963 [1758], 47-48)5

With lots of time at one's disposal, social actors focus their attention on others, thus stealing those people's valuable time intended for more useful or profitable occupations. As Manly complains in *The Plain Dealer*, "why should anyone, because he has nothing to do, go and disturb another man's business?" (Wycherly 1996, I, i, 293). The similarity with present-day problems of leisure emerges particularly from the large variety of possible leisure activities and the entertainment overkill that it induces in pleasure-loving individuals trying to maximize the available offers. See Gatty's jibe at Courtall, who claims to have no time for gallantry:

> Truly you seem to be men of great employment, that are every moment rattling from the eating-houses to the playhouses, from the playhouses to the Mulberry Garden; that live in a perpetual hurry and have little leisure for such an idle entertainment. (Etherege 1982 [1668], II, ii, 132)

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4 Hall notes that "'Leisure,' once understood as an antonym for 'busy,' is now scarred by the same kind of frenzy found in the work place. Many of us return from vacation to find respite in the relatively slower pace of our jobs" (2001, 28); echoing Marvell he is "sure that all of us are for the most part occupied with rational diligence, useful to our students, and colleagues and institutions and communities, [...] yet that at our backs we hear idle frenzy hurrying near" (Hall 2001, 31).

5 Henceforth abbreviated as I. All emphases in bold are mine.
Whereas, in the 17th century, this stress of leisure activities remains restricted to the aristocracy and the upper echelons of the middle class, in the 18th century it becomes a phenomenon experienced by a much larger number of people from various backgrounds.

Idleness in the 18th century is therefore initially an attribute of denunciation indicative of both moral laxity and social climbing. The connotation of harmless beginnings that will result in disaster persists from 17th-century views about idleness as the root of all sin. As in John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*, indulging in idleness (missing Sunday sermon, playing games), the exercise of leisure time leads to gambling, whoring, stealing, robbery and a criminal career ending on the gallows; or, with women, to illicit sexual intercourse, pregnancy, prostitution and death, whether by destitution or via the route of thievery ("Homily Against Idleness"). This trajectory from idleness to sin and vice ("Müßiggang ist aller Laster Anfang" – 'Idleness is the root of all evil') provides plots for numerous moral tales (e.g. Bunyan's *Life and Death of Mr. Badman*) and novels (*Moll Flanders, Ferdinand Count Fathom, Nature and Art*).

Yet, by the end of the 18th century, in the context of Romanticism, and the proto-Romantic verse of the poetry of sensibility, the derogatory overtones of idleness and indolence have become muted and a positive reconceptualization of leisure has taken place, particularly in the context of meditation and poetic inspiration. Thus, Rousseau's fifth reverie on his stay on the island on Lake Biel provides an enchanting picture of solitary bliss in nature (2004 [1782], 81-91); Gray in the famous "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1973, 61-66) and Goldsmith in his nostalgic depiction of the villagers' leisure activities in "The Deserted Village", paint an idyllic scene of rural pastoralism in opposition to urban hustle and bustle and vice (1966, 287-304); and William Godwin in *Fleetwood* has the young factory boy, Ruffigny, recuperate on his rambles in nature (1992 [1805]) – probably one of the first instances of the idea that working ability needs to be recharged by periods of relaxation. Above all, as Richard Adelman has so instructively illustrated, the notion of indolence acquires a major poetological function in Romanticism, and this not merely in Keats's "On Indolence" (Adelman 2011; 2014).

At first blush, it seems then that the story of idleness in the 18th century could be summarized in a simple narrative of a shift from a negative to a positive view of idleness, with mid-century works like Thomson's *Castle of Indolence* (1972 [1748], 163-212) or related work by William Cowper, Anna Letitia Barbauld and S.T. Coleridge suitably ambivalent about *otium*. However, as this article will demonstrate, attitudes towards leisure are much more varied and, indeed, conflicted than such a simple storyline suggests. I wish to document the ambivalences of idleness and indolence in the 18th century by comparing the *Spectator* essays' pronouncements with those of Samuel Johnson in *The Idler* and *The Rambler* in the later 18th century. As we will see, the attitudes towards idleness in both periods vary significantly, and Johnson's evaluation of idleness is, if anything, slightly more critical than Addison's and Steele's.

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6 But see Hume discussed below.

7 See Adelman (2011, 86-87).
1. The *Spectator* Essays on Idleness and Indolence

In the *Spectator* essays one finds both negative and positive depictions of idleness (Addison and Steele 1965). Thus, in *Spectator* # 316, for the correspondent, idleness is characterized as a "distemper" or disease bred from a lack of "Employment" and resulting in "Lethargy" (# 316: 3 March 1712, III 148; anon.). Such a (pseudo-) definition rests on the lexical meaning of idleness as inactivity, but it also links idleness to psychological disposition, i.e. torpidity, listlessness, apathy or even depression:

*Idleness is so general a Distemper,* that I cannot but imagine a Speculation on this Subject will be of universal use. There is hardly any one Person without some Allay of it; and thousands besides my self spend more Time in an idle Uncertainty which to begin first of two Affairs, that wou'd have been sufficient to have ended them both. The Occasion of this seems to be the Want of some necessary Employment, to put the Spirits in Motion, and awaken them out of their Lethargy. (# 316, III 148)

The correspondent goes on to remark on the paradoxical relationship between the amount of free time and its utility or qualitative use – quantity seems to have an inverse relationship to quality:

*If I had less Leisure, I should have more; for I shou'd then find my Time distin-
guish'd into Portions, some for Business, and others for the indulging of Pleasures:* But now one Face of Indolence over-spreads the whole, and I have no Land-mark to di-
rect my self by. *Were one's Time a little straitned by Business, like Water inclos'd in its Banks, it would have some determin'd Course; but unless it be put into some Channel it has no Current, but becomes a Deluge without either Use or Motion.* (# 316, III 148-9)

This anticipates the insight taken as a basis for the Freiburg interdisciplinary research cluster "Otium," namely that otiose leisure requires temporal delimitation – one cannot appreciate one's free time to maximum advantage if this time is illimitable. (In the words of the T-shirt inscription sold by Museum Selection: "The trouble with retire-
ment is that you never get a day off.") As the correspondent notes, by devoting some time to "Business" and some to the "indulging of Pleasures," the latter time would attain a specific quality, whether of recreation, otiose leisure or diversion. The simile which compares leisure's confinement to particular periods to the regulation of water courses, is particularly ingenious since it uses the flow of time and of water as the common denominator of generic space and, in the blend, links the vigor of business activity to the swiftness of the water current, with the stagnancy of unregulated water courses being equated with the indolence of human inactivity.

While the above passage sees idleness as a threat to a useful life of real pleasures to be savored at selected moments, another critical description of idleness goes beyond the metaphor of idleness as a disease to posit its degeneracy and dehumanizing consequences.

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8 Addison and Steele (1965) are hereafter cited parenthetically in the text. See Ketcham's (1985) excellent study of the *Spectator* essays as well as Fitzmaurice's (2000) stylistic analysis.
9 http://www.sfb1015.uni-freiburg.de/welcome?set_language=en
But indeed there are Crowds of People who put themselves in no Method of pleasing themselves or others; such are those whom we usually call indolent Persons. Indolence is methinks an intermediate State between Pleasure and Pain, and very much unbecoming any Part of our Life after we are out of the Nurses Arms. Such an Aversion to Labour creates a constant Weariness, and, one would think, should make Existence it self a Burthen. The indolent Man descends from the Dignity of his Nature, and makes that Being which was Rational meerly Vegetative: His Life consists only in the meer Increase and Decay of a Body, which, with Relation to the rest of the World, might as well have been uninformed, as the Habitation of a reasonable Mind. [...] (#100: 25 June 1711, I 420-1; Steele)

Paradoxically, it is indolence and not labour that produces weariness. The lethargy of the earlier passage is here replaced by suicidal dejection; and – in conformity with the idea that only agents are alive – the weary sufferer is portrayed as lapping into physical as well as metaphorical degradation – he becomes a vegetable, losing his mental ability as animal ratione. Indeed, given unpropitious frame conditions, leisure may turn from a pleasurable experience that enriches the well-being of a person into a harmful self-enclosure of brooding and melancholy. With no useful deployment of free time, boredom may set in and thought, rather than rising to active engagement with one's environment, may spiral downward, resulting in a preoccupation with the taedium vitae.

By contrast to these negative depictions of idleness and indolence, the Spectator essays, especially in Addison's contribution on the pleasures of the imagination, focus on the arts as ideal modes of filling one's free time. Not only do the arts allow for an "innocent" exercise of pleasure; they moreover cater to our basic human needs and bestow a number of sensual and intellectual gifts on us:

A Man of Polite Imagination, is let into a great many Pleasures that the Vulgar are not capable of receiving. He can converse with a Picture, and find an agreeable Companion in a Statue. He meets with a secret Refreshment in a Description, and often feels a greater Satisfaction in the Prospect of Fields and Meadows, than another does in the Possession. It gives him, indeed, a kind of Property in every thing he sees, and makes the most rude uncultivated Parts of Nature administer to his Pleasures: So that he looks upon the World, as it were, in another Light, and discovers in it a Multitude of Charms, that conceal themselves from the generality of Mankind. There are, indeed, but very few who know how to be idle and innocent, or have a Relish of any Pleasures that are not Criminal; every Diversion they take is at the Expence of some one Virtue or another, and their very first Step out of Business is into Vice or Folly. A Man should endeavour, therefore, to make the Sphere of his innocent Pleasures as wide as possible, that he may retire into them with Safety, and find in them such a Satisfaction as a wise Man would not blush to take. Of this Nature are those of the Imagination, which do not require such a Bent of Thought as is necessary to our more serious Employments, nor, at the same time, suffer the Mind to sink into

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11 This anticipates Johnson's remarks in the Rambler (# 85 (8 January 1751, II 82)), according to which "almost every occupation [...] is happier and safer than a life of sloth" (qtd. in Sachs 1967, 13). In his Guardian essay on sloth (# 131: 11 August 1713, II 290) Steele also argues that "there is more toil, fatigue and uneasiness in Sloth, than can be found in any employment a man will put himself upon" (1798, Vol. 2, 288-95). Gladfelder (2003) cites Oscar Wilde's quip from The Importance of Being Earnest: "Algernon: It is awfully hard work doing nothing. However, I don't mind hard work where there is no definite object of any kind" (445).
that Negligence and Remissness, which are apt to accompany our more sensual Delights, but, like a gentle Exercise to the Faculties, awaken them from Sloth and Idleness, without putting them upon any Labour or Difficulty. (# 411: 21 June 1712, III 538-9; Addison)

The arts may take on the function of a friend and satisfy one's need for conversational exchange; they quench our thirst or hunger for aesthetic experience in the visual medium and soothe our senses when applied to the artistic disposition of nature. The use of the word "Charms" links to the picturesque and its emphasis on variety. Indolence or inactivity in the negative sense induce a dearth of stimulation, they result in an existence threatened by monotony. The arts, by contrast, are particularly prone to enliven through their variety; they stimulate the exercise of one's mental capacities without overburdening them ("waken [the Faculties] from Sloth and Idleness, without putting them upon any Labour or Difficulty").

Even in this positive characterization of the pleasures of the imagination, idleness in its shape as a negative foil provides a kind of hortatory basso continuo. The innocent pleasures of the imagination are contrasted with "sensual Delights" whose overstimulation presumably terminates in exhaustion and mental and physical depletion (the tristitia post coitum?). More importantly, such indulgence leads to moral "Remissness," and the gratification of pleasures of a less innocent variety tend to encourage criminal leanings since they are married to "Vice" and "Folly." In this argument, Addison does not significantly differ from Bunyan or other apostles of restrictive morality. In the binary equations of Addison's argument, the pleasures of the imagination are unsurprisingly tasted by "wise M[e]n."

Besides the cited passages with their negative and positive depictions of idleness, one can find a great number of references to idleness in the Spectator essays which allow one to consider a range of idle activities and of connotations of indolence. Thus, although there are references to idleness as laziness (e.g. # 50: 27 April 1711; I 214; Addison), the examples of idle behavior include a variety of actions and pursuits as listed in what follows:

- begging: "alms [...] wages of idleness" (# 232: 26 November 1711, II 403; anon.)
- idleness of the fop (# 311: 26 February 1712, III 126; Addison)
- idleness of the rich who tinker with handicraft jobs (# 108: 4 July 1711, I 447; Addison)
- idleness of boredom – the "empty spaces of life" (# 93, 16 June 1711, I 395; Addison)
- idleness of diversions that attempt to fill these empty spaces (e.g. playing cards) (# 93: 16 June 1711, I 396-7; Addison)

Thus, begging is seen as a pastime of idlers who are paid for their laziness by alms (# 232). Indolence, however, is a typical habitus of the leisure class which includes the fop (who spends more time dressing than is good for him), the hobby craftsman (# 108) and the social busybody. However, Addison also acknowledges that "idle time" may induce boredom; the "empty spaces of life" (# 93, I 395) will need to be filled by reasonable activities rather than useless diversions such as card games:

The next Method therefore that I would propose to fill up our Time should be useful and innocent Diversions. I must confess I think it is below reasonable Creatures to be
altogether conversant in such Diversions as are meerly innocent, and have nothing else
to recommend them, but that there is no hurt in them. [...] I think it is very wonderful to
see Persons of the best Sense passing away a dozen Hours together in shuffling and
dividing a Pack of Cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few
Game Phrases, and no other Ideas but those of black or red Spots ranged together in dif-
f erent Figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of this Species complaining that
Life is short. (# 93, I 396-7; Addison)

The cited passage establishes an interesting parallel between the limited space of
*otium* and the shortness of life: just as life is too short and therefore too precious to
waste on diversions such as gaming (or dancing, presumably), one's free time is too
valuable to squander in self-destructive melancholy.

One can therefore note that already in the early 18th century, time is considered to
be a material good which acquires value from its limited supply. It is within the no-
tion of a Puritan timetable that empty spaces exude a *horror vacui* and seem to require
filling with activity. Those who waste their time on diversions fail to recognize the
value of time from an economic point of view, whether that economy is one of money
('time is money') or morality. One could even speak of an incipient ethics of leisure.

Leisure spent usefully and agreeably may be filled with the maintaining of
friendships and in tandem with "conversation" (intellectual exchange; presumably not
sexual; see # 93, I 395-6). It moreover is a particularly condign frame for the arts of
music, painting, reading (literature) and sculpture (# 411), as we have seen.

Idleness in the *Spectator* is implicitly contrasted with work ("Business"). Among
the busy, valuable work is opposed to idle diversions (business in the form of inane
activity). Idleness, likewise, has two variants – positive idleness (i.e. otiose leisure)
and simple idleness, namely laziness, folly or sloth. Indolence, as the "rest of the
mind" (# 316, III 149; anon.; see also # 624: 24 November 1714, V 132; Tickell), can
correlate with lethargy, but also with excessive activity. One can picture these distinc-
tions in a diagram as follows:

![Diagram of different types of idleness in The Spectator](image-url)

Figure 1. Different types of idleness in *The Spectator*
As regards the lexeme 'indolence,' the Spectator essays give equal weight to the dictionary meaning of 'painlessness' (# 381: 17 May 1712, III 431-2; Addison; and # 634: 17 December 1714, V 167; Tickell) and to 'inactivity' (# 316, III 148; anon.; # 634, V 167; Tickell; # 263: 1 January 1712, II 522; Steele). However, besides indolence qua rest of the mind and that of the vegetative state (# 316) already discussed above, the word is also used to describe the inveterate thieves of time whom Steele calls “Lowngers [i.e. loungers]” (# 54: 2 May 1711, I 229). In this connotation indolence equals idleness. At the same time, indolence occurs in two contexts which allow for a much more positive reading. It is used to refer to the inactivity of old age (# 100, I 419; Steele), where no moral note of denunciation is intended; and it approaches the positive quality of idleness spent indulging in the pleasures of the imagination when, in # 387, Addison associates it with a "perpetual calm,” “serenity of mind,” and "happiness:"

I scarce remember [...] to have met with many old Men, or with such, who [...] wear well, that had not at least a certain Indolence in their Humour, if not a more than ordinary Gaiety and Cheerfulness of Heart. The Truth of it is, Health and Cheerfulness mutually beget each other [...] Cheerfulness bears the same friendly Regard to the Mind as to the Body; it banishes all anxious Care and Discontent, soothes and composes the Passions, and keeps the Soul in a perpetual Calm. [...] Every one ought to fence against the Temper of his Climate or Constitution, and frequently to indulge in himself those Considerations which may give him a Serenity of Mind, and enable him to bear up cheerfully against those little Evils and Misfortunes which are common to Human Nature, and which by a right Improvement of them will produce a Satiety of Joy, and an uninterrupted Happiness. (# 387: 24 May 1712, III 451-4; italics original emphasis)

This usage of the term 'indolence' therefore is equally ambivalent as that of James Thomson in The Castle of Indolence (1748), where the initial pastoral mode gives way to moral outrage much on the lines of Canto II of Spenser's Faerie Queene with its Bower of Blisse (Spenser 2001).

2. Samuel Johnson's Idling

A first approach to Johnson's attitudes regarding idleness and indolence is to look at his definition of these lexemes in his Dictionary (1755):

YDLE. a.
1. Lazy; averse from labour.  Bull.
2. Not busy; at leisure.  Shakespeare
3. Unactive; not employed.  Addison
4. Useless; vain; ineffectual  Dryden
5. Worthless; barren; not productive of good  Shakespeare
6. Trifling; of no importance  Hooker

To YDLE. v.  To lose time in laziness and inactivity  Prior

YDLEHEADED. a. Foolish; unreasonable  Carew

YDLENESS s.
Johnson distinguishes between several related meanings of idleness: besides the expected meaning of "lazy," two denotations are particularly prominent, those of "not busy; at leisure" and "unactive; not employed." All three focus on a lack of activity, but his state of inactivity may be due to the moral failing of sloth; to the fact of having "empty spaces" of time in the Addisonian phrase; and to the lack of work, a forerunner of today's unemployment. The second set of denotations, however, is less a depiction of free time than of what one does in it. It characterizes a person, object or activity as not worthy of serious notice, as being useless or even ridiculous. In the definitions for idleness, these senses are clearly distinguished under the headings of "trivialness," "inefficacy," and "worthlessness," thus anticipating semantic differentiations made by the OED (s.v. idle), where idle talker ('inefficacy'), idle rascal ('worthless, contemptible'; s.v. rascal), idle fears ('baseless'), idle stuff ('trivial, trifling') and idle curiosity ('purposeless') are listed as semantic subdivisions (OED online).

By contrast, Johnson's definitions of indolence prominently display lack of pain as the primary meaning (which was already on its way towards obsolescence in the 18th century). Moreover, for Johnson the problem of boredom, melancholy and listlessness attaches to indolence rather than idleness:

INDOLENCE, INDOLENCY. s.
1. Freedom from pain. Burnet.
2. Laziness; inattention; listlessness Dryden.

INDOLENT, a.
1. free from pain
2. Careless; lazy; inattentive; listless Pope
   (Johnson, s.v. "indolence," "indolent" (1799))

With regard to indolence, there is therefore an emphasis on negative qualities; Johnson foregrounds idleness and indolence as lack of activity, potentially laziness; he also highlights the equation of indolence with melancholy, listlessness, and boredom. On the other hand, indolence (like idleness) may correlate not with inactivity but with overactivity, especially in the context of spurious and unimportant business by means of which one covers up for a lack of serious tasks to perform.

In the definitional texts in the Dictionary, idleness, indolence and inactivity are moreover frequently used to paraphrase lexemes or denotations of words such as dronish or supinity (defined by indolent and indolence), or babble, chat, chitchat, drone, drowsiness, to forestack ("to neglect by idleness"), lazing, loiter, lounge, lubber, mawmish, playpleasure, saunter, slubber, slug(gish), tattle, truant or vain/vanity.
all defined with reference to idleness. These definitions already reflect prejudices against idling and deep-seated attitudes on Johnson’s part which are echoed in the pages of the Rambler and the Idler. Some of the sources that Johnson provides for his semantic analyses are also telling, as for instance his first example passage from Taylor for the lemma busybody: "Going from house to house, tattlers and busybodies are the canker and rust of idleness, as idleness is the rust of time" (Johnson, s.v. "busybody" (1799)).

When one turns to the Rambler (1750-2) and the Idler (1758-60), one finds that these dictionary definitions are strategically deployed but also inflected by a number of specific contexts, some of them linked to well-known topoi. Thus, in the Rambler (Johnson 1969), the following associations of idleness occur:

- the boredom of the country vs. the town (# 42: 11 August 1750, I 231)
- the necessity of an active life: idleness is a "vacuity," it "ensnares the soul" and produces "passions, fancies and chimeras" (# 85: 8 January 1751, II 85-6)
- procrastination as idleness (# 134: 29 June 1751, II 345-9)
- idleness opposed to tranquility (ibid. 348)

In the Idler, where the subject is clearly central to the journal, a greater variety of modes of idleness can be noted:

- ease and pleasure as opposed to duty and business (# 1: 15 April 1758, 4-5)
- idleness as the common desire of mankind (# 1, 3-4)
- the equivalence of idleness and indolence (# 9: 10 June 1758, 30)
- "vis inertiae:" idleness is inactivity, stupor, languor, drowsiness (# 9, 31)
- total insensibility the aim of all the idle (# 9, 32)
- idleness is "calm repose" vs. business (# 19: 19 August 1758, 59)
- the idleness of "unruffled stupidity" vs. idleness dissimulated by "turbulence and hurry" (# 31: 18 November 1758, 48) – the antiquary as idler, dabbling in verses
- idleness and gender: the idling of shopman's wife (# 15: 22 July 1768, 48-9) vs. admiration for women not being idle (R # 85, II 85-6)

As one can observe in these lists, the crucial Johnsonian innovation regarding idleness is to align it with procrastination (R # 134, II 345-9) – an association not generally valid in the 18th century. That this was due to Johnson’s own personal problems has already been pointed out by Woodruff (1980), Hall (2001) and Jordan (2003). In fact, Johnson is said to have started the Idler in order to "escape from his edition of Shakespeare, which was already seriously behind schedule" (Woodruff 1980, 34). Boswell’s Life of Johnson is full of references to Johnson’s obsession with his

12 This is not a complete list.
13 Henceforth abbreviated as R.
14 See also The Rambler # 41, 7 August 1750, I 221-6 on memory and anticipation of future events as "relie[ing] the vacuities of our being" (221). See also Johnson’s warning to Hester Thrale not "ever [to] suffer yourself to acquiesce in total vacuity" (qtd. in Hall 2001, 29); on Johnson and "the vacuity of life" as observed by Hester Thrale see also Sachs (1967, 4-5); Sachs also draws attention to the entries on vacant and vacancy in Johnson's Dictionary (2001, 5). In the Idler, the lexeme vacuity occurs in the contribution of "Dick Linger" (I # 21, 2 September 1758; 68: "the vacuity of solitude") in correlation with "the tyranny of idleness" (ibid., 67).
supposed idleness. Citing Chesterton and his warning "against the pernicious effects of idleness," Boswell argues that Johnson shared the "listless torpor of doing nothing:"

"Of this dismal inertness of disposition, Johnson had all his life too great a share" (1980, 36). Like Benjamin Franklin, Johnson was obsessed with the maximum exploitation of his available time, though the strict schedules that Franklin observed were not Johnson's mode of operation. However, it is perhaps precisely because Johnson failed to set specific times for his work that he may have felt he was idling when he relaxed in the company of friends or slept in. To a 21st-century person Johnson's monumental oeuvre bespeaks a proximity of imagination as well as an untiring, even incessant scholarly and artistic activity much in excess of normal levels of industry.

When one looks at individual passages in Johnson, one notices that his depictions of idleness are overwhelmingly negative; only in the first issue of the *Idler* does he start out by underlining the "ease and pleasure" of idleness in opposition to "duty and business;" he also notes the universal desire for idleness in humankind:

> It will be easily believed of the Idler, that if his title had required any search, he never would have found it. Every mode of life has its conveniencies. The Idler, who habituates himself to be satisfied with what he can most easily obtain, not only escapes labours which are often fruitless, but sometimes succeeds better than those who despise all that is within their reach, and think every thing more valuable as it is harder to be acquired. (# 1, 3)

Johnson here even acknowledges that it might be a positive habit to refrain from running after novelties since a contented residence in relaxed circumstances often turns out to have helped to avoid unnecessary and fruitless quests. This insight can be verified today in the experience of returning from a long absence and finding in one's (snail- and e-) mail numerous messages that would presumably have incited one to hectic activity, but by the time one reads them, have resolved themselves.

Johnson in *Idler* # 1 goes on to observe that we all hanker after idleness. The word most closely resembles the meaning of 'leisure.' Johnson in fact here recognizes the paradoxical nature of our wish for rest. We believe that rest has to be earned; one needs to work hard to acquire the right to leisure – and this ties in with the conception of leisure as a class privilege or at least a reward for the meritocracy. In German literature there exists a humorous tale by Heinrich Böll in which the industrialist taking a stroll comes across a poor loafer relaxing under a tree and enjoying the view of the sea (Böll 1977, 267-69). He launches into a harangue to the idle man, praising industry and hard work. The gist of the discourse is that after years of round-the-clock hard work one is finally rewarded by being able to take time off and enjoy a stroll and look at the sea. To which the idler replies that he can do this now without having had to

16 Boswell (1980) recurs to the fact that Johnson used his idle time for "desultory" reading (43), but he also acknowledged that the product of such reading, unfettered by a plan of studies, is superior to cramming (35; 303-4). Sachs (1967) notes the recurrence of references to idleness in Johnson's diaries. Again and again Johnson takes the obviously idle resolve to "rise early" (e.g., 18 September 1760, 71) and to "oppose laziness" (ibid.), "to avoid Idleness" (Easter Eve, 1761, 73) and "to shake off Sloth, and to redeem the time misspent [sic] in idleness and Sin by a diligent application [...] to the duties which they Providence shall allot me" (Easter Eve, 1757, 63).
take the arduous route through a life spent on work. Of course, to make this paradoxical point, the parable eliminates questions on how the idler is able to survive (much less raise a family) or on whether the leisure enjoyed by the workaholic is qualitatively different from that of the loafer – after all, most rich people do not sit under trees but enjoy their leisure on golf courses, in exclusive clubs or restaurants, or five-star hotels with their private beaches. Johnson's temporal characterization of idleness as the "ultimate purpose of the busy" is redolent of socialism’s conception of retirement or David Hume's contestation that "[i]ndolence or repose" are "like sleep [...] requisite as an indulgence to the weakness of human nature, which cannot support an uninterrupted course of business or pleasure" (Hume 1987, 270). Johnson’s simile comparing peace at the end of war with leisure as the aim of work may, however, be queried; it raises problematic issues. If the end of war were peace, one would never have started a war in the first place (see the loafer above). What he implies is that work, like war, is a given and that the prospect of eventual peace (rest) makes it possible to persist in one's efforts:

If similitude of manners be a motive to kindness, the Idler may flatter himself with universal patronage. There is no single character under which such numbers are comprised. Every man is, or hopes to be, an Idler. Even those who seem to differ most from us are hastening to increase our fraternity; as peace is the end of war, so to be idle is the ultimate purpose of the busy. (# 1, 3-4)

Johnson's universalist argument continues with a redefinition of homo animal rationale into man as inherently idle:

There is perhaps no appellation by which a writer can better denote his kindred to the human species. [...] Perhaps man may be more properly distinguished as an idle animal; for there is no man who is not sometimes idle. It is at least a definition from which none that shall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the Idler?

That the definition may be complete, idleness must be not only the general, but the peculiar characteristic of man; and perhaps man is the only being that can properly be called idle, that does by others what he might do himself, or sacrifices duty or pleasure to the love of ease. (# 1, 4)

In this passage Johnson additionally refers to the acquisition of leisure through the work of others – man has so many obligations that he would never be able to enjoy his leisure unless he were able to delegate some tasks to others, whether wives, servants or apprentices. This observation again underlines the class-based conception of idleness – the 19th-century proletariat had nobody to whom it could delegate the necessary tasks of household work, having to forego leisure by undertaking these after a sixteen-hour work day.

In the following paragraph the editor of the Idler moreover includes not merely the reader of the journal among the class of the idle ("[W]ho can be more idle than the reader of the Idler?" – # 1, 4); he also notes that idlers constitute a group of like-

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17 See Rosa (2013, xxxv-xxxvi) on a variant of this urban legend.
18 At the same time he opposed the raising of wages for day-laborers on the assumption that more pay would encourage idleness in the working class (Boswell 1980, 1203).
minded people and that the neglect and contempt they elicit from the busy serve to afford them even better leisure:

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which less envy or competition is to be dreaded. The Idler has no rivals or enemies. The man of business forgets him; the man of enterprize despises him; and though such as tread the same track of life fall commonly into jealousy and discord, Idlers are always found to associate in peace; and he who is most famed for doing nothing, is glad to meet another as idle as himself. (# 1, 4)\(^\text{19}\)

At the end of issue # 1, the so far quite positive characterization of the idler takes a turn towards more critical assessment. Johnson points out that idlers dabble in projects which they never complete or put into execution (4-5); since they have never experienced failure, they are censorious of others' lack of success (5). This censoriousness, which appears quite harmless in issue # 1, emerges as malignment in issue # 3:

Much mischief is done in the world with very little interest or design. He that assumes the character of a critic, and justifies his claim by perpetual censure, imagines that he is hurting none but the author, and him he considers as a pestilent animal, whom every other being has a right to persecute; little does he think how many harmless men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not understand; or how many honest minds he debars from pleasure, by exciting an artificial fastidiousness, and making them too wise to concur with their own sensations. He who is taught by a critic to dislike that which pleased him in his natural state, has the same reason to complain of his instructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who, when he thought himself master of Peru, physick'd him to poverty. (# 3: 29 April 1758, 12)

Having introduced the notion of idleness in a comparatively favorable manner, Johnson thus starts to undermine the concept facetiously and to question it from a moral standpoint.

In issue # 9 a letter writer fantasizes about the indolent bliss of nakedness among native tribes, unfortunately impossible to emulate in English weather; he also foregrounds the bed as a site of indolence, which the correspondent argues to be "the same" as idleness (30). In his response to the letter writer, Johnson paradoxically points out that one needs to labour at acquiring the enjoyment of idleness. Idleness has a number of enemies, the foremost among these being "want," i.e. necessity:

Of all the enemies of idleness, want is the most formidable. Fame is soon found to be a sound, and love a dream; avarice and ambition may be justly suspected of privy confederacies with idleness; for when they have for awhile protected their votaries, they often deliver them up to end their lives under her dominion. Want always struggles against idleness, but want herself is often overcome; and every hour shews the careful observer, those who had rather live in ease than in plenty. (# 9, 32)

\(^{19}\) See also Idler # 31: "But idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected, for being a vice which terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others, and is therefore not watched like fraud, which endangers property, or like pride which naturally seeks its gratifications in another's inferiority. Idleness is a silent and peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore no body is busy to censure or detect it" (96).
The inurement to idleness on the path towards the ultimate achievement of "total insensibility" has to pass a process of education without which the benefits of indolence cannot be acquired:

[L]abour is necessary in his initiation to idleness. He that never labours may know the pains of idleness but not the pleasure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himself to insensibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of idleness, and shorten those of labour, till at last he will lie down to rest, and no longer disturb the world or himself by bustle or competition. (# 9, 32)

The high point of idleness is therefore the complete surrender to the "vis inertiae," and this surrender happens gradually:

The vis inertiae, the quality of resisting all external impulse, is hourly increasing; the restless and troublesome faculties of attention and distinction [...] by a long indulgence of idleness, will, like tapers in unelastic air, be gradually extinguished; and the officious lover, the vigilant soldier, the busy trader, may, by a judicious composure of his mind, sink into a state approaching to that of brute matter; in which he shall retain the consciousness of his own existence, only by an obtuse langour, and drowsy discontent. (# 9, 31)20

These tongue-in-cheek appraisals of indolence are counterpointed by a number of critical assessments of idleness in which idleness is often conceived of as busy-ness, impertinent interference in the affairs of others or more generally as a theft of valuable time from people who know how to spend their leisure judiciously. We have already seen this in the passage about the loiterers as tyrants to the individuals who would like to be left in peace (# 14, 47-8).

In issue # 19 we make the acquaintance of Jack Whirler, who is too occupied to do anything, moving between places:

[Jack Whirler] whose business keeps him in perpetual motion, and whose motion always eludes his business; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot stand still because he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places because he stays in none.

Jack has more business than he can conveniently transact in one house, he has therefore one habitation near Bow Church, and another about a mile distant. By this ingenious distribution of himself between two houses, Jack has contrived to be found at neither. […]

When you call at his house, his clerk tells you, that Mr. Whirler was just stept out […], but left word that he should be at the Half-moon tavern [158 Aldersgate Street] at seven, where he hopes to meet you. At seven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. Whirler to tell you that he is glad to see you, and only begs leave to run for a few minutes, to a gentleman that lives near the Exchange, for whom he will return before supper can be ready. Away he runs to the Exchange to tell those who are waiting for him, that he must beg them to defer the business till to-morrow, because his time is come at the Half-moon. (# 19, 60-1)

20 Compare this with Spectator essay # 100: "Such an Aversion to Labour creates a constant Weariness, and one would think should make Existence it self a Burthen. The indolent Man descends from the Dignity of his Nature, and makes that Being which was Rational merely Vegetative […]" (I 420).
The parallel of Jack Whirler's behavior with our cell-phone generation of youngsters strikes me as uncanny; they talk on their mobiles while they are in the company of friends, chatting with absent interlocutors, and only connect with the first group when they are already elsewhere, again by phone. Modernity thus already produces the very paradoxes of leisure observable in our own time.

In a different passage in the *Idler*, Johnson recognizes that "turbulence" is apt to "cover" a kind of idleness:

> As pride sometimes is hid under humility, **idleness is often covered by** turbulence and hurry. He that neglects his known duty and real employment, naturally endeavours to crowd his mind with something that may bar out the remembrance of his own folly, and does any thing but what he ought to do with eager diligence, that he may keep himself in his own favour. (# 31, 96)

Johnson here echoes Steele's *Guardian* # 131 essay, in which he also remarks that trifling activities are a strategy to cover up for a lack of serious business: "If we cannot bring ourselves to appoint and perform such tasks as would be of considerable advantage to us; let us resolve upon some other, however trifling, to be performed at appointed times" (294). Steele moreover satirizes those who dabble in science (293-4). Besides Mr. Whirler, Mr. Sober, Mr. Restless and Dick Linger belong to the category of idlers who are over-busy. On the other hand, for Johnson, retreat, the classic notion of *otium*, is likewise qualified as a type of laziness since it involves the shirking of labor:

> To the scheme of these solitary speculatists it has been justly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being useless. That mankind is one vast republick, where every individual receives many benefits from the labour of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from misery, none have a right to withdraw from their task of vigilance, or to be indulged in **idle wisdom or solitary pleasures**. (# 19, 59)

The censure of solitude is then extended in # 31 of the *Idler*, where Johnson hypothesizes that it may be idleness rather than pride that should take first place among sins. This in turn echoes Steele's *Guardian* essay, where he also argues that "the habit of Sloth is more invincible than that of Vice" (289). In anticipation of Keats, Johnson depicts the "true and open votaries of idleness:"

> There are some that **profess idleness in its full dignity**, who call themselves the "Idle," as Busiris in the play "calls himself the Proud" [play by Edward Young, 1719]; who boast that they do nothing, and thank their stars that they have nothing to do; who sleep every night till they can sleep no longer, and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again; [...]

> These are the true and open votaries of idleness, for whom she weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceased to live and at whose death the survivors can only say, that they have ceased to breathe. (# 31, 96)

Note how the Keatsian poppies linked to oblivion in their poetic intensity dwindle to the flatness of apathy and stupidity, thus again undermining the classic pretensions of *otium* as an ennobling and virtuous state of existence.
In the *Rambler* Johnson proposes to introduce a third term between overactivity on the one hand and the vegetable state of indolence. He calls this "ease:"

*Ease* is the utmost that can be hoped from a sedentary and unactive habit; ease, a neutral state between pain and pleasure. The dance of spirits, the bound of vigour, readiness of enterprize, and defiance of fatigue, are reserved for him that braces his nerves, and hardens his fibres, that keeps his limbs pliant with motion, and by frequent exposure fortifies his frame against the common accidents of cold and heat.

With ease, however, if it could be secured, many would be content; but nothing terrestrial can be kept at a stand. *Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain; [...].* (# 85, II 83)

Note that this echoes the *Spectator* # 100's schema in which indolence is situated between pleasure and pain, but reshuffles the position of the concepts (cf. I 420). In this manner, the two contrasting vices of idleness and indolence can be avoided and a golden mean of leisure within a life devoted to work is sketched.

A last interesting point to raise is Johnson's almost exclusive focus on the male sex (also true for the *Spectator* and *The Castle of Indolence*): predominantly idleness is associated with men. It also seems that the implied reader of the *Rambler* and *Idler* are mostly male, in contrast to the *Spectator* essays, which catered to a wide cross-sector of the educated public and specifically included women readers among its clientele. What is particularly interesting therefore, is that there are two passages in which Johnson links his discussion of idleness with women. The two passages contradict one another. In the *Idler*, a correspondent complains about his wife, who idles in his office and keeps others from work:

SIR,

I have the misfortune to be a man of business; [...] but what makes it the more so to me, is, that my wife has nothing to do: at least she had too good an education, and the prospect of too good a fortune in reversion when I married her, to think of employing herself either in my shop affairs, or the management of my family.

*Her time*, you know, as well as my own, must be filled up some way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind [...]: but my wife, though she could be of as much use as a shopman to me, [...] is now only in my way. She walks all the morning sauntering about the shop with her arms through her pocket-holes, or stands gaping at the door-sill, and looking at every person that passes by. She is continuously asking me a thousand frivolous questions about every customer that comes in and goes out; and all the while that I am entering anything in my day-book, she is lolling over the counter, and staring at it, as if I was only scribbling or drawing figures for her amusement. (# 15, 48-9)

Anticipating 19th-century strictures against idle females in the Victorian novel, this passage provides a humorous portrait of middle-class release from labour which results in boredom – compare Mr. Watt's inability to enjoy his leisure in Burney's *Busy Day* cited above. The wife, barred from an education that would have enabled her to run the shop in cooperation with her husband, pretends to be involved but also refuses to assume the lower position of an apprentice (such as her husband would like her to take over). By contrast, the observation of women at work sewing inspires Johnson to a hymn in praise of embroidery, which helps to "fill[ ] up" what he calls "the vacuities
of recluse and domestick leisure” (R # 85, II 85) and serves as a strategy of keeping the devil away:

For my part, whenever chance brings within my observation a knot of misses busy at their needles, I consider myself as in the school of virtue; and though I have no extraordinary skill in plain work or embroidery, look upon their operations with as much satisfaction as their governess, because I regard them as providing a security against the most dangerous ensnarrers of the soul, by enabling themselves to exclude idleness from their solitary moments, and with idleness her attendant train of passions, fancies, and chimeras, fears, sorrows and desires. Ovid and Cervantes will inform them that love has no power but over those whom he catches unemployed; and Hector, in the Iliad, when he sees Andromache overwhelmed with terours, sends her for consolation to the loom and the distaff. (R # 85, II 86)

Note that Johnson in both essays (since he agrees with the husband's strictures of his wife in essay # 15) pictures women as docile creatures who should be occupied by petty tasks in order to prevent their lapse into vanity and indolence. On the whole, leisure in the 18th century seems to be a predominantly male problem, where women can even serve as a positive role model of industry. By contrast, the love of luxury is more generally conceived of as a female preserve, with male ostentatious display of wealth taken for granted.

3. Summary

As we have seen, the development of attitudes regarding idleness and indolence is not as straightforward as the shift from neo-classicism to (proto-)Romanticism might lead one to assume. In many ways, the Spectator essays project a more consistently positive image of idling to the extent that they integrate leisure moments devoted to intellectual exchange, artistic appreciation and philosophic reflection into their notion of free time well spent. Johnson later in the century is more emphatically censorious with regard to the moral and practical threats of idleness.

It is particularly noteworthy that among the various types of idleness and indolence listed by Addison, Steele and Johnson there should be such great attention for laziness or an excess of activity as a form of idling. This diagnosis links with the 18th-century discovery of leisure among the middle classes, specifically the leisure of people who do not seem to need to work. Since vacant time must be filled, the question is with what it will be rendered supportable. The Spectator essays allow for a variety of "serious" and therefore morally acceptable modes of spending one's superfluity of time, and these are obviously tailored to classical notions of otium. Johnson not only fails to invoke the arts as legitimate types of idling; he is signally dismissive of scientific hobbyhorses and does not merely deplore the dabblers in science and the arts who are wasting their time in order to fill the gaps in their timetables but actively resents them for their interruptions of other people's productive work and well-spent time (I 14, 47).

21 Boswell, however, reports Johnson as holding "knotting" to be "mere idleness" (1980, 1285).
22 See, for instance, Longford (1989); Berg and Eger (2003); Berg (2005); Potter (2014).
23 But, see also Steele's Guardian essay # 13 (discussed above) and the Spectator # 108 (July 4 1711, I 446-9; Addison).
24 See also Spectator # 54 (May 2 1711, I 229-32; Steele).
self-induced stress in reaction to the variety of activities on offer and in correlation with the dictates of fashion and social decorum.

The most striking difference between the *Spectator* essays and Johnson's depictions of idleness and indolence in the *Idler* and *Rambler* lies in Johnson's emphasis on the psychological and physiological dangers of idleness, on idleness as "vis inertiae" (I, # 9, 31) which threatens to engulf the individual and convert them into a vegetative state of inactivity. Indolence in its extremity is therefore akin to unreason and a state that dehumanizes those in its thrall. Ease is an unstable middle ground between "pain and pleasure:" "Ease, if it is not rising into pleasure, will be falling towards pain" (R, # 85: 8 January 1751, II 83). When one succumbs to idleness, "the vital powers [...] gradually languid; that as their vigour fails, obstructions are generated; and that from obstructions proceed most of those pains which wear us away slowly with periodical tortures, and which, though they sometimes suffer life to be long, condemn it to be useless, chain us down to the couch of misery, and mock us with the hopes of death" (83). This physiological characteristic of indolence is extreme and goes much beyond the *Spectator* essays.

Johnson is moreover astute in his assessment of indolence as an extreme at one end of a scale stretching between lethargy and the vegetative state on the one hand and business on the other, and he introduces the concept of "ease" as a golden means between these extremes. However, he also observes that this ideal of ease and tranquility is unstable, since man is psychologically wired to desire that which he does not have and therefore vacillates between a desire to alleviate his boredom and an urge to withdraw from activity. As Johnson notes, the busy man fancies the pleasures of retirement but once installed in a secluded spot, finds himself subjected to the miseries of boredom: "such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry, and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated; we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit" (R # 6: 7 April 1750, I 34-5). In fact, man is never satisfied with the status quo but finds himself in thrall to "an incessant call for variety, and restless pursuit of enjoyments, which they value only because unpossessed" (# 78: 15 December 1750, II 46). In this analysis of the human velleity for innovation and change, Johnson takes a quite different attitude from the *Spectator*. Though Steele agrees that men love distractions and variety, this love of variation is pictured as a beneficial tendency and an aesthetic principle: "For Mr. Spectator, as for the retired man, common things are a source of continuous gratification" (Ketcham 1985, 85; *Spectator* # 206: October 26 1711, II 306-9; Steele). Where Johnson sees us tossed on the seas of frustrated hope, anticipating the Lacanian deferral of ultimate consummation, Addison portrays the delights of sauntering about in a garden (# 477: September 6 1712, IV 188-92; Addison). Not only is the garden one which "fills the Mind with Calmness and Tranquility;" it moreover allows for a delightful dream in which the stroller is able to appreciate a variety of pleasant views; 25 obviously we are in a landscape garden with vistas.

Johnson is in fact singular in his rejection of the classic ideal of reclusiveness (I # 19, 59). Despite his closeness to neoclassicism, as instanced in his emphasis on univer-

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salism in *Rasselas*, his suspicion of enthusiasm and the passions, and his admiration for Dryden and Pope, despite all this Johnson rejects the classic ideal of solitary withdrawal to the countryside, and he does so in the context of his repudiations of idleness. In the *Spectator* essays, the garden "becomes an emblem of time not as continuity but as a psychological expansion of a single moment" (Ketcham 1985, 87); it induces a *distensio animi* and facilitates meditation and reflection. Not so in Johnson, where the present moment emerges as an emblem of instability and anxiety: "all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived […]" (R # 41: 7 August 1750, I 223-4). Johnson's conclusion in response to this diagnosis is that man is caught between the regrets for past behavior and the hopes for the future, which are however illusionary since they represent "that accidie which drives the mind to turn upon itself for imaginative wish fulfillments" (Sachs 1967, 11). Bate quotes the Lacanian insight – anticipated in *Rasselas* – that "[h]e that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity … I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments" (Bate 1961, 64; original emphasis; Johnson 1971, II, 32; 85). As Bate goes on to suggest, Johnson's analysis of human desire uncannily lances the "common tendency of the imagination to simplify its own wants and then to mistake the objects to which it happens to turn for actual ends" (69). Johnson's diatribes against idleness, especially in the form of our running after illusionary objects such as tranquility in retirement, are really, according to Bates, "recurring symbols of the way in which the imagination, in common and daily life, is always simplifying endless desires of the heart into specific wants, and then finding them insufficient" (72). These pessimistic arguments on the part of Johnson are counterpointed by the *Spectator's* optimism. Where Johnson laments the "fallaciousness of hope," Addison enunciates hope with "Serenity" and "good Humour" (qtd. in Ketcham 1985, 102).

Johnson also notes that the pleasures of idleness emerge only in contrast to work – one only appreciates one's leisure if it provides a respite from labour (I # 9, 32). His surely facetious suggestion that idleness might be a more widespread vice than either pride, envy or greed prominently moralizes inactivity, but does so in quite a different manner from that employed in Puritan diatribes against the idle. As he notes, "[t]o be idle and to be poor have always been reproaches, and therefore every man endeavours with his utmost care, to hide his poverty from others, and his idleness from himself" (I # 17, 54; qtd. in Hall 2001, 30). Though Johnson is beholden to an ethics of work, he is not motivated by the class interest inspiring the traditional discourses of idleness. Nor are the objects of his scorn the habitual apprentices and working-class males indulging in drink, whoring and other unsavory pastimes. His agenda is, rather, to focus on our personal morality.

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26 As Sachs notes, Johnson "habitually" made a connection "between solitude and the sin of sloth" (1967, 53). An especially egregious example of this is his portrayal of the Hermit of Teneriffe, who is caught in a "Maze of Indolence" (Johnson 1957, 157).

27 Johnson more generally seems to perceive the human lot as one of entrapment. In the *Diaries* he prays to be delivered "from the chain of my sins" (18 September 1764, 81; original italics); in R 89 he laments that "the mind will break, from confinement to its stated task, into sudden excursions" (II 105), and, having delineated man's "habitual drowsiness," insists that, "[t]his captivity" needs to be escaped from and that, "to regain liberty" man must avoid self-analysis and "fix upon external things" and the "social pleasures and amicable communication" of society (ibid., 107).
Both Addison/Steele and Johnson use dichotomies to set the idle apart from the busy and the virtuous; yet in Johnson's case the distanciation of the speaker from the figure of the idler is tantamount to a strategy of negative projection. Just as the discourse of Western orientalism projects latent desires as features of the oriental other (Said 1995, 206), the indolent procrastinator in Johnson embodies those delights of rest and inactivity which are proscribed by the duty of labour and the ideal of diligence. Johnson's *emploi du temps* with its attendant neuroses is therefore an updated version of the Protestant work ethic, one which has replaced religion with moral uprightness (duty towards one's fellow citizens) and physical labour with work in a commercial setup of private enterprise and a personal accounting of time. Time is a moral coin for Johnson, and a good in and by itself, whereas for the Puritans it was a spiritual embarrassment which had to be filled with appropriate activity of a harmless, useful or religious quality. Whereas in Puritanism time itself, being sublunary, was thus to be eliminated in the rush towards a life beyond death, Johnson's time is a valuable property whose use and expenditure needs to be regulated, protected and exploited. One could therefore argue that the Romantic partiality for indolence has an unacknowledged anti-economic agenda, one which was not yet apparent in Thomson's *The Castle of Indolence* or related work by William Cowper, Anna Letitia Barbauld and S.T. Coleridge.

**Works Cited**


THE CONFLICTED NATURE OF INDOLENCE AND THE 18TH-CENTURY TRADITION OF IDLING


REVIEWS


It is easy to see why this book has reached its third edition: it is a very well written introduction. The eight chapters (on phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, extensions & applications, empirical linguistics) talk readers through concepts and analyses in an extremely accessible manner, step-by-step and easy to follow. Each (sub)chapter ends with a helpful summary, a good section on further reading, as well as both basic and advanced exercises; all of this is complemented by a glossary of terms at the end of the book. The style of presentation makes the book also useful as a self-study guide to linguistics, the only drawback in this respect being the missing key to exercises (or at least hints for the advanced exercises). The very same style makes it less useful for quick reference, i.e. as a source for checking up; thus, it also contains hardly any systematic summarizing figures or tables (Fig. 5.1 "Polysemy, homonymy and synonymy" on p. 174 is an exception in this respect).

The description of English is based on Standard British English and RP, with some references to other varieties, especially American English. Repeated comparisons to German, including in the exercises, are also a very welcome feature. The book presents a largely theory-neutral account, which is definitely laudable, and particularly noteworthy in the syntax chapter. This chapter succeeds very well in its aim of clearly showing the ways of reasoning for or against certain syntactic analyses and of thus imparting to students a feeling for (the importance of) syntactic argumentation. But perhaps the book is somewhat too reticent regarding theory. While the syntactic further reading section (142) names different theory-bound works, the book does not explicitly discuss different approaches (e.g. structuralism, generativism, functionalism) and their effects on linguistic description, as introductions sometimes do in their first chapters. Given that most, if not all linguistic concepts and terms carry theoretical baggage and also given that the methodologies of empirical linguistics (highlighted in ch. 8) are not in themselves completely theory-neutral, such a (brief) discussion might have been useful also for beginners. Regarding chapter 8 on "Linguistics as an empirical science," this is first of all an excellent manual of how-to-do research, i.e. finding and formulating research questions, building and refuting hypotheses, collecting and selecting data, as well as actually conducting the analysis, with all of this being further illustrated by one corpus-linguistic and one questionnaire-based case study. It even contains the clearest and most accessible explanation of statistics (here by example of chi-square) that I have ever come across. This chapter could also profitably be used in a Proseminar or be given to students in preparation for an empirical seminar paper. Nevertheless, the chapter makes assumptions that it does not discuss nor even mention, as not all of linguistics is empirical, and not all empirical linguistics is automatically quantitative in nature (as implied here).

Chapters 1 to 7 treat the essential contents – and some more – of any introduction to English linguistics. The two chapters on phonetics and phonology manage both the practical (e.g. "say the words out loud while standing in front of a mirror ..." 18) and
the abstract (cf. the H₂O analogy for complementary distribution) points admirably. There is perhaps a bit too much attention given to syllables, but the only flaw is the somewhat incomplete rhoticity explanation (not covering cases like card, for example). Morphology (ch. 3) includes the treatment of basic concepts, inflection and word-formation types, and in the context of affixation also productivity together with various types of blocking – the latter probably not standard for introductions. A very good exercise on the direction of conversion, based on OED and BNC material, stands out in this chapter. The formal (constituents, phrases) and functional (subject, object etc.) categories are introduced by way of thorough syntactic argumentation and terminological problems are highlighted (e.g. predicate). Reference, denotation, connotation, compositional meaning, lexical associations and sense relations are treated in chapter 5 based on well-chosen examples. Interestingly, classical concepts in this field, e.g. Saussure’s sign model or the semiotic triangle, are not named, though of course present implicitly (e.g. 154); prototype or cognitive approaches to meaning are also not included. Including pragmatic meaning and deixis in this semantic chapter could be seen as somewhat confusing; the former is of course taken up again in chapter 6. With regard to pragmatics the book focuses on speech acts, utterance meaning, Gricean theory, and politeness. A potential critical point here is the treatment of Grice, where the example used, discussion and some formulations (“interlocutors have to stick to certain conventions” 202, my emphasis) could give rise to or support common misunderstandings on the part of students (Grice offering a ‘manual’ for successful communication instead of a way of explaining pragmatic meaning). The extensions and applications selected for chapter 7 are historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, which is a good selection given the course selections at most universities. The treatments here are necessarily short, but give a fairly good impression of the concerns and methods of the selected fields. However, with regard to historical linguistics it might have been more appropriate to put less emphasis on language families, comparative reconstruction etc. (i.e. the prehistory of English) and instead more on studying the history of English itself, which is now restricted to one single page only.

Needless to say no two linguists will ever completely agree on the what and the how of an introduction – thus the critical points above reflect simply my different individual preferences. This remains an excellent introduction and I will definitely recommend it as one of two such works to my students.

CLAUDIA CLARIDGE


Over the last decade, a thriving handbook culture has emerged among the leading publishers, not least to the benefit of Cognitive Linguistics (CL). The volume under review is the third of its kind, following the first handbook of CL by Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007)¹ and Littlemore and Taylor’s (2014).² Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007, 15ff), in the introduction to their handbook, formulated three major future directions and expectations for CL: (1) a stronger emphasis on empirical work and the

firm embedding of CL in the general cognitive-science movement; (2) a stronger theoretical unification; (3) a greater focus on social aspects of language and communication. It is a natural choice to take these directions as reference points for the present review in order to highlight some recent developments and trends within CL documented by Dąbrowska and Divjak.

The handbook under review has three parts: I. The cognitive foundations of language; II. Overviews; III. Central topics. Many of the contributions redress the subjects of the corresponding chapters in Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007), e.g. those by Bergen (embodiment), Langacker (construal), Barcelona (metonymy), Gibbs (metaphor) and Turner (blending) in the first part, all of the chapters in the second part and some of the papers in part III. However, Dąbrowska and Divjak's volume is not a mere update of the earlier handbook by Geeraerts and Cuyckens; instead, it has its own profile and a distinct agenda. This agenda for CL boils down to the following formula: from introspective theorising to an empirical paradigm firmly rooted in cognitive science. What is highlighted in most chapters is, in particular, evidence and support coming from quantitative approaches, psycholinguistic and language-acquisition data, frequency-based accounts and computer modelling.

This agenda obviously concurs with the first direction formulated by Geeraerts and Cuyckens (see above). As the reference sections of the chapters in the present volume amply illustrate, there has long been considerable and fruitful contact of CL with the "hard" cognitive sciences, also in terms of methodology. However, the output of this contact as well as, more generally, studies using explicitly quantitative research methods were, until more recently, underrepresented in the dominant CL outlets (cf. Janda's 2013 figures on the share of quantitative studies in the CL key journal *Cognitive Linguistics*). Volumes such as González-Márquez, Mittelberg, Coulson and Spivey (2007), Glynn and Fischer (2010) and Janda (2013) attest to the rise and productivity of studies along these lines. It is a merit of Dąbrowska and Divjak's handbook to have put these strands centre-stage. Prominent examples in the volume include the dense and well-documented chapter on polysemy by Gries.

This "empirical turn" comes with a critical, sometimes sceptical, re-examination of central CL notions in the light of quantitative data, alternative approaches and findings from the "hard" cognitive sciences. A good case in point is the theoretical modelling of categorisation, dealt with in several chapters. First-generation CL strongly favoured prototype theory over its "competitors," in particular over exemplar-based models. This preference was due to the fact that the assumption of an abstracted prototype was more attractive to the original CL framework than the exemplar view, given the programmatic commitment to 'generalisation' and the objective to extract higher-level schematic representations. The resulting neglect of exemplar-based models in much of mainstream CL – with prominent exceptions, e.g. the work by Joan Bybee – certainly passed over findings and accepted knowledge in psychology and other disciplines, where these models enjoy(ed) a lot of popularity and have shown to rival or even outperform prototype-based accounts in many, though not all, cases of category formation. While exemplar-based models received almost no recognition in Geeraert and Cuyckens (2007), they are approvingly discussed and fully

accepted in many of the contributions to the present volume. This 'rehabilitation' of exemplar-based models is not surprising in the light of the general agenda of the handbook: These models are obviously friendly to accounts that heavily rely on the notion of frequency, much as the prototype view was and is friendly to accounts that assume a rich inventory of higher-level schematic representations.

The scepticism mentioned above also extends to other traditional CL concepts, including the very notion of higher-level schematic representations. Cases in point are the contributions by Ramscar and Port as well as by Baayen and Ramscar. These chapters are written from an artificial-intelligence perspective and advocate a view of language as a discriminative system. In the chapter by Ramscar and Port, tellingly entitled "Categorization (without categories)," central CL concepts like 'frame', 'idealised' cognitive model, 'image schema' and 'domain' are said to "fail to meet the criteria for theories of representation" and are regarded, at best, as still "useful phenomenological descriptions of some aspects of knowledge encoded in discriminative linguistic and conceptual systems" (91). Likewise, the model of "implicit grammar" exposed in Baayen and Ramscar is explicitly presented as an alternative to cognitive grammar (114) in that it does without abstraction and does not rest on the notion of schematisation: In this view, schemata and constructions are "unnecessary" constructs and they are "not taken to imply a corresponding cognitive reality" (113). Moreover, when the authors of the two chapters argue for a view of language framed along the lines of Shannon's mathematical model of communication proposed in the 1940s (i.e. a model in which linguistic forms are mere signals and, in themselves, explicitly not meaningful), there are further obvious tensions vis-à-vis the position generally associated with CL, upheld in other chapters and also highlighted by the editors in the introduction, that "all elements of language are meaningful" (1).

The brief comments on these two chapters suggest that two of the future directions given by Geeraerts and Cuyckens — embedding in the general cognitive-science movement and theoretical unification — may actually be conflicting. The former entails engaging with and integrating other perspectives, the latter implies a tightening of the theoretical profile of CL. What exactly constitutes CL positions vis-à-vis other approaches to language and within the general cognitive-science paradigm? What appears to be and is also presented by Dąbrowska and Divjak (1) as the smallest common denominators, i.e. "cognitive commitment" and "usage-based," turns out to be far too broad, unspecific and inclusive. The point of this comment is not to call for setting up camps and barriers and manning them on either side. CL has always been a network of various approaches, linked, as Geeraerts and Cuyckens (2007, 4) aptly framed it, in a family-resemblance fashion. Nor is it meant to define what are "good" or "bad" members of the "category" of CL approaches. However, what is needed is a set of shared basic underlying assumptions, concepts and tenets that constitute this paradigm and delineate it from "competing" views. Otherwise, CL indeed runs into a situation which, ironically, can be described with the title of Ramscar and Port's chapter mentioned above, i.e. "Categorization (without categories)."

In Geeraerts and Cuyckens' (2007) volume, much care was devoted to this issue, not only in their succinct outline of CL assumptions in the introductory chapter but also and explicitly in the organisation of their handbook. It featured distinct contributions that position CL vis-à-vis, e.g., functionalist and formalist approaches (Nuyts and Taylor, respectively), cognitive psychology (Sinha) and the "humanities," in particular.
philosophy (Harder). It also included a chapter on the "history of ideas" with which CL can be associated (Nerlich and Clarke). By contrast, in Dąbrowska and Divjak's handbook, there are no distinct chapters with such scopes. The editors left it to the discretion of the individual authors to address these issues in their chapters. Some of the contributors take these concerns very seriously, e.g. Nathan in his chapter on phonology, others show little or no such commitment. What is missing, too, and surprisingly, given the agenda of the volume, are chapters explicitly devoted to the implications, potential gains and potential limits of specific empirical research methods from the perspective of CL theory. In one understanding of "usage-based," for instance, it is desirable to base one's analysis on a maximum of data, culled, e.g. from XXL-sized corpora. However, the greater the amount of data the more it is impossible (and often not even deemed necessary) to inspect the individual contexts of the individual tokens. In another understanding of "usage-based," a linguistic analysis without close examination of individual contexts is an oddity. As Dąbrowska and Divjak state regretfully in their introduction, chapters dealing, for instance, with computational modelling were on their "wish-list but did not materialise" (3).

With respect to the third future direction envisaged by Geeraerts and Cuyckens, i.e. a "social turn" in CL, the volume under review gives a mixed picture. On the one hand, social cognition and the social dimension of language are firmly integrated in many chapters, e.g. in Verhagen (Grammar and cooperative communication) and Hart (Discourse) as well as through the prominence given by many authors to the notion of 'joint attention' in the sense of Tomasello. The chapter by Geeraerts and Kristiansen (Variationist linguistics) is specifically devoted to Cognitive Sociolinguistics. Dąbrowska's contribution adds to the picture by addressing individual differences. Several authors present cross-linguistic data. On the other hand, specific chapters that seek contact with relevant disciplines such as cultural anthropology and long-standing fields such as anthropological linguistics and intercultural communication do not feature in the present volume (although some of the contributions touch on such issues). Again, the editors evoke their "wish-list" in this respect (3), e.g. an originally planned chapter on linguistic relativity. In fact, this territory has come to be the domain of Cultural Linguistics documented by Sharifian (2015), with close ties to but also an ambivalent attitude towards CL. It is an open question whether these fields will remain within the ambit of CL.

Technically speaking, the handbook is well-edited, as any volume in de Gruyter's HSK series. The index is helpful but would have benefitted from a more fine-grained structuring of the entries. Occasionally, volume-internal cross-references in the running text were not updated in the process of editing and hence are opaque to the reader (e.g. the reference to a chapter by Tremblay that does not exist in the handbook; 411).

The handbook by Dąbrowska and Divjak is an important publication. It brings together the leading experts on the various topics, many of them shapers and key figures of CL. The volume strikes the balance between representing both the rich products of CL theory building in the introspective tradition and the growing body of sophisticated, often interdisciplinary, empirical research in CL. It also adds new foci to the list of central CL topics. In all of these respects, the editors have done excellent work. The volume also reflects current debates, challenges, tensions and discontinuities, and in this respect, too, the editors deserve praise for their choices. What is a bit disturbing,

however, is the long wish-list of chapters that did not materialise (3). It includes issues highly pertinent to the agenda of the editors, in particular those of a methodological nature. For the sake of a more comprehensive coverage, especially in the context of a handbook project, the editors should have taken the time needed to fulfil their wish-list. At least, a more elaborate introduction would have been desirable. In yet another respect, the list of issues and concerns not covered in the handbook is as revealing as the list of topics included: In the editors’ vision of CL, there is little room accorded to the contact of CL with the “humanities.” To the present reviewer, this is one of the most striking trends – albeit a very unsettling one – captured and conveyed by this handbook. The company with the humanities is, as Harder rightly put it, not a “regrettable” one for CL “(as some might think)” (2007, 1257).

FRANK POLZENHAGEN


The aim of this book is to "bridge the theoretical lacuna between cognitivist and social constructionist approaches to meaning and sense-making" (343) as regards social orientation. This aim is a highly welcome one, as cognitivist approaches, for the most part, have taken an "in-between-the-ears" (Rutkowska 1997, 139), i.e., individualistic view of cognition and ignored social aspects, while constructionist views have primarily focused on observable linguistic behavior to the neglect of the cognitive dimension in social interaction. Langlotz develops his theory on the basis of two data sets, 100 recordings of front-desk transactions at two Basel tourist offices and 2,500 student postings (with some teacher comments) from an e-learning course held at the University of Basel. Five previously published papers have fed into the book, a fact which may explain some of its inconsistencies and redundancies. It has three parts and altogether nine chapters, which follow the introduction. In the introduction, the author discusses the phenomenon of "social orientation," the theoretical challenge of bridging cognitive-linguistic and social-interactional approaches to meaning construction, describes his data sets, and outlines his theory of social positioning through language. Strangely, and to my mind theoretically unnecessarily, "social orientation" is cast into a biologistic, evolutionary framework of survival and adaptation; references are made to whales, primates, and especially wolves (1; also see the photo of "The social semiotics of wolves," 25). One may ask if complex forms and products of higher cognition that are exclusively human phenomena, and especially humor and linguistic creativity, which play important roles later in the book, can be accounted for along the same lines. Also, Langlotz identifies four central dimensions for an integrated view of the construction of social orientation: a cognitive, a social-interactional, a social-institutional and a linguistic dimension (6f.). This terminological distinction is odd, because, from a cognitive-linguistic point of view (which the author espouses), all of these dimensions would be cognitive.

Part I, "Social meaning," starts with Chapter 1, "Charting the dimensions of social meaning." Unlike the other chapters, in its simplicity, this chapter reads like an introductory script for first-year students (and some of its theoretical problems are carried

over to the subsequent chapters). Not only are self and identity reified (e.g., "we have an identity," 22), which runs counter to the constructionist view that self and identity are performed (cf. ch. 2), but it is assumed that people conceive of themselves, their identity – and "various sub-identities" (28) – as well as others and groups as containers (23f.). As long as no linguistic evidence is presented that people conceive of those entities as containers, the possible accusation that these metaphorizations are imputed by the theorist is not averted. Besides, Langlotz makes no cultural differentiation regarding the social realization of the containment-schema; the claim that "strangers […] are not allowed to have direct physical contact with the newborn and young babies" because they are not part of "our identity-container" (24) is a Eurocentric one (apparently, he has never experienced the "outdooring" of a newborn in, say, sub-Saharan Africa). Similarly simplistic is the division of social relationships into the three dimensions "duration of relationship," "familiarity," and "hierarchy" (22 f.), as if, say, gender had no role to play in social relationships. Hierarchy, furthermore, is conceptualized crudely along a verticality-schema, with up as superior and down as inferior. How would age, tradition, seniority, financial status, etc. feature in this hierarchy-dimension, one wonders? The complexities of this problem are known in the ethnography of speaking as "complex tenor" (Finch 2013, 120)2 but are sidestepped by Langlotz. The building of fortresses on hills is cited as an example for this spatialized concept of superiority by the ruling class in the Middle Ages over "more inferior social stands" (26) – this may be true, but military considerations certainly were more important. In chapter 2, "Social meaning and language," Langlotz elaborates on the construction of social meaning through language, which is conceptualized as a tool.

Given the limitations of cognitive linguistics in theoretically capturing the linguistic management of social interactions, it is not surprising that this chapter is exclusively based on non-cognitivist, pragmatic (broadly speaking) accounts of social interaction. Still, one would have wished for a recognition of recent works in the field of cognitive sociolinguistics (see, e.g., Kristiansen and Dirven 2008),3 which, as the name indicates, has a social orientation and a cognitive linguistic theoretical framework. Part I concludes with Chapter 3, "How to integrate cognitive and interactional view of social sense-making? Towards a blueprint for a socio-cognitive model of social orientation." In it, Langlotz presents a "praxeological critique" (91) of "the human cognizer […] as an independent and autonomous mental processor" (90) as posited by a specific strand of cognitivism. Given the purported aim of this chapter to integrate cognitive and interactional views, it is not clear why this particular kind of cognitivism is discussed, since the analytical tools applied in the following chapters come from a very different school of cognitive science, namely that of ecological cognition and experientialism. Besides, to label a socio-cognitive theory based on these views "post-cognitivist" (104) is a contradiction in terms. Part II, "Towards a socio-cognitive theory of situated social sense-making," opens with Chapter 4, "Dynamic cognition in social practice." In it, Langlotz picks up on the ideas of 'embodied' and 'ecological' cognition as well as on 'dynamic' and 'action-based' conceptualization. His theoretical reference points are Barsalou's model of 'situated conceptualization' and Fauconnier and Turner's theory of 'conceptual blending.' Chapter 5, "Language: The ultimate socio-cognitive technology – towards a socio-cognitive semiotics" is central to

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Langlotz’ approach. Various theoretical concepts and theories – inter alia, H. Clark’s “model of language use as joint action” (150), Tomasello’s theory of symbolic activity and again Barsalou’s model, to name but a few – are applied to an extract from the tourist office data set. Since one and the same example is run through the various theories successively and in synthesis, a sense of incoherence is conveyed, and it seems that Langlotz himself gets tangled up in his theoretical web. On p. 164, he writes that “coordination devices do not carry any meaning or chunks of common ground,” while on p. 167, the word tram is used as a coordination device, and the tram concept is exemplified as common ground between two interlocutors.

Part II closes with Chapter 6, " Cueing situated social conceptualizations – the epistemic scaffolding of social orientation through language," in which the definition of social meaning as social space provided in Chapter 1 is redefined in terms of ecological cognition. The focus lies on creativity in the construction of social meaning and in social positioning; the main theory used in the analysis of select examples is blending theory.

Part III, "Analysing the creative construction of social meaning," follows the thread laid out in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 deals with "The creation of social meaning through humour." Leaning on various linguistic theories of humor and methods introduced in previous chapters, a typology of humor is set up and the social functions and effects of the use of the various kinds of humor systematized and exemplified. While the classifications and analyses are fine-grained and convincing, one may argue whether unannounced humor can rightly be characterized as "aggressive" (265). The focus of Chapter 8 is on "The use of humour for creative social positioning in tourist-information and online workgroup communication." Select examples from the two data sets are presented to demonstrate how humor is utilized in social positioning and how this utilization can be elucidated, primarily by means of blending theory. In the "Conclusion" (ch. 9), Langlotz draws together the various theories his book rests upon and summarizes his main insights. He also suggests a list of possible applications of his model (or should I say, models?). The conclusion is followed by the references and a somewhat scant index (significant entries, such a "conceptual metaphor theory" and "prototype theory," are missing).

Despite its shortcomings – to which one needs to add a haphazard use of commas – this book constitutes an important contribution to a more socially-oriented cognitive linguistics. Though culture does not feature in any prominent way in this book, Langlotz’ ideas and methods may well be applicable to problems of intercultural communication, and thus have the potential to contribute to the cognate field of cultural linguistics.

HANS-GEORG WOLF


The book under review is, to my knowledge, the first empirical approach to the assumption that Scottish Standard English (SSE) as spoken by the Scottish middle class is currently undergoing change due to influence from Southern Standard British English (SSBE). To test this hypothesis, Schützler makes use of 27 speakers of SSE and examines three socio-phonetic variables which are clearly distinct across the two varie-
ties: the vowels in the lexical sets FACE and GOAT (in Wells' 1982 terminology\textsuperscript{1}), as well as rhoticity. FACE and GOAT are realized as monophthongs and diphthongs in SSE and SSBE, respectively, the former is rhotic, while the latter is not. In this context, Schützler's overall aim is to examine these variables in the light of social, stylistic and language-internal factors, and he arrives at the conclusion that the influence of SSBE on SSE pronunciation is marginal, being limited to individual settings (141).

The comparatively slim volume of 179 pages, including references (149-161), an appendix (163-175), and an index (177-179), starts with an introduction that gives a concise overview of research on Scottish English and explains why Edinburgh is the ideal location for the question under investigation. It is argued that, if there is influence from SSBE on SSE it needs to occur on a personal level in the context of SSE-SSBE networks, which due to its location and demography is likely to be found in Edinburgh. The second part of the introduction explains the features under investigation and places the study in a larger theoretical-methodological framework.

Chapter 2 first surveys how SSE is embedded in the Scottish linguistic ecology as the middle element of a Scots-SSE-SSBE continuum and then gives an account of relevant features of the SSE accent. In order to set the stage for the subsequent analysis, chapter 3 places the study within the framework of Speech Accommodation Theory and Audience Design and introduces the internal and external factors to be examined (for details see below).

Chapter 4 elaborates on methodological issues, providing details of the 27 speakers, the data collection itself, as well as the analyses of the variables and the statistical methods used for the evaluation of the findings. The data stem from recorded interviews and contain different sociolinguistic "styles" (i.e. a reading passage; a word list; and three different types of "careful speech," namely the "continuation of a story," "questions and answers; remembering details," and "discussion of personal details while filling in the questionnaire" [49]). As regards the factors that might have an impact on the realizations of the accent features under investigation, Schützler distinguishes between two age groups, between men and women, between two degrees of contact with SSBE, between speech styles, and between several language-internal factors, the most important of which are speech rate, stress and lexical frequency. The vowels were measured acoustically in Praat, while the analysis of rhoticity and linking r was carried out auditorily. In this context it is worth mentioning that Schützler develops his own method for vowel normalization, involving "a conversion of Bark into octaves relative to 1 Bk" (56), which is supposed to render the scale of resulting values linear and seems to have certain advantages over other approaches. The chapter ends with an account of the model used to test statistical significance of the findings. Here Schützler resorts to "hierarchical logistic regression," which he deems the best method for his data as his aim is to tackle, among other things, "individual observations clustered within persons" (60), i.e. speaker-internal variation.

Chapters 5 and 6 (on FACE and GOAT) as well as 7 and 8 (on rhoticity and linking r) are structured alike. Schützler first provides an overview of the respective "research contexts" (ch. 5 and ch. 7) leading to the formulation of his research questions and then presents his findings, i.e. the "statistical analyses of (e) and (o)" (ch. 6) and of "/r/" (ch. 8). In chapter 5 the acoustic qualities of diphthongs, the history of FACE and GOAT, and earlier findings on FACE and GOAT are given, while chapter 7 deals with the variability and history of /r/, as well as earlier findings on /r/ in Scotland. Each of the two results chapters proper (6 and 8) contains a descriptive part, presents the outputs of the

multilevel analyses and discusses the findings. The final chapter 8 summarizes the most crucial results. In a nutshell, the study found some age effects (e.g. older speakers are more conservative than younger speakers both in their realization of the vowels and of /r/ as a tap); the factor gender exhibited fairly variant results; the most monitored style of word list reading favours the use of more traditional forms; speakers with a higher degree of contact with SSBE show signs of anglicisation; and some internal factors (mostly speech rate, stress and lexical frequency) might in fact "contribute to the inception of a change that leads to social patterns of variation within the speech community" (141). All in all, Schützler concludes that at the time being and due to the lack of prestige of SSBE, SSE cannot be seen as undergoing a process of anglicisation.

Despite some minor shortcomings (some parts of the methodology and results chapters are at times somewhat dense and not too easy to follow without consulting other references; the innovative normalization method could have been described more explicitly; the groups of speakers might be too small, especially the contact group; the fact that only middle class speakers were chosen as informants makes sense in principle, although the criteria used for inclusion remain somewhat fuzzy). Schützler’s study is a fine piece of socio-phonetic research which can be recommended to anyone interested in the English accent in Scotland, in acoustic phonetics and in a multilevel approach to statistical modelling.

ALEXANDER KAUTZSCH


Around the middle of the 14th century Giovanni Boccaccio compiled a Latin series of lives of famous women (De Mulieribus Claris). Quite interestingly, this collection avoided Christian women, focussing mainly on pagan goddesses and heroines of Graeco-Roman antiquity. It seems Boccaccio thought that the pagan women deserved special attention because their accomplishments were not due to Christian transcendental authorities but came from inherent virtues or a natural determination and urge for reputation. Such highlighting of female achievements was not supposed to question standard medieval prejudices about women's "weaknesses" and their subordinate social role, but rather to promote models appropriate for men, although some potential "subversive" element may not be excluded.

There is some evidence that both the Latin manuscript as well as vernacular translations circulated in 15th-century England. In particular, there is one anonymous mid-fifteenth-century Middle English verse translation that some time ago attracted the attention of German scholars (Zupitza published extracts in 1892¹ and Schleich edited the full text in 1924²). Given the age of these publications and the fact that they are hard to come by, an up-to-date version of the text is most welcome and the new edition published by Janet Cowen has admirably coped with this task.


The book contains a highly informative scholarly introduction (covering some forty pages), the 1792 lines of the verse translation, a detailed textual apparatus, extensive notes on the text and a useful glossary. In the following I will focus on the introduction and the commentary.

The introduction starts with a detailed description of the manuscript, its make-up, the scripts (including minute commentaries on individual letters and their different forms), abbreviations, layout and decoration. This is followed by information on the (former) owner of the manuscript, the source and the translation. The anonymous translator chose only twenty-one among the 106 chapters found in Boccaccio's work (although we cannot be sure that he had the whole text available). The selection emphasises the purely pagan character of the work (with goddesses, sibyls, enchantresses and warrior queens among the chosen exemplary lives). Cowen manages to place the work nicely in the context of the late Middle English "lives" literature, working out differences to Chaucer and Lydgate, but also to the original source.

The next section is devoted to the linguistic profile of the text. Here Cowen first presents a systematic listing of all the forms found in the manuscript according to the 278 items of the LALME questionnaire. Despite her meticulous analysis of the data only a broad indication of provenance seems possible. This points to East Anglia and the London area. A further comparison with two linguistic profiles of texts closely associated with Lydgate reveal some forms that are characteristic of Lydgate, but, on the other hand, the text does not contain other spellings typical of Suffolk. Neither does a closer analysis of the rhyme forms shed any new light on the question. Thus, it seems that the resources presented by LALME cannot very much advance an exact placement of the text (Schleicher (1924, 106) had already argued for Suffolk and East Anglia as a likely location of the text).

The rest of the introduction is devoted to a scrupulous analysis of the versification (including stanza form, line structure, caesura and rhyme). The discussion contains a mass of detail and includes all the relevant literature. In the end, the analysis reveals that the anonymous author is no match to Chaucer or Lydgate, or, in Cowen's words: "The writer of the present poem certainly requires the active cooperation of his readers […]; indeed, one might say he requires too much of the reader, and even allowing for all the factors […], numerous lines remain problematic" (xliii).

The commentary section to the text is extremely helpful. It offers comments on difficult text passages, includes relevant background information, compares the Middle English text to the Latin source, discusses Schleich's emendations and contains detailed discussion on the sense(s) of prominent lexemes (for example, wytt ("wit") and poetys ("writers"). In addition, the commentary indicates places where the translator made expansions not found in Boccaccio, relating them to classical sources (for example, Sallust, Virgil, Ovid) or suggesting possible sources that might have been available to the translator. Last but not least, Cowen uses the resources of the MED and the OED to trace individual lexemes of the text and to assess the evidence of these databases. In many cases she can present predatings or at least supplementary information regarding the MED and OED. For example, the word rareness (l. 21) is not listed in the MED with the sense of "rarity" and not attested in the OED until the 16th century. The same applies to imuencyon (l. 393) in the modern sense of "invention". These and similar findings give the impression that many loanwords listed in the OED for the 16th and 17th centuries can already be found in late Middle

English texts. In this sense, Cowen's edition opens up an interesting perspective for further research.

There are just two minor points of criticism I would like to mention. As far as I can see, the introduction does not deal with morphology and syntax at all and the notes only rarely raise syntactic issues. This is a pity, because Schleich (1924, 106-109) already used morphological information in his initial attempts to determine more closely the provenance of the text and I wonder why this field has been left unexplored to further corroborate the findings. Also, Schleich's edition has the relevant text passages from Boccaccio's Latin text at the bottom of each page. The text of the present edition is impeccable and the addition of Latin passages would not have been amiss.

Despite these minor points, it should be stressed that this is a most welcome addition to *Middle English Texts*, corroborating the high academic and editorial standards of the series. It combines the insights of a meticulous linguistic analysis with the larger perspectives on developments of late Middle English language and literature.

**THOMAS KOHLEN**


The present volume has a clear-cut thematic focus: it is devoted to exploring the "links between teaching and drama" (11) which can be found in both pedagogy and dramatic art of late medieval and early modern England. It comprises the use of aspects of drama for purposes of teaching and the use made of pedagogical traditions for dramatic entertainment.

The first five of the fourteen essays are devoted to medieval religious drama, and show how pedagogical concerns furthered the development of dramatic art. Sarah Brazil (17-36) traces changes in the representation of Christ's Resurrection as part of the liturgy of Easter as well as in secular mystery plays. Unlike earlier liturgical texts, which highlight the emptiness of the tomb, the York, Chester and Towneley plays feature the body of Christ rising from the dead (27). With regard to the York Cycle Alexandra F. Johnston (37-51) points out that while the main aim of the cycle was to tell the Biblical stories to laypeople and to educate them in the doctrines of Christianity, the plays also convey a moral message, in line with the early fifteenth-century "affective piety' movement (38); Christ becomes "both teacher and suffering servant" (47). Examining the figure of "the middleman" who conveys God's words' intentions to humanity, Camille Marshall (53-70) suggests that the Towneley plays begin to dramatize doubt, in line with official church warnings about unauthorized preaching. Audiences are "taught to try and discern orthodox from unorthodox claims as well as to bear in mind that the performance at hand is a cumulation of signs that need to be correctly deciphered in order for the performance to be effective" (68). Olivia Robinson's article (71-88) examines the incorporation of Latin quotations from Scripture and liturgy (which are then translated) into vernacular plays "as a dramatic tool" (71). Comparing the *N-Town* play with "a piece of convent drama from fifteenth-century Burgundy" she argues that the similarity of procedure might point to "a self-conscious use of the on-stage female voice" (71). Tamás Karáth (89-110) compares "the extant records of the Norwich heresy trials" (91) with the *N-Town* plays, suggesting that the minute recordings of some the depositions are similar to the representation of the inquisitional procedures Christ undergoes in the two plays devoted to the Passion, as
both texts highlight the role of language as a "code and strategy for the identification of heretics" (103).

Four essays are devoted to lesser-known 16th- and early 17th-century traditions of 'pedagogical drama' while four other articles specifically address Shakespeare's pedagogical background. John J. McGavin's article (111-129) is devoted to the phenomenon that certain 16th-century plays 'moved' from one institution to another, fulfilling different functions and entertaining audiences of different kinds – like John Phillip's Comedy of Patient and Meek Grisell (ca. 1565), which was probably first written as a school play. To literary scholars used to interpret texts in their socio-historical contexts, taking due account of actual and implied recipients, this observation poses a challenge. McGavin's suggestion that "one should develop a critical account of the characteristics which permit some [...] plays to move between contexts" can certainly be extended to other literary texts with a universal appeal, including Shakespeare's plays. Stephanie Allen's essay (131-157) is devoted to two Latin university plays, Ulysses Redux (1591) and Nero (1601), plays which testify to an interest in experimenting with form which is quite remarkable in view of the current prejudice that "academic drama" was conservative and boring (131). While Alan H. Nelson's article (159-172) also provides a lot of interesting material, its documentation of sources does not reach the standards prevalent in the volume as a whole; and Nelson fails to provide a convincing proof for his thesis that "schoolmasters [...] were often antagonistic to public playhouses and playgoing" (159). Robert Stagg's essay (173-183) provides fascinating insights into early modern Schoolroom practices: Rhetorical education was to a large extent conveyed by means of rhythms: "Shakespeare's schoolroom was a place of rhythmic density and delight: of verse lines jostling against each other; of rhythmically charged call-and-response between teacher and pupil; of poetry written and chanted [...]" (187).

Lynn Enterline's discussion of the female complaints often found in "Tudor minor epics" (185-209) also offers a wealth of fascinating material. Her main argument, however, that the female complaints disrupt "the teleological drive of the imperial epic [the Aeneid]" (187) and that "provocative erotic stories [...] hardly comport with the high-minded civic aims of humanist schoolmasters or the legal profession" (193) can be challenged on the basis of the material provided by herself: Erasmus, whose writings to a large degree shaped the sixteenth-century grammar school curricula, himself recommended discussing the question "whether to take a wife or not take a wife?" as Enterline notices (188). If Tudor schoolboys learned to argue from the point of view of someone else (189, 193), such as suffering women (as in Ovid's Heroides), they not only learned a lot about rhetoric but also about human nature – which was perfectly in line with 'Erasmian' aims of education; and, after all, it was Virgil who in the Aeneid inaugurated the tradition of representing "female despair" (197): Dido's complaints in Aeneid, book 4 (which amount to 170 lines) certainly took pride of place among the texts studied in Elizabethan grammar schools. The juiciness of the "minor epics" provides an illustration of the aims and methods of the early modern schoolroom and was by no means opposed to them.

Oliver Morgan's study (211-226) contains an informed discussion of the rules of turn-taking in the early modern classroom, even though his speculations on why 18th-century editors assigned Miranda's speech in The Tempest, 1.2.353-64, to Prospero may appear a bit pedantic. Michelle O'Callaghan's article (227-252) provides an exciting account of the "War of the Theatres" with Marston and his "Children of Paul's" and Jonson and the Middle Temple reveals as main protagonists. As O'Callaghan
demonstrates, this "war" (which involves an "aggressive intertextuality" [227], a mutual 'borrowing' of lines) should rather be understood as a game of "flying" (228), indicative of the early modern habit of serio ludere and thus a "shared performance culture" (230). Effie Boronski takes up another neglected tradition of drama, the "Stuart Court Masque" (253-273), arguing that while these masques – commissioned by the King and produced at "extraordinary cost" (255) – strove to idealize monarchy they also implicitly exposed its weaknesses.

The last paper of the volume is certainly one of its highlights: Perry Mills, Deputy Head of the King Edward's School, Stratford, and his son Alex Mills provide a survey of the theatrical activities of "Edward's Boy," students of King Edward's School who specialize in the production of early modern drama (275-293). As the two authors show, present-day theatrical practice provides fascinating insights into the pedagogical uses of Early Modern school drama and the dynamics of boys' acting companies.

This volume clearly stands out from what can usually be expected of proceedings volumes and similar collections of essays in that it is exceptionally coherent: One central argument, that of the affinity of late-medieval and early modern pedagogy and drama, is discussed and substantiated from a variety of angles. The articles appear to be particularly well-researched, and many of the findings are extremely exciting, liable to enhance and perhaps change our views of early modern drama in general and Shakespeare's dramatic art in particular. If you want to know how Shakespeare became Shakespeare, or if – as a teacher or professor – you are looking for ways and means to enliven your periods of language instruction, this is the book for you.

Thomas Kullmann


Failing is part of the human condition as editors Stefan Brakensiek and Claudia Claridge show in their collection of essays Fiasko – Scheitern in der Frühen Neuzeit. Assembling contributions from different disciplines, the collection discusses early modern failures on the one hand and strategies of dealing with these failures on the other. Birte Bös investigates the British newspaper market at the beginning of the 18th century which saw the emergence of many new publications as well as the bankruptcy of many others. Bös analyses the metadiscourse employed by editors to comment on their business failures: rhetorical strategies range from negating the failure to blaming external factors. In this context, the editors often drew on conceptual metaphors that presented them as hapless victims in order to shed a softer light on their misfortune. Stefan Brakensiek is also interested in economic issues. He discusses "Projektemacher," i.e. those who continuously initiate new projects, of the 17th and 18th centuries and their role in the economic and political system. Contemporary encyclopaedias suggest that "Projektemacher" were considered to be dubious, politically potentially dangerous characters. Brakensiek, however, argues that they are more ambivalent and ought to be seen less negatively; initiating and conducting projects was also an official governmental task in German administrations. To illustrate his point, he turns to J.H.G. von Justi, who was not only a successful writer and economist, but also an avid initiator of projects, many of which failed, often leaving him in financial troubles. Claudia Claridge analyses the evaluation of the failed Darien Scheme, Scotland's only
colonialist venture, in printed publications. While anti-Scottish writers blame the Scots exclusively for the failure, pro-Scottish pamphlets are equally as biased. They accuse the Crown of neither endorsing the venture nor helping the Scottish colonists. Some authors draw attention to a constitutional problem: despite being governed by one monarch, Scotland and England were still two independent countries with potentially conflicting interests. As Claridge shows, the heated debate is also manifest in the writers' semantic choices (creating an "us vs. them" dichotomy) and the imagery of war and cruelty used to emotionally manipulate readers.

Jens Martin Gurr looks at two fragments – Thomas More's History of King Richard III and Percy Shelley's A Philosophical View of Reform – and suggests that they remained unfinished because the authors encountered unresolvable contradictions in their arguments. In his schematic text, More illustrates a spectrum of political views juxtaposing, for example, the good king Edward IV to the tyrant Richard. The didactic trajectory of the text would have demanded another good ruler to end the tyrant's reign. More, however, considered Henry VII tyrannical and had opposed his politics; as Gurr argues, leaving the text unfinished appeared inevitable. Shelley, too, was faced with a political conundrum: despite being an advocate of non-violence, his argumentation in A Philosophical View brought him to an impasse, where postulating violent resistance became almost a necessity, making Shelley abandon this treatise. Christoph Heyl focuses on the rhetorical (re)assessment of the Great Fire of London in 1666. When the fire broke out, a chain of failures ensued: the mayor underestimated the danger, fire fighting measures were inadequate, the king failed to help his capital etc. In the aftermath, various explanations sprang up: Puritan ideology interpreted the fire as God's punishment, while conspiracy theorists blamed Catholic arsonists. The court, however, presented the fire as a purge that would prove beneficial for the city. As Heyl shows, Dryden's Annus Mirabilis was written in this vein, and the Crown employed other media channels (e.g. illustrated ballads) to spread their view of the fire. Marcel Nieden is concerned with the repeated failures of 16th-century religious debates in Germany. Monarchs would initiate many of these religious colloquies to help overcome denominational theological differences. Nieden shows that their specific historical contexts were not the main reason for the failure of these colloquies. Instead he argues that they shared certain characteristics leading to their abandonment, e.g. a general unwillingness to compromise on both sides, goals that differed too much, or irreconcilable theological positions. With the Wars of Religion looming on the horizon, Nieden concludes that these communication attempts were noble albeit tragic failures.

Frank Erik Pointner discusses Walter Ralegh's fall from grace and his unsuccessful attempt to regain Queen Elizabeth's favour. After his disgrace, Ralegh re-fashioned himself as a discoverer promising, for example, to find the golden city of Manoa in Guiana. When the project failed, he wrote a travelogue assuring his readers that this rich region was worth another expedition and that, as a humanitarian act, the indigenous population needed help against the Spanish. Moreover, Pointner shows, Ralegh fashioned himself as a conqueror of the virgin land and by metaphorical association of the queen herself. Although he drew on the adequate contemporary Petrarchan discourse and imagery, his rhetoric failed, leaving him disgraced. Lastly, Jörg Wesche investigates how failure was viewed in 17th- and 18th-century Germany. With Kleist and Herder, Wesche outlines the discourse of failure in the 18th century. Kleist, on the one hand, thought success could be planned so that failure could be avoided altogether; Herder, on the other hand, viewed projects with hindsight, thinking potential failure to be an experience to learn from. These concepts find their precursors...
in 17th-century literature in which the imagery of failure is commonly associated with the shipwreck motif. Discussing the representation of Volquard Iversen's shipwreck in two texts, Wesche shows that a religious undercurrent is present to edify the readers: God saves the shipwrecked offering help in situations of failure.

All in all, *Fiasko – Scheitern in der Frühen Neuzeit* is an interesting collection of essays with only one (minor) deficit: the order of essays is not apparent and occasionally surprising. However, this should by no means diminish the merits of this book with its informative and insightful contributions. Anybody interested in the early modern period or those wishing to learn about the notion of 'failure' and the philosophical implications and rhetorical strategies associated with it will find it rewarding.


The anthology at hand edited by Christa Jansohn together with Werner Habicht, Dieter Mehl and Philipp Redl documents one of the many events in honour of William Shakespeare's 450th birthday: an interdisciplinary celebratory symposium of the 'Mainz Academy.' As already indicated by the book's trenchant title "Shakespeare unter den Deutschen" ['Shakespeare among the Germans'], its different contributors focus on the German reception of Shakespeare's poetry and plays as well as his influence and impact on German literature, language and music. The anthology contains 18 individual essays preceded by an introductory acknowledgement of the editor and a greeting address by William Gatward from the British Embassy in Berlin. These texts treat William Shakespeare as a German phenomenon, as a central connection between German literary and cultural history and the nation's history of mentalities. As a result, many of these essays and analyses continuously put a central focus on the conveyance of Shakespeare's work (especially his sonnets) in translation (cf. Osterkamp, 131-142; Redl, 143-159; von Petersdorff, 197-206). Not only does the book offer very well chosen and expertly reproduced illustrations, but as a nice bonus it also contains a CD-Rom called "Shakespeare by Numbers." This CD-Rom records a highly interesting and inspiring exhibition on Shakespearean sonnets put together by the 'Mainzer LyrikLabor' to commemorate the symposium (cf. also Hermann, 207-216).

Three of the contributions analyse individual aspects of Shakespeare reception in the first half of the 19th century: They trace, critically, how Shakespeare became 'German' (cf. Dehmann, 15-31), discuss Schlegel's Shakespeare after 1801 (cf. Knödler, 33-48), and identify the essentials of a realistic 'theory of tragedy' in Otto Ludwig's *Shakespeare-Studien* ['Shakespeare Studies'] (cf. Grüne, 49-62).

Three other texts deal with examples of the reception of Shakespeare in music: with German instrumental music of the 19th century (cf. Steinbeck, 63-87, esp. 78-87, which is a really impressive collection of 177 concert overtures and symphonic poems that were inspired by the contents of Shakespeare's plays), with Mendelssohn's music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (cf. Riehmüller, 89-106) and with Shakespeare's tragedies as operas by Verdi and Reimann (cf. Mehl, 107-129).

The Shakespeare reception of Friedrich Gundolf, especially his sonnet translation, is at the centre of two other contributions (cf. Osterkamp, 131-142; cf. Redl, 143-159). These two essays as well as one other (cf. von Petersdorff, 197-206) share a
richness of detail concerning their analyses of the translations. Yet, they are also characterised by a notable lack of theoretical basis, and thus disregard decisive works such as the inspiring results of the former Göttinger SFB 309 ‘Literarische Übersetzung’ ['Literary Translation'].

Three texts deal with Hamlet, the most "German" of all of Shakespeare's plays: from a rather general perspective by Peter W. Marx, editor of the Hamlet-Handbook (cf. Marx, 231-245), from a comparative perspective (Lear) concentrated on Alfred Döblin (cf. Davies, 247-265), and politically focussed on Heiner Müller (cf. Oliver, 283-293). Apart from another two very worthwhile and detailed studies, one on Karl Kraus, Shakespeare and "Weltdummheit" ['world stupidity'] (cf. Fischer, 161-173) and the other, a far-reaching analysis of Shakespeare's Richard III (as a 'limping mass murderer and cunning clown') on Berlin's stages of the 'Third Reich' and the GDR (cf. Wagner, 267-282), three other individual texts remain. Taken together, these three can serve as examples to document the thematic range, the wealth of information and the special qualities of the whole anthology.

At first glance, the contribution by Thomas Efer, Gerhard Heyer and Jürgen Jost is methodologically irritatingly foreign and yet for exactly that reason particularly inspiring. The authors introduce methods of computer science ('Text Mining') and concepts of mathematics for a formal examination of language and plot structures of plays and actively put them to the test (cf. Efer/Heyer/Jost, 216-229). In how far the resulting data and graphics actually offer deeper (and new) insights into the specific writing style and the intrinsic structure of Shakespeare's dramatic art remains to be seen. With the help of a broad source analysis Nicolas Detering takes a look at the problematic meaning of Shakespeare during the First World War: on the home front (cf. Detering, 175-196). While August and September 1914 still saw the fight for/with Shakespeare as a continuation of military quarrels, with Shakespeare quotes being used against England, the second and third year of war saw a change of direction: Staunch nationalists like Rudolf Brotnak and Gerhart Hauptmann started to use subtle argumentation to take Shakespeare out of the line of fire of the August patriotism. At the same time, while the war was still going on, there was a growing number of people who emphasised similarities, not differences, concerning Shakespeare's plays and who regarded his work as a means for international understanding. They were, however, in the minority. The concluding essay of the anthology, written by the editor, Christa Jansohn, is an unsurprisingly far-reaching, richly documented, and thorough analysis of the reception of Shakespeare on the German student stage. Her cleverly chosen emphases make the text very readable and inspiring. On the whole, this anthology deserves a lot of attention – its hopefully numerous readers will readily applaud the essays' critical reception of specific details as well as the potential of individual contributions to inspire further research.

UWE BAUMANN


Edward Gibbon's monumental History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (1776–1788) has never been out of print neither in English nor in German translations, even if mostly in an abridged form. Gibbon's magnum opus has been widely
praised as the most eminent narrative historiography in England of the eighteenth century. While modern historiographers surpass their predecessor in terms of an accurate and critical approach to sources, Gibbon has retained his good reputation for a comprehensive scope, philosophical judgment, stylistic elegance, and the imaginative construction of ancient rulers, albeit with more ironic detachment than empathy (384-85). His work became notorious for its critical attitude towards Christianity as one of the key factors in the demise of the Roman Empire. Gibbon’s place in world literature and the question of cultural transfer motivated Cord-Friedrich Berghahn and Till Kinzel to publish conference papers on the historian’s German reception in 18th- and 19th-century historiography, literature and the arts, as well as in psychology and philosophy.

(1) Historiography. In remarkable detail, Hans Erich Bödeker elucidates the popularization of selected topics of Gibbon’s History of the Decline and Fall in German journals to enlighten middle-class readers. The journals offered numerous reviews, adaptations, and excerpts in translation, focusing on the contested issue of the Christian religion, on Attila the Hun, and on the development of Germanic tribes and nations (38). While most reviewers unanimously appreciated Gibbon’s writing of history, they were divided over his eclectic research and his critique of Christianity as a force conducive to the decline of the Roman Empire (52-58). Often, readers conjoined Gibbon’s life and work, judging Gibbon either as a mediocre character more interested in rhetoric than argument (70) or as an erudite philosopher and great man of letters (74-82). Nikolas Immer describes how the Swiss author von Bonstetten only comes to appreciate Gibbon’s character and work when he himself travels to Rome and experiences its contemporary desolation as the aftermath of the fall of the Roman Empire, which he extends to the present in his own cultural history of Italy. Focusing on the academic discipline of ancient history, Wilfried Nippel argues that German scholars praised Gibbon as an excellent writer of history, but relegated him to a seat in the pantheon of enlightened history rather than granting him the position of a modern scholar with a more systematic and critical approach to sources, which they – ‘naturally’ – located in 19th-century Germany (96-99). However, in the special field of legal history, Ingo Reichard argues that Gibbon’s chapter on Roman law provided – in translation – the foundation stone of the discipline due to its modern conjunction of the law, politics, and history (107-108). According to Antonie Magen, the historian Karl Gutzkow mapped his own era of unrest in the 1840s as a period of transition on the model of Gibbon’s imperial decline and fall, which, in turn, has been interpreted as a parallel between the Roman Empire and the British Empire (243-48). Angela Steinsiek reveals that Gibbon formed the model of Gregorovius’ monumental and literary Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter (1859-72), which aimed at representing the epic totality of life (274-76). Burkhardt considers Gibbon as an important predecessor, as Patrick Bahners writes in his very comprehensive and analytic contribution, but finds fault with Gibbon’s rather limited view of the function of religion rather than noticing its central position in a history of ideas and institutions (279-82). In Burkhardt’s perspective, ‘superstition’ under Diocletian and Christianity under Constantine appear to be functional equivalents that maintain order as state religions (293). Therefore, Constantine should not be idealized as the first Christian emperor but recognized as a political mastermind (328).

(2) Literature and the arts. Among the German neoclassical and romantic authors, Johannes Saltzwedel reports in his survey, Schiller and Schlegel find fault with Gibbon’s neglect of the Greeks, while Forster, Humboldt, Jean Paul, Grabbe, and Börne are impressed by Gibbon’s grand scope, ethics, irony, and style. In a convincing inter-
textual and contextual reading, Thomas Richter delineates how Platen harks back to Gibbon's ancient history in order to create images of 'barbarians' in the sense of either the less civilized enemies of the Romans or the Romans who regressed to 'barbarians' through a neglect of cultivation. For example, having participated in the fight against Napoleon and the French empire, Platen recreates a positive image of the barbarian Odoacer, who defeats the imperial Romans and becomes the cultivated new ruler (210-16). László V. Szabó shows how von Scheffel transposes Gibbon's episodes of the Huns into his historical novel Ekkehard (1855) set 500 years later. Roman Lach draws a parallel between Gibbon's literary history and Felix Dahn's historical novel Julian the Apostate (1893) as both writers are fascinated by the literary exploration of complex and contradictory historical characters and processes, as in the obscure event of Julian's manipulation of or response to his army in turmoil, which suddenly nominated him as the new emperor (355-57). Till Kinzel agrees with Bernays's perspicuous analysis of Gibbon's literary style and elaborate use of footnotes as a dialogic supplement to his main text (143-46), but has to concede that German histories of literature and philosophy have gradually excluded Gibbon from the canon (153-54). Cord-Friedrich Berghahn speculates as to Gibbon's influence on Wagner's conception of the fall of society and state in essays written during the 1840s, in Der Ring der Nibelungen, and in Parsifal.

(3) Psychology and philosophy. Peter Erickson delineates the enlightened shift from supernatural to psychological explanations of religious conversion. He draws a parallel between Gibbon's representation of the emperor Julian's conversion to heathenism through the fabrication of miracles and the psychologist Jacob-Friedrich Abel's discourses on the mechanism of superstition in conversions. In spite of the progress of reason in the Enlightenment, Abel considers modern life in its psychological and physiological aspects, such as the indulgence in reflection and imagination, as conducive to manipulation that generates religious proselytes. He struggles in vain to establish protestant conversion as a consequence of free choice with a little help of pressure that recalls Foucault's regime of discipline (171-84). Andreas Urs Sommer finds a few traces of Gibbon in Nietzsche, who seems to have been interested in Gibbon as an independent scholar (371). However, Nietzsche reduced his second-hand smattering of Gibbon in his radical condemnation of Christianity as inimical to life and culture (377-80). In spite of the differences between Gibbon's skeptical reason and Dilthey's holistic understanding, Maria Behre and Michael Szczekalla discover a similarity in their conception of individuals as intersections of cultural systems and individual biographies as a source of cultural knowledge (390-93).

A few contributions suffer a little from the relative scarcity of intertextual traces and are compelled to resort to conjecture. It stands to reason that Gibbon's legacy has a greater impact in historiography and literature than in philosophy. However, the volume does full justice to its claim of offering building blocks of Gibbon's reception history as an important aspect of the cultural exchange between Great Britain and Germany.

MICHAEL MEYER
Our minds, says Kant, are formative, synthetic – they take in distinct appearances through the senses and mould them into intelligible entities. Then here is a challenge to the synthetic knack of those reading *Romanticism and Knowledge*: forge a narrative that does justice to the intricacy of the book's thirty-one contributions.

As in Kant, various categories (laid out in the introduction) aid one's understanding, and hence testify to the editorial skill underpinning the volume. Richard Holmes surveys a range of scientific findings from Joseph Banks's discovery of purposeless surfing in Tahiti to the Herschels' differing influences on Shelley and Keats. Tilottama Rajan discusses German idealism's "attempt to relate if not synthesize all knowledge" and the resulting entanglement of spirit in the disaggregating sciences (37). Paul Hamilton recapitulates the dialectic of enlightenment between the lure of the Kantian sublime to "exceed conceptual jurisdiction" and its "exposing" of the very "animal weakness" that reason strives to overcome (56; 59). Ian Duncan explores the anthropological bone of contention between Kant and Herder – whether reason is the (regulative) motor to the history of humanity or the consequence of a (constitutive) organic drive – before Nicholas Halmi treats Winckelmann's distinction between "artistic production" and "product" as a departure from Herder's historicism (83).

Mark J. Bruhn then disentangles Wordsworth's "Empirico-Idealist" philosophy from Coleridge's idealism by explicating Wordsworth's study of the "proto-Kantian" Cudworth (91). Christoph Bode expounds Georg(e) Forster's case for the significance of prejudice and incongruous perspectives as a means of promoting the emancipatory narration of scientific details across cultural gulfs. Another Forster – Johann Reinhold, the father of Georg(e) – and Blake feature in Noah Heringman's analysis of their "competing visions of primitive humanity" (115). Mihaela Irimia investigates Vasile Alecsandri's travels towards Africa's "awing otherness," and explains the sublime's potential "as antidote for […] spleen" (132; 129). Mental imbalance is also the subject of Norbert Lennartz's investigation into "Romantic Quixotism" qua "strained relationship with books which leads the avid reader to fail to differentiate between fiction and reality" (139). The conflict between classical and reformist curricula is at the heart of Catherine Ross's examination of Romantic polymathy which places emphasis on dissenting thinkers and academies, before Maximiliaan van Woudenberg traces Coleridge's library borrowings amidst the dynamics of the English student community at the "reform university" of Göttingen (157).

Rolf Lessenich, in an intellectual move paralleling Rajan, elucidates Erasmus Darwin's recourse to poetry and myth for the transmission of his "new egalitarian" science (174). Similarly, empiricism's insufficiency to explain a reality which, "like poetry, is a willed, forced, or imagined construct" emerges from Timothy Heimlich's analysis of Charlotte Smith's *Beachy Head* (177). David Duff surveys encyclopaedia prospectuses, material and yet ephemeral in their narrow purposefulness as advertisements and fundraisers, but highlights, too, their poetic function paralleling Wordsworth. Ralf Haekel continues the topic of encyclopaedias through his illustration of the "several paradigm shifts" that the concept of "soul" underwent in the unfolding scientific discourse (207). Pascal Fischer expounds Isaac D'Israeli's commandeering of seemingly
trivial "anecdotes, miscellanies, and 'curiosities'" and their "epiphanic quality" that renders disparate epistemic details more widely accessible (213; 216).

Coleridge's concept of reason is then the focus of Noriko Naohara's dissection of influences from Kant via Jacobi and Schelling to the theologian Richard Hooker. Reason remains in the epistemological limelight in Timothy Michael's essay on Wordsworth, Kant, and their "high argument" concerning the partial "suitability of the mind to the objective world" (236). Jennifer Wawrzinek explores the poetics of mind – the "intrinsic plasticity in the Keatsian oeuvre" that encompasses both alterity and physical infirmity (243). Arkady Plotnitsky further fleshes out this biological thread as he draws parallels between Keats's conceptions of chaos and thought with those of Hegel and Deleuze/Guattari, before Joseph Albernaz argues that "in Keats, as in Hegel, experience assumes a coherent and necessary shape only retroactively" (264).

Eugene Stelzig unearths Henry Crabb Robinson's "uncharacteristic failure of nerve" to introduce Goethe to Wordsworth's poetry (282), alongside German responses to Wordsworth ranging from enthusiastic (Herder) to dismissive (Voss). Timothy Whelan discusses Robinson's cautious inclination towards Wilhelm Benecke's speculative philosophy of moral evil arising from an "abuse of liberty" in pre-existence (287). James Hogg's deviation from such metaphysical accounts of evil subsequently emerges from Johannes Schlegel's essay, and Tamara Gosta makes the case for a vibrant complexity of knowledge – "communal memories, local beliefs, and empirical evidence" – in Hogg (310). Mirka Horóva contrasts the roles of knowledge and chance in the struggles of history as depicted in Byron's Werner, whilst Frederick Burwick situates Alfred Bunn's adaptation The Minister and the Mercer amidst the silk weavers' struggle, and "knowledge" as "secret plans" (326). Sebastian Domsch portrays the Romantic artist as a "prophet of uncertainty" – and of probability, to fill the ensuing void (337). Theresa M. Kelley argues against prophetic inertia in Goethe and Shelley, and for their more hopeful anticipation of posterity, and ultimately Stefanie Fricke holds on to intentionality as key to the transmission of knowledge between historical contexts, exemplified in her readings of Barbauld, Henry Kirke White, and the Shelleys.

**Philipp Hunnekuhl**


Despite the countless studies that have been published on London and its geographical and cultural make-up, Ged Pope is clearly correct in identifying the city's suburbs as an as yet under-researched area. His volume sets out to address this gap by adopting a very broad perspective, both in terms of the time frame (as indicated in the volume's subtitle) and with regard to the kinds of texts selected. 'Popular' works and genres like detective fiction are often studied side by side with others which would (like those by the authors named in the subtitle) in all probability be granted a 'literary' status by most readers and critics. This interest in analysing suburbia as comprehensively as possible is also reflected in Pope's basic semiotic approach which – as
explained in the introduction – allows him to read real-life suburban developments (e.g. population movements) and textual representations of the London suburbs as part of the same process (cf. 12-13); "the connection between writing in its broadest sense, and inhabiting a place, is that both involve similar kinds of creative acts, of reading and knowing a landscape, of reading the signs of other individuals: to create a meaningful map of where you live and who you are" (208-209). In this way, 'representation' becomes a central concept in the study, and the author indeed explains repeatedly that this focus is very apt for his subject matter, as he considers the suburb to pose inherent problems of visibility and legibility (cf. e.g. 3). Thus, both the specific issues and plot patterns of suburban fiction and the seeming reluctance of researchers to address these areas and their representations may derive from key suburban characteristics rather than from more circumstantial factors. The volume suggests these connections time and again, and though (understandably) they can never really be proved, they provide ample food for thought during the reading process and beyond.

Pope has structured his analysis in a consistently chronological form from the 1830s to the 21st century, delimiting his five main chapters according to standard period designations (early/mid-Victorianism, later Victorianism/Edwardian period, modernity, the post-war era and the contemporary situation). In this way, his argument is always easy to follow despite the plethora of examples which are examined, and the individual texts selected are more or less automatically positioned in the literary and cultural contexts of their time. At the same time, what makes the study especially inspiring is the leitmotifs that run through more or less all the demarcated periods and allow the reader to see sudden links between seemingly very different texts, even beyond the points that are explicitly made in the analysis. In this way, most chapters demonstrate the persistent need for boundaries in dealing with suburbia, both with regard to categorisations of the suburban space itself and to the desire of the 'metropolis' to flaunt its own distinction from the rather shady suburbs. As the textual examples show again and again, however, such secure borderlines are ultimately impossible, which generates varying degrees of anxiety. Indeed, the suburb is often connected with a prevailing sense of unreality and disorientation, leaving authors and characters to struggle for clarity and meaning. This experience also seems to manifest itself in the recurrent fantastic elements in different kinds of suburban fiction, from Victorian ghost stories and post-war suburban science fiction to contemporary representations like Zadie Smith's.

The suburb's lack of distinguishing features can moreover induce an impression of banality (cf. 204), of a dull life that is too clearly mapped out and leaves the individual sinking into insignificance. This perspective produces suburban loathing which the chosen texts sometimes combine with an undercurrent of nostalgia for the urban centre (cf. 106). There are also authors who try to overcome the representational problems of suburbia by deliberately introducing numerous concrete details. Often, however, such attempts to emphasise the materiality of the suburb usually have less reassuring effects, as the objects concerned finally turn against the characters. Pope's most convincing examples in this respect come from the contemporary period where suburban comedy shows men failing to master the materiality of the space – thus to some extent harking back to the "Nobodies" populating the high Victorian and Edwardian suburbs (67). At the same time, female writers often highlight how women are smothered by suburban materiality and lose their individuality in it (cf. 189-202). Although these texts may have comic effects, a sense of the uncanny ultimately predominates, which is indeed probably the term most frequently applied to suburbia in the volume.
as a whole. As a result, both successful homemaking and identity construction seem to be ruled out in suburbia and are represented as such in the respective texts. This makes Pope place some emphasis on immigrant and postcolonial views in the post-war and contemporary periods, with the suburb to some extent mirroring an apparently similar degree of insubstantiality in the colonial home (cf. 146). Thus, not only gender but also ethnic origin is shown as a relevant analytical category with regard to suburbia. At the same time, the volume observes a more general tendency to see and present the suburb as 'fake' (cf. 115-116), as a performance dominated by often self-conscious theatricality. From the 1920s onwards, Pope demonstrates this trend to be linked with a sense that the 'real' England is located in the past, so that suburban unreality then ties in with the increasing difficulties in establishing a clear concept of Englishness in the post-war period (cf. 168).

Throughout the whole of the volume Ged Pope skilfully elaborates on and intertwines these different threads to form a complex web of suburban associations. Nevertheless, one sometimes wonders if he might not also have used his wealth of material for outlining some changes or at least shifts in between the different suburban periods. Similarly, it might have been worth considering why London suburbia – despite its general "literary invisibility" (208) – seems to have found its place far more readily in some genres than in others, with both the genres’ dominant characteristics (like fragmentation) and perhaps also their social status as for instance 'popular' fiction constituting salient factors. But already as it stands, Reading London's Suburbs is a substantial, useful and so far unparalleled attempt to give the suburb and its representations the attention they deserve and to use semiotics to scrutinise the deeper layers of both the city and its texts. 'Texts' in this sense might even have been extended to include Salim Hafejee's photographs of suburban houses which run through the book, but the author apparently decided to leave their visual impact unimpaired by analytical interference.

**Merle Tönnies**


Wieland Schwanebeck’s study *Der flexible Mr. Ripley: Männlichkeit und Hochstapelei in Literatur und Film* sets out to address two gaps, namely the lack of critical attention to the complete series of Patricia Highsmith’s Ripley novels, and the failure of cultural narratology to incorporate research offered by masculinity studies. As many adaptations in various media show, the Ripley material has been of continuing interest to readers and cinema audiences, and Schwanebeck’s study argues that part of this appeal stems from the way these narratives intertwine discourses about masculinity and the motif of the *Hochstapler* (a concept which, Schwanebeck argues, is not commensurate with its English translations as *impostor* or *con man*). Central to his reading of the Ripley canon is the assumption that masculinity is a narrated construct, which can be likened to the *Hochstapler* motif because both include a form of deception. From this trifold perspective (*Hochstapler* motif-masculinity-narrative) the book performs in-depth readings of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, its neglected sequels, and their various film adaptations.

In the introduction the author clearly states the study's four major aims. First, the example of the *Hochstapler* is used to inquire in how far masculinity in general can be seen as a form of *Hochstapelei/imposture*, given the fact that it relies on unquestioned...
master narratives which refer to images that consist of citations instead of authentic essences. The second aim targets the fact that narratology cannot exist as a (gender-) neutral science of storytelling, but needs to be aware of the ideological and gendered implications of texts on the various levels of narration. Here, the study seeks to combine various approaches of gender and masculinity studies with classical narratology in order to read the Ripley novels from an enriched perspective, but also in order to draw more general conclusions about how masculinity is negotiated in society. As a third aim, the study intends to fill a gap in Highsmith criticism by providing the first in-depth analysis of the complete canon, whereas most research so far has mainly focussed on The Talented Mr. Ripley while dismissing its sequels. Finally, the study argues that the Hochstapler motif deserves its own place as a genuine motif to be distinguished from the picaresque novel.

Its logical structure divides the study into a theoretical part and one which features individual readings of the novels and their filmic adaptations. The theoretical part, making up almost a third of the book, first devotes a chapter to the Hochstapler as a cultural topos and scientific object. Its discussion uses various angles, including terminological, historical, sociological, psychological and literary perspectives. Because each of these disciplines use storytelling as an explanatory tool, Schwanebeck argues, literary studies have privileged access to the Hochstapler, whose existence is based on narrativity as well (54-5). The second theoretical chapter is then concerned with the connection between Hochstapelei and masculinity. First, Schwanebeck reviews important insights that gender and masculinity studies have provided for the study of men and masculinity. After that, the chapter takes on the challenge to combine narratological with gender-oriented approaches, with the goal to sensitise classical narratology to questions of gender. Finally, the chapter closes with the formulation of the study's main hypothesis, which combines the object of study (the Hochstapler motif) with its critical approach ("gendered" narratology): Masculinity is a form of (narrated) imposture. The following individual readings then focus on the five novels and their adaptations. These analyses show impressively detailed knowledge of the material, and they offer seemingly infinite possibilities to contextualise the novels. Thus, the readings reference a multitude of examples from popular and high culture, ranging from Mad Men through Nietzsche's Zarathustra to Millais' Ophelia, with which the interpretations are underlined and the arguments strengthened.

What is impressive about Schwanebeck's study is the way in which critical theoretical debates are carefully discussed in order to formulate a research design with which he then can perform his equally impressive readings of the novels and films. Far from lost in others' research, the author maintains a strong argumentative voice of his own, and although the myriad examples and references are at times almost overwhelming, Schwanebeck's precise and clear, if sometimes also polemic, style helps to keep the line of argumentation transparent. Furthermore, one of the great benefits of this study is that it overcomes a simplified literary approach which merely analyses images of masculinity as part of literary texts. His use of a gendered narratology, which questions the ideological formative power of narrative structures as such, is a welcome statement of how gender in literary texts should be analysed. His individual readings of the novels and film adaptations show not only a firm grasp on the material but also that the neglect of the whole canon so far is unjustified.

However, while written with confidence and convincingly argued, the study occasionally neglects aspects that do not fit its approach. To name a couple of examples, prominent female literary impostors, like Moll Flanders or Shakespeare's Portia, are

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elided from the literary history of the Hochstapler motif, which focuses exclusively on the male examples of the picaro and the dandy. The selection is understandable as this chapter lays the ground for the hypothesis that masculinity is a form of narrated Hochstapelei. Still, a short discussion of female imposture, especially involving cross-dressing, would have helped to clarify the closer connection between masculinity and Hochstapelei which the study claims. Elsewhere Schwanebeck claims that feminist narratology has mostly been preoccupied with experimental works featuring avant-garde forms of gender and sexuality, such as Orlando or The Passion of New Eve, while a narratology influenced by masculinity studies would be more helpful to address conventional gender performances (95-96). Feminist narratologists like Robyn Warhol, however, have worked on popular soap operas and the Victorian novel as well, so that this gap may only be an imagined one. Finally, it surprises that transgender theories, which also offer interesting responses to questions about authenticity, deception and imposture, find no adequate representation in this otherwise theoretically comprehensive study.

Der flexible Mr. Ripley: Männlichkeit und Hochstapelei in Literatur und Film is an ambitious book regarding its aims and a scope that includes a multitude of texts, media and theories. Taking aside reservations concerning some of its universalising claims, the overall framework is innovative, and the readings are strongly convincing. The book is a fascinating contribution to various fields and will provide important impulses for students of Highsmith, narratologists and scholars working in gender studies alike.

DOMINIK WALLERIUS


In 1949 the Canadian Jewish poet and journalist A.M. Klein was sent by his editor to the infant state of Israel in order to report on the emergence of its literature. Disappointed with the more obvious sources, he found it eventually in the poetry of the everyday presence of the revived Hebrew language. Klein was an ardent Zionist and his observation accords with the ideological bias of early Israeli statehood. And yet, on his return to Canada, the poet not only continued to write in English but eventually, concerned about the impact of the new Jewish state on Jewish life outside the contested borders of Israel, wrote an impassioned eulogy for the diaspora whose creative potential he praised.

In her ground-breaking study on Anglophone Israeli literature, Nadežda Rumjanceva illuminates a similar and yet very different phenomenon: of Jewish immigrants to Israel eschewing the 'poetry' of the ideologically sustained majority language and choosing to write in English instead. Building on the very few earlier fragmentary efforts to define the literary production of Anglophone writers in Israel as one of the new English literatures, Rumjanceva's broadly conceived and meticulously researched study presents the first systematic attempt to describe Anglophone Israeli literature as a comprehensive field of study. Grounded in convincingly applied theoretical and methodological approaches of transcultural, postcolonial, and Jewish studies, her book accumulates much original material and offers persuasive close readings of paradigmatic texts.
While clearly highlighting the internal diversity of Anglophone Israeli writing, the case for its categorisation is nevertheless cogently presented.

Taking into account migratory patterns and individual experiences of migration from the Anglophone diaspora to Israel, Rumjanceva interrogates the complex interaction between motivations for immigration and for the continued use, or adoption, of English as a creative idiom. While there is a clear predominance of Anglophone Jewish writers in Israel of American origin, this is complemented by an influx from across the Anglophone diaspora. Patterns of settlement (in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, the Galilee, kibbutzim, and settlements) are investigated in relation not only to the individual backgrounds of Anglophone writers in Israel but also to their varying ideologi
cal affiliations and to their thematic choices. Considering publication opportunities and institutional (self-)support of Anglophone writers in Israel, Rumjanceva moreover elaborates on the evolving infrastructure of, and the production context for, Anglophone literature in Israel, focusing in particular on the shifting role and appreciation of English from the days of the British Mandate to the present. Particularly compelling is her comparative approach, which explores the emergence and persistence of Anglophone writing in Israel vis-a-vis the development of Jewish American literature and Hebrew Israeli literature as well as Jewish cultural production in Yiddish.

Against this background, Rumjanceva develops perceptive and cogent close readings of her authors and their work, which she presents as paradigmatic. In her informed analysis, she focuses in particular on three crucial arenas of engagement: language, spaces and places, and the critical self-positioning towards the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the 'other.' From all three emerges that the quest for personal and poetic identity in Anglophone Israeli literature, of which poetry appears to be the preferred mode of expression, is largely determined by its transcultural context, by a demystifying impetus, and by the openness and flexibility suggested by the intermediary position of the Anglophone writer in Israel between the local and the global.

With few exceptions – most notably perhaps Shirley Kaufman, Rachel Tzvia Back, and Naomi Ragen – not many of the writers discussed in depth will be familiar to a wider readership, among them: Karen Alkalay-Gut, Zygmunt Frankel, Lami (Shulamit Halperin), Jerome Mandel, Rochelle Mass, Riva Rubin, and Richard Sherwin. Many others are barely mentioned; nor is the youngest generation of Israeli writers adopting English as their creative idiom, such as Shani Boianjiu and Joanna Chen, represented in any detail. Thus, while defining her subject area and the corpus of her investigation, Rumjanceva at least implicitly also sets out a canon – which throws into relief the obvious omissions. As she acknowledges, authors such as Dennis Silk, Richard Flantz, and Robert Friend would certainly merit further attention. Silk in particular, with his British background and emigration to Israel already in the early 1950s, might even have challenged to some extent the unfolding coherent narrative; as might have the increasing, but largely ignored, visibility of Israeli expatriate writers in English – among them Boianjiu, but also Avner Mandelman, Shelly Oria, Lavi Tidhar, and Ayelet Tsabar.

Given the diversity and ambivalence of Anglophone Israeli writers, one may wonder if a question mark might not usefully have been put to the powerful metaphor of Rumjanceva's main title, taken from Shirley Kaufman's eponymous selection of poems, *Roots in the Air* (1996). More attention might, moreover, have been given to alternative platforms of dissemination via the internet, which are mentioned but ultimately not considered in as much detail as their increasing proliferation may warrant. Finally, the volume conveniently offers a comprehensive timeline of Anglophone Israeli
literature and a copious works cited section of which any further research in this area will clearly benefit; but regrettably it includes no index which, in a publication that sets out to define a new field of studies, would have been more than welcome.

In sum, Rumjancev’s study signifies a decisive step towards synthesising and expanding earlier unsystematic approaches to Anglophone Israeli literature and it contributes greatly to its definition and mapping while siting it, aware of its distinct characteristics, within a loosely conceived framework of the new English literatures. Rigorous in its approach and persuasive in its conclusions, this book nevertheless raises many more questions than it answers which, in an emerging field as fluid as the literature of Anglophone writers in Israel, is not only to be expected but perhaps also to be hoped for.

AXEL STÄHLER


*Crunch Lit* by Katy Shaw is the first volume to appear in Bloomsbury’s new “21st-Century Genre Fiction” series and analyses literature and cultural productions in the wake of the economic crisis of 2007–8. This concise volume offers an overview of narrations that represent as well as question the ‘credit crunch,’ attempt to understand the development of increasing financialization in the 21st century as well as aim to provide alternative values. Drawing from a wide range of material, Shaw investigates novels, confessional narratives, drama as well as TV and radio programmes, documentaries and films in order to establish Crunch Lit as a genre which “speak[s] to a public desire for new narratives about this period” (13).

The focus of this study is literary fiction from the UK, which is underlined by the concentration on a handful of novels that are analysed throughout the volume (e.g. Ben Elton’s *Meltdown*, Sebastian Faulks’ *A Week in December* and John Lanchester’s *Capital*, amongst others). At first sight, this limited corpus seems to undermine the definition of Crunch Lit as a new genre of the 21st century, but by supplementing her analysis with the help of diverse cultural productions, such as reality TV, chick lit, radio drama and musical theatre, Shaw can impressively demonstrate that the engagement with the global economic permeates Western cultural production. Unfortunately, a comprehensive bibliography, as promised in the introduction (19), is missing from the review copy so that the validity of Crunch Lit as a literary genre rests on the aforementioned small corpus.

The first chapter provides the context for the following analysis by outlining the origins of Crunch Lit in US-American as well as British fiction that dealt with the political changes of neoliberalism and financial deregulation during the 1970s and 1980s. Shaw then goes on to scrutinize writing from the 1990s to 2000 to corroborate her thesis that especially the 1980s were seen as responsible for the rising economic difficulties. As a response in the new millennium, fiction turns increasingly to the domestic as “authors use family plots to tell wider stories about the relationship between global finance and individual freedoms” (39).

Departing from the crucial date of 9th August, 2007, the following chapter traces the immediate reaction to the credit crisis. Dominated by feelings of loss and trauma, many texts are written from an insider perspective and thus, function "as a form of info-fiction" (63), trying to keep pace with the rapidly unfolding events as well as attempting to tackle the complexity of the millennial financial system.
Arguing for the importance of space, even in a globalised world characterised by virtual networks, chapter 3 analyses London as a 'capital' city. Shaw subdivides this chapter into three parts. Firstly, the impact of increased financialization on the physical structures of the city as well as the ensuing credit crunch are outlined, as well as their leaving their marks in the form of a changing skyline. The focus then shifts to the ramifications for private spaces such as the home, at the same time providing further examples of individual characters that are influenced by abstract developments in the financial sector. The chapter concludes by analysing virtual spaces which function as "attempts to escape the reality of a financialized contemporary society" (84).

Chapters 4 and 5 highlight the impact of the financial crisis for gender constructions in fiction. The chapter entitled "Masters of the Universe" engages with the vilified persona of the banker and traces the dominant narrative that men's affinity to risk-taking and recklessness was the cause of the crisis. In contrast, the following chapter focuses on women's perspectives and fictions that sees women as main profiteers of this crisis. By analysing chick lit fiction, Shaw demonstrates how this genre is updated and transformed from its focus on fashion and consumerism to establishing new values in a post-crisis world.

The last chapter analyses "Financial Performance," focusing on theatre productions and comedy as well as visual media such as TV or cinema. As Shaw points out, production companies are not only challenged by how to respond to the shock to society caused by the credit crunch but are also under pressure by new austerity measures that dramatically limit their agency. In response to the crisis of the financial system, theatre productions increasingly took over the mission of educating audiences, trying to facilitate a deeper understanding of the structures of the financial world that allowed the crisis to happen in the first place. Shaw demonstrates that the changed reality of audiences led to the establishment of new reality TV formats, categorized as "Thrift TV," as well as an increased interest in documentaries.

The volume concludes that Crunch Lit functions not only as representation of the financial system and the impact of its crisis, but also serves as an intervention and as resistance to established structures. Shaw's study underlines the importance of cultural production as intervention as well as education when negotiating complex structures such as the global financial system. Although the monograph spotlights a wide variety of issues and interpretations, the overall concision of the volume is unfortunate at some points. Chapter 3, for instance, seeks to discuss fiction which "offer[s] alternative, and often critical, re-readings of the unseen impact of financial practices on the physical, social and psychological landscapes of a place and its inhabitants" (86), but allows only 18 pages for this wealth of topics. Ultimately, this only underlines the potential for further research and shows the timeliness of Shaw's publication that is the first to discuss Crunch Lit as a new genre in the 21st century.

JESSICA HOMBERG-SCHRAMM


The volume is a treasure trove of interdisciplinary work that seeks to blend the concerns of postcolonial studies with media-related inquiries. The editors' introduction provides an excellent overview of the faultlines and pitfalls that shape an interdisciplinary field traditionally oriented toward literary studies (postcolonialism, 7) and
almost anarchically diversified (media studies, 11). If the term has indeed become an empty signifier then, one might ask, why are we (and this volume) still using it? There is, admittedly, a little bit of shilly-shallying on the degree of political commitment (10) and its exact relation to the global and transnational studies (8, 13) that have recently emerged, threaten to displace, or at least re-orient postcolonial approaches.

The introduction serves as a worthwhile entry point to twelve articles that do not provide an overview to the field, but intriguingly throw a number of key areas into sharp relief. It might be usefully combined with reading Ulrike Bergermann and Nanna Heidenreich's more partisan total. Universalismus und Partikularismus in postkolonialer Medientheorie from the same publisher (2015). In comparison to the guarded and balanced introduction of the present volume, Heidenreich and Bergermann do not mince their words about the continuing colonial burden of a media studies they see still implicated in colonial thinking, an "embedded Wissenschaft."

Even in the very first section on "global media," conflicting views emerge; Whereas Terry Flew and Bonnie Rui Liu express a guarded optimism concerning the potential of participatory decentralized media options to overcome centralized government-orientated mediascapes along the "modernization" paradigm, Kai Hafez is less sanguine. In his perspective, which is informed by systems theory, civil society has had only limited effects in becoming a third player in the global media field (alongside governments and businesses). For Hafez, the pipe-dreams of transnational connectivity and "transculture" have proved premature in light of resistant national media systems and conservative chauvinisms, so that he sees only limited potential for media-induced change. Less theoretical, and more focused on the acting bodies in media politics such as increasingly active NGOs, Barbara Thomass arrives at a similarly mixed account. Unlike Flew and Rui Liu, both Hafez and Thomass either disregard or downplay the role of decentralized networked connectivity.

The papers converge, however, on the sceptical view of techno-determinism. The focus in general is not on hardware and software, but on the various ways in which transnational subjectivities are shaped. Brian Cheech and Anandam Kavoori's fascinating case study on Wael Ghonim is a case in point. Ghonim is a conflicted and conflicting transnational personality shaped by his Egyptian citizenship and Google executive profession. His example exposes the "contingent and fraught nature of transcultural subjectivity" and the multiple contradictions of the media's role during the 'Arab Spring' rebellion. The papers in this volume usefully combine representational concerns, such as questions of hegemony and counter-hegemony in the work of filmmaker Claire Denis as discussed by Rinella Cere, or the transgressive romance in Karan Johar's My Name Is Khan (2010) as interpreted by Monika Mehta, with the political and economic frameworks shaping the meaning-making. Mehta sketches both the Hindu-Muslim conflicts that are featured in the film and emerged around its distribution. She throws into sharp relief how film censorship produces and shapes representations and cultural meanings. While Lars Eckstein examines the role of media piracy of Indian and Nigerian "cassette culture" from a postcolonial perspective, Carla Maier's investigation of postcolonial media pirates focuses on postmigrant MCs and DJs in London. From the viewpoint of both media and postcolonial studies, meanings and representations are crucially shaped by media policy and the commodification of culture, as, for instance, demonstrated in Oliver Lindner's account of commodified hybridity in the literary field or Ana Cristina Mendes' insights into the appropriation of South Asian fiction. Probably the most fascinating glimpses this collection can offer shed light on the praxis of postcolonial media use. Uriya Shavit, for instance, provides a
qualitative study of diasporic media consumption in Germany. Two case studies, an
Israeli 'lonely sojourner' in Frankfurt and a Turkish 'passive transnational' illustrate the
changing and diverse patterns of engaging with 'home' media after migration. It would
be fascinating to update this study after the 2015 wave of migration to Germany to see
what new patterns of postmigrant engagement emerge.

Only one essay, Sven Werkmeister's sketch of the ethnic encounters of European
literary primitivism, is invested in media history – probably there is just too much to
be critically assessed in the rapidly shifting mediascape of the current world.

Some aspects might be seen as underrepresented, such as questions of Whiteness or
Rey Chow's ideas on the universalisation and localisation of ethnicity. All in all,
however, this volume is a methodologically diverse and knowledgeable cornucopia of
insights into one of the most vibrant and essential fields of contemporary media studies.

**Castro Varela, María do Mar, and Nikita Dhawan. Postkoloniale Theorie: Eine
kritische Einführung. Bielefeld: transcript, 2015. 376 pp.**

The second, completely revised and extended 2015 edition of the critical introduction
to postcolonial theory by María do Mar Castro Varela and Nikita Dhawan offers a
significant elaboration of their 2005 volume, which constituted one of the first Ger-
man-language introductions to the field's emergence and its most widely discussed
theorists Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi K. Bhabha. While the
first edition had already offered a brief contextualisation of other influential thinkers
and critics including Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire, it is somewhat surprising that
the new edition, although comprising more than double the pages of the first one,
does not necessarily pay more systematic attention to the influence of further key
concepts or thinkers, although many of them, e.g. Karina Bidaseca, Lila Abu-Lughod
or Achille Mbembe, are mentioned in passing. This first impression, however, is
somewhat qualified upon closer examination of the introductory chapter, which now
elaborates on aspects such as religion and secularism in relation to empire, the debate
on the (dis-)continuities between colonialism and the Holocaust, and the complex
relationship between globalization and postcolonialism. It is mostly in this as well as
in the fifth chapter, which now critically examines postcolonial theory in relation to
more detailed accounts of the "corrective methodology" (304) of intersectional ap-
proaches, decolonial interventions and questions of universalism vs. difference, that
many more critics and positions than before are considered. Yet these are frequently
introduced mainly in relation to their influence on or criticism of the infamously
dubbed "holy trinity" (Young 1995, 163).\(^1\) Out of the three, Spivak seems to largely
remain beyond reproach whenever criticism against her work is brought up, while the
detailed discussion of the points of critique brought forth against Said and Bhabha
offers a fairly balanced introduction to key debates and positions in the field.

The volume certainly retains its original impetus to (re-)vitalize postcolonial inter-
ventions in the German-language academic context, as especially the sub-chapter on
migrant activism vs. the international division of labor indicates. Yet, in spite of its
extended scope, one frequently has the impression that separate articles were woven
into this volume. While these certainly enrich the original overview, they at times

digress into a specialist discussion beyond the volume's overall survey character and purpose, which makes it difficult to discern a target audience for it. One example of this is the discussion of the critical reception of Vivek Chibber's *Postcolonial Theory and the Specter of Capital* (2013), which drifts off into a somewhat overly detailed outline of the various positions and mutual accusations of misreading between Guha, Chatterjee and Chakrabarty. Similarly, lengthy single-text summaries (e.g. of Peter van der Veer's *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (2001)) in the sub-chapter on religion, secularism and empire) at times appear redundant. In contrast, while one might expect a more general thematic or conceptual outline of the critical debates on "universalism versus difference" from the sub-header under which this discussion is placed, one has to abstract the larger debate from the exemplary one on the universalism of capitalism, in which Spivak again comes to the rescue and is given the final word. In contrast to such digressions, the highly significant decolonial debate, which currently influences a lot of work in the field for better or for worse, is reduced to a more or less blanket denial of the methodological validity of its interventions. While some of this criticism is undoubtedly justified, neither the concept of coloniality nor the shifts in perspective as well as the (dis-)continuities between postcolonial and decolonial approaches, as e.g. summarized by Gurminder K. Bhambra, receive sufficient attention to constitute a critical dialogue towards the ostensibly shared goal of decolonization – a term which remains curiously vague throughout the volume. Although this is attributable to the interdisciplinary challenge of any introductory overview of postcolonial theory, the volume is simultaneously at its best and faces its greatest challenges when providing detailed excursions in order to exemplify key debates.

While the first edition's conciseness at times led to generalizations of disciplinary approaches but provides a useful introductory survey, the extended volume seems to be faced with the opposite challenge in its weaving back and forth between theoretical arguments drawn from at times vastly different disciplinary and methodological contexts. Again, it is mainly Spivak who is allowed to shape-shift between her roles as literary critic and activist whenever one or the other appears to be a more opportune position, while most other critics are reprimanded for un-disciplined methodology or lack of applicability to the economic field of inquiry. To position Bhabha's focus on the significance of culture and processes of signification as ostensibly purely 'culturalist' without contextualizing the respective studies from which this assessment is drawn seems rather unfairly phrased in comparison. It is easy to condemn postcolonial theory and its academic industry when its stated "promise" is shortened to the formula "to defeat oppression and exploitation via hybridization" (291) and subversive agency is shifted to metropolitan migrants at the expense of 'postcolonial cultures' in the Global South. The implicit continued search for 'pure' positions of resistance and agency and the volume's call for transparency are as noble as the field's ostensible main focus on criticism of neo-colonial structures and unchecked international capitalism (309), yet the suggested mandate to 'harmonize' the interests of migrant and anti-racist activist positions with a focus on the international division of labor at times disregards the overlapping and entangled fields that have been and continue to be influenced by postcolonial theory but pursue specific questions and issues which cannot but fail to speak for the 'South', as the present study seems to insist they should. If critics in the field have learned any of the (as the volume rightly points out)

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ambiguous and contradictory lessons of postcolonial theory, one should probably no
longer aim to harmonize such conflicting interests. Complicity is indeed at the heart
of the contention, yet coming to terms with this aspect needs much more than tran-
sparency and self-critical reflection, as seems to be implied here.

Maybe, then, the sheer scope of the attempt to trace the 'postcolonial' through
these overlapping but at times necessarily distinct disciplinary contexts, while at the
same time providing empirical examples for a better sense of what is at stake in the
questions raised therein, is indeed beyond a single volume. Yet, especially the histori-
cal overview offers a solid introduction in dialogue with current critical debates, while
the chapters on the 'trinity' now offer more contextualized debates and an overall
balanced survey on their reception and criticism. Occasionally missing references and
typos do not diminish the feat of this dense volume, which features an excellent bibli-
ography for further investigation and would have benefitted from an index.

ANNIKA MCPHERSON


*Transkulturalität. Klassische Texte* is the third volume in the series *Basis Scripte – Reader Kulturwissenschaften* (eds. D. Kimmich and S. Schahadat), which aims at intro-
ducing major domains of cultural studies through the key scholarly contributions that
have built them. So far, this laudable project, designed for higher education teaching
and aimed at student readers, comprises anthologies on *Kulturtheorie* (eds. D. Kimmich
et al.), *Gender Studies* (eds. F. Bergmann et al.) and *Bildwissenschaft und Visual Cu-
lture* (ed. M. Rimmelé et al.), all of which represent well-chosen selections of classical
and more recent critical texts, some published in German translation for the first time.

The volume *Transkulturalität* characterizes this area of knowledge as a pluridisciplinary field shaped by contributions from literary scholarship, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, and postcolonial criticism. Understanding their
anthology as an illustration of the dynamic of debates on how culture(s) and cultural
diversity can be conceptualized (12), the editors define transculturalism somewhat
circuitously as "not primarily" an attempt "to differentiate following the inherent logic
of the de-essentialization of differences," but as a question responding to "the historicity
and contingency of differences, which are negotiated with the help of the concept of
culture and which produce(d) further differentiations in the process" (14; this and
subsequent translations by Katrin Berndt). The four sections of the volume denote four
centres of discussion that address the question of transculturalism. Each section consists
of an introduction followed by three to four texts that either are canonical contributions,
or contemplate ideas as yet neglected in the transcultural debate.

The first section, "Diaspora und Exil," draws attention to what has been described
as "a new age of diaspora" (21) in which various forms of diasporic and exiled exist-
ence have become a global phenomenon. Featuring eminent contributions from,
among others, Alfred Schütz ("Der Fremde") and Paul Gilroy ("Der Black Atlantic"),
the section begins with Hannah Arendt's remarkable essay "Wir Flüchtlinge," origi-
nally published in 1943. Writing in another era of exile and therefore providing a
historical yet topical perspective, Arendt discusses several phenomena that since have
become key issues of transculturalism. From her observation that the state of exile ties
a people's history with that of other nations to her comments on statelessness and
assimilation, and her distinction between what Arendt terms, following Bernard Lazare, "social parvenus" and "conscious pariahs" (43), she offers intriguing insights into the anxieties and the possibilities of the diasporic condition.

The second section, titled "Migration, Globalisierung, Transnationalisierung," correlates and contextualizes these concepts as intersections with regard to their "historical and spatial dimension," in view of the "paradigmatic significance of migration," and with regard to their relation to the "principle of the nation" (100). It includes essays by, among others, Homi Bhabha ("Von Mimicry und Menschen"), Leslie A. Adelson ("Against Between – Ein Manifest gegen das Dazwischen") and Arjun Appadurai ("Die Herstellung von Lokalität"). Against the background of German-Turkish literature, Adelson demands a reconceptualization of the idea of culture itself, drawing attention to the fact that cultural encounters have ceased to happen between cultures but now take place within – and as part of – one and the same complex culture (128-9). Appadurai explores another form of dialogue in his discussion: understanding the relationship between anthropology and locality as mutually constitutive, he wonders whether this connection has the potential to survive in a world undergoing a process of delocalization (155). The present-day production of locality, he argues, is affected by the nation-state, by diasporic exchanges, and the virtual life in digital communities, all of which depend on and become expressed in variable and contradictory dynamics themselves (170).

The contributions of the third section address the transcultural intersection "Übersetzung" in essays by Walter Benjamin ("Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers"), Mikhail Bakhtin ("Die Ästhetik des Wortes"), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak ("Grenzen überqueren") and Alexander García Düttmann ("Kultur der Polemik"). In different approaches to communication, the texts ask if, and how, cultural thinking and actions can be conveyed, and they discuss translation as a process that exposes the "differences, inequalities and hegemonies" which characterize the scene of translation itself (176). Bakhtin's well-known considerations of dialogism as a principle of language and literature (206), and Spivak's validation of translation in her demand for reconceptualizing comparative studies to include literatures in languages of the global South (222) are obvious choices here. Düttmann's essay draws a line to Adelson's argument when he highlights that the struggle for recognition of difference is, in fact, a confrontation of differences not only within a particular culture, but within subjects as well, who have either to accept and integrate, or to exclude their own difference (242).

The fourth and final section, "Wissen um das Fremde," continues the theme of dialogue by featuring three contributions from anthropology's writing culture debate. With essays by James Clifford ("Über ethnographische Allegorie"), Johannes Fabian ("Zeit und das Hervortreten des Anderen") and Naoki Sakai ("Die Verrückung des Westens und der Status der Geisteswissenschaften"), the section attends to the epistemological challenges of a discipline that set out to research and write cultural difference and eventually problematized its understanding of the familiar. Clifford's text has been particularly influential in using the rhetorical concept of allegory to show what the author calls the narrative character of cultural representations (261), which employ shared symbols to render unfamiliar behaviour comprehensible and meaningful for both those who observe, and those who are being observed (262). Sakai's discussion of knowledge production in the humanities concludes the anthology by identifying the transcultural in theorizing itself, suggesting new forms of theory production in the humanities that are more attentive to how theoretical knowledge is disseminated across cultures and to the ways in which it is conceived in different global locations (313).
The volume succeeds in introducing students to the breadth of the transcultural debate, and in selecting contributions that identify key issues of transculturalism. Still, the absence of texts by Fernando Ortiz, Wolfgang Welsch and Mary-Louise Pratt, who all made significant contributions to conceptualizing transculturalism but who are only briefly referred to in the introductions, is somewhat curious. The short biographical notes and lists of further reading that accompany each text are useful, yet in view of the anticipated readership, they could have included the contributions' years of first publication, only some of which are given in a footnote or the biographical brief. The internal structure of the sections does not always reflect the texts' order of publication, making it difficult for student readers to identify the contributions' historical position and significance in transcultural discourse. A helpful tool is the index of names, which could have been complemented with a subject index and a glossary briefly defining the main terms used in the volume. Such reservations aside, the volume comprises a selection of insightful and often surprisingly topical texts that give a good overview of the major issues and momentous implications of the transcultural question.

Katrin Berndt