
In 1960 Philippe Ariès famously proposed that the concept of childhood as we know it today was non-existent before the 18th century. Many subsequent studies have taken issue with this periodisation. From the 1980s onwards medievalists like Barbara A. Hanawalt, Linda Pollock, and Shulamith Shahar pointed to the existence of concepts of childhood before 1500. The 2000s witnessed an increase in studies in the early modern period. Kate Chedgzoy, Edel Lamb, and Lucy Munro, for example, explored theatrical representations of childhood as well as performances by child actors and boy companies. This is precisely the field to which Bastian Kuhl's monograph *Verhandlungen von Kindlichkeit: Die englischen Kinderschauspieltruppen der Shakespeare-Zeit* (2017) contributes. The title's indirect reference to Shakespeare is somewhat misleading because his plays were never performed by the actors' companies that Kuhl focuses on. His study is concerned with the second phase of the work of the Children of Paul's and Children of the Chapel: after their first heyday in the 1580s followed by a decade of inactivity, the two boy companies returned to the stage around 1600 where they performed plays by John Marston and John Lyly. Kuhl aims to delineate how the early plays of these two actors' companies negotiate the topos of 'childishness,' a term that he introduces to describe the early modern precursor to the modern construct of childhood. Kuhl argues that these dramas constantly evoke childishness, either with reference to their actors' own physical presence on stage or the roles and scenes that they play. Thereby, Kuhl suggests, these plays explore childishness as a meta-theme in front of their audiences and interrogate its aesthetic, political and moral dimensions.

The introduction plausibly reconstructs the discursive and practical circumstances fostering the return of the children's companies around 1600, such as dubious managerial practices and the early modern apprenticeship system. With recourse to Rosenkrantz's well-known identification of boy actors as predatory "little eyases" in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Kuhl deals with the public perception of the boy actors in London's theatre scene as well as the diffuse understanding of childishness around this time. Childishness, Kuhl convincingly concludes, functioned as a primitive and deficient other to adult masculinity, a peculiar 'humour' that had to be overcome.

Kuhl's first case study focuses on Marston's plays *Antonio and Mellida* and *Antonio's Revenge* but also touches upon his lesser-known pieces for the Children of Paul's as well as Ben Jonson's competing play *Cynthia's Revels*. First, in a rather lengthy section, Kuhl discusses Marston's earlier verse satires and his play *Histriomastix*, which makes use of themes and self-conscious devices that became formative in his work with the boys' company. The following close readings skilfully dissect the multilayered deployment of childishness in Marston's plays that, according to Kuhl, surpasses the mere purpose of parodying 'adult' theatre. It becomes clear that
Marston turns the spotlight on childishness. References to childishness allow him to subvert and negate common early modern assumptions about the young, for instance the belief that children are physically inferior to adults or that they only mimic them. Kuhl reads this impetus as a metatheatrical comment on the work of the children's companies, a suggestion that they are just as professional, if not even better, than their adult colleagues in the public theatres. Kuhl's analysis of Marston's deconstruction of masculinity through the motif of childishness is very intriguing. He shows that Marston represents the liminal phase between childishness and adulthood in a way that destabilises the early modern child-adult binary, which puts his work ahead of its time. The Children of Paul's, Kuhl concludes, employ this explicit treatment of childishness as a distinct element in their self-fashioning.

In Kuhl's second example we learn that this was not the case with the Children of the Chapel. While the Children of Paul's staged a new and deliberately experimental play upon their return and drew heavily on the theme of childishness, the Children of the Chapel chose a play that had already been performed: John Lyly's *Love's Metamorphosis*. Moreover, they resolutely excluded any markers of childishness. To support this claim, Kuhl traces the transformation of Cupid, who is traditionally a playful and eminently 'childish' figure, in three plays by Lyly: *Sappho and Phao* (1584), *Galatea* (1585/88) and the aforementioned *Love's Metamorphosis* (1600). Kuhl begins with a reflection upon the difficulty of dating these plays and a synopsis of Cupid's literary and visual evolution. He then illustrates how Cupid, an initially infantile character who submits to the female authority in *Sappho and Phao*, becomes more confident in *Galatea* and finally turns into an absolute and violent authority without any childish features in the last play. Although Kuhl's close readings are insightful and the first two plays are certainly important pre-texts, it remains puzzling that most of this section concentrates on plays that do not fall into his self-proclaimed sample period. Only the last play was, after all, performed by the Children of the Chapel in 1600. The brief concluding chapter provides an outlook on two performances by the Edward's Boys, a contemporary boy company from Stratford-upon-Avon, which neatly complements the text-based analyses of the previous chapters.

Although some of Marston's and Lyly's dramas have already received extensive critical attention and the object of his analysis is not entirely new, Kuhl approaches his primary works from a perspective that manages to amend readings presented in his most serious contender, Edel Lamb's *Performing Childhood in the Early Modern Theatre* from 2009. Readers interested in Childhood Studies, a field which puts a strong emphasis on theoretical and methodological inquires, may find Kuhl's traditional conception of childishness as a 'topos' and 'motif' as well as the missing reflection upon the implications of such an approach a bit disappointing and will most likely prefer Lamb's reading of childhood through Judith Butler's theory of performativity. All in all, however, Kuhl offers an informative study whose strength lies in its attentive close readings.

SANDRA DINTER

This book is a major contribution to Poe scholarship while also advancing research in 19th-century literary culture, the fate of rhetoric in modernity, and authorship studies. The principal case study concerns 'figures of Poe,' both the figural activities of the author and the resulting products and performances. By 'rhetoricizing Poe' Guttzeit illuminates, among other matters, the dispersal of transatlantic rhetorical traditions in antebellum culture. Further, this book models how rhetorical approaches can be used to open up new ways of interrogating issues of authorship.

The prevailing theme throughout is the role of rhetoric, especially its theoretical, poetical, and performative dimensions. As a result, Guttzeit remaps antebellum print culture through Poe while also examining his figures of the author, including the transatlantic poet-critic, the genius rhetorician, the detective, and the elocutionist. More specifically, with reference to the culture of rhetoric, he navigates and explores the romantic rupture of the relation between poetical and rhetorical discourse, contending that Poe actively shaped the consequences of this rupture even as he was shaped by it. Part One builds on Stephen Greenblatt's still relevant insight concerning the role of rhetoric in the author's fashioning of a discourse and in the author's own self-fashioning so as to show how, for Poe, authorship involves reflecting upon the production of one's texts and also staging oneself as a producer.

Guttzeit's attention to classical oratory provides a big critical pay-off. His division of poetical and performative figures of the author follows from the five parts of traditional rhetoric (building on Harold Love's postulation of "authemes"). Invention, arrangement, and style (inventio, dispositio, and elocutio), as processes shared by rhetoric and poetics, become historically informed poetical figures of the author as inventor, arranger, and stylizer. The final two stages, memory and delivery (memoria and actio/pronunciatio) are "interpreted as informing figures of the author that inscribe authorship into cultural memory through performance" (16). With this Archimedean point Guttzeit presents his readers with a more inclusive perspective on Poe, seen in terms of the essentially rhetorical character of his writings and performances.

In Part Two, for example, "Letter to B – " emerges as an Horatian art of poetry in which Poe rehearses the romantic sources (derived from Coleridge and Wordsworth) while also rejecting those elements not fitting into his own rhetorical system of effects. "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe's reflection on authoring the "The Raven," is shown to share the same common rhetorical ground on which Poe and Godwin (pace Dickens) developed their theoretical figures of the author. This leads to a critical assessment of Poe's invention of an innovative poetical figure of the author as detective, C. Auguste Dupin, seen by Guttzeit (following John Irwin) as a "hero of consciousness," along with Odysseus, Oedipus, and Theseus (150). Using Charles Peirce's concept of abduction as a third – specifically rhetorical – type of inference (reasoning that begins with an incomplete set of observations and proceeds to the likeliest possible explanation), Guttzeit recovers the constitutive elements structuring Poe's tales of ratiocination.
The concluding chapters focus on the explicitly performative dimensions of Poe's figures of the author with reference to the elocutionary movement of the period. Guttzeit reframes “The Rationale of Verse” as Poe's effort to construct and put into play a performative figure of the author. Then follows a resonant final chapter on Poe's figure of the literary performer or, to use Poe's Greek term, histrio. Such a multimodal role is presaged in “The Philosophy of Composition” and "Ulalume" (originally written as an elocutionary piece). This performative figure brings together orator, reciter (or rhapsode), and actor, which, Guttzeit demonstrates, emerges from the overlapping cultures of rhetoric and print. A nuanced treatment of "Loss of Breath" reveals that Poe's quips and puns betray a more serious intent; namely, a reinscription both of Quintilian's dialectics of self-affection (set up in the opening chapter) and an insistence on the instrumentality of the memory arts for understanding the hyperbolized methods on display in this account of desperate efforts to regain the power of speech. Guttzeit sensibly focuses on remediating interrelations of oral performance and print. This sets up his ensuing argument about the technological delivery of print, especially as regards Poe's remarks on anastatic printing – a process that enabled authors to print their own texts by duplicating the manuscript thus freeing them from publishers. New insights are thus brought forward regarding Poe's ideas about the rejection of being configured by the conditions of ante-bellum publishing and "actively refiguring the texts produced through the performance of handwriting" (220). A compelling interpretation of "X-ing the Paragrap" is presented vis-à-vis anastatic printing and the crossing out of the author. Poe emerges as an exemplary figure embodying and refracting the momentous changes in the relation between rhetoric and literature in ante-bellum America; both a symptom of the rupture between the two and a producer of it.

From start to finish this book is characterized by attention to detail and scrupulous scholarship; early on, regarding 'the problem of Poe' in literary studies and, at the end, 24 pages of Works Cited and ample indexes of names and of subjects. Especially laudable is Guttzeit's systematic use of theoretical considerations to interpret Poe in the interest of highlighting 'figures of the author.' His focus on rhetorical dimensions of Poe's works makes a timely intervention in debates over the romantic origins of the modern author, and signals a high-water mark in authorship studies for years to come.

WILLIAM E. ENGEL


Monographs in literary and cultural studies usually do not come with a glossary these days, so if one of them does it indicates just how far the study in question is venturing beyond the disciplinary comfort zone of a field that surely is not lacking in specialized vocabulary. Nina Engelhardt's commendable Modernism, Fiction and Mathematics is such a case, and its glossary as well as the text as a whole leave no doubt that a turn to mathematics from the perspective of literature is still widely considered a foray rather than a routine visit. Literary studies has connected quite well with the hard sciences at least since the 1970s, but mathematics was largely absent from these
attempts to bridge C.P. Snow’s ‘two cultures,’ and it remains regrettably marginal to literary scholarship.

Engelhardt offers some explanations for this reluctance in her work, but more importantly she seeks to offer ways of overcoming it. Her study proves the desirability of considering mathematics and literature together by showing, on a theoretical level, numerous productive parallels between these two modes of fictionality and their respective relation to the real, and, on a practical level, by analyzing four major novelistic works from this combined perspective, which yields fascinating and original results in each case. Engelhardt’s approach is so effective because she carefully balances the mathematical and the aesthetic without giving precedence to either and reducing the other to the status of metaphor. This makes not only for a more convincing argument but also for more accessible reading. In general, Engelhardt is an excellent interpreter of mathematical language who knows her audience, and she succeeds in conveying the complexity of mathematical discourse without needlessly complicating her critical account of it.

Her method in doing so is best summarized as historicist, and this approach gives her an appropriate framework to discuss literary works in relation to their contemporary mathematical context, and to generalize without universalizing. The conceptual focal point of her analysis is the foundational crisis in mathematics that not only coincided with modernism but also, as she persuasively shows, resonates with its aesthetic, philosophical, political, and ethical challenges. She narrates this crisis as a conflict between David Hilbert’s formalism and L.E.J. Brower’s intuitionism, oppositional responses to the shared sense that mathematics has radically disconnected from nature, and she thereby connects it to similar attempts in aesthetics to redefine (or recuperate) the relation between reality and representation. As Engelhardt cleverly frames this as a wide discourse of competing modernisms, she usefully draws numerous connections to other intellectual battlegrounds, incorporating the Vienna Circle as seamlessly as the Bloomsbury group, or connecting American pragmatism to Georg Simmel’s monetary philosophy of trust.

This conceptual network expands from the linchpin of the 1920s back to the Euclidean foundations of geometry and forward to 21st-century terrorism, but Engelhardt keeps it coherent by employing a neat structural stratagem that sufficiently stabilizes her approach. She begins her study (after a concise and clear introduction) by analyzing a novel published in 2006, Thomas Pynchon’s Against the Day, a text that to many a critic marks Pynchon’s move out of the postmodernism he has come to define with his earlier works. The novel is probably the most mathematical in American literary history, and its expansive set of worlds is arranged around the very questions that mark the foundational crisis of mathematics in the early 20th century. Engelhardt’s mathematical interpretation sheds light on what would remain obscure to most readers by deftly outlining the historical debates that inform the fictional text, but she also interprets these mathematical concerns in fictional terms and thus offers a fresh perspective on the larger modernist crisis of representation. As such, the study is a fitting addition to the Edinburgh Critical Studies in Modernist Culture series, and yet it also goes beyond the immediate context suggested by that title, since it incorporates postmodernist aesthetics as much as (for lack of a better term) post-postmodernist ones.
The second chapter moves from a 21st-century use of 20th-century mathematics to a set of texts that is contemporary with the debate in question, Hermann Broch's trilogy *The Sleepwalkers* (1930-32), and Engelhardt argues that the two positions of formalism and intuitionism provide the novels with a formal structure and a stylistic framework. Here and elsewhere, she emphasizes the cultural aspect of mathematics and its embeddedness in contexts the field only seemed to transcend in its premodernist insistence on universality, and she traces how Broch's characters deal (or fail to deal) with the implications of a mathematical loss of ground in a time when other first principles had been crumbling left and right. The third chapter continues this contemporary engagement by considering Robert Musil's massive fragmentary novel *The Man without Qualities* (1930/32) where the similar loss of certainty in and of mathematics is offset by its pragmatic applicability, a situation where mathematics really should not work but does, and where its application makes sense despite the fact that it is theoretically unfounded. Here, the very fictionality of mathematics becomes the crucial factor in its maintenance as a system that can be sufficiently trusted despite its flaws, and mathematics and literature connect as self-referential systems whose relevance to reality is continuously renegotiated.

Finally, Engelhardt returns to Pynchon by discussing *Gravity's Rainbow*, the definitive novel of American postmodernism, as an extension of the modernist engagement discussed in reference to Broch and Musil, with a particular focus on the ethical implications of what the author calls "maths fiction" (150). In a narrower context of Pynchon studies, this chapter is noteworthy because it goes against the grain of the dominant critical perspectives on the novel that read it mainly in terms of physics, and its mathematical reading of what only seems to be physical – especially the concept of gravity – really offers a fresh look at what had seemed quite well-established. In a more general context, however, the most fascinating contribution of this chapter is the argument that mathematics is all too readily seen as a constitutive part of the rationality that has been criticized by Adorno and Horkheimer in their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, whereas in fact Modern mathematics works just as much to undermine this rationality as it supports it.

Nina Engelhardt's monograph diligently explores this mathematical dialectic in relation to the literature that engages with it, and it is a well-written, thoughtful study whose scope radiates beyond its immediate focus and hopefully will have an impact in more than one scholarly context. At times readers may wish for a more extensive engagement with existing critical sources on the subject, and yet choosing this concise style is entirely apt for the purpose at hand, and certainly preferable over more redundant modes that would only blunt the sharp arguments proffered here. These arguments pertain to various issues that will be relevant not only to the literary scholars working on the texts discussed here, but also to anyone interested the complexity of modernism where the aesthetic always intersects with the scientific, the political, and the ethical. Last but not least, this is the guidebook to get if you want to make a first step into mathematical territory from that of literature, perhaps only to find that their many maps are more similar than one might think.

SASCHA PÖHLMANN