

GERMANISTIK *IN IRELAND*

Jahrbuch der / Yearbook of the
German Studies Association
of Ireland (GSAI)

Special Issue:

**German Studies and the
Medical/Health Humanities**

**Volume 18
2024**

GERMANISTIK

IN IRELAND

Jahrbuch der / Yearbook of the
German Studies Association
of Ireland (GSAI)

Volume 18
2024

Special Issue:

**German Studies and the
Medical/Health Humanities**

Guest Editors

Michaela Schrage-Früh (University of Limerick)
Linda Shortt (Maynooth University)
Jakob Summerer (Trinity College Dublin)

Editors

Siobhán Donovan (University College Dublin)
Tina-Karen Pusse (University of Galway)

Advisory Board

Jürgen Barkhoff (Trinity College Dublin)
Gordon Burgess (University of Aberdeen)
Klaus Kiefer (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)
Florian Krobb (Maynooth University/University of Stellenbosch)
Rachel MagShamhráin (University College Cork)
Bill Niven (Nottingham Trent University)
Gillian Pye (University College Dublin)
Klaus Dieter Rossade (Open University)
Hans-Walter Schmidt-Hannisa (University of Galway)
Christiane Schönfeld (Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick)
Sabine Strümper-Krobb (University College Dublin)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GERMAN STUDIES AND THE MEDICAL/HEALTH HUMANITIES

MICHAELA SCHRAGE-FRÜH, LINDA SHORTT, JAKOB SUMMERER

Introduction 5

OLIVETTA GENTILIN

Literarisierung medizinischer Fallstudien. Zur Figuren-Charakterisierung
in Georg Büchners *Lenz*, *Woyzeck* und in der Komödie *Leonce und Lena* 11

THOMAS WILKS

Thomas Bernhard and Wilhelm Genazino.

Distractions in Sickness and in Health 29

JOHANNES VITH

Landscapes and Nonhuman Witnessing. Sexual Violence and
Trauma in Baran bo Odar's *Das letzte Schweigen* (2010) 45

GILLIAN PYE

Violent Feelings. Tracing emotional regimes
in Anne Rabe's *Die Möglichkeit von Glück* 59

KATHERINE E. CALVERT

Emotional and Medical Interventions in
the 1970s Campaign Against Paragraph 218 75

MARTINA ZIMMERMANN

Changing How We Think about Ageing. A Narrative Approach 93

DESMOND O'NEILL

Personal Reflections on Working between Germanistik,
Medical/Health Humanities and Cultural Gerontology 99

JESS BENBOW, JAKOB SUMMERER

The Scriptotherapeutic Potential of Metaphor Use.
Some Lessons from Eating Disorder Autopathography 109

RACHEL MagSHAMHRÁIN

Care-Full Academia. From Autoethnographic Narratives
to Political Manifestos for Collective Action..... 129

Buchbesprechungen / Book Reviews 151

Rebecca Braun: *Authors and the World. Literary Authorship in Modern Germany*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. 368 pp. £56.50. ISBN 978-1-5013-9102-6(hardback). 2024. 366pp. £26. ISBN: 978-1-5013-9106-4(paperback).

Rebecca Braun's study, which comes out of a long-standing engagement with the practices and conditions of literary authorship,¹ opens with a key question: "How do authors relate to the wider world in which they live and work?"² It is a question that not only opens up pathways into understanding literature as a social and cultural practice emerging from an inextricable conflation of writer, work and world, but that also holds the promise of a more fundamental reconceptualization of the ways in which we approach, study and write literary history through the lens of authorship. Alternately celebrated, reviled, hyped, and battered as a cultural authority and prophetic sage, media pundit and prize-winning commodity, activist truth-teller and creative genius, the author has always been a figure *of* and *within* the world, traversing a treacherous territory at the crossroads of art, entertainment, politics and commerce. The near-fatal attack on Salman Rushdie's life on the stage of a literary festival in August 2022 was a particularly poignant reminder of this 'worldliness', demonstrating the potentially dramatic real-life consequences of art and authorial posture that, in a defiant act of reclaiming writerly agency, fed straight back into literary creation and thus cemented Rushdie's reputation as an icon (and, eventually, martyr) of free speech.³

In her rich and expansive study of post-war German literary authorship, Braun presents us with the author as an important stakeholder in literary culture, but one who performs the labour of writing under specific material circumstances, in concrete spatial settings, and embedded within both human and non-human networks. Acknowledging the author's "situated agency"⁴ helps deflate the still-prevalent cultural myth of the sole creator-genius and shift our focus towards the inherently collaborative practices of authorship, which Braun conceives of as "the iterative product of an expanded network of people, processes and material things that both relativize the autonomy of individual authors within the literature network and ensure they continue to matter" (p. 16). In taking an approach that neither overstates nor under-

¹ See, for instance, Rebecca Braun: *Constructing Authorship in the Work of Günter Grass*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008; Rebecca Braun and Emily Spiers (eds): *Re-Viewing Literary Celebrity*. Special Issue for *Celebrity Studies* 7/4 (2016); Tobias Boes, Rebecca Braun and Emily Spiers (eds): *World Authorship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

² Rebecca Braun: *Authors and the World. Literary Authorship in Modern Germany*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, p. 1. All page references in the review are to this edition.

³ Salman Rushdie: *Knife. Meditations After an Attempted Murder*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2024.

⁴ See, for instance, Joe Moran: *Star Authors. Literary Celebrity in America*. London: Pluto Press, 2000, p. 10.

plays the relevance of the author as the creator of imaginary and inhabitant of real worlds, she makes a compelling case for a holistic, integrative type of scholarship that productively blends literary sociology, textual analysis and literary theory. The result is an impressive piece of multi-layered cultural history that vitally enriches our understanding of the role, responsibility and wider impact of literary works in society well beyond the historical, cultural and spatial contexts under investigation.

Braun's major contribution to the theorization of authorship lies in her typology of "modes of authorship" – the ways in which "literary authorship is intimately bound up with a prevailing set of attitudes that are adopted within a particular society" (p. 27) – as distinct from "models of authorship" that are consciously adopted and performed by the actors involved in the literary network (p. 6, *passim*). Braun's definition of what constitutes a specific "mode of authorship" in fact elucidates her broadly inclusive understanding of authorship that comprises not only extra-textual, human and non-human factors, but, centrally, the work, its aesthetics and the literary traditions in which it is embedded:

A mode of authorship describes a certain attitude towards being an author in the world, whether on the part of that author or of the wider world that yields and validates her authorship. It can be inferred from close analysis of literary practices, whether these practices reside in the tangible structure of a literary text, are reconstructed through archival traces of relations across the literature network or are intangibly subject to philosophical concepts or social conventions. (p. 66f.)

The four central modes of authorship identified by Braun in post-war German literary networks are the celebratory, commemorative, satirical, and utopian modes, which variously shift, overlap, and merge to produce distinct models of authorship whose trajectory the book charts over a 75-year period. In rethinking twentieth- and twenty-first-century German literature through the lens of authorship – spotlighting authors with transnational and multilingual backgrounds writing in German – *Authors and the World* critically questions the canon and seeks to "give direct voice to a growing divergence from historically dominant models" (p. 20). Here the study also functions as an important document that benefits from Braun's decision to let the author have the last word: the book thus ends with three insightful conversations with contemporary female authors Ulrike Draesner, Olga Martynova and Ulrike Almut Sandig – representatives of the transnational model of authorship, outlined in the book's final chapter, that opens up German-language writing to the wider world. By amplifying diverse authorial voices that talk back to, and, in the process, weaken, the monolithic authority of the white, male author genius,⁵

⁵ See, for instance, the interviews with Kirsty Gunn, Antjie Krog and Benjamin Zephaniah in Sandra Mayer and Ruth Scobie (eds): *Authorship, Activism and Celebrity. Art and Action in Global Literature*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023, pp. 73–81, 57–70, 17–27 respectively.

Authors and the World transcends the scope and purpose of study and analysis and makes its own contribution to fostering a self-confidently collaborative, polyphonic and inclusive model of authorship.

SANDRA MAYER (*Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities
and Cultural Heritage, Austrian Academy of Sciences*)

Katherine E. Calvert: *Modeling Motherhood in Weimar Germany. Political and Psychological Discourses in Women's Writing*. Rochester/NY: Camden House, 2023. 188 pp. £70.13. ISBN: 978-1-8054-3125-1.

Ob als „Momfluencerinnen“ in sozialen Medien, in Schilderungen (problematischer) Mutter-Kind-Beziehungen in der zeitgenössischen Belletristik oder in politischen Debatten zur Familienpolitik – Mütter und die Normen, Praktiken und Darstellungen von Mutterschaft sind in der gegenwärtigen Medienlandschaft vermehrt sichtbar. Im Rahmen der *Motherhood Studies* wird dem Themenkomplex seit einigen Jahren insbesondere in den Sozial- und Kulturwissenschaften auch vermehrt wissenschaftliche Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet.¹ Einen wichtigen Beitrag zur kulturhistorischen Forschung der *Motherhood Studies* leistet Katherine E. Calvert mit ihrer Untersuchung zu Mutterschaftsdiskursen in den Schriften ausgewählter Autorinnen der Weimarer Republik, die auf ihrer Dissertation (2021, University of Sheffield) beruht. In einer ausführlichen Einführung in die soziohistorischen und medialen Bedingungen der Weimarer Republik und den darauffolgenden fünf Analysekapiteln präsentiert Calvert ein komplexes Bild der zeitgenössischen Mutterschaftsdiskurse, wie sie sich in den Texten politisch linksorientierter, sozialliberaler und sozialistischer Autorinnen manifestieren und von diesen mitgestaltet werden.

Methodisch verfolgt die Studie in erster Linie einen diskursanalytischen Ansatz, wobei das theoretische Fundament im einführenden Kapitel überraschend wenig Raum einnimmt. Der verwendete Diskursbegriff wird trotz seiner zentralen Stellung für die Untersuchung in sechs Zeilen abgehandelt, wobei auf Sara Mills' Begriffsdefinition verwiesen, Foucaults einschlägige Forschung als Quelle Mills' hingegen lediglich in einer Fußnote erwähnt wird (S. 2).

Das erste Analysekapitel beschäftigt sich mit Mutterschaft im zeitgenössischen psychoanalytisch orientierten Diskurs. Im Zentrum des Kapitels steht dabei die in der heutigen Forschung selten rezipierte Schrift *Das Frauenproblem der Gegenwart* (1932) der Wissenschaftlerin Alice Rühle-Gerstel. Calvert präsentiert Rühle-

¹ Ein gegenwärtiges Beispiel hierfür ist das interdisziplinäre Forschungsnetzwerk *MotherNet* (European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme), in dem Forschende der Universitäten Vilnius, Maynooth und Uppsala zeitgenössische europäische Perspektiven von Mutterschaft untersuchen.