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The Literature of German Romanticism (review)

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top, Kontje). In der Forschungsliteratur fehlt der von Elisabeth Krimmer im *Journal of Popular Culture* (2000) publizierte Aufsatz “A Spaniard in the Attic: The Texture of Gender in Friederike Helene Unger’s *Rosalie und Nettchen*,” der als die erste Veröffentlichung zu diesem Roman gilt. Nicht berücksichtigt wird auch die von Anne Thiel an der Goergetown Universität (USA) angenommene Dissertation “Verhinderte Traditionen: Märchen deutscher Autorinnen vor den Brüdern Grimm,” die unter anderem auch ein längeres Kapitel zu Ungers *Prinz Bimbam* enthält und für Gieslers Studie relevant ist. Schließlich hätte man einer so informativen und materialreichen Arbeit ein Personen-, Sach- und Begriffsregister gewünscht, das die Herstellung von Begriffen, Werken und Personennamen recht erleichtert hätte.

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Dennis F. Mahoney, ed. *The Literature of German Romanticism*. The Camden House History of German Literature, Vol. 8. Rochester: Camden House, 2004. 419 pp. US\$ 90. ISBN 1-57113-236-8.

The Literature of German Romanticism is volume 8 of the new Camden House History of German Literature. As the only multi-volume history in English, it meets a real need, at least in North America, where most students do not have the language knowledge necessary to cope with the De Boor/Newald *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*. In contrast to De Boor/Newald, the Camden House history reflects recent currents of thought about the notion of “history” by eschewing both chronological grand narrative and unified single perspective, offering instead self-contained essays on different aspects of the given epoch, by various contributors. The romanticism volume differs from its German counterpart, Gerhard Schulz’s authoritative two-volume *Die deutsche Literatur zwischen Französischer Revolution und Restauration*, also in other respects. It is narrower in scope, focussing specifically on romanticism as a movement, the only author considered who is not strictly speaking a romantic being Goethe. Furthermore, it is clearly not intended as a reference work. Students who are looking for an account of an author’s life and works will be frustrated. Instead, it tries to capture the character of romanticism, and it is structured around the notion of genre. It is thus not strictly speaking a history, since all essays concentrate on the early, programmatic phase of romanticism – Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel, for instance, are extensively discussed, whereas most late-romantic authors are dealt with fairly cursorily.

The choice of genre as structuring principle centres the book on aesthetic and literary issues. The repercussions of the French Revolution, for instance, play a much smaller role than in Schulz; the chapter on romantic politics is theoretical, devoted to a lucid analysis of the romantic demand for a merging of politics and morality, its self-contradictions and consequent impossibility. Kantian and idealist philosophy receive little attention – a flaw, in my opinion. On the other hand, the volume takes a welcome departure from tradition by including essays on science, music, the visual arts, as well as a chapter on gender.

The danger of building a history of literature through essays by multiple authors is lack of cohesion and unity of approach. On the whole, the editor has been remarkably successful in avoiding this problem: the volume reveals a clear overall design and con-

sistent approach, there is virtually no repetition, and cross references to other essays are indicated at relevant points. Nevertheless, perhaps inevitably, there is some divergence in how the contributors interpreted their task: some essays are clearly conceived as an introduction to romanticism, presuming no prior knowledge and couched in language easily comprehensible to undergraduates, while others represent rather new scholarly contributions, requiring prior knowledge of romantic literature and a not inconsiderable degree of theoretical sophistication. The notes are another area of disparity. They cover the whole spectrum from the barest minimum of source citation to an almost overwhelming wealth of suggestions for further reading. The notes to the introduction, for instance, provide a comprehensive overview of scholarship on romanticism in general and on a broad range of topics in particular; the notes for chapter one (on the genesis of German romanticism), on the other hand, offer no suggestions for further reading, not even milestones in the debate on the definition of the term – an omission unexpectedly made good by the essay on Goethe and the romantics, which represents the other extreme. Overall, the bibliography emerging from the notes is quite comprehensive and, in my view, one of the strengths of the book.

The essays fall into three groups: introduction to romanticism, genres, and the broader context (political theory, science, gender, music, the visual arts). Mahoney's introduction serves the dual purpose of presenting the romantic movement and the volume. In a few pages, he sketches a clear outline of the epoch, the stages of the romantic movement, its chief authors and texts. Equally successful are the essays on the "Genesis of German Romanticism" (Gerhard Schulz) and on "Early Romanticism" (Richard Littlejohns). Both represent lucid, concise, yet comprehensive overviews of complex and much-debated subject matter. The last of the general essays, on "Goethe and the Romantics" (Arnd Bohm), offers a discussion not only of Goethe's relations to the German romantics, but also of the reception of German texts in England, of Goethe's reception of Byron, and a provocative if somewhat idiosyncratic reading of *Faust* as an attack on romanticism. It is an impressively learned and thought-provoking essay, but perhaps better suited for publication as a scholarly article rather than in a history of literature. The genre approach works better in some cases than others. The novel, for instance, lends itself fairly easily to classification, and Gerhart Hoffmeister's take on it is compelling: from an analysis of the romantic theory of the novel he proceeds to reactions to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, then groups romantic novels into anti-*Meister*, radical anti-*Meister*, and diversification of the genre. At the other extreme, short prose or poetry are nearly impossible to characterize, and neither chapter attempts an overall picture. The approaches are not equally successful, however. Bernadette Malinowski's focus on poems of melancholy results in an insightful if somewhat dense study of one theme. The structuring principle of the essay on short prose (Ulrich Scheck), on the other hand, remains unclear, and the choice of texts is perplexing: why discuss five tales by Tieck, including *Des Lebens Überfluss* (1839!), but only one by Hoffmann (*Der Sandmann*), omitting even the justly famous *Der goldne Topf*? One would wish for less detailed plot summaries and more comprehensive analysis.

There is also diversity in formal aspects. Some essays are very well written, while others bear witness to a not entirely successful struggle with the English language. With one or two exceptions, all translations of German quotations are done by the contributors. The results are for the most part good, or at least accurate if a bit stiff, but there are some questionable choices and a few errors.

Though not altogether even in quality, *The Literature of German Romanticism* provides a broad and informative exploration of the movement, solid and reliable research, and a useful bibliographical resource. It has something to offer to both students and specialists.

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Nicholas Martin, ed. *Nietzsche and the German Tradition*. Oxford: Lang, 2003. 314 pp. US\$ 53.95 (Paperback). ISBN 3-03910-060-2.

In *Götzen-Dämmerung* Nietzsche lamented the absence in modernity of “den Willen zur Tradition, zur Autorität, zur Verantwortlichkeit auf Jahrhunderte hinaus.” But what does it mean to speak of *Nietzsche and the German Tradition*, as the volume under review does? This collection of papers, arising from the Seventh Annual Conference of the Friedrich Nietzsche Society held at the University of St Andrews in September 1997, performs three tasks. First, it examines Nietzsche’s engagement with various German traditions, scholarly, aesthetic, religious, and philosophical; second, it discusses his attitude to the Germany of his day; and third, it debates key aspects of his subsequent reception in German literature and thought. Thus Christa Davis Acampora analyzes Nietzsche’s approach to the “Homeric question” in his inaugural lecture (1869) and in “Homers Wettkampf” (1872); Hans-Gerd von Seggern relates *Die Geburt der Tragödie* (1872) to the classical aesthetics of Goethe and Schiller; Duncan Large traces the vicissitudes of Nietzsche’s view(s) of Luther; Thomas H. Brobjer documents Nietzsche’s reading of Schopenhauer, Leibniz, Herder, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Herbart, Schleiermacher, Feuerbach, and Marx; and Christopher Janaway offers a detailed account of Nietzsche’s reaction and response to Schopenhauer. For Daniel W. Conway, Nietzsche’s relationship to his fellow Germans was “famously vexed” (1), and his contribution surveys the main contours of Nietzsche’s conception of what is “German,” engaging in particular Laurence Lampert’s work in this area; while Ben Morgan uses Lesley Chamberlain’s *Nietzsche in Turin* (1996) as a starting point for his psycho-portrait of Nietzsche in terms of a “frightened pursuit of mastery” (146). Finally, Jim Urpeth examines the notion of “aesthetic disinterestedness” in Heidegger’s response to Nietzsche, noting the positive view of Schiller expressed in Heidegger’s lectures; in two separate papers, Paul J. M. van Tongeren and Gerd Schank investigate the implications of Nietzsche’s biological discourse, his talk of “breeding” a new “race”; in terms of the Left’s perspective on Nietzsche, Malcolm Humble considers the reception of his writings in the work of Heinrich Mann and Arnold Zweig; and the concluding essay, by Nicholas Martin, looks at how Nietzsche was attacked, or more often deliberately ignored, in the GDR.

Overall, what emerges from this impressively strong collection of papers is the importance, when reading Nietzsche, of attention to context. Janaway points to the multi-functionality of the figure of Schopenhauer (as “consolation,” “master,” “exemplar,” “authority,” “philosophical opponent,” “antipode,” “case-study,” and “Nietzsche’s educator”); then again, in *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche makes use of the structures of Schiller’s aesthetic theory, as Acampora and von Seggern suggest, but this did not prevent him, elsewhere, from attacking the widespread misunderstanding and misrepresentation