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Acknowledging Mann's awareness of reception processes, as well as his extreme literary self-awareness, paves the way for linking the author's idiosyncratic and ironic textual positioning with his globally acknowledged political and cultural pre-eminence. Thus a series of virtuoso close textual readings of both fiction and non-fiction by Volker Mergenthaler, Heinrich Detering, Hans Wisskirchen, and Jochen Strobel trace how Mann's specific biographical and intellectual experiences led to works that fuse dialectical pairings and paradoxical theses. Like the horticultural hybrid, these works are resilient in the face of any single line of attack, and can be sure to thrive and offer pleasure in many different contexts. They can also claim multiple attractive genealogies, as is explored in essays by Hans R. Vaegt, Lutz Hagedstedt, Sven Hanuschek, and Dieter Borchmeyer, who point out Mann's willed orientation towards Goethe, Schiller, and Nietzsche. Furthermore, these hybrid works are shown by Oliver Jahraus, Kontje, and Hermann Kurzke to have a therapeutic role for both their author and his changing audiences, as he uses the multiple possibilities of writing more or less explicitly to explore different versions of his authorial identity and in so doing uses the texts as entertaining warnings to himself and to his age.

Meanwhile a number of contributors argue that Mann is also able to puncture the serious representative function that the very structure of his works and his much-publicized work ethic appear to support—precisely by drawing attention to his own performance of a series of representative authorial roles (Detering, Strobel, Kontje). This relativizing gesture shows another, more humble and sympathetic side not only to the author, but also to the concept of hybrid representativeness that otherwise runs the risk of lionizing the author as the master of paradox and complexity. In a similar vein, a number of refreshingly different chapters focus on Mann's wider context—both as a literary object in his time (notably Steffen Martus, Sabina Becker, Wilhelm Haefs, Ralf Klausnitzer) and as an object of our own academic positioning (Hanuschek). Arguably the introduction, with its clear sympathy for Bourdieu, promises rather more chapters along these lines, and fewer of the more traditional readings which—for all their textual awareness—set about reconstructing the man and his life as the origin of the representative function he goes on to exert. It is only a minor mismatch, however, and the fascinating questions that are raised about authorship as both a textual and a contextual phenomenon ensure that this volume is of considerable interest to Germanists with even only a passing interest in Thomas Mann.

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*Franz Kafka: Narration, Rhetoric, and Reading.* Ed. by JAKOB LOTHE, BEATRICE SANDBERG, and RONALD SPEIRS. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. 2011. 251 pp. \$21.95. ISBN 978-0-8142-5177-5.

This is a significant publication, bringing together major figures in Kafka studies to discuss 'the peculiarities of Kafka's story-telling' and 'general issues in narrative theory' (p. 1). The editors' introduction presents James Phelan's model of narrative

as rhetorical communication, which presupposes a 'recursive relationship (or feedback loop) among authorial agency, textual phenomena (including intertextual relations), and reader response' (p. 10), and displaces 'thematic interpretation' in favour of 'ethical, affective, and aesthetic dimensions of reading' (p. 11; see James Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction: Judgments, Progressions, and the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007)).

Phelan offers valuable insights into the 'significant interpretive gap' (p. 29) near the end of 'Das Urteil', and distinguishes between 'determinate ambiguity' and textual 'stubbornness' in relation to narrative pace. Anniken Greve negotiates the opposition between face-value and allegorical readings of 'Die Verwandlung', and argues persuasively that the story is 'an enactment of or fleshing out of the *temptation* of dualism' (p. 53). Benno Wagner's piece ambitiously links the rhetoric of Kafka's Chinese stories and legal writings with historical events and phenomena, while Gerhard Neumann's chapter on 'Der Heizer' discusses the story's narration and embedded narrative acts as 'a game with metanarrative strategies' (p. 88). Gerhard Kurz offers a persuasive characterization of *Der Verschollene* as involving 'a pattern of temporary or illusory inclusion alternating with expulsion, via the (repeated) cycle of seduction, lapse, condemnation, and banishment' (p. 95), and discusses how the sword held by the Statue of Liberty in the novel's opening establishes the text's merging of realistic and allegorical dimensions. J. Hillis Miller's chapter on *Das Schloß* asks how useful narratological analysis is to understanding the novel, citing its discontinuity and incomplete status as challenges to such analysis, and focusing on characters' acts of mutual interpretation. Jakob Lothe makes interesting observations on the historical context of 'In der Strafkolonie' and the ethical equivalences between narrator, protagonists, and reader. Stanley Corngold investigates 'Forschungen eines Hundes' with reference to the thematic poles of music, nourishment, and writing, and Ronald Speirs examines movement as a manifestation of facets of self and society in the *Betrachtung* collection, as expressing creativity in selected letters and diary entries, and as part of the narrative structure of 'Das Urteil'.

While Phelan's contribution relates findings on 'Das Urteil' systematically to general concerns in narratology and rhetorical theory, the convergence of other chapters with the introductory characterization is variable. 'Thematic interpretation' is common (and not unproductive): Speirs focuses on movement, Wagner discusses building metaphors, and so on. As for reader response, although Phelan foregrounds plausible hypotheses about the 'authorial audience', and Greve and Lothe hint at individual differences that might shape and hinder certain responses on the (real) reader's part, most generalizations are insufficiently grounded, and distinctions between, say, the 'experienced' and the 'naive' reader (p. 134) are left uninterrogated.

At the other end of Phelan's communication model, many of the contributions seem interested primarily in Kafka the flesh-and-blood author: Kafka's diaries are used to corroborate observations made about the fictional texts; perspectival shifts from the third to the first person are invoked to indicate 'that the protagonist is the author's alter ego' (p. 132); and broader thematic parallels are established

between, for instance, Kafka's 'drive to understand' (p. 175) and the dog's drive in the 'Forschungen'. Often there is too much quotation accompanied by too little commentary. The generally sparse citations from the secondary literature make for uncluttered reading, but also create a sense of dislocation, and leave important reference points in Kafka studies unmentioned, sometimes to the extent of repeating previously well-expressed insights. The level of familiarity with Kafka criticism assumed by the volume is therefore not entirely clear, but the book is likely to appeal more to readers or scholars of Kafka than to narratologists.

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*Die Allegorie ist die Armatur der Moderne: Zum Wechselverhältnis von Allegoriebegriff und Medientheorie bei Walter Benjamin.* By SUK WON LIM. (Epistemata Literaturwissenschaft, 721) Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann. 2011. 166 pp. €29.80. ISBN 978-3-8260-4481-6.

Walter Benjamin's writing, located at the intersections of aesthetics, philosophy, literary criticism, media theory, and cultural studies, is shot through with a complex network of citations, allusions, and references, in which earlier ideas are quoted in later adaptations, fragments from some texts reappear in others, and basic categories are transferred between various genres and thematic areas. The result is less an organically unified work, and certainly no closed philosophical system, but rather a rhizomatic exploration of interrelated, open-ended, and often unpredictable statements, which makes the tracing of their similarities, correspondences, and revisions a primary task of scholarly investigation.

Suk Won Lim's study of the interactions between Benjamin's concept of allegory and his media theory is a thoroughly argued and convincing example of this critical enterprise. He takes his point of departure from Benjamin's *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* (*Origin of the German Mourning Play*, 1928), because it reflects not only the 'allegorische Intention' of (traditional) media such as the word, script, and image, but also the 'mediale Struktur der Allegorie selbst' (p. 11). He postulates that media-theoretical elements can already be traced in Benjamin's concept of allegory while features of allegory are reproduced in his media-theoretical texts (p. 12). Here are some examples: Lim shows that in photography and allegory, according to Benjamin, objects are frozen in the 'Moment ihres Aufblitzens', remaining fixated in a state of death, so that the photographic eye can be termed an allegorical gaze (p. 105). Benjamin's emphasis on principles of writing in photography also corresponds to the allegorical subject, which endows the dispersed fragments of contemplation with an (arbitrary) meaning only with the aid of script or writing (*Schrift*) (p. 108). If the film camera, according to Benjamin, makes visible another nature under surface reality—the 'Optical Unconscious'—then during the process of film production objects are being explicated allegorically, not only through montage techniques of fragmentation and dissociation, but also in the sense of an 'Anders-Rede', a differential figure of speech or discourse (p. 114) that is equally typical of the transfer of meaning in allegory, where an object is emptied of its