LITERATURE, 1830–1880

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1. General

REFERENCE WORKS AND GENERAL STUDIES. Alexa Geisthövel, *Restauration und Vormärz 1815–1847*, Paderborn, Schöningh, 237 pp. Manuela Günter, *Im Vorhof der Kunst. Mediengeschichten der Literatur im 19. Jahrhundert*, Bielefeld, Transcript, 378 pp., is a useful study of changes and shifts of 19th-c. literature in relation to questions of gender. G. argues that through the emergence of mass media, such as family magazines, the emphatic notion of ‘Literature’ as an expression of autonomous masculine creativity shifts towards a concept of ‘literature’ that is dependent on popular taste and is thereby identified as ‘feminine’. After an introductory theoretical chapter, G. demonstrates this shift from the noble male work of art to a base medialization and thereby ‘feminization’ of literature throughout the 19th c. in media history and selected literary texts. In a chapter on dilettantism, for example, G. offers an interpretation of Gottfried Keller’s novella *Die mißbrauchten Liebesbriefe*, showing how Keller caricatures 18th-c. notions of women’s role in ‘Literature’, namely that of admirer and provider of emotional, intimate inspiration for men’s literary production. Chapter six focuses on Theodor Fontane, Eugenie Marlitt and Wilhelm Raabe and shows to what extent the authors’ respective success can be regarded as a direct result of their expert use of the new mass media. In the case of Fontane, G. outlines how a flexible strategy of adapting his writing to the mass media market and a female audience enables Fontane to become a successful author in a time when traditional notions of literary value and authorship are losing their hold. The section on Marlitt offers a comparison between a selection of Marlitt’s novels, Keller’s *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe* and Fontane’s *Irrungen, Wirrungen* that highlights parallels in the authors’ uses of the mass media, such as the blurring of boundaries between information and entertainment. Finally, G. emphasizes Raabe’s open renunciation and derision of the cult of the artist as autonomous genius and presents a reading of *Stopfkuchen* that indentifies the text’s reflexion of its own mediality as one of the major characteristics of mass literature.
Themes. W. Albrecht, ‘Nachklänge und Neuansätze. Thesen zur vormärzlichen Phase der Aufklärungsdebatte’, Bunzel, Vormärz, 31–49. W. Bunzel, N. O. Eke and F. Vassen, ‘Geschichtsprojektionen. Rekurse auf das 18. Jahrhundert und die Konstruktion von “Aufklärung” im deutschen Vormärz’, ib., 9–27. O. Briese, ‘Vom Gottesgericht zum Weltgericht. Apokalyptische Motive in Aufklärung und Vormärz’, ib., 51–78. W. Bunzel, ‘Zurück in die Zukunft. Die Junghegelianer in ihrem Verhältnis zur Aufklärung’, ib., 79–98. A. Böhm, “Abbildungen des wirklichen Lebens” oder “Hirngeburt”? ’ ib., 241–64. Andrew Cusack, The Wanderer in Nineteenth-Century German Literature. Intellectual History and Cultural Criticism, Rochester, N.Y., Camden House, x + 257 pp., is a study of the ‘Wanderer’, linking the literary motif to 19th-c. non-literary discourses. Whereas the first two chapters are devoted to Romanticism and Goethezeit, chapters three and four offer readings of Heine’s Harzreise, Büchner’s Lenz, Fontane’s Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg, Gotthelf’s Jakobs des Handwerksgezellen Wanderungen durch die Schweiz, Holtei’s Die Vagbunden and Raabe’s Abu Telfan. In his analysis of Harzreise C. highlights how Heine uses an agglomeration of the Wanderbericht and travel satire genres to present a critical stance towards the emerging cultural practice of patriotic tourism that is based on chauvinistic nationalism and a relationship to nature that is determined by alienation and economic exploitation. In his reading of Lenz, C. focuses on the representation of landscape that returns from the Biedermeier empirical approach to nature to the Romantic conception of the ‘sublime’, blocking out, however, the exhilarating and emphasising the terrifying aspects of the experience. C. shows how Büchner thereby destabilizes the aesthetic norms of bourgeois ideology and defines physical suffering as the result of ideological and social mechanisms of repression from which not even nature can shelter the individual, except in moments of self dissolution. In Fontane’s work C. traces an affirmation of nationalism and values of the past. The final chapter is devoted to the socially marginalized, non-bourgeois ‘Wanderer’. Whereas Gotthelf disapproves of the political radicalisation of Swiss artisans on ‘Wanderschaft’ and Holtei adopts the bourgeois condemnation of nomadic life, Raabe returns to a more affirmative treatment of the motif, in order to express criticism of the actionism pervasive in post-1848, early capitalist society.