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“Now, thanks to God, there is a Polish count from the furthest wilderness!” National stereotypes in realistic literature from a cultural studies perspective

National stereotypes of the Other in realistic literature do not serve to depreciate an out-group and do not reflect national conflicts, but are based on internal social discussions within the in-group, which, however, are triggered by an inter-social discussion. As cases in point, the “Polish count from the furthest wilderness” in Keller’s novella *Kleider machen Leute* and the dangerous, exotic Chinese in Fontane’s social novel *Effi Briest* demonstrate that the stereotypical labelling of the figures serves as an image of internal social tensions in Switzerland and in Wilhelminian Prussia. When reading the texts as critical stories, it becomes clear that Keller criticizes the blind enthusiasm of the Polish insurgents of 1831 and 1846 as well as the backwardness and affability of the Swiss population, while Fontane blames the Prussian “social imperialism” in the Chinese Empire.

KEYWORDS
national
stereotypes,
imagology,
Keller’s *Kleider
machen Leute*,
Fontane’s *Effi
Briest*

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Jenny Erpenbeck's *Go, Went, Gone* in the light of Jacques Rancière's conception of logic of intervention

KEYWORDS

Jenny
Erpenbeck,
Jacques
Rancière,
Go, Went, Gone,
literature and
politics,
migration
discourse

Jenny Erpenbeck's novel *Go, Went, Gone* (2015) deals with the European refugee crisis, juxtaposing the calm and privileged life of its protagonist, Richard, a retired classics professor, with the precarious state of African refugees in Berlin. A group of war refugees has gone on a hunger strike to "become visible" and to make themselves heard. The narrative offers a portrait of Richard, a man who is going through an inner transformation from a state of indifference and self-absorption to political engagement and subjectivation after an encounter with the traumatized refugees and the controversial practice of European migration and asylum policies.

Jacques Rancière is known as a thinker of radical equality, both in aesthetics and politics. This article analyzes Erpenbeck's novel in the light of Rancière's thoughts on the conjunction between aesthetics and politics, both attempting to disrupt inegalitarian social orders in order to change the "distribution of the sensible" in a more egalitarian way.

Love and fascination in times of hate. “Incorrect” relations between Poles and Germans in the prose of Marian Pankowski

The biography of Marian Pankowski is an example of typical “Polish paths”. In the autumn of 1939, he fights against German troops, gets captured, and then returns to his family home in Sanok. Three years later, arrested for conspiracy, he is sent to Auschwitz and other concentration camps. In 1945, Pankowski chooses emigration in Brussels, although he will regularly visit his homeland. Then he starts writing stories, novels and dramas, but only a part of them is published in Poland. Despite his camp experience, in many books Pankowski ignores the post-war axis of the official political division, introducing love-erotic threads into the relationships between the German and Polish characters he describes.

KEYWORDS
World War II,
extermination
camps,
transgression,
eroticism,
national myths

Being free means singing freely – the political song from “Vormärz” to the present

KEYWORDS
political songs,
freedom
discourse,
bourgeois public
sphere, Hannah
Arendt, Jürgen
Habermas

Political songs articulate social change. They represent a public voice for differing groups and bring people together through a debate of relevant topics. This paper sketches how for Hannah Arendt this historical progress is caused by individual awareness of personal and political confidence and results from a changed understanding of freedom since the revolutions of the late 18th century. Moreover, Jürgen Habermas described the specific structural change of society and the public sphere as being a political space. Recent examples from Germany show how songs act with a conceptual idea of freedom that fundamentally emerged during the Enlightenment and changed during the long 19th century. However, in contrast to Heinrich Heine they do not reflect an emancipatory level of creating the public sphere rationally and continually – though this element would be a necessity to keep the awareness of a diversity of meaning in general.

“He’s wearing a white tie” – politics and dress: On *The Leopard* by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa

The author of the article discusses the political nature of the dress of the characters in Lampedusa’s *The Leopard*. When mayor Don Calogero – a parvenu and simpleton – arrives at a dinner hosted by Don Fabrizio wearing a white tie, he violates the social order sanctified by ages-long tradition. The gesture of crossing the threshold of an aristocrat’s palace symbolizes the decline of the world in which everything was organized in “the old way,” “quietly,” and “as always.” Hence, in Lampedusa’s novel, a white tie symbolizes modern transformation and becomes a metaphor of political change, from a white tie to “redshirts” and eventually to the “brownshirts” of the fascists.

KEYWORDS
G. di Lampedusa, revolution,
attire, gesture,
white tie

From propaganda to disillusionment. Crusades in Walther von der Vogelweide's and Neidhart von Reuenthal's lays

KEYWORDS
songs,
crusades,
autonomy of
the creator,
political poetry

Crusades, Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land which aimed to reconquer the Holy Sepulchre from the pagans, left their mark on the 12th and 13th-century European culture, including contemporary poetry. Until the present day, no uniform approach has been arrived at as regards the interpretation the crusade songs. One of the most hotly discussed questions is the extent to which the songs reflect a realistic vision of the Orient, which would appear to stem from a first-hand experience of the crusades, as opposed to the use of conventional motifs and topoi. The aim of this paper is twofold: first, to analyze the transformation of the theme in the poetical works of Walther von der Vogelweide and Neidhart von Reuenthal, and second, to look into the phenomenon of the so-called political literature of the Middle Ages.

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Late confession – Martin Pollack in the discourse on Austria’s role as a victim and/or perpetrator

Austria – the first victim or the most loyal ally? The article is devoted to the myth of Austria as the first victim of Nazi Germany and its surprisingly slow erosion. Despite the obvious historical facts, the myth of Austria as a victim continues to last until now in a substantial part of Austrian society, including the younger generation. Using the example of the works of Martin Pollack, a 1944-born Austrian writer and journalist, this paper indicates the particular role of non-fiction literature in the context of settling the accounts of Austrian society as a participant in the crimes of the Third Reich.

KEYWORDS
Austria,
World War II,
reckoning with
the past, myth
of the victim

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Utopian implications in Friedrich Hölderlin's unfinished elegy *Der Gang aufs Land*

KEYWORDS

Friedrich
Hölderlin,
Ernst Bloch,
utopia, poem,
anticipation,
process

Friedrich Hölderlin's concept of social utopia, which is based on a rule-free and egalitarian order of living together, is reflected in a poetics that understands language as the bearer of a visionary consciousness. In particular, the theoretical foundation of Ernst Bloch's philosophy of hope proves to be a suitable starting point for the analysis of utopian attachments in the texts of the poet. An exemplary subject of the present investigation is the poem *Der Gang aufs Land*. Out of the criticism of the society of Hölderlin's time, he develops the idea of an all-encompassing community that includes humans and gods, Christian and pagan, as well as nature and culture.

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“You in heaven! help me, a poor / Black man!” Critique of slavery in German poetry of the late 18th century (Claudius, Pfeffel, Herder)

Initially, the paper recapitulates some key aspects of the discourse about slavery in the late 18th century and illustrates the importance of the subject for many German writers of the time. Against this backdrop, it is shown how Claudius, Pfeffel and Herder tried to overcome widespread racist stereotypes in several poems which were meant to support the abolitionist cause. However, it cannot be overlooked that they partly failed to do so; in fact, the texts tend to unwillingly reinforce the idea of white superiority to some extent.

KEYWORDS
slavery,
Enlightenment,
abolitionism,
poetry

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The intellectuals' position and task according to Döblin – *Wissen und Verändern* in 1931 and today

KEYWORDS
Weimar
Republic,
socialism,
intellectual
commitment

Döblin's essay collection *Wissen und Verändern* answers an open letter written by a student asking for intellectual guidance in a time of crisis. The collection contains analyses of the political development as well as social and economic problems that appeared at that time. As we are facing the popularity of thriving populist and nationalist political agents nowadays, a broad public discusses the comparability of the Weimar Republic before 1933 and contemporary circumstances. In conjunction with that discussion, a public commitment of an intellectual elite and a much-needed standing against the "New Right Movement" are demanded. Against the background of this public discourse, the following elaboration examines the current relevance of Döblin's essays, his political conception and his understanding of what constitutes an engaged intellectual.

Two “parallel campaigns” – Robert Menasse versus Robert Musil

The paper offers a comparison of the recent Austrian novel *Die Hauptstadt* (*The Capital*) by Robert Menasse and the classic novel of Austrian modernism *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* (*The Man Without Qualities*) by Robert Musil, serving as an intertextual basis of the former. The comparison focuses on the “parallel campaigns” in both novels, by Musil in the Habsburg monarchy in 1913, before the beginning of World War I, and by Menasse in the EU Brussels in 2016. The postmodern author opposes nationalism in Europe, which resulted once in the Shoa, and expects the EU to (gradually) dissolve nations in favour of a common Europe of regions. The novel has many plots and uses brilliant humour. Both “parallel campaigns” end in failure because of the particularism of nations.

KEYWORDS
Menasse,
Musil, parallel
campaigns,
intertextuality,
nationalism

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Urbi et regi(bus). How Gymnasium Elbingese celebrated the tricentenary of Prussia's homage to Casimir IV Jagiellon with poetry

KEYWORDS
Elbing (Elbląg),
occasional
poetry,
Gymnasium
Elbingense,
Casimir IV
Jagiellon,
Augustus III
of Poland

On 10 June 1754, the Academic Gymnasium (grammar school) in Elbing (Elbląg) celebrated the anniversary of events that took place three hundred years earlier, when king Casimir IV Jagiellon received the pledge of allegiance from Prussian bishops, burghers of Elbing city, and the inhabitants of neighbouring townships. An occasional cantata and narrative poems, composed for the 1754 celebrations and preserved in print, interpret the aforementioned political events at the dawn of the Royal Prussia, as the foundation of Elbing's subsequent economic and cultural development. The recollection of past politics, accompanied by panegyric evocations of the contemporary king, Augustus III of Poland, was also aimed at fostering the town's prosperity in its current political context.

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Theatre as “bourgeois death dance”? Dealing with the past through remembrance in Rolf Hochhuth’s *Der Stellvertreter* und Thomas Bernhard’s *Vor dem Ruhestand*

The collapse of the Nazi regime was followed by a clear distancing of West German art from politics. However, *Der Stellvertreter* marks a turning point and transforms theatre into a political act again. Hochhuth looks back at the repressed past by examining the question of individual responsibility and guilt, using the silence of the Catholic Church during the Holocaust as an example. Auschwitz is brought on stage for the first time and the play initiates a wave of repoliticization, so that it is rightly regarded as a precursor of documentary theatre. Bernhard’s *Vor dem Ruhestand* is also political theatre *par excellence* as it takes sides, irritates, questions the existing order. In contrast to Hochhuth and his belief in the bourgeois subject, however, fascism serves Bernhard as a model of the decaying structures of bourgeois social systems.

KEYWORDS
political theatre,
coming to
terms with the
past, individual
and collective
responsibility,
Auschwitz

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Remembering the Great Terror (1937-1938). Memoirs and literary narratives of Olga Bergholz and Lydia Chukovskaya

KEYWORDS

Great Terror,
totalitarianism,
literature,
memory

Olga Bergholz's and Lydia Chukovskaya's memoirs and literary works constitute traces of memory of the Great Terror (the Great Purge) of the 1930s, and a harrowing depiction of the process of human degradation. The two female authors, both eminent intellectuals of 20th-century Russia, try to gain an insight into the nightmare of totalitarian horror and capture its contours in language. Unceasing work of remembering, along with an inner compulsion to create, enabled both writers to name and describe the criminal nature of the terror, expose its mechanisms, and show the consequences of ideological pressure exerted by the rulers on individuals. Based on intimate memories, which combine personal experiences with the communal experience of the tragedy, these representations of the horror of the 1930s challenge the official "monumental" narrative of the authorities.

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The perverse faces of totalitarian regimes in the works of René Kalisky

René Kalisky is a Belgian writer of Polish descent, who is best known for the plays he wrote in the last 12 years of his life. The tragic wartime experiences enabled him to write powerfully on historical and political topics. The aim of this paper is to present a vision of all totalitarian regimes of 20th-century European history (fascism, Nazism, Stalinism) often taking this approach to nightmarish proportions. Experimenting with ideas present in the work of Bertolt Brecht and Luigi Pirandello, Kalisky developed ideas of “superacting” and “supertext” as means to liberate not only the actor and the script from convention but also to help realize the dramatic potential of an audience. Kalisky defies also time and space, stressing at the same time that there is a special confluence of past, present, and future for the Jew.

KEYWORDS
Kalisky,
superacting,
supertext,
totalitarian
regimes

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The splendour and misery of an intellectual in dealing with politics: On the case of Karl Kraus

KEYWORDS
history of the
intellectuals,
media criticism,
language
criticism, satire,
anti-politics

Karl Kraus, who in 1906 was provocatively defined as a “fanatical non-politician” and was undoubtedly one of the most important and effective intellectuals of his time, rejected the figure of the author intervening in the newspapers because of his fundamental criticism of the media. Confident of the irrelevance of politics, he wavered between the left and the right. Hermann Broch saw him as the master of the “absolute satire” in which “anti-politics became politics, the only truly valid meta-policy.” After the shocking experience of World War I, Kraus could recognize no other political guiding principle than “saving life” and no cultural policy programme other than “language rescue.” Opposing both political camps, he then took the position of “anti-politics” and approached the type of prophetic and charismatic intellectuals critically analyzed by Pierre Bourdieu in the wake of Max Weber. Kraus’s media criticism remains particularly up-to-date and thoroughly political when applied to the critique of the new media and social networks, which are today even more manipulative than the press opposed by Kraus.

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Johannes Hevelke versus Jan Heweliusz – a literary portrait of an astronomer with politics in the background

The article is an attempt to outline the shape of the literary narrative about the Gdansk astronomer in German and Polish literature and journalism from the beginning of the 19th century to the present, with particular emphasis on the influence of political factors changing in the analyzed period. German politics before 1945, just as Polish politics until 1989, directly determined decisions of writers, which resulted in the creation of incomplete, ideologically shaped images of Johannes Hevelius at that time. In contrast, current politics, also the historical one, encourages Polish writers to create diverse, not necessarily “politically correct” visions of the astronomer.

KEYWORDS

Johannes
Hevelke,
Jan Heweliusz,
ideology,
historical
politics,
journalism,
fiction

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Non-neutral literature. Marxist motifs in the novels of Belén Gopegui

KEYWORDS
Belén Gopegui,
literary
commitment,
contemporary
Spanish novel,
Marxism

This paper points to the literary uses of Marx's and Marxist theories in the novels of Belén Gopegui (born 1963). The Spanish writer emphasizes the community dimension in human relations, introducing details about work, money and the material conditions of life. Gopegui shares this interest in politics and social life with a generation of contemporary Spanish writers, such as Rafael Chirbes, Isaac Rosa, Marta Sanz and others. In order to renew the traditional realist convention, she has developed original literary devices, such as collective auto-ironical subjects, poetic organization of language or a fusion of novelistic genres. Her work opens the possibility of a committed literature today.

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The view of the occupying force. The „Krakauer Zeitung“ 1939-1945

In the „Krakauer Zeitung“ the Germans living in the General Government received selected information about both political events in Germany and the world, and the origin and development of German institutions and organizations in the occupied territory. In accordance with Nazi propaganda, the „Krakauer Zeitung“ published articles which presented the occupied territory as seen through the eyes of the occupying force, and which were intended to make the German reader constantly aware of the alleged legitimacy of German supremacy in Poland and eastern European countries. At the same time, however, information which might have damaged the reputation of the Nazi regime was withheld from the German reader. The newspaper published only the information that was necessary, without divulging any secrets which might have been used by the Polish underground groups in their strategy of resistance against the occupation regime.

KEYWORDS
World War II,
German
occupation,
newspaper,
propaganda

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On symbolizing political history in myth. Ilse Langner's drama *Iphigenie und Orest*

KEYWORDS
myth of
Atreidae,
humanity
drama, Goethe,
war, post-war
crime, victims
as perpetrators,
violence

Ilse Langner's drama *Iphigenie und Orest* (1977 manuscript) pivots on a historical sequence of events: war, rescue and exile, merciless revenge after the war. Why is the plot set in a Greek mythological setting? The use of myth considerably extends the frame of references, which in turn necessarily surpasses documentary correctness. The dramatist already provided a world model to the dramatist of the Atreidean myth, which focuses on basic questions of violence-stricken human existence (while Goethe formed Iphigenie as a model of humanitarianism that overcomes violence). Langner's *Anti-Iphigenie* shows the spiral of violence as a challenge for the post-idealist 20th century.

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A happy ending for the dishonoured German woman – rape at the end of World War II in novels by Lilly Gräfin zu Rantzau and Utta Danella

Das Herz schlägt weiter (1950) by Lilly Gräfin zu Rantzau and *Regina auf den Stufen* (1957) by Utta Danella are non-artistic novels dedicated to controversial contemporary topics. The article explores both novels in the context of the 1950s and discusses the political connotation of each happy ending. By describing how the female protagonists, who fell victim to Soviet soldiers at the end of the war in 1945, survive and find a positive future for themselves, these novels implicitly contradict the notion of honour of National Socialism as well as the social stigmatization of raped women. Instead, they highlight the raped woman as a war victim, redeem her trauma, and reintegrate her into a reactionary or modern society, respectively.

KEYWORDS
Lilly Gräfin
zu Rantzau,
Utta Danella,
rape,
World War II,
1950s

A French colonial novel: Between literature and politics. Morocco in the works of the Tharaud brothers and Aline Réveillaud de Lens

KEYWORDS
colonial
literature,
Morocco,
Hubert Lyautey,
Tharaud
brothers,
Aline
Réveillaud
de Lens

The present paper discusses the impact of Hubert Lyautey, General Resident of Morocco, a French Protectorate since 1912, on the development of the French colonial literature. Having his own vision of ruling the Protectorate based on the declared respect toward the Sultan and his milieu, not wanting the country to become “the second Algeria,” Lyautey had to bring the French public opinion round to his policy in Morocco. That is why he invited to the Protectorate a number of artists and writers whose role was to depict the country in a favourable way. The paper focuses on the influence of Lyautey manifesting itself in the works of Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, well known French writers, who came to Morocco especially at the invitation of the Resident General, and those of Aline Réveillaud de Lens, a French writer and painter, who came to live with her husband in Morocco and there met Lyautey, who affected her a lot.

“Leaving the west implies to enter the world.” Ronald M. Schernikau’s poetics between East and West Germany

The article discusses the border crossings of Ronald M. Schernikau (1960–1991), a German author who enjoyed deplorably little recognition during his lifetime, and emphasizes his poetics as a result of these transgressions. Schernikau polarized the public opinion as a communist, as an author and as an iconic figure of the gay rights movement. His self-proclaimed *opus magnum*, *LEGENDE*, integrates a large amount of genres, quotations, and already published texts both by himself and by others or of other origins, the Bible and Shakespeare among them. However, previously overlooked material from the Schernikau collection in the archives of the Akademie der Künste Berlin shows that the author did pursue a stringent poetological concept: a postmodernist Marxist narrative with a strong emphasis on the classics, geared towards authors like Brecht and Shakespeare alike.

KEYWORDS
Schernikau,
Germany, GDR,
poetics

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Aesthetics and politics in Peter Weiss's writings

KEYWORDS
social fields,
culture,
aesthetics of
resistance,
political
engagement,
“novel policy”

The theoretical background of the following paper on the German author Peter Weiss (1916–1982) is twofold. First, it is based on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social fields, more exactly on his assumption of the autonomous fields of aesthetics and politics that more often than not can be involved in conflicts with each other, as it happened, for instance, in Nazi Germany. Second, a theoretical draft of three types of relations between the aesthetic and political fields forms the interpretative context in which Weiss's ideas and writings can be situated. The main focus of the paper is on his monumental essay-novel *The Aesthetics of Resistance*, which can be seen as an intricate network of discourses on aesthetics and politics and their interrelation.

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On the necessity of literature and the role of the (engaged) writer

In general terms, this article addresses the problem of the relationship between literature and politics. In detail, the issues of the necessity of literature, mutual relations between literature and society as well as literary and civic engagement will be addressed. In the context of the presented considerations, it refers in particular to two names: Peter Bichsel, who calls himself an engaged writer and who in his journalistic texts and speeches has until recently regularly referred to the issue of socio-political life in Switzerland, and Michael Köhlmeier, whose political speeches, recently published in the collection *Erwarten Sie nicht, dass ich mich dumm stelle. Reden gegen Vergessen* are a commentary on (not only) Austrian politics.

KEYWORDS
Peter Bichsel,
Michael
Köhlmeier,
engaged writer,
literature and
politics

“To read patterns with the human iris.” Border policies and the aesthetics of affect in Uljana Wolf’s prose poems

KEYWORDS
prose poetry,
post-/
modernity,
border policies,
border poetics,
aesthetics of
affect

The paper explores the intertwining of aesthetics and politics in Uljana Wolf’s volume of prose poems *falsche freunde* (2009), beginning with a feature pivotal in the constitution of the genre in the 19th century: the established boundary between prose and poetry. Highlighting the inherently transgressive, maverick quality of prose poetry in her own poetics, which shows affinities with post-structuralist theories on space and border (de Certeau, Flusser), as well as with concepts of affect (Massumi), Wolf achieves poetic-political expressiveness, in particular involving a critique of systems/societies of control, by means of a performative aesthetics allowing for a play with textual borders, linguistic affects and poetic effects. At the same time, the border constitutes a subject proper: it is the thematic core of “ALIEN,” a two-part series of prose poems dealing with border policies in modernity and their modifications in post- or “liquid modernity” (Bauman), i.e. in contemporary globalized life. How the different checking strategies, the changing function of the border as a symbolic construct, and the potential of autonomy and relationality ascribed to affect are mirrored in Wolf’s aesthetic/prose-poetic strategies is the central focus of my analyses.

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The significance of freedom for the future of Europe. A reference back to 1989

Around thirty years after the European freedom revolutions of 1989, the debate about their actors and their significance for the present and the future is in full swing. For a long time a statistically fixed view of government acts, diplomats and politicians as the decisive force of epochal change has dominated. However, awareness of the important role of non-state actors, oppositionists, intellectuals and artists in this process is increasingly breaking down. They raised their voices against oppression and lack of freedom, calling for respect for civil and human rights, democracy and the rule of law in all countries of the Eastern Bloc.

Their example worked into the long-time passive and paralyzed societies, their solidarity with each other, carried the torch of freedom from country to country. They could not replace the weight of state actors, but they could advance their actions and stood for the peaceful nature of system change. Europe, which had been divided for decades, was able to grow together on a new basis. Thirty years later, however, renewed authoritarian and dictatorial tendencies in a number of European countries question this integration process and call for the common struggle for the values of the peaceful liberation revolutions of 1989.

KEYWORDS
1989, freedom,
civil and
human rights,
democracy,
solidarity

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From the “Athanasium” to a medium of propaganda: Collective biographies and their political functionalities

KEYWORDS
biographic
paradigms,
politicization,
change of
function

In the 18th century, at the height of programmatic aesthetics of autonomy, a reconfiguration of a traditional genre thwarts the increasingly established dichotomy of a literary and political communication mode: the collective biography, which has its roots in the literary and historiographic communication system of antiquity, is consciously reshaped as a medium of political education and national identity self-conceptualization. When Johann Gottfried Herder and Justus Möser programmatically devise the collective form of life description as a means of national identity construction, they initiate a politicization of the genre, which is successively continued, modified and consolidated by collective biographies from the 19th and early 20th century. The paper highlights the variety of political functions which were attributed to biographic collections since the Enlightenment.

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Tabooed Stalingrad

For the German as well as for the Russian general public and the literary communities of both countries, the Battle of Stalingrad has been and certainly continues to be an extremely sensitive, still very topical matter. It has led to unsolvable, tense controversies regarding many taboos and their frequent violations which are associated with this specific horrible event and with World War II in general. In his paper, the author touches upon the question of how major taboos in the discourse on Stalingrad are reflected in the works of German and Russian writers. He provides some elucidating insights into a very complex topic, relevant for many different fields of study.

KEYWORDS

Stalingrad, taboo, German-Russian perspectives, self-image, enemy stereotypes and image of women