

Abstracts

Prince Eugene and Maria Theresa: Gender, History, and Memory in Hofmannsthal in the First World War

Wolfgang Nehring

Hugo von Hofmannsthal was one of the Austrian poets and intellectuals who took an active part in the historical-political events of 1914. He expected from the war a new vitality of public life and an end of the cultural crisis. In his early years he had advocated closer bonds between poetry and life. Now he encountered a situation that gave him the chance to strengthen his ties with reality. He worried about the existence of Austria, in which he was rooted, and tried to conjure up the Hapsburg spirit of the past for his contemporaries and to explain Austria's national history and right to exist to a large public.

My study discusses his essay on Prince Eugene and Maria Theresa in the context of collective memory (or cultural memory) and propaganda. Is there really a collective memory? Was there a collective memory, in which the great commander and the empress lived on, or did the author wish to create this memory from history? Should his essays be considered war propaganda? Self-assertion of Austria opposite the German ally appeared almost equally important. The change in emphasis from Prince Eugene as the greatest Austrian to the peace-loving empress mirrors the events of the war. Both contribute to an Austrian anthropology, which for the author lived on beyond the end of the Empire.

Cultural Memory and Intellectual History: Locating Austrian Literature

David S. Luft

“Cultural Memory and Intellectual History: Locating Austrian Literature” is an essay about the way intellectuals contributed to reshaping cultural memory in Austria after the Second World War. By cultural memory I mean collective memory of the cultural past, of the creative achievements of a society, in this case the achievements of writers. At the center of my story are five intellectuals trying to make sense of the significance of Austrian literature and the Austrian cultural past, usually in a mode of advocacy, both recalling and creating a cultural past for the tiny postwar republic. Cultural memory of this kind is both collective, in the sense of repeating what is known and accepted, and individual, in the sense of being actively selective and inventive. I am concerned here primarily with five cultural commentators who helped to shape understandings of Austrian literature in the early years of the Second Republic: Heimito von Doderer (1896-1966), Friedrich Heer (1916-1983), Ivar Ivask (1927-1992), Herbert Eisenreich (1925-1986), and Herbert Seidler (1905-). These intellectuals developed a view of Austrian literature that contributed to discourse about Austrian national identity by both expressing and refining Austrian understandings of their cultural past. In my discussion of their work, I concentrate on five texts that defined the concept of Austrian literature between 1955 and 1970.

Images of the Second World War in Austrian Literature after 1945

Karl Müller

The author examines selected examples of post-1945 Austrian literature, asking what pictures of the Second World War they imparted and what role they played when, certainly from 1948 on, a certain image of history began to take shape in Austria against the background of the Cold War. This image involved a fade-out in particular of the racist nature of the war, and it had a collectively exonerating and distorting impact. Attention is paid to the stories

and novels of former participants in the war and National Socialists, such as, for example, Erich Landgrebe, Erich Kern, Hans Gustl Kernmayr, Kurt Ziesel. A contrast is seen in the anti-war novel, *Letzte Ausfahrt* (Last Exit) (1952) by the former soldier Herbert Zand, who turns against the dominant image of history, as well as in Ingeborg Bachmann's use of war memories as a topic. The texts are read as a reservoir of selective memory: on the one hand they are critical, individual counter-memories and on the other hand, they make a positive contribution to the formation of the aforesaid collective image. One may say that a war of perception was fought around the Second World War; it was undoubtedly won in the immediate post-war years by those literary works that legitimized or at least trivialized the war. The critical voices of Herbert Zand, Gerhard Fritsch, and Ingeborg Bachmann were unfortunately the quieter ones and were not particularly successful in their time.

Marlen Haushofer: Recollections of Crime and Complicity Maria-Regina Kecht

This essay wants to introduce readers to one of Austria's most astute women writers of the immediate postwar period. Marlen Haushofer, in contrast to her contemporary Ingeborg Bachmann, has not (yet) gained international renown despite her literary craftsmanship. Looking at those works of her that most poignantly thematize the postwar reaction to the years of National Socialism and deal with the issues of guilt and responsibility, I focus on Haushofer's gendered perspective on the roles of victim, perpetrator, and bystander as played out in the seemingly apolitical microcosm of the family.

The essay consists of an introductory discussion of the relevant political-historical context, a brief commentary on two thematically related short stories, and an analysis of the novella *Wir töten Stella*. In her scathing portrait of femininity in the patriarchal order of the fifties, Haushofer condemns women as accomplices in the perpetuation of corrupt structures and strategies of domination. She points to women's subordination and conspiracy of

silence about evil-doing as powerful factors in the perpetuation of destruction. The metaphorical representation of Austrians' collective effort to forget their participation in Nazi crimes may be regarded as a gendered writing strategy allowing Haushofer to appear harmless and thus acceptable to her contemporaries.

Gender, the Cold War, and Ingeborg Bachmann

Sara Lennox

This essay uses the methodology of materialist feminism to situate Ingeborg Bachmann's life and writing in their Cold War context. After outlining the ways in which U.S. Cold War policy affected Austrian cultural life in the nineteen-fifties, I show that Bachmann's own activities during the period of U.S. occupation were steeped in that Cold War atmosphere. I also argue that the Cold War reconfiguration of gender relations left their imprint on Bachmann's writing. Comparing the narrative techniques of the unpublished short story "Sterben für Berlin" (1961) and Bachmann's Büchner Prize Speech "Ein Ort für Zufälle" (1964), I maintain that both texts address the Cold War's impact on Central European subjectivity and that Bachmann's subsequent writing oscillates between those two narrative approaches. Particularly the middle, dream chapter of the novel *Malina* uses the expressionist or surrealist strategies of "Ein Ort für Zufälle" to present history only via the scars left on the psyche, what Bachmann called "die Geschichte *im* Ich." Subsequent to the novel *Malina*, the figure Malina assumes the narrative standpoint of "Sterben für Berlin" to tell the apparently realist stories of the "Todesarten" cycle, whose characters remain unaware of the social forces of which they are victims.

Gender, Cultural Memory, and the Representation of Queerness in Ingeborg Bachmann's Narrative "A Step Towards Gomorrah."

Imke Meyer

This paper explores the questioning of a culturally produced fixed binary gender opposition, as well as of genre conventions, in Bachmann's "Gomorrah." This questioning, I argue, is achieved despite and in part even due to the fact that a lesbian relationship between the text's protagonists remains unrealized. The text's refusal to depict a lesbian relationship is not so much a capitulation to taboos of the 1950's. Rather, it points up the lack of a language and the lack of generic forms that would allow for the representation of true alternatives to traditional gendered power dynamics. If the narrative wants to avoid the reproduction of traditional patriarchal gender relations, it also has to avoid the reproduction of traditional literary forms. Since the narrative cannot speak itself in a form that would represent a viable alternative to traditional genres, it ultimately silences itself in the face of the impossible task of representing a queer relationship. This silence marks a moment of resistance to established cultural norms.

Jewish History and Memory in Paul Celan's "DU LIEGST"

Irene Fußl

In the poem "DU LIEGST" (1967), Paul Celan demonstrates his mindfulness of historical dates as memorials to past traumas – the execution of the conspirators of the plot to assassinate Hitler on 20 July 1944, the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg in 1919, and the be-heading of Danton in 1794. Celan has also written the specific date of the poem into the text, although hidden, and weaves together Jewish tradition and events of the recent past in a lyric exploration of human suffering. Building on the hitherto predominantly biographical readings of the poem, the presence of traditional Jewish texts (Old Testament, the Pessach-Haggada, and the Kabbala) and Christian teaching (New Testament) are analysed in "DU LIEGST," to reveal intertextual levels previously untreated

by scholarship. Two discordant levels of biblical intertextuality are evident, that of the Old Testament, with trigger words pointing to the events recounted in Genesis, Exodus and Deuteronomy, and also that of the New Testament, based on the story of the Christian Messiah. Evidence of these given pre-texts is discussed with reference to the distinctive characteristics of Hebrew and to linguistic structures employed in the Bible, which point to Celan's debt to Judaism and his mastery of Hebrew. Furthermore a mystic-kabbalist interpretation of the poem reveals a surprising number of symmetrical words, dates, and symbolic numbers.

Translating Czernowitz: The "Non-Place" of East Central Europe Leslie Morris

The historian Karl Schlögel's proclamation that Czernowitz is a "real place" and not just a literary topos serves as the point of departure, and the point of contention, for this essay. This essay examines the rhetorical and textual recreations of Czernowitz as "place" on contemporary maps of Jewish mourning and, specifically, in the work of the Czernowitz-born poet Rose Ausländer. Czernowitz poses an interesting problem for contemporary literary and cultural theory that seeks to map the fault lines between literary text, cultural and historical memory, and geographical and textual sites of memory. This legendary Jewish city, once a part of the Habsburg empire and now in Ukraine, is present as a textual site of memory, as the locus—even the embodiment—of the absence of Jewish culture in east Central Europe. This essay examines the literary and cultural meanings of Czernowitz, the layers of repetition and echo in the evocation of Czernowitz as place within the "non-place" of east Central Europe. In doing so, it sets out to define several new "tasks" for the literary "translation" of a place whose contours and boundaries have shifted in time, a place that is both heavily remembered and, at the same time, forgotten.

Geographies of Memory: Ruth Beckermann's Film Aesthetics Karen Remmler

How might we view the films by the Jewish Austrian filmmaker, Ruth Beckermann through the lens of the prose by the late German writer W.G. Sebald? The archival and, at the same time, haunting prose of Sebald's works such as *The Emigrants* or *Austerlitz* bears a close resemblance to the work of memory that Beckermann's films begs us to do. By focusing on particular spaces of remembrance in Beckermann's films in comparison to Sebald's similar practice of intermeshing historical and individual memories, this essay explores how the gendered construction of cultural memory takes place through transcultural encounters with those deemed as Other. Even as locations in Beckermann's films—a living room, the interior of a train passing through Vienna, a cold and sterile exhibit space, or a dream-like landscape—exist in reality, Beckermann's situating of memory in them, creates other, more compelling encounters between the living and the dead. The gendering of memory sites in Beckermann's films creates an alternative to the more elegiac images that are conjured in Sebald's textual and visual spaces of remembrance.

Viennese Memories of History and Horrors Dagmar C. G. Lorenz

World cities, including Vienna, are notorious for their crime history and for the imaginary crimes in fiction and film associated with them. The works of authors such as Musil, Canetti, Doderer, Jelinek, and Rabinovici, and Reed's film *The Third Man* portray Vienna as a setting of crimes.

"Conventional" crimes in literature and films include serial murders, crimes of passion, as well as underworld and gangster activities. These crimes pale in comparison with the crimes committed during the Nazi era and covered up thereafter. Aichinger in "Strassen und Plätze" calls to mind atrocities that occurred at different locations in Vienna. Only recently such crime sites have been marked

by memorial plates. This new culture of memory counteracts the collective amnesia of the postwar era.

The article explores Vienna's rivaling memories. The tourist industry casts Vienna as the city of dreams and waltzes, and critical literature portrays it as the city where the deportation of Jews was implemented even faster and more thoroughly than in Germany. Literary and autobiographical works by Viennese authors of different generations, e.g. Spiel, Aichinger, Beckermann, and Schindel reveal the ambivalence of Viennese forgetting and commemorating.

The Necessity of Remembering Injustice and Suffering: History, Memory, and the Representation of the Romani Holocaust in Austrian Contemporary Literature

Roxane Riegler

This essay focuses on the role of memory in Austria. It demonstrates the significance of literary production when addressing and coming to terms with the past. Reflecting on the role of memory in history and literature, I see the boundaries between the two blurring. My inquiry includes several questions: Why should we remember? How can we integrate literature into a theoretical framework of memory and history? Why do authors take the trouble to reconstruct a burdened past or even relive pain and suffering? How do authors address the connections between the past and the present? Is it important to draw distinctions between Non-Romani and Romani authors?

In my choice of texts I decided on a broad literary approach to the genocide: two autobiographies by author Ceija Stojka, which convey an inside look at individual and collective authentic Romani experience; the novels *Herzfleischartung* by L. Laher and *Farewell Sidonia* by Erich Hackl, which are concerned with the response of the general population to the genocide; and Elfriede Jelinek's play *Stecken, Stab und Stangl* unmasking the denial of guilt or at least shame in present-day Austria.

Staging Memory: The Drama Inside the Language of Elfriede Jelinek

Gita Honegger

This essay focuses on Jelinek's problematic relationship to her native Austria, as it is reflected in some of her most recent plays: *Ein Sportstück* (A Piece About Sports), *In den Alpen* (In the Alps) and *Das Werk* (The Plant). Taking her acceptance speech for the 2004 Nobel Prize for Literature as a starting point, my essay explores Jelinek's unique approach to her native language, which carries both the burden of historic guilt and the challenge of a distinguished, if tortured literary legacy. Furthermore, I examine the performative force of her language. Jelinek's "Dramas" do not unfold in action and dialogue, rather, they are embedded in the grammar itself.

Her radically subversive vision of Austrian culture reveals her own deep roots in it and the obsessive longing to align herself with its purest and martyred voices—from Hugo von Hofmannsthal to Paul Celan.

Against the exploitation by contemporary tourism of a landscape that is riddled with the undead of political and commercial crimes, against the pollution and perversion of official language, Jelinek's linguistic experiments, destructive and anti-traditional at first sight, are urgently conservative projects.