

Vera Nünning (Hg.), *New Approaches to Narrative: Cognition – Culture – History*, Trier: WVT, 2013, 248 S.

In this didactically very useful book, Vera Nünning deals with recent theoretical developments in the areas of cognition, cultural studies and genres related to history/historiography. The essays by a host of PhD students from Mainz and Heidelberg, three post-docs and two senior scholars derive from a workshop at the Gutenberg Research Centre at the University of Mainz which took place in the winter semester of 2012–2013. The date of the ›Acknowledgements‹ in May 2013 bears witness to the striking speed with which the volume was put together. The essays are arranged in three groups according to the three topics of the volume and are introduced by informative introductions from the pen of the editor, who also opens the volume with a very useful general introduction.

The main title is *New Approaches to Narrative*, a title that is somewhat misleading since it suggests that the various approaches outlined are primarily narratological or are predominantly serviceable for the study of narratives. Although this is definitely the case for the first section in the volume (›New Theories and Models for the Study of Narratives‹), in which cognitive approaches, work on experientiality in autobiographical narratives, the unnatural narratology paradigm, blending theory and emotion-focused studies of narrative are presented, the second and third sections have a much vaguer relation to storytelling and narratology. Thus, masculinity studies, intersectionality, the so-called generational approach, possible worlds theory, ritual studies and the ethics of literature (except for possible worlds theory, which has a long narratological tradition) are all approaches that could equally be applied to poetry or drama. The *soi-disant* narratology of section two is thus reduced to the use of narratology as a toolbox for a number of textual devices (focalization, analepsis, variation in types and modes of narration, etc.) which support and modulate the semanticizations of the texts. Though the illustrative example texts are narratives and the essays pay some attention to the deployment of the narratological toolbox, the ›cultural narratology‹ proclaimed in this section is not really a narratology but a deployment of concepts from classical narratology alongside other philological tools in order to focus on what are basically thematic issues: masculinity or gender studies; the intersections of race and gender in texts; the problematics of gender politics in literary representations of immigration and cultural memory (focusing on inter-generational conflicts); the study of ritual as a substrate in modern culture; and the problems of the ethics of literary texts. Even the essay on possible worlds theory in fact resolves itself as a study on mul-

tiperspectivism, and it therefore seems to me that it should more appropriately have been added to section one.

Section three consists of four articles on extremely diverse subjects. While Martin Seidl looks at a captivity narrative which showcases the ideological worldview of the Puritans, Davina Brückner deals with the deliberate temporal ambiguities which allow a pro-English viewpoint to emerge in the *Scotichronicon* of the fifteenth century. Cathleen Sarti, in her turn, analyzes the narratives told in the *Bill of Rights*; and Ilona Pikkanen deals with a Finnish theatre history which displays a number of fictionalizing strategies of presentation. All four essays are able to underline the importance of paying close textual (and narratological) attention to historical sources and historiographical writing. Yet, unlike the previous two sections, these four essays do not really represent four different approaches but four different types of ›historical‹ texts.

The most important value of the volume lies in the broad range of the various newer approaches it discusses. The choice is extremely up-to-date both in its covering of a wide spectrum of what is currently in vogue and in the extremely competent introductions provided to the three sections as well as in the summaries of relevant research that open each individual article. This is certainly a useful collection to consult if one wants to familiarize oneself with, say, the intergenerational approach or with unnatural narratology. The essays are all very lucidly structured on the same pattern, starting with a general overview of the approach in question and then applying it to a chosen text.

Despite these very positive impressions, I found myself chafing at the brevity of the essays, which often did not allow the authors to provide an adequate close reading of their example texts, some of which are not canonical and therefore might have profited from more extensive presentation of background information. There remained also some nagging doubts. For instance, Hartner's application of blending theory to multiperspectivism, though fascinating, had too little space to argue in detail why blending theory could be used in this context, for instance by addressing the relationship of such an application to the metaphorical or analogical core of blending theory. Brückner's persuasive treatment of the *Scotichronicon* might have needed a paragraph to explain to readers that the ›duke of Rothesay‹ was David, the son of the ruling king, Robert III of Scotland, who had withdrawn from rule and given over the management of affairs to the duke of Albany, called ›governor‹ in the extract she discusses. Seidl, presumably on account of the set word limit, fails to discuss the genre of the exemplum, which is constitutive to the sermon, her example text, and also shies away from engaging with the obvious

ethical problems raised by a captivity narrative in which the white woman not only kills but also scalps her Indian captors.

Given the extreme concision required from contributors, all of the authors can be congratulated on a high level of academic competence and achievement. Besides the introductory sections by Vera Nünning, I would like to particularly note as outstanding the contributions by Claudia Falk, Jan Rupp, Davina Brückner, and Jan Alber. I found only one typo in the volume, »Saccucees« (instead of *Sadducees*) on page 194, and only one essay that would have profited from stylistic revision (213–222). All in all, this is a highly recommendable introductory contribution to recent literary theories.

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Susanne Peters, Klaus Stierstorfer, Dirk Vanderbeke, Laurenz Volkmann (Hgg.), Film, Part I+II [Teaching Contemporary Literature and Culture 3. 2 Bde], Trier: WVT, 2013, 692 S.

Für die dritte Ausgabe der Serie zweibändiger Modellanalysen (nun zum Film, nach Roman 2006 und Drama 2008) haben die Herausgeber Peters, Stierstorfer und Volkmann den Filmexperten Dirk Vanderbeke als Gastherausgeber eingeladen. Gemeinsam haben sie ein illustres Beiträgerfeld, vor allem aus der deutschen Anglistik und Amerikanistik, angeworben, das nicht weniger als 35 Filme in didaktischer Perspektive und mit einem Auge auf die Benutzung im Unterricht aufbereitet. Die Einleitung beschreibt das Korpus und die Vorgehensweise und hält neben dem Anspruch, den globalen Film ins Visier zu nehmen, auch den letztlichen Fokus auf (insgesamt 13) US-amerikanische Produktionen fest. Die Herausgeber beklagen einleitend den Verlust an filmanalytischer Aufmerksamkeit durch die Proliferation und Mobilität von Konvergenzkultur und *transmedia storytelling* (1), ohne dass diese Begriffe allerdings genannt werden. Andererseits beschreiben sie zu Recht, dass Filme unter den Bedingungen der digitalen Speicherung wie Bücher rezipiert werden können: sie sind überall verfügbar und ein *close reading* ist problemlos möglich (2).

Die Auswahl von Filmen orientiert sich erkennbar nicht primär oder gar ausschließlich an filmästhetischen Kategorien, sondern an Popularität, kontroverser Resonanz, Diskursmacht und überhaupt eher an kulturwissenschaftlichen Kategorien. So gelingt es den Bänden, trotz der Übermacht der US-Filmindustrie und Hollywoods, eine erhebliche Diversifizierung nach den unvermeidlichen Kategorien *Gender*, *Class* und Ethnizität zu erreichen. Dies können die Bände einleitend reflektieren, wenn in nützlich-