

the potential offered by readings of space, particularly when such interpretations reveal tensions or bring to light elements which could otherwise have been overlooked. Such is the case in *Mal de amores*, as an analysis which focuses on space and mobility highlights the way in which traditional gender roles are reversed, so that some of the principal male characters stay at home while female characters, including 'the true female nomad' Milagros and the protagonist Emilia, travel and move at will (p. 171). Ultimately, however, *Mal de amores* does not connect nomadism with female autonomy, as is the case in, for example, *La novia oscura*. Thus, while there are interesting points of similarity in the way space is represented in these novels, generalization remains difficult.

Overall, the book is an insightful, theoretically informed study, and readers of the five novels discussed will find much of interest in Carvalho's careful analysis. It should be noted, however, that translations are not provided for the sometimes lengthy quotations in Spanish, and, unfortunately, English editions of all of the novels may not be widely available.

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SARAH BOWSKILL

*Aufklärung und Religion: Neue Perspektiven.* Ed. by MICHAEL HOFMANN and CARSTEN ZELLE. (Bochumer Quellen und Forschungen zum 18. Jahrhundert, 1) Hannover: Wehrhahn. 2010. 283 pp. €25. ISBN 978-3-86525-163-3.

This collection succeeds in being more than the sum of its parts. It has two main aims. First, given that Germany offers few counterparts to the aggressively anti-religious polemic found in France, it seeks to present a differentiated picture of the (North) German Enlightenment and defend it against the charge of half-heartedness. Second, it intends to relate the Enlightenment to our present situation, in which, despite the long-standing association of modernity with secularization, religion is not obsolete but resurgent, and in which the Enlightenment's critical and tolerant spirit may not be compatible with the growing strength of Islam.

Several contributors explore the relations with religion maintained by the early and late Enlightenments. Katrin Bojarzin questions the sharp divide between Pietism and the Enlightenment by showing that in Schnabel's *Insel Felsenburg* the travellers' religious awakening is a prelude to the construction of a *bürgerlich* society, while Carsten Zelle, in a densely researched article, shows how Pietist disapproval of sensual pleasure yielded to a moderate hedonism illustrated by Anacreontic poetry and medical anthropology. At the other end, Bernd Auerochs does his best to make sense of Friedrich Schlegel's fragmentary remarks on 'Kunstreligion', showing how much they were inspired by Lessing's *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* with its open-ended construction of sacred history and its anticipation of a new gospel.

Past and present are connected most explicitly by Michael Hofmann in 'Die Religion des späten Lessing und die aktuelle Renaissance einer undogmatischen Religiosität'. Taking issue with what he considers the indiscriminating critiques of Islam made by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Necla Kelek, he holds up the devout but dogma-free, tolerant, and socially engaged religiosity of *Nathan der Weise* as

a model for coexistence in a multicultural world. These are challenging arguments, but they seem to advocate a religion which can offend nobody because it has no content, and which, therefore, can offer little resistance to the various fundamentalisms led by present-day Christian, Jewish, or Muslim counterparts to Lessing's Patriarch. Stefan Greif assigns a similarly exemplary role to Herder's pantheism, while Leo Kreuzer associates Herder, Goethe, and a Spinozistic Lessing as precursors of a modern global pantheism or 'Weltfrömmigkeit'.

In addition, there are useful essays on the German reception of Bayle (Marie-Hélène Quéval), on the radical—and distinctly crude—scepticism of Johann Karl Wezel (Cornelia Ilbrig), and on the Haskala (Stefanie Buchenau, Rafael Arnold), while a particularly penetrating essay by Marina Mertens deals with Schiller. Starting with a witty reference to the atheistic campaign financed by Richard Dawkins ('There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life'), she examines the painful loss of religious certainties suffered by the lyric I in 'Resignation', Julius in the *Philosophische Briefe*, and the Prince in *Der Geisterseher*, and argues that Schiller deals with issues of belief by adopting literary forms which offer an array of perspectives. Likewise, this collection as a whole offers fresh perspectives on the Enlightenment by juxtaposing it with the present, and also supplies a number of solidly informative papers which ought to become standard reference-points.

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RITCHIE ROBERTSON

*Studies in Weimar Classicism: Writing as Symbolic Form.* By R. H. STEPHENSON.

Bern: Peter Lang. 2010. xvi+479 pp. £50. ISBN 978-3-03911-085-8.

'This book is a collection of (revised) published and unpublished material on aspects of Weimar Classicism, written in the light of Ernst Cassirer's cultural theory' (p. xi). The shared theme is the central role of symbolism in Classicism, as distinct from the centrality of semiosis in Romanticism. Stephenson shows convincingly at the outset Cassirer's debt to Weimar Classicism. One of the book's other main aims is to reconsider central tenets of contemporary cultural theory. It is able to show how Goethe's aesthetics are, in some important respects, a forerunner of Derrida's notion of the inherent instability of discursive language but that they also posit the stability of aesthetic meaning discerned in 'symbolic pregnancy'. Likewise, issues raised by the aesthetics of Weimar Classicism are shown to have been addressed by the Frankfurt School, Foucault, and others. The discussion of violence, of memory as an aesthetic phenomenon, and of the nature of symbolism is illuminating. The major works of Weimar Classicism are revisited with challenging and closely argued chapters. There is an excellent essay on the diachronic aspect of Goethe's *Faust*, a wide-ranging one on the novel of Weimar Classicism, as there is on Goethe's rhyming maxims, where it is argued persuasively that it is not the originality of the ideas that is crucial, but the form in which they are expressed.

Stephenson is at his best where he is dealing with the philosophical tenets underlying the theoretical and literary works. I have some misgivings when it comes to the transition from theories to practice. Although he is critical of the ahistorical