

Abstracts

Andrea Camparsi, *Between Symbol and Irony. Wagner and Mahler: the Presence of the Idea and the Nostalgia for the Present*

The essay means to disclose a comparative perspective between theoretical, epistemic and hermeneutical issues of two musical projects with an intense metaphysical value such as the compositions by Richard Wagner and Gustav Mahler. They are dialectically antithetical composers and for this reason fruitful of reflections concerning the essence of the music, its connection with the transcendence and its dramaturgic and symphonic declinations. Wagner and Mahler proceed along two different paths, but both involve in their compositions a constant reflection about the human essence and its connection with the universal. Ultimate purpose of this essay is to establish a dialogue between the symbolic revelation and redemption of the Wagnerian idea of *Gesamt* and the tragic irony of the Mahlerian panic sentiment, or rather between the presence of the idea in Wagner's *Bühnenfestspiel* and the *nostalgia* for the present in Mahler's symphonies.

Simone Costagli, *Between Art and Industry. The Reception of German Cinema in the Late Twenties Italian Critics*

The essay focuses on the Italian early reception of the German cinema of the Weimar period in the late Twenties. It investigates how Italian critics soon recognised the German Cinema as an important source of inspiration both on the artistic and on the industrial level for the Italian cinema, which was nearly disappearing at the time. Critics such as Alessandro Blasetti, Libero Solaroli, Eugenio Giovannetti and many others developed a coherent vision of German Cinema. They underlined the artistic value of German directors (among others Fritz Lang, Friedrich Murnau and Georg Wilhelm Pabst) and their efforts to produce a cinema, which could compete with Hollywood's industrial and artistic power. Along



with the recognition of the important influence on the development of Italian cinema of the Thirties and Forties, the reception of German cinema is an important research field to study the relationship between Fascist Culture and Modernity.

Claudio Di Meola, Daniela Puato, *Variation in Grammar. How Learning Grammars Deal with Systemic Alternations*

The present study analyses a range of significant phenomena of grammatical variation in German. Our focus is on those phenomena where the grammatical alternatives, fully accepted or at least tolerated by the codification of standard language, are equivalent not only on a functional but also on a semantic-stylistic level. We investigate case-alternations concerning: preposition-dependent noun phrases (*entlang der Flüsse* 'alongside the rivers' [genitive] vs. *entlang den Flüssen* [dative] vs. *entlang von den Flüssen* [prepositional case with *von*]), noun-dependent noun phrases (*die Museen Münchens* 'the museums of Munich' [genitive] vs. *die Museen von München* [prepositional case with *von*]), and various forms of appositions. Our perspective is both theoretical and didactical and involves the discussion of a significant selection of German learning grammars. Finally, suggestions are made for dealing more appropriately with phenomena of variation in the teaching of German as a foreign language.

Massimo Ferrari Zumbini, *The Images of Bismarck. From the «Celebratory Gigantism» to the Pictures' Scandal*

After 1870, the Bismarck cult constituted the leitmotif of Germany's national imagery. In 1914, five hundred Bismarck monuments of any kind existed in the German Reich. The first phase – up to the end of the 1890s – was dominated by conventional statues. After 1900, there appeared a new type of monuments, the so-called *Bismarcktürme*, a quadratic or conical block built of granite and with a gigantic urn – waiting to be lit on festive occasions – at the top. These rites and forms – meant to resemble Germanic funeral pyres – had nothing in common with Wilhelmine state and court pageantry and the neo-baroque monuments so dear to Wilhelm II. The evolution of both the style and the semantic content of the Bismarck monuments was thus channelled in a meta-historical, neo-pagan and neo-primitivist direction. It was a struggle within the Right itself and between the Right and the government. Looking at the big picture, how did this struggle help define the nation in the years to come?



Marino Freschi, *The Goetheanum. When literature becomes architecture*

The Goetheanum in Dornach is still the world center of the Anthroposophical Society. It was established by Rudolf Steiner during the First World War, but it was later destroyed by a great blaze, probably arson. Steiner committed to rebuild it, but he could not see it finished. The name of the place consecrated to anthroposophy is surprising: the explanation is that Steiner was a learned scholar of Goethe's work, especially of his scientific writings (most of which Steiner edited himself for the «Weimarer Ausgabe») and of his esoteric texts, on which Steiner's world vision is based.

Mariaenrica Giannuzzi, *Paul Celan and the Political Use of Natural History*

This article illustrates how the disciplinary fields of geology, aesthetics and politics connect in the poetry of Paul Celan in a materialistic, or *profane* way. The particular case, that will show the singular interconnection in Celan's work, is the design of linguistic landscapes. The choice of certain sources that belonged to the discipline of natural history after World War II was not politically neutral, as far as German natural sciences had been closely involved in the shaping of racial and nationalist politics. Celan's selection of natural history books shows, instead, the apparent effort to invalidate the symbolic of *Blut und Boden*. After a research in Celan's personal archive (DLA-Marbach) this collection is here re-examined. Even if Celan's appropriation of geological semantics has been read as a ritualistic reaction to the mass-destruction of the Jewish genocide (Uta Werner), or as a production of imaginary landscapes (Peter Szondi), one ought still consider the distance between Celan's avant-garde style and the Romantic *Naturlyrik*. Which semantic shifts does Celan's poetry apply to the symbolic connection of *Blut und Boden*? Which aspects of natural history can still question nationalist identity?

Giuseppe Raciti, «*I Painted the Devil on the Wall*». *Communism according to Heinrich Heine*

Cultural historians and Germanists have long focused on the thirteen-month period of intense associating between Heine and Marx; however, the theoretical investigations concerning that time are few and uncertain. The first aspect to point out is that Heine was not only an 'inspirer', in the way a poet can 'inspire' a philosopher. He handled concepts with the same precision he used to sharpen his verses. His concept of communism was no exception. But as long as literary and philosophical dresses keep being separated in the 'wardrobe of the spirit', the re-



sults will remain inconspicuous. The point is that Heine speaks of communism every time he speaks of tragedy. Historically speaking, tragedy fades into comedy, which closes an era and opens up to another. More precisely, comedy announces the tragedy of the future that is the tragedy of communism, whose advent, however, remains being indefinitely caught up in the meshes of the liberal and liberalist 'farce'.

Katharina Salzmann, *Linguistic Landscaping and the Multilingual Teaching Concept. The Case of the Chinese Migrant Community in Vienna*

This paper deals with the specific linguistic situation of the Chinese migrant community in Vienna, focussing on the collective multilingualism. The article presents a micro-sociolinguistic study which was carried out in the Chinese commercial quarter and is composed of two parts: a local examination and documentation of the written communication ('linguistic landscaping') and several interviews with migrants working there. On the basis of the detailed analysis of the publicly visible written language (shop signs, price tags and posters) and the results of the interviews dealing with the migrants' language biographies, the paper describes some consequences and suggestions for a possible multilinguistic teaching concept whose aim is to increase the migrants' multilinguistic competence taking into account their concrete living environment.