

long to the corpus on which the aesthetic discourse of the Enlightenment is based, namely encyclopedia articles, travel accounts, and texts on the philosophy of history. Lüsebrink's analysis suggests that these other kinds of texts can reveal something that ›mainstream‹ ones do not, namely that the eighteenth-century discourse on sculpture was deeply anchored in the philosophical, political, and economic context of the age. Last but not least, Guilhem Scherf examines the aesthetic debate over the use of gaping mouths in sculpture. According to Scherf, one can draw a clear dividing line between literati and sculptors. Whereas Winckelmann and Lessing believed that a wide-open mouth was irreconcilable with the ›law of beauty‹, sculptors like Michel Anguier, Pierre Puget, Etienne Maurice Falconet, and Franz Messerschmidt did not recoil from representing extreme pain in the body. Scherf suggests that sculptors were more favorably predisposed to an aesthetics of physical pain because gaping mouths self-reflexively evoked the activity of sculpting, and also because they helped bring statues and busts to life.

Through the diverse contributions that it brings together, *Herder und die Künste* does achieve its declared goal, namely »die vielseitigen Aspekte der Auseinandersetzung Herders mit der Ästhetik und Kunstgeschichte zu beleuchten« (9). For all its merits, however, the volume would have benefitted from a longer, more detailed introduction and the addition of a conclusion. These reflective interventions would have been necessary to address the novelty of the project, to explain the organization of contributions and the import of each section, as well as to bind the essays together more tightly. The first and final sections in particular sit somewhat uncomfortably with the others. The first, because the connection between anthropology and the arts warrants some explanatory remarks that should have found their way into the introduction. And the last section, because the essays in it do not engage with Herder almost at all and display a clear focus on France. These loose ends leave readers to wonder about the internal cohesion of the volume and cast a shadow over what, individually taken, are notable contributions to Herder scholarship and to the history of aesthetic thought.

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FISCHER, FRANK, *Triumph der Rache. Joachim Wilhelm von Brawe und die Ästhetik der Aufklärung*. Heidelberg: Winter Verlag (2013). 195 pp.

In recent decades, scholars have expanded our understanding of eighteenth-century drama by focusing on works that have not been considered »canonical«, and Frank Fischer understands his book on revenge in the plays of Joachim Wilhelm von Brawe (1738-1758) as part of this project. His monograph represents a welcome addition to this discussion.

Brawe was a promising dramatist of the mid-eighteenth century, who wrote two plays: a domestic tragedy, *Der Freygeist* (completed 1757, published 1758), and a heroic tragedy, *Brutus* (completed 1758, published 1768), before dying at age twenty. Fischer focuses on the *Rächerfiguren*, or avenger figures, in these plays – Henley in *Der Freygeist* and Publius in *Brutus* – finding that Brawe developed an innovative aesthetics of revenge that anticipates the *Sturm-und-Drang* movement. Fischer's

book provides close readings of these two tragedies and a wealth of contextualization for these texts, thereby bringing this innovative dramatist's work back into literary-historical focus.

*Triumph der Rache* begins with an overview of the research on Brawe, beginning with August Sauer in 1878, whereby Fischer contests the accuracy of Sauer's epithet: »der Schüler Lessings« (11). According to Fischer, few scholars have focused on the innovative nature of Brawe's avenger figures, and the work of Peter-André Alt (1994), Katrin Löffler (2005), and Wolfgang Lukas (2005) is noteworthy in this respect. Fischer ends the *Forschungsbericht* by pointing out the desideratum which his monograph is meant to rectify: »Trotzdem findet sich in der neueren Forschung noch keine Interpretation, die eine Erklärung für das deviante Verhalten und die Unerbittlichkeit der Rächer [...] liefern und in das Gesamtbild integrieren würde« (21).

Fischer provides information about Brawe's life, obtained from a variety of published and archival sources, then turns to Brawe's first tragedy, *Der Freygeist*. The chapter offers a plot summary then discusses the literary models that influenced the play: Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Miß Sara Sampson* (1755), Edward Moore's *The Gamester* (1753), and Edward Young's *The Revenge* (1721). Fischer details the play's publication history, which Lessing had sent in 1757 to Friedrich Nicolai and Moses Mendelssohn as an entry in Nicolai's contest for the best tragedy. Brawe's *Der Freygeist* placed second in the contest and was published by Nicolai in 1758. Fifteen further editions throughout the eighteenth century followed, along with translations into Russian, Danish, and French. Fischer lists numerous performances by significant theater troupes in the German lands throughout the 1760s and 1770s. The play proved so popular that Lessing had to change the title of his own comedy, *Der Freigeist* (completed 1749, published 1755) to *Der beschämte Freigeist*, in order to distinguish it from Brawe's tragedy.

Fischer discusses reviews and scholarship on the play, including the play's relationship to Lessing's, Nicolai's, and Mendelssohn's theorizations of tragedy. Fischer agrees with other critics that Brawe's *Der Freygeist* criticizes atheism and serves as »literarisierte Moraldidaktik« (84), drawing on Gellert's *Moralische Vorlesungen* and on a didactic poem by Albrecht von Haller, a quote from which serves as the play's epigraph. Fischer emphasizes how atheism and revenge work together to build a dramatic whole: »Der *Freygeist* ist ein ästhetisches Ganzes, aus dem weder das Titelthema noch die Rachehandlung wegzudenken ist und das aus der Spannung zwischen diesen beiden Polen seine Dramatik gewinnt« (84).

The next chapter, on Brawe's *Brutus*, begins with a plot summary, then discusses the formal innovations of *Brutus*, which, along with Christoph Martin Wieland's *Lady Johanna Gray* (1758), was one of the first German tragedies written in blank verse. Literary influences such as Joseph Addison's *Cato* (1713), Young's *The Revenge* (1721), Johann Jakob Bodmer's verse epic *Der Noah* (1752), and Voltaire's *Mahomet* (1743) are discussed. The chapter then deals with the publication history of *Brutus*, which was completed by February 1758 but not published until ten years later. This play was published four times in 1768 but only one additional time during the eighteenth century (1786). The play was first performed in the theater in 1770 in Vienna, but after that, Fischer finds only a few student productions of the play. Fischer emphasizes that the tragic actions of Brutus and his son Marcius are, in fact, set into motion by Publius's revenge plot, which has significant effects even after his death.

For Fischer, the centrality of Brawe's »Racheästhetik sui generis« (9) has been overlooked by scholars, and he devotes the fifth chapter to an analysis of Brawe's aesthetics of revenge. This chapter is the most innovative portion of the monograph. Fischer points out that the conception of revenge in Brawe's plays differs significantly from Enlightenment conceptions of revenge. He examines an article on revenge (1741) in Zedler's *Universal-Lexicon* and a piece on revenge in the moral weekly *Der Freund* (1754-1756) and ascertains that Enlightenment literature typically depicted revenge as a brief passion that destroys the avengers' environment, causing them to realize their misguidedness. For Fischer, revenge in Brawe's plays is very different from this conception; revenge is not a temporary emotion, nor is it seen as flawed behavior; instead, it is depicted as a total triumph, thus calling bourgeois values into question. In framing his argument, Fischer draws on Hans Magnus Enzensberger's conception of the »radikaler Verlierer« (150), adapting it to fit Brawe's avengers. Fischer's use of the term consists in three characteristics: »Selbstdiagnose« (151), »Kombinierte Hetero- und Autoaggression« (151), and »Konstanz des Rachevorhabens/Schläfertum« (152). Thus, Brawe's avengers, Henley and Publius, view themselves as losers in an asymmetrical conflict position; they become bent on the destruction of others and themselves so that revenge becomes an end in itself, causing them to triumph even at their deaths, without regret; and their plans for revenge are long-term calculations rather than the result of sudden passions.

Fischer contrasts Brawe's *Rächerfiguren* with vengeful characters in Enlightenment drama such as Ulfo in Schlegel's *Canut* and Marwood in Lessing's *Miß Sara Sampson*, finding that Brawe's characters, unlike the others, have no desires beyond revenge. Fischer finds much similarity between Brawe's Henley and Publius and the excessively vengeful characters in Euripides's tragedies and in *Sturm-und-Drang* dramas such as Guelfo in Klinger's *Die Zwillinge*.

Fischer's argument is innovative and convincing. His adaptation of Enzensberger's terminology fits the objects of Fischer's inquiry, but some readers will likely criticize the usage of a not uncontroversial text that deals primarily with twenty-first-century concerns such as terrorism. Fischer's argument is perhaps more convincing when he reads Brawe's texts against the background of Enlightenment discussions of revenge, Enlightenment and *Sturm-und-Drang* tragedy, and Euripides's tragedies as received in eighteenth-century Germany.

Brawe's plays are available in paperback volumes edited by Fischer and Jörg Riemer. Fischer maintains a website with a variety of materials relating to Brawe at <http://brawe.uni-leipzig.de/>. With these materials and, especially, with his monograph on Brawe, Fischer has done a great deal to make the work of this innovative playwright more accessible to scholars, thus contributing significantly to eighteenth-century literary studies. Fischer's book provides literary scholars with insightful readings of Brawe's two tragedies, with detailed summations of previous scholarship, as well as with information on the publication, performance, and critical reception of these plays; the book will thus be of value to theater scholars, literary historians, and students of the eighteenth century. It is likely to inspire other scholars to turn their attention once again to the creative young author Joachim Wilhelm von Brawe.