

## **Von Kraftmenschen und Schwächlingen. Literarische Männlichkeitsentwürfe bei Lessing, Goethe, Schiller und Mozart.**

*Von Martin Blawid. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011. vi + 412 Seiten. €99,95.*

In this study, a revised version of the author's dissertation under the same title, Martin Blawid examines a unique collection of eighteenth-century German and Italian texts. Blawid approaches these texts from a gender (masculinity) studies perspective, which he argues is new and neglected in readings of eighteenth-century German and Italian dramatic literature. Many gender-related studies of the long eighteenth century have sought to illuminate women's contributions to the period's literature. The bulk of German (Studies) scholarship on masculinity focuses on German literature and culture in and after the final quarter of the nineteenth century. Already in his title (*Entwürfe*), Blawid points to the manifold and dynamic nature of masculinity. He argues that the texts and characters he examines in the book make clear "dass sich 'Männlichkeit' einer eng an der Erfüllung von Normen orientierten Erwartungshaltung zunehmend entzieht" (399).

Unfortunately, however, Blawid's study still mostly reads like a dissertation. It spends a sizable amount of space working its way through a literature review, for example, documenting changes in gender and masculinity theory since the early 1970s (chapter 1). The first three chapters (of five, excluding the final *Zusammenfassung*) chart theoretical and historical developments in *Männerforschung* and conceptions of *Männlichkeit*, both historically (chapter 2) and in literary criticism (chapter 3). In his survey, Blawid has neglected a great deal of Anglophone scholarship on this topic. The primary works (i.e., the texts by Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, and Mozart/Da Ponte mentioned in the book's title) are too infrequently drawn into the investigation in these opening chapters. One of the more interesting aspects of Blawid's analyses, however, is his attention to *Konstellationen* of relationships of friendship and family in these works. The gender dynamics of these latter omnipresent categories deserve more scholarly examination, especially in studies of pre-twentieth-century society and culture. Blawid gives due attention, sometimes painstakingly so, to ways in which contemporary gender expectations can inflect these interwoven ties.

Parts of these preliminary chapters contain discussions of fascinating topics. While they are not exactly new, chapter 2, for example, tracks semantic developments behind *Geschlecht* and *Mann*, making use of *Conversationslexika* and Ute Frevert's study *Mann und Weib und Weib und Mann*. One can see further evidence of the theoretical discoveries Blawid examined in the book's first chapter, like the dynamic relational quality of hegemonic masculinity, dependent as it is on negative associations with femininity or "woman." Also in this second chapter, Blawid offers brief examples of *Männlichkeit*'s appearances in public discussion in the eighteenth century. Thus, we hear from figures like Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, and Joachim Heinrich Campe.

In chapter 3, Blawid introduces some aspects of secondary literary interpretation and criticism. The author surprisingly uses much of this chapter's space to present suggested theoretical concepts from the contributors to one volume edited by Vera Nünning and Ansgar Nünning (*Erzähltextanalyse und Gender Studies*, 2004), thus overlooking a wide variety of potentially useful sources. Blawid provides examples from his selected texts (by Goethe, et al.) that illustrate ways in which the critical approaches apply: e.g., reading uses of time as gendered in Mozart/Da Ponte's *Don Giovanni*.

Blawid's dedicated textual analysis begins in chapter 4, an examination of *Männlichkeitsentwürfe* in German dramatic texts. Blawid's methods in this study are, as he describes them, "textzentriert, aufgrund des Einbezugs der Ergebnisse aus den vorangegangenen Kapiteln jedoch nicht ausschließlich textimmanent" (112). The analysis is, however, largely *textimmanent*. The works are Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm oder das Soldatenglück* (1767), Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773), and Schiller's *Die Räuber* (1781). In methodically enumerated sections, the chapter presents in turn an overview, descriptions of the most important male characters in the action, and analysis of selected passages from each work. Generally in this chapter, Blawid's previous discussion of the semantic baggage behind *Mann* becomes more useful. In Lessing's play, Blawid examines Major von Tellheim, Paul Werner, and Just. These three characters have traits and relationships with each other based on military activity and servitude. Goethe's play offers the title character Götz, Adelbert von Weislingen, and the servant Franz. In the discussion of Götz (and his iron hand), corporeality and knightly codes naturally play important roles. From Schiller's play, Blawid selects Karl and Franz Moor and Moritz Spiegelberg. Here, familial and fraternal relationships are obviously crucial to the analysis. Beyond that, Blawid examines the band of robbers as a *Männerbund* with its attendant hierarchy and power dynamics.

In chapter 5, Blawid looks at three Italian dramatic texts (opera libretti) from collaborations between Mozart and Lorenzo Da Ponte: *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786), *Don Giovanni* (1787), and *Così fan tutte* (1790), which Blawid contends have been neglected in Italian Studies scholarship. From *Figaro*, Blawid selects Count Almaviva, Figaro, and Cherubino, whose relationships to each other are structured based on hierarchy and dominance. From *Don Giovanni*, Blawid selects the title character, Leporello, and Don Ottavio, whose forms of masculinity are relational, depending on their proximity to Don Giovanni. Finally, from *Così fan tutte*, Blawid takes Don Alfonso, Ferrando, and Guglielmo, whose relationships are based largely on friendship and professional interactions.

In his *Zusammenfassung*, Blawid offers an intricate schema or what could be realized as a matrix for describing and categorizing both the characters and the *Männlichkeitsentwürfe* he has treated in the book. The latter can be described as either *dynamisch* or *statisch*, *eigen-* or *fremdbestimmt*, *ein-* or *mehrdimensional*. Parameters can be used to classify these further, based on *Mut*, *körperliche Unversehrtheit/Stärke*, *Entschlossenheit/Standhaftigkeit*, *Freiheitsdrang*, *amouröser Erfolg*, and *rationale und emotionale Flexibilität* (390). Within each of these, a range exists of how the characters and their masculinity correspond to the criteria, from *vollkommen bzw. größtenteils*, to *weitestgehend oder zumindest partiell*, to *nur in sehr geringem Maße oder keinesfalls* (390-91). Blawid succeeds in illustrating wide spectra of masculinity, but, because of its limited review of scholarship and baroque categories, the study's elaborate theoretical apparatus may have limited utility.