

New Psychoanalytic Narrating: From Identity to Narration

Narrating as a Way Out of the Identity Trap

by Christian Eigner

Judith Butler's "Gender Trouble" brought the concept of identity back into vogue. However, this is always a dangerous concept because—even in its deconstructed form—it still promises solidity where in reality there is none to be found. In this respect, postmodern discourse can be held partly responsible for the conservative "identitariness" of the early 21st century (as Jürgen Habermas has already noted).

In fact, however, it is possible to do without the concept of identity if there is a shift towards storytelling/narrating as a structure:

In his late work, Wilfred Bion paved the way for a form of psychoanalysis that understands psychoanalysis as literarization; as the gain of a narrative position that integrates toxic beta elements as qualities into grammatical alpha worlds. And in general: narrative thinking is characterized as a successful exit from pathological speech.

However, the narrator no longer has a classical identity, but manages to weave together sequences and actions and, as it were, become the integral of the interweaving. This gives rise to an *Esprit Narratif* that remains as flexible as necessary, producing aesthetics and meaning that together can literally override and overwrite pressing tensions and emotions.

A New Psychoanalytic Narrating thus also opens the way back to a literary modernism that emphasizes possibilities and can be opposed to the conservative tendencies of the time.