

could have on her fetus. For example, Urte Heldhuser relates the story of poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who claimed he became a poet because of the shock of the sudden collapse of his parents' fortunes while his mother was pregnant with him. Another such example that moves the reader away from early modern monstrous births to more modern debates about how maternal health might affect the fetus is Caroline Arni's study of the generation of Parisians born during and shortly after the siege of 1871, who, some believed, exhibited higher rates of various psychological and physiological abnormalities, such as epilepsy and attention difficulties, because of the trauma their mothers experienced while pregnant.

The organization of the twelve essays is particularly effective. Roughly chronological, the essays take us from sixteenth-century to twenty-first-century interpretations of maternal impressions, while also managing to touch base with a wide range of disciplines. This interdisciplinarity for the most part does not feel forced, especially if the volume is taken as a whole, with several chapters demonstrating how, for example, the persistence of ideas of maternal impressions in literature connects to their persistence in the medical field. That being said, analysis of this influence is demonstrated more convincingly in some chapters than others. The final essay, by Tatjana Buklijaš, is a standout contribution. Buklijaš's essay could stand alone as an analysis of the shifting medical and cultural perceptions of the relationship between mother and fetus; she contributes a new perspective by not focusing just on cultural perceptions of the fetus or the pregnant mother but also on the ever-changing understanding, culturally and medically, of the relationship between the two. Bringing us from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century both in terms of medical research and the cultural repercussions of medical advancements, this essay serves as an excellent capstone to this volume; Buklijaš drives home the contemporary relevance of past discussions of maternal impressions.

Imaginationen des Ungeborenen is a fascinating, and ultimately successful, collection whose greater importance might be underestimated. It is a welcome contribution to the field of medical history, which can always benefit from such interdisciplinary work.

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Projektierte Himmel. Jörg Jochen Berns and Thomas Rahn, eds.
Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 154. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2019. 422 pp. €86.

This collection of thirteen essays had its genesis in a conference held at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel in 2013. The editors write an engaging introduction on the multiplicity of ways that one can study the heavens, both real and imaginary. The

book is divided into four parts that explore a wide spectrum of interdisciplinary studies, mainly from the areas of art, philosophy, science, and theology.

Part 1, "Himmelsbilder," is devoted to images of the heavens, whether scientific, mythological, or artistic. Claus Zittel focuses on Claude Mellan's engravings of the moon made from his observations through a telescope. Zittel emphasizes the discourse between artists and scientists around the lunar images. Patrizia Solombrino, on the other hand, examines Julius Schiller's *Coelum Stellatum Christianum* and his efforts to provide a Christian interpretation of the celestial chart using Johannes Bayer's *Uranometria* as his point of departure. Markus Bauer studies images of falling from the sky: using the mythological backdrop and analysis of the painting *Daedalus and Icarus*, attributed to Anthony van Dyck, Bauer examines the far-reaching effects of the Icarus myth in a broad range of inquiries.

Part 2, "Theaterhimmel," deals with real and imaginary images of the sky in Baroque opera, aerostatic figures, and architectonic spaces. Bernhard Jahn shows how the sky in operas (*Opernhimmel*) in the Baroque period adopted the mechanical, painted, poetic, and musical arts. The operas examined include Pietro Antonio Cesti's *Il Pomo d'oro* and Monteverdi's *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*. Stephan Oettermann's essay looks at Johann Karl Enslin and his aerostatic figures, which flew in the skies of nineteenth-century Europe. Wolfgang Brückle focuses on the sky's appearance within buildings. He looks at the boundaries of interior spaces and the framing of images of nature from the Enlightenment until today. Brückle also examines Étienne-Louis Boullée's plans for creating a visionary design for a Cenotaph celebrating Isaac Newton and elucidates Boullée's fondness for poetic expression in structures. In *Skyspace*, in Arizona's Roden Crater, the contemporary artist James Turrell frames a view of the sky inside a building, creating an aesthetic experience. In part 3, "Himmelstheater," Jörg Jochen Berns presents six early modern, single-leaf prints that depict prodigious figures and events in the skies; Hole Rössler examines frightening images in the sky from antiquity to the aerial attacks of World War II; Thomas Rahn looks at the sky as a medium for numinous and artificial writing. For example, the French author Jacques Gaffarel's methodology included interpreting the constellations with the use of Hebrew letters. Rahn also turns to Emperor Constantine's vision of the cross and André Félibien's description of the fireworks in the garden of Versailles in 1668 before examining early twentieth-century aerial advertising.

Part 4, "Transzendente Himmel," begins with David Ganz's study of visions of heaven in the ceiling paintings of Baroque churches. Ganz examines the transcendental vision that brings the heavenly sphere closer to the spectator. Christian Hecht's contribution focuses on an iconographic study of how sacred light is represented. The seventeenth-century Christian mystic, Giuseppe da Copertino, known for his levitations, is the subject of Joseph Imorde's essay. Imorde describes Giuseppe as the summit of anti-rationalism. Giuseppe was an exemplary figure among nineteenth-century individuals interested in the paranormal. The book's final contribution, by Günter Butzer,

compares the search for the artificial paradise in Dante's *Paradiso*, Baudelaire's *Les paradis artificiels*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Butzer draws parallels among the meditative approaches of the three authors. Dante has the *visio Dei* as his goal. Baudelaire seeks paradise by means of drug-induced intoxication, and Milton expounds on the Fall of man ("Sündenfall," 378) and on the taste (desire) and the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit.

Despite the remarkably broad scope, the book's four sections create a cohesive framework. This collection will appeal to scholars of art history and the history of ideas. The volume is handsomely produced and richly illustrated with black-and-white images and fine color plates. This book is fascinating and covers a topic that is rarely encountered in the literature.

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Catastrophizing: Materialism and the Making of Disaster. Gerard Passannante. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019. x + 294 pp. + color pls. \$25.

Gerard Passannante's fascinating book *Catastrophizing* explores the recurring descriptions of imaginary disasters in early modern Europe and the role they play at the junction between empirical and speculative forms of knowledge. Imaginary disasters, the book argues, illustrate a conceptual crisis, an experience of the limits of sense perception. Each chapter offers multiple examples of the mind's inclination to catastrophize in ways that echo or challenge the writings of Democritus, Epicurus, or Lucretius.

The first chapter is centered on Leonardo's paradoxical representations of disaster as a figure of the insensible world. The argument focuses first on his prophecies, a series of riddles mocking astrologists' obscure predictions and to which Leonardo supplies absurdly simple solutions. Leonardo's preoccupation with scale, movement, and making movement visible in painting also led him to describe and draw dramatic scenes of deluge and storms, a way to experience the ruthless quality of nature's necessary laws, the author notes, and to confront the uncertainties of perception. Catastrophic thought occurs repeatedly at "the threshold of the visible" (59).

The nova of 1572, the comet that appeared in 1577, and the 1580 Dover Straits earthquake all contributed to a reevaluation of Aristotelian cosmology and materialist assumptions. Philip Melancthon, who was the first to use *catastrophe* in the broad sense of the word, argued that the Epicureans had been oblivious to the signs of God that confirm the order of the universe. As new theories such as Copernicus's or Kepler's radically expanded knowledge of the cosmic world, there was an undeniable attack upon the idea of a chaotic universe as it was posited by the materialists. In this context, the author offers a new and distinctive evaluation of John Donne's poetry as a fusion