

# SPRACHKUNST

Beiträge  
zur Literaturwissenschaft  
Jahrgang XLIX/2018  
2. Halbband



Wechselseitige Kulturbeziehungen  
in englisch- und deutschsprachiger Literatur

Herausgegeben von  
Astrid Köhler



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ÖSTERREICHISCHEN  
AKADEMIE DER  
WISSENSCHAFTEN

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# KULTUREN IM DIALOG

## Vorwort

Von Astrid Köhler (London)

„Gespräch ist gegenseitige distanzierte Berührung“  
MARIE VON EBNER-ESCHENBACH

„Wonach sucht man in einer anderen Kultur?“, fragt Rüdiger Görner in der Einleitung zu ›Dover im Harz. Studien zu britisch-deutschen Kulturbeziehungen‹ und fährt fort: „Nach Echos des Eigenen, zuweilen nach Bestätigung, dann wieder nach Widerlegung bestimmter vorgefasster Meinungen über das Andere, das im Falle Englands auf den ersten Blick gar nicht so anders zu sein scheint, bei genauerem Hinsehen sich jedoch als fremder erweist, je vertrauter man sich ihm glaubt.“<sup>1)</sup> Er entwickelt daraus seine These von Kultur als Spannungsbeziehung, die freilich „ein bloß dialektisches Schema“ transzendiert und „von entschieden pluralektischer Natur“ ist.<sup>2)</sup>

Diese Spannungsbeziehung in ihren vielfältigen Erscheinungsformen war das Thema eines Symposiums, das im November 2017 aus Anlass von Görners sechzigstem Geburtstag in London stattfand. Nun ist das Vereinigte Königreich nicht erst seit dem Brexit-Referendum von 2016 ein sperriger Ort, wenn es um Kulturbeziehungen geht. Die etwa auf die letzten zwei Jahrzehnte datierbaren Umschichtungen in der britischen Kulturförderung, die umfassende Kommerzialisierung des Hochschulwesens, wie auch die Änderungen im Bildungswesen allgemein – etwa die Entfernung von Fremdsprachen aus den Pflichtlehrplänen – haben auch auf dieses Gebiet ihre Schatten geworfen. Gleichzeitig ist in den letzten Jahren aber etwa auch eine erfreuliche Anzahl an Kleinverlagen entstanden, die sich vorgenommen haben, ein altes Manko auf dem britischen Buchmarkt zu beheben und sich auf Literaturübersetzungen

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<sup>1)</sup> RÜDIGER GÖRNER, *Dover im Harz. Studien zu britisch-deutschen Kulturbeziehungen*, Heidelberg 2012, S. 24.

<sup>2)</sup> Ebenda, S. 11.

gen aus diversen Sprachen spezialisieren. (Dass dies ohne die großzügige Unterstützung durch die jeweiligen nationalen Kulturinstitute in London kaum möglich wäre, führt uns wieder auf die Eingangsbeobachtung zurück.) Sich in dieser Gemengelage ausdauernd um die Entwicklung einer produktiven, auch englisch-deutschsprachigen Dialogkultur zu bemühen, ist kein einfaches Unterfangen. Für Görner sind solche Bemühungen integraler Bestandteil seines Selbstverständnisses als im Ausland arbeitender Germanist, Intellektueller und Autor eines reichhaltigen lyrischen, essayistischen und narrativen Werkes.

Und so wie sich die wechselhaften und immer irgendwie asymmetrischen Kulturbeziehungen zwischen deutschsprachiger und englischer Kultur und Literatur als roter Faden durch seine Arbeiten ziehen und zugleich in einen breiteren Horizont eingebettet sind, so wollten wir es auch beim Symposium halten: Zwei Tage lang haben wir, beherbergt vom German Historical Institute in Londons Bloomsbury und abseits von den Mühlen unserer jeweiligen britischen, deutschen und österreichischen Institutionen, Vorträge gehört und diskutiert, die in ihrer Gänze eine Art Umriss von Görners akademischem Horizont (Philosophie, Literaturwissenschaft, Musik- und Kulturgeschichte) gezeichnet, sich in den Dialog mit seinen Arbeiten begeben und dabei Kulturbeziehungen vielfältigster Art ins Zentrum ihrer Betrachtungen gestellt haben.

Der Festvortrag wurde von MARTIN SWALES (Cambridge/London) gehalten, demjenigen in der Runde, der wohl am längsten mit Rüdiger Görner zu tun hatte, nämlich seit seiner Zeit als Promovend in London. Darin ließ er beispielhaft Vertreter des englischen realistischen Romans des 19. Jahrhunderts mit Vertretern des deutschsprachigen Romans der klassischen Moderne ins Gespräch kommen und gab somit zugleich einen Einblick in Görners Arbeitsweise und die methodische Vorlage für unsere Tagung, denn „[t]o such modes of dialogic, gradual, cumulative understanding, which are poles apart from our contemporary culture of ‚click here‘, of the instant downloading of information, Rüdiger Görner has devoted a career of the highest distinction.“ Solcherart dialogisches Verstehen wurde von allen Vortragenden praktiziert und vorgeführt, und einige haben ihre Texte für die Veröffentlichung in diesem Heft ausgearbeitet. Dass dies auf Deutsch und Englisch geschah, verwundert in diesem Kontext wohl kaum.

Das dialogische Prinzip, und zwar auf persönlicher wie auf kultureller Ebene, ist prägend für PAUL HAMILTONS Beitrag, der sich mit Heinrich von Kleist auseinandersetzt und gewissermaßen ein angelsächsisches Licht auf Kleists Kantkrise wirft. Dass er das in einem zugleich philosophisch und literarisch anmutenden Text tut, hat sowohl mit dem Thema als auch mit dem Dialogpartner

zu tun. Indem Hamilton durchaus bekannte Fragen an Kleists Kantrezeption erneut und zugespitzt stellt, und indem er die Insuffizienzen der bisherigen Antworten darauf bloßlegt, stellt er Kleist ins Zentrum eines Erkenntniskepticismus, der prägend für die Moderne ist. Mit Görner verwendet er ‚Grazie‘ als zentrale Kategorie eines modernen Kleistverständnisses.

Auch PATRICIA HOWES Beitrag zu Theodor Fontane hat einen Dialog zum Zentrum, hier zwischen verschiedenen Literaturen. Ausgehend von den sprechenden Namen und semantischen Leerstellen in ›Effi Briest‹ beleuchtet sie, wie Fontanes Kunst diese einander eigentlich ausschließenden Phänomene – etwa im Namen Innstetten – verbindet. Das dahinter steckende literarische Verfahren zeigt sie an der Genese von Effis Sicht auf Innstetten, oder genauer, der Abfolge ihrer aus diversen Lektüren gezogenen Projektionen. Freilich sei nicht nur die Protagonistin in dieser Hinsicht „mitteilsam und verschlossen zugleich“, sondern auch der Romantext selbst. Die Autorin zeigt, dass das intertextuelle Netz, in dem sich ›Effi Briest‹ bewegt, weit ausgreifender und komplexer ist als üblicherweise angenommen (und von Fontane selbst insinuiert). Exemplarisch wird das anhand der „Lui“-Figur vorgeführt, die sich beginnend mit George Sands Roman ›Elle et Lui‹ von 1859 durch die – nicht nur französische – Literatur zieht, in Mary Elizabeth Braddons ›The Doctor's Wife‹ von 1864 als „that ‚Awful Being‘, the mysterious ‚Lui‘ of a thousand romances“ figuriert und in Guy de Maupassants gleichnamiger Erzählung von 1883 eine Tiefe und Ausrichtung erhält, die „Lui“ zum Muster für Innstetten machen.

Mit interkulturellen Alltagserlebnissen englischer und deutscher Schriftsteller auf der jeweils anderen Seite des Ärmelkanals beschäftigt sich MARGIT DIRSCHERLS Beitrag. Von Reisenden wie Karl Philipp Moritz über George Eliot bis zu Matthias Politycki hat sie Alltagsbeobachtungen und -reflexionen im jeweils anderen Land herausgesucht, verglichen und auf die kulturelle Prägung ihres Blicks untersucht. Mit Bernhard Waldenfels geht sie davon aus, dass es „keinen Ort jenseits der Kulturen [gibt], der uns einen unbefangenen und unbeschränkten Überblick gestatten würde“. Dabei geht sie über die bekannte historische Linienführung – bis ins frühe 19. Jahrhundert nehmen englische Reisende Deutschland prinzipiell mit Herablassung, deutsche Reisende England prinzipiell mit Bewunderung wahr, mit Heine und Zeitgenossen setzt sich deutsches Selbstbewusstsein durch – hinaus und zeigt, wie über die Zeiten hinweg in der Wahrnehmung und Beschreibung auch der kleinsten, alltagskulturellen Details (wie der Zubereitung von Toast oder der Beschaffenheit von Bettdecken und Waschbecken) jeweils eine „andere Weltordnung“ sichtbar gemacht wird.

Um den Dialog zwischen verschiedenen Künsten geht es bei NORBERT BACHLEITNER, der sich mit Arnold Schönberg und James Joyce beschäftigt. Er geht der Frage nach, ob die beiden – zwischen denen bekanntlich kein



persönlicher Kontakt nachweisbar ist – mehr verbindet als die Etikettierung als ‚Hohepriester des Modernismus‘. Zu diesem Zweck nimmt er sich Schönbergs Zwölftontechnik und Joyces ›Ulysses‹ und ›Finnegans Wake‹ vor, die als jeweils durchgreifende Neuerungen in ihren Kunstformen gelten können, und setzt den Vergleich auf der Ebene der Produktionsweise an. Die Parallelen zwischen Schönbergs Kompositionstechnik und Joyces Schreibtechnik findet er vor allem im Zugriff auf die Materialität des sprachlichen und tonalen Systems. Beide Künstler gehen davon aus, dass die jeweils etablierte Grammatik ihrer Kunstform, sei dies Erzählkonvention oder Harmoniemuster, eben nicht ins Material selbst eingeschrieben ist und deshalb kreativ erneuert werden kann.

Auch CHRISTINE IVANOVIC beschäftigt sich mit einem Dialog über verschiedene Kunstformen und Sprachen hinweg, wenn auch aus einer anderen Zeit und unter anderen Umständen. Die österreichische Schriftstellerin Ilse Aichinger hat bekanntlich die Verfolgung und Vernichtung der Juden zusammen mit ihrer Mutter in Wien überlebt, während ihre Zwillingsschwester Helga im letzten Kindertransport vor dem Ausbruch des Krieges nach London gekommen ist. Wurden Ilse Aichingers literarische Texte schon ausführlich als im Dialog mit der in London gebliebenen Schwester Helga Michie gelesen, bezieht Ivanovic die Arbeit von Michies Tochter, der englischen Gegenwarts-künstlerin Ruth Rix, mit in die Betrachtung ein und zeigt, wie diese – im Dialog sowohl mit den Werken ihrer Tante als auch mit Dokumenten anderer, zum Teil vorher gestorbener, zum Teil im Vernichtungslager ermordeter Familienmitglieder – versucht, so etwas wie Familientradition zu schreiben. Dabei schafft sie jedoch keine geglättete Geschichte, sondern vermag es mit ihrer Collagentechnik, die Risse und Verwerfungen dieser Familiengeschichte zugleich aufzuzeigen und zu überbrücken.

Dialoge zwischen Personen, Zeiten, Künsten, Genres, Ästhetiken also, und darunter immer wieder die Begegnung zwischen englischer und deutschsprachiger Kultur. Die Zusammenstellung der Beiträge ergibt keinen geschlossenen Korpus, sondern greift, wie gesagt, exemplarisch Themen und Figuren aus Görners Arbeiten als Einladung zum fortgesetzten Gespräch auf. Nebenbei mag sie auch zeigen, dass die institutionelle Zugehörigkeit zu einer Fremdphilologie (hier: der Germanistik in Großbritannien) eben genau dort produktiv gemacht werden kann, wo sie den Blick und den Kontext weitet.

In der Abteilung ›Berichte und Besprechungen‹ finden sich daher neben dem erwähnten Festvortrag auch Rezensionen dreier größerer Arbeiten Görners. UWE SCHÜTTE und ROBERT GILLETT schreiben über die Bücher zu Georg Trakl und Alfred Kokoschka, zwei Biografien, die freilich – beide bei Zsolnay erschienen – über den deutschsprachigen Kulturkreis hinaus wahrgenommen

werden.<sup>3)</sup> Und JOACHIM FISCHER bietet eine kritische Würdigung eines Buches, das sowohl ein Charakteristikum als auch eine Ausnahme in Görners Werk darstellt: Es ist nicht oft, dass er sich so pointiert und passioniert in den politischen Diskurs mischt wie in seinem Brexit-Buch, in diesem Fall aber wohl ein inneres Gebot, denn er sieht die gegenwärtigen Entwicklungen in seiner Wahlheimat als Angriff auf alles, was er in den letzten Jahrzehnten hier verkörpert und zu befördern versucht hat. Dass Rüdiger Görner hiermit ein Heft der ›Sprachkunst‹ gewidmet wird, ist umso schöner, da er selbst regelmäßig darin als Autor auftritt. Ich bedanke mich herzlichst bei Christine Ivanovic für die Anregung zur Publikation.

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<sup>3)</sup> Die Trakl-Biografie ist 2017 auf Japanisch erschienen, die Kokoschka-Biografie wird momentan in mehrere Sprachen, u. a. ins Englische übersetzt.



# MANAGING KANT CRISES

By Paul Hamilton (London)

Kleist's so-called "Kant Crisis" seems to be based on an imprecise interpretation of some of the philosopher's "Kritiken". This essay attempts to interpret this "crisis" rather as an expression of poetic reflection than of philosophical analysis. Under this condition, the "Kant Crisis" highlights Kleist's sensitivity for scepticism, which is also shared by English romantics, who do not directly refer to either Kant or Kleist.

Kleists sogenannte „Kant-Krise“ gründet scheinbar auf einer ungenauen Interpretation eines Teils der „Kritiken“ des Philosophen. Hier wird versucht, diese „Krise“ eher als Ausdruck literarischer Reflexion denn als philosophische Analyse zu interpretieren. Unter dieser Voraussetzung formuliert die „Kant-Krise“ Kleists Sensibilität für den Skeptizismus, die auch englische Romantiker teilen, obwohl sie sich weder auf Kant noch auf Kleist direkt beziehen.

## 1. *Conditioning the Unconditioned*

How does *Kritik* become *Krise*? How does one manufacture a crisis out of Kantian philosophy? Kleist criticism in German still frequently returns to Kleist's staging in letters of his alleged reading of Kant. Whether or not he read Kant in detail and with comprehension, the idea of being so disturbed by the philosopher was clearly very important to him. It became for him what one critic called a *Reflexionsmedium*.<sup>1)</sup> While this might appear an anxiety peculiar to Kleist, I argue here that it is useful to spread the pain: to see what happens to other writers contemporary with Kleist – how they look to us – when placed in the same

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<sup>1)</sup> BERNHARD GREINER, *Eine Art Wahnsinn: Dichtung im Horizont Kants: Studien zu Goethe und Kleist*, Berlin 1994, p. 86: "Nach der immer noch zu wenig beachteten Arbeit von Ludwig Muth darf mit einiger Sicherheit angenommen werden, daß Kants *Kritik der Urteilskraft* die Ursache oder doch zumindest das Reflexionsmedium der Krise von 1801 war, in deren Folge bei Kleist das literarische Schaffen einsetzt." Greiner sees his own reading as contesting a critical tradition also fixated (*fixiert*) on Kleist's *Kant-Krise* but as binary dislocations between appearance and reality, rather than a teleological scepticism about the coherence of experience as a whole, a "progressive Spaltung" redeployed differently in different literary productions. He takes his bearings from publications by MAX KOMMERELL (1940), WALTER MÜLLER SEIDEL (1961), GERHARD NEUMANN (1986), and BETTINA SCHULTE (1988).

context. The question posed in this paper, then, is if Kleist's seemingly singular preoccupation with Kant is shared, not factually but in its traumatic character, by other writers of his period, writers who certainly did not become traumatised by reading Kant, but whose stance in relation to the literary possibilities they saw open to them can be better understood through the comparison with Kleist's worry. Carol Jacobs has even floated the idea of talking meaningfully about 'Kant's Kleist crisis', and this paper joins her in taking up post-Kantian ideas and hermeneutical claims that Kant was better understood by the Romantic literature that followed him than by himself. The concern to elucidate the meaning of Kant's philosophy simultaneously produced its own meaning.<sup>2)</sup>

Ludwig Muth pointed out that we are just as shocked when we read Kleist's famous Spring letters of 1801 to his fiancée Wilhelmine von Zenge and half-sister Ulrike as he apparently was by reading Kant. For what has this outburst of "Nihilism" to do with a philosophy which has proved fruitful in the history of ideas up to the present day and inspired Schiller and Goethe. Perhaps, Ernst Leopold Stahl had suggested, his knowledge of Kant was 'rudimentary'.<sup>3)</sup> But Stahl respectfully cites Ernst Cassirer, who, almost thirty years before, had ventured the considered opinion that no one had experienced as deeply and profoundly the immediate vital power ('unmittelbare Lebensmacht') to which Kant's apparent abstractions gained access. Neither Goethe's serenity nor Schiller's restless study of Kant is Kleist's response. And, Cassirer points out, Fichte, inspired by Kant, posited an external world intelligible enough for the practicable fulfilment of our human moral vocation (a not-I reflecting the I so as to provide a symmetrical field of action for it), and this idealism must also somehow have been bypassed by Kleist.<sup>4)</sup> To get round Fichte, Kleist's scepticism must have identified a damaging relativism not only in scientific truth but also in the Kantian idea of a self and the moral obligations determining it.<sup>5)</sup>

<sup>2)</sup> CAROL JACOBS, *Uncontainable Romanticism: Shelley, Brontë, Kleist*, Baltimore and London 1989, p. 186. See also NORBERT ALTENHOFER, *Der erschütterte Sinn. Zu Kleists ›Erdbeben in Chili‹*, in: *Positionen der Literaturwissenschaft: Acht Modellanalysen am Beispiel von Kleists ›Das Erdbeben in Chili‹*, ed. by DAVID WELLBERY, Munich 1985, p. 53: "Der Text als Rätsel, das Leben als unverständliches Buch, die Auslegung als unendliche Aufgabe: In diesem Problemwußtsein treffen sich der Schriftsteller Kleist und der Hermeneut Schleiermacher [...] eine Hermeneutik, die in der Bemühung um den Sinn des Werkes zugleich ihren eigenen Sinn produziert."

<sup>3)</sup> LUDWIG MUTH, *Kleist und Kant: Versuch einer neuen Interpretation*, *Kantstudien* 68, Köln 1954, p. 7. BERNHARD GREINER thinks Muth's work "zu wenig beachtet", cit. fn. 1, p. 186. See ERNST LEOPOLD STAHL, *Heinrich von Kleist's Dramas*, Oxford 1948, p. 7.

<sup>4)</sup> ERNST CASSIRER, *Idee und Gestalt: Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, Kleist: Fünf Aufsätze*, Berlin 1921, pp. 163–171. And see especially p. 174 – "Um die Möglichkeit der menschlichen Freiheit zu retten, musste die Welt der Dinge in eine Welt der Bilder aufgelöst werden."

<sup>5)</sup> See JAMES PHILIPS, *The Equivocation of Reason: Kleist reading Kant*, Stanford CA 2007, p. 13: "Contingency becomes the expression of the insubstantiality of the knower." The

Is Kleist simply mistaken about Kant's philosophy, or can Kant's philosophy be seen to undo itself under Kleist's scrutiny? One way the later might happen is as follows. Kant wanted aesthetic judgement to confirm the 'fit' which philosophy was obliged to assume to hold between the unconditioned and conditioned. The cooperation of those two realms, things as they are in themselves and as they appear to us, is clearly, from the point of view of Kantian philosophy, a benign affair. Confined to explaining the world as it must necessarily appear to us, philosophy has to assume without being able to prove that reality sustains appearance. Since appearances make sense, since our faculties, therefore, do work together successfully to produce them, we are necessarily obliged to think of what lies outside appearance as something consistent with the sense we make of its appearances to us.

In the third ›Kritik der Urteilskraft‹, are described the judgements letting us identify and experience this fortuitous collaboration, rather than just thinking it. Philosophy obliges us to assume it, but aesthetic and teleological judgements, working outside the logic of concepts, define experiences confirming the harmonious or purposive play of faculties necessary for concepts to have application. Kant is close to saying that in the case of aesthetic experience we can only enjoy this happy state of affairs if we know of its philosophical significance; and that way Hegel's aesthetics lie. For Hegel, once we have grasped art's peculiar philosophical significance we have no need of art itself: philosophy supersedes it. Kantian philosophy, having at first appeared to rely on aesthetic experience for its transcendental viability, can return upon itself and claim that aesthetic experience is only possible for philosophical reasons: because, as said, we are dialectically required to think that the unconditioned fits the conditioned. Leibniz had expressed the same thought in theological terms as a pre-established harmony ordained by God. But for Kant, Leibniz remained an idealist precisely because his omission to be dialectical as well as analytical meant he denied a materiality of things potentially (but impossibly) recalcitrant to our knowledge of them. He was so certain of his teleology, in other words, so sure it was backed by a theodicy, that he had no need of aesthetic pleasure as the confirmatory experience of a materiality which, although unconditioned, would always be cooperative.

Hegel argued that, after Kant, we can dispense with the details of aesthetic experience and need only salvage its philosophical significance. But Kant's idea

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Fichte-crisis (consequent on Kleist's reaction to ›Die Bestimmung des Menschen‹) about which Philips and others are sceptical, is relevant insofar as it stresses the moral confusion typically accompanying Kleist's representations of epistemological uncertainty. HERBERT KRAFT in his ›Kleist, Leben und Werk‹, Münster 2007, refers only to a "Fichte-Krise", pp. 38–40.

of a *sensus communis* is there to tie the knot which binds aesthetics to philosophy forever. Our faculties share a teleology or common purpose which, if baffled, if not underwritten by philosophy, would not be enjoyed. But the *sensus communis* suggests a common culture much larger than the mutual knowledge of what is needed to underwrite Kant's philosophical enterprise. Yes, it is detected through the 'communicability' of pleasure ensuring the universal applicability necessary for a judgement to be a philosophically respectable judgement. But in the aesthetic case, this gives the lead to an autonomous vocabulary separate from and displacing philosophy: the words of the poet and of the critic who understands her and can extend her work. And once the poet is in control, then the direction pointed to is no longer Hegel but the Jena ironists and, ultimately, Kleist. All you need to be is generally persuasive: to find words, that is, that can become everyone else's.<sup>6)</sup>

Kant's explanation of the sublime further reinforces the dialectical assumption which keeps such poetic bids to displace philosophy in their place. Even if the normal teleology of the faculties is disturbed, and their collaboration disrupted, this 'contra-purposive' experience still only amounts to a re-shuffling of the cards in Kant's philosophical pack. The beautiful fit which we enjoy between sensibility, imagination and understanding is, painfully at first, replaced by another, sublime configuration which supervenes when the first configuration breaks down. Because aesthetics owes no absolute allegiance to concepts, it can fictionalise another harmony, thinkable but not available to human beings as a technique of knowledge. In this scenario, imagination uses reason as a schema for nature, conjuring the idea of an absolute, unmediated knowledge. The defeat of the empirical imagination to facilitate such transcendental cer-

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<sup>6)</sup> In section 22 of the third ›Kritik‹, Kant wonders if common sense is a constitutive or a regulative principle, and leaves the question unanswered. But if it is constitutive, then poetry has indeed taken the initiative, because common sense delivers an experience by definition free of conceptual jurisdiction. Were common sense regulative, it would enforce a Reason we cannot legitimately get on experiential terms with, according to the ›Critique of Pure Reason‹. IMMANUEL KANT, *Critique of Judgement: Including the First Introduction*, translated with an Introduction by WERNER S. PLUHAR, with a Foreword by MARY J. GREGOR, Indianapolis, Cambridge 1997, pp. 89f. (240f.). BERNHARD GREINER, *Eine Art Wahnsinn* (cit. fn. 1), argues that Kleist research has been fixated by the thought that Kleist constructs out of his reading of Kant irreconcilable, binary oppositions, and instead claims Kleist expresses a "progressive Spaltung": rather, as I am suggesting, one changing with its different expression throughout his literary work, and so dependent for its character on just that literary convincingness (p. 75). The binary Kleist interpretations departed from here would include MAX KOMMERELL, *Die Sprache und das Unaussprechliche*, in: M. K., *Geist und Buchstabe der Dichtung*, Frankfurt 1940; WALTER MÜLLER-SEIDEL, *Versehen und Erkennen. Eine Studie über Heinrich von Kleist*, Köln 1961; GERHARD NEUMANN, *Hexenküche und Abendmahl. Die Sprache von Liebe im Werk Heinrich von Kleists*, in: *Freiburger Universitätsblätter*, Heft 91, 1986; BETTINA SCHULTE, *Unmittelbarkeit und Vermittlung im Werk Heinrichs von Kleist*, Göttingen, Zürich 1988.

tainty, at first causes pain: the pain of our necessary failure to produce unmediated knowledge, knowledge delivered by a reason un-critiqued by the limitation of our epistemological powers. Enjoyment returns when the new harmony is aesthetically judged to be a thinkable faculty teleology. We would have to be superhuman to possess it, but in aesthetic imagining we can experience what it would be to have it. We feel exalted to think our apotheosis in this way, and so all is well once more.

Trouble arises when we abandon the idea that the unconditioned must always be approached teleologically, as if it deliberately fitted itself to the way our faculties of reason, understanding, imagination and sensibility combine to catch its appearances. Kant thinks anything else is impossible, ruled out of court. We have to think the unconditioned as if on purpose making possible the conditioned, otherwise we saw off the branch we are sitting on to fall into the abyss, or even 'to fall upwards', as Hölderlin thought in his fragment on 'Reflexion'.<sup>7)</sup> Then the poetic capture of our experience of elevation beyond our epistemological means would become abjection. Instead of the Kantian *sublime* or the exalted sense that we are more than the epistemological apparatus reflected back to us in knowledge, assuring us that we have something in us, a native freedom, matching and letting us withstand the indeterminacy of whatever lies beyond our scientific capabilities, we would feel a lack of gravity (*Schwerkraft*) and sobriety (*Nüchternheit*). Falling upwards would be a kind of reduction, a bankruptcy ensuing upon our expenditure of all our epistemological credit. The opposite, to fall downwards, would, thinks Hölderlin, impede the 'elasticity' of Spirit necessary to true inspiration (*Begeisterung*). Falling upwards releases us from gravity, but decentres us from the feeling that is just, warm, clear and powerful. In other words, we lose our defining human boundaries rather than finding them expanded. Transposing to a musical idiom, Hölderlin says we would lose the prevailing tonality which he thinks poetry realises, and which contrasts with the aspiration to know the whole which science aspires to but cannot achieve.<sup>8)</sup> What, though, if we confronted this dysfunctional aesthetic experience head-on? It is not clear that Hölderlin, when positing our reflective condition of the momentarily incomplete, or endlessly approximate, or our typically eccentric path, does not himself do this.<sup>9)</sup> The consequences of this would be to entertain the idea of an aesthetics of unpleasure.

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7) FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN, [REFLEXION], *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe*, ed. by GÜNTHER MIETH, Berlin 1995, pp. 378–390, p. 378: "Man kann auch in die Höhe *fallen*, so wie in die Tiefe."

8) *Ibid.*, "[...] das augenblicklich Unvollständige zu ertragen."

9) *Ibid.*, p. 379.



For Hölderlin and then Kleist, after Kant two prospects, both unsettling, had presented themselves. Kant's foreclosing on any sensible talk of things in themselves, makes phenomena self-sufficient. Transcendental logic describing them describes the only experience possible for us to have. This is Kant's analytic, dependent on a straightforwardly binary opposition between appearance and reality. Thinkers, especially those of a religious bent from Jacobi to Coleridge, saw in this an end to theology, unless theology settled for pantheism. Post-Kantian reliance on language, on the other hand, delegated to literature the authority to continue talking about the dimension beyond appearance. Kant's dialectic had required that we assume a congruence between the phenomenal and noumenal realms. But in ceding to literature the responsibility for describing our experience of this necessary harmony, he backed the wrong horse. The Romantic literature which ensued, celebrated for its fictional licence, its symbolic over-reaching, its open-endedness, the confusing mixture of its genres, tended to present experience in excess of this supposed harmony by refusing Kant's binary logic of appearance and reality. The exhilarations of being unconfined to a self which was supposed merely to rubber-stamp the coherence of its experience increased the sense of what might be pleasurable, over-riding Kant's assumptions. From the perversions of Sade's ›Justine‹ to the Shakespearean range of Goethe's ›Faust‹, writers quashed distinctions between pleasure and un-pleasure, seizing the literary opportunities to present an undifferentiated world beyond analytic and dialectical thought. Their art succeeded in soliciting our willing suspension of disbelief by creating literary works about whose experience we could critically communicate with each other. The critical community established a culture beyond the original purpose of Kant's common sense.

We then feel the unconditioned through the disharmony of our faculties, not through their falling out of one configuration to settle comfortably into the pattern of another new resolution, as if transposing from one key to another. Hegel thought that such an aesthetic sense of dysfunction is redeemed as tragedy. Tragedy pointed up a contradiction in Reason's form at a particular historical stage, one to be resolved by the next, higher stage. But his argument was based on a view of art as an experience replaceable by Reason, not one making of Reason a possible experience. But to press the objection to Hegel's overcoming of aesthetic experience by philosophy, we might argue that even our pleasure in harmony might be underwritten by a lie. The unconditioned might frighteningly exceed its strategic or historically relative accommodation of our conditioned view of it. This (Gnostic?) alternative is not only thinkable; it is one way in which the post-Kantian could revise Kantian aesthetics, repeating the Kantian in another tone; but not the ironic tone of the Jena ironists, profit-

ing from uncertainty to exhibit an infinite adequacy of expression.<sup>10)</sup> Rather, this is something more like the Kierkegaardian suspension of the teleological, or Hölderlin's upward fall. Kierkegaard, after all, was explicitly opposed to the sufficiency of aesthetic explanation, which he thought over-exploited by the post-Kantians. But if we include Kleist, then we can say that among the post-Kantians were some who were already, in practice if not by design, communicating the abyssal possibilities left open by Kant's third ›Kritik‹. Critics from Ludwig Muth to Bernhard Greiner have stressed that the aporias of the third not the first ›Kritik‹ are key to Kleist's art.<sup>11)</sup>

Consequently, there are analogies useful for criticism in crises as apparently different as Wordsworth's confrontation with Godwin (›The Borderers‹), Coleridge's quarrel with Wordsworth, and Kleist's *Kant-Krise*. The unassimilable status of Kant's unconditioned ground of everything becomes what writing is about. Writing, as said, then takes the lead and even turns against the philosophy which had originally delegated to it the task of what it could not itself get on terms with. Romantics frequently write up as self-differing the disabled transcendental category which Kantian and post-Kantian speculation nevertheless cannot do without. Critics of Kleist have often pointed out that the famous passage in his letter to Wilhelmine von Zenge of 5<sup>th</sup> March 1801 where he describes his Kant crisis is far from a faithful rendering of Kant. Green spectacles, worn unknowingly, and undermining our knowledge of a world not entirely green, is no adequate critique of Kant's defence of epistemology in the ›Critique of Pure Reason‹. But the dramatization of uncertainty and scepticism in Kleist's literary work is a completely different matter. The experience of crisis described in Kleist's writings reflects upon its philosophical source and asks Kantian theory much more searching questions – penning, in effect, a phenomenology and its discontents – which *it*, philosophy, must become more sophisticated to be able to answer. This, arguably, is the *Sprachmagie* originally explicitly employed against Kant in the metacritiques of Herder and Hamann, and then later aggressively practised in post-Kantian art.

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<sup>10)</sup> Carl Schmitt, famously, in ›Politische Romantik‹ (1919), had provided the locus classicus for attacks on Friedrich Schlegel, Adam Müller and others for an ironic unseriousness. Cassirer, though, points up the difference from Kleist, “der ihn im Innersten erschütterte” by something which “bedeutet für sie [Jena Romantics] nur die Gelegenheit, sich in freier Ironie über die Welt der Dinge und ihre angebliche Notwendigkeit zu erheben.” CASSIRER, *Idee* (cit. fn. 4), p. 181.

<sup>11)</sup> See SØREN KIERKEGAARD, *The Concept of Irony*, with Continual Reference to Socrates, translated by HOWARD V. HONG and EDNA H. HONG, Princeton NJ 1989 and *Either/Or*, translated by DAVID F. SWENSON and LILLIAN MARVIN SWENSON, Princeton NJ 1971. BERNHARD GREINER, *Eine Art Wahnsinn* (cit. fn. 1), pp. 84–90, and *passim*.

## 2. *Beyond Dialectic*

Time is the form of inner sense for Kant, the form, that is “of the intuition of our self and inner state” (A33, B49). But as soon as Understanding grasps the object of inner sense, Schiller tells us in the first of his ›Aesthetic Letters‹, it destroys it.<sup>12)</sup> According to Martin Hägglund, time is also the form of Derrida’s idea of *différance*.<sup>13)</sup> Derrida, read with Hägglund’s emphasis, might provide a useful contrast to how the post-Kantians revised Kant and tried to solve the paradox of claiming familiarity with a subjectivity accessed through *apperception*, through *not* perceiving it. The project of Schiller’s ›Aesthetic Letters‹ is to salvage self-consciousness both from its cancellation by conceptual understanding and from the abstraction of the transcendental logic in which it is grounded. This intangible, after all, is also our self-acquaintance, the most familiar and continual of our apprehensions, isn’t it? We should have reams to say about it. The Kantian view (that since we cannot make the perceiving self the object of its own perceiving it is merely a logical requirement that experience be owned) does seem to beg the question of what self-consciousness is rather than provide an answer to it. However, time itself, the form in which we intuit ourselves, has traditionally seemed just as elusive, just as capable of its own deconstruction. Again, Augustine’s classic formulation (“What, therefore, is time? If nobody asks me, I know; if I want to explain it, I don’t”) describes the most common knowledge disappearing under philosophical examination.<sup>14)</sup> I would like to compare the *Kant-Erlebnis* of post-Kantians who thought that, after Kant’s exposure of the way our lives are conditional upon something we cannot know, something radically absent from appearance, we lose our orientation altogether. Kleist’s short story, ›Der Findling‹, in which the unknown foundling boy is assumed to be assimilable to the foster family, and is not, and destroys it, could hardly be more pointed in its expression of this dilemma.

A present whose sense is dependent upon a future that is subject to the same uncertainties (itself future-dependent once present) has become disquietingly unpredictable. Rivers, the villain of Wordsworth’s tragedy ›The Borderers‹,

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<sup>12)</sup> “But it is precisely this technical form, whereby truth is made manifest to the intellect, which veils it again from our feeling. For alas! Intellect must first destroy the object of Inner Sense if it would make it its own.” (“Aber eben diese technische Form, welche die Wahrheit dem Verstande versichtbart, verbirgt sie wieder dem Gefühl; denn leider muss der Verstand das Objekt des innern Sinns erst zerstören, wenn er es sich zu eigen machen will.”) FRIEDRICH SCHILLER, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters*, translated by E. WILKINSON and L. A. WILLOUGHBY, bilingual edition, Oxford 1967, pp. 4f.

<sup>13)</sup> MARTIN HÄGGLUND, *Radical Atheism: Derrida and the Time of Life*, Stanford, CA 2008, p. 16: “time is *différance*”, and see chapter one, “Autoimmunity of Time: Derrida and Kant”, pp. 13–50.

<sup>14)</sup> AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*, Book II, chapter 14.

is usually thought to be the vehicle of Wordsworth's critique of the ideas of William Godwin's ›An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice‹ of 1793. Rivers has an old man murdered by proxy in order to initiate another person, the murderer, into the unconditioned kind of experience Rivers has laid claim to. Wordsworth, initially enthusiastic, took from Godwin's treatise the idea that reason was the supreme organ of truth. Transcending local detail and circumstance, abstract reason, if followed meticulously, would necessarily lead to perfection. Wordsworth's later disillusion with this rational optimism and its remorseless utilitarianism, no doubt owing a lot to the subsequent Jacobin 'Terror' in France, grew from the neglect of human feeling in Godwin's argument, and the belief that truth referred in this way entirely to reason without any basis in affect would prove merciless. Truth, however, to be complete must be a notion with a place for sympathy and natural feeling. This, though, had been the conclusion that Godwin himself had reached, and his recent reading of David Hume is evident in the second edition of ›Political Justice‹ which appeared in 1795, two years later. Hume had thought that 'reason' without 'passion' could never be a motive for action. He also argued that our construction of the external world, our basic epistemology, was founded not on reason alone, but on the power of imagination to generate ideas of objectivity from reflections on the frequency and recurrence of impressions which in themselves had no necessary relation to each other. When Wordsworth expresses his full disillusionment in his drama ›The Borderers‹, however, his Humean critique of Godwin's rational contempt for conventional sentiment, and his subsequent tempering of it by concessions to natural feeling, are far from explaining the force of his poetry. It is better glossed in another context, one in which he was not learned but appears, I am suggesting, as a kind of historical default – the *Kant-Krise*. Kleist, as Cassirer suggests, is perhaps unique in that he arrives at a new theoretical insight into the world, in and through which he conceived the fundamental direction ('Grundrichtung') his art was to take. But much post-Kantian art is, if less explicitly, a capitalization on the opportunities for writing to be charged with the philosophical licence Kant's thought had been unable to police.<sup>15</sup>) In Wordsworth's drama, Godwinian reason's departure from feeling has become the idea that if we (impossibly for Kant) adhered to *pure* reason, we would become an entirely different kind of creature.

Kant believed that we could only think that new existence; and if we did so, we could only think of it as benign. Its transcendence of ordinary feeling does

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<sup>15</sup>) CASSIRER, *Idee* (cit. fn. 4), p. 175. Cassirer, p. 179, also provides a description of what I am calling a historical default when he writes that "Der transzendente Idealismus bildet auch an diesem Punkte die Grenzscheide der Zeiten und die Grenzscheide der Geister."

not necessarily promise brutality. In fact the ›Critique of Judgement‹ ensures that Kant's superhuman being for whom the sublime is not contra-purposive (who can actually use Nature as a schema for Reason) is *only* allowed to find it beautiful instead. Beauty for Kant, we have seen, is the pleasure taken in a non-coercive contract between our faculties and nature. They were, it turns out, made for each other. That is the only alternative. So one can only break from Kantian orthodoxy by postulating a character actively antagonistic to such a settlement. Again, Kant would argue that, as a matter of logic, such a creature would simply be incapable of experience; and without experience, it would have nothing to be the subject of. But such a creature is the possibility Wordsworth imagines: someone who, stepping outside the jurisdiction of Kant's transcendental logic, completely disorientates the rest of us. This idea, it seems to me, is not to be understood in relation to Godwin whom, as Stephen Gill says, Wordsworth is 'grossly simplifying', but to a different kind of economy of thought.<sup>16)</sup>

What, then, is at stake is a kind of 'greatness', not the evils of abstract reason. The new area of self-definition into which Rivers wanders is totally free of conceptual and ethical prescription and so is also totally arbitrary. It is sustained solely by its rhetoric. The 'purer element' in which he exists, 'Beyond the visible barriers of the world' exceeds the regulative influence on us of reason which Kant believes produces moral imperatives. The 'practical experiments' Rivers undertakes in this condition are not intentionally brutal, they are just a category mistake, an attempt to claim the authority to match a world beyond phenomena to the phenomenal world we experience. We therefore never get the 'purer element' intended, and can only see the actions of an 'unfeeling empiric'. It is like Penthesilea's love for Achilles, so extraordinary, "recht vom Herzen", that, quite out of her control, it produces dismemberment, as famously *Küsse* turn into *Bisse*, explicable to herself only as rhyme not as meaning, "Das reimt sich".<sup>17)</sup> Here, indeed, the words take the lead. Rivers' murderous 'greatness' is more like that, rhymes with Penthesilea if you like, and is much less explicable as a chastisement of the rationalist ambitions of Godwin's philosophy. If we belong to a category of being we cannot make sense of, it may not be enough to manage this discovery by critiquing attempts to make sense of it. We need to go beyond Kant's dialectic; we need to be able to dispense with Kant's *de jure* assumption that what is outside our understanding does not invalidate our understanding, and insofar as it influences our behaviour is moral. For it may

<sup>16)</sup> STEPHEN GILL, *William Wordsworth: A Life*, Oxford 1989, p. 114.

<sup>17)</sup> HEINRICH VON KLEIST, *Werke und Briefe*, ed. by SIEGFRIED STRELLER in collaboration with PETER GOLDAMMER, WOLFGANG BARTHEL, ANITA GOLZ, and RUDOLPH LOCH, 4 vols., Berlin, Weimar 1978, *Penthesilea Act 24, 3*. 118.

*de facto* impose itself, and we can only imagine what may ensue – and write about it.

Investigating scepticism in ›The Claims of Reason‹, Stanley Cavell praises Wittgenstein for never underestimating “the power of the motive to reject the human: nothing could be more human.” This human inhuman sits outside the phenomena | noumena opposition, as it sits “outside language games”.<sup>18)</sup> For in getting outside of ourselves, we simply re-enter ourselves by another door. Wordsworth and Kleist emphasize that we never really understood the extent to what we might be personally responsible for, of what we might be attributable to our agency. Correlatively, we never understand when we’ve made ourselves into something truly different from what we were before. Philosophy, or the attempt to know this fact, undoes itself in the process. This, arguably, is what post-Kantian philosophy understands, and why its insight has to be conveyed in discourses ostensibly other than philosophy, such as literature. But this literature is not a ‘literary absolute’ in the reassuring idiom of Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, a servant of philosophy. It is more like Alain Badiou’s idea of the ‘inaesthetic’: an art whose literature (Mallarméan) can render the event with a facility that dissolves defining philosophical oppositions between individual and universal, empiricism and Platonic idealism. Its significance is to register the passage of ideals different from those which might be put to any philosophical use.<sup>19)</sup>

In his writings on post-Kantianism and Romanticism, Stanley Cavell often emphasizes the expression of a “craving for exemption from human nature”, the “breaking of attunement” the consequences of the irreducible scepticism he analyses at length in ›The Claims of Reason‹.<sup>20)</sup> But, as with Scepticism, what is at stake is another way of belonging to the world and to ourselves. This contrariness will always be at odds with knowledge and morality; yet, as an experience which will not be gainsaid, “the *denial* of the human is essential to what we think of *as* the human”.<sup>21)</sup> To base everything on this might seem perverse. Kleist’s point (explicitly) and Wordsworth’s (by implication), I suggest, is that Kant makes possible this thought – by denying our knowledge of things in themselves and by, comparably, taking self-consciousness out of the realm of what we can know – and leaves us to cope with it, and to cope with it with-

<sup>18)</sup> STANLEY CAVELL, *The Claims of Reason*, Oxford 1982, p. 207.

<sup>19)</sup> PHILIPPE LACOUÉ-LABARTHE and JEAN-LUC NANCY, *The Literary Absolute*, translated by PHILIP BARNARD and CHERYL LESTER, New York 1988, and ALAIN BADIOU, *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, translated by ALBERTO TOSCANO, Stanford, CA 2005.

<sup>20)</sup> His main points are summarized in STANLEY CAVELL, *In Quest of the Ordinary: Texts of Recovery*, in: *Romanticism and Contemporary Criticism*, ed. by MORRIS EAVES and MICHAEL FISCHER, Ithaca, London 1986, pp. 183–241.

<sup>21)</sup> CAVELL, *Quest* (cit. fn. 20), pp. 184f.

out resources. Since he has ruled out of court philosophically the experience of what this thought is about, he need not worry about its convincing literary expression. It cannot be an experience, this experience, he says in effect. Arguably, the starting point for much of philosophy after Kant up to Wittgenstein is concerned with what Kant's philosophy shows but cannot say.

Post-Kantianism explains Romantic writing's preoccupation with self-dramatizations which appear excessive. At first Rivers and Penthesilea may appear in line with the Kantian *sublime*. In fact they return us to a phenomenology which should be domestic but now is apprehended as foreign, our inhuman human – with the rider that the difference between the two is getting more and more difficult to maintain. This is different from the psychoanalytic difference between the Unconscious and the conscious mind, where the bringing to consciousness of the Unconscious is assumed to be a benign, remedial, humanising activity in which the Unconscious is civilised by the consciousness, rather like Kant's notion of a sublime replaced by higher beauty apprehended by a superhuman creature. The unconscious can only be constructed retrospectively, from a state of consciousness it does not threaten to replace with a new human character. Turning the sublime into the beautiful re-establishes our human character, albeit at what Schelling and Friedrich Schlegel would call a higher Power (*Potenz*). Wordsworth declares his endeavour to foster “the mind's *excursive* power [...] [to] build up the Being that we are”. If the new and benign authority he wants for the rhetoric of *The Excursion* is to be successfully achieved, though, then the threat of Rivers will have to be reduced to an episode of sublimity within a wider domestication of the inhuman human. Rivers' 'greatness' is to be outdone by the apotheoses of characters relentlessly related throughout Wordsworth's poem, the individual details of their stories increasingly not being subsumed under Wordsworth's general, philosophical-sounding categories, such as “the mighty stream of tendency” or “the procession of our fate, howe'er | Sad or disturbed”.<sup>22)</sup>

### 3. Staging the Crisis

Rüdiger Görner's insistence on 'Grace' as a key category to understanding Kleist's dramatic worlds, means that Kleist's readers are asked to return to Kant's divide between appearance and reality.<sup>23)</sup> We should try to see violent and graceful exceptions to their harmonious interaction not as things we might decide

<sup>22)</sup> WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, *The Excursion* (1814), in: W. W., *The Poems*, Vol. 2, edited by JOHN O. HAYDEN, Harmondsworth 1977, Book 4. 1263f., Book 9. 87, Book 4. 12f.

<sup>23)</sup> RÜDIGER GÖRNER, *Gewalt und Grazie: Heinrich von Kleists Poetik der Gegensätzlichkeit*, Heidelberg 2011. See especially Part Two, ch. 6, pp. 129–143.

upon, the option Kant rules out. Rather we should consider them as visitations, which, in the case of grace, we can only hope for or put ourselves in the way of – like the music of his short story ›Die Heilige Cäcilie oder die Gewalt der Musik‹, which turns power into an access of something greater than it. Thus blessed, we may well indeed show this higher potential gracefully; but, in an unsettling dialectic, this superiority may then converge on a violence whose curse is equally entitled to supply our noumenal credentials. Achilles beware! Did Kleist mistake madness for genius, as Friedrich Schlegel suggested, or had he made them reciprocally undo each other?<sup>24</sup>) And did, therefore, Kleist scandalously expose the aesthetic vocation as being to show it is the aesthetic's own incapacity adequately to mediate or sublimate the unconditioned realm it had laid bare? He could do this not by a sublime recuperation of this failure – for how can the sublime rescue the failing sublime? – but only through the staging of crisis.<sup>25</sup>)

Alternatives to a binary explanation of uncertainty modelled on the appearance-reality distinction are the stuff of postmodern reading that we are all at home with now. Look at the story of the Marquise von O. She is saved from the threat of violation from persons unknown by a known quantity who turns out to have embodied the same threat. She didn't know what she knew. The saviour she knew was, unknown to her, her violator. Her swoon in which her rescuer's rape of her takes place is surely symptomatic for Kleist of a general condition. In the Kant-crisis, in other words, not to know what we don't know is also not to know what we know. To say that her body knew or remembered what her intellect could not is a ceding of authority comparable to saying that our language directs our thoughts rather than vice-versa. Her body is the material articulation of what has escaped her power to know. And we shall see later that Kleist implies this comparison himself.<sup>26</sup>) You can never be sure of phenomenological significance if it is the appearance of something about which you haven't a clue. You might as well advertise in the local newspaper for enlightenment, as the Marquise does. The bind here is puzzling, thoroughgoing and immensely productive for poetics and literature. Scepticism, as Stanley Cavell made it his

<sup>24</sup>) *Krisenjahre der Frühromantik: Briefe aus dem Schlegelkreis*, edited by JOSEF KÖRNER, 3 Vols., Brunn 1937, II, p. 239: "Er hat also nicht bloß in Werken sondern auch im Leben Tollheit für Genie genommen und beyde verwechselt ..."

<sup>25</sup>) See Ricarda Schmidt's summary of how Kleist is exercised by the fact "dass aber von einem universalen hermeneutischen Verdacht gegenüber allen Formen des Erkennens keine Rede sein kann"; and this problematic "allgemeine Wahrheit" is therefore expressed through the contradictory interpretations of ›Penthesilea‹ in modernity and over time generally. RICARDA SCHMIDT, *Weiblicher Sadismus, Wutwelt des Liebes-Urwalds, Geschlechtskampf, absolutes Gefühl: die Penthesilea-Rezeption in der Moderne*, in: BERND FISCHER and TIM MEHIGAN (eds.), *Heinrich von Kleist and Modernity*, Rochester, NY 2011, pp. 162f.

<sup>26</sup>) BIRGIT R. ERDLE, *Literarische Epistemologie der Zeit: Lektüren zu Kant, Kleist, Heine und Werfel*, Paderborn 2015, pp. 79–81.



theme to point out (in this case learned from Eve Kosowski Sedgwick's reading of Henry James's short story 'The Beast in the Jungle'), lets us into an essentially human activity or dilemma. Typically we are in thrall to something – let's call it a future – which we don't know anything about. In fact we are so ignorant, or scepticism once in play is so pervasive, that we honestly can't even know that we are so dependent.<sup>27)</sup>

This doubling is typical of Kleist. A young man in prison in Santiago called Jeronimo initiates the catastrophe of his own suicide only to be pre-empted by the disaster of an earthquake. He finds himself in a place of greater safety, a prison, clinging to the pillar on which he had wanted to hang himself. Self-harm becomes salvation, apparently in direct reversal of the tale of the Marquise von O, whose rescue was her undoing. But then the story returns us to the original catastrophe of unhappy lovers, Jeronimo and Josephe, condemned to death for adultery, which had been displaced by the now graceful-looking catastrophe of the earthquake. Muddle supervenes, and the pair saved by the earthquake are now murdered by those blaming them for the earthquake. So their salvation turns out to have been the cause of their death, analogously to the wrong visited on the Marquise after all. At the end, mere survival of catastrophe is the only happiness, without benefit of moral or any other kind of justification at all: "so war es ihm fast, als müßt er sich freuen."<sup>28)</sup> It just doesn't get any better, or worse. Once outside our normal parameters, anything can be explained by anything.

Cavell thinks that Wittgenstein solves the Kant-crisis. He shows that it makes no sense to postulate some reality with which our shared understanding or language is incommensurate but on which it is dependent. The so-called reality just drops out of philosophical consideration. But Cavell does appear to concede that we can *experience* thinking this way, false philosophically but recognizable existentially.<sup>29)</sup> By contrast, Hegel's contemporary solution to the Kant-crisis – by making the thing in itself the outward edge of phenomenology, a viewpoint from which the world may appear inverted but still the same – has no time for thinking the Kant-crisis as anything other than an experience which can be displaced by a higher state of understanding, the advance of reason beyond this contradiction to a more coherent stage of its progress.<sup>30)</sup>

<sup>27)</sup> See STANLEY CAVELL, *Contesting Tears*, Chicago, London 1996, pp. 151–164.

<sup>28)</sup> HEINRICH VON KLEIST, *Werke und Briefe* (cit. fn. 17), 3, 174.

<sup>29)</sup> CAVELL, *In Quest of the Ordinary* (cit. fn. 20), p. 197: "The dissatisfaction with one's human powers of expression produces a sense that words, to reveal the world, must carry more deeply than our agreements or attunements in criteria will negotiate."

<sup>30)</sup> G. W. F. HEGEL, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, A3, "Kraft und Verstand: Erscheinung und übersinnliche Welt", in: G. W. F. H., *Werke*, edited by EVA MOLDAUER and KARL MARKUS MICHEL, 20 vols., Frankfurt/M 1986, 3, pp. 107–137.

But for Kleist, the experience has its own validity outside the philosophical dilemma which may have triggered it, and the story it tells can be corrected by but never be effaced or rendered redundant by philosophy. Such writing's tolerance of contradiction sets an example of inclusiveness for a philosophy normally obliged to correct or rule out of court the conundrums which are the staple of Kleistian narrative. For Kleist, the experience related can remain unresolved, and, in fact, that may be its most salient characteristic. Again, as Werner Hamacher argues in his essay on Kleist's story, only literary resourcefulness can attempt meaningful expression of a Kantian philosophy in crisis.<sup>31)</sup>

In ›The Duel‹ (›Der Zweikampf‹), one of Kleist's most extreme examples, everyone is right and wrong at the same time. Count Jakob is right to think that he has slept with Lady Littegard who is equally right to think that he has not. She has, it turns out, been impersonated. Kleist seems to satirise Shakespeare's use of the bed-trick (recalling ›All's Well that Ends Well‹ more than ›Measure for Measure‹) rather than imitate it. Here it makes everything go badly not well. The uncanny charge to this story, though, is to suggest that we are not persons apart from our impersonations. How on earth can we get hold of this authentic personality other than through our aliases? We would be grasping, as Novalis said in his ›Fichte-Studien‹, at "a handful of darkness".<sup>32)</sup> The desire for authenticity, though, is ineliminable, and that intangible obscurity is often what Kleist's characters find themselves snatching at. This quest can be one for grace, or it can be murderous, as Penthesilea devours Achilles to find the truth she has fallen in love with.

God's judgement in allowing the Count to defeat the champion of the slandering Lady Littegard is right because he lets the Count win; but God then rightly lets her elected champion, her *chosen* impersonation, the Chamberlain Friedrich, win too. The Count perishes from the long drawn out effects of a superficial wound and her champion, Friedrich, adjudged the loser because he had apparently suffered mortal wounds, recovers, and so ultimately wins the duel he had lost – last man standing. This ambiguous rectitude is possible because Count Jakob is actually being punished for another crime, for having murdered his brother. God's will is the stand-in for the reality about which we supposedly know things but whose circumscription of our knowledge and the

<sup>31)</sup> WERNER HAMACHER, *Das Beben der Darstellung*, in: *Positionen der Literaturwissenschaft: Acht Modellanalysen am Beispiel von Kleists ›Das Erdbeben in Chili‹*, ed. by DAVID WELLBERY, Munich 1985, pp. 149–173. And in: *Kleist's Kritik der Urteilskraft: Zum Erhabenen in ›Das Erdbeben in Chili‹*, in: *Heinrich Kleist und die Aufklärung*, ed. by TIM MEHIGAN, Rochester, NY 2000, pp. 46–57. DAVID ROBERTS elaborates on Hamacher, interpreting Kleist's ›Das Erdbeben in Chili‹ "als eine narrative *Kritik der Urteilskraft*".

<sup>32)</sup> *Novalis Schriften: die Werke Friedrich von Hardenbergs*, ed. by PAUL KLUCKHOHN and RICHARD SAMUEL, 3 vols., Stuttgart 1968, 2. 106 (Fichte-Studien).

evidence we adduce to justify it renders that knowledge arbitrary. The presiding Emperor does not see the way duel leads to dual, *Zweikampf* to *Zweideutigkeit*, and is about to have the slanderous couple executed before all is revealed. We are left feeling that if our knowledge is knowledge of what remains unknowable then we are always ignorant. All is finally explained, yes, but on the way there the best image of our attempts to know things looks like the reading of Jakob's unsigned confessional note! We can know things only "if it is God's will", as the emperor concludes.<sup>33</sup>)

›Der Zerbrochene Krug‹ (›The Broken Jug‹) sees the comic rather than tragic possibilities here, caught in Frau Marthe's riposte to the Assessor Walter when he confidently claims that "he can know | All that we need to know to make a judgement." She replies: "How much you need to know to make a judgement | I do not know and will not seek to know | But what I know's this: to bring an action | I must be allowed to *tell* you what about."<sup>34</sup>) The story told is everything, and how persuasively you can tell it. Knowledge is closer to arbitration than reportage, and arbitration is inescapably close to the arbitrary just as in German, *Willkürlich*, or 'arbitrary' seems unavoidably close to the opposite of random, or the assertion of will. We are back to the idea of reality as an unsigned note, what Eve calls Heaven's "wunderbare Fügung" ("strange determining/coincidence"?).<sup>35</sup>)

In ›Das Bettelweib von Locarno‹, the lack of signature is even more apparent. No one has signed off in a recognizable way for what we cannot know our knowledge to represent. The loss of causal explanation does not exactly produce antinomianism in its place, but a self-confessedly mysterious writing is the best simulacrum for the unattributable story it describes. The story is of a wrong done to an old beggar-woman who is evicted from the place in which she has kindly been allowed to rest. The returning master of the house orders her to move and after retiring she expires. Subsequently she haunts the room, the sounds of her agonised efforts to move and final disintegration clearly heard by all. But, crucially, no one seems to recognize the haunting as by her. We the readers do, the characters do not. They don't know the title of the story in which they are appearing! It is as if once the door on the supernatural has been opened, the logic of reflection by which natural experience, pace Kant, reflects back to us our sense of the subject capable of having that experience, is disabled.

<sup>33</sup>) HEINRICH VON KLEIST, *Werke und Briefe* (cit. fn. 17), 3. 288.

<sup>34</sup>) I am using David Constantine's translation in HEINRICH VON KLEIST, *Selected Writings*, Indianapolis 2004, Scene 7, pp. 26f. Cf. *Werke und Briefe* (cit. fn. 17), I. 262. "Wieviel ihr brauchen möget, hier zu richten, | Das weiß ich nicht, und untersuch es nicht; | Das aber weiß ich, daß ich, um zu klagen, | Muß vor euch sagen dürfen, über was."

<sup>35</sup>) CONSTANTINE, *Kleist* (cit. fn. 34): Scene 8, p. 42; KLEIST, *Werke und Briefe* (cit. fn. 17), I. 280.

Outside these constitutive boundaries, we lose all specifics and particulars. The terror is never explicitly defined or named, and what appears to result from it – total conflagration of the castle – is appropriately no more explicable. Reality is once more the unsigned note, purposive but without a purpose, inscrutable. The supernatural in this story does not reflect back to us a freedom from natural determination mirroring our own freedom, for that freedom would ground our moral responsibility while here it is precisely the man's abdication of moral responsibility – the unkindness done to the beggar-woman – which has opened up the metaphysical void. No reasons or causes apply; everything is contingent.

Kant's philosophy reworks Leibnizian optimism, eschewing Leibniz's optimistic believe in a pre-established harmony guaranteeing the coherence of our knowledge, but recasting that harmony as a procedural necessity for us to have any experience at all. Tim Mehigan's studies of Kleist and Kant are helpful here.<sup>36)</sup> Mehigan basically argues that the *Kant-Krise* reacts to a residual Leibnizian optimism in Kant. Subsequently, though, Kleist writes as a modern, alert to the enigmatic openness of life abandoning a notion of "language as *adaequatio* for something more in line with systems theory (Luhmann)".<sup>37)</sup> The power of speech, rhetoric, and linguistic effect generally is a component of many of Kleist's plots, and also justified in his early essay ›Über die allmähliche Verfertigung der Gedanken beim Reden‹, which refuses a separation of thought and speech.<sup>38)</sup> Mehigan sketches a post-Kantian Kleist, one making an absolute of communication, so not a straightforward sceptic but someone who appreciates that if language produces only language, then changes in its currently integrated genres are bound to appear potentially catastrophic. Mehigan, drawing on recent Kleist criticism, argues that this comes from the phenomenology of language-led thought: when our language inspires us and then thinks for us, the experience feels like being ruled by 'chance and subjectivity', by the random association of ideas, while in fact it is the grammar of reality, 'a systematic operation', the force of historical change which is at work. Kleist's chosen example of Mirabeau's epochal remarks at the *Assemblée Nationale* to the Marquis de Dreux-Brézé, grand master of ceremonies, suggests, that Mirabeau's words fetch their sense out of an as yet unrealised future.<sup>39)</sup> This is Kleist's linguistic solution to the inaccessibility of the thing-in-itself: a self-sufficiency of language whose impersonality grants us an articulate perspective on what we cannot say. It is also his solution to the unpredictability of politics in a revolutionary age. Such showing, though, has the potential to confound

<sup>36)</sup> TIM MEHIGAN, *Heinrich von Kleist: Writing after Kant*, Rochester, NY 2011.

<sup>37)</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 170.

<sup>38)</sup> KLEIST, *Werke und Briefe* (cit. fn. 17), 3. 453–459.

<sup>39)</sup> MEHIGAN, *Kleist* (cit. fn. 36), pp. 178f.; KLEIST, *Werke und Briefe* (cit. fn. 17), 3. 454–456.

basic assumptions of what is coherent – such as the idea that we always say what we mean, what we intend, what we purpose.<sup>40</sup>) For Lukács, the problem in reading Kleist was to reconcile his ‘superb literary concretization’ of apparent decadence with his Junkerism. The *Kant-Krise* showed the reactionary Prussian unable to countenance the progressive core of Kantian *Kritik*. However, Mirabeau’s example appeals to Kleist, argues Andreas Gailus, because it shows “the historical eventfulness of his own speech”.<sup>41</sup>) Although it is as the creator of poetic speech, as Lukács concedes, that Kleist is to be taken most seriously, Lukács criticizes ›Penthesilea‹ for its avoidance of social mediation in its presentation of passion. (Penthesilea’s Amazons are symptomatically ‘exotic’, standing apart from the realistic drive Lukács values.) But in reducing it to the expression of “the self-contained and solitary soul of Kleist”, Lukács inadvertently also describes the confusion of the Kantian self, undone by *Kant*’s preservation of a realist dimension to his philosophy through the unknowable thing-in-itself.<sup>42</sup>) Kleist’s representation of historical agency follows from this, rather than being out of line with it.

#### 4. English Comparisons

Let me finish with one of the most spectacular disagreements amongst the English Romantic poets, the one between Coleridge and Wordsworth over the latter’s ›Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood‹. There are many personal reasons for the friction, but Coleridge’s objections find their main expression in a book, ›Biographia Literaria‹, written to settle a methodological quarrel, a poetological difference over the philosophical nature of poetry. In the context of my essay here, though, we might say that their dispute can also outline the features of what I have been calling the Kant crisis. Wordsworth is closer to Kleist, and Coleridge is troubled by Wordsworth’s Kleistian openness to the losses incurred to present experience as a result of preserving an unconditioned source of our aboriginal humanity –

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<sup>40</sup>) ANDREAS GAILUS, *Passions of the Sign: Revolution and Language in Kant, Goethe and Kleist*, Baltimore 2006, p. 148. Relevant for me is that Andreas Gailus can read Kleist’s Mirabeau anecdote as the collapse of performativity into grammatology, via, once more, the constitutive (Derridean this time) power of language. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 14: “Kleist’s anecdote lays open a constitutive feature of language. Every sign incorporates in its structure the energetic cycles of its own production. Every sign is performative with respect both to its past and to its future; it is the residue of its own performative history.”

<sup>41</sup>) *Ibid.*, p. 14.

<sup>42</sup>) GEORG LUKÁCS, *German Realists in the Nineteenth Century*, translated by JEREMY GAINES and PAUL KEAST, with an Introduction by RODNEY LIVINGSTONE, Cambridge, Mass. 1993, pp. 18–20, 32, *passim*.

Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From God who is our home [...] <sup>43)</sup>

Wordsworth can only describe our variable sense of this extra-phenomenal lineage. This unknowable immortality is intimated in a vocabulary of retrospect, diminishment and loss. Making what use of Plato's myth he can "as a poet", <sup>44)</sup> Wordsworth figures our immortality as something antenatal rather than post mortem; something, therefore, whose *fading* grandeur, as we grow older, is best testimony to its *original* grandeur. The child, the character closest to that primordial state can remember, as in Plato's anamnesis, but not systematically. His philosophical understanding of what he was is perceptual, grasped in the way the brightness of nature is pristine because it is "apparelled in celestial light", in reflected 'glory' that now has passed away. The child's experience of nature is irradiated by his antenatal experience, which projects on to nature a "vision splendid". He seems momentarily to corroborate Coleridge's view of nature in his reply to the Ode, 'Dejection: An Ode', "Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud". This is our "second nature", as James Chandler put it, the cultural creativity as natural to us as biological growth. <sup>45)</sup> In fact without culture, where would we be? Back in an impossibly unmediated, graceless sensibility, the stuff of Penthesilea. Wordsworth does not go that far, or sound Penthesilea's potential violence, but he does raise "his song of thanks" to culture as a mourning for an aboriginal state, not an elegy for the infantile existence which is closest to it but

those obstinate questionings  
 Of sense and outward things,  
 Fallings from us, vanishings;  
 Blank misgivings of a Creature  
 Moving about in worlds not realized,  
 High instincts, before which our mortal Nature  
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised [...] <sup>46)</sup>

Altogether this is a scene of loss as much as promise, of depletion as much as Coleridge's source of celebration, benediction and all the positives of religious institutional life. For in Wordsworth's poem, like the ghost of Hamlet's father, we tremble on the edge of a supernatural vocation, or Purgatorial chastening as if in Penthesilea's gaze after she has devoured her lover.

<sup>43)</sup> WORDSWORTH, *The Poems* (cit. fn. 22), I. 525.

<sup>44)</sup> *Ibid.*, I. 179.

<sup>45)</sup> JAMES CHANDLER, *Wordsworth's Second Nature: A Study of the Poetry and Politics*, Chicago 1984.

<sup>46)</sup> WORDSWORTH, *The Poems* (cit. fn. 22), I. 528.

And this is the point at which Coleridge fundamentally objects. He resents the polarity of an inauthentic life and an unspecific, unconditioned vocation. Wordsworth certainly reaches a compromise, one in which “primal sympathy” is reconstituted in a nature still founded on mourning, on grief for the loss it stands for.

To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.<sup>47)</sup>

But these intimations of immortality which nature gives us appear even *beyond* emotional response. Coleridge, on the other hand, is Christian, or uses a Christian theological framework for philosophy as does the Schelling of the ›Freiheitsschrift‹. Poetic speculation of the Ode’s kind is excessive. It advances, hubristically, beyond being a secondary repetition of God’s original act of creation. It bids to undo our God-given dispensation to evoke an immediate intimacy, one necessarily beyond our mortal lot, before rather than after it, but equally ‘outside language games’ for Coleridge. It undoes what it works with and produces a kind of chaos rather than what it should – the necessary proof of God’s harmony with our purposes, his identity or Incarnation in our fate, or a Christianizing of Kant’s transcendental dialectic.

For Coleridge, when Wordsworth’s language is about what it cannot know it becomes nonsensical rather than founding a new *sensus communis*, which for him would be religious. Hence Wordsworth’s strange commendation of a six-year old child as “best philosopher [...] Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!”<sup>48)</sup> If philosophers become children, literally not parabolically, anything, it seems to Coleridge, the ‘meanest’ thing, can stand for the numinous; we confront a democracy of poetic subject-matter indistinguishable from the arbitrariness of the world to which Kleist’s characters submit. Coleridge usually called this scenario pantheistic, and the *Pantheismusstreit*, starting with Lessing and Mendelssohn, has perhaps been allowed to overshadow the closer *Kant-Krise* surely more pressing for someone who had described in such detail his conversion to Kantianism from Empiricism, and who, like any post-Kantian, was then condemned to spend the rest of his life managing the consequences!

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<sup>47)</sup> Ibid., The Poems (cit. fn. 22), I. 529.

<sup>48)</sup> Ibid., I. 527.

## SPEAKING NAMES AND EMPTY DOMAINS

### Effi Briest and the 'Awful Being'

By Patricia Howe (London)

This essay traces the depiction of the ideal bridegroom in fairy tales, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels and memoirs, and its effect on Effi's sense of identity and marriage to Innstetten. There follows a brief analysis of Innstetten's own identity crisis. The conclusion considers the function of empty domains in the portrayal of social roles and constraints, and their effect on text and reader.

Der Aufsatz zeichnet die Darstellung des idealen Bräutigams in Märchen, Memoiren und Romanen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts nach und erörtert deren Auswirkung auf Effi Briests Identitätsgefühl und Ehe mit Innstetten. Darüber hinaus untersucht er Innstettens Identitätskrise und – im Zusammenhang damit – die Funktion von Leerstellen bei der Darstellung sozialer Rollenzuweisungen sowie deren Auswirkung auf Text und Leser.

Speaking names and empty domains bring contrasting qualities to the construction of fictional worlds. The speaking name enters fiction trailing the meanings and associations of its origins and history, modelling expectations about the new fictional entity that will bear it. Speaking names are predictive, indicative of character traits, and more obliquely of genre, anticipating actions or destinies, or, when used ironically or negatively, of raising and dismissing them. Empty domains, as logicians call them, are blanks whose content is unknown, because, logically, there is nothing to know. They may be seen as extreme forms of indeterminacy, beyond ambiguity, vagueness or those gaps that may be filled from the surrounding context.<sup>1)</sup> Readers of fiction, however, rush to fill the emptiness, to create meaning, consistency and coherence, because reading fiction is intrinsically and instinctively a gap-filling, world-modelling exercise.

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<sup>1)</sup> On forms of indeterminacy see: SOFIA KÄLLSTRÖM, ›Das Eigentliche bleibt zurück‹. Zum Problem der semantischen Unbestimmtheit am Beispiel von Theodor Fontanes ›Effi Briest‹, (= Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Germanistica Upsaliensia 41), Uppsala 2002.



The term 'Awful Being', which also occurs in pronominal form as 'lui' or 'that other him', is a literary construct, an element of world-modelling that designates the figure of the ideal bridegroom, and predominantly a product of female reading and story-telling. The following essay considers how both speaking names and the history of the Awful Being, beginning in myth and fairy tale and recurring in novels and tales, are present in the personalities, memories and fates of characters in ›Effi Briest‹. This is followed by a brief examination of the masculine self-image as it occurs in ›Effi Briest‹ and in Maupassant's short story ›Lui‹.

In ›The Doctor's Wife‹ (1864), Mary Elizabeth Braddon describes every young woman's fantasy bridegroom as "that 'Awful Being', the mysterious 'Lui' of a thousand romances", meaning French romances.<sup>2)</sup> In the nineteenth century the accepted meaning of the word 'awful' combined elements of fear and wonder. The Oxford English Dictionary of 1888 offers: "awe-inspiring, causing dread, worthy of respect or reverential fear, solemnly impressive, sublimely majestic."<sup>3)</sup> The emphatic pronoun 'Lui' has an appropriately distancing effect, echoed in Trollope's ›The Duke's Children‹ (1880) where the Duke of Omnium imagines his daughter's unknown suitor as "that other 'him' [...] the person she loves best in the world".<sup>4)</sup> The 'lui' of a thousand romances acquired his pronominal celebrity with George Sand's novel ›Elle et Lui‹ (1859), probably based on her relationship with Alfred de Musset.<sup>5)</sup> The novel provoked a riposte by Musset's brother entitled ›Lui et Elle‹, Louise Colet's novel ›Lui‹, also recording her romance with Musset, or possibly with Flaubert, and a one-act farce called ›Eux‹, followed by a pamphlet entitled ›Eux et Elles. Histoire d'un scandale‹.<sup>6)</sup> In ›L'Adultera‹ and ›Frau Jenny Treibel‹ Fontane refers to the romance as reflected in Sand's novel ›Leone Leonik‹.<sup>7)</sup> By the 1880s 'Lui', is a stock figure, the bridegroom of girlish fantasy, derived from stories and projected on to her own world. The heroine of Maupassant's ›Une Vie‹ (1883), nurtured at school by romantic tales, muses: "Comment serait-il? Elle ne le savait pas au juste et ne

<sup>2)</sup> MARY ELIZABETH BRADDON, *The Doctor's Wife* (1964), Oxford 2008, here: p. 160. "Mr. Lansdell was that awful being, the mysterious 'Lui' of a thousand romances." Braddon's novel was inspired by Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*.

<sup>3)</sup> *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, Oxford 1888, vol. I, p. 595.

<sup>4)</sup> ANTHONY TROLLOPE, *The Duke's Children* (1880), Oxford 2011, vol. 1, ch. 8, p. 58.

<sup>5)</sup> GEORGE SAND, *Elle et Lui*, (1859), ed. by THIERRY BODIN, Paris 2008.

<sup>6)</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 292–327, Réception critique et polémique.

<sup>7)</sup> References to Fontane's works, unless otherwise indicated, are to: THEODOR FONTANE, *Werke, Schriften und Briefe*, ed. by WALTER KEITEL und HELMUTH NÜRNBERGER, München 1962–1997, I, 1–7: *Sämtliche Romane, Erzählungen Gedichte und Nachgelassenes*; III: 1–5 *Erinnerungen, Ausgewählte Schriften und Kritiken*; IV: 1–5 *Briefe*, and given in the text in the form: title, section, volume, page. Here: *L'Adultera*, I, 2, 98, *Frau Jenny Treibel*, I, 4, 359.

se le demandait même pas. *Il serait lui, voilà tout! Elle savait seulement qu'elle l'adorerait de toute son âme et qu'il la chérirait de toute sa force ...*"<sup>8)</sup> She adds that all she has to do is to meet him.

In ›Effi Briest‹ Fontane combines the apparently contradictory elements of speaking name and empty domain by creating a name that simultaneously speaks and remains empty. It is, of course, Innstetten – interpreted to mean 'instead', but instead of what? Critical literature offers both extra- and intra-textual interpretations. The name, unknown in Brandenburg, has nonetheless been ascribed links to its noble families and, by problematic analogy, to names in Fouqué's ›Undine‹ – to the name of the knight, Ringstetten, which translates the 'de la Motte' of the author's name, while Undine may represent his unhappy wife, Caroline Briest.<sup>9)</sup> Peter von Matt interprets Innstetten's name as that of "die Anstatt-Figur",<sup>10)</sup> because he marries Effi instead of Luise. Renate Böschstein suggests that the name also defines Innstetten's "erstorbene Leben": "Effi statt ihrer Mutter, Karriere statt innerlich erfüllender Tätigkeit. Hier erfasst der Name eine Person, deren Wesentliches in ihrer Virtualität besteht, die anstelle dessen steht, was sie sein könnte."<sup>11)</sup> These two interpretations meet in the 'Awful Being', a literary construct and predominantly a product of female reading that sheds light both on Effi's idea of what Innstetten might be 'instead of' and of his own assessment of his 'erstorbene Leben'.

Did Effi, too, have an imaginary 'Lui'? If so, Innstetten, presented to her as 'Der Richtige', may be a substitute, whom she must accommodate to her image of 'Lui', that other him. At the beginning of the novel Innstetten is suddenly 'in place', allegedly visiting distant relatives, and, metaphorically, in the imagination and memory of Luise Briest, his erstwhile beloved, who, conveniently, has a daughter of marriageable age who resembles her. Luise describes him as "ein Mann von Charakter, von Stellung und guten Sitten" (›Effi Briest‹ I, 4, 8); he is "schlank, brünett und von militärischer Haltung" (›Effi Briest‹ I, 4, 18) apparently fulfilling the criteria for 'der Richtige', as Effi has inherited and will rehearse them to her friends. She tells Hertha, "Jeder ist der Richtige. Natürlich muß er von Adel sein und eine Stellung haben und gut aussehen"

<sup>8)</sup> GUY DE MAUPASSANT, *Une Vie*, in: *Romans*, édition établie par LOUIS FORESTIER, Paris 1987, pp. 1–149, here: p. 13.

<sup>9)</sup> See: <<https://web.archive.org/web/20110920112609/http://www.hum.uit.no/nordlit/3/schmidt.html>> [17.07.2019]

<sup>10)</sup> PETER VON MATT, *Verkommene Söhne, mißratene Töchter. Familiendesaster in der Literatur*, München 1999, here: p. 240.

<sup>11)</sup> RENATE BÖSCHSTEIN, Caecilia Hexel und Adam Krippenstapel. Beobachtungen zu Fontanes Namengebung, in: *Verborgene Facetten, Studien zu Fontane*, ed. by HANNA DELF VON WOLZOGEN und HUBERTUS FISCHER. Bearbeitet von HANNA DELF VON WOLZOGEN, CHRISTINE HEHLE, und INGOLF SCHWAN, Würzburg 2006, pp. 329–360, here: p. 351.

(*Effi Briest*, I, 4, 20). While much critical emphasis has been put on this naïve, evasive pronouncement, Hertha's comment "Gott, Effi, wie du nur sprichst. Sonst sprachst du doch anders" seems to pass unnoticed (*Effi Briest*, I, 4, 20). Yet Effi's response "Ja, sonst" implies a significant gap. Effi's naïve parroting of her mother's formula for matrimonial happiness deflects attention from the empty domain implied by "Ja, sonst", which might be inhabited by Effi's image of 'Lui', the 'Awful Being'. The question therefore remains: how did Effi view love, marriage or 'der Richtige' before the realities of the nineteenth-century marriage market overtook her?

The history of the 'Awful Being', together with Effi's reading, and her responses to the men she encounters allow the reader, if not to fill the empty domain in the text occupied by Effi's imaginary bridegroom, at least to delineate a shape. The phases of Effi's life mirror this history successively from myth, fairy tale and chivalrous romance, through the Gothic novel to Romanticism and Realism, contrasting girlish fantasy with the demands and expectations of society. The figure originates in myth and fairy tale and reaches his apotheosis in the chivalrous romance, where his two-fold appeal divides the sexes: he mirrors the instincts and ambitions of men who see him as a model, a potential self, while for women his nobility, good looks and romantic ardour make him the irresistible bridegroom, the agent of untold happiness and enhanced status. Thus, in *Don Quixote*: a man says that, when he hears tales of "those furious, terrible blows the knights deal one another, I get the fancy to strike a few myself", while a young woman prefers "the parts when some lady or another is lying in her knight's embraces under some orange-trees, and there's a damsel keeping watch for them, dying of envy and frightened to death".<sup>12)</sup> As the "damsel keeping watch" implies, the morality of chivalrous romance is closer to myth than to fairy tale, but all three genres inform the chapters that precede Effi's marriage through the shared motif of the quest.

Innstetten's quest for a bride most obviously resembles that of the fairy tale hero. Fairy tales express emotion as action: the hero may recognise the object of his desire instantaneously, gazing unobserved, he may stand stock still, fall on his knees or be struck dumb.<sup>13)</sup> He proposes without reflection. For example, in Grimms' *Brüderchen und Schwesterchen*<sup>14)</sup> a king, hunting in a wood, espies

<sup>12)</sup> MIGUEL CERVANTES, *Don Quixote*, translated by J. M. COHEN, Harmondsworth 1959, p. 278.

<sup>13)</sup> MAX LÜTHI, *The Fairytale as Art Form and Portrait of Man*, translated by JON ERICKSON, Bloomington 1984, p. 37.

<sup>14)</sup> *Brüderchen und Schwesterchen*, in: *Kinder- und Hausmärchen. Gesammelt durch die BRÜDER GRIMM, Mit einem Nachwort von KURT WASELWSKY*, München 1996, pp. 65–71, here: p. 67.

Schwesterchen, who has taken refuge in a hut from a wicked stepmother. After watching her for some days the king, instantly identifiable by his golden crown, knocks on the door and asks her to marry him. She immediately accepts. In fairy tales "jeder ist der Richtige, nur muß er von Adel sein, gut aussehen und eine Stellung haben" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 20). The quest, the instantaneous proposal, the conquering male gaze recur in Innstetten's courtship of Effi. Luise tells Effi "Du hast ihn vorgestern gesehen, und ich glaube, er hat dir auch gut gefallen" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 18), but, while he has knowingly observed a prospective bride, Effi was unaware that she was looking at her future husband.<sup>15</sup>) Steeped in the warped romance of her mother's history, Effi's ready acceptance of 'der Richtige' reflects the fairy tale's aspirational view of marriage. Luise encourages Effi's dreams of social success knowing that "sie lebt in ihren Vorstellungen und Träumen". (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 23). She tells Effi: "Es kommt dir vor wie ein Märchen und Du möchtest eine Prinzessin sein", and Effi replies „Ja, Mama, so bin ich“ (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 30). Yet this aspirational marriage also recalls the motif of the hunt. When Luise reprimands Briest for his dubious comments at the wedding, "Wir haben eben eine Hochzeit und nicht eine Jagdpartie", he replies that „er sähe darin keinen so großen Unterschied“. (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 36).

As Briest's remark and his disapproval of the scene from ›Das Käthchen von Heilbronn‹ performed at Effi's *Polterabend* both imply, legend and fairy tale as a means of disguising the socio-political function of marriage are subverted from the beginning. Even Luise sets fantasy aside when propriety is at stake, as when she refuses Effi a fur coat, the garment in which the princess in the tale ›Allerleirauh‹ disguises herself in order to escape marrying her widowed father and so replacing her mother. Pressed to re-marry and having promised his dying wife that he would only marry someone as beautiful as herself, the king chooses his daughter, "denn sie ist das Ebenbild meiner verstorbenen Frau", or as Rummschüttel says of Effi "ganz die Mama" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 199).<sup>16</sup>) By the end of Effi's engagement the fairy tale and its hero are fading. She persuades herself that Innstetten is "so lieb und gut gegen mich und so nachsichtig" because she feels too readily the reverential fear that also belongs to the 'Awful Being': "aber ... ich fürchte mich vor ihm" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 35).

Fontane's critical treatment of romantic fantasies as a female legacy, and Effi's marriage may be seen as a legacy, reflects the disapproval that accom-

<sup>15</sup>) The art critic JOHN RUSKIN drew attention to the similarity between the painting ›The Babylonian Marriage Market‹, by EDWIN LONG, 1875, in which young women are lined up with their backs to potential buyers, and European marriage practices, which he regarded as mercenary and immoral. See: JOHN RUSKIN, Notes on Some of the Principal Pictures Exhibited in the Rooms of the Royal Academy: 1875, Orpington and London 1875, p. 22.

<sup>16</sup>) Allerleirauh, in: GRIMM, Kinder- und Hausmärchen (cit. fn. 14), pp. 300–305, here: p. 300.

panies the 'Awful Being' throughout his broader history. Myth, fairy tale and romance seduce by presenting a message of happiness and fulfilment through a familiar repertoire of bold figures and exciting events that jeopardise a sense of both the spiritual and the real. The 'Awful Being' becomes the enemy of piety and practicality. In her autobiography of 1565 Saint Teresa of Ávila records how she became addicted to reading romances: "and this little fault, which I had observed in my mother, began to [...] lead me astray in other respects as well".<sup>17)</sup> In ›Don Quixote‹ (1606–1615), reading romances is perceived as the enemy of piety and as a sickness. The otherwise sane and ordinary hero re-invents himself as a version of the 'Awful Being', casts himself as the champion of a noble lady, – who is really a farm girl –, and embarks on chivalrous quests, returning bruised and battered. A priest and Don Quixote's cook, representing the pious and the practical, perceiving his library of books of chivalry to be the cause of his delusion, destroy all but those written in a realistic style. Restored to sanity, Don Quixote bequeaths his possessions to his niece, provided that she marries "a man who does not even know what books of chivalry are".<sup>18)</sup>

The danger posed by the 'Awful Being' to the female psyche nonetheless continues with the growing popularity of reading in Europe between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, for the novel's claim to represent the 'real' world and the capacity of private reading to transport the reader "to a secret place"<sup>19)</sup> are thought to pose a threat to the female mind and to woman's spiritual and domestic duties. Hence reading finds approval only when associated with piety, charity or practicality, and when supervised by mothers, clerics or tutors. Novels, however, increasingly emphasise the absence of a mother figure or her failure to fulfil her duty "to facilitate the transition from girlhood to the conventionalised world of maturity".<sup>20)</sup> Charlotte Lennox's satirical novel, ›The Female Quixote‹ (1752) parodies both these attitudes and the motif of sickness found in ›Don Quixote‹. Like Teresa of Ávila the heroine inherits her addiction to reading romances from her dead mother. Mediating her own life through her reading, she models herself on the imperious heroines of French romance, imagines predatory suitors and helpless victims, but fails to recognise either real danger or her genuine admirer.<sup>21)</sup> Here, as in other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century examples,

<sup>17)</sup> The Life of Saint Teresa of Ávila by Herself (1565), translated with an introduction by J. M. COHEN, Harmondsworth 1957, p. 26.

<sup>18)</sup> CERVANTES, Don Quixote (cit. fn.12), p. 938.

<sup>19)</sup> STEFAN BOLLMANN, WOMEN Who READ Are DANGEROUS [sic], translated by Christine Shuttleworth, foreword by KAREN JOY FOWLER, London and New York 2008, p. 13.

<sup>20)</sup> SUSAN PECK MACDONALD, Jane Austen and the Tradition of the Absent Mother, in: The Lost Tradition. Mothers and Daughters in Literature, edited by CATHY N. DAVIDSON and E. M. BRONER, New York 1980, pp. 58–69, here: p. 59.

<sup>21)</sup> CHARLOTTE LENNOX, The Female Quixote (1752), edited and with notes by AMANDA GILROY and WIL VERHOEVEN, with an introduction by AMANDA GILROY, Harmondsworth 2006.

cures, like causes, are rooted partly in female experience. Lennox's heroine is cured by the example of an older woman, who has outgrown romantic delusions, and by the arguments of a clergyman, influences that have a faint echo in Frau von Padden's attempt to warn Effi and persuade her to read Luther's ›Tischreden‹.

By the nineteenth century "the craze for reading" is seen as "a vice apt to lead a girl astray from her womanly virtues and one that would certainly reduce her value on the marriage market".<sup>22)</sup> In ›Northanger Abbey‹ (1803, published 1818), Jane Austen subverts her readers' devotion to the 'Awful Being', the charming young man who is "instantly before the imagination of us all"<sup>23)</sup>, by assigning him a marginal place in Catherine Morland's drama. Catherine's addiction to reading leads her to invest Northanger Abbey with the trappings of Gothic romance: an alarming owner, mysterious disappearances, and secret rooms. She creates a hero whose proposal of marriage is based on his superior understanding of Gothic romances, which he claims to have read while his future bride was still a child sewing her first sampler. Yet domesticity and sewing as solutions to the female legacy of reading romances may be "disavowed through parody",<sup>24)</sup> for, if the problem is parodied, the solution too is undermined. Moreover, despite the view that girls' education should be based on religion and practicality, sewing neither counteracts romantic tales nor guarantees virtue.<sup>25)</sup> Indeed, there is often a "conjunction between sewing and communication".<sup>26)</sup> Emma Bovary's "appetite for romance is whetted by a seamstress who lent novels to the *pensionnaires* in secret and sang eighteenth century love songs to them 'tout en poussant son aiguille'."<sup>27)</sup> Zola's ›La Conquête de Plassans‹ (1874), which, like ›Effi Briest‹, opens with a mother and daughter sewing in a garden, ends in disaster after the mother falls in love with a priest who asks her to start a sewing-circle. And Effi, first seen sewing an altar cloth, desecrates the needlework table by hiding her letters from Crampas in it.

Concealing the letters with their shameful secrets is Effi's response to life in the 'Spukhaus' with its echoes of the Gothic novel (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 183,

<sup>22)</sup> RENATE MÖHRMANN, The Reading Habits of Women in the Vormärz, in: JOHN C. FOUT (ed.), *German Women in the Nineteenth Century*, New York, London 1984, pp. 104–117, here: p. 110.

<sup>23)</sup> JANE AUSTEN, *Northanger Abbey* (1817), in: *Complete Works*, ed. by R. W. Chatman, Oxford 1982, vol. 5, here: p. 251.

<sup>24)</sup> GILROY, Introduction (cit. fn. 21) p. xix, describes Arabella's reading as a legacy from her mother, hence she "identifies with a female tradition, but one which is apparently disavowed through parody".

<sup>25)</sup> See: JAMES C. ALBISETTI, *Schooling German Girls and Women. Secondary and Higher Education in the Nineteenth Century*, Princeton, NJ 1988, p. 21.

<sup>26)</sup> See: MARY DONALDSON-EVANS, *Pricking the Male Ego: Pins and Needles in Flaubert, Maupassant, and Zola*, in: *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 30 (2002), pp. 254–265, here: p. 258.

<sup>27)</sup> *Ibid.*

241). Fontane translates satirical elements of Gothic romance such as the exotic mysteries of Innstetten's house into a means of control, an "Angstapparat aus Kalkül".<sup>28)</sup> When Effi tries to comfort herself by reading, only to come across the 'weiße Frau', she admits that "ich muß es aufgeben, mich durch Lektüre beruhigen zu wollen" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 71f.). By closing the book on the 'weiße Frau' and retreating into recollections of her *Polterabend*, a last vestige of fairy tale, Effi does not, however, escape being haunted by the figure of the young Chinese man.

In contrast to Gothic horror, Crampas brings vestiges of chivalry in late Romantic mode. Ironically both Effi and Innstetten see the new arrival in Kessin "wie ein Trost- und Rettungsbringer" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 104), but beside consoling he disrupts with an account of Innstetten's past that subverts Luise's sentimental reminiscence and confirms Effi's fears. Analysing Crampas's use of literature as seduction, Peter Pütz shows how the patchiness of Effi's reading makes her vulnerable. While her knowledge of Brentano's ›Die Gottesmauer‹ silences Crampas, she is not equipped to detect the omissions from Heine's poems and so fails to recognise a passionate declaration of love.<sup>29)</sup> It may also be argued that she hears only an echo of her own girlish fantasies. Heine's capacity for creating and puncturing romantic illusion conveys the deception and self-deception that draws Effi into Crampas's own illusions and delusions. Pütz suggests that Crampas's description of Heine as "sehr für das Romantische, was freilich gleich nach der Liebe kommt und nach Meinung einiger sogar damit zusammenfällt" (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 137) articulates a pose: "Seine höchst literarische Werbung verrät, daß sein Begehren weniger der Geliebten als dem gilt, was er 'das Romantische' nennt, und daß ihm die Romanze wichtiger ist als die Liebe."<sup>30)</sup> This priority anticipates the decadent hero, the man in love with the idea of love, as in Schnitzler's ›Anatol‹ (1889–1890). With Crampas's production of Wiechert's play ›Ein Schritt vom Wege‹ (1872), a rescue drama in which Effi plays the heroine, romantic illusion and delusion make a dramatic entrance into the world. The hollow romance is exposed, literally, when Innstetten reads Crampas's notes by a lamp inset with photographs of Effi's performance in the play. Innstetten, however, has effectively already discounted the romance of rescue and reconciliation in favour of his own, arguably deluded, idea of justice, for he has already sent for Wüllersdorf.

<sup>28)</sup> CLAUDIA LIEBRAND, *Das Ich und die andern. Fontanes Figuren und ihre Selbstbilder*, Freiburg 1990, p. 237: "Die Lektüre ruft die Geister herbei, die verscheucht werden sollen. [...] Entzieht sie sich auch 'dem Satanischen' in seiner sublimierten, literarischen Form, in der Gestalt des Chinesen, als Spuk holt es sie wieder ein."

<sup>29)</sup> PETER PÜTZ, *Wenn Effi läse, was Crampas empfiehlt... Offene und verdeckte Zitate im Roman*, in: Theodor Fontane, ed. by HEINZ LUDWIG ARNOLD (= *Text + Kritik, Sonderband*) Munich 1989, pp. 174–184.

<sup>30)</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 180f.

The changing shape of the 'Awful Being' shows how, while popular fiction perpetuates fantasy figures and improbable situations, serious novelists revise romantic sentiment that has deteriorated into sentimentality or is a disguise for materialism. Behind Effi's sudden revision of whatever "ja, sonst" conceals and "Natürlich muß er von Adel sein" lies an inability to distinguish art from life shared with other heroines of Realist novels. As Flaubert prepares ›Madame Bovary‹ (1856), he complains that "je navigue pour cela dans les océans laiteux de la littérature à castels, troubadours à toques de velours à plumes blanches".<sup>31</sup>) In the novel he demonstrates the capacity of cheap romances to deceive the reader by harmonizing romantic desire and social demands. His heroine's desire for "les mots de félicité, de passion et d'ivresse, qui lui avaient paru si beaux dans les livres" distorts her understanding of reality, as it did Don Quixote's.<sup>32</sup>) The confusion of life and art does not, however, originate simply in popular romance. Goethe's ›Die Wahlverwandschaften‹, George Sand's novels and, foremost, those of Scott, the most popular novelist in Europe, are common sources of seductive illusion. Emma Bovary is deceived by Rodolphe's explanation of elective affinities.<sup>33</sup>) When she watches the opera ›Lucia di Lammermoor‹ "Elle se retrouvait dans les lectures de sa jeunesse, en plein Walter Scott".<sup>34</sup>) Fontane resists comparisons between ›Effi Briest‹ and ›Die Wahlverwandschaften‹, and while he offers mocking echoes of Scott (›Frau Jenny Treibel‹, I, 4, 77), Effi's choice of reading reflects a taste for romance that includes Scott.

Like Emma Bovary – and many German women – Effi may have fallen under the spell of Scott and sentiment while still at school.<sup>35</sup>) The nostalgia of Scott's romances for trials overcome and daring acts of rescue by heroes who meet the criteria for 'Awful Beings', offers reminders of what she may have imagined for herself. In her feigned illness she apparently disregards

<sup>31</sup>) GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, *Correspondences II, 1851–1858*, Édition présentée, établie et annotée par JEAN BRUNEAU, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Paris 1980, p. 56.

<sup>32</sup>) GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, ›Madame Bovary‹, introduction, notes et relevé de variantes par EDOUARD MAYNIAL, *Classiques Garnier*, Paris 1961, p. 414, p. 32. THOMAS DEGERING, *Exkurs: Don Quijote und Madame Bovary*, in: *Das Verhältnis von Individuum und Gesellschaft in Fontanes ›Effi Briest‹ und Flauberts ›Madame Bovary‹*, Bonn 1978, pp. 103–130, here: p. 130.

<sup>33</sup>) See: JOHN T. BOOKER, *Indiana and ›Madame Bovary‹: Intertextual Echoes*, in: *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 31 (2003), pp. 3f., 226–236; in relation to Emma's reading in the convent, MAYNIAL (cit. fn. 32, p. 414) refers to L. DEGOUMOIS, *Flaubert à l'école de Goethe*, Geneva 1925, p. 51, where "L'auteur note l'analogie de cette éducation romanesque avec celle d'Ottolie dans les ›Affinités électives‹ de Goethe".

<sup>34</sup>) FLAUBERT, *Madame Bovary* (cit. fn. 32), p. 206.

<sup>35</sup>) RICHARD HUMPHREY, *The Historical Novel as Philosophy of History. Three German Contributions: Alexis, Fontane, Döblin* (= Bithell Series of Dissertations 10), London 1986, p. 75.



Rummschüttel's recommendation of travelogues, – according to Wilkie Collins the reading material of “the ‘dull people’ who want to suppress novels as immoral”.<sup>36</sup>) Effi's choice of novels, Scott's ›Ivanhoe, a Romance‹ (1820), ›Quentin Durward‹ (1824), Cooper's ›Der Spion‹ (1821), and the mid-century novels, Alexis's ›Die Hosen des Herrn von Bredow‹ (1846) and Dickens's ›David Copperfield‹ (1849–1850), may distract her, as Pütz suggests, because they are historical. But her choices may also console. Cooper's ›Der Spion‹, influenced by Scott, elevates “den Spion als Helden. Mit andern Worten, ein Niedrigstes als Höchstes” (›Der Stechlin‹, I, 5, 342), perhaps reflecting Effi's wish for redemption; ›David Copperfield‹ elevates the lowly, depicts both human follies and disappointments, and second chances. Yet, while they suggest a desire for romance, rescue and a new beginning, their historicity indicates that the past is irretrievable. Ironically ›Die Hosen des Herrn von Bredow‹, the novel censored by Roswitha because of its unseemly title, might with its struggle between an old-fashioned aristocratic hero and ‘das freisinnige Weibervolk’, have provided Effi with a humorously critical view of Brandenburg and its aristocracy, and a thought-provoking contrast to the passive heroine awaiting rescue.<sup>37</sup>)

Although the phases of Effi's inner life reflect the history of the ‘Awful Being’, she says towards the end “[...] ich habe nicht viel gelesen, und Innstetten wunderte sich oft darüber, und es war ihm nicht recht” (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 293). She responds to imaginative fiction, to poems and stories that mirror her emotions and aspirations, but is indifferent to Innstetten's letters during their engagement, which seem to her so impersonal that she could pin them on the public notice board, – an ironic counterpart to Crampas's secret notes, which become the stuff of gossip and newspaper reports. The reader never knows whether she receives or reads ›Luthers Tischreden‹, nor whether this would have had the intended effect. After her traumatic encounter with Annie she picks up the Bible and a hymn book, but on her return to Hohen-Cremmen she reads little and prefers nature, “Lesen [...] und [...] die Beschäftigung mit den Künsten hatte sie ganz aufgegeben. [...] Sie bildete stattdessen die Kunst aus, still und entzückt auf die Natur zu blicken [...]”. (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 279)

Effi may finally reject reading because words, both spoken and written, have first deceived and then betrayed her. The optimistic fantasies of fairy tale, chivalry and romantic fiction that she has read and heard, including her mother's romance, Crampas's carefully censored interpretation of Heine's poem and her role in

<sup>36</sup>) WILKIE COLLINS, A Petition to the Novel Writers, in: Household Words, December 6 1856, XIV, pp. 481–485. <<http://www.web40571.clarahost.co.uk/wilkie/etext/PetitionNovelWriters.htm>> [17.07.2019]

<sup>37</sup>) WOLFGANG BEUTIN, Königtum und Adel in den historischen Romanen von Willibald Alexis, Berlin 1966, p. 61.

Wiechert's play, held out false promises. The words of those around her chart and shape the course of her life: Crampas's notes, Luise's letter of rejection, and the newspaper report of the duel. The compassionate requests of Rummschüttel and Roswitha soften their harshness until, finally, Briest's simple instruction, "Effi, komm", returns Effi to her home, the reader to the beginning of her story and to the words that alarmed Innstetten. Only the inscription on Effi's gravestone remains. Despite her explanation that reclaiming her family name reflects the harm done to Innstetten's name, it may also be read as a rejection, a sign that the 'Awful Being' has been an unrealized dream, a temptation and a fleeting consolation, whose promise of happiness was overshadowed by his power to inspire fear.

Does he, however, exist unrecognized or unacknowledged elsewhere in her life? Her comments on other men imply a desperate need to convince herself that Innstetten is not just "ein schöner Mann [...] mit dem ich staat machen kann und aus dem was wird" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 34) but truly 'der Richtige'. Yet other male characters are inadequate alternatives to Innstetten. Cousin Dagobert excels as chaperone, dancer or mediator, but he is "ein großer Kadett in Leutnantsuniform" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 39), "ein halber Junge", (Effi Briest, I, 4, 39). Alonzo Gieshübler and Crampas belong to the past<sup>38</sup>: Gieshübler is "der einzig nette Mensch hier" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 101), but he is an anachronism, whose first name, old-world courtesy and library recall Cervantes, and identify Gieshübler as "ein Revenant romantischer Romanzen und galanter Ritter".<sup>39</sup> Crampas, "vollkommener Kavalier, ungewöhnlich gewandt" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 105), becomes an incriminating spectre, haunting both Effi who, visiting Rügen, avoids the place that shares his name, and ultimately Innstetten.

While complementarity and contrast afford the reader a glimpse of the 'Awful Being', Effi's ideal remains mysterious and is never embodied in a single person. The empty domain of "Ja sonst" initiates the self-censorship that marks her precipitous transition from child to bride, to wife and mother and comes to characterise her relationship with Innstetten. Her inherent tendency to be, in Luise's words, "mitteilsam und verschlossen zugleich, beinahe versteckt" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 38) becomes, according to Ingrid Mittenzwei, conscious self-censorship. She hides her emotions as she hides her letters, exercising caution as she learns where "das Individuum zu empfinden beginnt, wo es sich nicht mehr, nachsprechend, ans Genormte halten kann".<sup>40</sup> The discovery of

<sup>38</sup>) EDITH KRAUSE, *Desire and Denial: Fontane's ›Effi Briest‹*, *Germanic Review* 74 (1999), pp. 117–129, here: pp. 124f.

<sup>39</sup>) CHRISTINE RENZ, *Geglückte Rede. Zu Erzählstrukturen in Theodor Fontanes ›Effi Briest‹, ›Frau Jenny Treibel‹ und ›Der Stechlin‹*, München 1999, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup>) INGRID MITTENZWEI, *Die Sprache als Thema. Untersuchungen zu Fontanes Gesellschaftsromanen*, hrsg. von HEINZ OTTO BURGER und KLAUS VON SEE, Bad Homburg, Berlin, Zürich 1970, p. 137.

the letters, despite the ensuing misery and degradation, begins a process of release that culminates in hysterical recriminations after her reunion with her daughter, until finally, if problematically, this appears to resolve into acceptance and forgiveness.

While Effi's dreams and disappointments dominate the first half of the novel, Innstetten's inner life is largely closed to the reader.<sup>41</sup> 'Lui', however, is not only a phantom bridegroom haunting young women, but also a phantom identity haunting men, with a literary provenance of his own. In 1883 Maupassant, whose works are permeated by a sense of alternative identities and lives unlived, published a story entitled simply ›Lui‹, in which a phantom 'lui' haunts a man's home.<sup>42</sup> It is a monologue in which the man, obsessed by his own anxiety, tells a friend that he intends to marry in order not to be alone. The mere presence of his bride, whom he has seen only four or five times, will create the domestic normality that can dispel the ghostly figure he has seen sitting by his fireside. Although, so he tells his friend, the figure disappeared when he touched it, the image still haunts him. He is not afraid of a real intruder – he would shoot him; he is a man of *sangfroid*, rational, who knows he is hallucinating and can explain it as a malfunction of the optic nerve, but despite the logical explanation he cannot conquer his fear: "Il me hante, c'est fou, mais c'est ainsi. Qui, Il. Je sais bien qu'il n'existe pas, que c'est rien! Il n'existe que dans mon appréhension, que dans ma crainte, que dans mon angoisse!" (›Lui‹, p. 875) He asks "Pourquoi cette persistance?" But he knows why: "Elle me gêne cependant parce que j'y pense sans cesse" (›Lui‹, p. 875). The figure is 'il', not an object like 'lui' but a subject, a projection of the self, the only person from whom one cannot escape.<sup>43</sup> Maupassant's hero is haunted by his unlived life; 'lui' is a *revenant* goading him to change, either to recover the past or to forget the present. Marriage is his intended response.

This story sheds light on Innstetten's "Angstapparat aus Kalkül" as an instrument developed from his own fears, but designed to intimidate and control others. As Maria Trippelli says – and Maupassant's story underlines – it is the ghost who walks through one's own room that inspires dread (›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 94), and Innstetten, who both chides Effi for her fears and plays

<sup>41</sup>) JEONG, HANG-KYUN, *Dialogische Offenheit. Eine Studie zum Erzählwerk Theodor Fontanes*, Würzburg 2001, pp. 115–146; p. 129 describes Innstetten's inner life as largely closed to the reader in the earlier part of the novel.

<sup>42</sup>) GUY DE MAUPASSANT, *Lui*, in: *Contes et nouvelles*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade. Préface d'ARMAND LANOUX, Introduction et notes de LOUIS FORESTIER (= Bibliothèque de la Pléiade), Paris 1974, vol. 1, pp. 869–875. Further references are given by page number in the text. In a letter to Erich Heilborn, Fontane describes Maupassant as "ganz Genie, ganz Nummer eins" among short story writers. IV, 1, 609–610, 15.11.1896.

<sup>43</sup>) PIERRE COGNY, *Maupassant, l'homme sans dieu*, Brussels 1968, pp. 136–138, on "autoscopie" in ›Lui‹.

upon them, is himself haunted from the beginning: when Effi's friends call out "Effi, komm", Innstetten's reaction appears uncharacteristically irrational: "Er glaubte nicht an Zeichen und Ähnliches, im Gegenteil wies alles Abergläubische zurück. Aber er konnte trotzdem von den zwei Worten nicht los [...]" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 21), echoing Maupassant's haunted man who thinks of the figure constantly. For Innstetten, the Chinese man is a reminder that he has had two brides stolen from him, first Luise, then Effi. Like Maupassant's narrator he could and does shoot the man who intrudes on his marriage. The ghost stories which, as Crampas reveals, the young Innstetten told his comrades, may have been meant to scare them, to express pride in a family ghost, or to externalize his own sense of being haunted. This sense is revived on his return to Kessin by a glimpse of the "Spukhaus" and by the expression on the face of the dying Crampas.

While Innstetten, like Maupassant's character, is haunted by the man he might have been, his story goes beyond Maupassant's sketch. He fails to suppress either his anxieties or his deepest instincts by marrying, ultimately regrets his ambition and believes he should have used his "Schulmeistertum, was ja wohl mein Eigentlichstes ist, als ein höherer Sittendirektor" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 287). His pedagogic attitude to Effi and emphasis on his status in Kessin may be an unconscious product of this belief. His haunting originates not in an external threat but in himself, hence, as Renate Böschstein argues, Innstetten's name is that of the man who is instead of himself. Effi's role may have been to banish his ghostly *alter ego*, which, ironically, the need to dominate, to educate and eventually to punish her, only recalls, so that, following the duel, he no longer feels "intakt" (Effi Briest, I, 4, 287).

Both the 'Awful Being' of imaginative fiction and the letters and reports that record and determine the final part of Effi's life and Innstetten's history belong to the double discourse that regulates society while sweetening the compelling reality of the socially acceptable marriage. Briest and Luise conceal their awareness of this discourse from their daughter, only allowing themselves to consider the potential hazards of the marriage after the wedding, and again after Effi's death, but always as a personal not as a socio-political issue. Only Briest's "Effi komm" re-asserts the precedence of personal over social values. The mismatch between Effi and Innstetten offers a complex examination of these values, in which the 'Awful Being', the imaginary 'lui' demonstrates the different concepts of personal identity attributed to men and to women. Effi acknowledges but cannot conform to an out-dated view of woman's identity as conferred or at least confirmed by her husband, her designated role derived from his. Her imaginary 'lui' combines social success and prominence, which Innstetten achieves, with nebulous 'romantic' qualities, of imagination, atten-

tive affection and sensitivity, as modelled in the fairy prince, the chivalrous knight, the dashing courtier and the gallant heroes of bygone ages and literary romances. While Innstetten fulfils the social role of the 'Awful Being', he lacks the emotional attributes. Neither he nor any other man she knows supplies both aspects of the imaginary bridegroom. Reinforced by mythology, Effi's favourite subject, by fairy stories, romances and novels, the 'Awful Being', 'lui' only returns the heroine to herself, increasing her sense of being confined to a haunted house and to a closed society.

Innstetten's 'Lui', like that of Maupassant's hero and the Duke of Omnium's unknown rival, "that other him", is the alternative to the artificial self he has become. 'Lui' represents his un-lived life, the life in accordance with his deepest, suppressed psychological needs. His belated self-examination after the duel reveals a man who has hitherto denied his own true character, subordinating it to the demands of society, for his other 'Lui' would not have fulfilled either his own, Effi's or her mother's social aspirations.<sup>44</sup>) Ironically his discovery that Effi has been unfaithful and his decision, made in conscious opposition to his personal affections, to challenge Crampas because of the 'Gesellschaftsetwas', occur when he and Effi have begun to achieve their ambitions. Before the discovery the novel offers only glimpses of Innstetten's deepest anxieties, the disturbing "Effi komm" of the second chapter, his belief in ghosts and the stories he tells, all of which are rationalized, denied or disowned. After his discovery he becomes haunted by his own inauthenticity, by the self he has suppressed and the distorted identity he has assumed in response to social expectations. In his reflections, as in Effi's scattered verdicts on other men, lie unexplored but possible identities and narratives. Ultimately both Effi and Innstetten prove to be 'Anstattfiguren', not what they might have been or were meant to be to each other or to the world. There are no substitutes or second chances, but, while Effi retreats to her family home and name, the reader does not know how Innstetten's story will end, only that there appears to be no point of origin to which he can return.

Effi's "Ja, sonst" may be read as a first example of the self-censorship that both practise. In the light of her engagement to the alarming stranger who is the subject of her mother's romantic tale, Effi can no longer say whatever she used to say about her imagined future. The second-hand fantasy of Luise's romance almost, but not quite, silences her. It generates the self-censorship that combines with poor communication, not confined to individuals but as a generalized social practice, in such a way that moments of authentic self-expression become

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<sup>44</sup>) ROLAND KÖHNE, »Effi Briest« und die Duellfrage. Zu einem Brief Fontanes an Maximilian Harden, in: Fontane Blätter 64 (1997), pp. 110–115; here: p. 111.

intense, dramatic, even drastic.<sup>45)</sup> Conversation is no longer “verbindliches Ausdrucksmedium und [...] Mittel zur Aufklärung des Menschen über sich selbst und sein Verhältnis zum Mitmenschen”,<sup>46)</sup> Gaps, silences and denials disguise complex motives and irreconcilable differences between decorum, convention and propriety on the one hand, and hopes and imaginings on the other. Fictional models, with their fantasies, hauntings and illusions confirm that, in this novel, being ‘instead’ signals inauthenticity rather than simple substitution. Effi’s ‘Awful Being’ and Innstetten’s ‘Lui’ remain phantoms of what imagination supplies but life denies. The empty domain of Effi’s “Ja, sonst” becomes an awful warning, perhaps a chance for a change of consciousness, but not an unequivocal protest against the gap between inauthentic, imposed identities, social roles or projected models, and individual sensibilities.

The text, like Effi, is “mitteilsam und verschlossen zugleich”. Her “Ja, sonst” both signals the part played by imagination in her perception of marriage and inaugurates a series of textual gaps in which her social role is paramount: her engagement, wedding, divorce and death are merely reported or must be inferred from the surrounding text. These gaps have both aesthetic and social functions: they testify to Fontane’s fastidious avoidance of clichés, but also erase the eponymous heroine from the major events of her life and exemplify a society that refuses to acknowledge its own deficiencies or doubts.<sup>47)</sup> The spiral form of the novel, the return to the garden in Hohen-Cremmen and to Effi’s old name offer the reader a formal, but illusory sense of completion, for, in the ‘Awful Being’, ‘Lui’, the fantasy bridegroom and the un-lived life, language and literature conjure up possibilities that the world of Effi and Innstetten denies or destroys. They belong, rather, to other possible worlds, to the “subjunctive worlds” that “the fictive, counter-factual, anti-determinist means of language” can create.<sup>48)</sup> They prompt the reader’s urge to fill gaps, to create coherence and so to complete, a process that occurs:

so casually, so naturally, that we hardly notice what we are doing. We select from our fantasy a world that is close, in some internal, mental sense, to the real world. We compare what is real with what we perceive as *almost* real ... Think how immeasurably poorer our mental lives would be if we didn’t have this creative capacity for slipping out of the midst of reality into soft ‘what ifs.’<sup>49)</sup>

<sup>45)</sup> JEONG, Dialogische Offenheit (cit. fn. 41), ›Effi Briest‹, I, 4, 111.

<sup>46)</sup> MITTENZWEI, Die Sprache als Thema (cit. fn. 40), p. 18.

<sup>47)</sup> Cf. Fontane’s letter to Theophil Zolling, 25. Februar 1882, “Lücken und Unbestimmtheiten sind immer noch besser als Plattheiten und Alltäglichkeiten.” IV, 3, 183.

<sup>48)</sup> GEORGE STEINER, After Babel. Aspects of Language and Translation, London, Oxford 1975, p. 227; quoted in DOUGLAS R. HOFSTADTER, Gödel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid, Harmondsworth 1980, p. 643.

<sup>49)</sup> HOFSTADTER, *ibid.*, p. 643.

Although Effi's return to Hohen-Cremmen and death offer formal closure to her story, the final conversation between her parents invites the reader to consider other, undefined possibilities. While social criteria inform Luise's explanation of events, Briest's final "Ach, Luise, laß ... das ist ein zu weites Feld" (Effi Briest I, 4, 296) acknowledges the complexity of existing conditions and influences, and invokes, in an appropriately spatial metaphor, the wider domain of 'what-ifs' and perhaps of the alternatives implicit in Effi's "Ja, sonst".

# „DAS ALLTÄGLICHE WAR PLÖTZLICH WIEDER ABENTEUER GEWORDEN“

Britische und deutschsprachige Schriftsteller  
über das Leben jenseits des Ärmelkanals

Von Margit Dirscherl (Oxford)

Travellers from England to Germany and travellers from Germany to England have repeatedly written about how they experienced unfamiliar everyday life, ordinary objects and circumstances. With reference to Bernhard Waldenfels, this essay traces how they deal with the seemingly self-evident, which is new to them and which they do not always understand, and how they align it with their own experiences.

Reisende aus England, die Deutschland bereisten, wie umgekehrt auch Reisende aus Deutschland, die in England reisten, haben immer wieder Beobachtungen und Erlebnisse aus dem ihnen unvertrauten Alltag niedergeschrieben und von alltäglichen Gegenständen und Gegebenheiten berichtet. Wie sie mit dem scheinbar Selbstverständlichen umgehen, das für sie neu und nicht selten unverständlich ist, und wie sie es einordnen, zeichnet der Aufsatz mit Bezugnahme auf die Überlegungen von Bernhard Waldenfels nach.

„Mit Bewußtheit reisen bedeutet, über das Gesehene, Erlebte und unser Verhältnis dazu zu reflektieren; am besten schreibend“<sup>1)</sup> so Rüdiger Görner. Manchen britischen und deutschsprachigen Reisenden, die niederschrieben, was für Erfahrungen und Beobachtungen sie jenseits des Ärmelkanals machten, ging es darum, namhafte Personen einmal mit eigenen Augen zu sehen oder ihnen sogar zu begegnen. Karl Philipp Moritz nahm die Gelegenheit wahr, William Pitt den Jüngeren reden zu hören; Johanna Schopenhauer besuchte Sir William Herschel. George Eliots Aufzeichnungen über ihren Aufenthalt in Berlin drehen sich fast ausschließlich um ihre Erlebnisse in den literarischen Salons, während es Theodor Fontane in London immerhin gelang, in der Nähe von Charles Dickens zu wohnen. Außerdem ist es den Reisenden daran gelegen,

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<sup>1)</sup> Den beiden anonymen Gutachter/innen danke ich für ihre wertvollen Anmerkungen zu diesem Aufsatz.

RÜDIGER GÖRNER, Die Träne im Zug. Literarisches Reisen oder die Koffer in der Stadt unserer Phantasie, in: *Lettre International*, Sommer 2009, S. 106–110, hier: S. 106.



berühmte Orte kennen zu lernen. Deutschsprachige Reisende suchen in London Westminster Abbey auf, das Parlament, die Theater, aber auch die psychiatrische Klinik ‚Bedlam‘, Institutionen, deren äußere Erscheinung sie ebenso kommentieren wie ihre Funktionen im gesamtgesellschaftlichen Gefüge.

Verwunderung und Bewunderung stellen sich aber oft auch aufgrund unscheinbarer Details ein, in Momenten, in denen eigentlich nichts Weltbewegendes zu entdecken wäre, weil „immer wieder Fremdes einbricht [...], am ehesten dort, wo wir es nicht suchen“.<sup>2)</sup> Und so geraten, ob in Reiseaufzeichnungen oder fiktionalen Texten, nicht immer nur Persönlichkeiten oder Sehenswürdigkeiten ins Zentrum von Reflexionen, sondern auch das Nichtgesuchte, Beiläufige, Alltägliche. „Wenn wir vom Alltag sprechen, so bezeichnen wir damit in der Regel jene Bereiche unseres täglichen Lebens, in denen selten Spektakuläres geschieht“.<sup>3)</sup> Dazu zählen unsere Angewohnheiten und die Dinge, die uns zwar ständig umgeben, denen wir aber dennoch selten bewusst Aufmerksamkeit schenken. Alltag ist für uns all das, was sich regelmäßig wiederholt und das wir deshalb auch nicht mehr hinterfragen. Er ist das Selbstverständliche schlechthin, das Vertraute, das man nicht nur *versteht* (epistemische Vertrautheit), sondern *auf das man sich versteht* (praktische Vertrautheit),<sup>4)</sup> im Sinne von Alltagskompetenz. Trotz Routine ist aber selbst der vertraute, ‚eigene‘ Alltag nicht immer leicht; es gilt, ihn zu bestehen: „Der Alltag ist jener Bereich der Wirklichkeit, in dem uns natürliche und gesellschaftliche Gegebenheiten als die Bedingung unseres Lebens unmittelbar begegnen, als Vorgegebenheiten, mit denen wir fertig zu werden versuchen müssen.“<sup>5)</sup>

Unterwegssein ist zunächst eine Möglichkeit, den Alltag zeitweise hinter sich zu lassen, zugunsten der Abwechslung: eine Möglichkeit, Spektakuläres zu erleben.<sup>6)</sup> Aber Reisende oder Menschen, die sich auf längere Zeit in einem anderen Land aufhalten, erleben dort auch einen fremden Alltag. Dieser Alltag läuft zwar selbstverständlich ab, ist ihnen aber – sowohl epistemisch als auch praktisch – unvertraut. Erlebt werden *andere* „Bedingung[en des] Lebens“ und „Vorgegebenheiten“, die in ihrer Selbstverständlichkeit beobachtet und, zumin-

<sup>2)</sup> BERNHARD WALDENFELS, *Vielstimmigkeit der Rede*, Frankfurt/M. 1999, S. 15.

<sup>3)</sup> THORSTEN CARSTENSEN und MATTIAS PIRHOLT, Einleitung: *Alltag in der Literatur der Moderne*, in: *Das Abenteuer des Gewöhnlichen. Alltag in der deutschsprachigen Literatur der Moderne*, hrsg. von THORSTEN CARSTENSEN und MATTIAS PIRHOLT (= *Philologische Studien und Quellen* 267), Berlin 2018, S. 9–25, hier: S. 9.

<sup>4)</sup> Vgl. hierzu die auf Martin Heidegger zurückgehende Unterscheidung von Bernhard Waldenfels. WALDENFELS, *Vielstimmigkeit der Rede* (zit. Anm. 2), S. 91.

<sup>5)</sup> ALFRED SCHÜTZ und THOMAS LUCKMANN, *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*, Frankfurt/M. 1984, S. 11.

<sup>6)</sup> Vgl. hierzu die Überlegungen zur Tourismus-Werbung bei CHRISTIANE SOLLTE-GRESSER, *Spielräume des Alltags. Literarische Gestaltung von Alltäglichkeit in deutscher, französischer und italienischer Erzählprosa (1929–1949)*, Würzburg 2010, S. 9–16.

dest bis zu einem gewissen Grad, verstanden werden können. Bestenfalls ist es möglich, in den fremden Alltag kurzfristig einzutauchen. Für den Beobachter aus einem anderen Kulturkreis ist dieser Alltag gerade aufgrund der Diskrepanz zwischen der lokal gegebenen Selbstverständlichkeit und der eigenen Unvertrautheit damit alles andere als leicht zu bewältigen, ja mehr noch: Ihm kann sogar etwas Spektakuläres, wenn nicht Abenteuerliches innewohnen, wenn die entsprechenden „Prozesse der Veralltäglichung“<sup>7)</sup> (noch) nicht stattgefunden haben. Indem Reisende oder Neuankömmlinge das objektiv Andere erleben, werden sie selbst im Kleinsten mit der Erfahrung von Fremdheit konfrontiert, eine Erfahrung, die sie unweigerlich machen müssen, und die sich selbst in der Wahrnehmung unscheinbarer Gebrauchsgegenstände manifestieren kann. Sie erleben einen anderen Alltag als zu Hause, sind auf grundsätzliche Weise aus der eigenen Lebenswelt gerissen und deshalb gezwungen, auch Gegebenheiten ihre Aufmerksamkeit zu schenken, die sie in der Heimat gewissermaßen im Halbschlaf hinnehmen. Eine daheim beiläufig abgetane Wahrnehmung kann so zu einem Ereignis werden, über das es zu berichten lohnt, eine zuhause als unwesentlich empfundene Angelegenheit zur großen Herausforderung, auch bedingt durch die eigene kulturelle Sichtweise, gibt es doch „keinen Ort jenseits der Kulturen, der uns einen unbefangenen und unbeschränkten Überblick gestatten würde.“<sup>8)</sup> Wie Reisende bzw. sich länger jenseits des Ärmelkanals Aufhaltende mit den von alltäglichen Erlebnissen ausgehenden Herausforderungen lebensweltlich umgehen und sie literarisch bzw. sprachlich inszenieren, zeigt der vorliegende Aufsatz, im Rückblick auf fiktive, essayistische und diaristische Texte. Die Überlegungen von Bernhard Waldenfels zum Umgang des Individuums mit dem Fremden sowie zur Phänomenologie des Alltags sollen dazu beitragen, die schriftlich fixierten Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen begrifflich beschreibbar zu machen, zu erhellen und es ermöglichen, sie zu vergleichen oder zusammenzuführen.

### I.

Karl Philipp Moritz' Bericht ›Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahr 1782‹ zeichnet ein verhältnismäßig unvoreingenommener Blick aufs Detail aus. Zwar staunt Moritz über die Großartigkeit Londons im Allgemeinen, doch betrachtet

7) BERNHARD WALDENFELS, *Der Stachel des Fremden*, Frankfurt/M. 1990, S. 191. „Hierher gehört das Geschehen der Eingewöhnung, das sich in Form von Lernprozessen, Traditionsbildungen und Normalisierungen vollzieht“ (S. 198). Waldenfels bezieht sich mit der „Veralltäglichung“ auf Max Weber.

8) BERNHARD WALDENFELS, *Grundmotive einer Phänomenologie des Fremden*, Frankfurt/M. 2006, S. 109.

er ebenso aufmerksam das unmittelbar Nahliegende, wie den privaten Raum jenseits des Repräsentativen: „Ich bewohne nun ein großes Zimmer unten an der Erde vorn heraus, das mit Tapeten und Fußteppichen versehen, und sehr gut möbliert ist. Die Stühle sind mit Leder überzogen, und die Tische von Mahagoniholz.“<sup>9)</sup> Indem Moritz seine unmittelbare Umgebung detailliert schildert, lässt er seine Leser daran teilhaben, wie er als Reisender in der Fremde mit dem neuen Alltag vertraut werden und sich eingewöhnen will – Waldenfels formuliert 205 Jahre später den Gedanken, dass ‚Gewohnheit‘ „mit Eingewöhnung und Wohnen zu tun“<sup>10)</sup> hat. Die Vielfalt der Materialien, die Moritz in seinem neuen, zeitweisen Zuhause umgeben, sind dafür anscheinend von besonderer Bedeutung. Des Weiteren erzählt er von seinen Bettdecken, vom Schuhputzen, von Essens- und Aufstehenszeiten, dem allabendlichen Anzünden der Laternen in den Straßen, den sich stets in die Länge ziehenden Besuchen beim Friseur. Moritz vermittelt dabei nur implizit, wie seine Sinne angesprochen werden, konzentriert sich stattdessen auf die materielle Beschaffenheit seiner Umgebung und rituell anmutende Regelmäßigkeiten. Von seinen Beobachtungen, die er en détail schildert, sei nur eine herausgegriffen:

Aber es gibt eine Art, Butterscheiben am Kaminfeuer zu rösten, welche unvergleichlich ist. Es wird nemlich eine Scheibe nach der andern so lange mit einer Gabel ans Feuer gesteckt, bis die Butter eingezogen ist, alsdann wird immer die folgende drauf gelegt, so daß die Butter eine ganze Lage solcher Scheiben allmählich durchzieht: man nennt dies einen *Toast*.<sup>11)</sup>

Was sich heute wie eine humorvolle Arabeske liest, zeigt im Gegenteil, dass zur Zeit von Moritz ein Toast alles andere als selbstverständlich in Deutschland war und dass dort, wo es für einen Engländer alltäglich zuging, für einen Deutschen (und nicht zuletzt für einen deutschen Leser) erhöhter Erklärungsbedarf bestand. Wie „unvergleichlich“ das Toasten von „Butterscheiben“ (damit gemeint sind anscheinend gebutterte Brotscheiben) ist, äußert sich dann auch darin, dass das Vorgehen beim Toasten schrittweise illustriert wird („alsdann [...] allmählich“). Den kleinen treffenden Beobachtungen wird verhältnismäßig hohe Bedeutung beigemessen, da sie Überraschungen bereithalten – und „[U]nvergleichliche[s]“ wird vom Reisenden eben nicht antizipiert, entsprechend würde das Staunen darüber ansonsten „verschwinden wie ein Phantom“.<sup>12)</sup> Es sind Alltäglichkeiten wie diese, die Moritz in Staunen versetzen, ansonsten spa-

<sup>9)</sup> KARL PHILIPP MORITZ, *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahr 1782*, Frankfurt/M. 2000, S. 16.

<sup>10)</sup> BERNHARD WALDENFELS, *Ordnung im Zwielficht*, Frankfurt/M., S. 79.

<sup>11)</sup> MORITZ, *Reisen eines Deutschen* (zit. Anm. 9), S. 24.

<sup>12)</sup> BERNHARD WALDENFELS, *Phänomenologie des Eigenen und des Fremden*, in: *Furcht und Faszination. Facetten der Fremdheit*, hrsg. von HERFRIED MÜNKLER und BERND LADWIG, Berlin 1997, S. 65–83, hier: S. 74.

ziert er auf den letzten Seiten „noch aus Langerweile“<sup>13)</sup> durch London. „Über Fremdes und mit Fremden sprechen bedeutet, sich auf die Bahn der Aneignung zu begeben“:<sup>14)</sup> In der systematischen Erklärung dessen, was „unvergleichlich“ scheint und Moritz überrascht, und damit der Anverwandlung der vormals fremden Praxis des Röstens von „Butterscheiben“, zeichnet sich der „Versuch einer Überwindung des Fremden durch *Verstehen*“<sup>15)</sup> ab.

Unter all den für den Reisenden unvertrauten Gepflogenheiten gibt es allerdings eine, die Moritz für den Rest seines Aufenthalts zu schaffen machen wird: „Ein Fußgänger scheint hier ein Wundertier zu sein, das von jedermann, der ihm begegnet, angestaunt, bedauert, in Verdacht gehalten und geflohen wird.“<sup>16)</sup> Bedenkt man, wie genau Moritz darüber reflektiert, wie unvertraut den Engländern sein Verhalten ist – sie sind es nun, die „staun[en]“! –, wäre die Antwort auf die Frage, ob „die anderen, die Mitglieder eines fremden Milieus, einer fremden Gruppe, einer fremden Kultur uns fremd [sind] oder [...] wir ihnen“<sup>17)</sup> in diesem speziellen Fall vermutlich: Beide sind sie einander fremd, die Einheimischen den Reisenden sowieso, die Reisenden den Einheimischen aber im Grunde nicht minder. Wenn Moritz rasten will, versteckt er sich auf Seitenwegen, um unbeobachtet Milton lesen zu können, denn als Wanderer wird er von vorbeikommenden Einheimischen „angestaunt“ bzw. sein Verhalten wird von ihnen kritisch beäugt, weil sie es missverstehen. Für sie lässt sich das Gesehene klar deuten, sie nehmen automatisch an, dass derjenige, der zu Fuß unterwegs ist, sich die übliche Form des Reisens nicht leisten kann. Moritz geht diesem Missverstehen buchstäblich aus dem Weg, indem er den eigenen Alltag – Wandern mit Lesepausen – nun möglichst im Verborgenen bewahrt. Zwar will Moritz die fremden Alltagsdetails *verstehen*; *sich aneignen* will er sie aber eher nicht, zumindest nicht in diesem Fall, auch wenn es sich bei Milton um eine durch und durch englische Reiselektüre handelt.

Auf dem Land kommt er mit dieser Einstellung auch ganz gut voran. Schwieriger wird es, als Wanderer nachts eine Bleibe zu finden. Im Laufe von Moritz' Reise gewinnt man den Eindruck, seine Erlebnisse seien zunehmend von diesem einen Umstand bestimmt, denn abends ist er oft lange auf der Suche nach einer Unterkunft – und daraus generieren sich, auch im Dunkeln, weitere abenteuerliche Momente. „Zwischen den Kulturen verläuft eine Schwelle“<sup>18)</sup> wird hier deutlich, und anders als beim *Toast*, der Moritz' eigene

<sup>13)</sup> MORITZ, *Reisen eines Deutschen* (zit. Anm. 9), S. 174.

<sup>14)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Vielstimmigkeit der Rede* (zit. Anm. 2), S. 9.

<sup>15)</sup> Ebenda, S. 16.

<sup>16)</sup> MORITZ, *Reisen eines Deutschen* (zit. Anm. 9), S. 82.

<sup>17)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Grundmotive einer Phänomenologie* (zit. Anm. 8), S. 124.

<sup>18)</sup> Ebenda, S. 114.

Gewohnheiten nicht grundlegend infrage stellt, und der auch nicht zu Missverständnissen führt, stehen das Aneignen des Anderen und das Bewahren des Eigenen für Moritz hier in einem spannungsreichen Verhältnis. Deutlich wird in Moritz' Beobachtungen, dass es trotz Offenheit und Annäherung nicht zu einer grundsätzlichen „Verlässlichkeit“ des (englisch-) Alltäglichen kommt, und dass diese Verlässlichkeit auch durch „ausdrückliches Wissen“ – das sich Moritz zweifelsohne aneignet – „niemals völlig zu ersetzen ist.“<sup>19)</sup>

Das Gegenstück zur Schilderung einer Wanderschaft, wie sie Moritz gibt, findet sich knapp zwanzig Jahre später bei Henry Crabb Robinson, der unter anderem in Jena unterwegs ist und dabei gerade über die *Abwesenheit* von Abenteuer spricht. Ihm erschließt sich nicht, wie man zumindest in dieser Gegend am besten vorankommt; mangels Erkenntnis kommt er nicht annähernd in die Situation, den fremden Alltag als Abenteuer zu erkennen und erleben zu können. Am 14. Juni 1801 schreibt er in sein Tagebuch:

In the morning Brentano & I began our Tour under no very favourable Auspices for the weather was bad. And we lost half a Stunde in making a foolish Attempt to go through Villages instead of taking the Post Road. Our day was barren of Adventures. We dined with the lusty Landlady at the Darmstt. Stadt in ffriedberg & paid dearly for her Courtesy to us.<sup>20)</sup>

Die Textpassage zeigt auf den ersten Blick, wie der Mangel an Wissen über das lokale Alltagsleben verhindert, Fremdes zu erleben. Auf den zweiten Blick wird deutlich, dass das kulturell Andere gerade in der Abwesenheit jeglichen Abenteurers zutage tritt, auch wenn Crabb Robinson das nicht artikuliert. Mit Waldenfels gesprochen, trifft es in dieser Szene im wahrsten Sinne zu, dass sich „das Fremde zeigt [...], indem es sich uns entzieht.“<sup>21)</sup> Die Möglichkeit einer *Verlässlichkeit* tut sich auf dieser Wanderung gar nicht erst auf.

## 2.

London bot seinen Besuchern Abenteuer ganz anderer Größenordnung als Reisen in der *countryside*. Heinrich Heine ließ sich nach seiner Ankunft 1827 auf Cheapside, der damals belebtesten Straße Londons, im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes umrennen. Dort wird er „von allen Seiten fortgeschoben oder gar

<sup>19)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Der Stachel des Fremden* (zit. Anm. 7), S. 198.

<sup>20)</sup> HENRY CRABB ROBINSON, *Travel Diary 1801–1802*, f. 1. MS, Dr Williams's Library, London. Quotation by permission of the Director and Trustees of Dr Williams's Library, London, and the Henry Crabb Robinson Project (eds. Timothy Whelan and James Vigus), School of English and Drama, Queen Mary University of London <www.crabbrobinson.co.uk> [26.06.2019]. Für den Hinweis auf die Textpassage danke ich James Vigus.

<sup>21)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Phänomenologie des Eigenen und des Fremden* (zit. Anm. 12), S. 73.

mit einem milden God damn! niedergestoßen. God damn! Das verdammte Stoßen! Ich merkte bald, dieses Volk hat viel zu tun.“<sup>22)</sup> Trotz des von Heine auf mehreren Seiten so brillant veranschaulichten Entsetzens ist sein Blick auf London schon weit weniger unvoreingenommen als derjenige von Karl Philipp Moritz; in den Tagen Scotts und Byrons war in Deutschland eine wahre Anglomanie ausgebrochen. Und wo sich Moritz noch staunend nähert, schiebt Heine den Kulturschock – und das angesichts des bloß alltäglichen Eilens auf einer belebten Straße – schon wieder augenzwinkernd von sich, jedenfalls in seinen Texten. Deutlich werden aber auch bei Heine „*Unvertrautheit* und *Unverständlichkeit* von Wahrnehmungsgestalten und Handlungssituationen, denen unser ‚Wissensvorrat‘ nicht gewachsen ist.“<sup>23)</sup> Seine Darstellung der Londoner Alltagswelt als durch und durch außergewöhnlich vermittelt, wie umfassend der Reisende „mit einer anderen Wirklichkeitsordnung konfrontiert“<sup>24)</sup> ist, sogar in der beiläufigsten aller öffentlichen Situationen, beim Betrachten einer Schaufensterauslage in einer städtischen Straße. Heine geht es in seiner Schilderung dieser Situation weniger darum, „sich auf die Bahn der Aneignung zu begeben“,<sup>25)</sup> als vielmehr das Andere als Anderes hervortreten zu lassen. Indem die Fremdheitserfahrung so schillernd inszeniert wird, erscheint das Andere als Kontrastfolie zum provinziellen Deutschland, aber auch als Ausblick auf das zukünftige Leben in der gesellschaftlichen Moderne generell, dem kaum *Verlässlichkeit*, dafür umso mehr Tempo innewohnt.

Hermann Fürst von Pückler-Muskau hat in seinen Briefen zwischen 1826 und 1829 (veröffentlicht als ›Briefe eines Verstorbenen‹) eine Fülle bemerkenswerter Alltagsbeobachtungen aus dieser Zeit aufgezeichnet, etwa: „Bei jeder Tasse Tee entrollt er [der Engländer] eine auf unendliches Papier gedruckte Zeitung von der Größe eines Tischtuches.“<sup>26)</sup> Nicht ohne spöttischen Humor wird anhand solcher Passagen verdeutlicht, dass es nicht ganz einfach ist, eine andere Kultur anschaulich zu machen, selbst wenn es um etwas Harmloses wie eine Zeitungslektüre geht. Pückler-Muskau illustriert das (nahezu) ‚Unvergleichliche‘ seiner Wahrnehmung, indem er zum Vergleich mit einem sicherlich weitaus größeren Tischtuch greift sowie zum hyperbolischen „unendlich“. Damit zeigt er, wie unvertraut der Anblick einer dermaßen großformatigen englischen Zeitung auch für seine Leser wäre, die die Zeitung nicht selbst anblicken können und deshalb zugespitzt von ihr erzählt bekommen. Nicht die

<sup>22)</sup> HEINRICH HEINE, Sämtliche Werke, hrsg. von KLAUS BRIEGLER, München 2005, Bd. 2, S. 539.

<sup>23)</sup> WALDENFELS, Vielstimmigkeit der Rede (zit. Anm. 2), S. 91.

<sup>24)</sup> Ebenda.

<sup>25)</sup> Ebenda, S. 9.

<sup>26)</sup> In: GERHARD MÜLLER-SCHWEFE, Deutsche erfahren England. Englandbilder der Deutschen im 19. Jahrhundert, Tübingen 2007, S. 90.

Londoner Kriminalgeschichten, die, wie er nebenbei erwähnt, in der Zeitung stehen, beeindrucken und unterhalten hier, sondern deren ungewöhnliches Format; nicht der Inhalt, sondern die Form, als etwas „Unbekanntes in einem gesteigerten Sinne [...], für das unsere Ordnungsraster nicht ausreichen.“<sup>27)</sup> Wenn das Zeitungsformat schon verwundert, die schiere Materialität des nun wirklich alltäglichsten Gegenstandes, wie erscheint die andere Kultur dem Reisenden dann erst in ihrer Gesamtheit? Pückler-Muskau vermittelt auf souveräne Art und Weise und nicht zuletzt durch Komik erzeugende rhetorische Mittel, wie immens der Eindruck von Fremdheit sein kann – und zwar gerade *weil* er sich einem Detail wie dem Format einer Zeitung zuwendet.

George Eliots Briefe und Aufzeichnungen über ihre Zeit in Deutschland handeln vor allem von ihren Begegnungen mit Personen aus intellektuellen Kreisen sowie von kulturellen Ereignissen. Ihre Texte zeigen, dass sie sich intellektuell auf ihrer Reise zuhause fühlt. Mit den alltäglichen Umständen wird sie hingegen weniger vertraut, besonders im Hinblick auf das Wohnen; sie schreibt Beobachtungen aus dem Alltag nieder, die sie besonders irritieren, wie: „questionable meat, [...] stove-heated rooms and beds warranted not to tuck up“.<sup>28)</sup> Oder: „they consider a room furnished when it has a looking-glass and an escritoire in it“.<sup>29)</sup> Und sie reflektiert darüber, indem sie gelegentlich Verbindungen vom Speziellen zum Allgemeinen herstellt. In München zieht Eliot 1858 aus ihren Beobachtungen eine besonders pointierte Schlussfolgerung: „Soon we were at the Bairische Hof [...] – this was the first time of our journey that we had a carpet-less room and mattresses instead of spring beds. It was Germany *pur et simple*.“<sup>30)</sup>

„*Pur et simple*“ gilt hier im doppelten Sinne: sowohl lebensweltlich, indem der Raum nur mit wenigen Gegenständen ausgestattet ist, als auch epistemologisch, indem sich die nationalstereotype Projektion in reduzierter und damit kondensierter bzw. prägnanter Form darbietet. Die Beobachtung will zeigen, wie sich ‚das Deutsche‘ in der spärlichen Ausstattung des Zimmers auf den Punkt bringen lässt. Eliot entwickelt hier gewissermaßen eine rhetorische Strategie der Fremdwahrnehmung en miniature, und gerade weil es sich um eine aufs Detail konzentrierte Beobachtung handelt, mutet ihre Argumentation so bestechend an. Michael Sheringham zufolge gilt prinzipiell: „The oscillation between negative and positive evaluations is endemic to thinking

<sup>27)</sup> WALDENFELS, Ordnung im Zwielicht (zit. Anm. 10), S. 123.

<sup>28)</sup> The Journals of George Eliot, hrsg. von MARGARET HARRIS and JUDITH JOHNSTON, Cambridge 2000, S. 257.

<sup>29)</sup> Selection from the George Eliot Letters, hrsg. von GORDON S. HAIGHT, New Haven 1985, S. 185f.

<sup>30)</sup> The Journals of George Eliot (zit. Anm. 28), S. 309.

about the everyday. This means that any appeal to everydayness as interesting or valuable is likely to involve rehabilitation or exhortation: look at what you've overlooked!“<sup>31)</sup> Eliot hingegen wendet dieses Prinzip ins Gegenteil, bei ihr findet keinerlei Oszillieren statt. Stattdessen entpuppt sich für sie das Häufige als das Typische bzw. Essentielle. Damit bricht die Reflexion allerdings auch ab, mündet sie doch in eine eher problematische Verallgemeinerung.

Sich in der Fremde die unmittelbare Umgebung möglichst vertraut einzurichten, also zumindest im Hinblick auf die Unterkunft Verwunderungen und Irritationen zu vermeiden, ist seit dem neunzehnten Jahrhundert das Anliegen vieler Reisender. Dies geschah nicht zuletzt im Rahmen der aufkeimenden Tourismusindustrie; 1855 führte Thomas Cook die erste Reisegruppe nach Deutschland, dessen Hotels sich den Bedürfnissen englischer Gäste nach und nach anpassten. Thomas Carlyle übernachtete 1858 in Berlin im „British Hotel“. Außerdem hatten Reisehandbücher wie dasjenige von John Murray aus dem Jahr 1853 Konjunktur. Sein ›Handbook for Travellers on the Continent‹ enthält eine breite Mischung aus hilfreichen Informationen, die das Reiseland anschaulich machen sollen, und sei es durch die Angabe der genauen Anzahl der Soldaten und der jährlich veröffentlichten Bücher. Hinzu kommen ausführliche Angaben zu Unterkunft und Reismöglichkeiten.

Gleich an dritter Stelle, nach „Passports“ und „Inns and Expenses“, vergleichsweise prominent und, anders als sonst, mit möglichen Reaktionen des Reisenden verknüpft, wird der Unterpunkt „German Beds“ aufgeführt. Zwischen den praktischen und institutionellen Informationen findet sich eine aufs Detail gerichtete Alltagsdiagnose. Murray bezieht sich auf Konkretes, Materielles, Dinghaftes: „One of the first complaints of an Englishman on arriving in Germany will be directed against the beds. It is therefore as well to make him aware beforehand of the full extent of the misery to which he will be subjected on this score.“<sup>32)</sup> Es ist Murrays Anliegen, den Reisenden vorzubereiten, also Überraschungen – zumindest im Hinblick auf die Nachtruhe – möglichst zu vermeiden. Entsprechend folgt eine ausführliche Beschreibung der zahllosen Unbequemlichkeiten, die der Reisende laut Murrays ›Handbook‹ in deutschen Betten erleiden wird. Anschließend bekräftigt Murray seine Warnung, indem er Samuel Taylor Coleridge zitiert: „Mr. Coleridge has recorded his abhorrence of a German bed, declaring, he would rather carry his blanket about him, like a wild Indian, than submit to this abominable custom.“<sup>33)</sup>

<sup>31)</sup> MICHAEL SHERINGHAM, *Everyday Life. Theories and Practices from Surrealism to the Present*, Oxford 2006, S. 23.

<sup>32)</sup> JOHN MURRAY, *Handbook for Travellers on the Continent*, 9. Aufl., London 1953, S. 200.

<sup>33)</sup> Ebenda.



Hätte Murray sein ›Handbook‹ ein paar Jahrzehnte später geschrieben, er hätte außerdem, neben George Eliot, den Titelhelden aus Christopher Isherwoods ›Mr. Norris Changes Trains‹ (1935) zitieren können. Auch dieser bringt offenbar seine eigenen Decken in die viel zu kleinen deutschen Betten mit: „As you observe, I'm conservative enough to keep to my English sheets and blankets. The German feather-bags give me the most horrible nightmares.“<sup>34)</sup> Decke versus Daunenbett, das ist es vor allem, was gegen Deutschland ins Feld geführt wird. Im Privatesten, das sich anscheinend am heftigsten der *Veralltäglic*h<sup>u</sup>ng widersetzt (hier der Veränderung durch einen *fremden* Alltag), wird das Eigene im Verborgenen bewahrt oder dies zumindest angeraten – entsprechend der Gewohnheit von Karl Philipp Moritz, auf Reisen zu Fuß unterwegs zu sein, auch wenn er damit bei den Einheimischen auf Unverständnis stößt.

Was für englische Reisende die deutschen Betten sind, ist für Deutsche in England die Sonntagslangeweile. Nun mag ein Sonntag nicht unbedingt Alltag sein; er kehrt dennoch regelmäßig wieder, wird selbstverständlich ‚begangen‘ – oder eben nicht. Die Sonntagslangeweile ist geradezu ein Leitmotiv in der deutschsprachigen Literatur über England, wie bei Johann Valentin Adrian, der beklagt: „alles, was klingt, ist verpönt an diesem Tage der Langeweile.“<sup>35)</sup> Pückler-Muskau berichtet von einem Gespräch: „Es war gerade Sonntag, und die alte Dame konnte sich nicht enthalten [...], strafend auszurufen: ‚Aber wie ist es möglich, dass ein *guter* Mensch wie Sie an einem *Sonntag* normal eine Reise antreten kann!“<sup>36)</sup> Theodor Fontane formuliert es besonders sarkastisch: „Die großen Tyrannen sind ausgestorben; nur in England lebt noch einer – der Sonntag.“<sup>37)</sup> Geradezu überdeutlich findet bei Fontane eine „kognitive Distanzierung“ statt, er überzeichnet den Sachverhalt, nachdem „die Erwartungen auf einen vertrauten Verlauf der Dinge enttäuscht“<sup>38)</sup> worden sind.

Hinzukommen könnte, dass die sonntägliche Ruhe gerade in London mit der Annahme in Konflikt gerät, es ginge in dieser Stadt fortwährend rastlos oder zumindest abwechslungsreich zu (eine Annahme, die vielleicht von der Lektüre der Heine'schen Reisebilder befeuert wurde). Die Erfahrung des fremden sonntäglichen Alltags widersprüche in diesem Fall nicht nur der eigenen Gewohnheit, sondern auch dem „ausdrückliche[n] Wissen“<sup>39)</sup> bzw. den Erwartungen des Reisenden. Dies scheint dazu beizutragen, dass auch hier, ähnlich wie bei Eliot, das Sheringham'sche Prinzip des Oszillierens geradezu ins Ge-

<sup>34)</sup> CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD, *Mr Norris Changes Trains*, 6. Aufl., London 1956, S. 31.

<sup>35)</sup> JOHANN VALENTIN ADRIAN, *Bilder aus England*. 2 Bde. Frankfurt/M. 1827/28, Bd. 2, S. 31.

<sup>36)</sup> In: MÜLLER-SCHWEFE, *Deutsche erfahren England* (zit. Anm. 26), S. 90.

<sup>37)</sup> THEODOR FONTANE, *Aus England und Schottland*, München 1963, S. 53.

<sup>38)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Vielstimmigkeit der Rede* (zit. Anm. 2), S. 91.

<sup>39)</sup> DERS., *Der Stachel des Fremden* (zit. Anm. 7), S. 198.

genteil verkehrt wird. Die Beobachter machen es sich in ihren Texten zunutze, dass es „keinen Ort jenseits der Kulturen [gibt], der uns einen unbefangenen und unbeschränkten Überblick gestatten würde.“<sup>40)</sup> Die Befangenheit des Blicks sowie die Grenzen kulturellen Wissens werden hier rhetorisch eingesetzt, um die ‚Unvergleichlichkeit‘ besonders hervorzuheben, wodurch Prozesse der Stereotypisierung in Gang gesetzt bzw. ziemlich klar konturierte Wahrnehmungsfolien erzeugt werden.

### 3.

Im Jahr 1900 verfasste Jerome K. Jerome eine Fortsetzung seines früheren Romans ›Three Men on a Boat‹ und schickte seine Hauptfiguren diesmal, in ›Three Men on the Bummel‹, zum Radfahren quer durch Deutschland. Für die drei Reisenden ergibt sich immer wieder Anlass zur Verwunderung. Als besondere Herausforderung erweist sich das Zugfahren, wo die Bürokratie in den Augen eines Engländers alles andere als Ordnung schafft:

German travelling, it may be explained, is somewhat complicated. You buy a ticket at the station you start from for the place you want to go. You might think this would enable you to get there, but it does not. When your train comes up, you attempt to swarm into it; but the guard magnificently waves you away. Where are your credentials? You show him your ticket. He explains to you that by itself that is of no service whatever; you have only taken the first step towards travelling; you must go back to the booking office and get in addition what is called a ‚*schnellzug* ticket‘. With this you return, thinking your troubles over. You are allowed to get in, so far so good. But you must not sit down anywhere, and you must not stand still, and you must not wander about. You must take another ticket, this time what is called a ‚*platz* ticket‘, which entitles you to a place for a certain distance.<sup>41)</sup>

Das Komische der Passage besteht darin, dass sie wie eine präzise Anleitung formuliert ist, dabei aber das Ineffiziente des Vorgangs chronologisch reproduziert. Es wird möglichst gewissenhaft erklärt, wie umständlich der Erwerb einer gültigen Fahrkarte in Deutschland vonstatten geht. Der Ich-Erzähler von ›Three Men on the Bummel‹ stellt daraufhin eine Liste zusammen, sorgfältig gegliedert, in der alle Varianten von Fehlverhalten im Zug klassifiziert sind. Jedoch, so der Erzähler, „explanations are held as no excuse in Germany“.<sup>42)</sup> Berichtet wird bei Jerome nicht vom Verstehen des kulturell Anderen, geschweige denn von dessen Aneignung, sondern von der schieren Verwunderung über die andere Kultur und – über die Undurchschaubarkeit hinausgehend – die völlige Sinnlosigkeit, die nahezu das Bahnfahren selbst in Frage stellt; jedenfalls in den

<sup>40)</sup> DERS., Grundmotive einer Phänomenologie (zit. Anm. 8), S. 109.

<sup>41)</sup> JEROME K. JEROME, Three Men on the Bummel, London 1983, S. 125.

<sup>42)</sup> Ebenda, S. 126.

Augen des Reisenden. Ein Verstehen oder Eingewöhnen ist ihm unmöglich, das zeigt die Passage – anders als Moritz' genaue Beschreibung des Toastens von „Butterscheiben“. Aus der scheinbar objektiven Warte des Ich-Erzählers ist der Erwerb einer gültigen Fahrkarte ineffizient, wenn nicht widersinnig und von daher unzugänglich. Entsprechend erfahren wir am Schluss der Szene, dass sich Georges Zugfahrt als eine der teuersten Reisen gestaltete, die wohl jemals unternommen wurden. Unzugänglichkeiten wie diese lassen sich womöglich mit Alfred Schütz' ‚Relevanzstrukturen‘<sup>43)</sup> erklären, die in verschiedenen Kulturen jeweils verschieden ausgeprägt sind.

Außerdem bemerkenswert ist die Episode mit den Briefkästen:

Why, in Germany, is it the custom to put the letterbox up a tree? Why do they not fix it to the front door as we do? I should hate having to climb up a tree to get my letters. Besides, it is not fair to the postman. In addition to being most exhausting, the delivery of letters must to a heavy man, on windy nights be positively dangerous work.<sup>44)</sup>

Da Jerome die Befremdlichkeiten dermaßen überzeichnet – im Grunde ist er ein Humorist vom Schlage Heines –, machen diese kleinen Erlebnisse letztlich die große Reise aus. Gerade weil tausenderlei kulturelle Missverständnisse die Weiterreise manchmal fast verhindern, und weil sich die drei Radfahrer von Kuriositäten wie den Briefkästen dazu angehalten sehen, sich mit der anderen Kultur auseinanderzusetzen, bietet sie genau das an Abenteuer, was Crabb Robinson auf seiner gemeinsamen Wanderung mit Brentano vergeblich suchte. Das Spektakuläre verschwindet angesichts „jene[s] Bereich[s] der Wirklichkeit, in dem uns natürliche und gesellschaftliche Gegebenheiten als die Bedingung unseres Lebens unmittelbar begegnen“, auf dieser Reise geht es daher im wahrsten Sinne um „Vorgegebenheiten, mit denen wir [hier: die drei englischen Radfahrer] fertig zu werden versuchen müssen.“<sup>45)</sup> Darüber hinaus formuliert der Erzähler seine Kritik so, als wolle er seiner Fremdheitserfahrung eine moralische Dimension verleihen, weist er doch darauf hin, die Arbeit des Briefträgers sei „positively dangerous“. Indem er eine scheinbare Gefahr beschwört, treibt er seinen Spott aber nur weiter und weiter, denn de facto sind die Briefkästen ja nicht oben in den Bäumen angenagelt, sondern auf Brust- oder Hüfthöhe. Auf diese Weise wird selbst eine harmlose Radtour zu einer humorvoll erzählten Abenteuerreise, auch wenn sie ab und an allzu belehrend gestaltet ist. Die besichtigten Städte und Landschaften werden zum Beiwerk degradiert, im Vordergrund stehen stets die Hindernisse des Alltags. Daraus, dass das „Erklären [...] keine Nähe und Vertrautheit, eher das Gegenteil“<sup>46)</sup> schafft, speist sich

<sup>43)</sup> ALFRED SCHÜTZ, *Das Problem der Relevanz*, Frankfurt/M. 1982, S. 42.

<sup>44)</sup> So der Mitreisende George. JEROME, *Three Men on the Bummel* (zit. Anm. 41), S. 95.

<sup>45)</sup> SCHÜTZ und LUCKMANN, *Strukturen der Lebenswelt* (zit. Anm. 5), S. 11.

<sup>46)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Vielstimmigkeit der Rede* (zit. Anm. 2), S. 72.

die Komik dieser Episoden. Vor allem aber bleiben die von den Radfahrern gestellten Fragen unbeantwortet. Die Misslichkeiten und Kuriositäten werden als verwunderliche, anekdotenhafte Erlebnisse der Reisenden stehen gelassen, sie werden allenfalls mit Empfehlungen versehen – aber eben nicht auf einen gemeinsamen kulturellen Nenner („das Deutsche“) gebracht.

Den deutschen Alltag auf längere Zeit mitzuerleben, dabei aber eine gewisse Distanz zu bewahren: das war gewissermaßen das Programm in Christopher Isherwoods ›Goodbye to Berlin‹ (1939). Den Erzähler dieses Buchs beschrieb Isherwood rückblickend als „the detached foreign observer“.<sup>47)</sup> Sein Blick auf die Alltagsgegenstände konzentriert sich aufs kleinste Detail:

Everything in this room is [...] unnecessarily solid, abnormally heavy and dangerously sharp. Here, at the writing table, I am confronted by a phalanx of metal objects – a pair of candlesticks shaped like entwined serpents, an ashtray from which emerges the head of a crocodile, a paper knife copied from a Florentine dagger, a brass dolphin holding on the end of the tail a small broken clock.<sup>48)</sup>

“What becomes of such things?“<sup>49)</sup> fragt der Erzähler im Anschluss. Wie etwa 150 Jahre vor ihm Karl Philipp Moritz beschreibt Isherwood sein Zimmer. Aber anders als Moritz reflektiert er über den Sinn der Dinge; durch noch detailliertere Beschreibungen der Alltagsgegenstände zwischen Gebrauchsutensil und Dekoration arbeitet er auf sensible Weise deren Befremdlichkeit eigens heraus und zeigt uns damit mittelbar auch, wie geschärft unsere Wahrnehmung in einem anderen kulturellen Umfeld ist, und dass selbst im Kleinsten das Andere zu entdecken ist, was auch im Wort „confronted“ zum Ausdruck kommt. Dabei ist zumindest der Rhythmus des Alltags dem Erzähler längst vertraut, das teilt er dem Leser nebenbei mit, beispielsweise als er ankündigt: „And soon the whistling will begin.“<sup>50)</sup> Oder wenn er schildert, was hinter verschlossenen Türen geschieht: „they whistle up at the lighted windows of warm rooms where the beds are already turned down for the night.“<sup>51)</sup> Und er kennt sehr gut den „extraordinary smell in this room when the stove is lighted and the window shut“.<sup>52)</sup>

But that is precisely the point of the sort of novels that Isherwood was attempting to write, namely, to present and to examine the interrelations of two cultures, to seek to understand how and why two different and even inimical worlds understood or misunderstood each other.<sup>53)</sup>

<sup>47)</sup> CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD, *Christopher and His Kind. 1927–1939*, London 1977, S. 49.

<sup>48)</sup> DERS., *Goodbye to Berlin*, London 1966, S. 15.

<sup>49)</sup> Ebenda.

<sup>50)</sup> Ebenda, S. 13.

<sup>51)</sup> Ebenda, S. 14.

<sup>52)</sup> Ebenda.

<sup>53)</sup> PETER EDGERLY FIRCHOW, *Strange Meetings. Anglo-German Literary Encounters from 1910 to 1969*, Washington 2008, S. 131f.

Dabei bewahrt der Erzähler aber Distanz, er unternimmt keinen einzigen „Bemächtigungsversuch“, der „zu einer gewaltsamen Rationalisierung“ führen könnte, sondern er nutzt die von den Dingen ausgehende „Beunruhigung, Störung und Verstörung“<sup>54</sup>) subtil für seine erzählerischen Zwecke. Allenfalls verallgemeinert er vage („such things“), betrachtet in der Regel jede einzelne Sache so lange, bis sie in ihrer Einzigartigkeit erkannt und auf den Punkt gebracht ist. Die detaillierte und in diesem Fall mit Ernst vorgebrachte Beschreibung von Dingen und Wahrnehmungen hat aber auch eine Funktion jenseits dessen, dass sie Verständnis für eine den Engländern fremde Kultur erwecken will; schließlich teilt der Erzähler am Ende des Buches mit, wie sehr sich die Welt, von der er gerade erzählt hat, im Umbruch befindet. Der akkurat protokollierte Alltag der Spätweimarer Zeit ist hier auch deshalb besonders – und besonders aufzeichnungswürdig –, weil er spürbar bald der Vergangenheit angehören wird („What becomes of such things?“<sup>55</sup>). ›Goodbye to Berlin‹ archiviert Lebenswirklichkeiten, jedenfalls sofern sie literarisch aufbewahrt werden können.

## 4.

Wie gehen Schreibende mit dem fremden Alltag in einer Zeit um, in der längst bekannt ist, was ein *Toast* ist? Der Alltag bleibt anscheinend trotzdem voller Merkwürdigkeiten, die bewundert oder kritisch beäugt werden, und weiterhin „lauert Unbekanntes und Unverfügbares, das uns verlockt und bedroht, und beides oft in einer delikaten Mischung aus Überraschendem und Übermächtigem.“<sup>56</sup>) Matthias Polityckis Gedicht „Ursprung des philosophischen Empirismus“ (2015) widmet sich den englischen „knuffig kleinen Waschbecken“,

mit ihren zwei Hähnen  
am äußerst linken und am äußerst rechten Rand  
für kaltes und  
für warmes Wasser  
und doppelt rätselhaft,  
weil auch die Wasserhähne selber  
so geduckt gedrunken sind,  
daß man kaum eine einz'ge Hand komplett untern Wasserstrahl  
bekommt. [...]  
Lang stand ich jedes Mal davor,  
ehe ich Finger für Finger  
mal untern heißen,  
mal untern kalten Wasserstrahl gehalten hatte,

<sup>54</sup>) WALDENFELS, Grundmotive einer Phänomenologie (zit. Anm. 8), S. 125.

<sup>55</sup>) ISHERWOOD, Goodbye to Berlin (zit. Anm. 48), S. 15.

<sup>56</sup>) WALDENFELS, Der Stachel des Fremden (zit. Anm. 7), S. 193.

das Alltägliche war plötzlich  
wieder Abenteuer geworden und  
Anlaß, sich letzten Fragen zu stellen,  
äußerst befriedigend am Ende,  
wenn man's halbwegs bestanden und,  
wenngleich ohne allerletzte Antworten,  
hinter sich hatte.<sup>57)</sup>

Gewöhnlich ist das Wissen über kulturell Fremdes „nur wenig strukturiert und kaum differenziert“, und was „wir wahrnehmen, sind eher grobe Linien als innere Vielfalt der Formen.“<sup>58)</sup> Das vorliegende Gedicht handelt hingegen gerade von jener Formenvielfalt der Dinge, die bereits Christopher Isherwood ausgesprochen genau in den Blick nahm, auch wenn es hier nur um einen einzigen Gegenstand geht. Dieser Gegenstand stellt das Gedicht in die Tradition des Dinggedichts, wobei er ausgehend vom Staunen im Sinne von schierer Verwunderung erkundet wird. Es geht offensichtlich darum, dass man ein Waschbecken so unpraktisch konstruieren kann wie (für die Radfahrer bei Jerome) andernorts den Bahnverkehr oder die Aufhängung für Briefkästen. Und was als Beschreibung eines Waschbeckens daherkommt, entpuppt sich als grundsätzliche Abrechnung, die mindestens so ironisch ist wie die Alltagsbeschreibungen früherer Englandreisender.

Wie in der Überschrift „Ursprung des philosophischen Empirismus“ angedeutet, greift die Alltagsbeobachtung aus und es kommt zu umfassenden Schlussfolgerungen, die Alltagswelt wird zur „Evidenz- und Bewährungsquelle für anderweitige Erkenntnis.“<sup>59)</sup> Dabei handelt es sich aber nicht um scheinbar essentielle Wahrheiten über die andere Kultur oder um Typisierungen; die für das Dinggedicht typische „Neigung zur symbol[ischen] Ausdeutung“<sup>60)</sup> bezieht sich nicht auf nationale Stereotype. Es werden vielmehr epistemologische Einsichten gewonnen. Denn sichtbar wird im Gedicht ein der Wahrnehmung – und besonders der Wahrnehmung des kulturell Anderen – wesentlicher Mechanismus: „Da sich der Fremde nicht dem natürlichen Lauf der Dinge anvertrauen kann, ist er zu Abstandnahme und genauem Hinsehen genötigt. Auf diese Weise vermag er Einsichten zu gewinnen, welche den praktisch Versierten in der Regel verschlossen bleiben.“<sup>61)</sup>

Das Gedicht über die „knuffig kleinen Waschbecken“ zeigt, wie sich beim genauen Hinsehen auf die Oberfläche eines fremden Alltags auch tiefere

<sup>57)</sup> MATTHIAS POLITYCKI, *Sämtliche Gedichte*. 2017–1987, Hamburg 2018, S. 133.

<sup>58)</sup> HERFRIED MÜNKLER und BERND LADWIG, *Dimensionen der Fremdheit*, in: *Furcht und Faszination, Facetten der Fremdheit*, hrsg. von dens., Berlin 1997, S. 11–44, hier: S. 25.

<sup>59)</sup> BERNHARD WALDENFELS, *In den Netzen der Lebenswelt*, Frankfurt/M. 1985, S. 155.

<sup>60)</sup> GERO VON WILPERT, *Sachwörterbuch der Literatur*, 8. Auflage, Stuttgart 2001, S. 176.

<sup>61)</sup> MÜNKLER und LADWIG, *Dimensionen der Fremdheit* (zit. Anm. 58), S. 35.

Einsichten gewinnen lassen. Es führt den Leser zwangsläufig zu der Erkenntnis, „daß jeder Sinn und jede Form der Verständlichkeit an bestimmte Lebensformen und Weltordnungen gebunden bleibt, die sich ihrerseits als selektiv und exklusiv erweisen.“<sup>62)</sup> In der Faszination für die selbst im Kleinsten sichtbar werdende andere Weltordnung tritt eine unverhohlene Freude an deren Vielfalt zutage, die auch als Belohnung des Reisenden für eine Art phänomenologischer Redlichkeit gesehen werden kann, ist doch mit einigem Augenzwinkern<sup>63)</sup> die Rede vom bestandenen „Abenteuer“. Dem lyrischen Ich gelingt es durch seine Mikroperspektive auf den Alltag, sich „letzten Fragen“ zu stellen, auch wenn sie auf der Inhaltsebene, also im Hinblick auf die unpraktische Gestaltung des Waschbeckens, unbeantwortet bleiben: Das Gedicht bleibt „ohne allerletzte Antworten“. Sie sollen vielleicht ganz bewusst unbeantwortet bleiben, denn natürlich lässt ein unpraktisch konstruiertes Waschbecken in keiner Weise auf den englischen Empirismus schließen. Aber wir sind, mit Waldenfels, ohnehin „nicht Herr des eigenen Fragens“,<sup>64)</sup> nicht einmal beim alltäglichsten Tun, wie dem Händewaschen.

## 5.

„The everyday ceases to be everyday when it is subject to critical scrutiny.“<sup>65)</sup> Einerseits bestätigen die hier besprochenen kleinen Textpassagen diese Annahme natürlich. Andererseits befinden sich die Reisenden oder Neuankömmlinge, indem sie auf einen fremden Alltag blicken, in einer besonderen Situation. Das von Einheimischen beiläufig Wahrgenommene erweist sich für sie zunächst einmal als spektakulär und faszinierend, womit „die Schattenseiten jener selektiven und exklusiven Ordnungen, die in den Strukturen der Lebenswelt und unserer Alltagswelt angelegt sind,“<sup>66)</sup> in etwas Gewinnbringendes gewendet werden. Denn die Sichtweise aufs Detail, kombiniert mit der erhöhten Sensibilität des Reisenden, lässt das kulturell Andere erst einmal fassbar werden – ebenso wie die Anstrengung, die erforderlich ist, um mit den lokalen

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<sup>62)</sup> WALDENFELS, Vielstimmigkeit der Rede (zit. Anm. 2), S. 81.

<sup>63)</sup> Falls man das Wort „Abenteuer“ in diesem Zusammenhang wirklich ernst nehmen kann, also bereits das bloße Händewaschen ein Abenteuer für den Reisenden sein soll.

<sup>64)</sup> WALDENFELS, Vielstimmigkeit der Rede (zit. Anm. 2), S. 76.

<sup>65)</sup> RITA FELSKI, *Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture*, New York 2000, S. 78. Zur Schwierigkeit, über den Alltag (literatur-) wissenschaftlich zu reflektieren, d.h. das „Paradox, [...] das spezifisch Alltägliche des Alltags als etwas Besonderes in den Blick“ zu nehmen, siehe SOLLTE-GRESSER, *Spielräume des Alltags* (zit. Anm. 6), S. 17; außerdem, zum Verhältnis von Literatur und Alltag, ebenda, S. 43f.

<sup>66)</sup> WALDENFELS, *Ordnung im Zwielicht* (zit. Anm. 10), S. 123.

„Bedingung[en des] Lebens“<sup>67)</sup> fertig zu werden. Wie viel Aneignungsleistung wäre erst notwendig, lebensweltlich und literarisch mit der Kultur in ihrer Gesamtheit umzugehen und vertraut zu werden? Diese Frage stellen die Beobachtungen gewissermaßen nebenbei.

Entsprechend schafft das „Erklären“ oft „keine Nähe und Vertrautheit, eher das Gegenteil“<sup>68)</sup> und die Beobachter distanzieren sich bewusst vom Betrachteten, nicht zuletzt zugunsten komischer Effekte. Die Effekte beruhen gerade auch darauf, dass das kulturell Andere in der literarisch inszenierten Beschreibung einerseits Anschaulichkeit gewinnt. Jeder ist vertraut mit einem Bett, einem Aschenbecher oder einer Zugfahrt. Andererseits wirken die Gegenstände und Erlebnisse sonderbar in der jeweilig unvertrauten Gestalt, und die Fremdheitserfahrung verdichtet sich im Alltagsobjekt oder dem Alltagserlebnis. Gelegentlich wird ein solches Objekt oder Erlebnis als Blaupause verwendet und damit ausgehend von einem betrachteten Ausschnitt der Wirklichkeit auf das Typische, das Essentielle verwiesen, es wird vom Detail auf kulturelle Muster geschlossen – deren Komplexität dadurch aber reduziert wird –, und es kommt zu Stereotypisierungen.

Anderswo wird gezeigt, dass das Verstehen – oder auch nur das Übertreten einer „[z]wischen den Kulturen“ verlaufenden „Schwelle“<sup>69)</sup> – um seiner selbst willen erstrebenswert ist, und wenn es, ausgehend von der Verwunderung über ein Alltagserlebnis oder über einen Alltagsgegenstand, nur im Kleinen geschieht. Da der Reisende eine Form von phänomenologischer Redlichkeit an den Tag legen kann und in der Regel absichtlich die Herausforderungen sucht, die das kulturell Andere an ihn stellt, kommt es nicht selten zum „Versuch einer Überwindung des Fremden durch *Verstehen*“<sup>70)</sup> oder, wenn denn genug Zeit dafür bleibt, durch einen „Prozeß der Eingewöhnung“<sup>71)</sup> Dann initiieren Dinge und Erlebnisse Reflexionen nicht nur über das Fremde, sondern auch über das Eigene, und es tritt nicht nur das Einzigartige einer bestimmten kulturellen Umgebung zutage, sondern es zeigt sich auch etwas Allgemeingültiges jenseits des kulturell Besonderen. Sichtbar werden „die Grenzen der eigenen kulturellen Welt“<sup>72)</sup> Der Versuch, diese Grenzen zu überwinden, wird oft schillernd inszeniert, etwa bei Jerome oder Politycki. Die Beobachtungen bleiben strukturiert von eigenen kulturellen Wahrnehmungsmustern, selbst in der Wahrnehmung des Kleinsten, aber gerade dadurch wird uns „die Kontingenz

<sup>67)</sup> SCHÜTZ und LUCKMANN, Strukturen der Lebenswelt (zit. Anm. 5), S. 11.

<sup>68)</sup> WALDENFELS, Vielstimmigkeit der Rede (zit. Anm. 2), S. 72.

<sup>69)</sup> DERS., Grundmotive einer Phänomenologie (zit. Anm. 8), S. 114.

<sup>70)</sup> DERS., Vielstimmigkeit der Rede (zit. Anm. 2), S. 16.

<sup>71)</sup> DERS., Der Stachel des Fremden (zit. Anm. 7), S. 193. Originale Kursivsetzung aufgehoben.

<sup>72)</sup> MÜNKLER und LADWIG, Dimensionen der Fremdheit (zit. Anm. 58), S. 30.



unserer Erwartungen und die Begrenztheit unseres Wissensvorrates vor Augen [geführt]. Sie sorgt für die Infragestellung unserer eingelebten Gewißeiten<sup>73)</sup> und macht gelegentlich auch sichtbar, dass der Mensch ganz grundsätzlich „auf der Schwelle zwischen Ordentlichem und Außerordentlichem [lebt].“<sup>74)</sup> Und nicht zuletzt wird anhand von einzelnen Details sowie dem individuellen Staunen darüber die faszinierende Rätselhaftigkeit gefeiert, die das scheinbar unspektakulär Andere durch genaue Beobachtung gewinnt.

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<sup>73)</sup> Ebenda, S. 26.

<sup>74)</sup> WALDENFELS, Der Stachel des Fremden (zit. Anm. 7), S. 194.

# ABANDONING NARRATIVES OF MUSIC AND PROSE

Arnold Schönberg and James Joyce

By Norbert Bachleitner (Vienna)

The works of these two key Modernist artists exhibit a number of similar features: Joyce's abandonment of personal and representational narration can be likened to Schönberg's rejection of functional theories of harmony. Through rational constructions – based on structural constraints such as twelve-tone sequences and the Gilbert and Linati schemata – both artists systematically explore the limits and possibilities of their chosen material, with Schönberg's emancipation of dissonance and Joyce's highly artificial idiom in ›Finnegans Wake‹ expanding the possibilities of associating musical or literary meaning.

Das Werk dieser beiden ›Leuchttürme‹ der Moderne weist zahlreiche Ähnlichkeiten auf: Sie verabschieden das persönliche und mimetische Erzählen bzw. die klassische Funktionsharmonik; mit Hilfe rationaler Konstruktion aufgrund struktureller Vorgaben wie der Zwölftonreihen und der Gilbert und Linati Schemata messen sie systematisch Möglichkeitsräume aus; Schönbergs Konzept der Emanzipation der Dissonanz und die höchst artifizielle Sprache von ›Finnegans Wake‹ entgrenzen den Spielraum für die musikalische bzw. literarische Bedeutungszuweisung.

## *1. Introduction*

A comparison between Schönberg and Joyce is a challenging project that, in its first stages, can only yield provisional results. Undoubtedly both artists, in their respective disciplines, are key Modernist figures.<sup>1)</sup> To what extent, however, do their works and modes of production exhibit common features – beyond the universal characteristics of the avant-garde – that make for a meaningful com-

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<sup>1)</sup> This rating hardly needs any justification, we would like to provide some evidence, though:  
1) The ›Bibliographie des Musikschritftums online‹ <<http://www.musikbibliographie.de>> [25.06.2019] contains 2935 entries dedicated to Schönberg – the numbers for other important composers are R. Strauss 1887, B. Bartók 1480, I. Strawinsky 942, A. Berg 830, and A. von Webern 716. – 2) According to the publication database of the ›Modern Language Association‹ Joyce attracted more attention from researchers than any other author: the database documents 2302 entries, V. Woolf counts 1705 entries, Kafka 1197, Borges 1075 and Proust 997 (numbers taken from a lecture by DAVID DAMROSCH at the University of Vienna on 23 July 2016).

parison? There seem to be no direct connections between the two artists, such as meetings or references to one another in letters or notes. Our intermedial comparison, therefore, tries to establish parallels between works that emerged independently from each other. Due to the constraints of this paper, we concentrate on Schönberg's twelve-tone composition technique and Joyce's mode of writing in ›Ulysses‹ and ›Finnegans Wake.‹<sup>2)</sup> Earlier works by both artists will be excluded from this article.

Both Joyce and Schönberg took innovative steps around a similar time period. In 1908 Joyce began the preparations for ›Ulysses‹, with the actual writing process beginning in 1914, and completed by 1921. The experimental elements of Joyce's writing either appear in the later chapters of the novel or were inserted in the earlier chapters during the last revision of the text (in 1921/22).<sup>3)</sup> In 1923 Joyce began preparations for his ›Work in Progress‹ that finally appeared in 1939 under the title ›Finnegans Wake‹. Schönberg maintains that his compositions started to move away from a tonal center around 1908.<sup>4)</sup> The twelve tones of the chromatic scale in a continuous sequence, however, are already apparent at the beginning of the fourth movement of his second String quartet (op. 10, 1907/08). In the following decade Schönberg's piano pieces show a continuous movement towards the twelve-tone technique.<sup>5)</sup> His first composition to use strictly twelve tones ("erste strenge Komposition mit zwölf Tönen"),<sup>6)</sup> the Suite for piano (op. 25), dates from 1921. In July of the same year he famously informed his pupil Josef Rufer that he had that day found something that would guarantee the supremacy of German music for the next hundred years ("heute habe er etwas gefunden, das der deutschen Musik die Vorherrschaft für die nächsten hundert Jahre sichere").<sup>7)</sup>

<sup>2)</sup> CHRISTOPHER BUTLER, Joyce, Modernism and Post-modernism, in: *The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce*, ed. by DEREK ATTRIDGE, Cambridge 1990, pp. 259–282, compares Schönberg's and Joyce's pre-modernist works that testify to the "complete recreative and parodic mastery of previous traditions" (p. 263), whereas their "formally extremely complicated works [...] are independent of the usual mimetic aims associated with a particular content" (pp. 275–276). Butler refers to ›Stephen Hero‹ (1904–1906) and ›Pelléas et Mélisande‹ (1902/03), ›Finnegans Wake‹ (1939) and ›Moses und Aaron‹ (1930–1932), respectively. Both parameters of comparison seem to be too general to yield significant results.

<sup>3)</sup> For instance the intermediate titles resembling newspaper articles in chapter seven; see HUGH KENNER, *Ulysses*, London 1980, p. 71, and ARNOLD GOLDMAN, *The Joyce Paradox. Form and Freedom in His Fiction*, London 1966, p. 83.

<sup>4)</sup> ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG, *Composition with Twelve Tones*, in: A. S., *Style and Idea*, New York 1959, pp. 102–143, here: p. 105.

<sup>5)</sup> CLAUS GANTER, *Ordnungsprinzip oder Konstruktion? Die Entwicklung der Tonsprache Arnold Schönbergs am Beispiel seiner Klavierwerke*, München, Salzburg 1997, analyses the piano pieces op. 11, 19, 23, and 25 in this respect.

<sup>6)</sup> ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG, *Komposition mit zwölf Tönen*, in: A. S., *Stil und Gedanke. Aufsätze zur Musik*, ed. by Ivan Vojtěch, Frankfurt/M 1976, pp. 380–383, here: p. 382.

<sup>7)</sup> JOSEF RUFER, *Das Werk Arnold Schönbergs*, Kassel, London, New York 1959, p. 26. The quotation is probably not exact, especially the nationalist wording is more than doubtful;

As we have already stated above, due to the lack of any evidence of direct contact between Schönberg and Joyce any exploration of possible influence is futile. Moreover, the question of the ‘musicalization’ of Joyce’s prose – most obvious for instance in Chapter Eleven of ›Ulysses‹ – and Schönberg’s treatment of literary texts will not be covered in this article. The following comparison instead draws parallels between the technique of composition and the style of writing of these two key representatives of musical and literary Modernism. Both of them use their ‘material’, namely the language and the tonal system, experimentally. Literature and music represent “conventionalised human signifying practices [...], each of which is governed by a (historically variable) ‘grammar’ (generic conventions, the tonal system etc.)”.<sup>8)</sup> A major difference, however, emerges when considering the importance of sound. With the exception of poetry, sound is, in general, of low importance in literature, and especially in prose. Compared to music, literature is a semantic medium or art; in music sounds are simply sounds, whereas the sounds employed in literature – by the arbitrary association of external meanings – are not only sounds but words (“[...] die Laute, aus welchen das Material der Musik besteht, [sind] einfach Laute, während diejenigen, aus welchen das Material der Literatur besteht, durch die Zuweisung willkürlicher äußerer Bedeutungen nicht lediglich Laute, sondern Wörter sind.”)<sup>9)</sup>

Schönberg and Joyce both break the traditional rules of artistic creation, through the rejection of habitual melodic and harmonic practices and accustomed linguistic usage, in particular motifs, modes of narration, and the clichés developed by literary realism. By composing with twelve tones, Schönberg intended to reform musical ‘grammar’ in his works by presenting a radical contrast to former musical conventions. In particular he abandoned the classical theory of harmony, of significance in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, by reverting to Bach’s polyphonic and contrapunctual modes of composition.<sup>10)</sup> Moreover, he wanted to change or even destroy the “culturally assigned connotations” of

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see E. RANDOL SCHOENBERG, *The Most Famous Thing He Never Said*, in: *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 5 (2003), pp. 27–30. – For a detailed chronology of the development of the composition with twelve tones from 1921 to 1924 see THERESE MUXENEDER, *Arnold Schönbergs Verkündung der Zwölftonmethode – Daten, Dokumente, Berichte, Anekdoten*, in: *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 7 (2005), pp. 301–313.

<sup>8)</sup> WERNER WOLF, *The Musicalization of Fiction. A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality*, Amsterdam, Atlanta, GA 1999, p. 12.

<sup>9)</sup> CALVIN S. BROWN, *Theoretische Grundlagen zum Studium der Wechselverhältnisse zwischen Literatur und Musik*, in: *Literatur und Musik. Ein Handbuch zur Theorie und Praxis eines komparatistischen Grenzgebietes*, ed. by STEVEN PAUL SCHER, Berlin 1984, pp. 28–39, here: p. 30.

<sup>10)</sup> Bach is one of the major musical authorities for Schönberg and the ‘second’ Viennese school of music.

music.<sup>11)</sup> Compared to literature, music is characterized by the dominance of internal relations: in general, tones refer to the other tones that surround them and not to an extra-musical reality.<sup>12)</sup>

Schönberg intended to change listening habits by emancipating the dissonance. Like many theoreticians, he started with a discussion of overtones as the foundation of the ‘natural’ or ‘absolute’ musical system. The classical theory of harmony privileges the first few overtones as the first, third, and fifth elements of the overtone row form a major triad. The tones of the dominant and subdominant major triads and of the triads in the parallel minor keys are also located in the lower part of the overtone row. As a consequence, major thirds, fifths, and major sixths are considered to sound pleasant, harmonious, agreeable, cheerful, or even comforting. Fourths and sevenths are located in a neutral harmonic mid-field, whereas seconds, the minor third, and the flatted fifth are relegated as disagreeable sounds admitted only as transit tones. As Schönberg argued and demonstrated, this classification is neither ‘natural’ nor unchangeable, but is rather based solely on specific cultural traditions and listening habits.<sup>13)</sup> Its acceptance is due to musical socialization rather than to ‘nature’. Music ethnology demonstrates that tonal systems vary greatly according to culture and tradition. Listening to and enjoying music is primarily based on comprehension. “What distinguishes dissonances from consonances is not a greater or lesser degree of beauty, but a greater or lesser degree of *comprehensibility*.”<sup>14)</sup> In a similar way, grammatical and stylistic rules are not inherent to language and the same applies to literary norms, such as the conventions of realistic narration.

Tonality and functional harmony – dominant in Western music from Vivaldi to Beethoven – have both been compared to narrative literary forms, and in particular to the *Bildungsroman*. Susan McClary explains:

The background of a tonal composition [...] proceeds through a series of arrivals, beginning in the tonic key, moving through a few other keys, and returning finally home to the tonic. This background thereby traces a trajectory something like a quest narrative, with return to and affirmation of original identity guaranteed in advance.<sup>15)</sup>

<sup>11)</sup> Cf. WOLF, *The Musicalization of Fiction* (cit. fn. 8), p. 23.

<sup>12)</sup> Schönberg called the method of composition with twelve tones relating exclusively to one another the twelve-tone technique; qtd. in GANTER, *Ordnungsprinzip oder Konstruktion* (cit. fn. 5), p. 32.

<sup>13)</sup> An example of ‘musical rhetorics’ that codify the arousal of anger, compassion, anxiety or joy by musical means is the system of ‘figures’ used from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century in central and northern Germany by protestant precentors; see GUNNAR HINDRICH, Art. “Sprache und Musik”, in: *Handbuch Literatur & Musik*, ed. by NICOLA GESS und ALEXANDER HONOLD unter Mitarbeit von SINA DELL’ANNO, Berlin, Boston 2017, pp. 19–38, here: pp. 26f.

<sup>14)</sup> SCHÖNBERG, *Composition with Twelve Tones* (cit. fn. 4), p. 104.

<sup>15)</sup> SUSAN McCLARY, *Conventional Wisdom. The Content of Musical Form*, Berkeley, London 2000, p. 65.

The succession of hierarchically related harmonies produces coherence, creates suspense, and gives a sense of expectation as to musical progression. The concept of classical music represents Enlightenment ideals such as reason (rational effort resulting finally in the attainment of goals), purposeful advancement (waiting patiently and confidently for the pay-off), and the compatibility of social order and inner feelings.<sup>16)</sup> Other important features of the classical musical narrative are the “confidence in mimesis”, especially of human interiority, of passions and feelings, and of a “centered subjectivity”<sup>17)</sup> that may be expressed and traced by the audience throughout a piece of music. In analogy with the *Bildungsroman*, a concerto, sonata, or symphony movement demonstrates and performs “the narrative formation of an autonomous musical self as it ventures into other terrains, strengthens its innate resources through motivic development, and finally consolidates the secure identity that confirms the viability of the centered subject.”<sup>18)</sup> These musical conventions guarantee the listener a high degree of consolation and reconciliation. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, concepts and ideals such as the attainment of happiness through reasonable behaviour, the harmony of the individual and society, or a belief in the possibility of communicating one’s feelings and the integrity of the subject become suspect and doubtful. Atonal music, and in particular music composed with the twelve-tone technique, is fragmented into a succession of tiny units and, therefore, no longer relies on long spans of tension. If tonality creates narrative music, atonality may be considered to engender self-referential and “consciously ANTI-narrative” music.<sup>19)</sup>

## 2. “Emancipation of Dissonance:”<sup>20)</sup> *Schönberg’s Twelve-Tone Technique*

Adorno’s remarks about dodecaphony in his ›Philosophie der neuen Musik‹ serve as a guide when comparing Schönberg and Joyce.<sup>21)</sup> In a footnote of this

<sup>16)</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 67f.

<sup>17)</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 70 and 73.

<sup>18)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>19)</sup> SUSAN McCLARY, *The Impromptu That Trod on a Loaf: or How Music Tells Stories*, in: *Narrative*, 5–1 (1997), pp. 20–35, here: p. 21. McClary includes Philip Glass’s minimalism, blues, and rap in this tendency towards fragmentation.

<sup>20)</sup> SCHÖNBERG, *Composition with Twelve Tones* (cit. fn. 4), p. 104.

<sup>21)</sup> The fact that Adorno’s judgements about the twelve-tone technique are sometimes doubtful and that he got into disputes with Schönberg about these questions does not matter here. For the relation between Schönberg and Adorno and their respective comments on each other cf. LUDWIG HOLTMEIER, COSIMA LINKE, *Schönberg und die Folgen*, in: *Adorno-Handbuch. Leben – Werk – Wirkung*, ed. by RICHARD KLEIN, JOHANN KREUZER and STEFAN MÜLLER-DOOHM, Stuttgart, Weimar 2011, pp. 119–139.

treatise, Adorno even mentions Joyce alongside Picasso, Kafka, and Proust as artists who – like Schönberg – produced fragmentary works critical of tradition.<sup>22)</sup> While this enumeration could be interpreted as mere name-dropping, a look at Adorno's essay ›Der Standort des Erzählers im zeitgenössischen Roman‹ explains why Joyce is included. In this essay Adorno discusses the general alienation of the individual that leads to the abandonment of personal narrators and renders the idea of *mimesis* obsolete. The rebellion of the novel against realism (“Rebellion des Romans gegen den Realismus”) instigated by Joyce is connected with a rebellion against discursive language and the emancipation from the representational (“Emanzipation vom Gegenstand”).<sup>23)</sup> On the other hand, Proust stands for the subjective disintegration of narration, namely the micrological technique that finally fractures the unity of life into atoms (“mikrologische Technik, unter der schließlich die Einheit des Lebendigen nach Atomen sich spaltet”).<sup>24)</sup>

Returning to Adorno's remarks about dodecaphony in ›Philosophie der neuen Musik‹, a particularly striking passage compares musical composition and writing within the context of the consequences of dodecaphony:

Paralysis of the spontaneity of composition is also paralysis of the spontaneity of the advanced composers. They are confronting the same unsolvable tasks as writers who have to establish the vocabulary and the syntax for every single sentence they write.

(Gelähmt wird mit der Spontaneität der Komposition auch die Spontaneität der avancierten Komponisten. Sie sehen sich vor so unlösbare Aufgaben gestellt wie ein Schriftsteller, der für jeden Satz, den er schreibt, Vokabular und Syntax eigens beistellen muß.)<sup>25)</sup>

Adorno agrees that it is necessary to renounce traditional melodic and theories of harmony; he regards this as a sort of purgation of musical material (“eine Art Reinigung des musikalischen Materials”) that becomes cleansed of the dross of the mere organic (“von den Schlacken des bloß Organischen gereinigt”).<sup>26)</sup> On the other hand, this process of purification leads to loss: the composer's creativity and spontaneity are drastically restricted. Adorno criticises the atomization of small musical phrases (“Atomisierung der musikalischen Partialmomente”), the corresponding neglect of the over-all form of the work, and the loss of musical meaning (“musikalischen Sinns”).<sup>27)</sup> Focusing on the material and its principles results in a transition from organic music to the hegemony of the

<sup>22)</sup> THEODOR W. ADORNO, *Philosophie der neuen Musik*, Frankfurt/M 1978, p. 120.

<sup>23)</sup> THEODOR W. ADORNO, *Standort des Erzählers im zeitgenössischen Roman*, in: T. W. A., *Noten zur Literatur*, Frankfurt/M 1981, pp. 41–48, here: pp. 41f.

<sup>24)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>25)</sup> ADORNO, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (cit. fn. 22), p. 101; engl. translation N. B.

<sup>26)</sup> THEODOR W. ADORNO und ERNST KRENEK, *Briefwechsel*, Frankfurt/M 1974, letter of April 9th, 1929, p. 14.

<sup>27)</sup> ADORNO, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (cit. fn. 22), p. 107.

number, to the cult of sheer proportion (“Kultus der reinen Proportionen”)<sup>28</sup>), and to an abstention from expressing oneself by means of music.

Seriality and aleatoric techniques are clearly anti-subjectivist modes of composition.<sup>29</sup>) Contrary to conventional works of art, modern art is characterised by disruption; a medium dedicated to the expression of feelings has turned into a medium of thought, criticism, and self-reflection. Rational composition has ruled out the expressive function of music, dodecaphony in particular is dependent on the musical ‘material’ and not on the composer’s expressive intentions. Instead of expressing emotions, music registers corporeal agitations of the unconscious, shocks, and traumas (“leibhafte Regungen des Unbewußten, Schocks, Traumata”).<sup>30</sup>) Adorno’s association of music and the unconscious reminds us that Joyce’s mode of writing in ›Finnegans Wake‹ has been repeatedly characterized as relying on linguistic auto-generation and of thus rendering a dream reality. According to Adorno, the formal constraints and strict rules of a twelve-tone composition mirror the repression and alienation or even destruction of the individual in modern society. He therefore, proposes emancipation from this technique and the return to spontaneity, intuitive creativity and freedom of action (“Freiheit der Aktion”).<sup>31</sup>)

In his ›Harmonielehre‹ (1911) Schönberg, if we follow Adorno, had defined the representation of inner nature (“Wiedergabe der inneren Natur”) as the highest task of art. Its only purpose is the imitation of impressions that – associated with each other and with other sensory impressions – form new structures and new movements (“Nur die Nachahmung der Eindrücke, die nun durch Assoziation untereinander und mit anderen Sinneseindrücken Verbindungen zu neuen Komplexen, zu neuen Bewegungen eingegangen sind, ist ihr Zweck.”)<sup>32</sup>) In contrast with this rather traditional definition, the twelve-tone composition tries to relegate music ‘with a purpose’ to the background. The twelve tones should be equal and equivalent in order to avoid the feeling of a tonic, which is simply tonality. As soon as tonality is overcome, the tones lose their fixed harmonic function or ‘meaning’. The feeling of a tonic may be abandoned by avoiding the repetition of identical tones before all the other tones have been used. In other words, the twelve tones should be used with the same numerical frequency.

<sup>28</sup>) Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>) Cf. MELANIE WALD-FUHRMANN, Musik und Subjektivität, in: Historische Musikwissenschaft, ed. by MICHELE CALELLA und NIKOLAUS URBANEK, Stuttgart, Weimar 2013, pp. 289–306, here: p. 303.

<sup>30</sup>) ADORNO, Philosophie der neuen Musik (cit. fn. 22), p. 44.

<sup>31</sup>) Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>32</sup>) ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG, Harmonielehre, 4. Auflage, Wien, Zürich, London 1922 (first ed. 1911), p. 14.



In the following, we offer a few examples taken from the piano piece op. 25, Schönberg's first composition to use strictly twelve tones.<sup>33</sup> The basis for each composition with twelve tones is a sequence (or 'row') of tones called the prime series (or 'Grundgestalt'). In the case of op. 25, this row is composed of minor and major seconds, minor thirds, and (augmented) fourths (*fig. 1*):

Figure 1 shows four staves of musical notation illustrating the prime series and its transformations. The first staff, labeled "Gerade (Grundreihe)", shows the prime series in G major: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D. The second staff, "Umkehrung", shows the retrograde series: D, C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G. The third staff, "Krebs", shows the retrograde series in G minor: G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C. The fourth staff, "Krebsumkehrung", shows the retrograde series in G major: C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G, F. Vertical dashed lines indicate measure boundaries. The letters B, A, C, H are placed below the notes in the second and third staves to identify specific tones.

The inversion includes the famous sequence B-A-C-H, a clear reverence to Baroque musical tradition. The prelude to the piece introduces the prime series in the upper voice combined with a canonically retarded duplication of the same row in the bass voice, starting seven half-tones above the basic prime series (abbreviated G VII). In the second half of the second measure, the tones 9 to 12, starting from the f, i. e., still taken from G VII, are shifted underneath the tones 5 to 8. The tones of the series are numbered here for purpose of analysis only. Moreover, the appearance of the retrograde sequence of B-A-C-H and the changes of metre from 6/8 to 3/4 and 12/16 are also marked (*fig. 2*):

Figure 2 shows a musical score with two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The upper staff starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It contains the prime series G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D. The lower staff starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. It contains the retrograde series D, C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G. The tones are numbered 1 through 12. Above the upper staff, the letters H, C, A, B are written above measures 9, 10, 11, and 12. Below the lower staff, the letters H, C, A, B are written below measures 9, 10, 11, and 12. The time signature changes from 6/8 to 3/4 at measure 2 and to 12/16 at measure 4. The letters G I and G VII are written above the first and second measures of the upper staff, respectively.

After the introduction of the prime series, a number of variations of the basic sequence begin. The three basic modes of transposition of the prime series, amply used by Schönberg but obviously derived from Baroque rules of counterpoint composition, are the inversion ('Umkehrung'), the retrograde ('Krebs'), and the retrograde inversion ('Krebs-Umkehrung'). In measures 5 and 6 Schönberg employs the retrograde starting on the seventh half-tone (K VII) and on the keytone (K I) (*fig. 3*):

The image shows a musical score for piano, measures 5 and 6. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. Above the treble staff, the notes are labeled with numbers 10, 11, and 12. Above the bass staff, the notes are labeled with numbers 1 through 10. The first measure (measure 5) is labeled 'K VII' and the second measure (measure 6) is labeled 'K I'. The notes in measure 5 are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5. The notes in measure 6 are G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3. The notes are arranged in a retrograde sequence.

Crucially, the horizontal succession of tones may be transferred to the vertical axis, i. e. melodies are converted into chords. The number of voices may thus be augmented to three or four as in measures 22 to 25. The rows used here are inversion I, retrograde inversion VII, prime series VII, and retrograde I (*s. Fig. 4*).

Often groups of three, four, or even six successive tones are taken from the series, but the tones may be rather freely distributed on the horizontal and vertical axes as in the following example taken from the gigue, measures 43 and 44 (*s. Fig. 5*).

The relationship between freedom of choice and determination by sequence (and strict rules of musical development from this sequence) is hard to determine. It seems that there is most freedom at the beginning, with the choice of the sequence becoming more constrained over the course of composition. Whenever a number of notes (e. g. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10) have been used, the remaining notes (3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12) must then definitely be employed. Schönberg was fascinated with the potential of magic squares and his scores, which are readable in all directions, are sometimes reminiscent of such squares. Another possible association that arises with this method of writing music are Sudoku puzzles.

<sup>33</sup>) All examples are taken from GANTER, *Ordnungsprinzip oder Konstruktion* (cit. fn. 5), pp. 226, 231, 232, 239, and 299.

The musical score consists of six systems of music. The first system is labeled 'U 1' and contains measures 22, 23, and 24. The second system is labeled 'KU 7' and also contains measures 23 and 24. The third system is labeled 'G VII' and contains measures 9, 10, 11, and 12. The fourth system is labeled 'KI' and contains measures 1, 2, 3, and 4. The fifth system contains measures 5, 6, 7, and 8. The sixth system contains measures 9, 10, 11, and 12. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, various time signatures (3/8, 4/8, 6/8), and key signatures (one flat, two flats, one sharp). Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. The score shows a complex sequence of notes and rests, with some notes marked with a 'z' symbol.

The general ratio behind the complicated procedures of avoiding conventional chords and cadences is the urge to divest the single tone of its privilege of supremacy (“der einzelne Ton des Privilegs der Vorherrschaft beraubt”), which is another way of describing the emancipation of dissonance.<sup>34)</sup> As early as in the ›Harmonielehre‹, Schönberg had already maintained that tonality is no eternal natural law of music (“kein ewiges Naturgesetz der Musik”)<sup>35)</sup> and that the difference between consonance and dissonance is not absolute but fluid – it actually depends on the distance of the overtones from the keynote.

<sup>34)</sup> SCHÖNBERG, *Komposition mit zwölf Tönen* (cit. fn. 6), p. 381.

<sup>35)</sup> SCHÖNBERG, *Harmonielehre* (cit. fn. 32), p. 4.

Fig. 5

Beispiel 15

1 9 11 4 3 8 7 6 1 9 11 4 3 8 7 6

2 5 10 12 2 5 10 12

4 3 8 7 6 1 9 11 12 4 3 8 7 6 2 5 11 12

It is necessary to increase the capability of the analytical ear in order to be able to become acquainted with the overtones that are far away from the keynote and thereby extend the concept of artistically acceptable euphony to include the whole range of natural phenomena.

(Es hängt nur von der wachsenden Fähigkeit des analytischen Ohrs ab, sich auch mit den fernliegenden Obertönen vertraut zu machen und damit den Begriff des kunstfähigen Wohlklanges so zu erweitern, daß die gesamte naturgegebene Erscheinung darin Platz hat.)<sup>36)</sup>

It seems clear that these 'natural phenomena' comprise the physical and physiological foundations of music and the mathematical relations between the tones that define the sequence of overtones. They, however, do *not* lay down the rules of classical tonality and harmony. According to Schönberg, the human ear is as capable of perceiving the distant overtones that have a complex numerical relation with the keynote as precisely as the nearest overtones (octave, fifth, third etc.). In ›Harmonielehre‹ he outlines the idea that the equality of the twelve tones should form the foundation of the theory of harmony. In his lecture on ›New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea‹ (1946) Schönberg retrospectively cloaks his suggestions for innovation in a sequence of negative phrases:

There should be avoided: chromaticism, expressive melodies, Wagnerian harmonies, romanticism, private biographical hints, subjectivity, functional harmonic progressions, illustrations, leitmotifs, concurrence with the mood or action of the scene and characteristic declamation of the text in opera, songs and choruses. In other words, all that was good in the preceding period should not occur now.<sup>37)</sup>

<sup>36)</sup> Ibid., p. 18, engl. translation N. B.

<sup>37)</sup> ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG, *New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea*, in: A. S., *Style and Idea. Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. by LEONARD STEIN with translations by LEO BLACK, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1984, pp. 113–124, here: p. 120.

In a manuscript entitled ›Constructed Music‹ (c. 1931) the sober and constructive mode of composing is confronted with spontaneous music: “Music is assembled from notes”. Similarly, the composer’s creative influence, and especially their predilection for certain (consonant) intervals and chords, is limited. The highest possible praise for a composition is the statement “that it really is well worked-out”.<sup>38)</sup> What matters in musical composition is ratio, not feeling: the thought as such, not its clothing, orchestration, decoration, tone-colour, or expressive performance. In this context Schönberg quotes a Beethoven anecdote:

I have often wondered whether people who possess a brain would prefer to hide this fact. I have been supported in my own attitude by the example of Beethoven who, having received a letter from his brother Johann signed “land owner”, signed his reply “brain owner”.<sup>39)</sup>

We will not, however, further pursue Adorno’s comments on dodecaphony or Schönberg’s theory and practice of the new mode of composition; their recapitulation serves only to provide concepts and keywords that may be useful in our comparison with Joyce’s innovations in literary writing.

### *3. Joyce’s Abandonment of Narrative Concreteness and Personal Narration, as Compared to Schönberg*

The abandonment of narrative concreteness and personal narration through the fragmentation of a text will serve as a point of departure in this section. Here we compare Schönberg’s approach to composition with techniques of writing used in ›Ulysses‹, with traditional realist narration regarded as an equivalent to the theory of functional harmony applied in music of the Classical and Romantic eras.<sup>40)</sup>

The first nine chapters of ›Ulysses‹ are narrated (almost) entirely from a personal point of view, namely from Stephen Dedalus’s and Leopold Bloom’s perspective. Deviations from this type of narration appear for the first time in Chapter Ten (“Wandering Rocks”) which is composed of eighteen short segments.<sup>41)</sup> The reader accompanies various figures as they simultaneously make

<sup>38)</sup> ARNOLD SCHÖNBERG, *Constructed Music*, in: A. S., *Style and Idea* (cit. fn. 37), pp. 106–108, here: pp. 106 and 107.

<sup>39)</sup> SCHÖNBERG, *New Music, Outmoded Music*, in: A. S., *Style and Idea* (cit. fn. 37), p. 122.

<sup>40)</sup> In this respect we share the approach of ROBIN GAIL SCHULZE, *Design in Motion: Words, Music, and the Search for Coherence in the Works of Virginia Woolf and Arnold Schoenberg*, in: *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 25, No. 1 (1992), pp. 5–22; unfortunately, Schulze does not go beyond very general observations of parallels between Woolf’s decomposition of linear and causative narration and Schönberg’s transgression of functional harmony.

<sup>41)</sup> See KENNER, *Ulysses* (cit. fn. 3), p. 61.

their way through Dublin. The episode's technique seems mechanical: the segments fit into one another like cogs.<sup>42)</sup> This formation is, however, not made explicit by a narrator: representation speaks for itself.<sup>43)</sup> A similarly complex narrative formation can be observed in Chapter Eleven ("Sirens"), in which the narrative does not focus on any single character. In this chapter the materiality of language is finally foregrounded. This mode of narration tries to shift the mimesis of reality from the meaning of words to the sound of language ("die Mimesis der Wirklichkeit von dem Bedeutungsfeld der Wörter in das Laut- und Schriftbild der Sprache zu verlegen").<sup>44)</sup> Joyce imitates noises and musical sounds with words.

Franz Karl Stanzel sums up the loss of narrative unity in the novel:

The unity of personal narration presupposes a stable and constantly present centre that provides orientation [...]. In ›Ulysses‹ this centre, this resting-point, does not exist anymore. All the narrative conventions depending on it such as unity of relation to a third-person or first-person narrator, a fixed point of observation and perspective etc. have become obsolete. (Einheit der Erzählsituation setzt eine ruhende, Orientierung ausstrahlende, konstant dargestellte Mitte voraus [...]. Im ›Ulysses‹ existiert diese Mitte, dieser Ruhepunkt nicht mehr. Alle sich daraus ableitenden Erzählkonventionen, Einheit des Er-Bezuges oder des Ich-Bezuges, Fixierung des Beobachtungspunktes und der Perspektive usw., sind damit hinfällig geworden.)<sup>45)</sup>

In an even more radical fashion, Joyce continues the deconstruction of narration in Chapter Fifteen ("Circe"), where a number of dramatic voices compete with one another. If there is any narrative subject, it is reduced to the consciousness of the author during the conception of the text ("Bewußtsein des Autors im Augenblick des Konzeptionsprozesses").<sup>46)</sup> While we could offer further examples of the dissolution of a narrative subject in the second half of ›Ulysses‹, it seems sufficiently clear that this process resembles Schönberg's minimization of 'narrative' in his compositions by letting the musical material speak for itself.

From Chapter Ten onwards, the text of ›Ulysses‹ also shows a focus on the materiality of language and the prioritization of language and style at the expense of a narrative interest in plot and characterization ("Dominanz von Sprache und Stil gegenüber dem narrativen Interesse an Handlungsfortgang und innen- wie außengeschauter Personendarstellung"). Hans Walter Gabler

<sup>42)</sup> Cf. STUART GILBERT, *Das Rätsel Ulysses*, Frankfurt/M 1977, p. 182.

<sup>43)</sup> See FRANZ K. STANZEL, *Die Erzählsituation im ›Ulysses‹*, in: James Joyces ›Ulysses‹. Neuere deutsche Aufsätze, ed. by THERESE FISCHER-SEIDEL, Frankfurt/M 1977, pp. 255–283, here: p. 259.

<sup>44)</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 260f. We do not go into the use of musical forms such as fugue, overture, song, rondo and many others, which has often been analysed already.

<sup>45)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273, engl. translation N. B.

<sup>46)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

observes the breakthrough of textual self-generation from language, motifs, and the personal substance of the text („Durchbruch zur Selbsterzeugung des Textes aus der sprachlichen, motivlichen und personellen Eigensubstanz des Werkes“).<sup>47)</sup> Joyce compared writing ›Ulysses‹ with tessellating<sup>48)</sup> – a statement similar to Schönberg’s insistence that music be constructed rather than invented. In another quotation, Joyce indicates that words are set and combined rather than invented, that the writer uses pre-fabricated material: “I have the words already. What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in the sentence.”<sup>49)</sup> Hugh Kenner, therefore, rightly calls the author of ›Ulysses‹ an “arranger”.<sup>50)</sup> The numerous intratextual references may, therefore, be interpreted as a way of working with material that is already there, waiting to be used. From Chapter Fifteen onwards the text becomes literally self-generating:

We might say, then, that by its fifteenth chapter, ›Ulysses‹ has begun to provide its author enough in the way of material to become self-perpetuating. The cross-referencing which the author had injected before to remind us of similarities between characters [...] here takes on an appearance of autonomy, as ‘characters’ belonging to other contexts or even ontological levels rise up to confront the characters in the Dublin action [...].<sup>51)</sup>

The analogy with dodecaphony is established through both the preparation of the ‘material’, i. e. the sequence of tones, and of afterwards working with it. If this procedure is not strictly equivalent to self-generation, it is, however, clear that artistic production is strictly regulated and leads to unintentional and ‘unusual’ sequences and combinations of tones. In the quotation above we could insert ‘tones’ (instead of ‘characters’) that appear in an unconventional musical context and are, therefore, deprived of their accustomed tonal function. As we have already mentioned, Adorno criticises the emancipatory intentions of dodecaphony which end up in repression and constraint, causing the individual to disappear behind the material – and allegedly natural – laws of composition.

Music is not idiom any longer, does not stand for traditions fixed in traditional forms any more. Together with this objective element expression fades, too. Formerly, the urge to intensify expression had neglected the traditional dimension of musical language. [...] Finally, from the dialectics the natural material emerges in a threateningly pure form.

(Musik hört auf, Idiom zu sein, in überlieferten Formen für fest Überliefertes einzustehen. Dort aber zergeht in eins mit eben diesem objektiven Element der Ausdruck, dessen Stei-

<sup>47)</sup> HANS WALTER GABLER, *Werkentstehung und Textsituation des ›Ulysses‹*, in: James Joyces ›Ulysses‹. Neuere deutsche Aufsätze (cit. fn. 43), pp. 58–79, here: pp. 66 and 67.

<sup>48)</sup> Qtd. in PHILLIP F. HERRING, *Zur Textgenese des ›Ulysses‹: Joyces Notizen und seine Arbeitsmethode*, in: James Joyces ›Ulysses‹. Neuere deutsche Aufsätze (cit. fn. 43), pp. 80–104, here: p. 82.

<sup>49)</sup> Qtd. *ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>50)</sup> KENNER, *Ulysses* (cit. fn. 3), p. 65.

<sup>51)</sup> GOLDMAN, *The Joyce Paradox* (cit. fn. 3), p. 99.

gerung zunächst gerade die objektiv traditionelle Seite der musikalischen Sprache negierte. [...] Aus der Dialektik tritt am Ende das Naturmaterial bedrohlich rein hervor.)<sup>52)</sup>

Adorno problematises a regression towards natural material because, in his opinion, dodecaphony – analogous to late-capitalist society – rationalizes musical composition and restricts the freedom of the individual. Joyce scholars repeatedly maintain that a primary goal of his literary project was “to transcend the barriers of expressiveness set by the systems of existing languages”, while at the same time emphasising “the elements of chance and fluidity that Joyce was increasingly willing to admit into the mechanics of literary composition.”<sup>53)</sup> Parts of ›Ulysses‹ (for example, the penultimate chapter) border on deterministic writing.<sup>54)</sup> Adorno again attributes the alienating power of chance and determinism to the twelve-tone technique:

Total determination borders on chance insofar as totally constructed music appears to the individual as strange and incommensurable as does contingency.

(Die totale Determination berührt insofern sich mit dem Zufall, als die durchkonstruierte Musik dem Subjekt als ein so Fremdes und Inkommensurables gegenübertritt wie Zufallsereignisse.)<sup>55)</sup>

The principle of fragmentation and a concentration on the materiality of language – evident in Chapter Ten of ›Ulysses‹ – is a key principle of Chapter Fourteen (“Oxen of the Sun”). There, the individual paragraphs draw on prose styles taken from the history of English literature and, at the end of the chapter, contemporary dialects and slang. They form “a frightful jumble of Pidgin English, nigger English, Cockney, Irish, Bowery slang and broken doggerel”<sup>56)</sup> used by Joyce for parodic purposes. The chapter starts with phrases from chronicles – alliterating Anglo-Saxon (“Before born the babe had bliss. Within the womb he won worship”)<sup>57)</sup> – and medieval morality plays and epics, before crossing to the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, then parodying Defoe, Swift, Sterne, and Goldsmith, before finally traversing the 19<sup>th</sup> century up to Ruskin and Pater. Semantics are almost lost along the way; the sequence of historical literary styles performs the development of the human embryo in

<sup>52)</sup> THEODOR W. ADORNO, Über das gegenwärtige Verhältnis von Philosophie und Musik, in: *Musikalische Schriften V* (Gesammelte Schriften 18), Frankfurt/M 1984, pp. 149–176, here: pp. 161–162; engl. translation N. B.

<sup>53)</sup> LAURENT MILESI, Introduction: language(s) with a difference, in: *James Joyce and the Difference of Language*, ed. by L. M. Cambridge 2003, pp. 1–27, here: p. 1.

<sup>54)</sup> CLIVE HART, *Structure and Motif in Finnegans Wake*, London 1962, p. 65.

<sup>55)</sup> THEODOR W. ADORNO, Zum Stand des Komponierens in Deutschland, in: *Musikalische Schriften V* (cit. fn. 52), pp. 134–139, here: p. 138, engl. translation N. B.

<sup>56)</sup> JAMES JOYCE, *Ulysses*, ed. with an Introduction and Notes by JERI JOHNSON, Oxford 2008, p. 906.

<sup>57)</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 367.



a linguistic form. The ‘contents’ of the chapter – the birth of a child – could be told in one sentence. In this chapter the text is, therefore, actually self-referential and generated exclusively out of language.

For the final time, we will turn to Adorno as a guide in our comparison. In his discussion of the relationship between repetition and variety in Schönberg’s dodecaphony, he observes that the variation of a given sequence of tones becomes the force creating musical dynamics; composing with twelve tones, therefore, renders variation the ultimate principle (“das Variationsprinzip zur Totalität, zum Absoluten”).<sup>58)</sup> For Joyce linguistic variation is also a primary creative principle. Fritz Senn calls permanent stylistic re-formation (“fortwährende stilistische Re-Formation”) the central feature of ›Ulysses‹.<sup>59)</sup> Sometimes, in the case of Joyce’s catalogues, the series of variations aim at encyclopaedic completeness. His catalogues count amongst his key experimental writing techniques; they perform the “exploitation, to the point of explosion, of a given ‘programme’”.<sup>60)</sup> This linguistic transformation is evident in the passage featuring “Sindbad the Sailor”, which introduces Ulysses’ travel companions.

Sindbad the Sailor and Tindbad the Tailor and Jinbad the Jailer and Whinbad the Whaler and Ninbad the Nailor and Finbad the Failer and Binbad the Bailer and Pinbad the Pailer and Minbad the Mailer and Hinbad the Hailer and Rinbad the Railer and Dinbad the Kailer and Vinbad the Quailer and Linbad the Yailer and Xinbad the Phthailer.<sup>61)</sup>

Furthermore, as a supplement to this sequence, Joyce mentions “Darkinbad the Brightdayler”. The initial sounds – B (C) D F (G) H J K L M N P Q R S T V W X Y Z (›Phth) – may be compared to one of Schönberg’s primary series (Grundreihen). The initial sounds cover almost all available consonants, only C, which phonetically coincides with [k] or [s]; G, that is phonetically partly identical with J (or [dž], to be exact); and Z, which is transmogrified to “Phth” (although this form is probably meant to indicate a speech defect) are lacking. Joyce regularly employs such small ‘errors’ or deviations from the system – a trait he has in common with Schönberg who also frequently deviates from the strict rules of serial composition.<sup>62)</sup>

The paragraph declining Leopold Bloom’s name also relies on variation as the principle of text generation (“Bloom. Of Bloom. For Bloom. Bloom; Bloowho, Bloowhose, Bloohimwhom”), expanding it (“Boooloohoom, Bloohoom”),

<sup>58)</sup> ADORNO, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (cit. fn. 22), p. 99.

<sup>59)</sup> FRITZ SENN, *Odyssäische Metamorphosen*, in: James Joyces ›Ulysses‹. *Neuere deutsche Aufsätze*, ed. by THERESE FISCHER-SEIDEL, Frankfurt/M 1977, pp. 26–57, here: p. 27.

<sup>60)</sup> MILESI, *Introduction* (cit. fn. 53), p. 7.

<sup>61)</sup> JOYCE, *Ulysses* (cit. fn. 56), p. 689.

<sup>62)</sup> For examples of such ‘errors’ or deviations see GANTER, *Ordnungsprinzip oder Konstruktivität* (cit. fn. 5), pp. 23 (from piano piece, op. 11, no. 1), and 145f. (from piano piece, op. 23, no. 3).

or interpreting it as a relative pronoun and associating it with homophones (blue, blew). “Elpodbomool” and “Old Ollebo, M. P.” are anagrams that are reminiscent of inversions in music, while “Virag”, “O’Bloom”, “Don Poldo de la Flora”, “Senhor Enrique Flor”, “Henry Fleury”, and “Professor Luitpold Blumenduft” are translations of his name into Hungarian, Irish, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and German reminiscent of keychanges. A typo changes the hero’s name to “L. Boom”, verbal forms such as “blooming” and “blometh”, the exploitation of the pseudo-etymological relation with ‘blood’ in “bloody” and the association with trousers (“bloomers”) and place names (“Bloom Village”, “Bloomville”), more of transmogrification with “Bloomusalem”, and the invention of a group of supporters (“Bloomites”) follow.<sup>63</sup>

#### 4. *Writing/Composing Under Constraints*

In the case of Schönberg and Joyce, composing and writing according to external structural parameters or constraints comprises, in particular, the use of the twelve chromatic tones in a certain order of succession and the so-called Gilbert and Linati schemata, respectively. External structural parameters, and in particular numerical or topographical patterns, are common in experimental writing; their main purpose is to disturb or even destroy the principles and illusion of a mimetic narrative.<sup>64</sup> The use of such techniques amply demonstrates how flexible the ‘material’ – literary language and the tonal system – really is, and how easily this material may be liberated of its conventional semantics. Adorno hyperbolically interprets serial dodecaphony as determining every single note (“Jeder Ton der gesamten Komposition ist durch diese ‘Reihe’ determiniert, es gibt keine ‘freie’ Note mehr”)<sup>65</sup>, and maintains that musical sequences are dominated by contingency, chance, restless permutation, and mechanical patterns.<sup>66</sup> There is, however, ample consensus that the twelve-tone technique realizes the rational organization of the entire musical material (“Idee einer rationalen Durchorganisation des gesamten musikalischen Materials”)<sup>67</sup> and that a mathematical coherence (“Stimmigkeit als ein mathematisches Aufgehen”) replaces the inspiration and idea of conventional composition (“was der traditionellen Kunst ‘Idee’ hieß”).<sup>68</sup>

<sup>63</sup> These examples are qtd. in Senn, *Odysseische Metamorphosen* (cit. fn. 59), pp. 35–37.

<sup>64</sup> See ULRICH ERNST, *Typen des experimentellen Romans in der europäischen und amerikanischen Gegenwartsliteratur*, in: *Arcadia* 27 (1992), pp. 225–320.

<sup>65</sup> ADORNO, *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (cit. fn. 22), p. 63.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

Schönberg himself was aware of the constraints inherent in the use of sequences of twelve tones: he was trying to overcome the obstacles to creation, following the free flow of composing (“dem freien Schaffen flüssiger Schreibweise”).<sup>69)</sup> As we have already shown, dodecaphonic compositions *are* constructed according to constraints to a certain extent. This statement applies also to ›Ulysses‹. Joyce tries to explore systematically certain spaces of possibilities and variants. The ‘catalogues’ introduced above, which work according to certain specifications, represent external constraints on a micro level. Such constraints, however, also exist on the macro level of ›Ulysses‹, such as the series of newspaper articles in Chapter Seven, the musical forms imitated in Chapter Eleven, and the sequence of prose styles in Chapter Fourteen. In two schemata named after their recipients – the Gilbert and Linati schemata – Joyce assigns seven categories (or constraints) to each of the eighteen chapters, out of which at least six must be realized. Each chapter, therefore, contains certain figures, settings, and actions from Homer’s ›Odyssey‹. In addition it represents a certain time of day, an organ of the human body, an art or science, a colour, a symbol, and a (rhetorical) technique<sup>70)</sup> (s. *fig. 6*).

This schema dates from a late phase in the genesis of the novel; it is partly the result of an analysis of chapters already finished in draft, while also providing a number of ‘constraints’ for the final revision of the text. Some critics regard the schema as a fake, destined to set readers on wrong tracks,<sup>71)</sup> but after all ›Ulysses‹ *does* raise an encyclopaedic claim. In the words of Stanzel, the novel experiments with the totality of ways to describe the world (“ein Experiment mit der Totalität der Darstellungsmöglichkeiten unserer Welt im Roman”).<sup>72)</sup>

At the end of his ›Harmonielehre‹ of 1911 – which is placed at the end of the book to make it appear as a thought experiment – Schönberg envisions the systematic exploration of the possibilities of working with the twelve chromatic tones. He suggests using all possible gamuts, including rare and exotic scales (“in der europäischen Kunstmusik nicht oder nur selten verwendete[] exotische[] Tonarten”).<sup>73)</sup> The twelve-tone technique is easily recognizable as the realization of this idea. As we have already mentioned in our short analysis of the piano piece op. 25, the basis of each composition using twelve tones was a row or a number of sequences. Schönberg drew several charts which reveal his efforts to systematically explore tonal space. The charts for his String quartet No. 3, op. 30 (1927) include the twelve versions of the primary series, starting

<sup>69)</sup> Qtd. in GANTER, *Ordnungsprinzip oder Konstruktion* (cit. fn. 5), p. 82.

<sup>70)</sup> See figure 1: The Gilbert schema (from: JOYCE, *Ulysses*, cit. fn. 56), pp. 736f.

<sup>71)</sup> See HERRING, *Zur Textgenese des ›Ulysses‹* (cit. fn. 48), pp. 87f.

<sup>72)</sup> STANZEL, *Die Personalisierung des Erzählaktes im ›Ulysses‹*, p. 293.

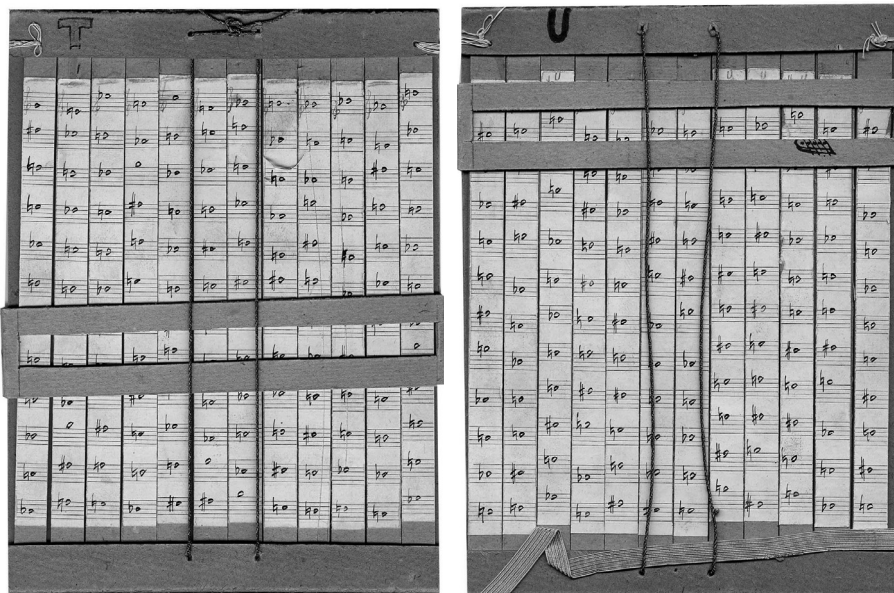
<sup>73)</sup> SCHÖNBERG, *Harmonielehre* (cit. fn. 32), p. 464.

APPENDIX A  
The Gilbert and Linati Schemata  
Table of Correspondences

THE GILBERT SCHEMA

Title	Scene	Hour	Organ	Art	Colour	Symbol	Technic	Correspondences
I. TELEMACHIA								
1. Telemachus	The Tower	8 a.m.		Theology	white, gold	Heir	Narrative (young)	Stephen: Telemachus, Hamlet; Buck Mulligan: Antinous; Milkwoman: Mentor.
2. Nestor	The School	10 a.m.		History	brown	Horse	Catechism (personal)	Deasy: Nestor; Sargent: Pisistratus; Helen: Mrs O'Shea.
3. Proteus	The Strand	11 a.m.		Philology	green	Tide	Monologue (male)	Proteus: Primal Matter; Menelaus: Kevin Egan; Megapenthes: The Cocklepicker.
II. ODYSSEY								
4. Calypso	The House	8 a.m.	Kidney	Economics	orange	Nymph	Narrative (mature)	Calypso: The Nymph; The Recall: Diugascz; Ithaca: Zion.
5. Lotus Eaters	The Bath	10 a.m.	Genitals	Botany, Chemistry		Eucharist	Narcissism	Lotus Eaters: Cabhorses, Communicants, Soldiers, Eunuchs, Bather, Watchers of Cricket.
6. Hades	The Graveyard	11 a.m.	Heart	Religion	white, black	Caretaker	Incubism	The 4 Rivers: Dodder, Grand and Royal Canals, Liffey; Sisyphus: Cunningham; Cerberus: Father Coffey; Hades: Caretaker; Hercules: Daniel O'Connell; Elpenor: Dignam; Agamemnon: Parnell; Ajax: Menton.
7. Aeolus	The Newspaper	12 noon	Lungs	Rhetoric	red	Editor	Enthymemic	Aeolus: Crawford; Incest: Journalism; Floating Island: Press.
8. Lestrygonians	The Lunch	1 p.m.	Esophagus	Architecture		Constables	Peristaltic	Antiphates: Hunger; The Decoy: Food; Lestrygonians: Teeth.
9. Scylla and Charybdis	The Library	2 p.m.	Brain	Literature		Stratford, London	Dialectic	Rock: Aristotle, Dogma, Stratford; Whirlpool: Plato, Mysticism, London; Ulysses: Socrates, Jesus, Shakespeare.
10. Wandering Rocks	The Streets	3 p.m.	Blood	Mechanics		Citizens	Labyrinth	Bosphorus: Liffey; European bank: Viceroy; Asiatic bank: Connee; Symplegades: Groups of citizens.
11. Sirens	The Concert Room	4 p.m.	Ear	Music		Barmaids	Fuga per canonem	Sirens: Barmaids; Isle: Bar.
12. Cyclops	The Tavern	5 p.m.	Muscle	Politics		Fenian	Gigantism	Noman: I; Stake: cigar; Challenge: apotheosis.
13. Nausicaa	The Rocks	8 p.m.	Eye, Nose	Painting	grey, blue	Virgin	Tumescence, detumescence	Nausicaa: Nymph; Phaeacia: Star of the Sea.
14. Oxen of the Sun	The Hospital	10 p.m.	Womb	Medicine	white	Mothers	Embryonic development	Trinacria: Hospital; Lampetie, Phaethusa: Nurses; Helios: Horne; Oxen: Fertility; Crime: Fraud.
15. Circe	The Brothel	12 mid-night	Locomotor apparatus	Magic		Whore	Hallucination	Circe: Bella.
III. NOSTOS								
16. Eumaeus	The Shelter	1 a.m.	Nerves	Navigation		Sailors	Narrative (old)	Eumaeus: Skin-the-Goat; Ulysses Pseudangelos: Sailor; Melanthius: Corley.
17. Ithaca	The House	2 a.m.	Skeleton	Science		Comets	Catechism (impersonal)	Eurymachus: Boylan; Suitors: scruples; Bow: reason.
18. Penelope	The Bed	—	Flesh	—		Earth	Monologue (female)	Penelope: Earth; Web: movement.

from all chromatic tones, and the same series ‘inverted’; see figure 2. Further basic series are produced by reading the twenty-four series backwards (‘Krebs’ and ‘Krebs-Umkehrung’)<sup>74</sup> (fig. 7 and 8):



Surveying a field of possibilities played not only an important role in the arts but also in psycho-physical research. Hermann Ebbinghaus, for example, tried to empirically test the capacity of human memory to memorise randomly generated syllables. The words of three syllables, each entirely meaningless according to ‘natural’ language usage, were constructed out of a pool of eleven vocal sounds, nineteen initial sounds, and eleven final sound consonants, with the total number of possible combinations, therefore, equalling 2299 (11 × 19 × 11). Friedrich Kittler compares this experiment with avant-garde sound and nonsense poetry of the early twentieth century and with dodecaphony. Ebbinghaus formed groups of 7 to 26 elements – similar to the twelve-tone sequences – with elements that had already been used eliminated from the pool until all other elements had been used up. Finally, like Schönberg and Joyce, Ebbinghaus broke his own rules by sometimes deviating from these strict constraints. Crucially, a comparison of the two ‘experiments’ reveals that the rather complex principles

<sup>74</sup> See Figure: Row charts to String quartet No. 3, op. 30 (1927), primary row (left) and inversion (Umkehrung, right) starting from the twelve chromatic tones (reprinted courtesy of the Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna).

of arranging the material were intended to remove language and music as far away as possible from their 'natural' use. According to Kittler, nonsensical syllables and equal chromatic tones constitute media in the modern sense and random selections create a pool of material that is selected in order to form individual aggregates ("Unsinnssilben oder gleichberechtigte chromatische Töne konstituieren Medien im modernen Sinn: vom Zufallsgenerator ausgeworfene Materialmengen, deren Selektion dann einzelne Komplexe bildet").<sup>75)</sup>

*5. Semantic Derestriction: ›Finnegans Wake‹  
Read by the Interpretive Community*

A final analysis of ›Finnegans Wake‹ will focus on one particular aspect that offers a productive analogy with Schönberg's mode of composition, namely the way in which the words in ›Finnegans Wake‹ are removed from their languages of origin and manipulated, in order to evoke a sense of the plurality of languages. Similarly, language in Joyce's last work is semantically derestricted; connections are drawn etymologically between languages, through the use of similar sounds. Key techniques include:

- the exchange of words sounding identical or similar (homonyms): 'eye' – 'I', 'tail' – 'tale', 'bedoueen' – 'between', 'Finnagain' – 'Finnegan';
- the use of portmanteau words: 'Babbel': 'Babel' – 'to babble'; 'isthmass': 'isthmus' – 'mass' – 'Christmas'; 'phoenish': 'phoenix' – 'finish';
- the splitting-up of a word into two or more words: 'Mississippi' and 'Missouri': 'missus', 'seepy' and 'sewery';
- the replacement of single letters: Lord – load – loud; february – febrewery;
- the transmogrification of quotations and locutions: 'Maria, full of grace' – 'Maria, full of grease'; 'Ring out the old, ring in the new' – 'Wring out the clothes! Wring in the dew!'
- sound associations across languages, aka surface translation: 'Send-us-pray' – 'Saint Esprit'; Sophy Key-Po – Sauve qui peut.<sup>76)</sup>

<sup>75)</sup> FRIEDRICH A. KITTLER, *Aufschreibesysteme 1800 1900*. Dritte, vollständig überarbeitete Neuauflage, München 1995, pp. 264f. The parallels with other spaces of possibilities may be augmented. According to an anecdote Schönberg got the inspiration for the twelve-tone technique in a Viennese café where the menu offered different sorts of coffee by a chart of twelve numbered shades of brown referring to the different mixtures of coffee and milk; cf. GERHARD PERSCHÉ, *Behutsame Annäherung*. Frank Scheffers musikalische Dokumentarfilme beim Festival „Wien Modern“, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Stadt-Ausgabe, 29 November 2007, p. 13.

<sup>76)</sup> These categories and the corresponding examples are taken from KLAUS REICHERT, *Viel-facher Schriftsinn*. Zu *Finnegans Wake*, Frankfurt/M 1989, p. 71.

These techniques are reminiscent of the disturbances of speech and the products of language disintegration (“Sprachzersetzungsprodukte”)<sup>77)</sup> that generated scientific interest at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This scientific interest shifted from the conventional collection of meanings to the signifier and the associations it produces. In his ›Grundzüge der Psychologie‹, Ebbinghaus records his experiments testing the emergence of linguistic associations. When trying to memorise nonsensical syllables the test subjects tended, in spite of explicit recommendations not to do so, to develop all kinds of secondary associations:

Unsystematically the most heterogeneous things come to their mind: consonance of syllables, relations between letters, similar nonsense words or names of persons, animals, and so on, meanings in another language, etc. [...]. Thus, pek becomes Peking, kin becomes Kind, sep reminds them of Joseph, neis of English nice, schuk of French choucroute. [...] The syllables faak neit are associated with Fahrenheit by one proband, another test-person in the case of jas dum – via the French jaser – thinks of dummes Geschwätz; the sequence of the syllables dosch pä m feur löt was interpreted as: das Brot Feuer löscht.

(Es fällt ihnen dabei etwas ein, und zwar bunt durcheinander das Allerverschiedenste: ein Gleichklang von Silben, Beziehungen von Buchstaben zueinander, ähnlich lautende sinnlose Worte oder Namen von Personen, Tieren u. a., Bedeutungen in einer fremden Sprache usw. [...] So wird z. B. pek zu Peking ergänzt, kin zu Kind; sep erinnert an Josef, neis an das englische nice, schuk an das französische choucroute. [...] Die Silben faak neit weckten z. B. bei einer Versuchsperson die Vorstellung Fahrenheit, jas dum bei einer anderen (durch Vermittelung des französischen jaser) die Vorstellung dummes Geschwätz; die Silbenfolge dosch pä m feur löt wurde einmal zu dem Sätzchen verbunden: das Brot Feuer löscht.)<sup>78)</sup>

‘Language disintegration’, *avant la lettre*, is reminiscent of deconstruction. Famously, ›Finnegans Wake‹ has often been interpreted as laying the ground work for post-structuralist theory and writing, with Jacques Derrida, Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, Jacques Lacan, Fredric Jameson, and many more praising Joyce in this respect.<sup>79)</sup> Brian McHale states of ›Finnegans Wake‹ that “there is no stable world behind this consciousness, but only a flux of discourse in which fragments of different, incompatible realities flicker into existence and out of existence again, overwhelmed by the competing reality of language. Postmodernist fiction, in short.”<sup>80)</sup>

Language is even more central to ›Finnegans Wake‹ than to ›Ulysses‹. In the former, words, and in particular their sounds, are the main ‘contents’,

<sup>77)</sup> KITTLER, *Aufschreibesysteme* (cit. fn. 75), p. 274.

<sup>78)</sup> HERMANN EBBINGHAUS, *Grundzüge der Psychologie*, erster Band, vierte Auflage bearbeitet von KARL BÜHLER, Leipzig 1919, p. 717, engl. translation N. B.

<sup>79)</sup> Cf. DEREK ATTRIDGE and DANIEL FERRER (eds.), *Post-structuralist Joyce. Essays from the French*, Cambridge 1984.

<sup>80)</sup> BRIAN MCHALE, *Postmodernist Fiction*, London 1987, p. 234.

with languages sometimes performing “presemantic sounds”.<sup>81</sup>) Language is, throughout the text, close to music, something which Joyce has used to explain the peculiarities of style: “He defended its technique or form in terms of music, insisting not on the union of the arts – although that seems to be implied – but on the importance of sound and rhythm, and the indivisibility of meaning from form [...]”<sup>82</sup>)

In ›Finnegans Wake‹ text is only present as text. “Here we are not inclined to ignore the medium whereby the content is transmitted; this is language at its least transparent [...]. Indeed it is difficult to talk of a ‘content’ that is somehow behind these words, pre-existing and predetermining them [...]”<sup>83</sup>) Liberating words from their conventional meaning and usage may once more be paralleled with Schönberg’s use of the twelve-tone technique. Whereas tones have a fixed ‘meaning’ in functional harmonics that may be rightly compared with conventional narrative, in dodecaphony they are free to enter into relation with all other tones of the chromatic scale. The freedom of linguistic association, therefore, directly compares to the freedom of tonal association. Schönberg’s own description of the new mode of composition – “Method of Composing with Twelve Tones Which are Related Only with One Another”<sup>84</sup>) – speaks to the idea of free tonal association making music truly autonomous.

The multiplicity of meaning apparent in the universal language of ›Finnegans Wake‹ is demonstrated by the many readings of the novel’s first word “riverrun”. The interpretations below are taken from “Finnegans Wiki”, a website dedicated to collective commentary of the text.<sup>85</sup>)

The entry ‘riverrun’ mentions a number of intertextual references:

*Genesis* 2:10: And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. – *Revelation* 22:1: “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” – Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Kubla Khan: Or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment*, lines 1–4: “In Xanadu did Kubla Khan / A stately pleasure-dome decree: / Where Alph, the sacred river, ran / Through caverns measureless to man / Down to a sunless sea.” → with a possible hint that this word is the Alpha of FW and symbolizes ALP. For Kubla Khan see FW 32. The allusion to Coleridge’s *Kubla Khan* leaves enough room for speculations: the poem came to Coleridge during a drug-induced dream → reverie; from *author’s note published with the poem*: “On awakening he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole,

<sup>81</sup>) MILESI, Introduction (cit. fn. 53), p. 5.

<sup>82</sup>) RICHARD ELLMANN, James Joyce. New and Revised Edition, New York, Oxford, Toronto 1982, p. 703.

<sup>83</sup>) DEREK ATTRIDGE, Reading Joyce, in: The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce, ed. by D. A. Cambridge 1990, pp. 1–30, here: p. 10.

<sup>84</sup>) See E. RANDOL SCHÖNBERG, The Most Famous Thing He Never Said (cit. fn. 7), p. 29.

<sup>85</sup>) See <<http://www.finnegansweb.com/wiki/index.php/riverrun>> [12.08.2019].



and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved" → Erinnerung; "At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter!" → the smooth flow of words is interrupted by thunder, producing charasmatic world of FW. – Alfred Tennyson, *Dying Swan*, lines 5–6: "With an inner voice the river ran, / Adown it floated a dying swan, / And loudly did lament."

Associations with the names of rivers are further noted:

River Jordan: a river in the Holy Land → Giordano Bruno, whose name means literally "Brown Jordan" → the River Liffey (FW 194.22 turfbrown mummy) → the Liffey as Dublin's sewer → jordan = a chamber-pot. Giordano wrote mnemonic works (see Erinnerung above). – elvop: (*Norwegian*) the course of the river, translates directly as riverrun (river – elv; run – lop (noun or imperative) – rivo (Latin) from (v) rivus ("brook; channel"): "I lead" or "I draw off".

The following part of the entry is dedicated to the phonetic similarity of 'river-run' with German 'Erinnerung' and to the connection of this concept to the conception of ›Finnegans Wake‹ in general:

Erinnerung: (*German*) remembrance; memory (i. e. a thing remembered) – Vico, *The New Science* ¶ 819: "... memory is the same thing as imagination ... the theological poets called Memory the mother of the Muses"; – Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Chapter 5): Freud identifies memories as a principal source of the manifest content of dreams.

At this point another field of reference comes into play.

reverie: (*n*) a state of dreaming while awake, a daydream; a fantastic, visionary, or impractical idea; (*music*) an instrumental composition of a vague and dreamy character

Two further names of rivers, one of them with musical associations, follow:

river Rhone → river runs from Swiss Alps to the Mediterranean Sea – river Rhine → cf. the connections between FW and Wagner's operatic tetralogy *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, which starts with the theft of the gold in *Das Rheingold*, and ends with the gold being Given! (FW 628.15) back to the Rhinemaidens at the conclusion of *Götterdämmerung*. – riverain: (*adj*) pertaining to a river or a riverbank; situated or dwelling on or near a river; (*n*) a district situated beside a river.

Another important association is the word 'reverend' and individual parts of this word:

reverend: (*informal*) a member of the clergy – Reverend: (*adj*) 1. (initial capital letter) used as a title of respect applied or prefixed to the name of a member of the clergy or a religious order, cf. ALP's letter (FW 615 ff): "Dear. And we go on to Dirtdump. Reverend."; 2. worthy

to be revered; entitled to reverence; 3. pertaining to or characteristic of the clergy – Reverend Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* was also a Menippean satire of decadence – err: to make a mistake; to sin; to wander from the right way; to go astray – Cf. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: “To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life!” It’s hard to find any better description for Joyce’s art in general and FW in particular. – run (*Old English*) mystery, secret; advice, counsel; writing; a rune – ri- (*Italian*) Prefix used with verbal roots to mean repetition; re-, again – ricorso (*Italian*) = return → Vico’s ricorso storico (historical return).

Finally, Italian, French, and German verbs and nouns, Irish echoes and some rather distant associations (translations, Old Norse, the constellation of Eridanos representing the river into which Phaeton fell) are suggested. These examples show that the possible associations drawn from ›Finnegans Wake‹ are virtually unlimited.

riverranno: (*Italian*) they will return; they will come back – riveran: (*Italian Dialect*) they will arrive – riverain: (*French*) inhabitant – reverons: (*French*) let us dream – reveries: (*French*) day-dreams; reveries; ravings; delusions – reverrons: (*French*) let us see again – reverence: (*French*) curtesy – rief heran: (*German*) he or she called or summoned somebody – Ragnarok: (*Old Norse*) fate of the gods; twilight of the gods; end of the world – liv amhran: (L/R split) Liv (Titus Livius, Vico’s “first loved” historian; Anna Livia Plurabelle; Lucia Joyce) + Irish “sing”. – Rivalin: Tristram’s father → L/R split – water faucet: is there a washhand basin with a tap in the corner of HCE’s bedroom? → the 1st of 7 elements in a circuit of HCE’s bedroom – watercourse → the Latinism-Saxonism of “river-run” becomes the Saxonism-Latinism of “water-course” – riverrun → Eridanos; Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 23: “I will drag down from heaven the fiery Eridanos whose course is among the stars, and bring him back to a new home in the Celtic land: he shall be water again, and the sky shall be bare of the river of fire.” – ribhéar a rúin, Irish for ‘my darling river’ – Rún (Irish) a riddle, a mystery.

## 6. Conclusion

As described in the introduction, Schönberg’s and Joyce’s innovations occurred almost in perfect synchrony in 1921, with preparatory plans going back to 1908. Both artists took a critical look at the basics of their material, namely language, narrative, and tonality respectively. They foregrounded the surface of the text, the signifier, and the tonal system. The literary and musical languages lose their conventional meanings and functional attributes. Joyce dissolves clear-cut narrative positions such as the personal and omniscient narrators. Certain passages in ›Ulysses‹ can no longer be easily attributed to individual characters and therefore turn – borrowing a term from post-modern dramatic theory – into textual areas (‘Textflächen’). Schönberg abandons tonality and the theory of functional harmony. Instead of ‘telling’ a musical ‘story’, which begins at a cer-

tain key and makes its way through the piece by means of conventional chord progressions up until a happy ending which returns once again to the opening key, he strings together a sequence of small musical fragments (motifs) that are determined by the necessity of containing all of the twelve chromatic tones.

Thus, both Schönberg's compositions and Joyce's texts are structured according to external constraints. Schönberg uses tone sequences that are defined in advance and largely determine the progression of the composition, in particular pitch and chords and, to a certain extent, also voice leading. In ›Ulysses‹ the Gilbert and Linati schemata determine a set of conditions that must be fulfilled in the individual chapters. On the textual micro level 'catalogues' parse a linguistic phenomenon in every detail and in all possible variations, something which is also true for a dodecaphonic sequence in a composition that tries out all possible applications and variants of a musical motif or constellation. In both cases a space of possibilities is explored. On the other hand, the creative subject – the artist's personality – loses some of its power as creator of the work of art; in general, modernism is sceptical with regard to the conveying of certain messages or feelings. It is little surprise that the majority of contemporary criticism was not in favour of such a depersonalization of artistic procedures. Even well-informed critics like Adorno regretted that determination in art – mirroring the alienation in capitalist society – replaced free expression of the individual. In ›Finnegans Wake‹ the deconstruction of language is even more radical than in ›Ulysses‹. The mixture of various languages in a highly artificial idiom renders the search for meaning a journey without any definable end – the possibilities of interpretation and association are virtually unlimited. In analogy to this development, the tones in dodecaphony also allow for free association – 'absolute' music that is free from any form of narrative mimesis implies equal relations with all the other eleven tones of the chromatic scale. The emancipation of dissonance opens up and expands the possibilities of musical association.

## TURNING HEROD'S CHILDREN INTO JAKOB'S CHILDREN

Cross-generational perspectives in conceptualizing  
memory and history through the perspective  
of “being a child”

By Christine Ivanovic (Vienna)

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the Austrian writer Ilse Aichinger, herself a survivor of the Holocaust, conveys both individual and collective trauma by using child protagonists as bearers of ›The Greater Hope‹ in her novel of that title (1948). More than half a century later, the British artist Ruth Rix, the only daughter of Ilse's twin sister Helga, who found refuge in England as part of the Kindertransport, re-collects the fragments of her family's memory. This article investigates the perspective of ‘being a child’ as a condition for the transference of memory.

Gleich nach Kriegsende verfasst Ilse Aichinger, die den Holocaust als Jugendliche in Wien überlebte, ›Die größere Hoffnung‹ (1948). Kinder sind die Protagonisten in diesem Roman, in dem Aichinger das persönliche und das kollektive Trauma zu verarbeiten sucht. Ilse's Zwillingsschwester Helga hingegen war mit einem Kindertransport 1939 nach England entkommen und fand hier eine neue Heimat. Mehr als ein halbes Jahrhundert später gibt ihre noch während des Krieges geborene Tochter, die britische Künstlerin Ruth Rix, den Fragmenten der Familienerinnerung neue Gestalt. Der Aufsatz untersucht, wie die Kinderperspektive die Erinnerungsarbeit prägt.

In the long history of working through Holocaust experiences in literature and film, the prominent role and ethical value of child protagonists was recognized early on. However there is still no systematic survey of the various types of child representation and the way their function has continually shifted over a period of more than seven decades. Considering the history of Holocaust literature in a broader sense, the generational change appears to be of particular interest. Children from the time of the Second World War are now in their late seventies or eighties, or even older. The transference of their memories affects their children and grandchildren too. Being a child of a Holocaust survivor and/or WW II refugee has proved to be deeply formative. One cannot grow out of this condition. It can never be left behind.

'Being the child of someone' is normally considered to be a condition that has to be outstripped while growing up and creating an independent identity based on personal achievement. For the descendant of a Holocaust survivor, however, it often becomes the mainstay of self-definition, a frame of identity building that is difficult to alter or to leave behind. On a personal level, the tracing back of family memory within a traumatizing history thus becomes an important way of working through what cannot be rationally understood. Passing on this memory to the next generation in a transfigured form is something artists are gifted to do. In reconstructing and preserving the singularity of individual human beings, this personal approach may even be a way of trying to overcome ideologies of collective violence and violent collectivity, yet it is the child's perspective which aims at a better future. What I am especially interested in here is the very condition of 'being a child' as a leading paradigm for the aesthetic representation of and working through traumatic experiences – not the image of the suffering child as a prevalent topic in Holocaust representations often bordering on kitsch. 'Being a child' also implies a specific position within the conceptualization of memory and history. Being situated at the threshold between what happened before, and what brought him or her into existence, on the one hand, and what is yet to come, on the other, the child embodies the very idea of history – a concept of reconnecting past and present, and of transforming the present into the future. It is far less its supposed innocence and need for protection that makes the figure of the child so attractive for literature dealing with collective trauma, but rather the fact that its specific position between past and future confers on the child a very particular role and ethical value in aesthetic representations.

In what follows I will paradigmatically consider the case of an Austrian family whose members became subject to the Nuremberg Laws once Nazi rule took over in Austria. While some of them managed to escape via emigration and some survived in Austria, others were ultimately deported and killed. It is the family of the renowned Austrian writer Ilse Aichinger, who was born in Vienna in 1921 and had an identical twin sister called Helga. Their parents were Ludwig Aichinger, an Austrian elementary school teacher from Linz, and his wife of Jewish heritage, Berta Kremer, a doctor and successful amateur composer, from Vienna. The couple divorced in 1927, but the family stayed on good terms until the father's death in 1957. After the 'Anschluss' in March 1938, Berta Aichinger immediately lost her job as a pediatrician with the city of Vienna. The family was later expelled from their flat in Hohlweggasse 1 to a mass accommodation at Este Platz 3 in the same (third) district of the city of Vienna. In May 1942, the grandmother Gisela Kremer and two of her other children, Felix Kremer, an engineer, and Erna Kremer, a pianist, were deported

and most probably met their deaths in Minsk shortly thereafter. Thanks to the help of Berta Aichinger's elder sister Klara, who had managed to emigrate to London in the summer of 1938, one of the twins, Helga, also escaped to England with one of the last children's transports from Vienna only weeks before the outbreak of the Second World War.

Ilse Aichinger remained in Vienna for the sake of her mother, who was not to be deported as long as she had to take care of a minor. They both survived war and persecution in Vienna. Separated at the age of 17, the identical twins experienced the historical catastrophe under significantly different circumstances, the one hiding in Nazi-poisoned Vienna, the other exposed to the challenges of an émigré existence in a foreign country whose language she yet had to acquire, and where she arrived while still a minor. Ilse and Helga eventually became a writer and an artist, respectively. Although the two sisters lived in different places from the moment of their separation, in their work they both constantly refer to the same history, and the testimonies they have delivered are intertwined to a surprising degree. This becomes even more evident when we further consider the artwork of Helga Michie's only daughter, Ruth Rix, who herself became an artist, and who relatively recently began working through the inherited testimonies of her ancestors. I will start with a look at her artwork.

### *1. Fragments of memory, fragments of history, recollected*

The British painter Ruth Rix was born in Leamington Spa in the middle of the Second World War, in the summer of 1942. She has a personal website through which she not only presents her artwork but also in a cautious way reveals aspects of her story/history. I propose to read her website like a text.

Based on a more or less standardized format, Ruth Rix's website is organized under five separate tabs ("Home"; "Work"; "About"; "More about"; "Contact"), whereby the tab "Work" offers six subtabs ("Recent Work"; "Hut", "Figure & Wood"; "Achill Paintings" 2013; "Dzadzu; Vienna Paintings" 1972–1974; "Archive"). The "Home" tab begins by positioning the artist unequivocally within the here and now:

I have a studio in Phoenix Brighton, and I have lived in Brighton since 1988. I have also lived in the Sussex countryside, York, Vienna and London.

At the same time the chronologically backward listing of the stations of her life no less decidedly points to her origin in both "Vienna and London". From two further tabs we learn "About" and "More About" the artist; in both cases a black-and-white landscape image from a historic postcard ›Am Attersee‹ is used for the background (it refers to a happy childhood experience, a summer

holiday spent with her family at the famous lake in Upper Austria), while the other tabs keep to a standard monochrome gray background. The first of the two tabs about the artist offers, in a very reduced way, basic information about her education as an artist, her previous exhibitions, and acknowledgments. The second one (“More About”) focuses on the ‘origins’ of the artist and her artwork. Here Ruth Rix introduces herself explicitly as a child of refugees from Austria. Having being born in England and grown up “in émigré circles in north London” she retains a strong bond with Austria:

My parents fled Vienna at the beginning of the war and met as refugees in England. My early years were spent in émigré circles in north London. I visited family in war-torn Vienna for the first time in 1948, and have revisited the city and the Austrian countryside many times since then. Lived in Vienna 1972–1974.

My family came to England from Vienna during the war, as refugees, and I still have relations there. I have visited Austria regularly since 1948.

Through her family both on her mother’s and her father’s sides, Ruth still has relatives living in Vienna, a city which she herself not only visits on a regular basis, but where she also used to live in the early seventies, working as an artist in the studio of renowned Austrian sculptor Fritz Wotruba (1907–1975). Interestingly enough she does not mention any names here, even though some of her family members are well known among literary circles, at least in Austria and Germany.<sup>1)</sup> More striking, however, is the last sentence in this tab of her website:

Much of my work has been influenced by my experiences, and those of my family, in Austria and England.<sup>2)</sup>

At this point the perspective goes beyond her own experiences and deliberately traces back to include the experiences “of my family, in Austria and England”.

<sup>1)</sup> Ruth’s father was Walter Singer (1919–2005), whose life story (personified by a figure named Karl Berger) has been famously documented by Austrian writer GERHARD ROTH in *The Story of Darkness*. Translated by HELGA SCHRECKENBERGER and JACQUELINE VANSANT, Riverside, Ca. 1999 (GERHARD ROTH, *Die Archive des Schweigens*. Band VI: *Die Geschichte der Dunkelheit*. Ein Bericht, Frankfurt/M. 1991). There are several sisters of her father still living in Vienna. Her aunt, Ilse Aichinger, had been married to renowned German writer Günter Eich (1907–1972). Their first child, Clemens Eich (b.1954), was a well-known German and Austrian actor and writer before his untimely death in 1998.

<sup>2)</sup> Beside these personal influences, on the main page of her “Work” tab she notes: “Strong influences are film and photography, theatre, sculpture, and Central European culture. As a child I watched the filming of *The Third Man* at Shepperton Studios. I have for a long time been influenced by the Austrian sculptor Fritz Wotruba, as well as by the work of John Berger, Rebecca Horn, Bill Viola and Tapies.” In this part of her self-presentation she refers neither to “Vienna” nor to “Austria”. Apart from different genres of art or media, the only general cultural reference she points to is “Central European culture”, thus opening the influence of “Austria” out into a wider space (and time) frame.

If one has a look at the subtabs of her webpage dedicated to her “Work”, one can see that in pursuing this aim Ruth Rix’s art of memorizing reaches out way beyond what oral history can tell. In her artwork she also relies very much on paper documents such as early photographs. Through those documents she focuses on the final stages of the Habsburg Empire rather than on the later period of persecution. The subtabs dedicated to her “Work” are also aligned backwards. After “Recent Work” (2017–2018), a series based around “Hut, Figure & Wood” (1985; 2015–2016)<sup>3</sup>), and a series of paintings she created as artist in residence in the Heinrich Böll cottage on Achill island, Co. Mayo, Ireland (“Achill Paintings 2013”), the list contains a subtab named “Dzadzu”. In our context it is the centrepiece of her artwork in which she traces her ancestors’ history back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The “Dzadzu” series dates from the period between 2000 and 2010, when Ruth Rix finally started offering “House Studio Tours, Phoenix Brighton”, a “studio show of work on the theme of family and memory”, as she explains on her website. On the “Home” tab of her website, beside a recent picture of the artist herself, there is also a photo of the wall in her studio in Brighton which includes a huge panel reaching from left to right, with significant parts of the “Dzadzu” series covering most of the wall. As the artist herself explains:

These works came out of the blurred boundaries between my early memories as the child of refugees, and the collective memory of the family. I tried to link the gaps due to separation, dispossession, deportation and death.

My mother Helga Michie escaped to England on the last kindertransport from Vienna, leaving her twin-sister Ilse Aichinger and other members of the family back in Austria. Some of the family were deported to Minsk and murdered.

I chose the shadowy figure of Dzadzu, my great, great grandfather, to explore, and perhaps to organise, the fragments of memory.<sup>4</sup>)

For a spectator who is only interested in her artwork, this short explanation accompanying the series does not seem strictly necessary – expressive as they are, the paintings and collages speak for themselves. But if we treat this brief introduction as part of her work, we are encouraged to ‘read’ Rix’s project as another form of ‘life-writing’ with a double motivation: aiming on the one hand to, as she herself puts it, “link the gaps due to separation, dispossession, deportation and death”, and on the other to link the artist’s early childhood memories with the collective memory of her family. It is only here, in the specific context of her “Dzadzu” series, that Ruth Rix speaks out the names of her mother and

<sup>3</sup>) This series includes two paintings dedicated to Ruth Rix’s grandfather, the father of the Aichinger twins, Ludwig Aichinger (1882–1957), ›Ludwig Reading‹ (2015; oil on board 10 × 15), and ›Ludwig II‹ (2016; oil on canvas 24 × 33).

<sup>4</sup>) <<http://www.ruthrix.com/#!dzadzu/a5yu7>> [26.06.2019]



aunt. And only here she explicitly recounts what happened to “some of the family”. In the “Dzadzu” series there are a few archetypal motifs, that recur regularly, such as the staircase (which at times merges with a female figure), or a dog originating in Tarkovsky’s film ›Stalker‹ (1979). But most prominently in her project Rix approaches the “collective memory of the family” by tracing the fragments of memories she inherited.

As was and is still the case with many refugee families, very often photographs were all that remained of the family’s former possessions. These pictures are handed down from one generation to the next, while the accompanying dates and stories are passed on orally. There are only fragments left by that process, and very often the individuals depicted can no longer be easily identified. The events associated with these images remain uncertain and it becomes more and more difficult for the heirs of the documents to reconstruct them. Rix seeks to link her own memory fragments from the time of the war and her early encounter with Vienna to the few material *tradita* and the stories of her surviving relatives, most explicitly in one of the earliest paintings of the “Dzadzu” series, the ›Staircase‹ (2000; oil on canvas 65 × 55 cm).<sup>5)</sup> In her project Rix refers to different categories of testimonies: to family documents in the possessions of her mother and aunt, such as letters and photographs; to oral accounts from surviving relatives; to literary works by Ilse Aichinger, which contain the author’s own testimony; and to secondary contexts that Ruth Rix extracted from the testimonies herself, such as the legendary local character “dear Augustine” from Vienna, a survivor *sui generis*, who also figures in some of Aichinger’s texts.<sup>6)</sup> As a focus for her discontinuous ‘narration’ Rix chooses “the shadowy figure of Dzadzu, my great, great grandfather”, whom she refers to by the family moniker “Dzadzu” in corrupted Slavic. Her seemingly incoherent series of single works, paintings, or collages serves as a platform “to explore, and perhaps to organize, the fragments of memory”. In combination with the “early memories as the child of refugees”, the project at the same time becomes the ‘life-writing’ of a consciousness that must emancipate itself from the situation of those who

5) Cf. “The staircase I glimpsed in a ruined building in Tel Aviv is fused with the one I played on in a London boarding-house, and that of the family flat in Vienna before the war, which I visited amid the ruins of the city in 1948. It also reminded me of watching filming on the set of *The Third Man*, perched on a stool.”

6) A fictitious character and local hero from Moritz Bermann’s book ›Alt-Wien in Geschichten und Sagen‹ (1868) which can be traced back to the historical person Mark(u)s Augustin who lived in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and famously survived a fall into a plague pit. Aichinger refers repeatedly to him, most prominently in her novel ›Die Größere Hoffnung‹ in the chapter “Das heilige Land” (The promised land), in: ILSE AICHINGER, *Werke in acht Bänden*, Frankfurt/M. 1991, p.74 and *passim*. Here “der liebe Augustin” (dear Augustine) appears as one of three travel companions the children encounter on their (imagined) trip in the coach (alongside Columbus and David).

escaped. It is an attempt to integrate the fragments of inherited testimonies into a larger context, eventually making them part of a tradition which would go beyond the catastrophe.

Considering Rix's "Dzadzu" series, we recognize that she is not handing down the history of a successful family. Again and again we encounter the figure of a frightened, running dog, the traumatic icon of a history of loss and destruction as found in ›Dog & Paper Trail‹ (2010; collage 30x42cm). It is the history of a Jewish family whose ancestor once migrated from the Caucasus Mountains to Central Europe; whose members were at home in the former Austrian Empire, and who were later exposed to persecution and extermination during the Nazi period. Ruth Rix tries to approach her unknown ancestor, whose image has been lost, through the photograph of his son ›Jacob‹<sup>7)</sup> (2010; mixed media on paper, 59x81cm), who, as Ilse Aichinger put it, had been lucky enough to pass away in time, unlike his wife Gisela, Ruth's great-great-grandmother, who, along with her children Felix and Erna, was deported to Minsk and lost her life under unknown circumstances.<sup>8)</sup> It is not *them*, however, the victims of the Holocaust, whom Ruth Rix turns to in the first instance. It is their father and grandfather she approaches in her work: "My great-grandfather Jacob who died just before the war. I tried to pull him away from his photograph to use his less-formed image to shape his father Dzadzu."

Here the outline and void image of her great-grandfather Jakob serves the artist as a frame to figure out the lost image of "Dzadzu", Jakob's father. Rix thus deliberately shifts the perspective on the relationships between the members of the family. While she is going far back in her search for "my great-grandfather" and the lost image of his father – of whom she knows only from hearsay – this point of view not only enables her to work her way back up the chain of the family's history; it also turns around the perspective on the future of those who are now lost. This happens even more strikingly when, in another approach to the same image, Rix incorporates a photograph kept by her mother Helga inside Jakob's head. In this collage, ›Jakob's children‹ (2010; collage 30x42cm), the same figure serves as an imagining of what was yet to come. Rix again merges Jakob's profile with the profiles of some of his relatives, this time his children, by using a negative print of a photograph once taken by her great-aunt Klara: two of the children in the photo are in fact the very great-uncle and great-aunt of Ruth's that were later deported. The negative print suggests that the image itself has not yet been developed. It documents a state prior to the

7) The website uses both spellings "Jacob" and "Jakob". In quoting the titles of the artworks I keep to the original spelling.

8) ILSE AICHINGER, *Film und Verhängnis. Blitzlichter auf ein Leben*, Frankfurt/M. 2001, p. 23.

later catastrophe of their lives. In Ruth Rix's work it is like a dream, a vision still preserved in the head of their father Jakob.

The surviving photo keeps the children's images in a curious state: they are dressed up and acting as though they are going on a trip in a coach, a trip which from a later perspective might be understood symbolically as an attempt to escape the nightmare of history. In this respect the capturing of the scene (whose actual context family memory has not passed on) strongly resembles a chapter that Ilse Aichinger sketched out in her novel ›Die größere Hoffnung‹, which was first translated into English by Cornelia Schaeffer as ›Herod's Children‹ (1963).<sup>9)</sup> It seems that both Ruth Rix and Ilse Aichinger are referring to the same document in order to recollect memories of their family members as well as to reflect on their disappearance. In shifting the perspective to the fathers, however, Ruth no longer perceives the children as the persecuted ones, exposed to the violent will of the anti-Semitic ruler – “Herod's children”. Rather, in recollecting the true generational chain, she restores their place in history as being the children of Jakob, namesake of the progenitor of Israel. It is the very image of this figure of Jakob which in Ruth Rix's ›Dzadzu‹ series provides the frame for her working through history: it allows her both to cross-fade the image of her great-grandfather with that of the former Emperor Franz Joseph (the symbolic ‘father’ of the nation of Austria whose silhouette on horse-back pops up in her series again and again), and to bring it into relation with the dispersed fragments of the lives of his children or with torn letters (fragments from the history of the family's separation at the time of the war) in ›Jakob and Torn letter‹ (2010, collage 21 × 30 cm).

The photograph used for ›Jakob's Children‹ had been a *traditum* within the Aichinger family for decades. It was only recently published on the cover of a new translation of Ilse Aichinger's novel ›The Greater Hope‹ by Geoff Wilkes (2016).<sup>10)</sup> The book came out not with an English-language fiction publisher, but with the German publishing house Königshausen & Neumann that is otherwise specialized in research papers in the Humanities. It was the Australian Gail Wiltshire, former theatre director and author of a book on Aichinger, who made the publication of Wilkes's new translation with the Würzburg publisher possible.<sup>11)</sup> She herself contributed an afterword in which she reads Aichinger's novel decidedly within the context of the Aichinger family history and in which she explicitly points out the connection between the family photo, the family tree, and the novel. There is no proof, however, that Ilse Aichinger

<sup>9)</sup> ILSE AICHINGER, *Herod's Children*. Trans. by CORNELIA SCHAEFFER, New York 1963.

<sup>10)</sup> DIES., *The Greater Hope*. Trans. by GEOFF WILKES, Würzburg 2016.

<sup>11)</sup> GAIL WILTSHIRE, *A Spatial Reading of Ilse Aichinger's Novel ›Die größere Hoffnung‹*, Würzburg 2015.

herself ever intended her book to be read closely in regard to her own family's history. On the contrary: being herself a witness forever traumatized by the humiliation, persecution, deportation, and murder of the Jewish people of Vienna, her own close relatives and friends included, in her novel she did rather more than just keep the memory of her loved ones alive – the latter being a rather intimate task. Aichinger's novel, which she had written down quickly and ardently in the aftermath of the War, had to literally play out a "greater hope" against the humiliation of mankind, against the corruption of the mind, against the barbarism of the German Nazis and all conflicted people. It was not only about the fate of her family; it was about humanity.

### *2. The greater hope of the children and the leap of emancipation*

As was already mentioned, Ruth Rix's mother Helga had escaped Vienna by fleeing to England in July 1939. After the start of the war, she was cut off from virtually all news regarding her relatives; there were only a few letters with a strictly limited word count delivered via the Red Cross, which took months to reach their destination. News of Ruth's birth reached Vienna a whole nine months after the event. News of the deportation of her grandmother, aunt, and uncle reached Helga in the form of a void – their signatures were missing on the letters she received.<sup>12)</sup>

The family's situation was traumatizing to Ilse Aichinger as well. While her twin sister Helga was sent to England, Ilse remained in Vienna in order to protect the life of their Jewish mother, who was safe from deportation only as long as she had a "not purely Jewish" child to support. Ilse was forced to watch in silence as her relatives were put into trucks and deported over Vienna's Schwedenbrücke – while the Austrian citizens cheered. Her relatives were taken from her before her eyes, lost to her sight forever. This vanishing that she witnessed became the constant theme of Ilse Aichinger's own existence – again and again she speaks of a longing to vanish and disappear – as well as a foundation for her later writings. Proceeding from autobiographical remarks to that effect by the author herself, scholarship on Aichinger notoriously tends to comprehend her

<sup>12)</sup> NIKOLA HERWEG, "Ich schreib für Dich und jedes Wort aus Liebe". Der Briefwechsel der Zwillingsschwestern Helga und Ilse Aichinger, in: RÜDIGER GÖRNER, CHRISTINE IVANOVIC, SUGI SHINDO (eds.), *Wort-Anker Werfen. Ilse Aichinger und England*, Würzburg 2011, pp. 27–43; SUSANNA BROGI, *Kommunikative Überlebensstrategien im Exil. Der Briefwechsel von Helga Michie und Ilse Aichinger*, in: GERMAINE GOETZINGER und INGE HANSEN-SCHABERG (eds.), *Auf unsicherem Terrain. Briefeschreiben im Exil. Edition Text + Kritik*, München 2013, pp. 73–82.

work within the frame of a “poetics of disappearance”.<sup>13</sup>) Yet the ambivalence of this ascription should not be overlooked. Again it is the perspective of children that seems to be of the utmost importance here. Just looking on and not being able to interfere with what is going to happen characterizes the state of ‘being a child’. In Aichinger’s novel, her female protagonist Ellen learns to outgrow this state step-by-step, while at the same time adopting the biblical injunction “become like little children” (Matthew 18:3), rather than adopting the position of adult followers of or collaborators with the perpetrators.

›Die größere Hoffnung‹ describes in a simple but very affecting way the successive and continuously accelerating steps of exclusion, persecution, and deportation during the Nazi regime, using as an example a group of children and adolescents on the verge of adulthood in Vienna. Without ever following a narrowly autobiographical concept, the novel very clearly ‘processes’ the experiences of the author during those years.

It was only decades later that Aichinger made a comment in a very different context that could be connected to her first novel. In a personal memoir, she recounts an event from the war that I would like to quote here:

Es war an einem frühen Vorfrühlingstag an einer Mauer der inneren Stadt, nahe dem jüdischen Tempel, nahe der Residenz der geheimen Staatspolizei und nahe von Adalbert Stifters ehemaliger Wohnung in Wien, an dem ich auf einem der unverkennbaren Anschläge, die die zum Tode Verurteilten anprangerten, zum ersten Mal die Namen der weißen Rose las. Ich kannte keinen dieser Namen, aber ich weiß, daß von ihnen eine unüberbietbare Hoffnung auf mich übersprang. Das geschah nicht nur mir. Diese Hoffnung hatte, obwohl sie es uns möglich machte, in dieser Zeit weiter zu leben, doch nichts mit der Hoffnung zu überleben zu tun.<sup>14</sup>)

It was the execution of the brother and sister Hans and Sophie Scholl on February 22, 1943, that Aichinger supposedly learned of that day – news that for her became an “insurpassable hope”.

In her short account, Aichinger names the time and place of a crucial experience both very explicitly and very generally. The precise location can be understood paradigmatically – the Jewish synagogue at Seitenstettengasse 4 in Vienna’s First District is juxtaposed with the Hotel Metropol at Morzinplatz, which housed the headquarters of the Gestapo; at the same time, the adjacent apartment building (Seitenstettengasse 2) retains the memory of a long-dead

<sup>13</sup>) Cf. Aichinger’s ›Journal des Verschwindens‹ in her volume ›Film und Verhängnis‹ (cit. Fn. 9); see also CHRISTINE IVANOVIC, Ilse Aichingers Poetik des Verschwindens, in: Symposium. A Quarterly Journal in Modern Literature. Bernhard, Aichinger, Grünbein, Kehlmann, and Jelinek: Literature and Austro-German Cultures of memory (Guest editor: KARL IVAN SOLIBAKKE), Volume 63, N° 3 (Fall 2009), pp. 178–193.

<sup>14</sup>) ILSE AICHINGER, Kleist, Moos, Fasane, Frankfurt/M. 1987, p.32.

representative of Austrian literature, yet another figure of a symbolic father, the writer Adalbert Stifter, who, like Aichinger's own father hailed from Linz.

Two concepts appear in this passage that are key for Aichinger's writing in general: "Hoffnung" (hope) and "springen" (leaping). Both are central figures for her, appearing as early on as her novel. The phrase which gives the novel its title, ›Die größere Hoffnung‹, is first mentioned in a note dated a month after the execution of the Scholls and written down on a scrap of paper that has been preserved as an insert in Aichinger's wartime diary. In the note, the author writes:

Die Hoffnung ist alles, diese größere Hoffnung, die die Dinge aus dem Schwankenden hinaufreißt in die brennende Existenz des guten Willens.  
21. März 1943<sup>15)</sup>

It seems appropriate to combine both these passages and to interpret the news of the Munich resistance group as a 'trigger event' that not only allowed those who were faced with the prospect of a violent death in Vienna to survive spiritually, but also became the origin of Aichinger's later testimonial writing. This is also mirrored in the use of an expression that will turn out to be the decisive figure of the novel: the leap. The text itself ends with a leap, when the protagonist Ellen finds herself on her way "to the bridges" in a burning Vienna, endowed with the task of delivering an unknown message. As she eventually decides to make that final leap, she is torn apart by an exploding grenade. These quotations from an earlier period help to confirm that the circumstances given shape within the novel derive from Ilse Aichinger's own life story – and can therefore be read as a testimony motivated by her own life history.

Aichinger imbues her text's testimony with authenticity, but she does not achieve this by writing autobiographically. The validity of the novel's depiction stems from the (hidden) reference to news of how the White Rose attempted to resist the Nazi regime – at the cost of their own lives. As can be garnered from the preserved note and her later retelling, it was that news that instilled in the person and later the author Ilse Aichinger that "greater Hope" – a hope greater than the hope for mere survival – that would later become the title (and theme) of her novel. Testimonial life-writing – bearing witness to what happened to people like Ilse Aichinger at that time in that place and, equally, to what was done to oppose it – has found its ethical importance for her. What comes to Aichinger as the shocking realization of that moment, she connects with the aspect of decision, as it is described so passionately by, for example, Kierke-

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<sup>15)</sup> Cf. for a further elaboration of this context CHRISTINE IVANOVIC, *Ilse Aichinger in Ulm*. In: SPUREN 93. Marbach a. N.: Deutsches Literaturarchiv (2011).

gaard. In reference to Lessing, Kierkegaard illustrates his fundamental view of the “incommensurability between a historical truth and an eternal decision” by prominently referring to the image of the leap:

Understood in this way, the transition in which something historical and the relation to it become decisive for an eternal happiness is a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*. Lessing even says, “If this is not what it is, then I do not understand what Aristotle has meant by it”, a leap both for the contemporary and the non-contemporary. The words are as follows: „Das, das ist der garstige breite Graben, über den ich nicht kommen kann, sooft und ernstlich ich auch den Sprung versucht habe.“ Perhaps that word *Sprung* is just a stylistic turn of phrase.<sup>16)</sup>

In Kierkegaard’s argument, “the leap is the category of decision”<sup>17)</sup>. For Aichinger’s hero Ellen, it is the decision to free herself and pass over into another state of being, thus reconnecting with the children who were fellows of her earlier days and who have already been murdered.

Regarding Aichinger’s novel, there are two aspects that bear special mention. Firstly, Aichinger left no doubt, both within her novel and in her later comments on it, that it is a text that gives shape to the very real historical situation she experienced; at the same time, however, she deliberately chose the form of the novel over that of an autobiographical report. Thus she does not explicitly mention the ‘trigger event’ for her own writing within that text, but instead chooses to emphasize the structural element that connects the two – decision as a leap. This in turn makes her text something more than mere testimony – that is, a simple recording of what happened – by imbuing the action with an ethical dimension following the news of the White Rose resistance. Secondly, what I call the ‘trigger event’ here, the personal recollection of seeing notices of the Scholl siblings’ execution, remains, for the moment, historically unverifiable. No research in any historical archive has unearthed any evidence that there was such a public notice at the time; indeed, according to several experts it seems highly unlikely that there was.

Connecting the concepts of Place – News – Hope becomes a guiding mission, generating a template of survival that was crucial at the time. In the novel, that template then generates a testimony of its own order, making Aichinger’s text both an authentic life history and a historically relevant testimony that expresses the experience of the terrors of that time. It does not limit itself to describing real, personal, experiences of the consequences of the edicts and procedures imposed by the ruling Nazis, but instead attempts to grasp the very

<sup>16)</sup> SØREN KIERKEGAARD, Concluding unscientific postscript to the philosophical crumbs. Ed. By ALASTAIR HANNAY, Cambridge 2009, p.83f.

<sup>17)</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

essence of the entire situation that resulted from those actions. That includes the news of the Scholls' execution and the "Greater Hope" instilled by it: the decision for a leap out of the fray – at the cost of one's own life. The testimony of that "leap" as a monument to the decision it embodies becomes a historical reality for Aichinger, a reality that she manages to express in her novel even beyond the confines of that particular epoch.

### *3. Where I live: Language and the house of being*

Aichinger is highly regarded as an author whose early and late works are read in the context of the Shoah. The discourse of her texts regularly contains references to her own life history. Key events include the separation of her Jewish mother and her non-Jewish father before the 'Anschluss' of Austria; the separation of the twin sisters; the deportation and murder of her grandmother, uncle, and aunt in May 1942; her survival in Vienna with her mother; the difficulties of continuing to live as a survivor of the Holocaust, the "weiter leben", as Auschwitz-survivor Ruth Klüger famously put it in her own report;<sup>18)</sup> her passion for cinema that she developed in her later years and through which she sought to exercise the art of disappearance in order to find a connection to those who disappeared. However, it must be noted that very few of these events are explicitly discussed within her texts. Most of this information comes from Aichinger's late texts: some of it is found in parts of her book ›Kleist, Moos, Fasane‹ (1987), but most of it in works written from the age 70 upwards and published after the millennium, such as ›Film und Verhängnis‹ (2001) and ›Unglaubliche Reisen‹ (2005).

Aichinger's oeuvre as a whole can be seen as life-writing and, as I outlined earlier, it entails the avowed aim of giving testimony. However, the double perspective given by her extraordinary position as one of a pair of identical twins has been perceived only recently – despite its undeniable presence throughout her texts. A popular thesis is that her sister Helga Michie was the original impetus and point of reference for Aichinger's writing.<sup>19)</sup> But her sister's own situation has so far been largely ignored. Although she retained extensive connections to other Austrian refugees in London, her emigration meant a language shift from German to English. She did not create a literary oeuvre that compares in extent and renown with that of her sister – but she did write: original poems in German and in English, some of them published in various

<sup>18)</sup> RUTH KLÜGER, *Weiter leben. Eine Jugend*. Göttingen 1992; revised English edition: *Still Alive*, New York 2011.

<sup>19)</sup> Cf. HERWEG, *Briefwechsel* (cit. Fn. 13).



journals in England and Germany, as well as a number of literary translations from German into English. It was only in her later years that Helga Michie began her graphic work, creating a respectable body of work consisting of about 150 distinct graphic pieces that have been shown in several exhibitions. A monograph documenting and commenting her works was published in 2018.<sup>20)</sup>

Helga Michie's position as a Holocaust-refugee in England was a very different one from that of the Viennese survivor Ilse Aichinger. She is an alien. Her language connects her with other refugees from Austria, but it is different from the language of the country in which she has arrived. Because as a refugee she had to leave behind her home and hope to find a new one elsewhere, she attached particular importance to the house.<sup>21)</sup> Younger emigrants especially show a vital interest in establishing a new home – in the sense of shelter as much as in the sense of appropriating a new language and making it into a *conditio sine qua non* for processing their new existence. On the other hand, the 'mother tongue' is often retained as a symbolic home. Hannah Arendt is a prominent example of an author who produced her most important publications in an appropriated, alien language, but nevertheless kept an emphatic relationship to her mother tongue: "Für mich ist Deutschland die Muttersprache, die Philosophie und die Dichtung" (For me, Germany is the mother tongue, philosophy and poetry), and "Es gibt keinen Ersatz für die Muttersprache", (Nothing can replace the mother tongue) she famously confessed in her 1964 interview with Günter Gaus<sup>22)</sup>; all that she has left of Europe is her language. Derrida, who was critical of Arendt's remarks on her (German) mother tongue, asked in 1997 in his seminar on hospitality (*De l'hospitalité avec Anne Dufourmantelle*):

What in fact does language name, the so-called mother tongue, the language you carry with you, the one that also carries us from birth to death? Doesn't it figure the home that never leaves us? The proper or property, [...] a mobile home? But also an immobile home since it moves about with us?<sup>23)</sup>

On the other hand, he explicitly points out the experience of the alien as an alienation of ultimately even one's own language:

"Displaced persons", exiles, those who are de-ported, expelled, rootless, nomads, all share two sources of sighs, two nostalgias: their dead ones and their language. [...] On the other hand, exiles, the deported, the expelled, the rootless, the stateless, lawless no-ads, absolute foreigners, often continue to recognize the language, what is called the mother tongue, as

<sup>20)</sup> HELGA MICHIE, *I Am Beginning to Want What I Am. Werke / Works 1968–1985*, ed. by CHRISTINE IVANOVIC, Wien 2018.

<sup>21)</sup> Cf. the documentation of her work *ibid.*

<sup>22)</sup> GÜNTER GAUS, *Zur Person. Zeugen der Geschichte*, Berlin 2001.

<sup>23)</sup> JACQUES DERRIDA, *Of Hospitality. Anne Dufourmantelle invites Jacques Derrida to respond*. Translated by RACHEL BOWLBY, Stanford 2000, p. 89.

their ultimate homeland, and even their last resting place. [...] If it [the language] seems to be both, and by that very fact, the first and the last condition of belonging, language is also the experience of expropriation, of an irreducible expropriation. What is called the "mother" tongue is already "the other's language".<sup>24)</sup>

One of the testimonies of life history from that time is a photograph that has survived – and, in this context, is quite remarkable. It shows Helga together with her little daughter Ruth, on the balcony of her house in London. To the right of her is a small cross with a handwritten legend: "Hier wohne ich" ("I live here"). The photograph was sent as a message to her sister Ilse in Vienna. It marks the confident gesture of a young woman who has not only arrived in a new home, but has also *created* a new place of living. The presence of her daughter Ruth also indicates a shift in her self-perception from "being a child" to being an "I" who may also perceive herself as the begetter and the protector of a new life, with a little pride and a full sense of responsibility. The picture does not show the apartment itself as an intimate, personal interior space – but rather the position of the home within the city space, the street, the building. The home is viewed from outside, identified by the lively figures on the balcony – who in conjunction with the note and the apartment itself become one single entity. Helga herself, meanwhile, occupies a transitional space: neither truly inside nor out, neither on the ground nor in the air. A classic constellation, almost reminiscent of the balcony scenes in Kafka's novel of exile, ›Der Verschollene‹. Through its connection of writing and image, the photo-message also reproduces another classic setting: the proclamation from a balcony. "Hier wohne ich" is the final act of coming home as well as of verbal appropriation, though it still remains in the transitional space of the balcony, and therefore fragile and precarious. Helga's inscription on the photo that turns the occupation of a space into an expression of one's own emancipation is no less programmatic here than the famous sentence said to have been uttered by the Austrian foreign minister Leopold Figl after the signing of the Austrian State Treaty from the balcony of Schloss Belvedere: "Österreich ist frei!" (15. Mai 1955).<sup>25)</sup>

In 1963 Ilse Aichinger published a short story that could be seen as a counterpart to this document. The title ›Wo ich wohne‹ ("Where I live") also became the title of the collection that text was published in.<sup>26)</sup> For Aichinger, that

<sup>24)</sup> Ibid., p 87, p.89.

<sup>25)</sup> Cf. also Aichinger's related short story "Zweifel an Balkonen" (Doubt on balconies) and its reading by CHRISTOPH LEITGEB, Untergrabene Balkone: Zum Verhältnis von Unheimlichkeit und Subversion in einem Text aus Ilse Aichingers „Schlechte Wörter“, in: ARVI SEPP, GUNTHER MARTENS (ed.), „Gegen den Strich.“ Das Subversive in der Deutschsprachigen Literatur nach 1945 (= Literatur: Forschung und Wissenschaft, Bd. 26), Berlin 2017, pp. 71–84.

<sup>26)</sup> ILSE AICHINGER, Wo ich wohne. Erzählungen, Gedichte, Dialoge, Frankfurt/M. 1963.

phrase is no less programmatic than the exclamation on Helga Michie's photograph. The deictic "here", however, is transformed by Aichinger into something ambivalent that can be interpreted as either an interrogative or a relative. While Michie takes possession of her London apartment through the exclamatory message to her sister, the protagonist (of uncertain gender) in Aichinger's story experiences quite the opposite: her own apartment keeps sliding down floor by floor, until it is finally below even street level (it could be noted here that Helga's photograph shows a facade that does not quite join with the perspective and takes on a noticeable slant – or a slide downwards). This development may not end in dispossession – her apartment is neither taken from her nor does she flee from it – but it does result in social isolation: all the other persons moving through the building (and at times through her apartment as well), such as tenants and the cleaning woman, seem oblivious to the change described in the story and behave as they always do. But the narration leaves no doubt that the apartment itself is actually changing position and that it is not merely a figment of the protagonist's troubled mind. A comparison of Helga Michie's inscription on the photo-message with her sister's story reveals yet another difference regarding the self-perception of the "I". The liberated exclamatory "I" at the end of the short note by Michie ("Hier wohne ich"), finds itself stuck in the middle of "Wo" and "wohne" in the title of Aichinger's story. Being neither mother nor child, and more and more stripped off its social relations, the single "I" finds itself encased in the downwards sliding apartment. It experiences itself as isolated and hidden, neither emancipated nor liberated or even recognized by the outer world – it only speaks out through the text.

Aichinger's strange short story could well be read as a reaction to the photograph from England. On the other hand, considering the emotional conjunction of language and the feeling of home under the conditions of an existence in a foreign space, Aichinger's story might be read in relation to the language in which people 'live': while it remains 'livable' in principle, its position in the social whole has changed dramatically. The conditions and possibilities of communications have undergone a shift, and the relationship between the protagonist and her environment is damaged.

This in turn creates yet another context of importance for Aichinger's writing. In 1947 a much-discussed letter was published, which Martin Heidegger had written to the young French philosopher Jean Beaufret a year previously. The letter, entitled "On Humanism", shows Heidegger's attempt at a first commentary after the war.<sup>27)</sup> At the very beginning, he writes:

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<sup>27)</sup> See among others one of the first reviews by MAX BENSE in *Merkur* 3 [1949] H.20, pp. 1021–1026.

Die Sprache ist das Haus des Seins. In ihrer Behausung wohnt der Mensch. Die Denkenden und Dichtenden sind die Wächter dieser Behausung. Ihr Wachen ist das Vollbringen der Offenbarkeit des Seins, insofern sie diese durch ihr Sagen zur Sprache bringen und in der Sprache aufbewahren.<sup>28)</sup>

Language is the house of being. In its home human beings dwell. Those who think and those who create with words are the guardians of this home. Their guardianship accomplishes the manifestation of being insofar as they bring this manifestation to language and preserve it in language through their saying.<sup>29)</sup>

Aichinger's story ›Wo ich wohne‹ bears witness to an existence in the Holocaust as well as its continuation in the Post-Holocaust. It serves as a testament to a language that has become a home that threatens to obliterate those contained within it. What the Jewish people experienced under the Nazi regime required at least something this drastic in order to be expressed, and it becomes even more drastic because it also contains an answer to Heidegger's much-discussed phrase.

Half a century later, in 2005, Ruth Rix creates the media collage ›Storeys‹ (2005; mixed media & collage, 38 × 37 cm). In that picture, the author's niece explicitly references the short story "Where I live". It is an "image of the uncertainty of boundaries", explains the artist on her website. The photograph, with its geometric elements and figures, shines through the artwork, including the markings of the writing and the repetition of the black, white, and blue colours. Through this, Rix expresses the connection between home and language – unmistakably present in the title ›Storeys‹ which bears more than a passing resemblance to the word "stories". The word alludes to the sinking apartment as much as it refers to the aspect of passing-on, a transference of experience in the form of a story – a story that also contains a close connection between 'story' and 'history' (expressed by the same word 'Geschichte' in German). Ruth can no longer pass on these stories through language. If you consider "Language [as] the house of being", the aforementioned "uncertainty of boundaries" refers equally to the borders of language.

#### 4. *Being a child jumping out of the fray*

A short entry in Franz Kafka's notebook, dating from around 1920, comes to mind, ›ER‹ (He), famously interpreted by Hannah Arendt in her essay ›Between

<sup>28)</sup> First edition in: MARTIN HEIDEGGER, *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*, ed. by ERNESTO GRASSI, Bern 1947. Quote from MARTIN HEIDEGGER, *Gesamtausgabe*, Bd. 9 *Wegmarken*, ed. by F.-W. VON HERRMANN, Frankfurt/M. 1976, p. 5.

<sup>29)</sup> MARTIN HEIDEGGER, *Letter on Humanism*. Translated by FRANK A. CAPUZZI, in: *Pathmarks*, ed. by WILLIAM MCNEILL, Cambridge 1998, p. 239.

Past and Future<sup>30</sup> – written at around the same time as Aichinger’s story. In her comment Arendt reads Kafka’s text as an allegory for history, for the struggle between past and future: “He has two antagonists”, Kafka writes, “the first presses him from behind, from the origin. The second blocks the road ahead.” At the end of Kafka’s short entry we encounter an idea which resembles the end of Aichinger’s novel: “His dream, though, is that some time in an unguarded moment – and this would require a night darker than any night has ever yet been – he will jump out of the fighting line [...]”<sup>30</sup>)

Out of a historical “night darker than any night has ever yet been” Ilse Aichinger, Helga Michie, and Ruth Rix created an almost invisible connected artwork that can never be understood without this reference to the experiences of persecution, extermination, and refuge.

Faced with the impossibility of re-assembling the history of her dead ancestors, of those who were displaced, disappeared, or destroyed, Ruth Rix developed a pictorial language that takes the fragments of family memory and recombines them in order to be able to pass them on once more. Being a child of refugees, she finds herself encouraged to trace what has been lost and to investigate. She “inherits” fragments of memories that echo in her own experiences and impressions. She takes these fragments and creates an amalgam with objects from her family history, from the history of Austria – the dominant figure of Emperor Franz Joseph – but also from archetypal figurations of trauma (the dog, the destroyed staircase).

In her works, Ruth Rix passes on and transforms inherited traumatizing images of terror and persecution. Just as Ilse Aichinger does in her novel ›Herod’s Children‹, she allows memory to emancipate the children from persecution, to let them step out into another way of existence. Instead of deploring the brutally sacrificed children she succeeds in reinstalling them as ›Jakob’s children‹, as the heirs of their ancestors, and thus as her own ancestors, too. In integrating the fragments of her family’s memory into a complex artwork in her studio here and now in Brighton, she offers them another home. She thus recovers a history that no longer relies on linear memory, or coherent language. “Dzadzu” is the linguistically corrupt memory fragment of an ancestor that once came from a Slavic region. The points of connection are missing, and so the unreconstructable outline of Jakob is amalgamated with another prototype of history: the emperor Franz Joseph appears in his subject, while the subject becomes the

<sup>30</sup>) HANNAH ARENDT, *Between Past and Future. Six Exercises in Political Thought* [1961]. With an Introduction by JEROME KOHN, New York 2006, p. 7.

<sup>31</sup>) Cf. on her website („Recent work“): ›Snow & Sky, 2017, digital print 29 × 41 cm; ›Snow Clearer, 2017; collage & mixed media on paper; 42 × 29 cm; <<https://www.ruthrix.com/recent-work-1>> [26.06.2019].

striking image of the Emperor. In the collage ›Franz Joseph & Augustine‹, yet another Viennese character becomes an alter ego of the great-great-grandfather: “Augustine, a legendary figure from medieval times, wanders into the frame much as Dzadu wandered into central Europe from the Caucasus.” The family history is joined with the collective history of the cultural space from which the family once originated (“Central Europe”), a representative space that is blended with an individually marked location (for this picture, Rix again used the negative of a photograph taken from a window of her grandmother's apartment: a man stands on the roof of the building across the street, shoveling snow).<sup>31</sup>)

In Aichinger's texts, however, language itself remains the place of action. Language is a testament to disappearance, to destruction, but also to the “Greater Hope”. In Aichinger's writing the children, however lost, are not pictured as such. There is a strong driving power in the young woman Ellen to overcome what is going to destroy them. It is the child who bears the greater hope, the child being situated at the threshold between past and future; a hope that has to be fulfilled in the one step only necessary to “jump out of the fighting line”.

Searching for lost family members and lost memories, Ruth Rix – who for her lifetime has been the child of refugees and Holocaust survivors – finally found a way of following Aichinger's hint. As she uses her inherited testimonies – documents as much as stories – to generate pictures, she passes the *tradita* on. But at the same moment she also takes on the demand to “jump out of the fighting line” through transmitting their history by the way of her art. Ruth Rix did not turn the inherited testimonies of her family's fate into a coherent story fixing them into a well-shaped tradition. Moreover, in looking at her pictures, we ourselves become witnesses of the sinking experiences as they turn into latent images of trauma that require tradition to be generated anew – a task that is up to every individual on his or her own. Or, in the words of Walter Benjamin: “In every epoch, the attempt must be made to deliver tradition anew from the conformism which is on the point of overwhelming it.”<sup>32</sup>)

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<sup>32</sup>) WALTER BENJAMIN, *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, in: WALTER BENJAMIN, *Illuminations*. Translated by HARRY ZOHNS. Edited and with an introduction by HANNAH ARENDT, New York 1969, p. 258.



# VERZEICHNIS DER LITERATURWISSENSCHAFTLICHEN HABILITATIONEN AN ÖSTERREICHISCHEN UNIVERSITÄTEN

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- Logos, Leib und Tod. Studien zur Prosa Friederike Mayröckers, München 2008.
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**Habilitationsschrift:**

Poetischer Pragmatismus. Goethe und William James, Universität Graz 2017, 334 S. [*Siehe Publikationen.*]

**Kurzfassung:**

Die Habilitationsschrift zeigt erstmals die historischen und systematischen Beziehungen zwischen den Werken Goethes und William James' auf. Dabei wird zum einen, unter Einbezug von Archivmaterial, die Goethe-Lektüre des US-amerikanischen Philosophen in ihrer Bedeutung für die Genese und Poetizität des James'schen Pragmatismus rekonstruiert. Zum anderen wird die (proto-)pragmatische Dimension von Goethes Werk herausgearbeitet und dieser als literarischer Philosoph und Wegbereiter des angloamerikanischen Pragmatismus exponiert. Mit der Konturierung der vielfältigen diskursiven Relationen zwischen literarischen, philosophischen und naturwissenschaftlichen Wissensordnungen der Goethezeit und jenen der US-amerikanischen Kultur des späten 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhunderts gewinnt der Pragmatismus als transatlantische Denkbewegung Profil. Auf theoretisch-methodischer Ebene leistet die Arbeit einen maßgeblichen Beitrag zum interdisziplinären Forschungsfeld „Literatur und Philosophie“, wobei neben der Rolle literarisch verfasster Philosopheme insbesondere auch das epistemische Potential literarischer Verfahren und deren spezifische Funktionen für die Konstitution philosophischer Diskurse und Praktiken demonstriert werden.

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Theodor Kramer – Heimatdichter und Sozialdemokrat zwischen den Fronten. Ein Beitrag zur österreichischen Lyrik der Zwischenkriegszeit, Wien 1991, 345 S.. [*Siehe Publikationen.*]

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  - Der „universalste Dilettant“ als „Baumeister der Welt“ – Zu Zweigs biographischem Essay über Giacomo Casanova, in: ARTURO LARCATI, KLEMENS RENOLDNER (Hrsgg.), „Am liebsten wäre mir Rom!“ Stefan Zweig und Italien (= Schriftenreihe des Stefan Zweig Zentrum Salzburg 9), Würzburg 2018, S. 99–117.
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- „Frauenverehrer“, „Liebessklave“, „Gott und Teufel“ – zu Karl Kraus' erotischer Biographie, in: KATHARINA PRAGER (Hrsg.), Geist versus Zeitgeist. Karl Kraus in der Ersten Republik. [Katalog] Wien 2018, S. 166–181.

**Habilitationsschrift:**

Prolegomena zu einer neuen Biographie Marie von Ebner-Eschenbachs. „Berühmtsein ist nichts.“ Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. Eine Biographie, Wien 2018.

**Kurzfassung:**

Die Habilitationsschrift besteht im Hauptteil aus der 2016 im Residenz Verlag publizierten Biographie der österreichischen Schriftstellerin Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (1830–1916) sowie aus einer theoretischen und forschungsgeschichtlichen Einleitung, die mit der Methodenreflexion ein Bekenntnis zum Prinzip der biographischen Narration wie zu Diltheys Forderung ablegt, das Individuum als „Kreuzungspunkt für Kultursysteme“ zu betrachten. – Die Biographie füllt eine Forschungslücke, die sich seit Anton Bettelheims Werk „Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. Wirken und Vermächtnis“ (1920) aufgetan hat. Sie setzt der verklärend-verehrenden Haltung des Freundes eine Position kritisch-distanzierter Würdigung entgegen, die einerseits der Ästhetik von Ebner-Eschenbachs heute vielfach unterschätzter Literatur gilt, andererseits ihrer für eine Aristokratin bemerkenswert fortschrittlichen politischen Anschauung, in der die Diskurse der franzisko-josephinischen Epoche evident werden. Dem

gängigen Bild einer Dichterin des Mitleids und der Güte werden dezidiert andere Facetten entgegengehalten: die – gerade gegenüber dem eigenen Stand – scharfsichtige Sozialkritikerin, die „Emanzipierte“, die Satirikerin, die Liberale und Antiklerikale. Ausgehend vom Status einer breitenwirksamen Kultautorin um 1900, verfolgt die biographische Erzählung den Weg eines von unbeirrbarem künstlerischen Ehrgeiz getragenen Talents: von den Widerständen der gräflichen Herkunftsfamilie Dubsy und des Cousins und späteren Gatten Moriz von Ebner-Eschenbach, über die ersten kleinen Erfolge und großen Niederlagen als Dramatikerin und die Profilierung als Aphoristikerin und Prosaautorin im fortgeschrittenen Alter bis zum durch Selbststilisierung mitgestalteten Bild der Berühmten.

Venia:

Neuere deutsche Literatur.

Institutszuordnung:

Institut für Germanistik der Universität Wien.

Assoz. Prof. Dr. Silvia Schultermandl

Geboren: 1977

Beruf: Assoziierte Professorin am Institut für Amerikanistik an der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz.

Dissertation:

Unlinear Matrilineage: Mother-Daughter Relationships and the Politics of Location in Asian American and Caribbean American Literature, Graz 2004, 235 S.

Publikationen:

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- (Zus. mit MAY FRIEDMAN:) Click and Kin: Transnational Identity and Quick Media, Toronto 2016.
- (Zus. mit PETRA ECKHARD und KLAUS RIESER:) Localizing Global Phenomena: The Contact Spaces of American Culture (= American Studies in Austria 10), Vienna 2012.
- (Zus. mit MAY FRIEDMAN:) Growing Up Transnational: Identity and Kinship in a Global Era, Toronto 2011.
- (Zus. mit SEBNEM TOPLU:) A Fluid Sense of Self: The Politics of Transnational Identity in Anglophone Literatures (= Contributions to Transnational Feminism 2), Vienna 2010.
- Against the (Main)Stream: New Perspectives on Asian American and Asian British Studies. Guest Edited special issue of Interactions 15.2 (2006): S. 1–168.

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- Trading Spaces, Locating Identities, Writing Selfhood: Lisa Suhair Majaj’s and Shirley Geok-lin Lim’s Transnational Life-Writing, in: *A Fluid Sense of Self: The Politics of Transnational Identity in Anglophone Literatures* (= *Contributions to Transnational Feminism* 3), hrsg. von SILVIA SCHULTERMANDL und SEBNEM TOPLU, Wien 2010, S. 25–41.
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  - Reading for Connectivity: Aesthetics and Affect in Intermedial Autobiographies 2.0, in: *Autobiography 2.0 and Quick Media Life Writing*. special issue of *Interactions: Studies in Communications and Culture* 9.2 (2018), S. 251–263.
  - (Zus. mit MAY FRIEDMAN:) Introduction: Autobiography 2.0 and Quick Media Life Writing, in: *Autobiography 2.0 and Quick Media Life Writing*. Special issue of *Interactions: Studies in Communications and Culture* 9.2 (2018), S. 143–154.
  - (Zus. mit KATHARINA GERUND und ANJA MRAK:) The Affective Aesthetics of Transnational Feminism, in: *WiN EAAS Women’s Network Journal* 1 (2018), S. 1–23.

*Online:*

- (Zus. mit DAVID HUCEK:) The Border Makes the Stranger: Hospitality and Mobility Justice in Paul Meschuh’s “Boat People” (2016), in: <<http://hostfilm.usal.es/index.php/boat-people-2/>>
- (Zus. mit DAVID HUCEK:) Hospitality and the Ethics of Disposability in Christoph Kuschnig’s Hatch (2012), in: <<https://hostfilm.usal.es/index.php/hatch-2/>>
- (Zus. mit DAVID HUCEK:) Fatih Akin’s The Edge of Heaven (2007) and the Hospitality of Engagement, in: <<https://hostfilm.usal.es/index.php/edge-of-heaven-2/>>

**Habilitationsschrift:**

States of Ambivalence: Transnationalism as Aesthetic Experience in American Literature from Equiano to 9/11, Graz, 2018, 292 S.

**Kurzfassung:**

The study considers transnationalism as an aesthetic experience prompted by American novels which challenge national narratives and the idea of a complete, static, and singular sense of American identity in various ways. It discusses how American novels from the early Republic to the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks allow readers to explore a sense of ambivalence about the American nation-state by engaging them into aesthetic experiences which prompt them to feel the confusion and distress of protagonists who cannot make sense of national categories in their own identity quests. The study shows that texts which portray the various notions of hybridity and uneven access to modernity of protagonists who need to come to terms with their own fluid identities against the backdrop of prevalent myths of a solidified national American identity, can induce in the reader an acute awareness of the ambivalences that shape the idea of “an” “American” “identity”. It investigates the salient markers of the aesthetics of transnationalism and conjoins the insights of aesthetic theory with those of transnational American Studies to formulate a new perspective on the transnational turn in American literature.

**Venia:**

Amerikanistik.

**Institutszuordnung:**

Institut für Amerikanistik an der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz.

Priv. Doz. Dr. Florin Oprescu

Geboren: 1977

Beruf: Priv. Doz. am Institut für Romanistik der Universität Wien und Assistenz-Professor an der Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, Rumänien.

**Dissertation:**

Der Roman und die Morphologie der Macht. Eine rumänische Fallstudie 270 S. [*Siehe Publikationen.*]

**Publikationen:***Monografien:*

- Model și cataliză în lirica românească modernă (Model and Catalysis in Romanian Modern Lyric), Cluj-Napoca 2007, 163 S.
- (In)actualitatea lui Eminescu. Izomorfismele canonului literar (The In-Actuality of Eminescu. The Isomorphism's of the Literary Canon), București 2010, 300 S.
- Romanul românesc și morfologia puterii (The Romanian Novel and the Morphology of Power), Iași 2018, 266 S.
- Power and Literature. Strategies of Subversiveness in the Romanian Novel (= Mimesis 71), Boston, Berlin 2018, 270 S.

*Herausgaben:*

- (Zus. mit PETREA LINDENBAUER, CAMIL PETRESCU, DUMITRU TUCAN:) Identități și alterități socio-istorice în Uniunea Europeană (Identities and Socio-Historical Alterities in EU), Timișoara 2017.

- (Zus. mit PETREA LINDENBAUER und MICHAEL METZELTIN:) *The Culture of (Im)Pudicity. The Romanian Case*, Frankfurt/M. 2018.

*Aufsätze:*

- “Nichita Stănescu și recuperarea modelului eminescian” (Nichita Stănescu and the Recuperation of the Eminescian Model), in: *Studii de literatură română și comparată*, vol. XVI-XVII, Timișoara 2001, S. 253–257.
- Dr. Heinrich von Wlislöcki – Despre poporul nomad al rromilor (Imagini din viața rromilor din Transilvania) (Dr. Heinrich von Wlislöcki – About the Nomad Roma People. Images from the Roma Life of Transilvania), in: *Revista de etnologie*, vol. X, Timișoara 2001, S. 219–222.
- “Călători și călătorii la capătul nopții” (Voyagers and Voyages at the End of the Night), in: *Studii de literatură română și comparată*, vol. XVIII–XIX, Timișoara 2003, S. 179–187.
- Les expériences théâtrales modernes, ou «vivre» le théâtre, in: *Caiet de semiotică*, nr. 14, Timișoara 2003, S. 81–84.
- “Paradoxul blagian al modernității” (The Blagian Paradox of Modernity), in: *Meridian Blaga*, vol. III, Cluj-Napoca 2003, S. 186–192.
- O ipostază a modelului catalitic blagian în lirica română modernă (A Representation of the Catalytic Blagian Model in Modern Romanian Poetry), in: *Meridian Blaga*, vol. IV, Cluj-Napoca 2004, S. 187–196.
- 75 H.P. Une mise en signe avant-gardiste, in: *Caiet de semiotică*, nr. 15, Timișoara 2004, S. 169–174.
- O ipoteză asupra destinului scenic al dramaturgiei lui Blaga (A Hypothesis about the Blaga’s Theater Destiny), in: *Tomis* (August 2004), S. 60–62.
- Metamorfoza autorului (Eugen Ionescu – Rinocerii) (The Author Metamorphosis. Eugen Ionescu – The Rhinos), in: *Banat*, nr. 4–5, (April–May 2004), Lugoj, S. 13.
- Pașol na turbinca, in: *Tomis* (June 2005), S. 28–30.
- Intrarea prin oglindă (Through the Mirror), in: *Tomis* (Februar 2005), S. 32–35.
- Modernitatea și reprezentările lirice bliagene (Modernity and Lyrical Representations of Blaga), in: *Magistri honorem*. G. I. TOHĂNEANU, Timișoara 2005, S. 391–402.
- Dicționar al Scriitorilor din Banat (Dictionary of Banat Writers), hrsg von ALEXANDRU RUJA (CNCSIS grant), EUVT, Timișoara, 2005. (Articles: “Arieșan, T. Claudiu”, “Dima, Simona Grazia” S. 243–246, “Foarță, Șerban” S. 311–318, “Nemoianu, Virgil” S. 547–554, “Țichindeal, Dimitrie”).
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- Noul umanism bliagian (The New Blagian Humanism), in: *Meridian Blaga* VI, Cluj-Napoca 2006, S. 133–146.
- Ion Barbu’s “New Humanism”, in: *Analele Universității de Vest din Timișoara, Seria Filozofie și Științe ale comunicării*, vol. II, XIX (2007), S. 99–107 and at [www.filocom.uvt.ro](http://www.filocom.uvt.ro).
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- Ipoteze lirice ale Logosului (Lyrical Representations of Logos), in: *Studii de literatură română și comparată*, vol. XXII, Timișoara 2007, S. 131–138.
- Reprezentări lirice ale angelicului (Lyrical Representations of the Angelic), in: *Studii de Literatură română și comparată*, vol. XXIII, Timișoara 2007, S. 75–90.



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- Poetica influenței (The Poetics of Influence), in: Meridian Blaga VIII, Cluj-Napoca 2008, S. 112–125.
- Max Blecher și exercițiul autenticității (Max Blecher and the Authenticity Exercise), in: Studii de Literatură română și comparată, vol. XIX, Timișoara 2008, S. 111–130.
- “Bertolt Brecht și metamorfoza epică a teatrului. Opera de trei parale” (Bertolt Brecht and the Epical Metamorphosis of Theater. The Threepenny Opera), in: Analele Universității de Vest, seria Științe Filologice, Timișoara, XLVI (2008), S. 188–193.
- Vocația prieteniei (The Friendship Vocation), in: Ion Ianoși. 80, Ed. Aura Christi and Alexandru Ștefănescu, București 2008, S. 187–194.
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*Habilitationsschrift :*

Der Roman und die Morphologie der Macht. Eine rumänische Fallstudie. [Siehe Publikationen.]

*Kurzfassung:*

In der vorliegenden Arbeit ›Der Roman und die Morphologie der Macht. Eine rumänische Fallstudie‹ beschäftige ich mich theoretisch und angewandt mit der Art, in der uns die Lite-

ratur, und insbesondere der Roman, ein Erkenntnisinstrument für die Beziehungen bietet, die zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt die Strukturen einer Gesellschaft definieren. Dabei gehe ich von der Voraussetzung aus, dass die Literatur in einer Gesellschaft wie der rumänischen zur Zeit des Kommunismus, die den Machtexzess erfahren hat, oft eine Form der Subversion und Verurteilung der Exzesse war. – Davon ausgehend erforsche ich die Beziehung zwischen der sozialen Macht und dem Roman. Im ersten Teil der Arbeit werden die sozio-politischen und philosophischen Theorien von F. Nietzsche bis M. Weber und die neueren Auffassungen von S. Lukes, S. Parsons, P. Bourdieu und M. Foucault, die wesentlich zur Bestimmung des Begriffs der Macht beigetragen haben, kritisch durchleuchtet. Anschließend wird eine für die narratologische Textanalyse geeignete Typologie der Macht entworfen, welche auch die Zusammenhänge beschreibt, die zwischen den Aktanten in den verschiedenen Handlungsumständen entstehen. – Der zweite Teil der Arbeit ist den Fallstudien gewidmet, die die oben angeführte Typologie anhand von vier repräsentativen Romanen der rumänischen Literatur aus verschiedenen historischen Epochen veranschaulichen soll. Die Analyse der ausgewählten Romane hat einen exemplarischen Charakter für die im ersten Teil erarbeitete Typologie der Macht, aber auch für die Romane der rumänischen Literatur im Allgemeinen.

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## BERICHTE UND BESPRECHUNGEN

RÜDIGER GÖRNER, Georg Trakl. Dichter im Jahrzehnt der Extreme, Wien (Zsolnay) 2014, 352 S.

Und Kinder wachsen auf mit tiefen Augen,  
Die von nichts wissen, wachsen auf und sterben,  
Und alle Menschen gehen ihre Wege.

Und süße Früchte werden aus den herben  
Und fallen nachts wie tote Vögel nieder  
Und liegen wenig Tage und verderben.<sup>1)</sup>

As far as one can tell in the absence of an index, Hugo von Hofmannsthal's ›Ballade des äußeren Lebens‹ is not one of the very many intertexts cited by Rüdiger Görner in his book on Trakl.<sup>2)</sup> And it is perfectly true that its composition does not fall in what Görner calls "das Jahrzehnt der Extreme", though its publication certainly does.<sup>3)</sup> It is true too that Hofmannsthal's is not a name cited in the index either to the ›Historisch-kritische Ausgabe‹ or to Weichselbaum's biography.<sup>4)</sup> Yet if Walter Ritzer's ›Neue Trakl-Bibliographie‹ is to be believed, Eva Reuter had brought the two poets together under the sign of "Schwermut" as early as 1949.<sup>5)</sup> And these lines seem in some ways to express the essence of Trakl, especially of the Trakl presented in Görner's study.

What comes across with extraordinary intensity is the profundity of Trakl's vision. So much so, indeed, that as a reader one is apt to get lost in it. That vision, as Görner presents it, did not much concern itself with the mundane details of everyday living, was often absent and self-absorbed. To that extent it is possible to apply to it the precise pun of Hofmannsthal's 'von': Trakl, like Hofmannsthal's

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<sup>1)</sup> HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL, ›Ballade des äußeren Lebens‹, in: H. v. H., Sämtliche Werke I. Gedichte I, ed. by EUGENE WEBER, Frankfurt/M. 1984, p. 44.

<sup>2)</sup> RÜDIGER GÖRNER, Georg Trakl. Dichter im Jahrzehnt der Extreme, Vienna 2014. Hereafter cited just with a page number.

<sup>3)</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>4)</sup> GEORG TRAKL, Dichtungen und Briefe. Historisch-kritische Ausgabe, ed. by WALTHER KILLY and HANS SZKLENAR, 2 vols, Salzburg 1969. Hereafter cited as HKA. HANS WEICHSELBAUM, Georg Trakl. Eine Biographie, Salzburg 2014.

<sup>5)</sup> WALTER RITZER, Neue Trakl-Bibliographie, Salzburg 1983, p. 177.

children, can come across as naïve, ignorant, even other-worldly precisely because he is so achingly aware of the void at the heart of being. Equally, Trakl's poetic universe is full of people going on their way, often without a concrete social or geographical goal, so that the act of going, and the frequently irredeemable loneliness that accompanies it, necessarily become metaphorical and metaphysical. Like Hofmannsthal, Trakl, the poet par excellence of autumn and decay, never tires of following fruits, especially the crimson-black berry of the elder, through its cycle of ripening and decay.<sup>6)</sup> For Trakl as for Hofmannsthal, birds are also implicated in the process, notably in the elegiac dactyls of "Lange lauscht der Mönch dem sterbenden Vogel am Waldsaum" (HKA I, 421). And when that poem continues "O die Nähe des Todes", those of us who have read Görner – who devotes some of his finest pages to an account of Trakl's invocative 'O' – realize with a shock of recognition that we are here at the heart of Trakl's universe of poetic practice. In Trakl, even more than in Hofmannsthal, it is death itself whose seeds were there from the beginning, which grew slowly, naturally and single-mindedly to fruition, and then, when the moment was ripe, turned this stocky, slightly stooping man (Görner's book is sparsely, but evocatively illustrated) into an uncanny resemblance of a bird's carcass.

That moment occurred in 1914. It is the first thing that is mentioned on the blurb to Görner's book, and for good reason. For that book is a characteristically oblique contribution to the slew of publications which appeared in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. With the help of Alfred Ehrenstein, who punningly says of Trakl that he was "mehr Suicid als Cid", Görner (p. 289) underlines the point that this death, though it occurred in the context and in the wake of mechanized mass slaughter, is at once anachronistic and prophetic. It refuses the rhetoric and practice of heroism, and with it the (ironically broken) way in which a whole generation made sense of their likely demise. And it substitutes instead a death by creative toxicity (the phrase, of course, is Görner's – see p. 64 and the whole chapter that starts there) of a kind that makes Trakl a forerunner of what with the death of Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse would become the 'club 27'. Although there is some equivocation over whether Trakl's death was actually deliberate, and although his allegiance to Alvarez's 'savage God' is not universally accepted, it is hard not to read his cocaine overdose as a gesture of absolute refusal: Trakl was no more prepared to participate in the folly of the First World War than he had been to work for the 'Ministerium für öffentliche Arbeiten' (see Weichselbaum, 128f.). It is also though an expression of separateness and solitude: nothing about Trakl's life demonstrates his difference from his contemporaries as persuasively as his leaving it. And those friends who arrived after the event could plausibly surmise that, had they got to Trakl earlier, things would have turned out differently (HKA II, 742; Weichselbaum 174; Görner 272). At another level again, though, that death seems necessary and inevitable.

<sup>6)</sup> See for example HKA I, 54, quoted in GÖRNER, p. 297.

In the light of it, Trakl's poems make perfect sense – and conversely, the poems seem to lead by an inexorable logic if not to that death, then to an equivalent one. And as we have seen with Hofmannsthal, a strong sense of an ending – what in Freud would become the death drive and what Mann, in Görner (p. 140) calls a "Sympathie mit dem Tode" is characteristic of the period as a whole.

In other words, Görner's book, written and published to commemorate Trakl's death, is also structured by and permeated with it. Thus on page 62 Görner writes "Trakls Dichtungen werden fortan das Sterben als ein Werden zum Tode zeigen." On page 136 he notes specifically, "Trakls *Gedichte* zeugen vom Wirken der Toten und des Todes." And on pages 294–295 he quotes Adorno to the effect that "Die Einheit des Expressionismus besteht im Ausdruck dessen, daß die [...] Menschen [...] zu Toten wurden." The sequence matters, and helps to explain the ways in which Görner approaches Trakl. For Görner has important things to say both about the "Dichtungen" – that is the holistic poetology of Trakl's writing, and about individual collections and poems, and also about his place in the literature of his time. For example: the context in which he quotes Thomas Mann on the "Sympathie mit dem Tode" is not that of Trakl's possible decadence, nor even that of a discussion of his possible incestuous "Blutschuld" – but at the start of a discussion of his use of colour. It is a take on a much vexed issue that is instantly persuasive – and would have been even more so if his publisher had offered a colour reproduction of the extraordinary self-portrait from December 1913, to which Görner devotes some particularly illuminating pages (178–180), and in which all the Trakl colours, separately and together, can only contrive to give his skull a thin veneer of anguish. Reading this portrait also in the light of what Görner has to say about synaesthesia and music is actually a terrifying experience.

Görner's reading of the poem 'In Venedig' is similarly shattering. The poetic logic whereby the 'Einsame' and the 'Heimatlose' become a child with a "kränkliches Lächeln" is rendered even more compelling by the reference to the fate of Gerhart Fischer and the description by his sister of the mortally ill 19-year-old's final gondola journey. In this regard too Görner does valuable work in reminding us that there is nothing fantastic about Trakl's poems. On the contrary, they are unrelentingly realistic – but the reality they represent has been transformed almost beyond recognition by the apprehension of death that underlies them. The point is underlined as it were from the other end in Görner's reading of 'Vorstadt im Föhn'. The poem begins for all the world like an expressionist 'Großstadtgedicht', with the slaughter-house offering a synaesthetic reminder of death in the form of blood which seeps into the canal like a whisper. But it ends with a vision of reflections and clouds that is informed by memories of childhood and childhood reading.

Late in the study, on page 296, Görner quotes a small poem that is not by Trakl at all. The author is Friedrich C. Heinle, who, Görner tells us, committed suicide in 1914 at the age of 19, in protest against the war. The poem begins with a syntactical ambiguity of a kind which Trakl pursued much further, whereby it is not immediately obvious that the word "Licht", capitalized as befits its position at the



start of a line, is in fact an adverb. It introduces a play of light and shadow, past and present, in which familiar symbolist trochaics have suddenly to accommodate “Schüsse”. The second stanza starts with the word “Leise”, which contrasts with the martial sound words of the previous stanza (“dröhnen”, “klirrend”), and, because it is associated with light, takes on a hint of synaesthesia. It also of course expresses the tone of Trakl’s poetry generally, and it occurs in a similarly prominent position in a poem by Werfel, which Görner had quoted on page 275. The stanza also features the Trakl-word “mild”, a contracted participle (“verschwommen”) and some pluralized “Schatten” that are both literal, metaphorical and metaphysical. And it ends with the ambiguous phrase “wie verweint”. With it the poem becomes an act of mourning directly comparable to Wilfred Owen’s ›Anthem for Doomed Youth‹. In this context the “Abends” of Heinle’s title turns out to be the precise equivalent of Owen’s “slow dusk”. Thus by introducing Heinle’s poem into his discussion of Trakl, Görner makes us aware of the extent to which the great poet of evenings is part of a pan-European phenomenon. Or, as Hofmannsthal puts it, in a line which could again serve as a summary of Görner’s Trakl: “Und dennoch sagt der viel, der ‘Abend’ sagt.” Without Görner’s erudition and wide reading, without his sensitive analyses and his extraordinary skill at capturing echoes, and above all without his minor-key musings on death and the author, we would have understood a great deal less both about the ‘Dennoch’ – and about the ‘viel’.

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Robert Gillett (London)

RÜDIGER GÖRNER, Oskar Kokoschka. Jahrhundertkünstler, Wien (Zsolnay) 2018, 352 S.

Wie Rüdiger Görners ausgezeichnetes Buch über Oskar Kokoschka einzuordnen ist in das nahezu nicht mehr überschaubare Werk des deutsch-englischen Literaturwissenschaftlers, gibt er in seiner Danksagung vor: nämlich als Schlussteil eines monografischen Triptychons, in dem sich Thematisches mit Biografischem verbindet. Das will sagen, Görner setzt anhand von Kokoschka fort, was er mit ›Rainer Maria Rilke. Im Herzwerk der Sprache‹ (1987) und ›Georg Trakl. Dichter im Jahrzehnt der Extreme‹ (2014) begonnen hat, nämlich „eine Trilogie des Künstlerischen“ zu versuchen, „in der das Wort neu sichtbar werden und das Sichtbare anders als sonst üblich zu Wort kommen sollte“ (350).

Dass ein ganz konkreter Link zum Trakl-Buch besteht, legt Görner im Nachwort offen: es ist Georg Trakls eindrucksvolles Gedicht ›Die Nacht‹, das spontan entstand, als der Lyriker den Maler bei der Verfertigung seines Gemäldes ›Windsbraut‹ beobachtete, mit dem Kokoschka auf seine so stürmische wie tragisch-

unglückliche Liebesbeziehung zu Alma Mahler reagierte. Mit diesem Gedicht, „das aufsingt und ein maßloses Erschrecken beschreibt, das so hymnisch klingt und so abgründig wirkt“, hatte Trakl laut Görner nicht weniger als „poetisch die Lebens- und Schaffenssubstanz dieses Künstlers getroffen“ (314).

Insofern repräsentiert es eine literarische Verdichtung und Vorwegnahme dessen, was Görner in seiner Kokoschka gewidmeten Studie gelingt. Diese tritt, genauso wie in den Vorgängerwerken über Rilke und Trakl, nicht als plane Biografie auf, noch will sie umfassende Werkeinführung sein, sondern vielmehr die dialektische, wechselseitige Durchdringung von Leben und Werk Kokoschkas vorführen, bei der eben auch das Leben zu einem Kunstwerk zu werden vermag. Ein wenig zu bescheiden vielleicht charakterisiert Görner sein kenntnisreiches Buch jedenfalls als einen „Versuch über das ‚Werk im Leben‘“ (12) des vielseitigen Kokoschka.

Der „Jahrhundertkünstler“, als der Kokoschka im Untertitel firmiert, interessiert, ja fasziniert Görner, weil er ihn sieht als einen „Weiser in die Möglichkeiten der Bildkunst, die im Namen des Menschlichen verstört, aufrüttelt, niemanden gleichgültig lässt“ (313). Mit Letzterem meint Görner offenkundig auch sich selbst, denn seine Passion für den Künstler ist für jeden Leser, für jede Leserin auf jeder Seite seiner Studie erkennbar. Doch weshalb besitzt der „Weltbürger“ (313) und Jahrhundertkünstler eine besondere Signifikanz für Görner? Nicht unwesentlich verantwortlich ist die lange Lebensdauer des 1896 im niederösterreichischen Pöchlarn geborenen und immerhin 94 Jahre alt gewordenen Malers. Wie „Länge und Fülle des Lebens auf seine Kunst zurück[wirkten]“ (12), fragt Görner daher im Buch.

Des Weiteren imponiert die künstlerische Vita, die Kokoschka nach wilden, expressionistischen Anfängen zu einem Alterswerk geführt hat, das den ungestümen Modernismus der Anfänge zu widerrufen scheint. Vor allem aber ist es die artistische Mehrfachbegabung, die den Maler in den Fokus von Görner rückt: neben dem Hauptfeld der Bildkunst war auch die Literatur wesentlich für Kokoschka: er war „ein Dramatiker und Erzähler hohen Ranges, ein (kultur)politischer Schriftsteller, Essayist und Autobiograf“ (15).

Darüber hinaus hebt Görner die bemerkenswerten politischen Schriften und Interventionen von Kokoschka hervor. Er verfügte „über eindrucksvolle Kenntnisse in der politischen Theorie und ihrer Geschichte – vom Sozialutilitarismus eines Jeremy Bentham bis zur Problematik staatlicher Souveränität“ (15). Görner betont in seiner Studie dabei insbesondere das Engagement Kokoschkas im Bereich der Pädagogik, über das noch zu sprechen sein wird. Kokoschka war ein dedizierter Anhänger des böhmischen Philosophen und Theologen Amos Comenius (1592–1670), der heute zumeist nur noch aufgrund des nach ihm benannten europäischen Mobilitätsprogramms für Schulen bekannt sein dürfte.

Kaum erstaunlich, dass Görner, der ja selber ein bedeutsamer, prägender (Hochschul-)Lehrer ist, Kokoschkas lebenslanger pädagogischer Utopie einer „Bildung von unten“ nachgeht, in welcher den Volksschulen die Aufgabe zufällt, zu einer Humanisierung der Gesellschaft beizutragen. Gerade angesichts der Erfah-

rung des Faschismus sah Kokoschka als zwingend erforderlich, dass ein Volksschulwesen ohne staatlichen Eingriff den Kindern nicht Nationalismus sondern Völkerverständigung lehrt, um so auf eine Überwindung nationaler Antagonismen (und kriegerischer Konflikte) hinzuarbeiten. Das sollte schließlich resultieren in „einer Weltgemeinschaft von Gelehrten, Wissenschaftlern und Pädagogen, getragen vom ‚Geist einer Föderation‘, und zwar im Sinne jener der mittelalterlichen Zünfte“ (193).

Natürlich war (und wäre) es kaum zu erwarten, dass es einer emanzipatorischen Friedenspädagogik, welche Kokoschka zudem mit einer internationalistischen Kunstpädagogik zu verbinden trachtete, tatsächlich gelingen könnte, den (längst schon überholten) Nationalismus zu überwinden, der ja in der Tat bis heute die Wurzel vielen Übels darstellt. (Man denke nur an rezente politische Entwicklungen in Deutschland und Großbritannien.) Görner kritisiert zwar, dass die Forderung von Kokoschka nach gesellschaftlicher Relevanz von Wissenschaft das unhintergehbare Gebot von deren Zweckfreiheit verletzt, dennoch nimmt er das utopische Bildungsprogramm von Kokoschka ernst, nicht zuletzt weil er sehr wohl weiß, dass nach dem Ende der Utopien die ohnehin gefährdete Zukunft unserer Kinder in der Tat verspielt wäre.

Kokoschka also. Sich ihn zum Gegenstand zu wählen bedeutete, sich einen gewichtigen Künstler und ein vielschichtiges Lebenswerk vorzusetzen. Das erfordert ein nicht geringes Maß an Überblick und Beherrschung des Materials, was Görner durch Schwerpunktbildung und nicht zuletzt durch quantitative Beschränkung erreicht. Will sagen: Nach der Lektüre des etwas über 300 Seiten umfassenden Kokoschka-Buches hat man einen Einblick gewonnen, für den andere Autoren wohl durchaus 500 Seiten oder mehr benötigt hätten. Zudem demonstriert Görner in seiner ersten Monografie über ein bildnerisches Werk, dass er sich darin mit derselben intellektuellen Autorität dem Gegenstand anzunähern vermag wie in seinen längst schon Dutzenden Büchern, die sich primär (aber nicht exklusiv) mit Literatur, Philosophie, Kultur- und Motivgeschichte beschäftigen.

Kennzeichnend für Görners souverän-ironischen Stil ist sein Feingefühl für Sprache, das ihn einen gesunden Abstand wahren lässt zum akademischen Jargon bzw. der degenerierten Sprache unserer heutigen Digitalkultur (worauf freilich erst ein rarer stilistischer Ausrutscher wie „Medienöffentlichkeit“ (142) aufmerksam macht). Kennzeichnend auch Görners angelegentliches Faible für sentenzenhafte Wortspiele („Kokoschka zeichnete bis zuletzt als ein Gezeichneter“; 314). Nicht genug zu belobigen ist ebenso sein Bemühen um ausgewogene, umsichtige und, wo nötig, auch vorsichtige Urteile. So mahnt er etwa an einer paradigmatischen Stelle, deren konkreter Kontext hier nichts zur Sache tut: „Vorformungen und Nachwirkungen – dergleichen behauptet sich leichter, als dass es sich schlüssig nachweisen ließe. Was unterschwellig im Künstler nachwirkt, was ihn prägt, es setzt sich nur von Fall zu Fall, im Akuten des jeweils entstehenden Werkes um, aber auch das nur in Aspekten“ (27).

Die Vorsicht dem undifferenzierten (Kurz-)Schluss gegenüber, um die es hier im kritischen Urteil geht, ist selbstredend nicht zu verwechseln mit Unsicherheit, sondern dem akuten Bewusstsein geschuldet, dass Geisteswissenschaftler des Öfteren schlauer zu sein glauben, als sie sind – weshalb sie sich gerne zu Aussagen über Künstler bzw. Kunstwerke versteigen, deren Stoßrichtung mehr über den Urteilenden als das Beurteilte aussagt. Der professionelle Zwang, einer zunehmend unmündig werdenden Studentenschaft im Unterricht orthodoxe Glaubensformeln vermitteln zu müssen, dürfte auch beitragen, dass werk-biografisch ausgerichtete Untersuchungen oft simplifizieren.

Görner hingegen weiß sehr genau, dass man von der Warte des bürgerlichen Professors nicht automatisch befugt ist, die Zwänge und Leidenschaften von Künstlern, die wie im Fall von Kokoschka in Armut lebten und Verfolgung erlitten, zu beurteilen. Von Elias Canetti stammt die bedenkenswerte Frage, „ob es unter denen, die ihr gemächliches, sicheres, schnurgerades akademisches Leben auf das eines Dichters bauen, der in Elend und Verzweiflung gelebt hat, einen gibt, der sich schämt.“ Görner jedenfalls, soviel ist gewiss, ist sich dieser Problematik stets bewusst.

In bezeichnendem Gegensatz zum durchschnittlichen Beamtengermanisten deutscher Prägung ist er ja zu einem gewissen Teil selbst Künstler, wie seine Lyrik und Prosa umfassenden literarischen Publikationen zeigen. Gleichsam bundesdeutscher Verdienstkreuzträger und englischer Anarchist zugleich (wobei sich eine Spekulation über die Gewichtung dieser sich nur scheinbar wechselseitig ausschließenden Anteile hier verbietet), ist er mehr als andere befugt, sich kompetent über das – um diese schöne Fügung hier nochmals aufzurufen – „Werk im Leben“ von Kokoschka zu äußern.

Doch nach diesem nötigen Exkurs zurück zum Gegenstand der Rezension: Das Porträt, das Görner in seinem Versuch über Kokoschka zeichnet, ist nur deshalb so genau, weil er eben auch auf die „Kehrseite“ des Künstlers blickt, so etwa darauf, was Kokoschkas erotische Eskapaden für die sich für ihn aufopfernde Ehefrau Olda Palkovská an Leid bedeuteten. Auch was die mörderischen Gewaltphantasien (und zumindest zeitweiligen pädophilen Tendenzen des frühen Kokoschka) betrifft, stellt Görner lieber eine Frage anstatt eine notwendigerweise verkürzende Antwort zu liefern: „Was nur rumorte in ihm? Waren das bloß künstlerische Gesten und Motive?“ (48).

Bedacht und abgewogen ist ebenso, was er zum – zumal für Kokoschka – unglückseligen Ausgang der Beziehung zu Alma Mahler sagt: „Nicht ein Liebestod war Oskar und Alma beschieden, sondern der Tod ihrer Liebe. Das wäre als Satz eine griffige Schlusspointe, aber bleiben wir angesichts der Quellen vorsichtig; denn es handelte sich in der Folgezeit um ein sporadisches Nachklingen ihrer Liebe, zumindest was Kokoschka anging“ (72). Dieses schmerzliche Nachklingen wird dann besonders treffend auf den Punkt gebracht in der Darstellung und Kommentierung des bizarren Umstands, dass Kokoschka zu seiner Dresdner Akademiezeit der Puppenmacherin Hermine Moos den Auftrag gab, einen mög-

lichst lebensgetreuen, lebensgroßen Fetisch anzufertigen, was immerhin „in der Geschichte der Puppe als einem Kulturphänomen [...] einmalig [ist]“ (100).

Dass Görner in der Tat ein besonderes Gespür für die Malerei Kokoschkas besitzt, das verdeutlichen immer wieder seine Bildbeschreibungen zentraler Gemälde. Nicht nur, wenn es um die ›Windsbraut‹ geht (64ff.), die er dann auch im Schlussbogen seines Buches in einer grandiosen Engführung mit Trakls Poem „liest“ (314ff.), erweist sich Görner als Meister der Ekphrase wie der Bildauslegung. Zwar ist es bedauerlich, dass der Verlag diesem Band nicht jenen Bildteil beigegeben hat, den er eigentlich verdient. Doch zumindest ist es ein positiver Aspekt des Digitalzeitalters, dass man jederzeit Bilddateien der Werke Kokoschkas aufrufen kann, um sich so zumindest einen groben Eindruck zu verschaffen.

Dem, was derzeit unter dem akademischen Trendlabel „transmedial“ durch die Kulturwissenschaften geistert, galt immer schon das besondere Augenmerk Görners. So auch in der Kokoschka-Studie. Er richtet sein Interesse ausführlich auf die ästhetische Besonderheit der literarischen Texte Kokoschkas, an denen er etwa hervorhebt: „Man kann hier geradezu von einem bildlichen Erzählen sprechen, selten genug unter bildenden Künstlern“ (137). (Görners Archivrecherchen ist im übrigen – neben bisher unbekanntem biografischen Fundstücken aus der Korrespondenz des Künstlers –, auch die Erstpublikation eines bisher ungedruckten Prosatextes mit dem Titel ›Ein Traum‹ (118–120) zu verdanken.)

Ganz in seinem Element ist Görner, wenn er über seine – neben der Literatur – andere Passion schreibt, die Musik, und dabei etwa „das intensive und produktive Wechselverhältnis von Kokoschka und Komponisten“ (224) wie etwa Gottfried von Einem oder Werner Egk in den Blick nimmt. Ein Görner'scher Lieblingstopos ist ebenso die Analyse der verfehlten Begegnungen zwischen bedeutenden Künstlern. Diesmal vermag er am konkreten Beispiel des missglückten Austausches zwischen Kokoschka und Thomas Mann zeigen, dass sich anhand der Inkompatibilität bedeutender Künstler einiges lernen lässt über den Eigensinn der Kunst.

Unter dem Kapiteltitel „Das Porträt als Darstellungsform“ entwirft Görner dann eine kleine Philosophie der Porträtmalerei im Allgemeinen und von Kokoschka im Besonderen: „Porträts legen Zeugnis einer Reihe von Begegnungen ab zwischen Künstler und Modell. Beim Porträtieren und vor allem auch beim Urteilen über das Porträt spielen dann zwei Grundfragen eine entscheidende Rolle: Wie begegnet der Künstler dem anderen, zu Porträtierenden? Wo beginnt im Porträtgemälde das Gegenüber, und was geht vom porträtierenden Künstler in das Porträt des anderen ein? Welches Bild vom Menschen wird dabei entworfen?“ (205) Wie Görner dann u.a. ausführt, wurde Kokoschka von anderer Hand nur höchst selten porträtiert, während es ihm in seinem Porträtschaffen gelang, eine eigentümliche „Spannung zwischen Feinsinnigem und Grobschlächtigen“ (213) herzustellen, wobei mit Seitenblick auf die Selbstporträts des Künstlers festzustellen ist, dass Kokoschka „in seiner Gestaltung aller Gesichter, die er gemalt hat, gegenwärtig [ist]“ (216).

Umso dringlicher erscheint daher Görners Frage nach dem Faible des Künstlers, insbesondere die Porträts von Machtmenschen zu malen, das Kokoschka gegen Ende seiner Schaffenszeit umtrieb. Konrad Adenauer, Theodor Heuss, Ludwig Erhard und Helmut Schmidt unter anderen gehörten zum Kreis der Gemalten, wobei der späte Kokoschka, so Görner, „den Großen in der Politik auf Augenhöhe [begegnete]“ (234). Vielfach führten die Porträtsitzungen zu engen Bekann- und Freundschaften, die Kokoschka weniger aus Eitelkeit und Geltungssucht betrieb, als um dergestalt Ansprechpartner für seine Ideen zur Friedenspolitik und europäischen Einheit zu gewinnen.

Unproblematisch war das alles freilich nicht. Wie Görner ausführt, gehören die vorgenannten Politikerporträts in eine Werkreihe, die bereits nach 1945 beginnt, etwa wenn Kokoschka den Schweizer Industriellen Emil Georg Bührle malte, der sein beträchtliches Vermögen der Waffenfabrikation verdankte. „Nichts daran scheint Kokoschka gestört zu haben. Auftrag war Auftrag – gerade in den Nachkriegsjahren –, und ein jeder hatte sein Gesicht. Sein Porträt des hochkultivierten Rüstungsmagnaten zeigt einen distinguierten Biedermann ohne Brandstifter“ (220). Was hier aufgeworfen wird, neben den moralischen Erwägungen, ist die Frage nach der Nähe zur Macht, die (moderne und gegenwärtige) Kunst durchaus suchen darf, aber auch dringend bewusst gestalten sollte, nicht zuletzt um eine Farce von jenem Kaliber zu verhindern, die Görner in seiner so instruktiven wie unterhaltsamen Digression zu Graham Sutherlands Porträtbild von Winston Churchill schildert. (Es wurde „auf Betreiben von Churchills Frau, Clementine, im Garten von Chartwell verbrannt“; 245).

Das abschließende Kapitel von Görners Studie gilt erneut der Dimension des Pädagogischen und ist „Porträt des älteren Künstlers als Erzieher oder: Schulen des Sehens“ betitelt. Es dreht sich mithin um die von Kokoschka 1953 begründete Internationale Sommerakademie in Salzburg, in deren Rahmen er seine „Schule des Sehens“ einbettete als Versuch, einerseits gegen die vehement abgelehnte Gegenstandslosigkeit in der modernen Kunst zu Felde zu ziehen, andererseits aber eben auch, um seine eigene Ästhetik als „schulbildend“ zu etablieren. Ausgerechnet im kulturkonservativen, um nicht zu sagen: reaktionären Salzburg der Nachkriegszeit führte ihn diese Intervention in die ästhetischen Debatten der Zeit zwangsläufig auf ein vermintes Gelände, denn Kokoschka avancierte dabei wider Willen „zur Leitfigur eines ästhetischen Revisionismus“ (257), der sich zu einem nicht geringen Teil aus zumeist braunen Gefilden speiste.

Dass Kokoschka die Kunst eines Egon Schiele als Pornografie diffamierte und sich ausgerechnet den nationalsozialistisch schwer belasteten Kunsthändler Friedrich Welz zum „Inspirator und ‚Sekretär‘ der [Sommer-]Akademie“ (261) auserkor, war da mehr als unglücklich. Erneut verweigert sich Görner einem vielleicht vorschnellen Urteils in der causa, um stattdessen die Fakten in aller Objektivität zu präsentieren, dabei aber auch die dunklen Stellen zu erwähnen, in denen „(zu) vieles Spekulation, Vermutung, Mutmaßung“ bleiben muss, damit man sich als Leser selber eine Meinung bilde: „Und weil es allzu leichtfiele, hier zu urteilen,

ohne die genauen Begleitumstände zu kennen, sei darauf verzichtet“ (263), schreibt Görner salomonisch.

Eines darf jedoch, mit Görner, als Fazit festgehalten werden: „Das Besondere der Schule des Sehens war, dass Kokoschka seine Schüler dazu anzuleiten verstand, als Einzelne zu sehen und gleichzeitig dieses Sehen auch als gemeinschaftliche Erfahrung zu begreifen“ (267). Sowohl hinsichtlich des gemeinschaftlichen Ethos als der phänomenologischen Orientierung an der alltäglichen (Seh-)Erfahrung, die freilich auf ein neues Wahrnehmungsniveau gehoben werden sollte, wertet Görner die Schule des Sehens als Kokoschkas wichtigsten Beitrag zur einer praktischen Kunsttheorie. Mehr noch: „Bedenkt man in Kokoschkas Denken den Zusammenhang zwischen dem von Comenius abgeleiteten Erziehungsprojekt, das er ein Leben lang verfolgte, und der Schule des Einsehen-Lernens, dann stehen wir hier einer pädagogisch-konkreten Utopie ersten Ranges gegenüber“ (270).

Der Blick auf das Alterswerk von Kokoschkas vielperspektivischen Gemälden (wie dem der Wiener Staatsoper, der Kölner Rheinuferfront und dem Inneren des Kölner Doms, aber auch etwa der Ansichten vom Genfer See und von Delphi), demonstriert für den genauen Betrachter Görner weiters vor allem eines: „Dieser Künstler konnte Lehrer des Sehens werden, weil er selbst in fortgeschrittenem Alter nicht müde wurde, sich selbst nach wie vor auch als Schüler des Sehens zu begreifen, neue Blickwinkel zu erproben, Einblicke und Ausblicke zu ergründen, den Farben eigenständige Perspektiven zu gewähren und immer wieder dem Erstaunen über das Gesehene Ausdruck zu verleihen“ (267).

Als Leser dieses außergewöhnlichen Kunst-Buches wiederum kann man mit Görners Augen auf Oskar Kokoschka, sein Leben und Werk blicken. Dabei hat sich Görner stets an der Maxime orientiert, die er am Ende des Bandes wie folgt fasst: „Kunstkritik nämlich darf eines nie vergessen: Sie hat letztlich immer der Wertschätzung ihres Gegenstandes zu dienen. Auch wenn im besten und von Friedrich Schlegel eingeforderten Fall auch die Kritik Kunst werden soll und – im Gegenzug – die Kunst Kritik sein kann, in Wirklichkeit kann die Kritik nur mit ihrem Kunst-Werden liebäugeln“ (351). Rüdiger Görner, und dafür legt sein Kokoschka-Band eindrucksvoll Zeugnis ab, ist ein Kunst-Kritiker, der zugleich die diffizile Kunst der Kritik wie kaum ein anderer deutscher Intellektueller beherrscht, da er die Freiheiten des angelsächsischen *criticism* mit dem Genauigkeitsanspruch der Literaturwissenschaft zu verbinden versteht.

RÜDIGER GÖRNER, *Brexismus oder: Verortungsversuche im Dazwischen*. Mit einem Gespräch über das historische Exil von Rüdiger Görner mit Jeremy Adler und Michael Krüger, hrsg. und mit einem Nachwort versehen von GÜNTER BLAMBERGER (= Beiträge zur neueren Literaturgeschichte; Band 379), Heidelberg (Universitätsverlag Winter) 2018, 129 S.

Nichts ist in unserer Zeit der multiplen Verflochtenheiten illusionärer als der Glaube an eine unanfechtbare nationalstaatliche Souveränität.  
(RÜDIGER GÖRNER, *Brexismus*, p. 76)

Over twenty years ago my colleague Gisela Holfter and myself founded the Centre for Irish-German Studies at the University of Limerick. Ever since the Centre for Anglo-German Cultural Relations at Queen Mary University of London appeared on the academic scene in 2005, we have regarded with envy the vibrant development of our counterpart in the UK under the inspired directorship of Professor Rüdiger Görner. It is an extraordinary twist of history that since the fateful Brexit decision of 23 June 2016 the successful CAGCR appears destined to operate in a political environment that may drift away from both Germany and the European Union and may even be hostile to its work while the activities of our own Centre, unexpectedly, have been catapulted into the mainstream in Ireland, as is explicit in the Government's strategy paper *Ireland and Germany: A wider and deeper footprint* of April 2018. This document not only places Irish-German relations in the forefront of Irish foreign and EU policy, it also allocates a key role to culture in Ireland's future (post-Brexit?) relationship with Germany. Of course, this says nothing about the importance of the work of either centre in the future: in fact, it can easily be argued that the work of the CAGCR will be needed even more now than ever before.

'Brexismus' is a collection of five, mostly previously published, essays or interview transcripts, with a preface and an epilogue by the author. It also contains the transcript of a discussion between Görner, Michael Krüger and Jeremy Adler about German exiles in wartime Britain<sup>1)</sup>, recorded at the University of Cologne on 7 November 2016. Blamberger provides a brief Postscript. I might be forgiven for focussing specifically on the Brexit-related articles here. The volume aims to explain Brexit and its background to a German readership. Görner has been a resident in the UK for close to four decades and the book combines the insider with the outsider perspective. The book is exceptionally well informed and offers a good insight into German perspectives on Brexit. Görner is in fact a very sought after speaker in German Brexit debates and his views matter; some articles in this volume have already reached wider audiences in their first iterations as newspaper

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<sup>1)</sup> My co-director Gisela Holfter has written extensively on German-speaking refugees in Ireland, most recently in GISELA HOLFTER, HORST DICKEL, *An Irish Sanctuary: German-speaking Refugees in Ireland 1933–194*, Berlin/Boston 2017.



articles, radio broadcasts and academic conference papers. The author is also an excellent stylist and pairs his puns and wit in the most effective way, in a manner we associate with the best British essayists. This of course can only be savoured by readers of the German language.

The book appeared in early 2018 and describes the state of the Brexit debate at the end of 2017. Dates matter in this context as the intervening months have amply demonstrated; events can develop very quickly indeed in the context of Brexit. By the time this review appears Britain may very well have changed its mind again and have decided that all things considered the country may after all be better off within the EU. But whatever happens, Görner's analyses will not have been superseded. In fact, the reader is perhaps particularly struck by the lack of movement on the issues discussed in the book since then: the contradictions and inconsistencies outlined by Görner have in fact only become more obvious and have congealed into an intractable political stalemate that makes it difficult to see a resolution. Much has got worse. The "Politclownerien" (31) the author describes have become only more spectacular, reaching new heights when a Scottish MP, in an act worthy of Fritz Teufel's ›Spaßguerilla‹, stole the ceremonial mace in the House of Commons Chamber to delay a vote, broadcast to the incredulous amusement of millions of citizens in the rest of the EU brought up with a sense of admiration for the parliamentary traditions of the motherland of representative democracy. The Irish Backstop, only hinted at in Görner's book, has since become a key issue of the Withdrawal Agreement of November 2018 – and *the* stumbling block for its passage through the House of Commons, inevitably and entirely predictable to everyone in Europe bar the British Brexiteers. Establishing new borders and no borders simultaneously is no easy task! The Brexiteers' nightmare of the 'Norwegian solution' becoming rule takers rather than a rule makers (101) has, equally predictably, effectively come to pass, though British have so far refused to accept this least bad outcome of the Brexit decision formulated in the Agreement.

The book is written "cum ira et studio", as Görner himself puts it (10). Much anger and frustration speaks out of all essays about the "barbarisation of political culture" in Britain (9). Görner does not hold back about the "British high treason against the European idea" (13) and "the bizarre delusion in Britain, and especially England, of returning to the old glory of the British Empire" (11). He has researched the consequences of acquiescence and appeasement in the face of the Nazi aggression long enough to know what intellectuals failing to speak out in times of crisis, or to speak out too late, can lead to: "Nein, es ist genug. Wer jetzt nicht Tacheles redet über die verhängnisvollen Auswirkungen des Brexit-Referendums, wer jetzt nicht Farbe bekennt, müsste seine Selbstachtung verlieren" (10). The inclusion of the interview with Adler and Krüger further underpins the lessons of the National Socialist era.

Coming from someone who has devoted his academic life to furthering understanding between Germany and Britain, Görner's *Radikalkritik* will hardly

surprise us but can also be understood as the bitterness of a disappointed lover: Görner deplores the loss of much that he admires about Britain, “das englische Understatement, das Verhalten Vornehme, das Ethos des Kompromisses, das in der Redensart ‘we agree to differ’ einen so vorbildlich sinnfälligen Ausdruck gefunden hatte” (75). He deplores the “Selbstdemontage einer ganzen politischen Kultur, die einmal vorbildlich war” (10). This culture includes tolerance and compassion and expressed itself also in British openness towards German refugees during the Nazi era: no doubt the interview with Adler and Krüger was specifically added to remind German readers “that it was not always so”.

Given the author’s background, the collection unsurprisingly has a cultural focus; it concerns itself with the cultural consequences or potential collateral damage of Brexit and explores their (often mentality-historical) backgrounds (15). This seems to me a vital contribution to the Brexit debate which all too often, in Ireland almost exclusively<sup>2)</sup>, has been dominated by economic, political and legal considerations, in Britain all bundled together in the vacuous slogan of “taking back control”. In Britain itself, of course, the cultural dimension is essential for an understanding of Brexit: the multi-layered culturally-embedded issue of immigration was after all central to the debate.<sup>3)</sup>

Görner’s outrage at the denial of the European links in Britain, and the European dimension in British history is palpable because it is so obviously false. His anger is expressed in the strongest form in his immediate response only days after the referendum of 23 June 2016 and published here as “Ketzerische Sonntagsgedanken zum EU-Referendum in Britannien”, based on an original broadcast written for the *Hessischer Rundfunk*. Görner castigates British ignorance about the EU which left it open to the lies perpetrated during the campaign, especially by the “Lügenbarone der britischen Politik” (35) Boris Johnson und Nigel Farage (though one might think this a little unfair to good-natured poor old Baron Münchhausen). The regional diversity in Britain and the different outcomes in Scotland, Northern Ireland and the City of London may yet force Britain to acknowledge and deal with its “most profound identity crisis since the end of World War II” (20). The idea of “sovereignty in this digital age of total interconnectedness“ (22) is for Görner not only an outmoded concept but the most perfidious and at the same time naïve aspect of this whole campaign (22); what is required is: “To accept mutual dependencies and reinforce them by further developing viable political community

<sup>2)</sup> I have taken a similar approach from an Irish perspective, on a much more modest scale, in my contribution to the Irish national broadcaster’s *Brainstorm* website: <<https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2017/1123/922301-life-after-brexite/>> [26.06.2019].

<sup>3)</sup> The cultural perspective has also been adopted by the Irish critic Fintan O’Toole in his ascerbic psychopathology of the English, ›Heroic Failure‹ which has placed the Brexit debate into a broader framework of an English mentality shaped by the country’s colonial past. Using English writers as his key sources, he augments the “fear of the other” of Brexit by a more general “fear to be exposed”. (FINTAN O’TOOLE, *Heroic Failure: Brexit and the Politics of Pain*, London 2018).

structures and rendering them fruitful for the common good” (23). This is precisely the opposite of the Brexiteers’ *Weltanschauung*.

The absence of the European dimension in the Brexit debate is further explored in “Kontinentalsperre. Brexit oder: Die Begehung des Scherbenhaufens”. No Europeans were invited to discussions about Brexit (28), the discussion was all about Britain and Europe never featured in British self-definitions (25). The complete lack of consideration of the EU as the most successful peace project within Europe expressed itself also in the commemorations of the battle of the Somme on 1 July 2016, a few days after the referendum (21). Görner deplores that the UK never fully participated in the Union and failed to develop the EU institutions towards an “umfassende Parlamentarisierung der europäischen Entscheidungsprozesse” (31), the multiple opt-outs by British governments paving the way for the eventual Brexit vote (37). Görner laments the depoliticization of the school curriculum and the disappearance of the subject of Politics under Margaret Thatcher which contributed to the widespread ignorance about the EU. For him the absence of political education is a key deficit of contemporary British culture (32). (He expands on the topic in an interview with Barbara Klimke entitled “Der Brexit ist Ausdruck eines eklatanten Mangels an politischer Bildung” which also forms part of the book.) He also has critical things to say about the discipline of Political Science at university level which he regards as too timid, unwilling or unable to explain the concept of ‘shared sovereignty’ (32). The overall result was a widespread relapse into the rhetoric and practice of purely national interest politics (33). This subsequently expressed itself in Britain’s naïve attempts in the immediate aftermath of the referendum to revive the antiquated strategy of bilateralism in its foreign policy (38), of which the other EU member states quickly disabused British negotiators, causing the collapse of their strategy (if there ever was one) like a house of cards. Görner puts Brexit also in a wider European context with populist neo-nationalism raising its head everywhere as a late consequence of globalization. He critically adds that Germany in particular too long felt safe in its conviction that after 1989 we had arrived in a post-national age (37). The article first appeared in 2016 in that most ambitious and intellectually brilliant European quarterly ›lettre internationale‹, published in four language editions, albeit, tellingly, never in English.

“‘Tragischer Transport’? oder: Verortungsversuche im Dazwischen. Überlegungen zur Person des Kulturvermittlers”, first published in October 2016, is a plea for the work of the CAGCR. Görner places his own position on a historical continuum, digging deep into his knowledge of Anglo-German cultural relations. He sees himself as a successor to Alfred Kerr, Stephen Spender, Ernst Robert Curtius and Sebastian Haffner. His historical overview over key mediators between Germany and Britain up to the 1930s is bookended by Constantin Geisweiler with his ›German Museum‹, published in 1800, and Harry Graf Kessler, the son of a German-Irish couple. Somewhat despondently and disillusioned he concludes: “In the space of the in-between it can already be booked as a success if the attempt, the venture to embark on cultural mediation, is even noticed” (54), an attitude

shaped perhaps by the inability of the CAGCR to substantially influence the pre-Brexit intellectual climate.

In “Illusionspolitik: Der Brexit als Offenbarungseid des ‘Systems Whitehall?’” Görner blames the “System Whitehall” of successive British governments for the Brexit crisis, especially the xenophobic tendencies born out of an absence of a European perspective. This also resulted in a shortage of experts on European matters which became so blatantly obvious in the negotiations and is making the set up of alternative legal and regulative arrangements in a short space of time a virtually impossible task. In the Brexit debate Europe was falsely blamed for the outcomes of the “System Whitehall” which is responsible for the ever-increasing centralization in London and the death of municipal England (72). Consequently, the voters feel disenfranchised, they fear they have no chance in the new globalized environment and no longer feel represented by any political party. Görner supplies many details of the financial benefits Britain has reaped from the EU. Culture and education being the areas closest to his heart, he fears the disaster looming for third level research where British universities have been spectacularly successful in EU competitions, not to mention doubts about the continuation of the ERASMUS programme. He blames the strong influence of government on the third level sector (71) for both the decline of European Studies and of Modern Languages which contributed to the ill-informed pre-Brexit climate. Görner also highlights the lesser known fact that the EU’s culture funding for London dwarfed that of the Arts Council (71). Little wonder that London’s mayor Sadiq Khan whom the author regards as a bright light campaigned tirelessly against Brexit (79).

The concluding essay “Brexismus: Über eine postimperiale und neonationale Vermessenheit, nebst einem musikpsychologischen Exkurs” is an original work for this volume on the role of music, landscape and other arts in the creation of British national identity and the utterly unreflected complexity of trying to marry notions of both England and Britain with the concept of the nation. Here Görner shows his way with words. Parallel to *Rachitis* which Germans also call “die englische Krankheit” he coins the term “Brexitis”, a condition closer to an illness than a state of mind, “mehr eine [...] kollektiv exzentrische Geste als ein wirklicher Ismus” (90).

A few concluding remarks on Görner’s important book: The focus on culture and literature in the context of Brexit unavoidably shapes the perspective, the German-British focus is always in danger of losing sight of the bigger picture. Görner himself is aware of this and mentions the trend both in Europe and the US towards a renationalization for which we may look for an explanation not only in the “System Whitehall” but in post-1989 globalization. It may very well be true that the ‘European’ dimension was actually not so central to the British decision at all, as Görner says himself: many did not even understand that the decision actually meant “raus aus der EU” (69). That the EU bought so readily into the underlying ideology of neoliberalism (strongly encouraged by the UK) was what drove the ever increasing income disparities in all EU countries. In this sense the EU also bears a share of the responsibility for the present crisis, though lessons seem to have been

learned post-Brexit. Moreover, among those left behind by globalization anger may have expressed itself in the same way as in Britain, had, in 2016, other countries adopted the same ill-advised strategy of running a referendum. It is also worth remembering that the referendum result was an accident which was not supposed to happen and could easily have gone the other way, e.g. if a higher percentage of young people had bothered to vote. We should never lose sight of the fact that close to half of British voters did not agree with the proposition.

In his “Offener Epilog” written in January 2018 Görner perhaps overshoots his admirable aims somewhat by declaring closer co-operation between Britain and the EU in the area of culture and academia, i.e. via the universities, as the ‘only’ way to counteract the consequences of Brexit (100). Nevertheless, the book’s message that education is central to an understanding of what happened and the key to a better future can hardly be disputed. In this context universities have a hugely important role to play. Görner sees the promotion of constructive bilateralities in a multi-lateral context (104) as the noble task of cultural mediators such as *Germanisten*. Perhaps *Germanistik* abroad has done too little of this in the past and it remains to be seen whether the subject following the example of the Goethe Institute is prepared to regard itself more seriously as part of European Studies rather than simply as an exploration of the German-speaking countries’ national identities and cultural specificities. Much can be gained, both politically and culturally, from a Europeanization of German, French, Hispanic, Slavonic Studies etc., i.e. from these philologies devoting themselves not just to the teaching of national cultures and their languages but to the broader, and ultimately more important, task of educating European citizens. To Görner himself such a Europeanization project post-referendum appears understandably a ‘utopia’ in present-day Britain, albeit, he hopes in a Blochian sense, a ‘concrete utopia’ (104). The author occasionally includes Ireland in his mentality-historical reflections on ‘the British Isles’ (84), a highly problematic denotation in Ireland, in the context of Brexit all the more so. From the perspective of the neighbouring isle the book, like the whole Brexit debacle, implicitly confirms to its readers and to all Europeans who may for the first time have been forced to expend more serious thought on the complexity of mentalities in this part of the EU: Ireland is after all not Britain, *au contraire* as Beckett put it.

## REFLECTIVITY AND THE NOVEL

### Thoughts on the English and German Narrative Traditions

*Lecture in honour of Rüdiger Görner, held on 16 November 2017  
at the German Historical Institute, London*

By Martin Swales (Cambridge/London)

Many years ago a colleague told me that she had just been re-reading Charles Dickens's ›Oliver Twist‹. She had been (yet again) bowled over by the scene in which Oliver, still hungry, asks for more. What similar moment, she wondered, might one find in the nineteenth-century German novel, a scene that would be in the same league as regards aesthetic power and moral resonance? I was somewhat nonplussed; but I then pointed to the moment when, in Chapter 34 of Fontane's ›Effi Briest‹, the eponymous protagonist says: “Es ist komisch, aber ich kann eigentlich von vielem in meinem Leben sagen: ‘beinahe.’” This statement, one that seeks to understand and express felt deprivation is quite wonderful in its richness of implication and opens up many more interpretative possibilities than does Oliver's plaintive plea. But it is a moment of thoughtfulness and reflectivity rather than the expression of visceral need which we get from Dickens.

One could generalize this point of contrast. One might suggest that the scene from Dickens, like so many in nineteenth-century English fiction, is unforgettable in bringing alive the felt practicalities of social living, the stresses and strains of literally and metaphorically coping with anxieties as to where the next meal is coming from. Whereas more often than not the German novel has world enough and time to ruminate, to question, to reflect. This may have not a little to do with the prestige, in nineteenth-century German letters, of the *Bildungsroman*, that novel of growing up which has less to do with the hard contours of getting by in an unrelievedly harsh world than with the need to understand the gradually unfolding complexity of individual selfhood. Goethe is, of course, a key witness here. One thinks not only of his ›Wilhelm Meister‹ project, which was so often hailed by subsequent writers as the paradigmatic *Bildungsroman*, but also of the fact that so many of his narrative works have interpolated, inserted texts – and this structural constellation generates a climate of reflectivity, reflectivity about what happens in the process of

telling and responding to stories. By contrast, the English novel is more strenuously realistic – admirably suited, by that token, to film and television adaptation. To say this much is, of course, to rehearse well-known truisms; and I hope, in this speech, to differentiate the truisms a little by hearing the two novel traditions, the English and the German, in dialogue with each other. Put schematically: I shall comment on two classics of high modernist German novel writing and suggest that they offer profound reflections not just on processes of self-conscious narrativity but also on the workings of novelistic realism. And I hope to illuminate the reflectivity that informs the resolutely realistic universe of the English novel. After all, the narrative traditions of the two countries and cultures are anything but hermetically sealed. On either side of its nineteenth-century realistic corpus the English tradition is no stranger to the novel's ability to be self-conscious. ›Tristram Shandy‹ is nothing but reflections on a life story that never quite gets told. And with James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, the spectrum of novel writing in English embodies reflectivity and conceptual energy. Moreover, much recent work on novel realism has stressed the importance of a certain rhetoric, a rhetoric of referentiality (Barthes, Furst, Prendergast, Riffaterre)<sup>1)</sup>, whereby the society evoked in the novel exists not just in the materiality of its being (in the streets, rooms, furnishings which are so often circumstantially described), but also in the mental furniture, in the assumptions, symbols and values by which and in which the characters live, move, and have their being. I want particularly to focus on the question of value and values. My starting point is with an English critic, F. R. Leavis, who, while focusing primarily on a Russian text, ›Anna Karenina‹, makes the link with the English tradition, with D. H. Lawrence, and with the quest for value and significance that animates the realistic novel's artistic and ethical trajectory:

[...] the concern for significance that is the principle of life in Anna Karenina is a deep spontaneous, lived question, or quest. The temptation in wait for Tolstoy is to relax the tension [...] by reducing the 'question' into one that can be answered – or, rather, one to which a seemingly satisfying answer strongly solicits him: that is, to simplify the challenge life actually is for him and deny the complexity of his total knowledge and need.<sup>2)</sup>

Leavis goes on to insist that ›Anna Karenina‹ is centrally concerned with the values inherent in the lived experience of the characters, and the values which we, as readers, activate in our experience of reading the novel. There is, for Leavis, an undeniable didactic impulse in evidence, but it is one that is at every turn checked by the sheer realistic abundance of the novelist's sympathy. (Interestingly, Thomas Mann argues something similar in his 1940 essay on ›Anna Karenina‹. He insists that Tolstoy's commitment to the moral trajectory of his novel is sustained in the teeth of the almost titanic worldliness which flows from his allegiance to the sheer

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<sup>1)</sup> See LILLIAN R. FURST, "All is true": the Claims and Strategies of realistic Fiction, Durham and London 1995.

<sup>2)</sup> F. R. LEAVIS, ›Anna Karenina‹ and other Essays, London 1967, p. 12.

materiality of human experience.) At the heart of Leavis's essay is the belief that ›Anna Karenina‹ exacts from us a two-fold process of recognition. At one level, we acknowledge the fictive world put before us as truthful, as having a purchase on life, on the way we lived then, or live now, or might live in the future. But recognition also implies knowing again, knowing anew, knowing afresh. And in this dimension of our re-knowing we find ourselves asking how we may live aright, and that arightness can be ethical, political, sexual, existential. Realism offers us a reflection of, and a reflection on, the values that do, can, or should animate the real. Indeed, it is the glory of such novel-writing that the values exist both in quotational mode – they are the property of the characters' self-consciousness – and also in the discursivity of narratorial and readerly reflectivity.

Let me give three instances of what I mean. I shall begin with the opening sentence of a novel that enjoys immense popularity. And it is a sentence that I would give my eye teeth to have written: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." This is, of course, the virtuosic opening flourish of Jane Austen's ›Pride and Prejudice‹. The irony is delicious. The opening fanfare takes us, or so we might expect, into high places of speculative philosophy, of existential profundity. We might think, for example, of a passage such as the following from a recent novel where the intertextual reference to Jane Austen is unmistakable:

It is a paradox universally acknowledged that the experiences which the individual regards as the most private are in fact the most common. Birth, procreation, and death bind us together into a shared web, forming an inseparable nexus between the individual and humanity as a whole.<sup>3)</sup>

But Jane Austen has no such grandiose universals up her impeccably embroidered sleeve. The seemingly sovereign authorial opening to the novel is, in fact, quotational. The moment of reflectivity with which ›Pride and Prejudice‹ opens is anchored in the characters' self-understanding. If there is an authoritative, perhaps authorial, as it were Archimedean, site of definitive cognition, it is present by implication as the high comedy of manners is played out before us. But only by implication. On the whole the novel is content to eavesdrop on – and to report – the values by which the characters and their behaviour are governed. This much emerges on the very opening page of the text. The second paragraph tells us that the universally acknowledged truth is not so much universally acknowledged as "so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families". Universality is, then, a function of the social consensus within a given class, and of a particular gender. As the ensuing dialogue makes clear, Mr Bennet has neither heard the news about the new tenant who has taken Netherfield Park, nor, when he does hear it, does he register its import for the Bennet family with its bevy of marriageable girls. Mrs Bennet is explicit in her aspiration to get one of them married off. Mr Bennet, how-

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<sup>3)</sup> JEREMY ADLER, *A Night at the Troubadour*, London 2017, p. 297.



ever, remains resolutely, perhaps deliberately, obtuse. “Is that his design in settling here?” he asks – to the unconcealed irritation of his wife. By the end of the first page of the novel, then, the universal truth has been unmistakably relativized by over-use in the characters’ conversational gambits. The opening sentence invokes “a single man in possession of a good fortune”. The concept of wealth then passes to Mrs Bennet who speaks of Mr Bingley as a “young man of large fortune”, later as a “single man of large fortune”. By the end of a few lines of dialogue Jane Austen has established the quotational mode that indwells in her mastery of free indirect speech.<sup>4)</sup> Society exists, then, as a communality of attitudes, as a set of values and assumptions. The narrative voice is content to allow that interplay of various reflectivities to take its course; there are few instances of judgmental intrusion in Jane Austen’s novels. Judgment is left to the reader.<sup>5)</sup> He or she will decide which of the characters comes closest to living aright in the available world.

My two other examples from the English realistic novel are far removed from the deft understatement of Jane Austen. George Eliot’s ›Middlemarch‹ opens with a universally acknowledged truth if ever there was one:

Who that cares much to know the history of man, and how the mysterious mixture behaves under the varying experiments of Time, has not dwelt, at least briefly, on the life of Saint Theresa, has not smiled with some gentleness at the thought of the little girl walking forth one morning hand-in-hand with her still smaller brother, to go and seek martyrdom in the country of the Moors?

The initial instance of reflectivity in ›Middlemarch‹ is anchored in the portrait of a woman of high spirituality, whose “passionate, ideal nature demanded an epic life”. In earlier cultures, cultures scarcely touched by the pragmatic climate of nineteenth-century provincial England, the ideal type of the Saint Theresa figure provides a yardstick of value. And that measure of human dignity retains its force even into ages and cultures that offer little sustenance to the nobly questing soul. Many subsequent Therasas, the Prelude to the novel continues, have been doomed to “tragic failure, to a life of mistakes, the outpouring of a certain spiritual grandeur ill-matched with the meanness of opportunity.” Such latter-day Therasas find themselves “helped by no coherent faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul”. They are, it seems, martyrs to the small-spirited mediocrity of the world which they are obliged to inhabit. They live by values which are beyond the common indication.

One asks oneself what the function of this grandiose Prelude is for a novel which is resolutely concerned with the modest lives and experiences of nineteenth-century provincial England. The answer, I venture to suggest, has to do with that reflectivity in respect of value, in respect of living aright in the currently available world which is at the heart of English novel realism. For George Eliot the central issue

<sup>4)</sup> ROY PASCAL, *The Dual Voice*, Manchester 1997, pp. 45–60.

<sup>5)</sup> EDWARD NEILL, *The Politics of Jane Austen*, Basingstoke 1999, pp. 66–69.

is ethical and explores the parameters of the morally good life.<sup>6)</sup> It expresses itself in the characters' interactions, negatively in the aridity of Dorothea's marriage to Casaubon, positively in the crucial meeting between Dorothea and Rosamund, in the fulfilment that Dorothea finds in her marriage to Will. She remains an incommensurable presence in *Middlemarch* – “where she [is] spoken of to a younger generation as a fine girl who married a sickly clergyman, old enough to be her father, and in little more than a year after his death gave up her estate to marry his cousin – young enough to have been his son.” In terms of practicality, Dorothea's values have offered her only modest living aright. Yet there is the other dimension of reflectivity that is present in the responses of the reader. And in that framework of significance Saint Theresa becomes an instance of ethical truth. The novel closes with an impassioned justification of Dorothea, one which conjoins sublimity, transcendence on the one hand with modest human decency on the other:

Her finely touched spirit had still its fine issues, though they were not widely visible. [...] the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive: for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unheroic acts; and that things are not as ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs.

The appeal here to the reader, to the ‘you and me’ of our shared humanity is one of the most memorable moments in European realism. The narrative voice holds in focus both the limited, relative values of a particular historical world and the larger values of spiritual arightness, and in the process creates a reflectivity that brings narrator and reader into communion.

My final example from the English tradition is Charles Dickens's ›*Bleak House*‹. The opening chapter is magnificent in its rhetorical fervour. The governing gesture is that of description, description of the material world. But this is no act of dispassionate constation. Rather, there is an excess in the entities described, and that excess converts physicality into laceratingly judgmental metaphor.<sup>7)</sup> There is mud, fog, and gas everywhere. All three substances serve to block out the light and, by extension, to blight human being and knowing. The temporal signature is that of the present tense. But many of the sentences lack main verbs. The parataxis is mobilized in the service of judgment, judgment passed on the sheer Manichean horror that disfigures the environs of the city:

Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows: fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollution of a great (and dirty) city. Fog in the Essex marshes, fog in the Kentish heights.

That blighting of all life, energy, and good sense finds its crowning symbolic embodiment in something that is man-made, in an institution – in the High

<sup>6)</sup> PAULINE NESTOR, *George Eliot*, Basingstoke 2002, pp. 130–139.

<sup>7)</sup> LYNN PYKETT, *Charles Dickens*, Basingstoke 2002, pp. 130–133.

Court of Chancery. Its tentacles reach far and wide throughout the land. It is the begetter of “its decaying houses and its blighted lands in every shire”, “its worn-out lunatic in every madhouse”. It perverts justice in that it “gives to monied might the means abundantly of wearying out the right”, it “exhausts finances, patience, courage, hopes; [it] so overthrows the brain and breaks the heart that there is not a honourable man among its practitioners who would not give – who does not often give – the warning, ‘suffer any wrong that can be done you, rather than come here!’” It is difficult to quote brief passages from Dickens. There is a flow, an intensity to the writing, a rhythmic energy that brooks no interruption or dissent. That fervour is triggered by the need to pass judgment in the name of such values as “patience, courage, hope”, which are entirely set at nought in the High Court of Chancery. The denunciation is blistering and becomes, by implication, a direct injunction to the reader – “Suffer any wrong that can be done you, rather than come here!” It is from this hellish world that, late in the novel, Poor Jo, the crossing sweeper, is delivered. Allan Woodcourt, a young surgeon, teaches the dying boy the first few phrases of the Lord’s Prayer. And Jo’s death generates a brief, ferocious paragraph which closes Chapter 47 of the novel. The authorial narrator grieves for so many other victims of the rapacious world that is nineteenth-century London;

Dead, your Majesty. Dead, my lords and gentlemen. Dead, Right Reverends and Wrong Reverends of every order. Dead, men and women, born with Heavenly compassion in your hearts. And dying thus around us every day.

I referred just now to the “authorial narrator”. But somehow the term sounds too technical, too bloodless and over-theorized. And this is because there is an unmistakable spoken fervour to so much of Dickens’s writing. It was hardly by pure chance that he was fond of – and very successful at – giving readings from his works. The lament for Poor Jo is directed at the serried ranks of English society, starting with the monarchy, then passing to the aristocracy, and then to the clergy. The respectful forms of address acquire a bitterly critical force because those in the higher ranks of society are, by virtue of their rank, removed from ever witnessing the death of a humble crossing-sweeper. One hears this particularly in the modulation of “Right Reverends” to “Wrong Reverends”. Finally the accusation reaches us, ordinary men and women. In a moment of fierce pathos Dickens as it were turns on us, his readers. He is no stranger to sentimentality. Yet one senses that, for him, it is a risk worth taking in the service of a passionately reflective debate about right values, about living aright in a monstrous world.

I want now to pass to two texts written in German – Franz Kafka’s ›Der Process‹ and Robert Musil’s ›Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften‹. Both novels are classics of European modernism, and they display a reflective sophistication that makes concepts and ideas truly novelistic. Yet in the process they also illuminate the workings of social, institutional reality and invite us to reflect on the narrative conventions of literary realism.

Kafka's ›Der Prozess‹ begins with a disturbance of routine. We are told that one Josef K., who turns out to be the protagonist of the novel, is arrested one morning. That arrest is not without its ambiguous aspects. Its initial manifestation seems to be that Frau Grubach's, K.'s landlady's cook, fails to bring him his breakfast; she "kam diesmal nicht". The fracturing of normality is stressed in the very next sentence – "das war noch niemals geschehen". The old woman who lives opposite scrutinizes K. "mit einer an ihr ganz ungewöhnlichen Neugierde". Clearly what has been up to this point usual has now become unusual. K. rings the bell and a man entirely unknown to him appears. He assumes the time-honoured role of the servant – "you rang, Sir?" The situation is menacing in its oddity, but not overtly brutal. The stranger has a conversation with someone "der offenbar knapp hinter der Tür stand". Clearly we the readers are, at this stage of the proceedings, not allowed to know any more than the bemused K. A climate of uncertainty and unclarity prevails. The very opening sentence is couched in the conjectural mode: "Jemand musste Josef K. verleumdet haben", we read. It seems that the narrator knows no more than the baffled protagonist. We are told that Josef K. has done nothing wrong, although that statement, curiously, is couched in the subjunctive mode: "ohne dass er etwas Böses getan hätte". Why not the indicative? Even instances of physical description are fraught with tentativeness. In answer to K.'s ringing of the bell, a man appears whom K. has never seen before (the "noch niemals" repeats the motif of fractured routine). We are given a brief physical description of the stranger:

Er war schlank und doch fest gebaut, er trug ein anliegendes schwarzes Kleid, das, ähnlich den Reiseanzügen, mit verschiedenen Falten, Taschen, Schnallen, Knöpfen und einem Gürtel versehen war und infolgedessen, ohne daß man sich darüber klar wurde, wozu es dienen sollte, besonders praktisch erschien.

This is a brilliant sentence. It is one that, like Jane Austen's universally acknowledged truth, I would have given my eye teeth to have written. It is a sentence that invites us to reflect on so much realistic novel writing which contains description of material reality because that concrete world will tell us a great deal (perhaps all we need to know?) about the characters, about their values and assumptions. Yet here, in Kafka's universe, the physical object in question – a jacket – is clearly profoundly useful yet it is impossible to make out what purpose it serves. In so much of the world Kafka evokes, events occur, characters meet and interact, but we are no longer quite sure what is actually – rather than apparently - going on, just as K. cannot know "wer der Mann eigentlich war". Just as K. is disorientated by the interruptions of his routine life, so we too, as readers of realistic fiction (which is still the staple diet of most novel writing nowadays), are disorientated by the disturbances that fracture our sense of reassuring narrative intelligibility.<sup>8)</sup> We desperately look for meaning in Kafka's texts, but what we emerge with is not

<sup>8)</sup> See THEO ELM, *Der Prozess*, in: HARTMUT BINDER (ed), *Kafka Handbuch*, Stuttgart 1979, pp. 430–432.

reliable causality, not negotiable meaning. Rather, we find ourselves reflecting on the assumptions we normally make as readers of fiction. But the values we bring to bear on our reading process no longer hold sway. We are unsure how to live aright in an unintelligible world. Our reflectivity does not banish the sense of disturbance; it compounds it.

My final example comes from the opening of Robert Musil's ›Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften‹. It is a supreme exercise in intertextual irony as regards the governing rhetorical gestures of realistic fiction. Musil supplies chapter headings very much in the spirit of many eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century novels. In this instance we read: "Woraus bemerkenswerter Weise nichts hervorgeht". We note the paradox to the effect that it is noteworthy that nothing emerges from this chapter. Perhaps we are (as it were) being offered a gloss on Barthes's "reality effect"<sup>9)</sup> – that convention of realistic writing that rejoices in the sheer redundancy of physical description in the novel (frequently in the opening pages of a novel – one might think of the beginning of Balzac's ›Le Pere Goriot‹). According to Barthes, the reality effect amounts to an acknowledgment of physical thereness for its own sake. Musil's chapter heading, in the spirit of an old-fashioned novel, brings us then surprisingly close to modern theory. The interplay between various novel cultures is sustained in the first paragraph of the main text. It ends: "Mit einem Wort, das das Tatsächliche recht gut bezeichnet, wenn auch etwas altmodisch ist: es war ein schöner Augusttag des Jahres 1913." What precedes this sentence is a technical description of the weather in scientific meteorological detail. As readers we can take our pick as to which description most effectively sets the scene.

That scene-setting, under various narrative aspects,<sup>10)</sup> continues in the next paragraph. We are told about the rhythms and sounds of traffic in Vienna. The narrator suggests to us that cities are to be recognized by their patterns of human and vehicular movement, and that these rhythms are much more what defines the characters of any given city than is its name. We are then offered reflections on what passes for accurate notation of the relationships between human beings and the world around them. We content ourselves with the simple constataion that a nose is red; we never ask "welches besondere Rot sie habe, obgleich sich das durch die Wellenlänge auf Mikromillimeter genau ausdrücken ließe." In our daily lives, as in our reading of realistic novels, we put up with vagueness and approximation, it seems. And this blurring extends even to human identity. We are introduced to two characters who will figure prominently in the novel. But this meeting between characters and readers is a very curious one. We are told that in their clothing and general behaviour these two figures belong to the upper echelons of society; they "trugen die Anfangsbuchstaben ihrer Namen bedeutsam auf ihre Wäsche gestickt". As in the Kafka passage just quoted, we find ourselves moving within the narrative

<sup>9)</sup> ROLAND BARTHES, *L'Effet de réel*, in: *Communications* 11 (1968), pp. 84–89.

<sup>10)</sup> See HELMUT ARNTZEN, *Musil-Kommentar zum Roman ›Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften‹*, Munich 1982, pp. 76–92.

convention of the realistic novel: the externals tell us a great deal about the inner life of the characters. Immediately the narrator spells out the interpretative implications: "in der feinen Unterwäsche ihres Bewusstseins wussten sie, wer sie seien". They are certain of their own identities, of their place in the world. But who are they? The narrator's answer is ironic in the extreme: "Angenommen, sie würden Arnheim und Ermelinda Tuzzi heißen, was aber nicht stimmt, denn Frau Tuzzi befand sich im August in der Begleitung ihres Gatten in Bad Aussee und Dr Arnheim noch in Konstantinopel." Musil's invoking of the realistic convention is masterly. At one level we are reminded that any novel opening entails a kind of conjecture, a thought experiment. "Let us assume that ..." is the governing rhetorical gesture. But suppose the gesture is wide of the mark. But which mark? It seems that, for the purposes of Musil's novel, there are two characters, and they are given their civic titles – Frau Tuzzi and Dr Arnheim. But they are not, at this particular time of year, in Vienna. They exist as much as any characters do in fiction – but not as originally introduced to us. We find ourselves reflecting on the notations of character and of place in novels. In Kafka's ›Der Process‹ we learn that the main character is called Josef K. But this seems a shade inadequate, not much to go on by traditional criteria. Does the protagonist of this novel have a merely bureaucratic existence, designated by the initial of his surname? We know that the author is Franz Kafka. His name contains the letter 'k' twice. Is some game of autobiographical hide-and-seek being played with us? The letter 'k' is followed by the vowel 'a' twice. Musil's fictional version of Austria-Hungary is named 'Kakanien', deriving both from the initials k and k, signifying imperial and royal and from the child's word for excrement. Is Musil's world, then, some form of Kafka-land? Novels can play havoc with our readerly interest in, and need for, reality inside and outside the narrative text.

I want to come swiftly to a conclusion. I have been trying to highlight the presence of reflectivity in the broadly realistic temper of the nineteenth-century English novel and the presence of realistic issues and stylistics in the high self-consciousness of the modernist novel in German. These arguments, I am very much aware, have traversed well-known territory, although I hope not wearisomely so. I have looked briefly at five novels that all, in their different but perhaps not unrelated ways, are of the very first rank. They are of the very highest literary quality. They engage us as readers, they bring us into dialogue with the worded text. They initiate that complex and gradual process that is the hermeneutic circle which develops as we move back and forth between text and context, between individual sentences or paragraphs and the gradually emerging nexus of signification that is the work as a whole – which then in its turn re-modifies the individual items of the text. To such modes of dialogic, gradual, cumulative understanding, which are poles apart from our contemporary culture of 'click here', of the instant downloading of information, Rüdiger Görner has devoted a career of the highest distinction. And we are all immeasurably in his debt.



# SPRACHKUNST

Beiträge  
zur Literaturwissenschaft  
Jahrgang XLIX/2018



VERLAG DER  
ÖSTERREICHISCHEN  
AKADEMIE DER  
WISSENSCHAFTEN



# SPRACHKUNST

## Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft

Hrsg. im Auftrag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Institut für Kulturwissenschaften und Theatergeschichte, von Hans Höller, Christoph Leitgeb und Michael Rössner.  
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