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The Poetics of Quotation in the European Novel



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THE POETICS OF QUOTATION
IN THE
EUROPEAN NOVEL

THE POETICS
OF *Q*UOTATION
IN THE EUROPEAN NOVEL

BY HERMAN MEYER

TRANSLATED BY

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I N M E M O R I A M
W O L F G A N G K A Y S E R

*Nur aus innig verbundenem Ernst und Spiel
kann wahre Kunst entspringen.*

GOETHE

TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

THIS English translation, authorized and approved by the author, incorporates various minor emendations to the original German version. This explains any slight discrepancies between the text and notes of this translation and those of the German edition as published in Stuttgart by J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung (1961; second edition, 1967).

With the exceptions noted below all translations from the cited literary and scholarly works are our own. Most of the German novels are not available in English translation. And because of the unique stylistic problems involved we preferred to make our own translations even for the passages from Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* and *The Beloved Returns*, where we consulted but did not rely upon the standard translation by H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Alfred A. Knopf).

In Chapter I the two passages from Alfred Döblin's *Berlin Alexanderplatz* are cited according to the translation by Eugene Jolas (New York: Viking Press, 1931). The passages from Rabelais (Chapter II) and Cervantes (Chapter III) are quoted from the translations published by the Modern Library. And in Chapter X we have quoted Goethe's *Faust* according to the translation by Bayard Taylor, which is most easily available to American readers in a number of editions.

We are grateful to Professor Hermann J. Weigand for permitting us to use his translation of the chapter on *Tristram Shandy*, which was incorporated with only the slight revisions necessary for stylistic consistency.

The Princeton University Committee on Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences generously supported the preparation of the manuscript.

Finally, we would like to thank Lin Peterson for her careful and helpful editing of an unusually difficult text.

We undertook this translation with the strong conviction

P R E F A C E

that Meyer's study represents an exciting and original contribution to the theory and practice of the European novel. It is our hope that it will find, in America, the same enthusiastic response that it has encountered among scholars and friends of literature in Europe.

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THE POETICS OF QUOTATION
IN THE
EUROPEAN NOVEL

CHAPTER I

Introduction

THIS introductory chapter offers a welcome opportunity to lay my cards on the table. The intentions of this study are manifold. The methodological starting point is structural analysis: to inquire what the literary quotation signifies and achieves as a structural element in the novel from Rabelais to the present, specifically in each of the novels to be considered here. In this connection structure may be defined as the pervasive order which is determined by the character of the work as a whole and of its parts in their reciprocal relationship, and which comprises in equal measure elements of form, substance, and content. It still remains to be considered in what direction it will be necessary to go beyond pure structural analysis.

Let us restrict ourselves for the time being to the structural-analytical aspect. The notion of investigating quotations with an eye to their structural effect may strike some people as an eccentric whim that would do credit to that unforgettable rider of hobbyhorses, Walter Shandy. For what more can the literary quotation—this little foreign element inserted into the narrative work—signify and accomplish than a statement of pure content or, at most, of contextual relevance? Of course, it is easy to see that it can have some significance for the spirit of a novel if the author appropriates words and sentences from the work of another writer. Certain connections can be established between the quoted matter and the new frame of reference in which it has been accepted, and this will have a certain bearing on the spirit of the novel in question. One can investigate, further, from what particular areas of literature the novelist borrows his quotations, and speculate about the conclusions that can be drawn with regard to his taste, his education, and his philosophical attitudes. All of this,

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however, has very little to do with the structure of the novel. It concerns, rather, its substance or—even more precisely—the rudiments of substance that remain in our hands when we split into two isolated parts the primordial unity of substance and form through which alone the substance is realized. Can we go further and attribute to the quotation the significance of a true structural element? Or to put the question another way: Can the quotation, despite its natural limitations, play an essential role in the total structure of a narrative work? Are quotations anything more than simply the raisins in the cake, and can their aesthetic effect go beyond the momentary delight that the raisins offer the palate?

As a necessary implication of our definition of the concept "structure," structural analysis must include content and substance as well as form. At the same time, we must inevitably focus our view first of all on the formal nature of the relevant novels. Hence the interpretation of substance and content emerges primarily *sub specie formae*. This is not the result of any subjective caprice or formalistic bias; rather, it follows with logical consistency from the objective state of affairs that Goethe, with unequaled precision, once defined in this way: "Everyone sees the subject matter immediately before him; the substance is detected only by the man who has something to add to it; and the form remains a mystery to most people."¹ The last words of this sentence are surely not the product of any esoteric arrogance, but a sober assertion containing a challenge which must be taken with the utmost seriousness. In another place Goethe implies how the solution of the mystery is to be found. Here it is the creative artist rather than the reader who is placed at the focal point:

The poet's reflection is directed primarily toward the form; the world supplies him with his subject matter all too liberally, and the substance rises spontaneously

¹ Goethe, *Maximen und Reflexionen*, ed. Max Hecker (1907), p. 55, No. 289; and in the edition by Erich Trunz (*Hamburger Ausgabe*), Vol. XII, p. 471, No. 754.

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from the fullness of his heart; the two encounter each other unconsciously, and in the last analysis one does not know to whom this wealth actually belongs.

But form, although it is already latent in the poetic genius, demands to be recognized, to be considered; and here a certain reflection is required so that form, subject matter, and substance suit one another, adapt themselves to one another, interpenetrate one another.²

This refers to the poet, but a comparison of the two passages cited demonstrates how important Goethe considered the ontological analogy of creation and enjoyment, of poet and reader. With reference to *Wilhelm Meister* he once noted that "the reader must maintain a productive attitude if he wishes to participate in any production."³ The concept of the "productive attitude" clarifies the phrase that the reader must have "something to add to it" if he wishes to find the substance. Without question, however, it is the form that places the highest demands on the productive capacity of the reader. It is binding on the reader, too, that the form demands to be "recognized" and "considered." And "reflection" is required of him also so that in his apperception "form, subject matter, and substance suit one another, adapt themselves to one another, interpenetrate one another." I can think of no better formulation to express the ideal that has hovered before me during this study, no matter how far the realization may lag behind the ideal.

The topic of inquiry is literally forced upon us by the wealth of factual data in narrative art. As we read certain novels, of whose typological nature we shall still have to speak, it strikes us again and again that the effect of the employed quotations is not limited to their statement of substance. They are put into overarching contexts of a formal nature and fulfill an essential function within them. This observation was the germinating source of the present

² Goethe, *Werke* (Sophien-Ausgabe; Weimar, 1887-1920), Part I, Vol. 7, p. 100.

³ Goethe in a letter to Schiller, 19 November 1796.

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study, and it inevitably became associated with more general reflections on the nature of narrative art and of the novel in particular. These reflections concern the problem of unity and totality in the narrative work. Speaking generally, the novel is not the mere product of organic growth from a simple seed. Rather, it arises through a complicated process whereby disparate elements are melted and welded together. The central, inchoate vision of the author attracts foreign subject matter, the whole fullness of empirical reality; and by this I mean not only the realm of external facts, but also the multiplicity of traditional cultural values. The artist's vision makes use of this foreign subject matter in order to realize itself in the work of art. The novel is thus a multiple totality, arisen out of multiplicity. It not only grows, it is also made. Its genesis is to a great extent a process of integration of heterogeneous elements.⁴

Now, the literary quotation is an element whose heterogeneity is far more obvious than is often the case; after all, it is a bit of preformed linguistic property shaped by another author. It is tantalizing to follow the ways and means by which the writer absorbs this foreign body into the totality of his novel until the two eventually merge. Now what is the optimal integration of this alien body into the new linguistic totality? One might believe that it should consist in the most nearly complete assimilation of the quotation. But this is generally not the case. If the quotation is blended into the new linguistic totality to the point of being unrecognizable, then it loses its specific character and its specific effect. In general it might be maintained that the charm of the quotation emanates from a unique tension between assimilation and dissimulation: it links itself closely with its new environment, but at the same time detaches itself from it, thus permitting another world to radiate into the self-contained world of the novel. Its effect is to

⁴ See my essay "Zum Problem der epischen Integration," *Trivium*, 8 (1950), 299ff.

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expand and to enliven the novel, contributing thereby to its variegated totality and richness.

This holds true not only for conspicuous quotations, but also for cryptic ones that remain hidden for the average reader and reveal themselves only to connoisseurs. In the case of the cryptic quotation we are dealing less with simple concealment than with an outright game of hide-and-seek. The point of the game is to discover the quotation, for only by being discovered can it achieve its specific effect. Between the conspicuous and the cryptic quotation there is, therefore, no difference of category but only of degree. Categorically, on the other hand, either kind of quotation differs from the hidden *borrowing*, for the discovery of the latter may result in a certain philological satisfaction, but no aesthetic delight. Two examples make this clear.

The anonymous author of *The Vigils of Bonaventura* characterizes the two hostile brothers, Don Juan and Don Ponce, with the following words: "In great indifference they lived side by side, and when they embraced, they seemed like two frozen corpses on the Bernhard, chest to chest, so cold was it in the hearts in which neither hate nor love prevailed."⁵ This is a curious image, one that is not readily comprehensible. The riddle is solved if by chance we discover the source in Jean Paul's *Titan*, which had appeared shortly before *The Vigils*. There, in an exuberant conversation between Roquairol and Albano, we read: "Why do men always lie, like the corpses on the Bernhardus Mountain, frozen upon one another's chests, with fixed eye, with rigid arms?"⁶ Even now the matter would remain puzzling if Jean Paul, following his usual practice, had not appended a scholarly footnote: "The unknown victims of freezing are left unburied by the monks, who prop them up chest to chest." The remoteness of the simile,

⁵ *Die Nachtwachen des Bonaventura*, ed. Franz Schulz (1909), p. 40.

⁶ Jean Paul, *Titan*, Part II, Cycle 55; in *Sämtliche Werke* (Akademie Ausgabe), Part I, Vol. 8, p. 324.

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the verbal similarity, and the identity of what is meant in both cases by the comparison—namely the coldheartedness that exists among men—leave no doubt in our mind about the source exploited by the author of *The Vigils*, and it is clear that we can understand the comparison only on the basis of Jean Paul's footnote. Nevertheless it would be false to speak of a cryptic quotation. The borrowing is distinguished from the quotation by the fact that it has no referential character.⁷ It does not aim to be related to its source, and this is appropriate since the return to the source may bring about a certain philological clarification, but no enrichment of the meaning and no added aesthetic value.

As a counterexample, let us consider the opening words of *Buddenbrooks*. Here Thomas Mann uses the naturalistic technique, patterned especially after the brothers Goncourt, of having the story plunge directly *in medias res* with direct speech. We hear a question and an answer:

"What is that?—What—is that. . . ."

"Oh, the devil, *c'est la question, ma très chère demoiselle.*"⁸

Not until then is the situation portrayed. The eight-year-old Tony Buddenbrook is sitting on her grandfather's lap, and we realize that she has asked something and he has answered. Only now do we find out that Tony is busy memorizing the Lutheran catechism. Now the reader understands—or to put it more cautiously, the reader is led to the point of comprehending—that the words "What is that?" are not, as he probably had assumed at first, Tony's own words. They belong, rather, to the catechism, where each article of the Ten Commandments and the Credo is followed by this question, whereupon the explanation of the relevant article is given. Only now does the reader also appreciate the ambiguity of the answer. The grandfather,

⁷ Regarding the concept of referential character, see Albrecht Schöne, *Säkularisation als sprachbildende Kraft*, Palaestra, Vol. 226 (1958), *passim*, and especially the chapter on Gotthelf. This excellent work is quite revealing for the broader implications of our theme.

⁸ Thomas Mann, *Buddenbrooks*, Part I, Chap. 1, sentence 1ff.

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a mocking freethinker, intentionally misinterprets the question. Pretending that Tony herself has posed it, he answers rather blasphemously, "Oh, the devil, *c'est la question*." But even this blasphemy is revealed to the discerning reader only indirectly. The reader also must know his catechism by heart and must conclude from the words repeated by Tony ("I believe that God created me along with all creatures" and so forth) that she has just memorized the first article of the Credo ("I believe in God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth") and that the skeptical question of the grandfather refers to this article. The words "What is that?" have a clear referential character; despite the initial camouflage, they demand to be recognized as a quotation. For that reason the opening of *Buddenbrooks* belongs wholly in the thematic area of our investigation, whereas we shall exclude in general such borrowings as the one noted in *The Vigils of Bonaventura*.

Still a few more delimitations are necessary. In the technical language of literary criticism and also in popular usage, the word "quotation" is used in two senses. In the broader sense "quoting" can mean that one alludes to or cites not the literal words, but the content of specific literary passages or even of entire literary works. Reference, allusion, pastiche, parody, plagiarism—these are all somehow related to the quotation proper or have at least manifold and often compelling points of contact with it.⁹ Precisely because the transitions are so fluid and the boundaries sometimes so uncertain, we consider it practicable to limit ourselves in general to quotations in the narrower sense of the word. Otherwise the danger arises that we will get lost in a limitless mass of material. So we shall restrict

⁹ From the very voluminous secondary literature on these related concepts I shall cite only the following Dutch works, which might otherwise perhaps escape the reader's attention: A. H. van der Weel, *Vier vormen van nabootsing in de letterkunde*, Inaugural Lecture at the University of Amsterdam (Rotterdam, 1954); H. Wagenwoort, *Navolging en plagiaat in de litteratuur* (Groningen, 1958); and especially the informative and amusing book by Jan Grootaers, *Maskerade der muze* (Amsterdam, 1954).

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ourselves to quotations that retain the wording of the original. This wording need not be absolutely precise. It can, for various reasons, deviate more or less from the original; as a matter of fact, these reasons are often rather interesting. The determining point in our delimitation is this: not merely is the content of literary passages referred to and to a certain extent faithfully reproduced, but also and above all the word order. However, we do not want to tie ourselves dogmatically to this criterion. In the interest of our theme it can be desirable here and there to go beyond the boundaries that we have established.

Structural analysis and literary history can proceed separately for great distances, but in many cases they are dependent upon each other in the last resort and must be united in some manner if they hope to reach valid results. It was Wilhelm Raabe and Thomas Mann whose willful art of quoting first fascinated me. But it soon became clear that this willfulness does not always signify something wholly unique and new, but that it is indebted to what could be called a tradition of willfulness. The material under investigation referred me imperiously to the great and exemplary antecedents, and especially to the three patriarchs of the humoristic novel: Rabelais, Cervantes, and Sterne. Thus, the formal analysis grew of its own accord and, as it were, without any intention on my part, into a history of form. Likewise, without any preconceived intention, the investigation had to transcend the boundaries of German literature. This does not mean that I am expanding into comparative literature for its own sake. The primary aim of this investigation is still to illuminate, analytically and historically, a certain formal trait of the German novel. If, in order to do so, it broadens out to a comparative scope, this should be regarded only as a means to the end.

It might be considered capricious to begin with German literature as late as Wieland, while in other literature we go back to the sixteenth century. The obvious reply is that the subject matter itself prescribes or, in any case, suggests

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this limitation. The development being traced is to a great extent the development of the humoristic novel, whose high road leads from Rabelais by way of Cervantes, Fielding, and Sterne to Germany, continuing there by way of Wieland, Jean Paul, and Wilhelm Raabe right down to Thomas Mann. I venture to suggest that the quotation has developed into a true epic artistic device of aesthetic significance in the humoristic novel. And it is perhaps not difficult to understand the logic of this circumstance. An autonomous epic art of quoting can originate only at the point where the narrative is borne by a personal narrator who can exploit the quotation in sovereign freedom, putting it into new and unique contexts of form and meaning. Wolfgang Kayser once brilliantly demonstrated that the presence of a personal narrator is the decisive factor in the origin of the modern novel in Germany. This contrasts with the baroque novel, in which the narrator "speaks as it were as an *anonymous* who has no individual point of view as a person."¹⁰ The significance of this personal narrator, who should under no circumstances be identified with the author, since he is himself an element of the narrative fiction, emerges clearly from Kayser's juxtaposition of textual passages from a novel of the High Baroque, Lohenstein's *Arminius*, and Wieland's *Don Sylvio*. With Wieland, a process that had long been prepared abroad begins abruptly in Germany. Kayser rightfully points not only to Fielding and Sterne but also to Cervantes, and with equal justification one can single out Rabelais, in whose work the role of the narrator as a fictional element unfolds even more richly and shapes itself even more tangibly than in Cervantes.

What the sovereign freedom of the narrator implies with reference to the art of quoting will, I hope, become clear on almost every page of this book. The freedom of which the narrator makes use is the freedom of play. Here, of course, I do not mean by "play" any kind of irresponsibility.

¹⁰ Wolfgang Kayser, *Entstehung und Krise des modernen Romans* (2nd ed., 1955), p. 9.

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I think of it rather as a significant function of life that is basic to art—thus in that lofty sense which the aesthetics of Goethe's age lent to the concept and which we hear, for instance, in the words of Goethe set as a motto at the beginning of this study. Play may have a certain element of irresponsibility; but it is a paradoxical truth that the quotation, as an element of play, nevertheless arrives ultimately at aesthetic responsibility. The concept of play seems also to furnish the clear criterion by which we can distinguish the method of quoting in the German novel of the seventeenth century from the method employed in the period that we have chosen to investigate. In the novel of the High Baroque, quoting had a soberly learned and aesthetically unfree character. This may be illustrated by a little example which can of course raise no absolute claim to general validity, but which can cast some light on what is typical for the times.

One of the most learned products of the High Baroque art of the novel is Philipp von Zesen's *Assenat*.¹¹ If the text itself scarcely permits us to doubt the enormous polyhistorical learnedness of the author, it is revealed in oppressive abundance in the apparatus that he has added to the novel. The reasons and intention underlying this appendage are clearly stated in the preface. The book deals, as von Zesen emphasizes, not with an invented story but with one that is sacred and moreover true: "I didn't get it out of the clear blue sky nor did I dream it up solely from my own brain. I am able to cite the writings of the Ancients that I have followed." Von Zesen's chief concern is acknowledgment of authority; that is, factual substantiation. He needed, as he says, no "disguises" and no "distortions." "The naked Truth of these matters of which the present Story tells could suffice without all that. From the Notes appended at the end where I authenticate my composition from the Writings of the Ancients and Moderns, the Reader

¹¹ Philipp von Zesen, *Assenat* (Amsterdam, 1670). I quote from this first edition.

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will see this. . . ."¹² The apparatus is called "Concise Notes," but this strikes us as an involuntary jest: including the appended alphabetical index these notes constitute more than two hundred pages, that is, almost two-thirds the volume of the actual text of the novel. Nevertheless the author explains with modest pride that he could easily have doubled the apparatus; only consideration for the patience of the reader prevented him from doing so! Let us see in one example how the text of the novel and the apparatus are related to one another. The opening sentences of the novel read as follows:

The lovely Lily-Month had now passed; the solstice had occurred through the descendant Cancer: the Nile rose ever higher and higher; and Osiris began gradually to approach the Virgin Womb of his heavenly Isis when the woeful Joseph descried the Place of his misery. Memphis, the royal city, he regarded with plaintive eyes.¹³

These few lines inspire the author to eight pages of commentary. The very first substantive, "Lily-Month," is a neologism coined by von Zesen and thus requires explanation. Naturally he could have been content to note that the Lily-Month is June. Instead he expatiates for three pages on a whole nomenclature of months: the names given by Charlemagne; the Latin designations for the months with all possible (and impossible!) etymologies; the names of the months in the various Greek dialects, in Egyptian, and in Hebrew. All of this is larded with scholarly sources and liberal quotations from Ovid, Plutarch, Seneca, and so forth. We see the same thing in the even more extensive commentary on the place-name Memphis. The whole doxography of classical philology is requisitioned and offered by quotation and synopsis not only with reference to the question of whether Memphis really was the royal resi-

¹² The passages from the preface quoted here and below are to be found on (the unnumbered) pages iv-vi of the first edition.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

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dence at that time, but also in connection with the etymology of this name. This moraine of pedantry strikes the modern reader as equally chaotic and superfluous. But this impression surely reflects in no way the intention that motivated the author. In his opinion the text of the novel and the notes belong inextricably together. He even goes so far as to implore the reader to read the notes first! "For if one has comprehended these well, one will read the Historical composition (which is to say, the Novel) itself with greater profit as well as understanding. Then one will know much more readily toward what goal I aspire. Then one will see that I did not write this or that in vain and without premeditation nor from my own inspiration. Verily, then almost no word will seem to have been written in vain." The scholarly cultural world which makes its appearance through quotation has absolute authority for the writer. It would be idle vanity to deviate from it and to allow one's "own inspiration" to come into play. Because of this the writer stands in a relation of intellectual bondage to the quotation, and takes it upon himself to impress this bondage upon the reader as well. Surely the quotation has in von Zesen's mind an integrating function, but this integration is of a purely factual sort and aims at the augmentation of the reader's knowledge. It differs radically from the aesthetic integration which comes about only through the author's free play with the quotations. Naturally what we have said should not be applied part and parcel to the whole art of the novel in the seventeenth century. It should be recalled that Grimmelshausen, in the concluding chapter of the fifth book of *Simplicissimus*, treats the long Guevara quotation ("Adieu World" and so forth) rather independently, subordinating it to his own purposes.¹⁴ Nevertheless, I have the impression that even Grimmelshausen's serious treatment of quotations has basically little in common with the playful art of quoting which is our theme.

¹⁴ See Günther Weydt, "Weltklage und Lebensüberblick bei Guevara, Albertinus, Grimmelshausen," *Neophilologus*, 46 (1962), 105-25.

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The association of structural analysis and diachronic representation of historical connections is a question of tact and probably also of compromise. In the choice of the works to be treated I have consciously limited myself, in the opinion that the intensive must here take precedence over the extensive. Only nine writers, and by these altogether a dozen novels, are taken into account. In general, it has been my principle to treat only a single work by each writer: namely, such a characteristic one that whatever is found out about it should have a certain typical and thus representative significance for his entire work. Only in three cases have I deviated from this principle, for obvious reasons. In this way it seemed most easily possible to emphasize the main stages and the high points of the development. Naturally the choice is colored here and there by subjective preference and hence open to debate. Thus, for instance, a chapter on Fielding's *Tom Jones* might perhaps have been in order, and only because of the need for strong concentration did it seem feasible to focus all our attention on Sterne. It will perhaps strike some people as even more questionable that Goethe's novels were not taken into consideration. They seemed to me to lie somewhat outside the line of development traced here, which is on the whole the development of the humoristic novel.

Jean Paul has been omitted with complete awareness and conviction, no matter how strange this may seem at first glance. Contrary to my initial expectation and perhaps contrary also to the reader's anticipation, I ascertained that Jean Paul makes use of literary quotations here and there, but that they do not play a decisive structural role in his works. But what about the wealth of learned or quasi-learned notes with which Jean Paul accompanies his narrative and which, primarily in the form of footnotes, lend it such an unmistakably unique character? These footnotes ordinarily contain no direct quotations, but merely cite the sources for certain curious facts that occur in the text of the novel; or they clarify facts that are alluded to in the text of the novel in such a cryptic way that their meaning would

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remain completely obscure without the explanatory note. The facts utilized in this way have for the most part a highly esoteric and unusual character. They often scarcely clarify the sense of the narrative and can be justified only in part by the author's delight in displaying his knowledge. Their main function is radically to loosen up the narrative unity. The reader is constantly compelled to relate the content of the story to things that are far removed; he cannot permit himself to be carried along quietly by the stream of the narrative, but must as it were hop back and forth between the narrative and its scholarly apparatus.

One example can show the complicated relationship of tension created between text and apparatus as a result of this device. At one point, when Jean Paul is talking in an endlessly involved way about the phenomenon of the Court Favorite, contrasting him with his antipode, he uses the following words:

Certainly there is in every country someone who—just as the goat in the desert or Adam in Halberstadt took all strange sins upon himself—in this very manner, as a plenipotentiary and representative of merit, is the levying agent and collector of all premiums that accrue to merit. This collector is better known under the name of Court Favorite.¹⁵

Obviously this passage is concerned primarily with the concept of the Favorite; the scapegoat has only a secondary analogical function. Nevertheless the writer is not satisfied with the paraphrase of the concept of scapegoat, which is clear enough in itself. He adds to it the rather puzzling allusion "or Adam in Halberstadt," which becomes comprehensible only through a footnote: "On Ash Wednesday the citizens of Halberstadt commissioned a fellow citizen, who was no angel, to go from church to church, black, barefooted, veiled, to do penance for the others." The footnotes teem with such curious bits of lore. Taken in their totality

¹⁵ Jean Paul, *Der Jubelsenor*; in *Sämtliche Werke*, Part I, Vol. 5, p. 410.

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they have a very peculiar but clear function. They add to the narrative that "colorful border and area of diffusion for strange associations" which in Jean Paul's opinion belongs essentially to "humoristic sensuousness" ("Humoristische Sinnlichkeit").¹⁶ They are closely related to the quotation not only in their playful character but also through their formal origins. They extend the tradition of the parodistic pedantic commentary which, quite within the framework of our theme, will concern us in Rabelais, Sterne, and Wieland. For this reason it was necessary to linger somewhat more extensively on Jean Paul's footnote technique.¹⁷

Although we emphasize the history of form in our study, we must keep in mind the fact that literary phenomena do not develop in a vacuum, but that they are conditioned climatically by the cultural area surrounding them. Our theme leans strongly in the direction of intellectual and cultural history. It would be an artificial impoverishment if we tried ascetically to exclude this whole aspect. Perhaps it could be said quite generally that literature is not born out of pure spontaneity, but arises from the interplay of spontaneity and tradition. However that may be, the art of quoting substantiates the more general observation that literature is nourished by literature. Whether he is oriented toward tradition or against tradition, the writer is concerned with the management of a cultural inheritance that he himself absorbs, preserves, and passes along. Yet we understand the significance of this great process of *traditio* (which means a passing on) only in part if we view it solely from the author's point of view and do not give equal

¹⁶ Jean Paul, *Vorschule der Ästhetik*, paragraph 35.

¹⁷ Walther Rehm, in his learned and witty study of "Jean Pauls vergnügtes Notenleben oder Notenmacher und Notenleser," *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, 3 (1959), 244-337, has provided us with an exhaustive aesthetics of Jean Paul's footnote technique; his analysis does justice explicitly to the structural function of this "gelehrt-witziges Spielzeug." Note especially the eighth section, where the individual forms of the footnotes are distinguished or, as Rehm puts it in his Jean-Paulian idiom: "das Fuss-Noten-Volk . . . für die Parade geordnet wird" (p. 297). Our observation that quotations play no noteworthy role in Jean Paul's footnotes is wholly borne out by Rehm's thorough analysis.

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weight to the role of the public. Precisely in the case of quotation it is of decisive significance whether there exists a literary and cultural background which the author shares with his public and to which he can appeal with full confidence that it will be understood. The quotation thus becomes an important indication for literary sociology, because in it the extent and nature of the literary culture of the public are reflected.

In this connection it is of central importance whether or not a people has at its disposal a national literature which it regards as classically exemplary and as the firm basis of its own culture. This point of view is of particular interest for German literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The age of Goethe forms a kind of watershed. Whereas Wieland, for example, could not yet in his quoting draw upon an exemplary literature in his own language, the writers following Goethe—and even Goethe's younger contemporaries, along with their public—are in possession of a national literature with canonical validity. Above all, the works of Goethe, Schiller, and Lessing constitute the reservoir from which the cultivated German can draw. The quoting of one's own classic writers is a conspicuous characteristic of German bourgeois culture, which is reflected in the literature of the nineteenth century in all possible nuances. This reflection, however, is complicated in a fascinating way by the fact that precisely the most important writers take a critical stance with regard to the state of affairs we have just sketched. They see quite clearly that the general consumption of culture involves a rather dubious banalization of the product, and in their narratives they allow this view to appear openly. For this reason the use of quotations in E.T.A. Hoffmann, in Immermann, and especially in Raabe and Fontane takes on an unmistakable note of cultural criticism. As one element of mimetic social representation, it is an effective means of characterizing the satiated and shallow self-complacency of the culture of certain bourgeois circles. The cultured Philistine's passion for adorning his conversation with familiar quotations mani-