

CAMDEN HOUSE

HISTORY OF GERMAN LITERATURE

Volume 4

Early Modern German Literature 1350–1700



Edited by Max Reinhart

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Max Reinhart

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First published 2007
by Camden House

Camden House is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620, USA
www.camden-house.com
and of Boydell & Brewer Limited
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
www.boydellandbrewer.com

ISBN-13: 978-1-57113-247-5
ISBN-10: 1-57113-247-3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Early modern German literature 1350–1700 / edited by Max Reinhart.

p. cm. — (Camden House history of German literature; v. 4)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-57113-247-5 (hardcover : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 1-57113-247-3 (hardcover : alk. paper)

1. German literature — Middle High German, 1050–1500 — History and criticism. 2. German literature — Early modern, 1500–1700 — History and criticism. I. Reinhart, Max, 1946–

PT238.E375 2005

830.9'003—dc22

2007037294

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

This publication is printed on acid-free paper.

Printed in the United States of America.

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Preface and Acknowledgments

THE ENTERPRISE OF WRITING a literary history of this period under the inclusive nomenclature of “early modern” has only one precedent: Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly’s fifty-four-page chapter “The Early Modern Period (1450–1720)” in *The Cambridge History of German Literature* (1997). Volume 4 of the Camden House History of German Literature, however, is the first attempt to give a book-length account of the entire period, from its earliest manifestations in the late Middle Ages to its yielding to the modern aesthetics of individual expression in the Age of Sentimentality. Early modernists disagree somewhat over beginning and end dates. This volume establishes an earliest-possible *terminus a quo* of 1350; the *terminus ad quem* of 1700 allows for a seamless connection to Volume 5 of the series, though 1750 would be closer to the actual transition to modernity. Still, even a volume as ample as this one can make no claim to comprehensiveness. Indeed, the possibility of such a claim expired with the fading, after the First World War, of the nineteenth century’s illusions of a single “grand narrative” born among Italian Renaissance princes and bequeathed to a German spiritual prince by the name of Luther, Protestant, whose genius, allegedly, set the great wheel of modernity in motion. The “account” promised here has a rather more modest goal: to represent as thoroughly as possible the current state of scholarship in the field, and to do so across the long duration between 1350 and 1700-plus in order better to observe the essential transitions in mentality, contours in culture, and multiplicities in convention.

To provide some conceptual control over the subjects in this volume, the twenty-six chapters have been arranged in five parts: 1) Transitions: this part includes discussions of the late-medieval-to-early-modern transition itself as well as related studies on the structure of the period and the state of philological-editorial research. 2) Formations: these represent some of the more massive literary-intellectual developments of the period, such as education, which were fundamental to all other aspects. 3) Forms: these include the three classical genres plus the sensational new mixed form of the emblem. 4) Representations: some of these subjects, like the formations, had broad significance, but are placed under this rubric because of their particular nature to reflect, or represent, other interests (for example, literature at or concerning the court). 5) Lives: four parallel-lives studies represent biographical experiences at various stages of the early modern period, from early to late; a fifth study included in this biographical part addresses women’s writing of the period, which often tended to be intensely personal in nature.

The term “early modern” in the title of this volume — rather than a reference to “Renaissance” or “Reformation” — may surprise some readers as

much as it did the colleague outside the historical disciplines to whom I recently showed a list of the ten titles in the series. After a moment's reflection he responded: "Did Germany not have a Renaissance or a Reformation?" Unwittingly, he had precisely formulated a question that has vexed historians since the second half of the twentieth century and literary historians since about the last quarter. I replied that "early modern" has come to replace the classic categories "Renaissance" and "Reformation" as an explanatory model for the period between the late Middle Ages and the Modern Age. If my explanation did not altogether persuade him, the fault was only mine, for the "early modern" model is by now almost universally accepted by historians across the relevant disciplines.

What difference does it make to conceptualize this enterprise as a unitary subject rather than to divide it into two periods, each with its own volume (1. Renaissance and Reformation, 2. Baroque), as in traditional literary historiography? Let us consider a traditional handling of, say, fool's literature, a prominent genre between Early Humanism and Late Baroque. A scholar assigned this topic for a volume on the Baroque would immediately think of the various foolish types in burlesque drama: the harlequin, the *miles gloriosus*, the *zanni*, *Hanswurst*; or certain characters in Grimmelshausen and Beer and other writers of picaresque fiction; or Reuter's outrageous *Schelmuffsky*, or Riemer's political *Maul-Affen*, "gaping fools," in addition to other related figures and genres. All would then be gathered and explicated against the backdrop of baroque history, morality, aesthetics, and culture. An introductory paragraph would acknowledge the tradition of fool's literature and mention some outstanding titles, such as Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and Brant's *Ship of Fools*. Then, however, the discussion would necessarily make a giant leap back to the Baroque, leaving decades of generic, social, moral, and confessional development out of sight — the very processes that nourished and transformed the genre in its seventeenth-century forms. Similarly, the separate volume on Renaissance and Reformation would make its obligatory references to the traditions from which fool's literature was derived as well as its continuation into the Baroque, but then settle down to its "own" periodic focus. In both instances, the lingering impression is that fool's literature existed somehow independently in the respective period; that it appeared and disappeared more or less *nolens volens*; and worst, that students may safely ignore the gaps left by these condensed or truncated processes. The present volume, by contrast, seeks to allow the manifestation of the fuller unfolding, or bridging, of genres and forms within the structures of long-term developments in early modern society and culture.

As a practical matter, it was one thing to propose covering the extreme dates of 1350 and 1700 in a single volume, but quite another to find scholars capable of treating assignments across these 350 years. The reasons for this frustration originate within traditional academic structures, and are troubling to the extent that this trammled thinking still reigns in many places. Notwithstanding all hermeneutical advances in historiography, the organization of literary studies for the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries in

most universities remains mostly locked (a) in the historico-aesthetic periodization scheme of Renaissance, Reformation, and Baroque; (b) in national categories — for German literature, specifically, the Reformation still commonly enjoys the status of founding myth, alternatively of the “German spirit” or a “German early-bourgeois revolution”; and (c) in a pertinacious animadversion toward social and mental history, not to mention a blindness to Latin. As a result, few scholars receive formal training in actual early modern literature — including Neo-Latin studies — in the full chronological sense. The present volume is fortunate to have the participation of some of the preeminent early modernists from Germany, the U.K., and North America. As a result of the pioneering efforts of many of these contributors over the past twenty years or so, early modern literary studies within some universities have gained traction, despite the constant pragmatic tug of “actualizing” or “modernizing” curricula. This development would appear to bode well for the future of the specialization.

The editorial apparatus of this volume conforms in its main features to that of the others in the series. Endnotes accompany each chapter; a bibliography of selected primary works and secondary studies stands in penultimate position, just before the final comprehensive index of names, works, and concepts. A striking one-third of the contributions to this volume were originally written in German — a direct reflection of the publisher’s support for recruiting the leading experts, whether their native language was English or German. The volume contains hundreds of German and Latin titles, for which standard English translations are supplied, as known; otherwise, working renderings are provided.

Certain regrets at this final stage of production rise to the surface. Suitable scholars for one or two proposed topics could not be found. Most painful, however, was not being able to accommodate one very fine essay: “Confessionalization and Literature in the Empire, 1555–1700” by Ute Lotz-Heumann and Matthias Pohlig. I am somewhat consoled by its having found a worthy home in *Central European History* 40 (2007): 35–61.

For a work of this size, the list of people who contributed to the production is impossibly long, though a few cannot go unmentioned. At the top of the list I must place the publishers at Camden House and Boydell & Brewer, who believed in the unitary conceptualization of the volume and had the courage to publish it as such — a publishing first. Nothing about this thick, pathbreaking volume was easy, but the sharp editorial staff at CH and B&B managed every step of production with great expertise. I am especially grateful to Jim Walker, the editorial director, for his ever-workable advice and unfailing good humor through countless hours of telephonic brainstorming; to Jane Best, the production editor, for keeping the various editorial stages coordinated and moving forward, and who readied the essays for the typesetter; to Sue Smith, the production manager, for her creative solutions to a host of big and small problems; and to Cheryl Lemmens, the indexer, whose skills were indispensable to the scholarly usefulness of the volume. A personal word of thanks goes to James Hardin, the general editor of the series, for generously

sharing his extraordinary editorial wisdom gained over a professional lifetime of editing and publishing.

My sincere appreciation is due the excellent translators of the German-language contributions: Michael Metzger (Professor Emeritus of German, University of Buffalo), Michael Swisher (Chair, Departments of Art and Literature, and of Humanities, Truman College, Chicago), Karl F. Otto Jr. (Professor Emeritus of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Pennsylvania), and James Hardin (Professor Emeritus of German, University of South Carolina).

It is, of course, to the individual contributors of this volume that the greatest debt is owed. A number of them were among the first scholars of early modern German studies; without their pioneering efforts, the present volume, which conceptualizes the years between 1350 and 1700 as a unitary period, could not have been imagined. To edit the work of all of these superb contributors has been for me both challenging and rewarding.

And finally, for guidance and inspiration over the years, it is a very special joy to express my gratitude to Klaus Garber, the founder and former director of the Institut für Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit (Osnabrück),

*quo cum sermones poteram conferre suaves,
tutus et in fidum spargere verba sinum.*

Max Reinhart
Athens, Georgia
August 2007

Introduction: German Literature in the Early Modern Period

Max Reinhart

Early Modernity in History and Scholarship

GOETHE'S FAMOUS QUIP to his biographer Johann Peter Eckermann in 1824 that when he was eighteen Germany too was only in its teens was tossed off with a laugh,¹ and was not the sign of historical arrogance that some commentators have made it out to be. Nevertheless, the glib remark can still rankle historians of older literature who research and teach within an academic culture of cost-effectiveness that often seems to have been struck by amnesia for history before Goethe. Taken at face value, it ignores a good 500 years of structural changes that transformed the Middle Ages into modern Europe: politically, the diminution of imperial and papal powers vis-à-vis electors, states, and territories, and the creation of constitutional guarantees; socially, the proliferation of cities and the rise of urban culture, with its officialdom and ideas about citizenship, representation, and social mobility; economically, the advent of industrial capitalism, the invention of the printing press, the marketing of books, and the expansion of international banking; intellectually, humanism, the Copernican revolution, the rise of empirical methodologies, and meritocratic theories of the nobility of mind, which, among other things, inspired co-education and the idea of gender equality; religiously, the Protestant Reformation, the Jesuit renewal of the Catholic faith, and personal expressions of spirituality (mysticism, spiritualism, pietism). This is to say nothing of other kinds of changes that had equal effect on the development of history over this half-millennium: the suppression of heresies, the witch-hunting craze, sectarianism and the wars of religion, the Thirty Years' War (1618–48). All of these events and developments, together with the genre traditions inherited from the Middle Ages and the humanistic forms and styles coming across the Alps from Italy, produced complex, multilayered discourses. These discourses were transmitted by a new university-trained humanist elite and nourished the imaginations of Lessing and Herder and Goethe and Schiller in the Age of Enlightenment. Did it really all begin with Goethe?² Only if one does not know one's history.

Where does German literature fit within the big picture of early modernity? If we accept the dominant historiographical paradigm, the history of early

modern German literature constitutes a chapter within a much larger unfolding in Europe between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, one that manifests four tendencies: (1) the late medieval economic and population depression, followed by a recovery between 1460 and 1500; (2) the gradual weakening after the mid-thirteenth century and then sudden fragmentation in the early sixteenth of Christendom as *una societas christiana* and the formation of independent states and territories; (3) the rise of colonial empires in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and (4) the proto-industrialization of Europe and breaking of the Malthusian barrier as the gateways to modernity.³ Viewed in these terms, the beginning date of 1350 in the title of volume 4 of the Camden House History of German Literature recalls the inception of the Black Death (from 1347), with its catastrophic effects on population and economy, while the end date of 1700 anticipates the industrial developments of the early eighteenth century.⁴ This rather sober account of history between the late Middle Ages and modernity reflects the twentieth century's repudiation of the previous century's revolutionary versions of the Renaissance and the Reformation, most heroically Leopold von Ranke's "grand narrative," which opened with the thunderous *event* of the Protestant Reformation and rumbled its way down to his own time (and would continue until after the First World War).⁵ The idea of dramatic revolutions has given way in modern historiography to the observation of epic evolutionary processes.

It is the profound contribution of modern historiography, particularly of the *Annales* method⁶ and of the sociohistorical school,⁷ to have shifted the focus of historical analysis from great events, or great institutions, or great personalities, or even great works, to their processual and mental contexts.⁸ This shift has resulted in paradigmatic changes in the way literary historians view the field of writing in the centuries formerly organized under the epochal categories of "Renaissance," "Reformation," and "Baroque." The nineteenth-century advocates of the Renaissance and Reformation's "modernization" and "liberalization" have been silenced in this scheme, as have those that claimed to find some Germanic essence in the Baroque. Three of their greatest "discoveries" — the Renaissance's discovery of the "subjective" self and the "objective" world (Burckhardt);⁹ the Lutheran Reformation's discovery of the "German national spirit" (Treitschke);¹⁰ and the northern Baroque's discovery of the non-Italian, "Germanic qualities" (Wölfflin)¹¹ — have been exposed as ideological constructs. Gone is the dramatic story of an enchained medieval past that rises to intellectual and spiritual liberation in the Renaissance and the Reformation;¹² gone the fairy tale of an uncouth Baroque transformed at last into Classical Weimar;¹³ likewise gone the counter-myth of a reactionary Baroque set on the restoration of an aristocratic, Catholic Europe.¹⁴

None of this is to suggest, however, that those venerable terms must be discarded in our preference for "Early Modern." They are still useful and desirable, even necessary, as apt metaphors for historical and stylistic *movements*. The balance struck in the mid-1990s by the editors of the *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600* in judging the efficacy of the terms "Renaissance" and "Reformation" in historiography seems as judicious in 2007 as it was then:

“The Renaissance” still means the recovery, adaptation, and expansion of knowledge associated with the neo-classical revival, but it can no longer stand for Burckhardt’s birth of modernity in the form of individualism. “The Reformation” still means the transformation and differentiation of western Christianity during the sixteenth century, but it can no longer stand for [John Lothrop] Motley’s liberation of the world from priestcraft and superstition. Thus shorn of their former ideological freight, the concepts still retain distinct signatures as aspects of a world which was, at the same time, late medieval and early modern.¹⁵

To assay a similar judgment for “the Baroque,” we may say that it still means a highly rhetorical, nonmimetic, even anticlassicist style (Nietzsche) that tends to the instrumental use of language, perhaps, as some have suggested, in the interest of achieving cultural stability following the chaotic wars of religion.¹⁶ But it can no longer stand for Burckhardt’s characterization of the Baroque as a “crude Germanic dialect” as against the “pure language” of the “Renaissance,”¹⁷ or for Wölfflin’s implications about a Gothic “manliness” and bold expressivity, as against the alleged effeminacy and subtlety of Italian or French style — a harsh dualism that under National Socialism was turned into a racial distinction between Germanic strength and un-Germanic weakness.

Viewed across the long duration, or *longue durée*, rather than period by period, previously unrecognized or ignored conflicts between political, ecclesiastical, social, and cultural forces become visible in the early modern world and literature. Two of the most powerful of these forces, which both divided and unified European society, were nationalization and confessionalization. Although the autonomous territories that were formed by policy in the Peace of Augsburg (1555)¹⁸ meant that Germany would be politically fractured for the following three centuries, an overarching ideology of the nation, driven especially by humanist patriotism, inspired a search for authentic varieties of German cultural artifacts and experiences. The tide of confessionalization, usually identified with the later century but set in motion in the 1520s with Luther’s politicization of theology, which played out most disastrously in the Peasants’ Wars, produced deep rifts in sixteenth-century society,¹⁹ but it also brought about solid and positive alliances, not only at the local level, but in ways that overlapped and commonly transcended territorial jurisdictions. This is particularly evident in the early modern history of international Calvinism.²⁰

The long perspective can likewise bring into sight previously unnoticed connections, or bridges, between aesthetic, mental, and social phenomena, not as crude causalities but as energies that burst into form (texts, paintings, compositions) at their sites of encounter.²¹ By recognizing the proper origins of early modern Europe in the mid-fourteenth century we are able to appreciate both the modern tendencies that were “dawning” in the late Middle Ages²² and the vernacular medieval forms and attitudes that persisted in the Reformation. The simultaneous arrival of Latin humanistic forms from Italy clashed and meshed with the Germanic medieval forms to produce a formal

syncretism that was “perhaps the most conspicuous phenomenon of the late-medieval-to-early-modern transition” [Garber].²³

Under the epochal categories of traditional literary history, older texts tended to be thought of in a kind of handmaidenly role, as *exempla*, to support religious, philosophical, political, or other ideological interests. This was considered to be less true for allegedly “genuine” literature after about 1750 than for earlier literature, which was understood as functional or rhetorical in the negative sense of being mechanically “imitative,” or non-ironic.²⁴ A great advance in literary interpretation since the 1960s was to give equal value to older texts as individual historical achievements, as representations of real human responses to social circumstances. Hans-Gert Roloff, one of the founders of the early modern philology, reminds us in his chapter in this volume that the transformative fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries were in fact uniquely “rich in human questions about the right way of living, about values, dangers, the need for change, about criticism and affirmation of old and new authorities.” Roloff concludes: “The real purpose of a literary history oriented toward human values is to discover and interpret these issues.” This reorientation led to a massive rediscovery of texts, both German and Latin; a reevaluation of the canon; the founding of dozens of editorial series; and a revolution in the practice of source scholarship and critical editing. The new texts included many by vernacular writers either unknown to or rejected by Martin Opitz and the seventeenth-century literary reformers. The Opitzian reform aspired to the formal sophistication of foreign, especially French, poetic accomplishments, and therefore rejected most indigenous forms and authors, even literary giants like Martin Luther and Hans Sachs. Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken, Hermann Bote von Braunschweig, Jörg Wickram, Johann Michael Moscherosch, Christian Weise, and Johann Beer are only a few of the writers — all now considered to be indispensable for a full appreciation of early modern literature — that were recovered by the new *Literaturwissenschaft*. The Neo-Latin tradition too had to be rehabilitated, since it had been marginalized by the nationalistic biases and taste preferences of nineteenth-century philologists, such as Jakob Grimm, who excluded any texts on principle that fell outside of what he called “the Protestant dialect.”

This philological renewal contributed moreover to significant innovations in methodology, above all, to comparativism and interdisciplinarity (or multidisciplinary), which provided a more accurate reflection of how knowledge was organized prior to the departmentalizing reforms of the nineteenth century. The field of early modern studies has adapted and made productive use of these new methods within the humanities and social sciences. Intertextuality, for example, including intermediality, has helped to reveal the ingenious combinational strategies of early modern composition.²⁵ A related method, known as *Gesellschaftsvergleich* (comparison of societies), was developed in the late 1990s in the social sciences to investigate how structural changes occur in modern economies and industries; it has expanded to embrace historical inquiries across the disciplines and into the early modern period regarding material and other factors (conventions, *habitus*, agendas, confessionism)

that drove organizational changes.²⁶ Among its possible uses for early modern German studies, the method suggests itself as an approach to long-unanswered questions regarding the internal dynamics and changes in literary societies: for example, concerning the sensitive confessional politics in the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft (Fruitbringing Society);²⁷ or the internal causes that led to the dissolution in the early eighteenth century of the older humanist literary societies and the precise motivations behind Leibniz's interest in a national academy of sciences.²⁸

The essays in the present volume owe much to these groundbreaking efforts. Indeed, we are pleased to be able to include contributions by several of the outstanding pioneers of early modern German literary studies. One of our goals, of course, is to present the current state of research in the various subjects, although, despite the extraordinary generosity of the publisher, space limitations prevent anything approaching a full inventory of the varieties of research that now occupy the field. On the other hand, while selection was primarily guided by judgments about the readiness or maturity of certain topics for summary in a literary history, contributors were by no means discouraged from taking a "progressive" approach. As a consequence, much new or ongoing research will be found between these covers. Given that early modern literary studies is one of the most active research areas within the humanities and social sciences, it was perhaps inevitable that the *push* of this energy would make itself felt even in a literary history, an essentially conservative genre.

While the topics offered here must be restricted in number, they are often sweeping in breadth and perspective. They range from large historical structures to small aesthetic forms and include, in addition to discussions of literature per se, an overview of early modern German music and an essay on the pictorial "language" of early modern German art. The intent behind the five organizational rubrics is to provide some conceptual control over a potentially unwieldy repertoire. Though other headings might have served as well, together these represent a hermeneutical framework within which the activities of writing and scholarship and living in early modern Germany had their meaning, both historically and aesthetically.

A few words about the headings may be useful. "Transitions" may seem a bit fuzzy given our express certainty that the late Middle Ages was the point of origin for early modernity. In this volume Graeme Dunphy reminds us that the problem is partly a function of how the field is laid out. Because "the early thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries are established coordinates in the discipline of literary history," what lies between leaves the discipline with an apparent transition. However that may be, some solace may be taken in our shared befuddlement with other historians over the question of how periods succeed one another, never more charmingly expressed than by E. H. Gombrich, writing for children: "How nice it would be if, suddenly, heralds were to ride through the streets crying: 'Attention please! A new age is beginning!' But things aren't like that."²⁹ The next heading, "Formations," stands for fundamental processes that bore everything else along in their own movement. For example, the movement

of education in Germany is traced here across the early modern *longue durée* from the late medieval university curriculum to the humanist reforms of Erasmus and Philipp Melancthon to the pragmatic revisions of seventeenth-century pedagogy. “Forms” includes the classical genres of drama, poetry, and prose, as well as the new mixed form of the emblem. Other mixed forms proliferated in the early modern period too — *Flugblätter* (broadside), figured poetry, prose eclogue — but none as ubiquitously as the emblem; in fact, many other mixed forms betray essentially emblematic structures. “Representations” pertains to a group of practices or activities that often served, functioned on behalf of, “represented,” overriding interests — the making and cataloguing of princely libraries, the application of erotic (especially Petrarchist) imagery to various kinds of discourse, the strategies of writing about magic and witches, the use of travel reports for ideological purposes or for profit. Finally, “Lives” — specifically, “parallel lives,” but including an account of women’s writing in the context of their lives — reminds us (as does a fascinating subset of early modern research),³⁰ that men and women experienced life no less vividly in the early modern period than we do today, and that the successes or failures of careers and goals of scholars and artists often hinged on the accidents of fortune or the wisdom of personal choice.

Our main interest in this volume of literary history concerns how *literary* texts had meaning in the early modern period (though “literary” prior to the new organic aesthetics of the later eighteenth century must be defined very broadly). While the organizational headings here provide some assistance, early modern philology has shown that these texts also had meaning individually and within specific discursive traditions. “History,” the legal historian Michael Stolleis observes, “essentially relies on texts.”³¹ But, as he goes on to explain, *how* texts speak is as significant as *what* they speak. Every situation is specific to the text as communicative instrument, and every text has its reception in these situations. Communication and reception occur within specific “socio-genetic” groups (intellectual societies, pietist devotional circles, women’s domestic gatherings), as the sociologist Norbert Elias observes: “The originators speak out of a social situation [. . .]; they speak into a very specific situation [. . .] that is characteristic for a specific [. . .] grouping of people.”³² This dynamic of communication and reception can be either affirmative (imitation, mimesis, normative morality, social discipline) or dialogical (negation, alienation, counterfactuality, barbarization³³). There is also a third, “mental,” level — one implied in the *Annales* method — that relates to the semantic forms of communicative structures and patterns of thought not immanent to the texts themselves: traditions, genres, topoi, conventions, occasions, images. These “mentalities” affect textual meaning exogenously but can themselves be transformed in the process of textual interpretation over time.

In this light, events and developments between the mid-fourteenth and the eighteenth centuries constitute not only the backdrop against which all writing took place but are also the stone upon which texts carved their messages. That idea informs the following sketch of the history of German literature between 1350 and 1700.

Early Modern German Literature in Context

Late Medieval and Early Humanism

The early modern period opened in the wake of the imperial crisis provoked by the end of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and the failure to elect a new emperor. The Great Interregnum led in the next century to a formalization (Golden Bull, 1356) of the rights of princely “electors” (seven in number, drawn from both secular and ecclesiastical courts) to choose the emperor. This decentralizing of imperial power ran in near parallel with the erosion of church authority, challenged by the conciliar movement since the early fourteenth century³⁴ and most starkly manifested in the Great Schism of 1378–1417. After the disasters and anxieties of the thirteenth century, many people expected, well into the fourteenth, the coming of the kingdom of peace prophesied by Joachim of Fiore (ca. 1135–1202). Alas, this hope was shattered by the events of the calamitous fourteenth century, beginning with the Black Death, which within a few years wiped out a quarter of Germany’s population.³⁵

One reason for the rapid spread of plague was the movement of populations into walled urban settlements over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. On the eve of the early modern period the number of German towns had quadrupled, most having fewer than 2,000 citizens, but some, like Nuremberg and Augsburg, more than 10,000. Many joined in regional confederations, such as the northern Hanseatic League, for military or economic protection. Some families (the Fuggers, the Welsers, for example) who divined early the potential of the emergent capitalism crossing the Alps from northern Italy, achieved immense wealth in the sixteenth century by lending great sums at interest to ambitious but cash-strapped princes, kings, and emperors.

It was chiefly in the cities that literacy and its attendant skills (especially letter writing, or epistolography), institutions (schools, chanceries), and rewards (social mobility) flourished within the rising apparatus of officialdom and around the new industry of printing. The culture of writing in Germany actually began considerably in advance of the printing press in cities where bureaucratic organization furnished the need and employment for young men skilled in humanistic correspondence. Johannes von Tepl, the author of the first great work in German prose, *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen* (The Plowman of Bohemia, 1400/1), got his start as a notary in the city of Saaz. The first European university north of the Alps and east of Paris was founded in Prague in 1348, followed soon by others in the German-speaking realm: Vienna in 1365, Heidelberg in 1386, Cologne in 1388, Erfurt in 1389, Rostock in 1419, Basel in 1460, Ingolstadt in 1472, Tübingen in 1477, and, as the first of eleven more in the sixteenth century, Wittenberg in 1502, where Luther became a professor of biblical studies. With the gathering into towns came a different ordering of social groupings, reformulations of laws and privileges (Roman law, *ius civitatis*), governing bodies (especially the *Stadttrat*, or city council), and, perhaps most importantly for the arts and literature, a profoundly changed

sense of the self with respect to a community of others. This bourgeois self-awareness motivated not only the social satires of a Heinrich Wittenwiler (*Der Ring*, ca. 1410); moral fables like *Reineke Fuchs* (1498); adventurous tales of a new type of hero, the wandering merchant; or the songs of the *Meistersinger*, urbanized mutations of the former singers of courtly love. It also lay behind the psychologically revolutionary self-portraiture of Dürer, or the deeply troubling looks into the realm of social limits and taboos in works like Thüring von Ringoltingen's *Melusine* (1456) [Dunphy].

The epistolary art was not the sole invention of the cities, however, and was in equal demand at the major courts. The courts — estimated to have been around 100 in number during the early modern period [Watanabe-O'Kelly] — exemplified Germany's intimate relationship with Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The cultural intercourse began at the court of Charles IV, who aspired to create an intellectual and aesthetic environment in Prague to rival the finest courts in Europe. Besides founding there the first university and the first botanical garden in the German Empire, Charles was especially keen to absorb the influence of leading Italian scholars, such as the theorist of Roman law Bartolo of Sassoferrato. Apparently at the behest of his chancellor, Johannes von Neumarkt (ca. 1310–80), Charles invited the renowned Petrarch to instruct the chancery in how to cultivate an effective prose style for chancery documents. The result was not only an effective administrative and diplomatic instrument but one distinguished by supple rhythms and lovely concinnity. Beginning in the fifteenth century, leading German courts, notably Vienna and Heidelberg, employed Italian scholars or Germans who had studied in Italy. One of the court's advantages over the cities was its largesse: through patronage it could purchase the creative energies of writers, artists, and musicians in producing a literary, visual, and musical cosmos of "representation." Compared to the courts, cities had a miserly reputation among writers and artists!

Both empire and church were again declaring their respective authority on the eve of the Reformation, and with renewed vehemence. By the late fifteenth century the empire was making the extravagant claim to being the "Heiliges Römisches Reich Deutscher Nation." Grand-scale power politics stormed the European theater in the fifteenth century, from the Ottomans in the Southeast (conquest of Constantinople, 1453; siege of Vienna, 1529), to France (invasion of Italy, 1494) and England in the West (Tudor accession, 1485), to Spain in the Southwest (marriage of Isabella and Ferdinand, 1469), to Sweden in the North (Vasa accession, 1526). Early modern states and monarchies displayed their claims to empire through ambitious seaborne voyages of exploration and discovery (Columbus, Coronado, Da Gama, Cartier, and the rest). The glory days did not fade easily. Even after the Hohenstaufens had become a distant memory, fifteenth-century regent-novelists like Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken (1393–1456) and Eleonore von Österreich (1433–80) resurrected the old high courtly virtues, not merely for novelistic sentimentality but also to inculcate them as principles of good governance amid the changing sea of embourgeoisement (*Verbürgerlichung*).³⁶

The church, for its part, blustered its way past most of its critics with self-entitlements, denunciations, and threats of excommunication. Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed in his bull of 1302, *Unam sanctam ecclesiam*, that all *temporalia* are properly subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction; in 1329 Pope Johannes XXII, loather of all things German, pronounced Meister Eckhart's teachings, including his disparagement of the Roman Church as a *Mauerkirche* (church of walls), to be heretical.

But it is grossly misleading to paint the late medieval church, as some have done, as ineffectual or unresponsive to its flock or lacking in spiritual heat. Quite the opposite was true. Right up to Luther's repudiation in 1517 of the pope's scriptural authority to sell indulgences for the remission of sins, the church continued to fulfill its basic sacerdotal and totemic functions for the general populace. The production of literary (calendars, plays, hagiographies, celebrations of Mary), artistic (saints, adorations, Christ scenes), and musical (chorale, mass, hymn) works for the special days of the church year reached unprecedented levels in the late medieval period, as did the varieties and fervency of expressions of piety among the laity.³⁷ Religious poetry was intensely visual and focused much attention on iconographic representations of the exemplary life of Christ. In the late medieval period religious manuscripts outnumbered secular ones by three to one, and this despite the massive increase in secular writings.

Even the literary genius of Luther himself was not unprecedented. The literature produced by the monastic and spiritual traditions (Augustinians, Franciscans, Dominicans, the Teutonic Order) coursed into Luther's world and filled his imagination. Linguistic masters of the stature of Heinrich Seuse or Meister Eckhart or Johannes Tauler were no less gifted than Luther.³⁸ Nineteenth-century philology established the modern watershed between Middle High German and Early Modern German with Luther and the Reformation. Twentieth-century language scholars, less influenced in their judgment by the brilliance of Luther's accomplishments as a writer and translator, reset the beginning of Early Modern German at a point considerably in advance of the sixteenth century [Born].

Modern research into the vitality of the late medieval church also contradicts the still commonly held belief that the Lutheran Reformation, as the spiritual counterpart to the Renaissance, brought modernity into being in one fell swoop. No doubt, "modern" elements (antischolasticism, individual freedom, secularization) are present in Luther's thought, at least inceptively. However, compared to the rationalist, skeptical brand of religion that arose in the later eighteenth century around Lessing, Luther's Reformation seems more medieval than modern. Scholasticism, allegedly spurned, pervades Luther's thinking; human freedom for him is limited to obedient believers and is hostile to the notion of free will [Carrington]; and while Luther affirms the importance of this world within the plan of salvation, his willingness to place religious enforcement in the hands of secular rulers helped to fuel the confessional politics that not only had a hand in the bloody Peasants' Wars but hastened the coming wars of religion. While the Reformation was

indubitably transformational in the history of western religion, it decidedly did not throw open the doors to modernity. What is more, if we again take the long view of early modernity, Luther's was but one, if the most important, among a series of reformations across Europe: Thomas Cromwell's in England, Jean Calvin's in Geneva, Huldrych Zwingli's in Zurich, Thomas Müntzer's in Saxony, the Anabaptists' in Münster, to say nothing of the Catholic Church's own reformation after the birth of the Society of Jesus (1534) and the Council of Trent (1545–63). Indeed, there had been earlier reformation movements, such as Jan Huss's in Bohemia, and there would be later ones as well, such as the Spiritualists' (Sebastian Franck, Kaspar Schwenckfeld) or the Pietists' (Gottfried Arnold, Philipp Spener). All of these shared Luther's goal of reforming the church and deepening spirituality, if by different means.³⁹

Still, the church in many ways had indeed failed to reform itself from within, to the dismay of many, and troubling signs of imminent crisis abounded in the decades just prior to the outbreak of the Protestant Reformation. Two Dominican friars in Germany, Heinrich Kramer (known as Institoris) and Jakob Sprenger, were dispatched in the 1480s to seek out alleged enemies of the church known as “witches” and bring them to God's justice. In 1487 Kramer systematized the process of identification and punishment in the infamous *Malleus malleficarum* (The Witches' Hammer) [Scholz Williams]. Another Dominican friar, Savonarola, delivered fiery millenarian sermons in Florence in the 1490s, prophesying the end of the world. Nuremberg, widely admired for its open-mindedness and hospitality, drove the Jews from the city in the 1490s and seized their property and synagogue, a practice that accelerated in these years throughout Europe. The princes of the church enjoyed ever-greater economic prosperity but still sought to rob the poor of their pittance by the sale of *Nachlaßbriefe* (letters of indulgence) that promised remission of sins, an abuse that filled one young monk with such righteous indignation that he dared at last to call Rome to account.

Toward the end of the late medieval period three developments came about that would prove decisive for the flowering of humanism and the advent of the Reformation in Germany. The first was the convocation of two major church councils in German lands, the Council of Constance (1414–18) and the Council of Basel (1431–49). These protracted events brought Italian humanists, who were in the employ of the church, to Germany, where their impact on German intellectuals was nothing less than life changing. The most important of the Italian visitors was Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1405–64, later Pope Pius II), who, after his service at the Council of Basel, was retained by Friederich III to direct the chancery at the new imperial seat of Vienna. It is no exaggeration to say that Enea Silvio introduced the Germans to themselves through his monograph *De ritu, situ, moribus et conditione Germaniae* (On the Customs, Geography, Habits, and Condition of Germany, 1457). Besides describing geographical and other wonders of Germany, Enea Silvio introduced Tacitus, the ancient Roman historian, whose *Germania*, recently rediscovered, sang the praises of the venerable Germanic virtues (modesty,

generosity, honesty, loyalty, freedom, perseverance, courage, genius, and nobility). These legendary virtues became weapons for the Germans in the coming cultural and religious wars with Rome.

The second development concerns the model of piety represented by the *Devotio Moderna*, a Dutch religious movement whose members were known as the Brethren of the Common Life. Their most celebrated member before Erasmus was the German Thomas à Kempis (family name, Hämmerlein), the author of the widely admired *De imitatio Christi* (1420–41). The Brethren cultivated a modest approach to spiritual reform inspired in part by a high regard for classical learning. As a youth in Deventer, Erasmus was introduced to the Brethren's method of textual criticism, which later became for him an instrument of great philological power that allowed him to make significant improvements in how to read and understand the Bible [Rummel].

The third development, the invention of movable type by Johannes Gutenberg in the mid-fifteenth century in Mainz, revolutionized the world of communications [Füssel], contributing fundamentally to the evolution of an essentially oral-based culture to one driven by writing. Scholars have described this transformation as *Verschriftlichung* [Knappe].⁴⁰ In 1968, at the beginning of the new sociohistorical *Literaturwissenschaft*, Roy Pascal made the astute observation that the printing press was in no small part responsible for the very “consolidation of burgher culture.”⁴¹ For the “arch-humanist” Conrad Celtis (1459–1508) it meant that the culture-hungry Germans now had the technological means to overcome their *stolida inertia*, “stupid laziness” (Ode 3,9), and at last to catch up with the Italians.

As we have seen, however, German humanism actually began, if haltingly, some 150 years before Celtis uttered these words; Italian humanism still much earlier. Furthermore, the qualities Emperor Charles and his chancellor recognized in Italian humanism did not spring Minerva-like out of the air but grew from very material social and political roots. The conditions conducive to the formation of an intellectual estate developed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in middle and northern Italy with the rise of a wealthy manufacturing class. While certain of the feudal aristocracy became involved in the early capitalistic enterprises, the rest retired to the countryside.⁴² Between the new *haute bourgeoisie* and the old aristocracy a useful estate of civil servants and intellectuals formed over the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and consolidated its position in part by acquiring access to privileges by virtue of its social proximity to the aristocracy.⁴³ Petrarch (1304–74), the son of a wealthy merchant and educated in Montpellier and Bologna, belonged to this rising estate, which over the next century forged links across Europe and, by holding in common a set of classically derived ideals and practices known as the *studia humanitatis*, established an identity as the *respublica litteraria* (republic of letters), or *nobilitas literaria*. By 1500 the term *humanista* (humanist) designated a person who shared these features.⁴⁴ That humanism eventually took hold north of the Alps owed to the cultivation of similar sociopolitical connections, beginning with its reception at the imperial court in Prague.

Middle Humanism and Reformation

The first signs, in trecento Italy, of an emerging learned aristocracy are visible in the epistolary debate between Dante and the Bolognese grammarian Giovanni del Virgilio over the relative merits of Italian and Latin.⁴⁵ The exchange took place in 1319 within the rustic form of the Vergilian eclogue. It has an intensely searching quality that addresses the question of the poet's relationship, or obligation, to his readers. Should one write in the elevated argot of Latin, or should one make a commitment to the humble language of the people, the *lingua volgata*?⁴⁶ The unspoken conflict in this ostensibly academic tussle between friends was rooted in social ideology: the value of the people versus the value of the aristocracy. Dante aspired to elevate the *genus humile* by creating a poetic language in the vernacular that was the equal of Latin. For Giovanni, the learned estate should guard its privileges by holding to its hermetic codes. Giovanni reflects the early educated estate's claim to shared privilege with the aristocracy. Thus the aesthetic question raised by Giovanni: What is good? is at base a social question: What is noble? Dante, by insisting that the humble language of the people can be as distinguished as the elevated language of the educated, added an ethical dimension to the question: not, What is good? but What is *truly* good? not, What is noble? but What is *truly* noble? This philosophical distinction would resonate powerfully in the republic of letters for the following half millennium.

This appeal to *vera nobilitas* (true nobility) is coeval with the birth of humanism, for it is predicated not on the privilege of birth but on personally earned merit. Dante pounded this idea home in his *Convivio*, and a massive literature of true nobility followed.⁴⁷ It was a cornerstone of republican theory,⁴⁸ which asserted the superiority of education and competence over inherited privilege, and is found in many discourses, including political theory and in writers as diverse as Machiavelli (1469–1527) and Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), founder of the modern theory of natural law. Florentine writers of the quinquecento trumpeted the city's record of meritorious civil servants, most notably Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni, as well as its greatest poets (Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch), as living proofs that Florence was the legitimate successor to the ancient republic.⁴⁹ The topos can be tracked deep into the eighteenth century with the enlightened middle-class appropriation of natural law and belief in the general perfectibility of humankind, irrespective of social class, race, or gender. It was an ideal of the French Revolution and is deeply embedded in the American Constitution.

It was at about this point in the development of the *respublica litteraria* that humanism personally came to Germany. When Emperor Charles IV and his chancellor Johann von Neumarkt invited Europe's preeminent poet to Prague in 1350 they expected one distinguished visitor; instead, they got two: besides Petrarch, his traveling partner, the revolutionary republican tribune Cola di Rienzi as well. Rienzi had a plan. While the emperor listened with detached amusement and some anxiety, Rienzi laid out a fantastic blueprint for restoring the Roman Republic, under the leadership of Charles himself, to its former glory. Nothing was to come of this except jail time for Rienzi. Petrarch's

principles of style, on the other hand, were accepted wholeheartedly; adaptations were made, and a German chancery style was born. Fifty years later it served the notary Johannes von Tepl in composing *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen*, as mentioned earlier. The subsequent wave of anti-Hussite persecution in Bohemia, however, poisoned the environment. Another half century would pass before the *studia humanitatis* would be reintroduced to Germany, by Enea Silvio in the 1640s and in the lectures of the wandering humanist Peter Luder (ca. 1415–72) at the University of Heidelberg in 1456.⁵⁰ The idea of *renovatio imperii* (the renewal of the empire) that Rienzi had tried to get across to Charles IV helped to drive a German cultural war against shared adversaries in Rome.⁵¹

This urge to renew or refashion the world was the fire that welded the ideas of nation and culture for the early German humanists around Conrad Celtis. The private intellectual society, or sodality (*sodalitas*), was the primary institution for the communication of this concept, even more so than the university, court, or church. Here the members “could act according to rules that they themselves had devised. No institution therefore was more suited to the self-expression of the humanists of Europe than these *sodalitates literariae*.”⁵² The movement of intellectual societies began in quattrocento Italy in Bologna and spread quickly to Florence, Naples, Venice, Rome, and then across Europe over the following three centuries. One of the four societies in Florence, the Accademia della Crusca, inspired a German member, Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köthen, to establish the first vernacular literary society on German soil, the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft, in 1617. Intellectual societies in Germany were founded in the late fifteenth century in important towns, especially those with universities and typically around a respected scholar or distinguished personality: in Heidelberg (Bishop Johann von Dalberg and Celtis), Nuremberg (the patrician Willibald Pirckheimer), Erfurt (the poet-scholar Eobanus Hessus), Augsburg (the antiquarian Conrad Peutinger), Vienna (Celtis and certain court officials). Following in the classical tradition of Giovanni, the common language of these early sodalities was Latin, though the common ethos was Dantean. German humanists on the whole showed greater interest in the natural sciences and mathematics than did their more philosophically minded colleagues in Italy. In the privacy of their gatherings these differences could be mulled over, political issues debated, questions of literary style and taste adjudicated, new writings read aloud, criticism entertained, ideas fostered. A culture of mutual support and high spirits, even a measure of excess, was the order of the day, as we see in a delightful ode by Celtis that recalls an evening at the Sodalitas Rhenana (Rhenish Sodality), which he had founded as a student in Heidelberg in 1484–85. After serious discussions about nature and poetry it is time to eat and drink, and the mood suddenly soars:

Hinc Bacchi madidis cymbia poculis
Fervens mensa tulit cum variis iocis,
Hic nummos nocuam perdit ad aleam,
Alter carminibus vacat,

Hic flexu volucris saltibus incites
 Exercet variis corpora motibus,
 Ut risum eliciat, dum rudis aemulus
 Lapsu praecipiti cadit.⁵³

[And now quickly to the table! The cups stand running over with Bacchus's draft and call us to merry games. Over there one fellow is gambling away his coins; over there another is singing a song. That fellow is winding up his body to make a great leap, and twists himself about energetically to get his muscles ready. Now laughter ensues as another, competing with him, falls to the floor.]

A century and a half later the cult of friendship in the literary societies could be a shield against the surrounding world of violence. In the amicable warmth of the Kürbishütte in Königsberg, Simon Dach contemplates the blessings and responsibilities of friendship:

Der Mensch hat nichts so eigen
 So wol steht ihm nichts an /
 Als daß Er Trew erzeigen
 Und Freundschaft halten kan;

 Wann er mit seines gleichen
 Soll treten in ein Band /
 Verspricht sich nicht zu weichen
 Mit Hertzen / Mund und Hand.

 Die Red' ist uns gegeben
 Damit wir nicht allein
 Vor uns nur sollen leben
 Und fern von Leuten seyn;

 Wir sollen uns befragen
 Und sehn auff guten Raht /
 Das Leid einander klagen
 So uns betreten hat.⁵⁴

[Nothing is more innate to humankind, nothing more appropriate, than that we should show our loyalty and prove our friendship by joining with others like ourselves in fellowship and promising with heart, mouth, and hand never to fail. Speech has been given us so that we need not live all by ourselves and far from other people. We should ask questions of each other and depend on one another's advice; confess to one another the suffering that afflicts us.]

The scholar Paul Hankamer in 1935, under the “manly Baroque” bias of those years, mocked what he considered a culture of preciosity in the *Sprachgesellschaften*: “In this void they composed often virtuosic congratulations and avowals of friendship and elegant epistles to one another, the dreadful emptiness of which could only be supplemented by mutual assurances of

their literary immortality [. . .].”⁵⁵ This ill-tempered gibe misses not only the humanity that lay behind the *courtoisie* of the sodalities but its implicit ethical criticism as well. The insistence on deference toward others, the readiness to praise, the avoidance of doctrinal hairsplitting, the cultivation of the correct and the beautiful: in the semantics of humanist discourse these behaviors called attention to their absence in society or, indeed, in the very institutions that ought to know better — the courts, the churches, the universities. The critical potential of panegyric speech was appreciated in antiquity and exploited in exemplary fashion by Vergil in his eclogues. Within the poetic community of the literary societies it brought forth a type of *Gegenweltsliteratur* (counter-world literature) that, as we shall see, flourished above all in Nuremberg in the 1640s.⁵⁶

The fact that the Rhenish Sodality at Heidelberg enjoyed the patronage of Bishop Johann Dalberg of Worms and Elector Philipp of the Palatinate reminds us of the alliance between intelligence and power in early modern Europe. All major early societies in Italy enjoyed noble benefactors, many of these from the ranks of the *potentes* (wealthy ruling families), such as Cosimo and Lorenzo de’ Medici at the Accademia Platonica in Florence. This dependence continued to distinguish the European movement of intellectual societies. In Paris in the seventeenth century the Cabinet Dupuy counted on the protection of no less formidable a figure than Cardinal Richelieu.⁵⁷ Through its first generation the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft was almost completely aristocratic;⁵⁸ around 1650, 475 members out of the total of 527 were aristocrats. However, in the next generation this proportion began to shift as memberships in the various societies became predominately bourgeois.⁵⁹ Nuremberg’s Pegnesischer Blumenorden, founded by the patrician Georg Philipp Harsdörffer (1607–58), consisted almost exclusively of bourgeois members. With the tendency toward refeudalization in the seventeenth century the friction between the learned estate and nobility increased and in some instances culminated in legal confrontations over questions of privilege.⁶⁰

The humanists of Celtis’s generation⁶¹ were primarily secular-minded. Most agreed with Celtis that Rome had abandoned its moral and intellectual mandate and that the time had come for those privileges to be transferred to Germany (*translatio artium*) [Füssel], but the church itself was not an issue that aroused them to action. Celtis spoke for most early humanists in his preference for a quasi natural religion —

est deus in nobis, non est quod numina pictis
aedibus intuear

[God dwells in us; I have no wish to gad about in painted sanctuaries]

— an attitude that incited some religious leaders, including Luther, to accuse Celtis and his friends of paganism. The focus of these humanists was on the moral qualities of the individual, not on adherence to any particular confession. Even Zwingli (1484–1531), who had received a humanist education, was reproached by Luther’s circle for moral leniency; his rejoinder was to fault

Luther's *sola fide* (by faith alone) doctrine, which he said fostered in the faithful a complacency about doing the good works appropriate to a true Christian.

This attitude toward the church changed significantly in the generation of humanists after Celtis. While not doctrinaire, they saw no conflict in a simultaneous commitment to ecclesiastical reform and the reform of human learning and manners;⁶² indeed, the two were reckoned as whole cloth. The path to these reforms moved in reverse: *ad fontes*, “to the sources,” a method the northern humanists learned from the Italian historians, especially Lorenzo Valla (1406–57). Valla was famous for having proven through meticulous textual analysis that the allegedly fourth-century Donation of Constantine — which purported to confer on the inheritors of St. Peter the city of Rome and the entire Western Roman Empire — was an eighth-century forgery. Erasmus applied this same textual rigor to his 1516 Latin translation of the New Testament (from the Greek original), the edition that Luther would consult assiduously in making his own translation into German in 1521.

This look back to the sources as the way to establish authentic texts and, by extension, authentic Christian theology and behavior was one of the most important practices shared by the humanists and the evangelical church reformers in the early years of the Reformation. Another related practice was the use of criticism. The modern concept of the humanist as *criticus* had been introduced only recently by the Florentine scholar Angelo Poliziano (1454–94), in 1492, to characterize the attitude and method of the new *eruditi* (educated) in their opposition to Scholasticism. Its effectiveness was enhanced by the printing industry, which produced and disseminated books so rapidly and widely that the criticism emanating from, say, remote Wittenberg, was amplified and given the appearance of simultaneity and ubiquity. Luther seized this potential to deliver a devastating blow to the church's foundations in three epochal works from the “Reformation Year” of 1520: *An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation* (To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation), *Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft der Kirche* (On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church), and *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen* (On the Liberty of a Christian Individual). There were many types of criticism, of course. One that the humanists and reformers shared was the satirizing of opponents. Several outstanding literary works exemplified this, such as Sebastian Brant's (1457–1521) *Das Narrenschiff* (1494), Erasmus's *Laus Stultitiae* (Praise of Folly, 1511), the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* (Letters of Obscure Men, 1516 and 1517), written mainly by Ulrich von Hutten (1488–1523) and Crotus Rubianus (1480–ca. 1545), and Friedrich Dedekind's (1524–98) *Grobianus* (1549). This is to say nothing of the suasive power of *Flugschriften* (pamphlets), one of the deadliest weapons in the vernacular arsenal of the reformers; or of the large generic category of *Narrenliteratur* (literature of fools), which was exploited to hilarious and often brutal effect on all sides. Some of the most effective satirical writings came from the pen of the Franciscan humanist and opponent of the Reformation Thomas Murner (1475–1537), as in his *Von dem großen lutherischen Narren* (On the Great Lutheran Fool, 1522).

Two other behaviors, or traits, are also often mentioned as typical of humanists, though they are found in equal measure among the church reformers: individualism and patriotism. Theories about the “Renaissance man” go back to the ideal of the *uomo universale*.⁶³ Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) is usually thought of in these terms. Burckhardt was particularly in awe of the Dutch humanist Rudolf Agricola (1444–85), poet, painter, sportsman, rhetorician, and musician. The ideal of the “perfected man” was a subject of much speculation in conversational literature (also called literature of dialogues), beginning with Baldassare Castiglione’s *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (The Book of the Courtier, 1528) and cultivated through the entire early modern period. Literary examples of the early modern cult of personality are found in many genres, including eulogy — *Leichenpredigten* (eulogies) constitute one of the largest corpora of occasional literature in the early modern period⁶⁴ — and autobiography, but especially in painting: Grünewald’s attention to expressionistic agony; Hans Holbein the Younger’s monumental, sensuous portraits of English royalty and aristocracy; Dürer’s penetrating self-portraiture.⁶⁵ Here too the printing press and the rapid rise of the publishing industry contributed to the glorification of the individual. The swift appearance of books with one’s name on the title page created the potential for sudden fame and enhancement of reputation. Wealthy individuals, such as Willibald Pirckheimer (1470–1530) in Nuremberg, invested heavily in the cultivation of private libraries, the fame of which spread throughout the European republic of letters.

The half century following the printing of Enea Silvio Piccolomini’s groundbreaking history of Germany, which advanced the European Tacitean movement — the cult of the Roman historian Tacitus — saw a great outpouring of patriotism among the purveyors of the new learning.⁶⁶ This movement grew in intensity in the period of the Reformation as German evangelicals and humanists alike joined in a general *Kulturkampf* against what they considered a decadent Roman culture.⁶⁷ It took now a theological or ecclesiological turn, now an intellectual one. Celtis struck a revivalist tone in his inaugural address at the University of Ingolstadt in 1492, haranguing Germans to resist the decadent foreign (read: Roman) strain and affirm their own national genius. To do so will require, he says, nothing less than a “turning,” literally a “conversion,” to the humanistic studies: “Quamobrem convertite vos, Germani, convertite vos ad mitiora studia!” (Turn then, Germans, turn to more cultured studies!), he cries.⁶⁸ Celtis’s call was taken up with militant zeal by Hutten in his *Arminius* (ca. 1519). In this Lucian satire Arminius comes before the god of the underworld, Minos, to make his case for his proper place in history. Tacitus appears as Arminius’s chief advocate, praising the ancient Germanic conqueror of the Romans as “Germany’s Liberator”:

Ohne Zweifel war er Deutschlands Befreier. Er griff das römische Volk nicht in seinen Anfängen an wie andere Könige und Fürsten, sondern in seiner Blütezeit, in Schlachten war sein Erfolg wechselnd, im Kriege blieb

er unbesiegt. 37 Jahre wurde er alt, zwölf davon war er an der Macht, und noch jetzt lebt er in den Liedern der Barbaren.⁶⁹

[Without doubt he was Germany's Liberator. He took on the Roman people, not in its mere beginnings like other kings and princes had, but in its prime. His success was mixed in battles, but in war he remained undefeated. He lived to thirty-seven, twelve of those years as ruler, and he still lives in the songs of the barbarians.]

At the end of the seventeenth century, Daniel Casper von Lohenstein (1635–83) recalled Hutten's work in writing his novel of state of the same name, *Arminius*, in 1689–90 (discussed below). A related hero, Aristarchus, the courageous Greek astronomer and so-called Copernicus of antiquity, was invoked by Martin Opitz in 1617 to make the same appeal to German patriotism as Celtis had: to seize the genius of the German language and create a national poetry in the vernacular.

If the foremost motivation of Celtis's generation was the spread of the *studia humanitatis* through foundings of institutions of learning (schools, universities, sodalities) and the establishment of a humanist curriculum, the next generation was motivated to ensure their lasting success by integrating them within the political and religious structures of authority. In a book that became a model of its kind throughout Europe, *De civilitate* (On Civility, 1530), Erasmus established his pedagogical reform on the ideal of a pure Christian foundation, the *philosophia Christi*. Many religious contemporaries considered *De civilitate* to be more mundane than spiritual, though this impression owed to its subtle method. Erasmus gradually leads the student away from extreme behaviors to that of true modesty, or grace, which he believes to be the true representation of Christ-like behavior. The attitude that should spring from this achievement is the prerequisite for the further pursuit of the *pia philosophia* (pious philosophy). In the seventeenth century this Aristotelian ethic of *modestia* experienced a transformation as *prudentia civilis* (social prudence), by which practice a young man might enhance his chances of success in the political world [Kühlmann, "Education"].

The impact of Erasmus's educational theory was profound across Europe and in England. But it was his younger contemporary, Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560), who consolidated the humanistic model of erudition and piety and implemented it in the Protestant school system.⁷⁰ For his pedagogical accomplishments he became known as the *praeceptor Germaniae* (teacher of Germany). Because Melanchthon established the unity of *eruditio* and *pietas* on biblical precepts, he was able to ensure that Renaissance letters, along with the related humanistic educational goals and methods, would thrive as a staple in the classroom. As a practical matter of importance to all humanists, this also meant that they could count on steady employment.

Even before 1520, however, suspicions had arisen in evangelical as in humanist circles that an irreconcilable difference lay below the surface of their cooperation. In 1524 Erasmus politely raised the essential question in a little publication titled *De libero arbitrio diatribe* (A Disquisition on Free Will),

which challenged Luther to state clearly his position on the subject of free will. Luther's reply the following year took the form of a lengthy, vituperative book called *De servo arbitrio* (The Enslaved Will), in which he denies that Scripture gives any evidence to support belief in human volition, and in which he decries Erasmus's willingness to entertain the option of human choice.⁷¹ Clearly, Erasmus and Luther had fundamentally different anthropological perceptions: Erasmus (and most humanists) saw humankind as essentially graceful, that is, able to participate personally in the divine action of grace,⁷² whereas Luther (and most evangelicals) held to a view of humankind as hopelessly lost. After this exchange it became apparent to actors on both sides of the issue that their presumed consensus had been illusory and their cooperation only pragmatic. Church historians refer to this tendency toward the leveling of differences between the evangelicals and the humanists in the interest of a common cause (reform) as the confessionalization of humanism.⁷³ Some humanists, such as Melancthon, rededicated themselves to the evangelical cause while others, like Pirckheimer, returned to the Catholic fold.

Others did their best to hold the alliance together. Hutten, a brilliant stylist who wrote forcefully on behalf of the new learning (most famously in the *Letters of Obscure Men*), also exploited his family privilege as an imperial knight socially and militarily in support of Luther, whom he continued to value as an indispensable champion of reform. In 1522 Hutten and Franz von Sickingen (1481–1523), another humanist and imperial knight, led a popular crusade on behalf of the Reformation to wrest control of lands belonging to the archbishop of Trier, a quixotic undertaking that failed and spilled over into the Peasants' War of 1524–25. Other individuals employed the pen rather than the sword in this battle. Eobanus Hessus (1488–1540), writing in Latin, and Hans Sachs (1494–1576), writing in German, both celebrated Luther as the *Gottesmann* for the times. Inspired by Luther's courageous stand at the Diet of Worms in 1521, Hessus composed in his honor a cycle of six elegies. In the first elegy Luther is a Christian Moses restoring the truth to Christianity:

Tu uelut à facie Mosis uelamina ducens
 Apparere facis quae latuere prius.
 Tu sua Christicolae reddis cognomina plebi,
 Nomina quae rebus dissona nuper erant.
 Pax iterum coelo redit aurea, & hoste perempto
 Nocte sub aeterna bella sepulta iacent. (ll. 75–80)⁷⁴

[But you remove the veil, as it were, from the face of Moses and reveal what was formerly hidden. You give back to Christianity its true sign, a name that not long ago was contradictory to reality. Golden peace returns from heaven and, now that the foe has been defeated, wars lie buried in eternal night.]

The same point was made in the vernacular by Nuremberg's famous cobbler, Hans Sachs, best known for his sometimes ribald and always entertaining *Fastnachtspiele* (Shrovetide plays), in a long verse allegory called *Die wittenbergisch Nachtigall* (The Nightingale of Wittenberg). Composed in 1523, it

contributed to the local groundswell of support for the Reformation, which was officially adopted in Nuremberg two years later. Like Hessus, Sachs presents Luther as the restorer of true Christianity. Throughout his work he interweaves biblical, creedal, and doctrinal allusions, as in the following passage:

Die Wahrheit ist kommen ans Licht.
Deshalb die Christen wieder kehren
zu den evangelischen Lehren
unseres Hirten Jesu Christ,
der unser aller Löser ist,
des Glaub allein uns selig macht.⁷⁵

[The Truth has come to light. Therefore, Christians return to the evangelical teachings of our Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who is the Redeemer of us all, in whom faith alone makes us righteous.]

These and other attempts notwithstanding, confessional polarization increased as the Reformation spread and had permanent negative implications for the literary societies. The access Celtis had enjoyed to the imperial house in Vienna or the Catholic princely circle in Worms — without feeling co-opted by them! — was eliminated by confessional party formation. Before this time — in Nuremberg, in Augsburg, in Strasbourg, in Basel, in Ingolstadt, in Erfurt — the sodalities pursued, without confessional strictures, the goals of Celtis. Then, suddenly: “Mit dem Einbruch der Reformation kommt der erste Schub der Sodalitätsbewegung in Deutschland zum Stillstand” (With the onset of the Reformation the first impulse of the movement of the literary societies in Germany grinds to a halt).⁷⁶ The caesura would last precisely a century, if we measure the onset of the Reformation from Luther’s posting of the *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517 until the founding of the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft in 1617.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, as Protestant, Catholic, and sectarian camps multiplied, confessional wars engulfed much of Europe. Germany was spared the worst. The settlement of the Peace of Augsburg provided that each of the scores of territories in Germany should have *de facto* authority, which precluded a national political center but led to a pragmatic coexistence of the confessions. In centralized nation-states, such as France, hysteria could run unchecked, as the dreadful fate of the Huguenots in the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacre (24 August 1572) attests. Still, many potentially volatile issues remained unresolved in Germany after Augsburg that would fester until at last erupting in the Thirty Years’ War.⁷⁷ One of the most significant for German literary history was the exclusion of Calvinism from the parties to the Augsburg treaty. Historians have observed that the very success of the Peace of Augsburg guaranteed its ultimate failure. The particularism that came of it only postponed the inevitable confessional explosion. Meanwhile too, the Catholic Church had experienced a reformation of its own, which established or reaffirmed institutional structures and doctrinal positions. Along with the creation of the Jesuits, it gave rise to a militant Counter-Reformation that produced some of the most powerful literature, architecture, and music of the early modern period.⁷⁸

In the midst of the violence and confusion of the late sixteenth century a philosophy of peace, known as irenicism, arose among moderate Lutherans and Calvinists based on Erasmian principles of toleration and conciliation.⁷⁹ This movement is sometimes identified with the so-called Second Reformation.⁸⁰ The Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, prepared under the auspices of Elector Palatine Friedrich III by two young theologians, Zacharias Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus, was the first major undertaking to reduce conflicts in doctrinal positions to statements of consensus. A generation later, at the threshold of the Thirty Years' War, Ursinus's disciple David Pareus (1548–1622), published a guide for confessional unity called *Irenicum* (The Book of Peace, 1614).⁸¹ Though it could not hold back the coming tide, its Christian-humanist vision inspired others, like the Strasbourg professor Matthias Bernegger (1582–1640)⁸² and the poet and dramatist Johann Rist (1607–67),⁸³ to dare to imagine peace in a peaceless world. A century later similar circumstances would obtain and a new call to understanding and peace would have to be made, as we shall see. But who could have foreseen that prior to the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War?

Late Humanism and Baroque

The devastations and existential dread that accompanied the Second World War reminded many historians of the similar dimensions of horror and loss experienced during the Thirty Years' War, and it is in that context that we must appreciate the impassioned postwar search for the meaning of the Baroque in history. The great scholar of literary topoi Ernst Robert Curtius, known mainly for the inventory of the western literary tradition in his magisterial *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter* (1948),⁸⁴ understood the Baroque as Nietzschean anticlassical “mannerism,” a style characterized by contorted, unnatural, artificial effects, by contrast with the stable classical style of the Renaissance and all other “classical” periods. This distinction led to a good deal of tiresome debate over nomenclature reminiscent of the nineteenth-century ideological dualities of Renaissance/Reformation and Renaissance/Baroque. In the late 1950s, however, one of Curtius's students, the journalist Gustav René Hocke, developed a historical typology in two books, *Die Welt als Labyrinth* and *Manierismus in der europäischen Kunst und Literatur*, that have attracted renewed interest since their republication in 1987.⁸⁵ For Hocke, the chaotic period of the wars of religion and political fluidity from the late sixteenth century through the Thirty Years' War represented a condition of mannerist insecurity that resulted in a pronounced rhetorical style characterized by singular perspectives and exaggerated poses and colors. By contrast, the period of settlement and nation-building following the Peace of Westphalia (1648) was driven by a search for stability characterized by an intense striving for formal certainties, to which he gave the name Baroque. The utility of this simple scheme helps to bring into focus certain late-sixteenth-century ordering or stabilizing tendencies as early as about 1572⁸⁶ — especially the late-humanist pursuit of *ordo*⁸⁷ — that led in the following generation to the German literary reform and in the next to grand literary visions of a *pax Europa*.

By 1600, as the idea of modern literary reform was just beginning to be considered seriously in Germany, England already had its Elizabethan Age with Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Sidney; Spain its *siglo de oro* with Cervantes and Lope da Vega; France its classical century with Ronsard, Joachim du Bellay, and Jean-Antoine de Baïf. Germany had its Protestant Reformation and Martin Luther, to be sure, who was revered across the continent for his unparalleled mastery of the German idiom. Unlike the leading vernaculars of Europe, however, the German that fell from the Reformation tree was a plump fruit, cultivated for persuasion and didacticism. Content overwhelmed form; form shaped itself to the demands of the message. German was a polemical hammer (Luther, Müntzer); a satirical catcall (Bote, Murner); a farcical mirror (Sachs, Wickram); a militant pamphlet (*Flugschrift*); an instrument of conversion (Manuel, Rebhun); a Rabelaisian burlesque (Fischart). By the contemporary European standards of *belles lettres*, however, its lack of formal sophistication still marked it as a barbarian language. Opitz's friend Julius Wilhelm Zingref (1591–1635) complained that to be a German abroad was an embarrassment.

But that is not the whole story. Just as actively as any other nation in the century of the Reformation, Germany participated in the high culture of Latin [Kühlmann, "Neo-Latin"], which operated on a discrete track separate from the vernacular culture. While some German humanists contributed to both traditions, the literary products in German and those in Latin had divergent aims. It is impossible to estimate how many Germans contributed to Latin literature in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, since the types of writing were manifold, ranging from pedagogy to poetry. Selections have been gathered in recent editions,⁸⁸ though these represent only the tip of the iceberg. Consequently, in 1617, when the twenty-year-old Opitz composed his Latin-language appeal for poetry to be written in German — *Aristarchus sive de contemptu linguae teutonicae* (Aristarchus; or, On Contempt for the German Language) — he could rely on established formal models. All that was lacking was a German poetics that explained the rules and collected samples for emulation. Opitz himself supplied it in 1624 with his *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey* (Book of German Poetics), with models primarily from French and Dutch, but also from Neo-Latin. Commentators have sometimes referred to his poetics and the subsequent rapid spread of its principles as "revolutionary." But that is to forget the vital fountain from which it drew. In truth, the *Poeterey*, while ingenious, was a conservative summary of available models.

Initial poetic attempts tended toward strict imitation, and few lived up to expectations. Opitz's own *Teutsche Poemata*, composed just prior to the publication of the *Poeterey*, was released without his approval by an overly eager Zingref [Verweyen]. Horrified by its lack of readiness, Opitz undertook revisions — these related not only to elements of style but also to implications about confessional politics — and republished the collection in 1625 under the slightly altered title *Deutsche Poemata*. Within a few years, however, other German poets had begun to find their own voices and to push back against some of the classical prescriptions of Opitz's poetics. The lyrics of the young Leipzig poet Paul Fleming seem to spring directly from personal experiences; the

Silesian lawyer Andreas Gryphius (1616–64) fills the classical sonnet with theological and existential meditations; the combinational imagination of the exiled Austrian Protestant Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg (1633–94) stretches the traditional linguistic bounds of German poetry; the eccentric Quirinus Kuhlmann (1651–89), before his death in Moscow by burning, loaded his poems with messianic language punctuated with exclamations and incantations that threaten the very idea of form. Harsdörffer's Nuremberg colleague Johann Klaj (1616–56), one of the most gifted, if unheralded, poets of the century, invented a dithyrambic form, neither drama nor epic nor lyric, for public performance, accompanied by music, called *Redeoratorium* (declamatory oratorio), which enjoyed a sensational but brief life.⁸⁹

In keeping with Horace's axiom "ut pictura poesis" (poetry is like a picture), baroque writers cultivated a highly imagistic aesthetics. It is especially on display in the emblematic genre [Daly], which has applications in many other forms (figured poetry, staged tableaux, epideictic narrative,⁹⁰ among others). The related acoustic practice of *Klangmalerei* (sound painting), associated especially with Nuremberg, was related to deeper theological speculations about the divine voice in creation. Contemporary German language specialists promoted the thesis that German was coeval with Hebrew, hence an original tongue [Born]. Baroque experimental forms were too great in number for overview here. They included oddities like poems cut and scattered to be found and reconstructed, riddle epigrams, numerological puzzles, echo poems, and countless other ephemera. The language of the so-called Second Silesian School overturned traditional norms in its reach back to the elaborate styles of Italian concettism and Spanish "Gongorism."⁹¹ Critics of this movement use the term *Schwulst* (bombast) to characterize what they consider its inflationary rhetoric, especially the penchant for compounding figures, such as congeries and repetitive naming. The Breslau patrician Christian Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau (1616–79) turns Petrarchist imagery [Hoffmeister] — itself a scandal to readers who thought of poetry in moralistic terms — toward an erotic flirtation with death:

Es wird der bleiche tod mit seiner kalten hand
 Dir endlich mit der zeit umb deine brüste streichen /
 Der liebliche corall der lippen wird verbleichen;
 Der schultern warmer schnee wird werden kalter sand /
 Der augen süßer blitz / die kräfte deiner hand /
 Für welchen solches fällt / die werden zeitlich weichen.

[Pale Death with his cold hand will eventually in time stroke you about your breasts. The lovely coral of your lips will pale; the warm snow of your shoulders will turn into cold sand. The sweet flash of your eyes, the powers of your hand — for whomever such gestures are made — these will weaken in time.]

The seventeenth-century debate, reminiscent of the one that swirled around Celtis, about whether to allow non-Christian elements in poetry or on stage

was answered in individual ways:⁹² in Nuremberg, Sigmund von Birken (1626–81) evicted the traditional mythological figures of pastoral eclogue and replaced them with Christian ones; conversely, Lohenstein's poems and historical dramas revel in Roman, Egyptian, and Turkish exoticism.

The practice of writing poems for special occasions (*Gelegenheitsdichtung*), whether in recognition of achievements within the republic of letters itself or to celebrate events in the life of a patron, city, or country, was common throughout Europe in the seventeenth century, as it had been in the sixteenth.⁹³ Cultivated in antiquity as a convivial style, it represented in the sixteenth century the largest corpus of Neo-Latin poetry (some 100,000 individual publications) and constituted the very “nerve center of early modern poetic and scholarly communication” [Kühlmann, “Neo-Latin”]. In his *Poeterey* Opitz warns against its potential abuse of the poetic calling: it should remain an amateur practice, lest poets be reduced in the public mind to mere hacks for hire. Despite the precaution, seventeenth-century German poets produced such poems in quantities that matched their earlier Neo-Latin counterparts. The occasional poem, which is by nature a social construct involving a triangular relationship between the poet, the occasion, and the addressee, has become a key genre for investigating the social role of poets in early modernity.

The spread of the Opitzian literary reform was hampered by the old want of a national political and cultural center as well as that of a standard German dialect; nevertheless, and in spite of the war's impediments on every side, the process moved forward. The reconstruction of the routes this process followed through Germany's many urban and courtly institutions has shed new light on cultural contexts. The most interesting concerned the demographics of the religious and social affiliations. That the reform was primarily a Protestant affair may seem obvious enough — but not “Protestant” in its original meaning of the combined evangelical fronts.⁹⁴ The confessional motor of the seventeenth-century reform was Calvinist, usually called Reformed. Furthermore, most of the reform's early patrons belonged to the nobility — as explained in the second part of this introduction, the phenomenon of noble patronage was one of the principles in the origins and genesis of the republic of letters — most of whom had little higher education, by contrast with the writers themselves, who were mostly university-trained *poetae doctae*. Good reasons existed for a man with political ambitions to stop short of the ultimate academic degree. There was always the sense, of course, that humanist education stood in the way of or was superfluous to actual political practice, and this sense only sharpened in the seventeenth century into a philosophical and pedagogical pragmatism. In some places already in the sixteenth century, moreover, *doctores* were legally barred from sitting on the innermost governing bodies. This was famously the case in Nuremberg.⁹⁵

The significance of confessional affiliation was not adequately appreciated until the “discovery” of confessionalization in the 1980s.⁹⁶ Opitz himself makes an interesting case study [Verwey]. In 1619, not long after having composed *Aristarchus*, Opitz moved to Heidelberg, the seat of the Calvinist court of Elector Palatine Friedrich V, where he matriculated at the university

and became employed as a tutor in the home of the electoral privy counselor G. M. Lingelsheim (1556–1636). Lingelsheim's was one of the most active literary homes in Germany, and he himself had long been deeply involved in confessional politics in the Palatinate and across Europe.⁹⁷ It was in these circumstances that Opitz worked out the principles of his poetics and composed many of his early poems. The links fostered in Heidelberg between the ideas of nation and literature seemed to hinge on the political success of Friedrich, who was elected king of Bohemia to protect the interests of the Protestant Union after war broke out in 1618. After Friedrich's defeat in 1620, imperial forces occupied Heidelberg, and the political aspirations of the Reformed faith had to be recalculated. Confessional and aesthetic affinities quickly became apparent around Germany, most impressively in the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft, whose largely aristocratic membership was mainly Calvinist-Reformed, as we saw earlier. The Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft rose rapidly to intellectual and cultural preeminence in Germany and influenced the founding of many more language and literary societies (*Sprachgesellschaften*). Among the most important were the Kürbishütte (1620s), the Aufrichtige Tannengesellschaft (Honorable Society of the Pines, 1633 in Strasbourg), the Deutschgesinnete Genossenschaft (Germanophile Brotherhood, 1642 in Hamburg), and the Pegnesischer Blumenorden (Flower Order on the Pegnitz, 1644 in Nuremberg).⁹⁸ The cultivation of the humanist values of friendship, peace, and humanity was not intended in the first place to serve spiritual reformation. It was practiced rather for the sake of the German language, though the reformed language was in turn to serve as the conduit to a general cultural renewal. This aspiration is voiced repeatedly in the correspondence and fiction of the literary societies.

It has been suggested that the war helped the German language "grow up," rather like the boy hero Simplicissimus in Grimmelshausen's (1621/2–1676) famous postwar novel *Der Abenteurliche Simplicissimus Teutsch* (The Adventurous Simplicissimus German, 1669). Simplicissimus (or, Simplicius) began life as an ignorant peasant but matured linguistically as he acquired the many idioms of the social situations forced upon him over the course of the war. One encounters the metaphors of war over and over in seventeenth-century German literature.⁹⁹

In response to the perpetual state of war, a rich literature of consolation arose in Germany. Sometimes the themes of war and consolation exist side by side within a single work, as in a captivating moment in Book I of Grimmelshausen's novel. Simplicissimus has just fled an attack on the family farm by marauding soldiers only to become lost in the woods. Having fallen asleep in mortal fear, he wakes to the sweet voice of a hermit singing a song of consolation: "Komm Trost der Nacht, o Nachtigall" (Come, Consolation of Night, O Nightingale). Consolation literature may be classified as secular or spiritual, depending on the themes of the individual work or episode. Spiritual consolation belongs to the larger movement of religious literature and therefore adduces mainly biblical and spiritual themes and images. Secular types draw especially on the principles of Neo-Stoic philosophy.¹⁰⁰ Fleming's often anthologized sonnet "An sich" (To

Oneself), for example, encourages the reader to dare to refuse to be defeated, however daunting the odds may seem:¹⁰¹

Sey dennoch unverzagt. Gieb dennoch unverlohren.
Weich keinem Glücke nicht. Steh' höher als der Neid.

[Be nevertheless undaunted. Act nevertheless undefeated. Yield not to any chance. Stand higher than envy.]

An indication outside of the realm of fiction of the importance of consolation was the hope expressed by Harsdörffer in 1643, in volume 3 of the *Frauenzimmer Gesprächspiele* (Playful Colloquies for the Ladies), that Boethius's *De consolazione philosophiae* would soon find a German translator.

Hymnody was one of the most innovative types of spiritual poetry in the Baroque. It derives mainly from two sixteenth-century sources: the Spanish mystical tradition of Teresa of Avila and Juan de la Cruz, and the sixteenth-century Lutheran hymn (*Kirchenlied*) repertoire. An early attempt in 1572 in Heidelberg by Paul Melissus Schede (1539–1602) to Germanize the French Huguenot Psalter turned out oddly for two reasons: he kept too close to the French versification rather than, as Opitz later insisted, using regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables; and, as he himself admitted, he aimed at too lofty a style for what is essentially a modest genre. A superior version by the Prussian humanist Ambrosius Lobwasser (1515–85) appeared the following year and was authorized by Elector Friedrich III. The Lutheran hymn, unlike almost all other reform genres, had its roots in indigenous culture but proved adaptable to baroque formal sensitivities. The Berlin pastor Paul Gerhardt (1607–76), following in the tradition of the late-humanist Lutheran hymnists Philipp Nicolai (1556–1608) and Johannes Heermann (1585–1647), wrote hymns of surpassing beauty. His best-known hymn, “O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden” (1656, in English-language hymnals as “O Sacred Head Now Wounded”), borrowed music composed in 1601 by Hanns Hassler. It is integrated into J. S. Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* (1727, 1736) as a repeating chorale.

Other writers specialized in spiritual lyrics more suited for reading than for singing. Klaj's declamatory oratorio has been mentioned, as have the religious sonnets of Greiffenberg and Gryphius. The Sulzbach polyhistor Christian Knorr von Rosenroth (1636–89) cultivated a synesthetic language that resonates with imagery from mysticism, alchemy, and kabala that was, for all that, quite singable. His “Abends-Andacht” (Evening Devotion) of 1684 continues to be anthologized in hymnbooks. The Catholic tradition was adapted by Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld (1591–1635) to portray affecting expressions of love: Jesus as the tender shepherd, or the soul as Christ's beloved. In the epigrams of the Catholic convert Johannes Scheffler (a.k.a. Angelus Silesius, the Silesian Angel, 1624–77), human and divine realms of thought and experience often converge startlingly: “Ich weiß das ohne mich GOtt nicht ein Nu kan leben” (I know that without me GOd cannot exist even one moment).

Italian spectacles (masque, carnival, ballet, opera) dominated the German stage for most of the seventeenth century. Performances of Italian opera are recorded in some of the larger German halls, such as Salzburg, Vienna, Innsbruck, and Prague, even prior to 1620. The first German-language opera, a production of Ottavio Rinuccini's *Dafne*, translated by Opitz and set to music (now lost) by Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672), was mounted in 1627. By the end of the century many more German operas were finding performances, especially on courtly stages in leading centers like Bayreuth, Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, Lüneburg, and Weissenfels; a bourgeois opera house was founded by Hanseatic merchants in Hamburg in 1678. For most of the century, however, German secular theater was handicapped by a shortage of stages; only small venues were available at most universities, schools, and courts. Perhaps in part for that reason, many German plays seem to have been conceived of only for reading (*Lesedramen*). Opitz's early translations of ancient tragedies, Seneca's *Trojan Women* (as *Die Trojerinnen*, 1625) and Sophocles' *Antigone* (1636), were no doubt intended to serve as models of translation.¹⁰² To modern readers, many of these sometimes staggeringly erudite plays, documented in appendices that sometimes exceed the length of the dramas themselves, may be of more historical than literary interest. For example, Gryphius's *Ermordete Majestät, oder Carolus Stuardus* (Regicide, or Charles Stuart), written shortly after the execution of Charles I in 1649, is revealing of the German philosophy of sovereignty. However wrong Charles may have been for violating English royal custom vis-à-vis Parliament, Gryphius maintained an unwavering Lutheran loyalty to the principle of *Obrigkeit* (secular authority) and a correlative disdain for the rebellious Roundheads. Curiously, a scant ten years later Gryphius offered up a decidedly anti-Stuart view in the eponymous *Papinianus* (1659), which features a republican hero in the mold of the great Florentine civic humanists Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni. The late twentieth century found in the intriguing plots and psychological complications of Lohenstein's dramas reasons for a scholarly revival [Alexander].

Nevertheless, the major plays of Gryphius and Lohenstein and Johann Christian Hallmann (ca. 1640–ca. 1714) were in demand in theatrical-minded cities having stages large enough to accommodate considerable logistical demands. This was notably the case in Breslau (the German name for Wrocław), home to two renowned schools, the Maria-Magdalena-Gymnasium and the Elisabeth-Gymnasium, both of which boasted excellent stages and active performance schedules, especially in the years between about 1643 and 1671. Lohenstein and Hallmann wrote a number of their dramas expressly for the Breslau stage and appeared as actors on occasion.¹⁰³ Despite a reactionary trend in the 1680s and 1690s against the theater — led by certain Pietist, orthodox Lutheran, and Calvinist moral fundamentalists — the theatrical tradition in Breslau continued into the early eighteenth century under the direction of the school rector Christian Gryphius (1649–1706), who produced several of the martyr- and tyrant-dramas of his father, Andreas Gryphius, on the stage of the Maria-Magdalena-Gymnasium.¹⁰⁴

Whereas religious drama in sixteenth-century Germany and Switzerland had been primarily the domain of the Protestants (biblical drama, Reformation drama), in the seventeenth century it became the chief weapon in the literary arsenal of the Jesuits and the Counter-Reformation. Magnificent stages represented the three tiers of the universe — heaven, earth, and hell — and overwhelmed the senses and the will. It is reported that following one performance in Munich of Jakob Bidermann's *Cenodoxus* (1602), a play about a too-proud humanist whose learning and manners avail him nothing but damnation, several audience members, including a nobleman, were moved to take vows of celibacy and enter a monastery.

The novel, "the last major genre to be created in early modernity" [Garber], was imported into Germany through translation, since none of the forms was indigenous to Germany (*Prosaekloge*, "prose eclogue," represents a certain exception, as we shall see). Notwithstanding its immense popularity in other European national literatures of refinement and the fact of its authentic roots in antiquity (Hellenistic romance, Menippean satire), the novel receives no discussion in the *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey*. As he did for the drama, however, Opitz produced translations of well-known European novels, most notably John Barclay's *Argenis* (1626–31, from Latin),¹⁰⁵ though later German writers of courtly novels followed these models only loosely [Solbach]. In their search for workable models, German writers of the first reform generation turned repeatedly to translations of successful European novels and epics ("novels" in verse). Thus, translation became one of the major occupations of the *Sprachgesellschaften*. Diederich von dem Werder (1584–1657), a diplomat and member of the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft, in translating Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (as *Das Erlösete Jerusalem*, 1626) and Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1632–36), hoped to inspire a German epic poem of comparable sophistication. The Spanish pastoral novel *Diana* by Jorge de Montemayor was introduced into Germany in 1619 through the partial translation of Hans Ludwig von Kuffstein (1582–1656), an Austrian diplomat; it was left for Harsdörffer to complete, a generation later, in 1646. Harsdörffer's recommendation of Boethius was taken up by the Nuremberg physician Johann Hellwig (1609–74) and published in 1660.¹⁰⁶ This list of German translations of ancient and contemporary European novels could be extended indefinitely. But lest the impression remain that this activity was the pastime of dilettantes, let us recall that the German concept of imitation, *Nachahmung*, connoted emulation, a certain going-beyond the original. In Harsdörffer's formulation of the principle, the original can and should be "besser gemacht" (improved upon) if the poet is capable of "sinnreiche Erfindung" (ingenuity).¹⁰⁷ Harsdörffer mentions three strategies by which an original work can be improved in the German language: by enhancing rhetorical color, by bringing moral clarity to bear on the story, and by integrating authentic German themes and motifs.

As a result of this preliminary search for models, three distinct novelistic forms came to be practiced in seventeenth-century Germany: picaresque, pastoral, and courtly. Having evolved in sixteenth-century Spain from the models

Lazarillo de Tormes and *Don Quixote* as a knightly travesty of the medieval epic in the high courtly style, the picaresque novel (German, *Schelmenroman*) was imported by an anonymous translator into Germany in the second decade of the seventeenth century. However, we may trace the real origins of the German picaresque novel to the translation by the Bavarian chancery officer Ägidius Albertinus (ca. 1560–1620) of Mateo Alemán's *Gusman de Alfarache* (as *Der Landstörtzer* [The Vagrant, or Runagate], 1615). The eyewitness fiction of an anti-hero narrator, combined with an adventurous linear structure, proved to be the ideal vehicle for a realistic, if not real,¹⁰⁸ portrayal of war and human comedy. Christian Reuter's (1665–ca. 1712) *Schelmuffskey* (1696)¹⁰⁹ and some of the novels of Johann Beer (1655–1700), such as *Teutsche Winter-Nächte* (German Winter Nights, 1682),¹¹⁰ can still be read with pleasure.

Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus*, however, ranges above not only the other German picaresque novels but all German novels of the seventeenth century and stands shoulder to shoulder with the greatest novels of the century in all of Europe.¹¹¹ It is one of those ironies of reception history that, in its own time, this novel, written by a modestly educated burgher in the language of the people — it delights in realistic attention to local detail, scenic description, and mastery of dialects — was disparaged and then ignored as inconsequential by the *cognoscente*. That notwithstanding, its general popularity prompted six editions (not to mention a spate of pirated versions) over the following six years before the author's death.¹¹² Scholars have concocted various theories to explain the work's underlying intention and effectiveness. One that riveted the attention of many scholars in the 1960s and 1970s sought to demonstrate that it is structured around astrological principles.¹¹³ However that may be, *Simplicissimus* remains one of Germany's great contributions to world literature.

The German pastoral novel was assembled from multiple European traditions: southern (Italian and Spanish), exemplified by Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia* and Montemayor's *Diana*; English, exemplified by Sidney's *Arcadia*; and French, exemplified by Honoré d'Urfé's *L'Astrée*. Plots typically revolve around the social misfortunes of the landed aristocracy in the wake of the economic crisis, the so-called *Kipper und Wipper* period between about 1620 and 1626, in which rural property values plunged and noble privileges vanished.¹¹⁴ *Die verwüstete und verödete Schäferey* (The Devastated and Desolate Pastoral, anon., 1642) and Johann Thomas's (1624–80) *Damon und Lisille* (1663) are two of the literary responses to this time of crisis [Hoffmeister].

A second pastoral type, prose eclogue,¹¹⁵ arose in Germany about midway through the Thirty Years' War. It was an invention of Opitz — exemplified in his *Schäferey von der Nymphen Hercinie* (Pastoral of the Nymph Hercinie, 1630) — which alternated in equal measure prose narration (pastoral novel) and versified passages (eclogue), to which he added a substantial middle panegyric section in verse dedicated to his patron. It was brought to maturity by the so-called *Schäferdichter* (shepherd poets) in Nuremberg in the 1640s. Until the literary sociological scholarship of the 1960s discovered its critical potential, the prose eclogue had been largely dismissed, owing to the playful nature of the conversations and poetic experiments that constitute most of the

action, as a type of baroque trivial literature.¹¹⁶ Its expansive tripartite structure, consisting of an opening walk through nature, a middle panegyric, and a closing walk through nature, allows ample opportunity for eclectic observations — on nature, morality, industry, history, customs — that often contain implicit social criticism.¹¹⁷ The great scholar of modern utopia Ernst Bloch observed that the counterworld of Arcadia, by virtue of its qualities of *Freundlichkeit*, *Friedlichkeit*, *Menschlichkeit* (friendliness, peacefulness, humanity), precisely the qualities that the real world lacks, constitutes a negative criticism.¹¹⁸ This negative potential makes prose eclogue one of the best examples in early modern German literature of dialogical narrative.

The sensationally popular sixteenth-century courtly romance *Amadís de Gaula*, first published in a Portuguese version in 1508 and subsequently translated, adapted, and broadened in Spanish, French, German, and other languages by the end of the century, was the general model for the seventeenth-century German courtly novel (or novel of state). Opitz's translation of Barclay's *Argenis* helped to establish the literary representation of absolutist culture with its trappings of power and courtly manners, including a highly stylized type of love. Philipp von Zesen's (1619–89) translation in 1645 of Madeleine de Scudéry's (1607–1701) widely read French novel *Ibrahim Bassa* (1641) superseded the Barclay-Opitz model. Inexplicably, Zesen did not include in his translation Scudéry's introduction, widely considered to be the best theoretical discussion of the courtly novel of the century. It was Scudéry who drew the historical connection to the Greek romance (Heliodorus's *Aithiopika*), which enhanced the appeal of noble lovers and their adventures in exotic lands. The cast of characters sometimes reached into the hundreds, and plots were proportionately complicated. As a result of new information gathered from unpublished manuscripts and other archival research in the second half of the twentieth century, Lohenstein's *Arminius* (1689–90)¹¹⁹ and Duke Anton Ulrich's *Octavia* (1677–79, 1703–4, 1712–14) are now appreciated as milestones in the literary representation of political theory.¹²⁰ With these two works, Lohenstein and Anton Ulrich transcended the role of writers of adventurous entertainment and attained to the stature of political visionaries. Lohenstein wrote *Arminius* (as explained above, Arminius was the Germanic tribal leader praised by Tacitus for his victory over Roman forces in the first century A.D.) in the wake of Louis XIV's hegemonic advances on German territory and his revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685; the latter action effectively returned France to a policy of religious intolerance.¹²¹ Against this state of affairs *Arminius* presents an alternative of a unified Germany under a great emperor. Similarly, Anton Ulrich seems to have been negotiating his way through the never-completed *Octavia* toward a grand solution to the confessional conflicts that had so long beset Germany and Europe.

Thus, at the end of the early modern period twin visions of national unity and religious peace arose and looked confidently across the threshold of Old Europe into modernity. It was a vision that inspired the elderly Kant to speculations about a permanent peace: "As the times required for equal steps of progress become, we hope, shorter and shorter, perpetual peace is a problem which,

gradually working out its own solution, steadily approaches its goal.”¹²² Hocke may have been overly sanguine about the Baroque’s search for stability: there would be no real stability either in the Baroque or any time soon in Europe. What remains of that search is the same thing that remained around 1700 of the idea expressed some 400 years earlier by Dante — and repeated time and again throughout the early modern period — of the possibility of political unity, religious concord, and the renewal of ancient greatness in the modern world.

Notes

¹ 15 February 1824. In *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens* (Berlin: Deutsche Buchgemeinschaft, 1984). Translation: *Conversations with Eckermann (1823–1832)*, trans. John Oxenford (San Francisco: North Point, 1984), 31.

² This is the question that motivates the study by Klaus Garber, “Begin with Goethe? Forgotten Traditions at the Threshold of the Modern Age,” trans. Karl F. Otto Jr., in *Imperiled Heritage: Tradition, History, and Utopia in Early Modern German Literature*, ed. Max Reinhart, Studies in European Cultural Transition 5 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 209–51.

³ See, for example, the standard work by Peter Kriedte, *Peasants, Landlords and Merchant Capitalists: Europe and the World Economy 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

⁴ See Rondo Cameron, “A New View of European Industrialization,” *The Economic History Review* N.S. 38, no. 1 (1985): 1–23. For literature, however, the year 1750 is more commonly taken as the turning point to modernity, marked by the publication of Klopstock’s *Der Messias* (1748).

⁵ See Georg G. Iggers and James M. Powell, eds., *Leopold von Ranke and the Shaping of the Historical Discipline* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1990), and Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present*, rev. ed. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1983). The most recent summary of this narrative has been drawn in a too-little-known paper by Thomas A. Brady Jr., *The Protestant Reformation in German History*, Occasional Paper No. 22 (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1997).

⁶ Named after the journal *Annales d’histoire économique et sociale*, founded in 1929 by Marc Bloch and Lucien Lebre. This “school” rejected the former dominant political historiography in favor of an interdisciplinary one emphasizing geography and sociology and viewing history from a perspective of the *longue durée*.

⁷ Besides Klaus Garber’s chapter in the present volume see also his discussion in his preface, trans. Michael T. Jones and Max Reinhart (as well as the observations in the editor’s introduction), in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, ix–xv (esp. xi–xii) and xvi–xxx.

⁸ The *Annales* historians recognized certain factors, constituting *mentalité*, beyond the formal ones (events, genre, motifs, structure, and so on) that humans bring to experience, say, of literature, that have their own power to shape meaning. These include values and beliefs. Sometimes “culture” is used in the broad sense for this force.

⁹ “In the Middle Ages both sides of human consciousness [. . .] lay dreaming or half awake beneath a common veil. The veil was woven of faith, illusion and childish

prepossession, through which the world and history were seen clad in strange hues. [. . .] In Italy this veil first melted into air; an *objective* treatment and consideration of the state and of all the things of this world became possible. The *subjective* side at the same time asserted itself with corresponding emphasis; man became a spiritual *individual*, and recognised himself as such.” Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy: An Essay* (1860), trans. S. G. C. Middlemore (London: The Folio Society, 2004), 103.

¹⁰ On Heinrich von Treitschke’s views see Jan Herman Brinks, “Luther and the German State,” *The Heythrop Journal* 39, no. 1 (1998): 1–17.

¹¹ Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barock: eine Untersuchung über Wesen und Entstehung des Barockstils in Italien* (Munich: Ackermann, 1888). National Socialism would exploit such categories to “discover” the “manly Goth.”

¹² Klaus Garber argues that the first scholar to have made this case convincingly was Konrad Burdach (1859–1936), who related the Renaissance back to the reformist (protohumanist) theology of the Middle Ages. See “Versunkene Monumentalität: Das Werk Konrad Burdachs,” in *Kulturwissenschaftler des 20. Jahrhunderts: Ihr Werk im Blick auf das Europa der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Garber, with Sabine Kleymann (Munich: Fink, 2002), 109–57. See also the classic revision of the Renaissance by Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside, 1948).

¹³ This view was held most notably by Georg Gervinus. See Peter Hohendahl, “Gervinus als Historiker des Barockzeitalters,” in *Europäische Barock-Rezeption*, ed. Klaus Garber, Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung 20 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 561–76, here 562, note 2.

¹⁴ This position was espoused by spokesmen of the so-called “konservative Revolution” of the early twentieth century, such as Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Rudolf Borchardt.

¹⁵ Thomas A. Brady Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600* (Leiden: Brill, 1994–95), 1:xxi. The Motley reference regards his discussion of Luther in *Democracy: The Climax of Political Progress and the Destiny of Advanced Races: An Essay*, 2nd ed. (Glasgow, 1869), 23.

¹⁶ See Wilfried Barner, *Barockrhetorik: Untersuchungen zu ihren geschichtlichen Grundlagen* (1970), 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2002).

¹⁷ Burckhardt, *Cicerone: eine Anleitung zum Genuß der Kunstwerke Italiens* (Basel: Schweighauser, 1855).

¹⁸ For the central terms of this accord see “Der Augsburger Religionsfriede,” in *Deutsche Geschichte in Quellen und Darstellung*, vol. 3, *Reformationszeit 1495–1555*, ed. Ulrich Höpf (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2001), 471–84.

¹⁹ “The Peasant War spawned strict supervision and state control which modern research tends to associate with ‘confessionalization,’ a development today relegated to the later-half of the century.” “Introduction: The Unsettling Settlements,” in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, 2:xviii.

²⁰ See, among the many studies, Robert M. Kingdon, “International Calvinism,” in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, 2:249–82; W. Fred Graham, ed., *Later Calvinism: International Perspectives*, Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 22 (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publications, 1994); and Menna Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism: 1541–1715* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985).

²¹ This thought may be compared with Stephen Greenblatt’s notion of social energy in *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*,

New Historicism: Studies in Cultural Poetics, series no. 4 (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988), though among German early modernists the belief still prevails that texts had more authorial stability than this notion may seem to imply.

²² Heiko A. Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986).

²³ Andreas Solbach, in the opening of his chapter in this volume, speaks of the “vitality” of the German tradition in the transmission of medieval forms — “whether anecdotes, short tales, or novelistic forms” — into the early modern period. (Henceforth, references to chapters in this volume will be indicated simply by the name of the author in square brackets; e.g., as here: [Garber]).

²⁴ “Je stereotyper ein Text das Gattungshafte wiederholt, desto geringer ist sein Kunstcharakter und desto geringer ist auch sein Grad an Geschichtlichkeit.” Hans Robert Jauss, “Theorie der Gattungen und Literatur des Mittelalters,” in *Alterität und Modernität der mittelalterlichen Literatur: Gesammelte Aufsätze 1956–1976* (Munich: Fink, 1977), 339.

²⁵ See especially Wilhelm Kühlmann, “Kombinatorisches Schreiben — ‘Intertextualität’ als Konzept frühneuzeitlicher Erfolgsautoren (Rollenhagen, Moscherosch),” in *Intertextualität in der Frühen Neuzeit: Studien zu ihren theoretischen und praktischen Perspektiven*, ed. Kühlmann and Wolfgang Neuber (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1994), 111–39.

²⁶ See Heinz Schilling, “Der Gesellschaftsvergleich in der Frühneuzeit-Forschung — ein Erfahrungsbericht und einige (methodisch-theoretische) Schlussfolgerungen,” in Hartmut Kaelbe and Jürgen Schriewer, eds., *Vergleich und Transfer: Komparatistik in den Sozial-, Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2003), 283ff.

²⁷ Much excellent research on this subject has been done — especially that of Klaus Conermann, such as his edition *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft: Der Fruchtbringenden Gesellschaft Geöffneter Erzschein, das Köthener Gesellschaftsbuch Fürst Ludwigs I. von Anhalt-Köthen 1617–1650*, 3 vols. (Weinheim: VCH, 1985) — without this question having been clarified. More recent research continues to suggest how sensitive the issue was, but still without being fully able to explain why. See Max Reinhart, “Battle of the Tapestries: A War-Time Debate in Anhalt-Köthen (Georg Philipp Harsdörffer’s *Peristromata Turcica* and *Aulaea Romana*, 1641–1642),” *Daphnis* 27, nos. 2–3 (1998): 291–333.

²⁸ Research on this question has not moved beyond the options posed a quarter-century ago by Werner Schneiders, “Gottesreich und gelehrte Gesellschaft: Zwei politische Modelle bei G. W. Leibniz,” in *Università, Accademie e Società scientifiche in Italia e in Germania dal Cinquecento al Settecento*, ed. Lactitia Boehm and Ezio Raimondi (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1981), 395–419, and Klaus Garber, “Zentraleuropäischer Calvinismus und deutsche ‘Barock’-Literatur: Zu den konfessionspolitischen Ursprüngen der deutschen Nationalliteratur,” in *Die reformierte Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland — Das Problem der “Zweiten Reformation,”* ed. Heinz Schilling (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1986), 317–48.

²⁹ Gombrich, *A Little History of the World* (1936), trans. Caroline Mustill (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 163.

³⁰ To take only the topic of the early modern family see especially studies by Steven Ozment, such as *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2001), and *Flesh and Spirit: Private Life in Early Modern Germany* (New York: Viking, 1999). See also the volume in honor of Ozment edited by Mark R. Forster and

Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Piety and Family in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

³¹ Stolleis, “Einleitung,” in *Staat und Staatsräson in der frühen Neuzeit: Studien zur Geschichte des öffentlichen Rechts*, suhrkamp taschenbuch wissenschaft 878 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 9.

³² “[D]ie Urheber sprechen aus einer sozialen Lage [. . .] heraus; sie sprechen in eine Lage [. . .] hinein, die für eine ganz spezifische [. . .] Gesellschaft [. . .] von Menschen charakteristisch ist.” Elias, “Thomas Morus’ Staatskritik: Mit Überlegungen zur Bestimmung des Begriffs Utopie,” in *Utopieforschung*, ed. Wilhelm Voßkamp, suhrkamp taschenbuch 1159 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 2:101.

³³ On *Verwilderung*, “barbarization,” see Karlheinz Stierle, “Die Verwilderung des Romans als Ursprung seiner Möglichkeit,” in *Literatur in der Gesellschaft des Spätmittelalters*, ed. Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (Heidelberg: Winter, 1980), 253–313.

³⁴ The most important treatise on church politics was *Defensor pacis* (Defender of Peace), written in 1324 by the rector of the University of Paris, Marsilius of Padua. Marsilius blamed the clergy for claiming too great authority in temporal affairs. This abuse was to be corrected, in his view, by greater participation of laity, formed as councils, in ecclesiastical decision-making.

³⁵ See George Huppert, *After the Black Death: A Social History of Early Modern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986).

³⁶ Citing Bernhard Burchert’s *Die Anfänge des Prosaromans in Deutschland: Die Prosaerzählungen Elisabeths von Nassau-Saarbrücken* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1987), Solbach emphasizes the role of prose in this appeal to the new bourgeoisie: “Some scholars believe that Elisabeth embraced the new literary form of expression in order to convey to her peers — and specifically to her son, Johann III — that the rise of a potent urban bourgeoisie made it historically necessary to shift from a confrontational (top-down) to a cooperative (horizontal) type of politics based on a shared form of communication.”

³⁷ “There is a pervasive misconception that late medieval religion had become lax and the medieval church tolerant to a fault of human weakness, a conclusion often drawn in contrast to Protestantism. Only the religiously indifferent, unbelieving, and/or reclusive could have found them to be such.” Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1980), 216. See also John Van Engen, “The Church in the Fifteenth Century,” in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, 1:305–30.

³⁸ See Steven E. Ozment, *Homo spiritualis: A Comparative Study of the Anthropology of Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson and Martin Luther (1509–16) in the Context of Their Theological Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1969).

³⁹ See Erika Rummel, “Voices of Reform from Hus to Erasmus,” in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, 2:61–92.

⁴⁰ See Helmut Kreuzer, ed., *Verschriftlichung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1997), and Jan-Dirk Müller, “*Aufführung*” und “*Schrift*” in *Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996).

⁴¹ Pascal, *German Literature in the 16th and 17th Centuries: Renaissance — Reformation — Baroque* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968), 10.

⁴² Research into this subject began in the former GDR with a collection of studies on the social history of what we now call early modern Europe: Robert Weimann, Werner Lenk, and J. J. Slomka, eds., *Renaissanceliteratur und frühbürgerliche Revolution:*

Studien zu den sozial- und ideologiegeschichtlichen Grundlagen europäischer Nationalliteraturen (Berlin: Aufbau, 1976). More recently see Klaus Garber, "The Republic of Letters and the Absolutist State: Nine Theses," trans. Max Reinhart, in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, 41–53.

⁴³ See Iring Fetscher and Herfried Münkler, eds., *Pipers Handbuch der Politischen Ideen*, vol. 2 (Munich: Piper, 1990).

⁴⁴ The word *Humanismus* was coined in Germany in the early nineteenth century.

⁴⁵ Dante had made his plans known to compose his *Divina Commedia* in Italian, for which he was reproached by the grammarian Giovanni, who insisted that the vernacular should be reserved only for humble speech.

⁴⁶ This extremely interesting topic is vividly presented in two sources: Werner Bahner, "Dantes theoretische Bemühungen um die Emanzipation der italienischen Literatursprache," in *Formen, Ideen, Prozesse in den Literaturen der romanischen Völker* (Berlin: Akademie, 1977), and Konrad Krautter, *Die Renaissance der Bukolik in der lateinischen Literatur des 14. Jahrhunderts: Von Dante bis Petrarca* (Munich: Fink, 1983). See also Klaus Garber, "Utopia and the Green World: Critique and Anticipation in Pastoral Poetry," trans. James F. Ehrman, in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, 73–116, here 82–83.

⁴⁷ For an introduction specific to early modern Germany see Volker Sinemus, *Poetik und Rhetorik im frühmodernen deutschen Staat: Sozialgeschichtliche Bedingungen des Normenwandels im 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978); Klaus Bleek and Jörn Garber, "Nobilitas: Standes- und Privilegienlegitimation in deutschen Adelstheorien des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts," in *Hof, Staat und Gesellschaft in der Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Elger Blühm et al. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1982), 49–114; and Klaus Garber, "Zur Statuskonkurrenz von Adel und gelehrttem Bürgertum im theoretischen Schrifttum des 17. Jahrhunderts: Veit Ludwig von Seckendorffs *Teutscher Fürstenstaat* und die deutsche 'Barockliteratur,'" *ibid.*, 115–43.

⁴⁸ See Brandon Bradshaw, "Transalpine Humanism," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991), 95–131.

⁴⁹ See Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (1955), rev. ed. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1966).

⁵⁰ See Frank Baron, "Peter Luder," in *German Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation, 1280–1580*, ed. Max Reinhart and James Hardin, vol. 179 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1997), 129–34, here 130.

⁵¹ See Gerald Strauss, "Ideas of *Reformatio* and *Renovatio* from the Middle Ages to the Reformation," in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, 2:1–30.

⁵² Klaus Garber, "Sozietäten, Akademien, Sprachgesellschaften," in *Europäische Enzyklopädie zu Philosophie und Wissenschaften*, ed. Hans Jörg Sandkühler (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990), 366–84, here 366.

⁵³ Celtis, "Ad Ioannem Vigiliū," in *Libri Odarum quatuor*, ll. 48–55. Quoted from Hedwig Heger, ed., *Spätmittelalter, Humanismus, Reformation: Texte und Zeugnisse*, vol. II/2 of *Die Deutsche Literatur: Texte und Zeugnisse* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 2:29–33, here 31–32.

⁵⁴ Dach, "Perstet amicitiae semper venerabile Faedus!," in *Gedichte des Barock*, comp. and ed. Ulrich Maché and Volker Meid, Universal-Bibliothek 9975 (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1980), 86–87.

⁵⁵ *Deutsche Gegenreformation und deutsches Barock: Die deutsche Literatur im Zeitraum des 17. Jahrhunderts* (1935), 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1964), 43.

⁵⁶ See Max Reinhart, “Welt und Gegenwelt im Nürnberg des 17. Jahrhunderts: Ein einleitendes Wort zur sozialkritischen Funktion der Prosackloge im Pegnesischen Blumenorden,” in *Pegnesischer Blumenorden in Nürnberg: Festschrift zum 350jährigen Jubiläum*, ed. Werner Kügel (Nuremberg: Tümmel, 1994), 1–6. For more on the genre of prose eclogue see the “Late Humanism and Baroque” section below.

⁵⁷ See Klaus Garber, “Paris, Capital of European Late Humanism: Jacques Auguste de Thou and the Cabinet Dupuy,” trans. Joe G. Delap, in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, 54–72.

⁵⁸ See Conermann, *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*, 2:31.

⁵⁹ See Karl F. Otto, *Die Sprachgesellschaften*, Sammlung Metzler 109 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1972).

⁶⁰ Max Reinhart, “Poets and Politics: The Transgressive Turn of History in Seventeenth-Century Nürnberg,” *Daphnis* 20, no. 1 (1991): 199–229, describes one such confrontation between the intellectual estate and the ruling patriciate. This article built on the little-known study by Ferdinand Elsener, “Die Doktorwürde in einem ‘Consilium’ der Tübinger Juristenfakultät des 18. Jahrhunderts: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Stände im ‘Imperium Romano-Germanicum,’” in his *Mélanges Philippe Meylan: Recueil de travaux publiés par la Faculté de droit* (Lausanne: Impr. Centrale, 1963), 2:25–40.

⁶¹ See Eckhard Bernstein, *Die Literatur des deutschen Frühhumanismus*, Sammlung Metzler 168 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1978).

⁶² See Lewis Spitz, *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1963).

⁶³ An excellent introduction is Heinz Otto Burger, *Renaissance, Humanismus, Reformation: Deutsche Literatur im europäischen Kontext* (Bad Homburg: Gehlen, 1969).

⁶⁴ See for instance the large *Katalog der fürstlich Stolberg-Stolberg’schen Leichenpredigten-Sammlung*, vols. I–IV/2, ed. Friedrich Wecken, Bibliographie familiengeschichtlicher Quellen 2 (Leipzig: Degener, 1927–28). Most of the individually printed works are available in Wolfenbüttel, Germany, at the Herzog-August-Bibliothek.

⁶⁵ See Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1993).

⁶⁶ See Frank Borchardt, *German Antiquity in Renaissance Myth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1971).

⁶⁷ See Donald R. Kelly, “Tacitus Noster: The Germania in the Renaissance and Reformation,” in *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition*, ed. T. J. Luce and A. J. Woodman (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), 152–67. For the later period of humanism see Michael Stolleis, “Public Law and Patriotism in the Holy Roman Empire,” in *Infinite Boundaries: Order, Disorder, and Reorder in Early Modern German Culture*, ed. Max Reinhart, Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 40 (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1998), 11–33.

⁶⁸ Celtis, *Oratio in gymnasio in Ingelstadio publice recitata*, in *Selections from Conrad Celtis 1459–1508*, trans. and ed. Leonard Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1948), 36–64, here 60.

⁶⁹ Hutten of course wrote in Latin. The German comes from a translation edition by Martin Treu, *Arminius*, in *Ulrich von Hutten: Die Schule des Tyrannen: Lateinische Schriften* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), 191–206, here 193.

⁷⁰ Heinz Scheible, “Melanchthons Bildungsprogramm,” in *Lebenslehren und Weltentwürfe im Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit: Politik, Bildung, Naturkunde, Theologie*, ed. Hartmut Boockmann, Bernd Moeller, and Karl Stackmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 233–48.

⁷¹ Translation edition (Luther’s text is drastically abbreviated): *Erasmus — Luther: Discourse on Free Will*, trans. and ed. Ernst F. Winter (New York: Continuum, 2000).

⁷² See Walter M. Gordon, *Humanist Play and Belief: The Seriocomic Art of Desiderius Erasmus*, *Erasmus Studies* 9 (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990).

⁷³ See Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (New York: Oxford UP, 2000), and most recently Ute Lotz-Heumann and Matthias Pohlig, “Confessionalization and Literature in the Empire, 1555–1700,” *Central European History* 40 (2007): 35–61.

⁷⁴ Hesus, “In Martinvm Lvthervm elegiarvm libellus: De eius in urbem Erphurdiam ingressu, Elegia prima,” in *Humanistische Lyrik des 16. Jahrhunderts*, comp. and ed. Wilhelm Kühlmann, Robert Seidel, and Hermann Wiegand, *Bibliothek der Frühen Neuzeit* 5 (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1997), 252.

⁷⁵ Sachs, *Die wittenbergisch Nachtigall, die man jetzt höret überall*, in *Hans Sachsens Gedichte [und] ausgewählte Werke* (Leipzig: Insel, 1911), 1:8–24, here 22.

⁷⁶ Garber, “Sozietäten, Akademien, Sprachgesellschaften,” 377a.

⁷⁷ See Geoffrey Parker, “Germany Before the War,” in *The Thirty Years’ War* (London: Routledge, 1984), 12–24.

⁷⁸ See Elisabeth G. Gleason, “Catholic Reformation, Counterreformation and Papal Reform in the Sixteenth Century,” in Brady, Oberman, and Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600*, 2:317–45.

⁷⁹ Jeffrey K. Jue, “Protestant Irenicism and the Millenium: Mede and the 65 Hartlib Circle,” in *Heaven upon Earth*, *Archives internationales d’histoire des idées* 194 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 65–85. An extreme devotion to the thought of Erasmus developed as early as the 1520s and 1530s in Spain, a movement known as *Erasmianismo*, which continued to be vital until around 1600. The possible connections between Spanish Erasmianism and northern irenicism have not been well traced.

⁸⁰ See Heinz Schilling, ed., *Die reformierte Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland: Das Problem der “Zweiten Reformation”* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1986).

⁸¹ See Günter Brinkmann, “*Das Irenicum* des David Pareus in theologiegeschichtlicher Sicht” (Ph.D. diss., University of Marburg, 1971).

⁸² Bernegger, *Tuba pacis* (1621). See the published dissertation by Waltraud Foitzik, “*Tuba pacis*”: *Matthias Bernegger und der Friedensgedanke des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Ph.D. diss., University of Münster, 1955).

⁸³ Rist (with Ernst Stapel), *Irenaromachia Das ist Eine neue Tragico-comaedia von Fried und Krieg* (1630).

⁸⁴ Translated by Willard R. Trask as *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (1953), 7th ed. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990).

⁸⁵ Edited by Curt Grützmacher and published by Rowohlt (Reinbek bei Hamburg); new edition 1991.

⁸⁶ The year 1572 has sometimes been taken by literary historians as the Baroque's *terminus a quo*. The watershed event of that year was the publication of Paul Melissus Schede's German translation of the French Huguenot Psalter. This work will receive comment later in this introduction.

⁸⁷ Erich Trunz, "Der deutsche Späthumanismus um 1600 als Standeskultur" (1931), in *Deutsche Barockforschung*, ed. Richard Alewyn, 2nd ed. (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1966), 147–81.

⁸⁸ Most importantly, Kühlmann et al., eds., *Humanistische Lyrik*; still useful but currently out of print, *Lateinische Gedichte deutscher Humanisten*, 2nd ed., comp. and ed. Harry C. Schnur, Universal-Bibliothek 8739 (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1978).

⁸⁹ See Conrad Wiedemann, *Johann Klaj und seine Redeoratorien: Untersuchungen zur Dichtung eines deutschen Barockmanieristen* (Nuremberg: Carl, 1966).

⁹⁰ The classical example is *Aeneid* 1.157–79.

⁹¹ "Gongorism," an extravagant style, *estilo culto*, named after the Spanish baroque lyric poet Luis de Góngora y Argota (1561–1627).

⁹² See Joachim Dyck, *Athen und Jerusalem: Die Tradition der argumentativen Verknüpfung von Bibel und Poesie im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Beck, 1977).

⁹³ See Wulf Segebrecht, *Das Gelegenheitsgedicht: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Poetik der deutschen Lyrik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1977), and Klaus Garber, ed., *Handbuch des personalen Gelegenheitschriftums in europäischen Bibliotheken und Archiven* (Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 2001–).

⁹⁴ The Catholic majority at the Diet of Speyer in 1529 lumped all parties who continued to support the evangelical movement into the "protesting estates," and anyone who left the Catholic fold was considered a "protestant."

⁹⁵ See Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Wiley, 1966).

⁹⁶ Two of the first discussions were Wolfgang Reinhard, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prologomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 10 (1983): 268–77, and Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1–45. The first major study of its implications for literature was Garber, "Zentraleuropäischer Calvinismus und deutsche 'Barock'-Literatur."

⁹⁷ Axel E. Walter, *Späthumanismus und Konfessionspolitik: Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik um 1600 im Spiegel der Korrespondenzen Georg Michael Lingelsheims*, Frühe Neuzeit 95 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2004).

⁹⁸ To begin with the vast scholarship see Otto, *Die Sprachgesellschaften*; Martin Bircher and Ferdinand van Ingen, eds., *Sprachgesellschaften, Sozietäten, Dichtergruppen*, Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung 7 (Hamburg: Hauswedell, 1978); Sebastian Neumeister and Conrad Wiedemann, eds., *Res Publica Litteraria: Die Institutionen der Gelehrsamkeit in der frühen Neuzeit*, 2 vols., Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung 14 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987); and Klaus Garber, ed., *Europäische Sozietätsbewegung und demokratische Tradition: die europäischen Akademien der Frühen Neuzeit zwischen Frührenaissance und Spätaufklärung*, 2 vols., Frühe Neuzeit 27 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996).

⁹⁹ See especially Marianne Beyer-Fröhlich, *Selbstzeugnisse aus dem Dreissigjährigen Krieg und dem Barock* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1970).

¹⁰⁰ The classic formulation of this philosophy at the time was found in Justus Lipsius's *De constantia* (1584), soon thereafter translated into German by Andreas Viritius as *Von der Beständigkeit* (1599).

¹⁰¹ The attitude of Fleming's poem is singularly reflected in certain songs by Wolf Biermann written in the former East Germany: for example, in "Trotz alledem" and, especially, "Ermutigung," which begins: "Du, laß dich nicht verhärteten / In dieser harten Zeit" (You, don't let yourself be hardened in this hard time).

¹⁰² See Richard Alewyn, *Vorbarocker Klassizismus und griechische Tragödie: Analyse der Antigone-Übersetzung des Martin Opitz* (1926; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962).

¹⁰³ See Roswitha Schieb, *Literarischer Reiseführer Breslau: Sieben Stadtspaziergänge* (Potsdam: Deutsches Kulturforum Östliches Europa, 2004).

¹⁰⁴ See James Hardin, "Authorship as Job Requirement: Seventeenth-Century School Drama and Christian Gryphius," in *The Professions of Authorship: Essays in Honor of Matthew J. Bruccoli*, ed. Richard Layman and Joel Myerson (Columbia, SC: U of South Carolina P, 1996).

¹⁰⁵ Opitz also published "an improved translation" (Pascal, *German Literature*, 131) of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* in 1629. He worked from the German translation by Valentinus Theocritus von Hirschberg, who himself seems to have worked from the original English and a French translation. See the title page of the 1643 edition in Curt von Faber du Faur, *German Baroque Literature: A Catalogue of the Collection in the Yale University Library* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1958), 474, no. 214a.

¹⁰⁶ Hellwig titled his translation *Christlich vernünftiges Bedenken*, a rather curious formulation that means something like "Wise Christian Meditation." Knorr von Rosenroth found it "unverständlich" (unintelligible) and produced his own translation, which was admired by Johann Christoph Gottsched.

¹⁰⁷ Harsdörffer, *Poetischer Trichter* (1650; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), 1:13.

¹⁰⁸ Research has shown that Grimmelshausen borrowed from published accounts of the war, as well as from pre-war topological compendia, such as the Italian *Piazza Universale* of Tommaso Garzoni and the French *Théâtre du monde* of Pierre Boaystauu. See Dieter Breuer, "Krieg und Frieden in Grimmelshausens *Simplicissimus Teutsch*," *Der Deutschunterricht* 37, no. 5 (1985): 79–101, and Max Reinhart, "Unexpected Returns: Some Literary Uses of Erasmus' *Adagia* in 17th-Century Germany," *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 19 (1999): 47–60.

¹⁰⁹ Translated by Wayne Wonderley as *Christian Reuter's* Schelmuffsky (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1962).

¹¹⁰ Translated by John R. Russell as *German Winter Nights* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1998).

¹¹¹ Two of the best starting points on this question are George Schulz-Behrend, Introduction, *The Adventures of Simplicius Simplicissimus*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1993), vii–xxiv, and Dieter Breuer, "Simplicianischer Zyklus," part 3 of *Grimmelshausen-Handbuch* (Munich: Fink, 1999), 27–114.

¹¹² The last edition to appear, following three posthumous editions, was in 1713. After that, as literary taste (*Geschmack*) in Germany moved still further from vernacular

realism, Grimmelshausen's work rapidly became obscure. Like so many other early modern works rejected by the new rationality of the early eighteenth century, *Simplicissimus* was rediscovered at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the Romantics.

¹¹³ See especially Helmut Rehder, "Planetenkinder: Some Problems of Character Portrayal in Literature," *The Graduate Journal, The University of Texas* 3 (1968): 69–97, and Günther Weydt, "Planetensymbolik im barocken Roman," part 1, "Die astrologische Struktur des Romans," part 4 of *Nachahmung und Schöpfung im Barock: Studien zu Grimmelshausen* (Bern: Francke, 1968). This theory was roundly criticized by Blake Lee Spahr. See especially his "Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus*: Astrological Structure?" *Argenis* 1 (1977): 7–29.

¹¹⁴ Winfried Stadtmüller, "Münzwesen und Preispolitik im 17. Jahrhundert," in *Deutsche Geschichte*, vol. 7, *Dreißigjähriger Krieg und Absolutismus 1618–1740*, ed. Heinrich Pleticha (Gütersloh: Lexikothek, 1984), 140–52. Establishing the weight of the money determined its worth: a coin was placed on a scale, called a *Wipper* (see-saw), by a *Kipper* (tipper). The *Wipper* "tipped" (German, *kippen*) if the coin's weight determined it was of full value.

¹¹⁵ The term was coined in the 1960s by Klaus Garber to convey both the prosimetric form and the two European pastoral traditions that make up prose eclogue, and by the 1970s had become generally accepted. See his "Nachwort," in *Pegnesisches Schäfergedicht 1644–1645*, Deutsche Neudrucke, Reihe Barock 8 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1966), 3*–27*.

¹¹⁶ Its reevaluation goes back to the groundbreaking work of Klaus Garber, *Der locus amoenus und der locus terribilis: Bild und Funktion der Natur in der deutschen Schäfer- und Landlebendichtung des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1974).

¹¹⁷ As an introduction to the structure, style, and purpose of prose eclogue see Max Reinhart, "Die *Nympe Noris* as Literary Artifact," in *Johann Hellwig's "Die Nympe Noris" (1650): A Critical Edition*, ed. Reinhart (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1994), xxviii–xli. Klaus Garber has written extensively on the genre. See especially "Vergil und das Pegnesische Schäfergedicht: Zum historischen Gehalt pastoraler Dichtung," in *Deutsche Barockliteratur und europäische Kultur*, ed. Martin Bircher and Eberhard Mannack (Hamburg: Hauswedell, 1977), 168–203; "Martin Opitz' *Schäfferei von der Nympe Hercinie*: Ursprung der Prosaekloge und des Schäferromans in Deutschland," *Daphnis* 11 (1982): 547–603; and "Nuremberg, Arcadia on the Pegnitz: The Self-Stylization of an Urban Sodality," trans. Karl F. Otto Jr., Michael Swisher, and Max Reinhart, in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, 117–208.

¹¹⁸ Bloch, "Arkadien und Utopien," in *Gesellschaft, Recht und Politik*, ed. Heinz Maus, Soziologische Texte 35 (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1968), 39–44.

¹¹⁹ Among the recent studies on *Arminius* see Thomas Borgstedt, *Reichsidee und Liebesethik: Eine Rekonstruktion des Lohensteinschen Arminiusromans* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992), and Cornelia Plume, *Heroinnen der Geschlechterordnung: Weiblichkeitsprojektionen im epischen und dramatischen Werk Daniel Caspers von Lohenstein und die Querelle des femmes* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996).

¹²⁰ As a starting place see Giles Reid Hoyt, *The Development of Anton Ulrich's Narrative Prose on the Basis of Surviving "Octavia" Manuscripts and Prints* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1977); more recently, Stephan Kraft, *Geschlossenheit und Offenheit der Römischen Octavia von Herzog Anton Ulrich: "der roman macht ahn die ewigkeit gedencken, den er nimbt kein endt"* (Würzburg: Königshausen, 2004).

¹²¹ The Edict of Nantes was signed in 1598 by Henry IV to guarantee all citizens, Catholic and Protestant (including Huguenots), the free exercise of religion.

¹²² *Zum ewigen Frieden* (1795), in *Kant's Werke*, ed. Königlich Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1923), 8:343–86, here 386. The passage was translated by Peter Rosenbaum. See Klaus Garber, “Prophecy, Love, and Law: Visions of Peace from Isaiah to Kant (and beyond),” in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, 1–18, here 15–16.

Part I:

Transitions

Frühe Neuzeit — Early Modernity: Reflections on a New Category of Literary History

Klaus Garber

The Rise of a Macroepoch in the Cultural Sciences

FRÜHE NEUZEIT AS A HISTORICAL CATEGORY did not yet exist for our great teachers in the early twentieth century. The primary challenge they set for themselves, especially in the extraordinarily productive decade of the 1920s, was to restore the concept of the baroque to its proper meaning.¹ An eighteenth-century term from art history meant as a contrastive stylistic concept to *Renaissance*,² *baroque* was further distorted in the nineteenth century by purveyors of a romantic nationalism, who sought to invest it with distinctively Germanic qualities. This issue turned into a cardinal problem of the discipline of German literary studies (*Literaturwissenschaft*) and stirred deep feelings related to national identity and modernity. By contrast, it found little resonance among scholars of other European literatures, for whom the Baroque represented only one cultural epoch among others without exceptional significance for the larger questions of identity. Nor did the concept resonate as a term designating a period within the discipline of history (*Geschichtswissenschaft*). In the 1940s historians introduced *Frühe Neuzeit* as a unitary concept for apprehending the development of Europe between the late Middle Ages and the Enlightenment.³ *Literaturwissenschaft* did not begin to organize the relevant subperiods (Renaissance, Reformation, Baroque) under this rubric until about the last third of the century.⁴ Although it has become the accepted period term for scholarship in the field, “early modernity” has not been applied, until the present undertaking, as a category within the writing of a complete history of German literature.

We may begin by considering the temporal and structural boundaries of early modern literature. Simply to make the macroepoch coterminous with the outer temporal boundaries of the epochs that gave us our previous nomenclatures (Renaissance, Reformation, Baroque) and to make its problems synonymous with those with which scholarship in these epochs has been traditionally concerned would yield an all too narrow view. To presume, on the other hand, to absorb the entire interpretive history of those combined individual periods would be overwhelming, since that history contains nothing less than the

phenomena that gave birth to the modern world. To attempt either kind of cultural history of early modernity would be an adventurous enterprise in any event, motivated by the seductions of a grandiose experiment but vulnerable to the fatal danger of either under- or overreaching.⁵ It is therefore imperative at the outset of this groundbreaking volume briefly to set forth for the first time, as a heuristic for German literary history, the general contours of the early modern period as they have emerged in scholarship since about the 1960s. This will entail some review of the historical and critical thinking that effected the paradigm change as well as some reflections on its implications for research in the field of German literary history between about 1350 and about 1750, that is, between the late Middle Ages and the Enlightenment; or, framed another way: between Reformation and Revolution.⁶

In the wake of the Reformation the dissolution of Christendom as *una societas christiana* represents a watershed in European history. The counterpart of this confessional upheaval was the movement of bourgeois revolutions of the late eighteenth century, culminating in the French Revolution, which produced similarly profound social and cultural changes. Efforts to understand the history between Reformation and Revolution were well underway by 1800, concentrated initially on major figures and events at the beginning and end of the period but soon broadening to include relevant movements, groups, and tendencies. The volatile debates of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries about the origins and nature of modern history — understood as encompassing the preceding three to six centuries and framed in large binary terms, such as regression and progression, authoritarianism and democracy — were symptomatic of Europe's search for its intellectual identity.⁷ Historians sought to appropriate the apparent lessons of the past to uses in the present. In the following synopsis we will look at a few of the issues and figures pertinent to a culturally based literary history of early modernity; most had become controversial already in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though they grew in intensity over the following two centuries.

One of the first controversies concerned the reform movements within the church, especially the Lutheran reform, which soon overran its theological bounds to spill into larger ideological and social questions, among them the distribution of wealth and power and which authorities should have this responsibility. This question of authority had been evolving since the Carolingian renaissance⁸ around the concept of the *renovatio* of classical antiquity. That is, what nation and which institutions, secular or ecclesiastical, should appropriate and control the ancient heritage, and which forms should it take politically and culturally? The struggle that ensued overturned the mental and material foundations of medieval life. Nineteenth-century idealism and liberalism (also called modernism) interpreted the postmedieval tendencies as “progressive,” encouraging the fullest possible development of the modern personality.⁹ Propagated by the educated bourgeoisie and by labor movements alike, this liberalism, or modernism, had its roots in the teleological optimism of the Enlightenment concerning the social and intellectual progress of the human species, and it held in force until the second half of the twentieth

century. The liberal model found powerful voices in the historians Karl Friedrich Eichhorn, Jules Michelet, Max Weber, and Ernst Troeltsch, to name only a few of the most prominent theoreticians.¹⁰ Conservative opposition, expressed in manifestoes like *Die Christenheit oder Europa* (Christendom or Europe, 1799, published 1826) by Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis, 1772–1801) or “Der Adel und die Revolution” (The Nobility and the Revolution, 1807) by Josef von Eichendorff (1788–1857), objected that the old order had in fact remained essentially intact under the universal aegis of Christendom.¹¹ The radiance of this revisionist interpretation increased as the attractions of idealism and liberalism faded over the course of the century.¹² As the twentieth century proceeded and devastating social and human tragedies further eroded liberalism’s positions and betrayed the shortcomings of enlightened bourgeois innovations,¹³ the conservative response only gained in strength. Once again, around 1900, a nostalgic vision of an Old Europe dominated by an aristocratic elite seized the imagination of many. By the eve of the First World War the conservative version of early modern history was attracting a range of literary minds in Germany that included the dramatist Hugo von Hofmannsthal and the poet/translator Rudolf Borchardt.¹⁴

Between these liberal and conservative fronts, however, other thinkers, almost from the beginning, called attention to questions neglected by the extremes. In the spirit of the Renaissance, and as a rebuke of ascendant rationalism, the Neapolitan philosopher Giambattista Vico (1668–1744), in his *Scienza nuova* of 1725, rejected the clear and distinct ideas of Cartesian logic in favor of seeing poetic creativity and imagination as unitary properties (body and soul) of the human. In Germany, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) repudiated the modeling of the modern mind on Greco-Roman values and the Latin language, even as he remained thoroughly a creature of the Enlightenment, ever insisting, as in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Mankind, 1784–91), that all classes should receive an education. Herder mistrusted religion in its organized form — his published regret that Luther did not establish a national church had nothing to do with organized religion¹⁵ — and diagnosed confessionalism as a pestilence. His views were inspired in part by certain sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religious dissenters who obeyed, not secular or even ecclesiastical authorities, but only the dictates of the Holy Spirit. Such dissenters included Sebastian Franck (1499–1542), Jakob Böhme (1575–1624), and Johann Valentin Andreae (1586–1642). Later intellectuals fall into this middle category as well. One of the most important was Konrad Burdach (1859–1936), whose balanced conceptualization helped to lay the foundation for our specialized study of early modernity. As we shall see, Burdach staunchly opposed the strictly liberal, “modernistic,” appropriation of the Renaissance. He showed instead how intimately the Renaissance meshed with the reformist theology of the late Middle Ages, finding in its universalizing and humanizing motifs the very impulses for national consolidation that had begun in early Renaissance Italy. This thesis built a bridge to the following generation of intellectuals, including Hofmannsthal, who likewise discerned that the period

we are calling early modernity contained immense, but historically explicable, cultural and ideological complexities.

A number of German-Jewish intellectuals were also important predecessors of early modern German scholarship. Leaving aside the renowned Jewish names of the nineteenth century — Heinrich Heine, Ludwig Börne, Karl Marx — whose work contributed indirectly to the discovery of the new macro-epoch, certain figures of the twentieth century are exemplary. Until the National-Socialist racial laws of 1933, these scholars worked in Germany or other German-speaking countries, enhancing with their bold ideas the nation's reputation for innovative thought for one last time. Compelled to emigrate — many of them to the United States — they left behind a lasting intellectual deficit. Engineering a comprehensive methodology, they took into consideration evidence from all cultural spheres. The philosophies of Ernst Cassirer and Hannah Arendt; the critical social theories of Max Horkheimer and Franz Borkenau; the sociologies of Karl Mannheim and Norbert Elias; the art criticism of Erwin Panofsky and Raymond Klibansky, of Fritz Saxl and Edgar Wind; the literary studies of Walter Benjamin and Erich Auerbach, Arnold Hirsch and Richard Alewyn — all were driven by the ambition to discover the complex origins of modernity and the historical processes leading to it. The revolutionary cultural-historical research of the 1960s and its subsequent impact on the field of early modernity would have been inconceivable without their preliminary work.

Clearly, the rapid acceptance of the idea of early modernity in the cultural sciences owed much to political circumstances. The crises experienced by western democracies some twenty years after the Second World War had a profound impact on the university. The radical tides that swept through the institutional structures opened up new avenues of research and methodology, especially that of interdisciplinarity. This coincided with the rediscovery of the traditions of liberalism and radical democratic thought, but also of socialism and communism. As different as the theories and political intentions of these philosophies were, they shared an interest in the structural origins of bourgeois society and its culture — and these structures (early capitalism, mass communications, educated officialdom, and so on) were discovered in early modernity. The most fruitful impulses for early modern scholarship came out of the social research in the school of critical theory. Horkheimer's contributions on the dialectics of middle-class liberalism in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* (Journal for Social Research, 1930s), Benjamin's "Thesen zum Begriff der Geschichte" (Theses on the Concept of History, 1939), or Jürgen Habermas's *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, 1961) are three prominent examples. These influences significantly changed the direction of research in political science, sociology, and philosophy, but also in art and literary history over the following generation.

Those heady times are long gone, and future scholars must assess their ultimate value to scholarship. Since then, however, early modernity has become one of the most productive fields of research and theory in the humanities and social sciences. Among other achievements, it has led to the

rediscovery of vast areas of knowledge that had vanished with the academic departmentalization of knowledge in the early nineteenth century. As we now can appreciate, the compilations of universal knowledge (*Litterärsgeschichten*) of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century — so despised in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century — in fact provided indispensable bibliographical data about the early modern archives of knowledge. Today, the archeological exploration of early modern informational systems makes use of precisely those curious hermetic inventories; indeed, together with the identification of texts in need of editorial elucidation, these neglected data represent one of the field's most active research components. To borrow a metaphor from the bibliographer Gerhard Dünnhaupt, only “the tip of the iceberg” has yet been uncovered with respect to this fundamental research.¹⁶ We now realize that all early modern forms of cultural expression rested on assumptions of universal, Latin-based knowledge.¹⁷

Early modern texts demand interdisciplinary approaches to fathom their combinational structures.¹⁸ In this spirit, cooperative research teams from various disciplines have formed over the past twenty years. The Universities of Vienna, Augsburg, Frankfurt, and Osnabrück led the way in founding institutes for early modern literary and cultural studies; in the United States, the interdisciplinary society for early modern research, Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär (FNI), has its headquarters at Duke University.¹⁹ Several other centers have developed specializations in the transitional epoch between the late Middle Ages and early modernity. Essential research tools are still needed, however: dictionaries, lexicons, handbooks, manuscript inventories, bibliographies, editions.²⁰ Other desiderata include a yearbook for early modern studies and additional university teaching chairs, to ensure that research in this field remains vital.

Early Modernity and Literary Studies: Questioning Epochal Nomenclatures

The temporal boundaries of early modernity remain somewhat variable. Opinions divide over whether the *terminus ad quem* should reach into the eighteenth century, or how far; a few scholars maintain the extreme view that it should extend deep into the nineteenth century to include Germany's belated connections to the bourgeois revolutions in Western Europe. All of this reminds us that debates over nomenclature can illuminate central problems of the disciplines. As noted above, the name first took hold within *Geschichtswissenschaft* as a kind of shorthand for the Reformation in its widest sense, that is, of embracing the entire age of confessionalization. In literary studies the curriculum traditionally had been ordered into “older” and “newer” literature, and narrowly defined boundaries often aroused self-defeating disputes. It was not until about 1980 that universities in Germany began to create professorships for early modern literature. Since then, these chairs have

generally exploited existing resources and structures to construct the early modern component: either combining areas of medieval literature and early modern literature (as at the University of Munich) or combining periods from approximately 1500 to 1750 (as at the University of Osnabrück).²¹ Another reason for the delay in accepting the macroepoch in literary studies is that literary movements — not to mention those in art and music — are driven not only by historical but by stylistic changes as well, and periods therefore often bear the names of those styles (classical, baroque, sentimental, romantic). In literature, art, and music, the term “early modern” therefore had to compete with canonically valued stylistic period terms.²²

Ultimately overriding reasons, however, have led to adopting early modernity as a macroepochal term to replace, or at least embrace, the traditional divisions. Above all, its scope is advantageous for grasping the structures and stature of the period’s art, music, and literature. These disciplines benefit uniquely from analysis within a capacious frame that does not force developmental phases into overly restrictive or static divisions such as to imply that one is somehow antithetical to or supplants another. Early modernity holds a series, or network, of epochal subcategories in a relatively value-neutral equilibrium. Comprehended within this megastructure each subcategory may possess singular claims to time, place, or style without demanding hermeneutic autonomy. Renaissance and Humanism, Mannerism and Baroque, Enlightenment and Rococo, Sentimentality and Storm and Stress — these common pairings remain useful as terms for successive epochs of the arts and literature. However, their character changes when regarded within the process of early modernity, since the larger context places them in a context of phenomena and spheres of activity outside their traditional purview. No sensible person would question the validity of the venerable category *Renaissance*, of course. Viewed as part of early modernity, however, it loses its claim to historical originality, as something distinct from all that had gone before.²³ The Renaissance can now be related meaningfully to the culture of the late Middle Ages. Indeed, this focus has resulted in one of the most fruitful currents of research today and is showing us how to discern the avenues of transition by which the structures of the late Middle Ages evolved into those of the early modern period.²⁴ Put another way, the new historical category of early modernity has opened a fresh chapter in the search for the sources of modernity.

It is now plausible to reconstruct literature’s evolution over some four hundred years as a process of unfolding in coherent phases. As interpreters of this process, early modern literary historians serve as mediators between apparent extremes and as synthesizers of the differences. Long-term processes, identifiable within the category of early modernity as historical arcs that take in culturally related regions and points in time, now become visible and help us to discern the proper beginnings, ends, and contexts. For instance, we may now comprehend the social revolutions of the late eighteenth century as the completion of epochal processes that began to appear some three hundred years earlier as another kind of revolution. The early modern megastructure must be understood as permeable, elastic, and flexible, both with respect to the

epochs and regions it embraces as well as to the specific qualities of artistic and literary traditions it contains.

The European Horizon of Early Modern Literature: A Historical Sketch

The European-wide field of orientation is hardly a distinctive feature of early modern literature alone. The ancient and medieval literatures thrived on active interchanges, giving and taking across national borders. During the Age of Hellenism, Greek literature was transmitted to Rome by way of Alexandria; the medieval religious and courtly literatures spoke a common conceptual language shaped in France and Germany; later authors continued to draw on a common store of formal traditions reaching back to Homer and the Old Testament. The history of European literature is one of incessant adaptation and rewriting. If we know only one national literature, we know none. Vergil is incomprehensible without knowledge of Homer, Dante without knowledge of Vergil, Goethe without knowledge of Dante. Early modern European literature comprised a single entity even as it subsumed many discrete forms and negotiated constant reciprocity among its national and ethnic cultures. As early modernity drew to its conclusion toward the end of the eighteenth century, its greatest writers, Goethe above all, foresaw the advent of world literature and speculated on its implications.²⁵

A crucial structural force within early modernity was *nationalization*, which swept the continent and set its stamp on the various literatures. National identity and national literature developed together.²⁶ The competition for poetic laurels that began in the early Renaissance in Italy took on a decidedly nationalistic tone with the rise of the nation-states. Cultural documents across early modern Europe reveal the shared dignity of political greatness and cultural prestige. This reciprocity held true even in instances where author and patron were motivated individually by self-interest. The idea of the nation joined them. The overarching ideology was that a nation must discover its own cultural sources and have its own linguistic and literary traditions if it is to understand itself and be understood by others. Never has faith in the interdependence of politics and the arts been as deeply seated or as elegantly stated as in early modernity.

Humanists took the lead in transmitting these ideas. As the guardians of tradition, they controlled the primary instrument of maintaining it: competence in ancient languages. All were conversant in Latin; many knew Greek, some knew Hebrew, a few knew Arabic. Mainstream early modern literature was by and for the learned. That was so to an unprecedented degree if only because the inventory of traditions had grown immensely over the centuries. Early modern literature thrived on rediscovering and making available lost or neglected cultural ideas, artifacts, and texts, especially from antiquity but including the major Christian traditions and the church fathers (Jerome,

Augustine, Origen, Chrysostom). Humanists felt called upon in the first place to restore Greek, Hellenist, and Roman writers to their rightful places; they carried out this mission by preparing critical editions and commentaries, by emulating them in their own works, and by harmonizing them with Christian thought.²⁷ That common foundation established *a priori* the European implications of early modern texts.

One research component of literary historical research in early modernity examines how this common European literature formed into the various cultural and national contexts and their unique reception of these texts. This happened over the lengthy maturation process of the individual national literatures, each of which contributed specific forms and styles to the whole. Given its special affinity for and proximity to the traditions of ancient Greece and Rome, Italy had prominence in the formation of Europe's literary culture. Its wealthy and sophisticated urban and courtly infrastructures provided ideal political and social circumstances for rediscovering and appropriating the classical literary heritage. In Italy's small territories and communes a veritable republic of humanist scholars fostered the culture of antiquity. They received generous support from the dominant urban social classes and the princely courts, diverse social spheres that each had its respective interest in restoring the ancient cultural treasures. Classical literature, especially in its Roman, specifically Augustan phase with Vergil and Horace, aroused fierce pride in all rising European nation-states. This was perhaps particularly true in Italy and in Germany, given the similarly acute political crises in the recent history of both countries.²⁸ Not surprisingly, therefore, intimate cultural relations formed between these two nations as early as the mid-fourteenth century. At the court of Emperor Charles IV (r. 1355–78) in Prague, discussions between Germans and Italians ranged from epistolary style to political revolution. The dramatic story of these meetings in Prague between the humanist Petrarch, his political ally the revolutionary Roman tribune Cola di Rienzi, Emperor Charles, and his chancellor Johann von Neumarkt, has been recounted elsewhere.²⁹ The evocation in these exchanges of Rome's former grandeur and its possible *renovatio* under German auspices inspired statesmen and humanists north of the Alps and evolved into a separate nationalist ideology in Renaissance and Reformation Germany.³⁰

The subsequent emergence of the individual European literatures encompassed the whole of Europe. Its full history has yet to be written. Even Ernst Robert Curtius's monumental *Europäische Literatur und Lateinisches Mittelalter* (1948),³¹ a breathtaking survey of the shared literary identity of Europe, concerns mainly western Europe and therefore offers only a partial appreciation of the vastness of the actual development. States and territories throughout Europe adopted the literary forms and ideas of classical antiquity in their own "national" rhythms and patterns, each taking part in the complex and shifting ideological and stylistic interchanges.

Of all the revolutionary movements and crises in the early modern period, *confessionalization* produced the deepest splits and alliances — ideological, political, and cultural.³² The departure of the Protestant states and territories from the Catholic community and, following the Peace of Augsburg (1555),³³

the proliferation of independent territories, each with its own policies relating to cultural expression and organization, had lasting influence on the shaping of literary traditions, especially in the north and west of Europe.³⁴ Confessional exclusionary policies caused quasi-independent “national” literatures to form, which in turn reinforced the sense of political autonomy of the new territories. The ones that continued to adhere to the old faith brought forth, thanks in part to revitalized religious orders, particularly important achievements in drama and theater.³⁵ Still, for all of these territorial and confessional differences, the linguistic *koine* of old Europe’s educated elite provided a unifying force and barrier to particularization. Transcending vernacular and confessional linguistic boundaries, Latin remained the undisputed medium of education, communication, and literature until the eighteenth century.³⁶ Its mastery was prerequisite to taking part in the intellectual and literary life of the age within the *respublica litteraria*. In the witty intellectuality of Neo-Latin, writers between Renaissance and Enlightenment expressed a unity amid diversity that was strikingly different from the monastic and clerical expression of spirituality in the Middle Ages.³⁷

A further underpinning of the homogeneity and stability of the literature of early modern Europe was its constitution according to genres. Early modern writers adopted and perpetuated the classical formal repertoire — ideas and images from pagan antiquity of course had to be made morally and theologically harmonious with the Christian world of letters. Poets often boasted of surpassing the ancients, a competitive but essentially playful gesture of the early modern culture of emulation. The ability to connect with this tradition reflected one’s cultural sophistication and agility. This playful competition has been passed down as the so-called *querelle des anciens contre les modernes*. In their renewal of the classical genres the architects of the *via moderna* sought to close ranks with their great predecessors to gain greater prestige for their own efforts, whether in Latin or the vernacular.³⁸ Writers from Dante to Goethe engaged in this practice, as scholarship in early modern rhetoric and poetics has demonstrated.³⁹ Clearly, the literature of early modern Europe must be appreciated in its combined practices of *imitatio*, *aemulatio*, and *innovatio*. Even minor poets could be feted as poets laureate in a learned world steeped in the generic conventions of ancient and modern intertextuality. The literary community knew well who the true innovators were: their names appear regularly in prefaces, manuals of poetics, and correspondence.

The first prominent vernacular poet at the threshold of early modernity was Dante (1265–1321), whose *Divina commedia* (1307–21), despite its medieval philosophical difficulties, provided a model for poetry in the *volgare*. Dante also composed treatises on the superiority of the new national languages over Latin.⁴⁰ It was Petrarch (1304–74) and Boccaccio (1313–75), however, who made the native literary idiom accessible to national poets. Petrarch’s collection of 366 sonnets to the beloved Laura, the *Canzoniere* (concluded shortly before his death), perhaps the most celebrated work of the early modern period, and Boccaccio’s novellas, most notably in *Il Decamerone* (completed 1353), but also in *Comedia delle Ninfe fiorentine* (called *Amato*, 1341–42) and *Elegia di*

Madonna Fiammetta (1343–44), inspired emulation throughout Europe. Still, both poets continued to compose in Latin. The eclogue, the epistle, the treatise, the mythological genealogy, the heroic panegyric — all these they revived in the spirit of the ancients. Short forms were preferred, though Petrarch did experiment with the epic (his unfinished *Africa*). Many later humanist writers sought to master the epic genre of Homer and Vergil, but few were successful. Comic epics such as Matteo Boiardo's (1434–94) *Orlando innamorato* (1495) and its sequel by Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533), *Orlando furioso* (1516), have proven the most durable over the centuries.

The last major genre to be created in early modernity, the novel, provoked aesthetic and philosophical debates over the questions of originality and imitative quality. Though writers produced many imitations of the Hellenistic romance (such as *Pyramus and Thisbe*), the greatest literary achievement of early modern Europe was the novel. Three types of novel dominated the practice: courtly, picaresque, and pastoral. The leading national literatures in Europe (Italy was the exception) discovered the greatest part of their literary mission in the novel: Spain, with the *novela sentimental*, such as Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor* (1492), or the picaresque *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554); France, with the satirical *Gargantua et Pantagruel* (1532–52) of Rabelais; and England, with works like Philip Sidney's verse-and-prose pastoral *Arcadia* (1590). In the genre of the novel, the early modern potential for innovation within the framework adapted from antiquity is vividly evident.

Early Modern German Literature in European Context: Some Structural Considerations

Early modern writing in the German-speaking lands shared features with the other European literatures while revealing specific indigenous traits. This may be illustrated by recalling its place within the two great contexts that framed all European literature: the genre traditions extending from the late Middle Ages, and the forces of the Reformation and subsequent confessionalization.

Medieval genre traditions. — These traditions survived well into the sixteenth century with extraordinary tenacity. In their final phase, they especially affected the literary culture of the cities, mainly in the flourishing communes of southern and southwestern Germany.⁴¹ Many medieval manuscripts were commissioned by members of the wealthy urban elites in these geographical regions. This reception occurred across diverse regional languages and dialects. The familiar distinction between High and Low German is only the most evident instance of the wide range of linguistic differences that existed during this transitional period. Attempts to establish critical norms and standards for the written language began in earnest only in the seventeenth century and succeeded only gradually, with printed texts continuing to reflect regional practices, including the peculiarities of the typesetters, until the time of the Enlightenment.⁴² Until then, standardizing attempts by individual authors and

the so-called *Sprachgesellschaften* (language societies) had limited general effect. While they did provide models and theoretical impulses, only the rise of the great printing and publishing concerns in the eighteenth century created the modern production methods that would turn standardization into national practice. The delay in standardization allowed traditional medieval literary forms to continue to flourish despite the simultaneous arrival of innovations from Italy and elsewhere in Europe. The resulting formal syncretism, together with the great variety of audiences it created, is perhaps the most conspicuous phenomenon of the late-medieval-to-early-modern transition. It may be in this regard, in fact, that the usefulness of the category early modernity shows to its best advantage: it simultaneously comprehends, synchronically and diachronically, heterogeneous regulatory systems of literature without privileging the value of certain phenomena and reducing them to oversimplified period terms. Early modernity is not a literary epoch in which old and new can be cleanly distinguished; one cannot reconstruct an innovation-by-innovation evolution or assign “regressive” and “progressive” tendencies to a given phase. We must understand early modernity in the broadest scope of its multifarious forms and styles and themes if we are to perceive the many other complexities of influence and interchange occurring simultaneously.

Early modern German literature manifests a dual linguistic structure: the medieval genres were fostered mostly in German (*Volksbuch*, sermon, song) — one indication of the continued vitality of native literary conditions — and the humanistic genres mostly in Latin (elegy, epistle, school drama, and so on). This duality must be appreciated comparatively and in European context. Competence in Latin was required to participate in humanism’s literary endeavors as a writer or reader; lacking this competence, one remained outside the *respublica litteraria*. A stubborn but misguided notion thus arose in literary history that a learned elite dominated the early modern literary scene to the exclusion of commoners. This is wrong, as many individual cases illustrate, since even a commoner could, through education, rise to the ranks of the learned; it is also patently misleading given that literacy was rare across the entire social spectrum. If audiences were to receive ideas as literature at all, they often required oral and visual mediation, whether in the form of songs, dramas, sermons, or broadsheets. The critical pairings “speech versus writing” and “writing versus image” have proven to be useful paradigms for investigating the degrees of *literarization* of early modern social orders and have helped to overturn received assumptions.⁴³ We now know, for example, that authors of *volkstümlich*, or popular, texts were often more learned than previously thought. Indeed, many scholars now doubt the validity of the commonly made distinction between “popular literature” (mostly in German) and “learned literature” (mostly in Latin). These two types of literature were, in fact, practiced within a single, dual-linguistic cultural system — yet another argument against casting apparent dichotomies in early modern Europe in binary terms. A more judicious approach is to assess how forces balanced, or related to, each other within the neutralizing contexts of the *longue durée* between the late Middle Ages and the Enlightenment.⁴⁴

Reformation. — The movement of the Reformation was the most important influence on literary developments in the early modern period.⁴⁵ In the Reformation's extended history, confessionalization (sometimes called "the long Reformation") led to fundamental rethinking about the place of language and literature in culture. This was so not only for its universally recognized contributions to reviving the German language, including linguistic standardization, and making it a suitable vehicle for many forms of literary expression. It is also central to understanding humanism properly, that is, within its wider cultural and political perspectives.⁴⁶ Indeed, as pointed out earlier, the Reformation and confessionalization comprised the great watershed in the evolution of modern German literature, a protracted event, as it were, with permanent consequences.⁴⁷ Even the Enlightenment did not reverse its forces; it continued to influence literary life throughout the nineteenth century and even well into the twentieth.

A host of smaller and larger doctrinal and philosophical disagreements within the ranks of the early reformers themselves eventually grew into the schismatic forces of confessionalization. To enumerate them all would take us far beyond the limits of this sketch. One of the first and in some ways the most decisive of these battles arose from the exchange in 1524–25 between Erasmus and Luther over the question of free will: to what degree, if at all, is the individual Christian able to participate in the act, or process, of salvation?⁴⁸ Erasmus thought: to a limited but significant degree; Luther thought: not at all. For many evangelicals and humanists this fundamental philosophical difference marked a parting of the ways. But even less essential arguments in the early years of the Reformation between Luther and others, including his associate in Wittenberg, Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560), generated divisions over the following decades that had significant literary consequences. The humanist *nobilitas literaria* felt more of a kinship, both intellectually and behaviorally, with the supremely learned Erasmus or the judicious Melanchthon than with the mercurial and uncompromising Luther. It was mainly Melanchthon, moreover, who designed the Latin-based pedagogical system and instituted humanist studies at the universities, developments that guaranteed employment and influence for humanists over the succeeding generations. What began as academic quarrels ostensibly over *adiaphora* (indifferent things) — for example, whether Christ was actually present in body or only in spirit in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper — between Luther and Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531) soon led to a schism in the evangelical community. The Reformed Church in Zurich, founded by Zwingli and incorporating the teachings of John Calvin (1509–64), grew into a powerful ecclesiopolitical movement that attracted large numbers of intellectuals across Europe for about a hundred years. At its zenith around 1600 the great Calvinist centers in the Upper Palatinate (especially at the Heidelberg court) encouraged the adoption and refinement, in distinctive German forms, of the Neo-Latin humanist culture.⁴⁹ The boundary between Protestant and Catholic territories established at the end of the Thirty Years' War by the Peace of Westphalia (1648) — from which the Calvinists were excluded! — only confirmed

the depths of the confessional divisions of the sixteenth century. A history of early modern German literature must give serious attention to the cultural and political implications of these confessional divisions.

This fundamental bifurcation in Germany obtained until the later eighteenth century, when first attempts were made to establish the northeastern variety of Protestantism as the norm for the intellectual culture of the nation as a whole.⁵⁰ Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700–1766), a professor of rhetoric and philosophy in Leipzig, was the leading literary authority in this movement.⁵¹ Still, however, the world of German letters continued to struggle to overcome the trammels of confessional and regional traditions. More than any other figure, Herder devoted himself to this task; his efforts and those of other opponents of particularization represented first steps in the consolidation of a national literary culture in Germany.⁵² A budding national theater, plans for a national academy, limits on censorship, and the new disciplines of journalism and criticism were some of the more obvious signs that the boundaries of confessionalism were being overcome in at least some quarters.

In the country at large, however, these efforts proved only marginally effective. The bastions of the various confessions remained unmoved and Germany's territorial and social landscapes unrepaired. The popular notion that modern German literature was driven by some centrally inspired aim of achieving glorious classical stature was the fanciful invention of nineteenth-century nationalism. Even the "classical" Weimar of Goethe and Schiller has become subject to debate.⁵³ During the era of the French Revolution, the final phase of European early modernity, German literature reflected the tenacity of the old political struggles, now being conducted with unprecedented vehemence.⁵⁴ Today we can hardly take seriously the harmonizing, teleological accounts from the nineteenth century that viewed history from on high, willfully ignoring the destructiveness of those battles. Georg Gottfried Gervinus (1805–71) and other literary historians of his generation exhausted this vein of historicist interpretation.⁵⁵ Lesser minds, some of them spurred by *völkisch*, or racist, presumptions, degraded German literary historiography to the point of celebrating only "essentially Germanic" qualities, discrediting and rejecting all influences from abroad, especially from the hated *welsch*, or Romance, cultures.

Regions of Practice — Phases of Development

Despite the continuing vitality of medieval themes and forms, the new Italian styles began to be received very early in Germany and were decisive in shaping intellectual and cultural trends. Burdach traced these connections and their implications in his monumental *Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation* (19 vols., 1893–1939), as well as in many monographs. He was concerned above all to show which forms the Italian Renaissance had taken in Germany and how they developed. Burdach endured harsh criticism for asking these questions at all.⁵⁶ Some nativist critics expressed their disapproval in chauvinistic, occasionally

völkisch language — all the more reason at last to grant his ambitious project the attention it deserves.

Among other things, Burdach discovered that the gateway for the great intellectual innovations in early modern Germany was the court of the Luxemburg emperors in Prague.⁵⁷ Charles IV's chancellor, Johann von Neumarkt (ca. 1310–80), hoping to reinvigorate the chancery use of classical Latin, engaged in lively correspondence with Petrarch about the new *ars bene dicendi et scribendi*. He himself composed a beautifully rendered translation of the pseudo-Augustine *Buch der Liebkosung* (Book of Adoration, 1355). Situated on the periphery of the German language area, Bohemia remained, as to both religion and the arts, a place where experimentation was encouraged. Two major periods of cultural efflorescence are associated with Bohemia:⁵⁸ The first began with the reforms at the court of Charles IV and lasted until the Hussite Wars (1420–34). The second arose a century later along with Calvinism, which found particular favor among the Bohemian nobility under Emperor Rudolf II. Around 1600, Prague had the reputation of being a cultural crucible and a primary locus of intellectual exchanges in Central Europe.⁵⁹ Early humanists were concerned in the first place with securing proper forms and styles. The first great formal and stylistic achievement of Bohemian humanism was a gem of stylistic elegance in German prose, *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen* (The Plowman from Bohemia, 1400/1) by Johannes von Tepl (ca. 1350–1414/15), a notary and rector of the Latin school in Saaz. The Bohemian culture that produced so fine a work stands at the beginning of early modernity, not far behind the first achievements in Italy's own literary renaissance.⁶⁰

After about 1400, however, humanistic studies generally became concentrated in major cities, mainly in the German southwest: Strasbourg, Basel, Ulm, Augsburg, and Nuremberg were the cradles of the early humanist movement and centers for the incipient printing trades.⁶¹ A prosperous urban patrician class supported the *studia humanitatis* through patronage, receiving in return printed dedications, poetic tributes, and commemorative dramatic scenes. The cities, especially the free imperial cities with jurisdiction over surrounding territories, had an urgent need for officials trained in the law. Not surprisingly, during European humanism's early phases, lawyers especially, some of them high civic officials (notable example: the Florentine chancellor Coluccio Salutati, 1331–1406), and other private men of wealth (such as Petrarch) were the first to propagate and support the new ideas and styles. We have only recently become fully aware of how far northward the early humanism of the cities reached, extending its influence through social connections and networks as far as Vilnius, Riga, and Reval by way of Rostock, Danzig, and Königsberg.⁶² This created a solid foundation for the development of German literature and culture in the early modern period. No other region provided early humanism such a variety of opportunities to flourish as did the German-speaking towns and cities of Central Europe in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

However, humanism also remained firmly associated with the courts of Germany's territorial rulers.⁶³ This too reflected the Italian heritage.

Humanism in Italy, as later in the transalpine lands, could not have consolidated as a movement without princely protection. In these courtly circumstances, humanist writers brought unprecedented prestige to the courts and ruling dynasties — the revival of poetic studies in Italy reintroduced the panegyric genres that had been practiced so effectively in Imperial Rome — and received privileges in return. This penetration of humanism into the courts comprises a fascinating chapter in early modern German literary history, not least because a number of the most cultivated principalities were ruled by women of strong character and intelligence, many of whom took an active role within the humanist culture of refinement.⁶⁴ Indeed, women regents were in the vanguard of courtly patronage of humanists throughout Europe.⁶⁵ Among the outstanding centers were the small courts of Mechthild of the Palatinate (1418–82) in Rottenburg on the Neckar and of Eleonore of Austria (1433–80). As the humanist movement developed, however, the principal writers gravitated toward the major centers of political power, often establishing intellectual societies there — in Vienna, Munich, and Heidelberg, later Kassel, Dresden, and Prague. Bishoprics in Mainz, Würzburg, and Bamberg, but as far away as Breslau in Silesia, attracted concentrations of humanists as well.⁶⁶ Again, we are reminded that the old Holy Roman Empire, thanks to its decentralized structure and countless princely seats, offered ample opportunity for ideas to flourish.⁶⁷ Although there were no true capital cities in greater Germany (even Vienna could not play that role), exchanges and learned communication among courtly centers enabled a broad sharing of humanist ideas and encouraged their practical application.

The third main concentration of early humanist activity (in addition to Bohemia and the territorial courts) was centered in the universities and gymnasias in the cities, though its institutionalization met with initial resistance where medieval academic structures still prevailed or where curricula were controlled by religious orders. It is rewarding to study individual cases in this struggle to renew courses of study in the *Artes* faculties in particular. Some places, most prominently Heidelberg, saw the implementation of comprehensive reforms;⁶⁸ others, such as Cologne, with its Dominican faculty, stubbornly retained the old ways. Widespread educational reforms took place only in the postconfessionalization era, as we shall see.⁶⁹ And everywhere — and this was most symptomatic of how they organized themselves — humanists founded learned societies outside the structures of the courts, universities, and schools, an initiative that testifies both to the need to secure a home for the new studies free from institutional and traditional strictures as well as to the new movement's bid for social approval and moral support.⁷⁰ North of the Alps no individual did more than Conrad Celtis (1459–1508) to spread the new learning through founding and promoting learned societies, literally in the four geographical regions of greater Germania.⁷¹ This tradition remained vital throughout the early modern period and deep into the eighteenth century.

With the Reformation, however, the influence of one man in particular came to dominate German social and intellectual life. The national encounter with Luther, the *Gottesmann*, inscribed itself deeply in the cultural identity of

the German people. Debates continue over whether he caused greater good or greater harm. However that may be, he affected German culture more profoundly than any personality before Goethe. Post-Reformation literature everywhere bears the marks of his influence.⁷² This is so not only because of the genres he created: congregational hymns and the hymnal, the German Bible and the Great and Little Catechisms, the unique Lutheran sermon, the pronouncements from his table talks and elsewhere on the worldly and spiritual matters that guided Protestant Germany in a thousand facets of practical life. Most significantly, Luther gave Germans the power to use their own language in all matters, private and public. The resonance of his work among the German people — even the illiterate could hear it read aloud in churches, on street corners, in public buildings — sealed this empowerment. Inspired by his example, literary creativity in the native language exploded over the following decades, not only in the genres just enumerated, but also in biblical and comedic dialogues and dramas; in spiritual and secular song; and in the private realm of letters, diaries, and biographies. This turn to personal forms of expression, indeed, testified both to a general intensification of feeling as well as to a rising confidence in the authenticity of individual faith. All of this activity extends far beyond the limits of what is literary in the strict sense, of course, since Luther's mission aimed at overturning all circumstances of life. In short, Luther's contribution remains a milestone in the history of European private and public culture, but especially in Germany.

The Lutheran upheaval altered the structures of humanistic studies, and by no means entirely negatively. Thanks primarily to Melanchthon, the utility of a humanistic education secured for its graduates a definitive place in the schools and universities.⁷³ In the Protestant lands this had incalculable consequences for literature in terms of its functions, its inventory of forms, and the nature and size of its audiences. Melanchthon's pedagogical agenda established Latin as the basis of education in the secondary schools and made the ancient languages and their texts central to the curriculum. Because the substance of Greek and Roman culture was integral to the school disciplines of rhetoric and poetics, it was transmitted with lasting effect to successive generations. By the second half of the sixteenth century, Greek and Latin studies had become firmly institutionalized. Poetry in Latin, but also in Greek, flourished in the schools, especially through the cultivation of *casualcarmina*, occasional poems, to celebrate the special occasions of an individual's life or of the academic community, in keeping with the convivial styles and practices of antiquity.⁷⁴ Over time most cities between Strasbourg and Reval, the Rhine and the Oder, boasted a thriving community of poets within the school and university milieu; a few poets managed to gain entrance to princely courts, which gave them somewhat wider influence. By about 1600 the practice of writing in Latin was sufficiently vigorous and widespread to constitute a cultural matrix.⁷⁵ If efforts did not generally transcend the conventional, we should not underestimate their combined impact on literary styles and critical standards for the next century. Writers skilled in Latin, whatever their social function — academic, bureaucratic, legal, scientific, or literary — kept the

coinage inherited from ancient Rome in circulation. During this period of Late Humanism, Latin was practiced with greater vitality than ever again.

However, anyone alert to happenings abroad could see that writing of the kind that aspired to ancient standards was no longer being done exclusively in Latin. With Luther, Germany had taken the lead in the reform of religious life, but the literary product of the Reformation primarily served confessional purposes and was formally limited to the pertinent genres for evangelical needs, such as polemic, tract, sermon, biblical drama, and devotional meditation. Now, a century later, Germany stood as the last important European nation to produce a humanistically based vernacular poetry.⁷⁶ The obverse of Luther's movement became evident: a nation had immersed itself in the struggle for the true faith; bitter conflicts had eventuated between Lutherans and Catholics and, with still greater investive, between their various wings and factions. While this disputatious culture inspired the use of German in the media of propaganda and polemics, it did nothing to develop the aesthetic standards of form in the vein of classical antiquity or contemporary writing in Italy and France, England and the Netherlands, even in Poland and Hungary. In those lands, writers had long before adapted their native languages and poetic practices to classical criteria. At the threshold to the seventeenth century, vernacular German trailed far behind.

This cultural deficit motivated the new generation of poets to undertake a radical reform of German literature. The movement's leader, Martin Opitz (1597–1639), raised the challenge, to create a vernacular literature equal to the best European writing, in a Latin treatise of 1617, *Aristarchus sive de contemptu linguae Teutonicae* (Aristarchus; or, On the Contempt for the German Language). This was exactly one century after Luther had set the Reformation in motion with the posting of his *Ninety-Five Theses*. Opitz recognized that German in the colloquial manner practiced by Luther, as effective as it was for the reformer's purposes, could not match the formal sophistication of the leading European languages. Setting this as his goal, Opitz adopted a Latinate infrastructure of forms and styles that had been perfected over the Latin centuries and absorbed in the sixteenth century by the national literatures with which German was to compete. Opitz himself provided the rationale and European models for emulation in his *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey* (Book of German Poetics, 1624).⁷⁷ Its great attention to rules and details, followed meticulously by most seventeenth-century German poets, though not by all, was unjustly ridiculed as pedantic by later detractors.

The reform took hold most successfully in regions where humanism had put down roots: in the Palatinate and the upper Rhine, with Heidelberg and Strasbourg as cornerstones in the west; and in Bohemia, Silesia, and Lusatia to the east, especially in Prague, Breslau, and Görlitz, as well as at certain princely courts. Most of the major reform locales were deeply influenced both by their rich humanist traditions and by the cultural and intellectual life of Calvinism.⁷⁸ Calvinism's theological positions and its encouragement of social activism militated far more effectively than orthodox Lutheranism against the powerfully organized Catholic Counter-Reformation.⁷⁹ Recent textual evidence has

shown how persistently the Opitzian reforms spread even during the Thirty Years' War, despite its brutalities and depravations, and how literary culture took hold across the broad linguistic landscape of German-speaking Europe, especially in the north and east between the Baltic and Transylvania.⁸⁰ The old concept of “baroque literature,” which located the main cultural influences in the Catholic South, is decidedly unhelpful in this regard. Just as in the rest of Europe, the German vernacular gradually adopted the structuring values of classical humanism, and with them at last, an educational and literary undertaking could begin on a grand scale.

At the outset of these reflections we acknowledged our debt to the early twentieth-century interpreters of the structures of what we now call early modern literature and culture, to Richard Alewyn (1902–79) above all, for showing how best to understand the concept of the baroque.⁸¹ In his *Vorbarocker Klassizismus* (1926) Alewyn made it clear that the term *barock* was unsuited to describing Opitz's reforms, since they were essentially classical — Alewyn speaks of “pre-baroque” — and predicated on humanist principles. Alewyn showed that the Baroque period had courtly origins and that this courtly culture had unfolded within the Catholic sphere of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Romance Europe. Theater, opera, ballet and dance, processions, and festive pageants were the authentic courtly genres. The culture of *das Wort* (the word), of literature, was only minimally present in these forms, he argued, as compared with the more strictly literary forms shaped by the traditions of humanism. Alewyn thus explained how *baroque* and *pre-baroque* could be practiced simultaneously. To be sure, special circumstances obtained for Germany, where a European-style courtly culture did not emerge until the second half of the seventeenth century. Again, a delay had to be accounted for; and so it was that the paradoxical claim came about that courtly culture in Germany reached its height in the Age of Enlightenment. A history of early modern German literature over the *longue durée* refutes the ahistoricity of this canonical representation.

That Gottsched, one century after the literary reformer Opitz and two centuries after the literary reformer Celtis, felt the need to undertake basic reforms all over again testifies to how skeptically cultural experts still pondered the status of German literature. This was to become one of the defining problems of the eighteenth century. Gottsched, the great strategist and early arbiter of native culture, still could discern no clear lines of a national literary development. That was due in part to his bias against what he considered the “unnatural” conventions of German literary style in the second half of the seventeenth century, especially in the works of the poets of Nuremberg and Silesia: its overwrought, or mannerist, artistry; its nonnative qualities; its unseemly courtly elements. To Gottsched's taste, they violated the proprieties of Opitz, Paul Fleming (1609–40), Simon Dach (1605–59), and others he considered authentically German. To appreciate his point of view we must recall the extreme conventionality of contemporary courtly culture.⁸² Gottsched was by no means anticourtly; he was criticizing rather the failed opportunities of the courts to promote what was inherently German instead of

imitating Romance habits. What fueled his desire to gain access to the powerful courtly centers was the hope of cleansing German culture of the foreign strain and restoring a literary culture of *das Wort*.

An Observation on the End of the Early Modern Period

As a scholar of the Baroque, Alewyn was uniquely qualified to recognize the eighteenth century's peculiarities. He located the end of the period we are calling early modernity in the phenomenon of *Empfindsamkeit* (sentimentality) as exemplified in the work of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803), the celebrated author of the epic poem *Der Messias* (1748), which ushered in a stunningly fervent poetic style.⁸³ Alewyn was suggesting, astutely but pragmatically, that the literary culture of the early modern period drew to its close as writers began to abolish the aesthetic presupposition of necessary conformity to generic conventions within intertextual frames of reference,⁸⁴ and as they came to understand art as an individual expression of the self, or genius, or soul. While it is true that early modern writers had spoken in similar terms, modern writers of the new sentimentality set about abandoning the received rhetorical criteria for measuring poetic effectiveness. *Originality* became the new touchstone: a great, unique work of genius requires a great, unique genius who alone commands the vision and the powers to produce a monument of originality. Both the production of a work of art as well as the work itself belong within a poetic process deemed divine, indeed, Promethean. In the humanist era, poetic creation amounted to an act of reinvention from a cornucopia of topics (some of the most important are found in Curtius's book); now understood as an act of creation, it is exalted as sublime. For Alewyn, Klopstock was the first European writer to embody this ethos. Soon it would be associated with the name of Germany's greatest poet, Goethe.

Even Germany's *Klassik*, the flowering of the arts inspired by Goethe and Schiller at Weimar, was a late arrival on the European cultural stage.⁸⁵ Italians revere their three great Florentine poets, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, for having founded the literary language of the nation and brought it to its early perfection already in the *trecento*. Sixteenth-century Spain produced the *siglo de oro*, exemplified in Lope de Vega and Calderón, Cervantes and Gracián. England celebrates the Elizabethan Age of Shakespeare and Spenser as a high point in its literary achievements. France's mid-seventeenth century with Corneille, Racine, and Molière is memorialized as the Classical Age in the nation's literary memory. Poland can claim Jan Kochanowski (1530–84) as its greatest poet before the nineteenth century. For reasons that we have suggested, the extraordinary length of time required for a literature in German to evolve to these standards set Germany apart among its European neighbors.

It may have been this very delay that motivated, after the founding of the Reich in 1871, the furious commitment to reevaluating and rewriting

Germany's literary history, above all that of the *Klassik*, but also especially that of the *Barock*. It did much to affect the attitudes of literary scholarship and to shape theoretical writings, all of which, to one degree or another and often mistakenly, were said to go back to Goethe. The post-Goethean fixation on a pseudotheological aesthetics of creativity, on personal experience and confession, and on individual style played out to the disadvantage of early modern literature. How essentially different early modern culture was from its modern assumptions did not become apparent again until late-twentieth-century comparative studies at last demolished the ahistorical views about the Age of Goethe.⁸⁶ Our continuing investigations into the knowledge-based foundations and their intertextual networks throughout Europe between the late Middle Ages and the Enlightenment reaffirm that the historical category of *Frühe Neuzeit* deserves to have a productive role in future scholarship.

Translated by Michael M. Metzger and Max Reinhart

Notes

¹ In 1940, one literary historian summed up these efforts as the search for “das eigentliche Barock” (the authentic Baroque): Erich Trunz, “Entstehung und Ergebnisse der neuen Barockforschung,” repr. in *Deutsche Barockforschung*, ed. Richard Alewyn, 2nd ed. (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1966), 449–58, here 449.

² See especially August Buck, ed., *Renaissance — Reformation: Gegensätze und Gemeinsamkeiten* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986); it is summarized briefly by Max Reinhart, “Baroque,” in *Encyclopedia of German Literature*, ed. Matthias Konzett (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000), 1:70–74, here 70.

³ This began as an extension of medieval research, as the titles suggest. For example, Fritz Wuessing, *Die Geschichte der aussendenden Länder vom Mittelalter zur frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Schulz, 1948), or Werner Goetz, *Translatio imperii: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Geschichtsdenkens und der politischen Theorien im Mittelalter und in der frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Killian, 1954). Historical studies of *frühneuzeitlich* culture began with the *Handbuch der Kulturgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenaion-Verlag, 1977); the German series *Zeitalter deutscher Kultur* included Ernst Walter Zeeden's *Deutsche Kultur in der frühen Neuzeit* in 1968. By the late 1960s historians had begun to produce first summaries and introductions to the period: for example, Ernst Walder, “Zur Geschichte und Problematik des Epochenbegriffs ‘Neuzeit’ und zum Problem der Periodisierung der Europäischen Geschichte,” in *Festgabe Hans von Greyerz zum sechzigsten Geburtstag* (Bern: Lang, 1967), 21–47, or Ilja Mieck, *Europäische Geschichte der frühen Neuzeit: eine Einführung* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1970). As late as the mid-1970s historians were still concerned with elucidating “epochal” qualities: for example, Johannes Kunisch, *Über den Epochencharakter der frühen Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1974). For an overview of scholarship see Nada Boskovska Leimgruber, ed., *Die Frühe Neuzeit in der Geschichtswissenschaft: Forschungstendenzen und Forschungserträge* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1997).

⁴ In literary history the earliest use of “frühe Neuzeit” began, as in the historical sciences, as an extension of medieval studies, as reflected in the title of the first text anthology by

Wolfgang Stämmler, *Texte des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1956). Independent use of the concept may be traced to the founding of what remains the major scholarly journal for early modern studies, founded by Hans-Gert Roloff: *Daphnis: Zeitschrift für mittlere deutsche Literatur und Kultur der frühen Neuzeit*, which issued its first number in 1972 (mittlere “middle” intends in principle the same historical range: 1350/1400–1700/1750). Monographs in “early modern” literature did not begin to appear regularly for several more years, however. A similar genesis obtained for art history: earliest programmatic titles include Gottfried Boehm, *Studien zur Perspektivität: Philosophie und Kunst in der frühen Neuzeit* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1969). The term began to be adopted for music history only much later, in the 1990s, and has gradually found an auxiliary place alongside the traditional period terms: for example, Rob C. Wegman, *The Crisis of Music in Early Modern Europe, 1470–1530* (New York: Routledge, 2005). In the present volume see the chapter “Music in Early Modern Germany” by Steven Saunders.

⁵ A recent publishing project seeks to apprehend the cultural history of early modern Europe in terms of “cultural exchange.” Each of its four volumes has a particular focus (vol. 1, religion; vol. 2, cities; vol. 3, correspondence; vol. 4, European identities): *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, gen. ed., Robert Muchembled, assoc. ed., William Monter (New York: Cambridge UP, 2007).

⁶ “Reformation” here in the broadest sense as an “age of reform.” Compare Steven Ozment’s similar, though less extensive, conceptualization in *The Age of Reform 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1980).

⁷ These debates will be well known to many readers and are too numerous to enumerate here. For readers unfamiliar with them, the following may serve as a point of departure: for the nineteenth century, David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1984); for the twentieth century, Edward Ross Dickinson, “Biopolitics, Fascism, Democracy: Some Reflections on Our Discourse about ‘Modernity,’” *Central European History* 37 (2004): 1–48. More generally see also Ingo R. Stoehr, *German Literature of the Twentieth Century: From Aestheticism to Postmodernism*, Camden House History of German Literature, vol. 10 (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2001).

⁸ A classic introduction to this topic is Percy Ernst Schramm, *Kaiser, Rom und Renovatio: Studien zur Geschichte des römischen Erneuerungsgedankens vom Ende des Karolingischen Reiches bis zum Investiturstreit* (1929; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992).

⁹ For an introduction see James C. Sheehan, *German Liberalism in the Nineteenth Century* (U of Chicago P, 1978); also Leonard Krieger, *The German Idea of Freedom: The History of a Political Tradition* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1972).

¹⁰ Eichhorn (1781–1854), lawyer and scholar of constitutional law; Michelet (1798–1874), French historian of vast erudition; Weber (1864–1920), economic and social historian, most noted for his book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*; Troeltsch (1865–1923), philosopher of religious history, especially remembered for his book *The Social Teachings of the Christian Church*.

¹¹ Among the many studies on this subject see the recent collection of essays *Der europäische Adel im Ancien Régime: Von der Krise der ständischen Monarchien bis zur Revolution (ca. 1600–1789)*, ed. Ronald G. Asch (Cologne: Böhlau, 2001).

¹² The failure of idealism as a moral and social force was the subject of a celebrated post-war essay by Hajo Holborn, “Der deutsche Idealismus in sozialgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 174 (1952): 359–85. This is the subject of recent observations by Gerhard A. Ritter, “Meinecke’s Protégés: German Émigré Historians Between Two Worlds,” *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 39 (2006): 23–38, here 27–28; Ritter provides other pertinent references on nineteenth-century liberalism as well (esp. p. 32).

¹³ This was most famously expressed in the 1944 collection of essays by Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialektik der Aufklärung: Philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1969).

¹⁴ Both men have been regarded as part of the so-called “konservative Revolution,” a term coined by Hofmannsthal, a third-generation Catholic and cofounder of the Salzburg Festival, in a 1927 speech in Munich, though some critics’ further associations of them with later National Socialism are unfortunate. Borchardt called for a “creative restoration” of ancient, medieval, Reformational, and Weimar Classical values as an antidote to the destructive forces of modernism (including naturalism and the obfuscation of traditional forms).

¹⁵ See Michael Embach, *Das Lutherbild Johann Gottfried Herders* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1987); also Lowell Anthony Cook, “Luther, Herder, and Ranke: The Reformation’s Impact on German Idealist Historiography” (Ph.D. diss., North Texas State University, 1983), University Microfilms International: 83-27018.

¹⁶ Dünnhaupt, “Der barocke Eisberg: Überlegungen zur Erfassung des Schrifttums des 17. Jahrhunderts,” *Aus dem Antiquariat* 10 (1980): 441–46.

¹⁷ See Richard van Dülmen and Sina Rauschenbach, eds., *Macht des Wissens: Die Entstehung der modernen Wissensgesellschaft* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003), and Wolfgang Detel and Claus Zittel, eds., *Wissensideale und Wissenskulturen in der frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Akademie, 2002).

¹⁸ This research was summarized most recently in Helmut Puff and Christoph Wild, eds., *Zwischen den Disziplinen: Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003).

¹⁹ The U.S. society was inspired by the Osnabrück model, Interdisziplinäres Institut für Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit. See the preface (p. xi) to the volume of selected papers from FNI’s first triennial: *Infinite Boundaries: Order, Disorder, and Reorder in Early Modern German Culture*, ed. Max Reinhart, Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies 40 (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1998). FNI limits its scope to German studies but extends to all relevant disciplines; Osnabrück embraces all of Europe.

²⁰ Since the literature and culture of early modernity was European in scope, proposals are being made to the European Union to establish a major research institute for basic work of this kind.

²¹ The establishment of interdisciplinary institutes for early modern studies at a number of universities has effected certain other changes as well, the most important of which are research and teaching across national borders. In Germany, this is being encouraged through cooperation between the two fields most preferred by students in the humanities, *Germanistik* and *Geschichtswissenschaft*.

²² See Barbara Mahlmann-Bauer, ed., *Scientiae et Artes: Die Vermittlung alten und neuen Wissens in Literatur, Kunst und Musik* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004).

²³ The same may be argued for Weimar Classicism. See Klaus Garber, "Begin with Goethe? Forgotten Traditions at the Threshold of the Modern Age," trans. Karl F. Otto Jr., in *Imperiled Heritage: Tradition, History, and Utopia in Early Modern German Literature*, ed. Max Reinhart (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 209–51.

²⁴ Among the growing number of studies on this topic see Dorothea Klein, "Wann endet das Spätmittelalter in der Geschichte der deutschen Literatur?" in *Forschungen zur deutschen Literatur des Spätmittelalters: Festschrift für Johannes Janota*, ed. Horst Brunner and Werner Williams-Krapp (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003), 299–316, and Walter Haug, ed., *Mittelalter und Frühe Neuzeit: Übergänge, Umbrüche und Neuansätze* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1999). In the present volume see the chapter by Graeme Dunphy.

²⁵ Among the many publications on Goethe's concept of world literature see Horst Steinmetz, "Weltliteratur: Umriß eines literaturgeschichtlichen Konzepts," *Arcadia* 20 (1985): 2–19; Fawzi Boubia, "Goethes Theorie der Alterität und die Idee der Weltliteratur: Ein Beitrag zur neueren Kulturdebatte," in *Gegenwart als kulturelles Erbe: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturwissenschaft deutschsprachiger Länder*, ed. Bernd Thum (Munich: Iudicium, 1985), 269–301; and Klaus Manger, ed., *Goethe und die Weltliteratur* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003).

²⁶ See Klaus Garber, ed., with Winfried Siebers, *Nation und Literatur im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit: Akten des 1. Internationalen Osnabrücker Kongresses zur Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989), and Herfried Münkler, Hans Grünberger, and Katrin Mayer, eds., *Nationenbildung: Die Nationalisierung Europas im Diskurs humanistischer Intellektueller: Italien und Deutschland* (Berlin: Akademie, 1998).

²⁷ On the humanists' return to the ancient sources and their editorial activities see the chapter by Erika Rummel in this volume.

²⁸ In Germany the demise of the Hohenstaufen dynasty in the mid-thirteenth century ushered in a period of instability in the empire that did not begin to be corrected until the accession of Charles IV. In Italy the oft-remarked "calamitous fourteenth century" was very real, marked by a nearly chaotic level of political confusion as despotism (*signoria*) and tyranny threatened to replace consensus.

²⁹ See especially Konrad Burdach, *Rienzo und die geistige Wandlung seiner Zeit*, vol. 2 of *Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation: Forschung zur Geschichte der deutschen Bildung* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1928); Paul Piur, *Cola di Rienzo: Darstellung seines Lebens und seines Geistes* (Vienna: Seidel, 1931); Heinz Otto Burger, "Neue Laienbildung und neue Laienfrömmigkeit im 14. Jahrhundert," in *Renaissance, Humanismus, Reformation: Deutsche Literatur im europäischen Kontext* (Bad Homburg: Gehlen, 1969), 15–44, esp. 15–31; and most recently Klaus Garber, "'Your arts shall be: to impose the ways of peace' — Tolerance, Liberty, and the Nation in the Literature and Deeds of Humanism," trans. Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster, and Michael Swisher, in Garber, *Imperiled Heritage*, 19–40, here 24–29.

³⁰ See Donald R. Kelley, "*Tacitus noster*: The *Germania* in the Renaissance and Reformation," in *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition*, ed. T. J. Lude and A. J. Woodman (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993), 152–67.

³¹ *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (1953; repr. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991).

³² Briefly, *confessionalization* defines the process following the Peace of Augsburg (1555) by which church and state fused into absolutist territories, each state having

exclusionary rights to choose its own religion, or confession; by the same token, the confession exercised its own political will upon the state. This process is explained at greater length in Scott Dixon's chapter in the present volume, together with pertinent references to scholarship. As a first reference, however, see Heinz Schilling, "Die Konfessionalisierung im Reich: Religiöser und gesellschaftlicher Wandel in Deutschland zwischen 1555 und 1620," *Historische Zeitschrift* 246 (1988): 1–45.

³³ The concordat formula *cuius regio eius religio* (whose territory, his religion) coined around this event meant that each territory had the right to choose which confession would be practiced there, to the exclusion, or near exclusion, of all others.

³⁴ See Klaus Garber, "Zentraleuropäischer Calvinismus und deutsche 'Barock'-Literatur: Zu den konfessionspolitischen Ursprüngen der deutschen Nationalliteratur," in *Die reformierte Konfessionalisierung in Deutschland — Das Problem der "Zweiten Reformation,"* ed. Heinz Schilling (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1986), 317–48.

³⁵ See in this volume the chapter on Neo-Latin literature by Wilhelm Kühlmann.

³⁶ From the vast scholarship on this subject see Manfred Fuhrmann: *Latein und Europa: Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts in Deutschland von Karl dem Grossen bis Wilhelm II.* (Cologne: Dumont, 2001); Bodo Guthmüller, ed., *Latein und Nationalsprachen in der Renaissance* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998); and Wilhelm Kühlmann, "Nationalliteratur und Latinität: Zum Problem der Zweisprachigkeit in der frühneuzeitlichen Literaturbewegung Deutschlands," in *Nation und Literatur im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Klaus Garber (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1989), 1:164–206.

³⁷ In the vacuum left by the decline of Latin-based culture, a vernacular imitation arose in the nineteenth century that, despite ostensible similarities such as cultural and patriotic vocabulary, would develop virulently nationalistic tendencies.

³⁸ See Guthmüller, ed., *Latein und Nationalsprachen in der Renaissance*.

³⁹ Early modern scholarship on this subject is summarized in the chapter by Joachim Knappe in this volume.

⁴⁰ The story of Dante's controversial efforts on behalf of the *lingua volgata* is told, among other places, in Werner Bahner, "Dantes theoretische Bemühungen um die Emanzipation der italienischen Literatursprache," in part 1 of *Formen, Ideen, Prozesse in den Literaturen der romanischen Völker* (Berlin: Akademie, 1977), and in Konrad Krautter, *Die Renaissance der Bukolik in der lateinischen Literatur des 14. Jahrhunderts: Von Dante bis Petrarca* (Munich: Fink, 1983). See also Klaus Garber, "Utopia and the Green World: Critique and Anticipation in Pastoral Poetry," trans. James F. Ehrmann, in *Imperiled Heritage*, 73–116, esp. 82–83.

⁴¹ See Klaus Garber, ed., with Stefan Anders and Thomas Elsmann, *Stadt und Literatur im deutschen Sprachraum der Frühen Neuzeit*, 2 vols. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1998); Nikolaus Henkel and Nigel F. Palmer, eds., *Latein und Volkssprache im deutschen Mittelalter 1100–1500* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992); and Bernd Moeller, Hans Patze, and Karl Stackmann, eds., *Studien zum städtischen Bildungswesen des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983).

⁴² On the standardization of German see the chapter by Renate Born in this volume.

⁴³ See, for example, Werner Röske and Ursula Schaefer, eds., *Mündlichkeit, Schriftlichkeit, Weltbildwandel: Literarische Kommunikation und Deutungsschemata von Wirklichkeit in der Literatur des Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Narr, 1996), and Jan-Dirk Müller, ed., *"Aufführung" und "Schrift" in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1996).

⁴⁴ The term *longue durée* is most closely associated with the name of Fernand Braudel, a second-generation member of the French school of historiography known as the *Annales*, which favored viewing history in long-term structures rather than, as traditionally, as narrowly defined periods or events.

⁴⁵ Richard van Dülmen, "Reformation und Neuzeit: Ein Versuch," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 14 (1987): 1–25, provides an excellent introduction to this subject.

⁴⁶ See Erika Rummel, *The Confessionalization of Humanism in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000); Rummel also offers a brief summary of this problem in her chapter in the present volume.

⁴⁷ See Kaspar von Greyerz et al., eds., *Interkonfessionalität — Transkonfessionalität — binnenkonfessionelle Pluralität: Neue Forschungen zur Konfessionalisierungsthese* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 2003).

⁴⁸ The two texts are gathered in English translation (Luther's is condensed) in *Erasmus — Luther: Discourse on Free Will*, trans. and ed. Ernst F. Winter (New York: Continuum, 2000). The utter implications of the humanist/evangelical exchange have never been more incisively formulated than in Heiko A. Obermann, *Luther: Man Between God and the Devil* (1982), trans. Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 211–25.

⁴⁹ See most recently Axel E. Walter, *Späthumanismus und Konfessionspolitik: Die europäische Gelehrtenrepublik um 1600 im Spiegel der Korrespondenzen Georg Michael Lingelsheims* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2004).

⁵⁰ See Jans Rohls and Gunther Wenz, eds., *Protestantismus und deutsche Literatur* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004), and Nicholas Hope, *German and Scandinavian Protestantism, 1700–1918* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999).

⁵¹ See Katherine Goodman, "Gottsched's Literary Reforms: The Beginning of Modern German Literature," in *German Literature of the Eighteenth Century: The Enlightenment and Sensibility*, ed. Barbara Becker-Cantarino, Camden House History of German Literature, vol. 5 (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2005), 55–76; further, Gunter E. Grimm, "Gottscheds 'Critische Dichtkunst' und die Vernunft-Poesie der Frühaufklärung," in *Literatur und Gelehrtentum in Deutschland* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1983), 620ff., and Garber, "Begin with Goethe?," esp. 213–16.

⁵² In works such as *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Literatur* (1766–67) and *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (1772) the implications for a national literary culture arise from Herder's primary historical concern with the elements of a broadly shared German culture through achieving a national language and political independence. Of the many studies on this subject see most recently Wulf Koepke, "Herder and the Sturm und Drang," in *Literature of the Sturm und Drang*, ed. David Hill, Camden House History of German Literature, vol. 6 (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2003), 69–93.

⁵³ Gerhart Hoffmeister, *A Reassessment of Weimar Classicism* (Lewiston, NY: Mellon, 1996). Further, see W. Daniel Wilson, *Das Goethe-Tabu: Protest und Menschenrechte im klassischen Weimar* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999), and "The Political Context of Weimar Classicism," in *The Literature of Weimar Classicism*, ed. Simon Richter, Camden House History of German Literature, vol. 7 (Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2005), 347–68.

⁵⁴ As a point of departure see Thomas P. Saine, *Black Bread — White Bread: German Intellectuals and the French Revolution* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988).

⁵⁵ Peter Hohendahl, “Gervinus als Historiker des Barockzeitalters,” in *Europäische Barock-Rezeption*, ed. Klaus Garber (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 561–76.

⁵⁶ Among Burdach’s critics who did not share his interdisciplinary embrace of cultural history, including iconography and the history of ideas, were Paul Joachimsen, Karl Brandi, and Gerhard Ritter. The groundwork for a reassessment of Burdach has been laid by Klaus Garber in “Versunkene Monumentalität: Das Werk Konrad Burdachs,” in *Kulturwissenschaftler des 20. Jahrhunderts: Ihr Werk im Blick auf das Europa der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Garber, with Sabine Kleymann (Munich: Fink, 2002), 109–57; see also Garber’s article on Burdach in the *Literaturlexikon: Autoren und Werke deutscher Sprache*, ed. Walther Killy (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon, 1989), 2:325–26.

⁵⁷ A useful introduction to Prague humanism is still S. Harrison Thomson, “Learning at the Court of Charles IV,” *Speculum* 25, no. 1 (1950): 1–29.

⁵⁸ A standard introduction to this topic is Hans Bernd Harder, *Studien zum Humanismus in den böhmischen Ländern* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1988); and *Später Humanismus in der Krone Böhmen: 1570–1620* (Dresden: Dresden UP, 1998).

⁵⁹ See R. J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World: A Study in Intellectual History 1576–1612* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993; corrected paperback edition: London: Thames and Hudson, 1997).

⁶⁰ For a discussion of *Der Ackermann aus Böhmen* see in this volume the chapter by Graeme Dunphy.

⁶¹ Paul Gerhard Schmidt, ed., *Humanismus im deutschen Südwesten: Biographische Profile* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1993). In the present volume see also the chapter by Erika Rummel and that by Stephan Füßel.

⁶² Klaus Garber, *Das alte Buch im alten Europa: Auf Spurensuche in den Schatzhäusern des alten Kontinents* (Munich: Fink, 2006); also Garber, Manfred Komorowski, and Axel E. Walter, eds., *Kulturgeschichte Ostpreussens in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2001).

⁶³ See August Buck, ed., *Höfischer Humanismus* (Weinheim: Acta humaniora, 1989). In the present volume see the chapter by Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly.

⁶⁴ On the subject of early modern women writers see the chapter by Anna Carrdus in the present volume.

⁶⁵ See Sharon L. Jansen, *The Monstrous Regiment of Women: Female Rulers in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), and Lisa Hopkins, *Women Who Would Be Kings: Female Rulers in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Vision, 1991).

⁶⁶ The scholarship on this subject is now vast. For an introduction see Sebastian Neumeister and Conrad Wiedemann, eds., *Res Publica Litteraria: Die Institutionen der Gelehrsamkeit in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987), and Werner M. Bauer, “Humanistische Bildungszentren,” in *Von der Handschrift zum Buchdruck: Spätmittelalter — Reformation — Humanismus 1320–1572*, ed. Ingrid Bennewitz and Ulrich Müller, vol. 2 of *Deutsche Literatur: Eine Sozialgeschichte* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1991), 274–86.

⁶⁷ See Hans Erich Bödeker and Ernst Hinrichs, eds., *Alteuropa — Ancien Régime — Frühe Neuzeit: Probleme und Methoden der Forschung* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1991).

⁶⁸ Walter, *Späthumanismus*, esp. Teil I.

⁶⁹ See the chapter by Wilhelm Kühlmann on education in this volume.

⁷⁰ For an introduction to early modern intellectual societies, including a sketch of their historical traditions beginning with Plato, see Klaus Garber, "Sozietäten, Akademien, Sprachgesellschaften," in *Europäische Enzyklopädie zu Philosophie und Wissenschaften*, ed. Hans Jörg Sandkühler (Hamburg: Meiner, 1990), 4:366–84.

⁷¹ See Jörg Robert, *Konrad Celtis und das Projekt der deutschen Dichtung* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003).

⁷² There is no better introduction to this subject than Marian Szyrocki, *Martin Luther und seine Bedeutung für die deutsche Sprache und Literatur* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1985). An excellent if little known publication (in pamphlet form) on the "grand narrative" of Reformation history is Thomas A. Brady Jr., *The Protestant Reformation in German History*, Occasional Paper No. 22 (Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 1997).

⁷³ As an introduction see Gerhard Arnhardt and Gert-Bodo Reinert, *Philipp Melancthon: Architekt des neuzeitlich-christlichen deutschen Schulsystems* (Donauwörth: Auer, 2001).

⁷⁴ The standard work on the genre of the occasional poem is Wulf Segebrecht, *Das Gelegenheitsgedicht: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Poetik der deutschen Lyrik* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1977).

⁷⁵ Erich Trunz, "Der deutsche Späthumanismus um 1600 als Standeskultur" (1931), in Alewyn, ed., *Deutsche Barockforschung*, 147–81.

⁷⁶ See in this volume the chapter by Peter Hess, part III: "Representative Culture: Vernacular Learned Poetry in the Humanist Tradition."

⁷⁷ On personal circumstances surrounding the writing of this poetics and his first book of collected verse see in this volume the chapter by Theodor Verweyen.

⁷⁸ See Garber, "Zentraleuropäischer Calvinismus," and Walter, *Späthumanismus*.

⁷⁹ Among recent studies on this subject see André Biéler, *Calvin's Social and Economic Thought*, trans. James Greig, ed. Edward Dommen (Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 2006); also Patrick Collinson, "Calvin and Calvinism," in *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Modern Library, 2004), 87–102.

⁸⁰ Klaus Garber and Martin Klöcker, eds., *Kulturgeschichte der baltischen Länder in der Frühen Neuzeit: Mit einem Ausblick in die Moderne* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003), and Garber, *Das alte Buch*; see also Thomas Haye, ed., *Humanismus im Norden: Frühneuzeitliche Rezeption antiker Kultur und Literatur an Nord- und Ostsee* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), and Edmund Kotarski, ed., with Malgorzata Chojnacka, *Literatur und Institutionen der literarischen Kommunikation in nordeuropäischen Städten im Zeitraum vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert* (Gdansk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdanskiego, 1996).

⁸¹ Among his many monographs and articles specifically on the Baroque see this cross-section: *Vorbarocker Klassizismus und griechische Tragödie: Analyse der Antigone-Übersetzung des Martin Opitz* (1926; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962); review of "Karl Viëtor: Probleme der deutschen Barockliteratur (1928)," in Alewyn, ed., *Deutsche Barockforschung*, 421–26; "Formen des Barock," *Corona* 10 (1943): 678–90; and "Goethe und das Barock," in *Goethe und die Tradition*, ed. Hans Reiss (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1972), 130–37. On implications for early modernity in Alewyn see Max Reinhart, "Der Detektiv in der Geschichte: Richard Alewyn und das Problem der Frühen Neuzeit," *Daphnis* 34, nos. 3–4 (2005): 381–428.

⁸² Jörg Jochen Berns and Thomas Rahn, eds., *Zeremoniell als höfische Ästhetik in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1995).

⁸³ See the collected papers from the 2002 colloquium in Osnabrück: *Das Projekt Empfindsamkeit und der Ursprung der Moderne: Richard Alewyns Sentimentalismusforschungen und ihr epochaler Kontext*, ed. Klaus Garber and Ute Széll (Munich: Fink, 2005).

⁸⁴ See Wilhelm Kühlmann and Wolfgang Neuber, eds., *Intertextualität in der frühen Neuzeit: Studien zu ihren theoretischen und praktischen Perspektiven* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1994).

⁸⁵ Garber, “Begin with Goethe?”

⁸⁶ The patterns of literary developments during the eighteenth century are extremely complex and have long caused uncertainty about appropriate terminology. Beginning in West Germany in the 1960s, Werner Krauss and his followers began to clarify matters through comparative investigations into previously ignored aspects of the German Enlightenment from its inception until the revolutionary era. For example, see Krauss, *Perspektiven und Probleme: Zur französischen und deutschen Aufklärung und andere Aufsätze* (Neuwied, Berlin-West: Luchterhand, 1965). Heuristic approaches sought to explain the developmental logic driving texts with different themes, styles, and forms, each with its explicit purpose and appearing simultaneously or in close succession; how they related to each other historically; and how they might be interpreted as evidence of a literary practice of enlightenment that was becoming increasingly radical. Some studies suggested that the Rococo as a literary phenomenon accorded well with the spirit of the Enlightenment, which aimed to promote humanity’s free exercise of all of its powers. It could be demonstrated that this leitmotif, grounded in enlightened anthropological thought, ran all the way through the eighteenth century and encouraged a climate of critical opinion regarding *Empfindsamkeit*, the culture of feeling and sensibility. Its practical orientation, based on enhancing empathy and sympathy, was in no way at odds with the way the Enlightenment characteristically made moral values of Christian virtues. Moreover, the social criticism in documents of the Storm and Stress could be read as a sign of rebellion — in the best spirit of the Enlightenment — against petrified and inhumane political institutions. This revolutionary impetus, rooted in ideas of natural law and critical of prevailing systems, especially in France, corresponded to a prerevolutionary disposition within broad sectors of German literary production of the 1770s and ’80s, which was undeniably in tune with ideas expressed by the enlightened avant-gardes of Europe.

German Literature of the Middle Period: Working with the Sources

Hans-Gert Roloff

In memoriam Victor Lange et Herbert Penzl

Middle German Literature

IN THE HISTORY OF GERMAN LITERATURE the middle period (*Mittlere Literatur*) came to be regarded not only as independent of medieval literature, on the one hand, and modern literature, on the other, but as having fundamental significance for the subsequent evolution of German literature after the eighteenth century. Middle German literature includes the period from the end of the fourteenth to the middle of the eighteenth century, approximately 1400 to 1750. The term *Frühe Neuzeit* (early modern period) has become the designation of choice for cultural historians of the middle period, and in this essay both terms — middle and early modern — will be used interchangeably.¹

The period of middle German literature thus covers some 350 years. Texts have been transmitted to us in abundance in all their variety, but most have yet to be edited, annotated, and properly understood. The intensive textual criticism of the last forty years has made clear that the terminology traditionally used for the historical evaluation of these texts was entirely unsuited to a systematic description of the multifaceted phenomena and problems of this massive body of literature. The individual texts defy the traditional categories that derived not from literature but from the realms of politics, philosophy, religion, and art. The basic error in traditional methodology was that it failed to view literature — which is a humanly constructed world of textuality — as an independent historical achievement (*Geschichtsleistung*), and instead as a handmaiden to abstract ideologies.

However, when these texts are systematized according to their own literary criteria and reception, an entirely different perspective arises, because texts (and their authors) communicate in reaction to problems, ideas, events, forms, and the like, and produce human discourses that introduce us to the existential problems of people at particular times in history. The middle period is rich in human questions about the right way of living, about values, dangers, the need for change, about criticism and affirmation of old and new authorities. The real purpose of a literary history oriented toward human values is to discover

and interpret these issues. Recent research on early modern Germany has demonstrated gratifying signs of progress toward making this literature comprehensible in its human component, whether in the form of carefully documented biographies, interpretive monographs, or comprehensive editions with extensive commentaries.

The fact that research began to focus intensively on middle German literature only in the second half of the twentieth century has to do with the sharp increase in sociohistorical method in literary studies and the concomitant distancing from the narrower poetic aesthetics. With this development the dictum — traditional since the positivism of Wilhelm Scherer (1841–86) — that the literature between Middle Ages and Enlightenment was aesthetically inferior, collapsed. The related idea of a widened concept of literature opened up the early modern fountainhead of literary sources, which portray the problematic nature of human experience with greater intensity and immediacy than the other historical disciplines. This led rapidly to the fundamental realization that literary-historical research and the adequate historical understanding of texts cannot occur without interdisciplinary cooperation.

The 350-year period of German literature between medieval and modern — “German” understood in the linguistic and geographical sense as the territory in which German was the national language of communication, parallel, of course, to Neo-Latin, which provided access to the European intellectual world — reveals a series of structural commonalities that permit us to speak, in spite of the myriad of themes and forms, of a discrete historical *block*. Within this block it is clear that the seventeenth century consciously looks back to the views and events of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The turns of century at 1500 and 1600 — the so-called thresholds to the Reformation and to the Baroque — could not interrupt the vital outpouring of literature. At least four basic historical features are constitutive of middle German literature:

1. The evolution and standardization of language. Early New High German began to develop in the fourteenth century and emerged in the eighteenth in the standard New High German. Parallel to this development, Neo-Latin emerged from medieval Middle Latin as a result of exposure to the literature of Roman antiquity as the language of scholarly, scientific, and technical discourses (medicine, pharmacy, philosophy, law). This German-Latin bilingualism was taken for granted in the middle period; an author’s decision to use one or the other language depended on the communication intention of the given situation. Indeed, both languages influenced each other, particularly in structure: on the one hand a certain Latinism made itself felt in German, while on the other a certain German influence prevented Neo-Latin from becoming a mere imitation of the ancient idiom. The reasons for Latin’s equality in literary communication were, first, its ability to integrate crucial German concerns into the European discourse, and second, cultural-political pride in claiming European intellectual superiority in Germany via *translatio imperii* (transfer of rule). German literature in Neo-Latin assumed a high intellectual priority in the

middle period. It was therefore a serious error of older German literary-historical scholarship, under the influence of a nationalistic vision, largely to ignore this rich body of Neo-Latin literature in favor of literature written in “the Protestant dialect” (Jakob Grimm) of Early New High German — and all this, despite statistical proof that books published in Latin, well into the seventeenth century, were far more numerous than those in the national vernacular.

2. The influence of literature, culture, mentality, and the sociopolitical sphere. The reception of the *studia humanitatis* occurred, to be sure, on terrain that had already been prepared literarily and culturally to assure that the “new” aspects of Roman antiquity transmitted through literature would serve to produce intellectual innovation. The amalgamation between “old” and “new” in early modern German literature has only recently begun to be appreciated in its proper historical perspective. Although Latin-Roman influences had an immense effect on middle German literature, they were rejected in the philosophical upheaval of the eighteenth century in favor of an idealized culture of Greek antiquity: Rome versus Athens, Latin versus Greek, Horace versus Pindar, Vergil versus Homer.
3. The turn to rhetorics and poetics, first to those of antiquity, then to native conceptions that modulated classical principles to fit contemporary needs. Two insights formed the basis for this active mode of reception: writing (including poetic composition), is, like speaking, learnable and teachable; and all written expression obeys the principles of communication and aims to persuade the reader to one’s own cause. Without consideration of this communication system one cannot approach early modern German literature with understanding. Rhetoric, which was commonly taught as a technical subject, was the real writing school of these centuries. The literary theories of communication that gradually developed from applied rhetorics gave authors the possibilities they needed to create the wealth of formal innovations that eventually guaranteed this literature its unique position in the history of German literature.
4. Middle German literature as a sophisticated experimental laboratory. This produced both new literary forms and new instruments of literary distribution: copying of manuscripts, printing, theater, and official oratory. From the fifteenth century on we encounter new genres and other small literary forms that over the centuries had gradually become established forms: epic long and short forms, a wide breadth of theatrical text forms, and an abundance of German and Latin lyrical forms. We also find other important forms of specifically literary communication: letters, tracts, sermons, biographies, historiographical writings, travel reports, chronicles, commentaries, orations, and so on. The 350 years of middle German literature constitute one of the most creative periods in the entire western history of literary form.

In addition to these four features we may also observe that middle German literature was anchored deeply in the social, political, and religious problems

of the time. Indeed, neither before nor after has literature been integrated with history to such a degree, making pragmatic use of its sophisticated strategies of communication to teach, admonish, enlighten — in short, to win the public for a given cause over a long period of time in which struggles raged over changing political, religious, social, economic, and other power structures.

Middle German literature comprises the most recent research area of Germanic studies; cultivated only since the last third of the twentieth century, it has subsequently become a model of modern research strategies, notwithstanding the aversion it has aroused in some quarters because of its solidly historical methodology. Any attempt to search out the formal origins of modern and current literature must lead back to the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Here the beginnings of the genres drama, novel, novella, short story, biography, and technical writing began; here too the primary avenues of literary distribution began to thrive: printing and theater. It was in this period that printed literature was discovered to be a commodity requiring production, distribution, and consumption. The early years of middle German literature were thus full of literary innovations.

Early Source Scholarship

To understand early modern German literature correctly, one must start with basic research: consulting the bibliographical compilations of the literature that has been handed down to us in manuscript and print and determining where they are preserved (archives, libraries, and other repositories). Establishing comprehensive lists of manuscripts and prints for the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries remains a philological desideratum that will require future generations for completion. The production of lexicons is a related activity. Lexicons mine information about known and unknown authors and their works and provide contextual and historical information. For the middle German period one should begin with the biographical and bibliographical lexicon *Die deutsche Literatur*.²

The work of basic research continues with the process of making new texts accessible in critical editions and commentaries. This is a huge area for future research, and one of immense significance, for the extent to which well-planned and well-executed editions exist determines both what sources are available as well as the literary picture we have of a given period. Access to source texts is the precondition not only for interpretation but also for interdisciplinary evaluation and cooperation. Older literary scholarship failed badly in this respect, with the result that literary histories as late as the twentieth century offered inaccurate views of the actual textual realities in middle German literature, thus preventing meaningful discussion. The literary historical coverage of middle German literature provided by earlier source scholarship is replete with gaps that mislead and even distort the picture. There are a few important exceptions, such as the authoritative volumes by Richard Newald, Hans Rupprich, and Hedwig Heger in the renowned De Boor/Newald series,

Geschichte der deutschen Literatur.³ It was with these volumes that the newer early modern philology can be said to have begun. These excellent volumes made full use of what trustworthy editions of primary texts existed, and in doing so demonstrated how intimately literary history and editorial source research are bound together.

But even these solidly philological works provided little help beyond manifold positivistic data (titles, dates, etc.). Certain other monographs from this earlier period on neglected authors have turned out to be disappointingly unreliable, given that they were not based on critical editions and often substituted unverifiable opinions, conceptions, and judgments; still others projected subjective aesthetic or ideological biases. Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century scholarship indeed largely ignored early modern German literature or rejected it on the alleged ground that it did not meet the intellectual and aesthetic standards and values of Weimar Classicism. Certain interest was shown, for nationalistic reasons, in allegedly nativist figures such as the Nuremberger Hans Sachs and others from Alsace and Silesia. Few scholars were interested in or were qualified to deal with the Neo-Latin literature; one may say in fact that the bilingualism of middle German literature, a unique and determinative feature of the early modern period, was a major reason for its being ignored by Germanists. To be sure, texts of modern literature are incomparably easier to access than those of the middle period; and the relatively small corpus of German medieval texts are firmly in the hands of the medieval philologists. But for early modern German literature the situation is precarious.

We realize today that the total production of early modern literary texts was made available in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries only selectively, and was guided mainly by other disciplines, especially church history. Consequently, vast thematic areas are still waiting for analysis and historical-critical editions. The earlier editions that exist do not so much represent *examples* of early modern works as they do only *selections* meant to demonstrate their place in a presumed literary-evolutionary process toward the telos of modernity. This very selectivity, however, has grossly distorted both the texts themselves and the larger truth about production. This unsystematic selection arose mainly from doctoral dissertations.

Alongside several readers and anthologies, such as Karl Goedeke's *Elf Bücher deutscher Dichtung* (1849), complete texts and larger works were published chiefly in series. They included Johann Scheible's twelve-volume *Das Kloster, weltlich und geistlich: Meist aus der ältern deutschen Volks-, Wunder-, Curiositäten-, und vorzugsweise komischen Literatur* (The Cloister, Secular and Spiritual: Mostly from the Older German Folk, Miracle, Curiosity, and Comic Literature, 1845–49) and *Schatzgräber* (Treasure Seeker, 1846–48, 5 vols.); Hermann Kurz's *Deutsche Bibliothek* (1862–68); *Kürschners Deutsche National-Litteratur* (1882–99); and the short-lived *Lateinische Litteraturdenkmäler des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (1891–1912). The majority of middle German editions appeared in the series *Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins Stuttgart* (BLVS), beginning in 1842, which continues into the present and has published over 300 volumes, and the reprint series

founded by Wilhelm Braune, *Hallesche Neudrucke deutscher Literaturwerke des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (1876–1957; continued as *Neudrucke deutscher Literaturwerke*, 1961 to the present). In addition to single works, the BLVS also published editions of major writers of the late medieval period and of the middle period: *Fastnachtsspiele* (Shrovetide plays), Hans Sachs, Jörg Wickram, Jakob Ayer, Paul Fleming, Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, Andreas Gryphius, Simon Dach, and others.⁴ The *Hallesche Neudrucke*, which made an effort to bring out a varied series consisting largely of individual texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, published as its first volume Opitz's epoch-making *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey*. Edmund Goetze's editions of Sachs's *Fastnachtsspiele* and *Fabeln und Schwänke* (Fables and Jests) plus the writings of Johann Eberlin von Günzburg appeared in the series in piecemeal fashion, though with continuous pagination. The series had the great merit, by virtue of its exemplary variety of texts, of demonstrating the colorful nature of the literature of these two centuries. In keeping with its times, to be sure, it too favored an agenda emphasizing the German-national aspect and did not produce any works in Neo-Latin. The editorial quality of the individual works is variable but consistent with philological practices of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. With certain exceptions, however, they remain useful. Their chief fault is the lack of commentaries — considered redundant at the time since they were intended for use only by experts in the field.

In this overview of earlier editions treating early modern German literature it is notable that, other than those few in the BLVS, hardly any extensive “work” editions (*Werkeditionen*) of individual authors were undertaken. The large editions of Martin Luther, Philipp Melancthon, and Huldrych Zwingli were made by theologians, with some help from Germanists in the case of Luther. Two exceptions may be regarded as models by modern editorial standards: Eduard Böcking's seven-volume Hutten edition (1859–70) and the five-volume Aventinus edition (1881–86).⁵ It is surprising that, until the second half of the twentieth century, no comprehensive critical edition of Erasmus was undertaken, meaning that scholars had to be content with the early-eighteenth-century edition by Jean Leclercq (1703–6, 11 vols.). P. S. Allen's magisterial edition of Erasmus's letters in twelve volumes (Oxford, 1906–58) remained unmatched on the Continent until much later.

Even in the first half of the twentieth century, in spite of the innovative research on baroque literature, little motivation was shown for discovering, editing, and writing adequate commentary on the works of middle German literature. The BLVS and the *Hallesche Neudrucke* did continue to bring out new works. An acceptable edition of the writings of the Franciscan satirist Thomas Murner appeared in the years between 1918 and 1931 (9 vols.), although, again as a product of the contemporary mentality, it included only his German-language writings and crassly ignored his many Latin texts.⁶ Heinz Kindermann's monumental collection, *Deutsche Literatur: Sammlung literarischer Kunst- und Kulturdenkmäler in Entwicklungsreihen*, which began to appear in the 1920s and was stopped only by the Second World War, provided

new texts, including Neo-Latin works, in middle literature and continues to be useful to modern scholars for its expert introductions to the individual volumes. The original plan of the series for the period 1400–1750 included the following series: *Meistersinger* (4 vols.), Humanism and Renaissance (6 vols.), Reformation (7 vols.), *Volksbücher* and *Schwankbücher* (chapbooks and jest books, 7 vols.), Baroque (28 vols.) — altogether some fifty-two volumes. Twenty-five actually appeared, five of which cover the baroque tradition of southern Germany.

Modern Source Scholarship

The nineteenth and earlier twentieth century made a large number of individual texts accessible, but few complete editions of particular authors or genres. Although these editions facilitated the extraction of much positivistic information (as noted above for the De Boor/Newald series), they were much less useful for literary-historical analysis. Research was thus held hostage, as it were, to the ideological exploitation of texts qua superstructural documents. With the profound reorientation of *Literaturwissenschaft* after about 1960 toward the view of texts as conveyers of unique forms of literary expression within particular historical contexts, it became clear that the older method of source scholarship was an inadequate instrument for the new demands of historical research. The methodological acknowledgement of the causal nexus between literature and history was the prime motivation for the modern science of source scholarship.

Modern research on German literature and culture between 1400 and 1750 began in earnest in the 1970s and by the 1980s had begun to yield significant results. The subsequent eruption of critical editions — many of them undertaken as corrections to previous ones — gave rise to new areas of early modern scholarship and established the science of critical editions as a new field of research. One insight that drove the production of critical editions was that interpretive monographs, important as they are, cannot replace the primary works themselves: each generation reads texts differently and therefore runs the risk of falling into its own ideological traps if the sources — the genuine representations of the historical time of the texts — are not available for objective verification. An example may suffice. The distinguished scholar of late medieval *Erbauungsliteratur* (literature of edification), the Berlin philologist Wieland Schmidt, after long and patient research, published an exemplary study in 1938 on the manuscript transmission of Otto von Passau's *Die Vierundzwanzig Alten* (1480), a text that existed in some 150 manuscripts and prints. Schmidt's laudable intention was to make this mass of material comprehensible; but he did not actually edit the work itself, since he considered it of inferior quality, notwithstanding the great popularity it had enjoyed in its own time. In failing to do so, he thereby obfuscated the salient fact that precisely its popularity provided valuable historical evidence about the mentality of its recipients. Modern source scholarship, by seeking to work from the

historical situation of the text, hopes to avoid such limiting personal judgments based on taste or ideology.

Producing such editions is now a central activity of early modern scholarship. Marketing considerations require, however, that most appear in series, meaning that they are subject to the structural principles of the particular series.⁷ This is by no means universally the case, however, such as for the comprehensive new critical editions of Melanchthon, Johann Valentin Andreae, Martin Bucer, Heinrich Bullinger, and Sigmund von Birken. Besides the BLVS and the *Hallesche Neudrucke*, which continue their programs, many new series have come into existence, though some only briefly. Among the major series still active are the following: the *Ausgaben Deutscher Literatur des XV. bis XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (ADL), which commenced in 1967 and has brought out 170 volumes to date, including complete editions of Geiler von Kaysersberg, Alexander Seitz, Johannes Adelphus, Jörg Wickram, Thomas Naogeorg, Wolfhart Spangenberg, Daniel Czepko, Johann Rist, Philipp von Zesen, Johann Christian Hallmann, Christian Weise, Wolfgang Caspar Printz, Johannes Riemer, and Johann Christoph Gottsched. ADL has also published a number of non-series editions, including the *Sprichwörtersammlungen* (Collections of Aphorisms) of Johann Agricola; the *Sämtliche Dramen* of Sixt Birck; *Teufelbücher* (Devil Books); and *Spieltexte der Wanderbühnen* (Plays by the Itinerant Players). The *Berliner Ausgaben* series has published editions of Johann Reuchlin, Johann Fischart, Sebastian Franck, Nicodemus Frischlin, and Friedrich Nicolai since the early 1990s. The series *Mittlere Deutsche Literatur in Neu- und Nachdrucken* has brought out the corpus of the *Geistliche Spiele* (Spiritual Plays) of the Tyrolean *Sterzinger Spielarchiv* and — in addition to individual editions — the critical edition of the complete works of Johann Beer. The extensive series *Nachdrucke Deutscher Literatur des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Bern) publishes important individual texts of the seventeenth century in facsimile with critical commentaries. The *Bibliothek Deutscher Klassiker*, whose ambitious and comprehensive program included twenty-four early modern volumes, was abruptly discontinued recently. The volumes that were published, however, are of the highest editorial quality, especially for their exhaustive commentaries. Of the early modern volumes actually published, several of the texts already existed in other philologically acceptable editions (Gryphius and Grimmelshausen, among others) — the curse and blessing of such inclusive series that attempt to market more to a general than to a specialized readership. One more recent series should be mentioned, since it promises to fill in a notable lacuna in the area of middle German literature, if only sufficient numbers of scholars participate and if the series remains financially solvent: the program of *TRANSLATIO* is to publish both complete editions and reception literature. The very significant area of reception literature, including translation, has been almost completely overlooked, in spite of its enormous impact on the early modern evolution of German literature and culture. The main sources, of course, were ancient Greek and Roman literature, Renaissance literature of the Romance countries, and Neo-Latin literature.

These initiatives to discover and edit source materials have also led to innovations in editorial practice that answer the unique demands of middle German literature, which are distinctively different from those for medieval literature. For the fifteenth century, most texts were handwritten and transmitted in that form, usually as an *apograph* (copy, transcript); autographs, manuscripts in the hand of the author, were rare, and are found mostly as personal letters, often preserved among authors' literary remains (*Nachlässe*) in archives and libraries. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, transmittal via manuscript continued to be practiced in certain circles, particularly in those, such as the courtly sphere, that had little interest in publicity. Other manuscripts remained unpublished because they were considered merely functional (*Gebrauchsliteratur*), such as written-out versions of Jesuit dramas.

In general, however, after the invention of movable type, texts increasingly were transmitted in printed form and could be marketed in all parts of Germany. With only rare exceptions among printed works, the preprint manuscripts have not been transmitted. Since very few authors had or took the opportunity in the early modern production process to read proofs during the typesetting, the final form of the printed work reflects in language, orthography, and structure the practices of the printer. The modern editor is in effect forced to accept the *editio princeps* as the provisionally authoritative text. A normalization of the various versions for the sake of effecting an early modern German linguistic standard, or *Kunstsprache* — Karl Lachmann employed a standardized orthography in his nineteenth-century editions of medieval manuscripts — is unacceptable, given the extraordinary irregularities in early modern dialectal, grammatical, and orthographical forms. As analyses of autographs have shown, orthographical license is attributable less to printers' arbitrariness than to authors' whimsy. Thus, "corrections" or modernizations of the text being edited must be avoided, absent some convincing philological reason. But since, as practice has shown, the printed texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are by no means free of error, it is inadvisable simply to provide the editions in facsimile; only expert philological and linguistic judgment can establish the final form of the edition. The number of printed works that lend themselves to facsimile reproduction is quite small. Some texts were printed repeatedly, which testifies to the enthusiasm and curiosity of the reading public for this literature. From printing to printing one regularly finds textual variants (*Lesarten*) that show, first, that nearly every subsequent issue was newly typeset, and second, that their reception evolved in ways that reflect the changes in social, educational, linguistic, and literary conditions, though scholars may differ in exactly how they define and evaluate these phenomena.

A particularly gratifying development in source scholarship is the new conception of the commentary: greater emphasis is now placed on broad historical developments and intellectual and cultural contexts rather than on narrower work-internal issues. This approach makes the distant world of middle German literature more accessible to the general reader. Doubtless the most important advance coming from this new conception of early modern literary history, however, is the inclusion of Neo-Latin literature. Every new edition of such

texts from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century fills in one more space in the literary map of the period. The fact that in recent years it has become customary to provide a parallel translation of the Latin texts will be helpful in the integration of these heretofore largely neglected materials into literary history.

The question is often raised whether it is now possible to write a general literary history of the middle period. The answer must be a qualified “yes.” The state of source scholarship has advanced greatly over the past generation; but much remains to be done. Whatever history we may attempt must of necessity be only a snapshot of the whole. That is true of any period of literary history, but especially of the middle period. Literary history is continuously modified and enriched by new discoveries and evaluations. The more exhaustively the creations of the past are documented and made accessible to new generations the more structurally refined will become our picture of literary history — not only in its harmony, but in its vital contradictions as well.⁸

Translated by James Hardin

Notes

¹ My concept of the middle German period is outlined in detail in *Das Berliner Modell der mittleren deutschen Literatur*, ed. Christiane Caemmerer, Chloë 33 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 469–94.

² *Die deutsche Literatur: Biographisches und bibliographisches Lexikon*, ed. Hans-Gert Roloff, Reihe 2, *Die deutsche Literatur zwischen 1450 und 1620* (Stuttgart: Frommann-Holzboog, 1983–), Reihe 3, *Die deutsche Literatur zwischen 1620 und 1720* (1987–), and *Literaturlexikon: Autoren und Werke deutscher Sprache*, ed. Walther Killy, 15 vols. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1988–93). See also the earlier lexicon founded and edited by Wilhelm Kosch, *Deutsches Literatur-Lexikon: Biographisches und bibliographisches Handbuch* (1927–30), 2nd ed., 4 vols. (1949–58), 3rd ed., 16 vols., ed. Bruno Berger and Heinz Rupp (Munich: Francke [later Saur], 1968–96).

³ *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, founded by Helmut de Boor and Richard Newald, 12 vols. (Munich: Beck, 1949–94). Hans Rupprich, *Vom späten Mittelalter bis zum Barock*, vol. 4, part 1, *Das ausgehende Mittelalter, Humanismus und Renaissance 1370–1520*, 2nd ed., ed. Hedwig Heger (Munich: Beck, 1994); Rupprich, part 2, *Das Zeitalter der Reformation 1520–1570* (1973); Richard Newald, vol. 5, *Vom Späthumanismus zur Empfindsamkeit 1570–1750*, 6th ed. (1967).

⁴ The series was also open to medieval works and included culturally interesting texts such as Endres Tucher's *Baumeisterbuch von Nürnberg* (1862), or the Nuremberg *Polizeiordnungen* (1861).

⁵ Hutten edition: *Opera quae reperiri potuerunt omnia*, 5 vols. plus 2 indices (Leipzig: Teubner, 1859–70; repr., Aalen: Zeller, 1963–66). Aventinus edition: *Johannes Turmair's genannt Aventinus Sämmtliche Werke*, 5 vols., individual vols. ed. Siegmund Riezler and Matthias Lexer (Munich: Kaiser, Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1881–86).

⁶ *Thomas Murners Deutsche Schriften mit den Holzschnitten der Erstdrucke*, 9 vols., ed. Gustav Bebermeyer, Eduard Fuchs, Paul Merker, et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1918–31).

⁷ Recently, it has become much more difficult to obtain copies or microfilms, much less the original works, due to new restrictions by lending libraries. Often now, for example, books cannot be sent to university departments or institutes; or microfilming is refused because of possible damage to the original works; or copying fees are prohibitive. Such hindrances to access thus makes the creation of reliable critical editions all the more urgent.

⁸ Special thanks to Professor James Hardin, who is himself a specialist in middle German literature, for soliciting and translating this article.

Literary Transitions, 1300–1500: From Late Medieval to Early Modern

Graeme Dunphy

A Period of Flux?

A POPULAR IF UNINFORMED MANNER of speaking refers to the medieval period as “the dark ages.” If there is a dark age in the literary history of Germany, however, it is the one that follows: the fourteenth and early fifteenth century, the time between the Middle High German *Blütezeit* and the full blossoming of the Renaissance. It may be called a dark age, not because literary production waned in these decades, but because nineteenth-century aesthetics and twentieth-century university curricula allowed the achievements of that time to fade into obscurity.¹ If we compare the high medieval writings of Walther von der Vogelweide or Wolfram von Eschenbach with the Reformation writings of Martin Luther or Ulrich von Hutten, the cultural gulf that opens up before us seems enormous, leaving the impression that the intervening years were ones of rapid transition. But when we acknowledge that a full three centuries lie between these two familiar landmarks, we realize that the rate of change was doubtless no faster than in any other literary epoch. If the period from the mid-thirteenth century to the end of the fifteenth may be called a transition, it is because the early thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries are established coordinates in the discipline of literary history. There are good reasons for this: the *Blütezeit* produced Middle High German poetics of particular genius, the Reformation intellectual exchanges of an extremely high caliber. If we define the former as medieval and the latter as early modern, it can be useful to see the gradual dawning of modernism as the years “between.” But it is important to recognize that all such constructs are arbitrary.

What characterizes the literature of the transition? In the late medieval period the forms and aspirations of literary endeavor stood in clear continuity with those of the High Middle Ages; but they were also rapidly expanding in scope, with many innovations that would become important for the Renaissance and the Reformation. The bulk of chirographic² production continued to be written in Latin, but the German language was quickly gaining ground. The student approaching the period for the first time will be struck by obvious linguistic developments.³ Diphthongization (*hūt* > *Haut*) set in from the late thirteenth century, though the monophthongization that filled the gap

left by the splitting of the long vowels (*huot* > *Hut*) had yet to occur. The lengthening of short vowels, the disappearance of the preterit singular grade of ablaut, and various other forms of leveling also fell in these centuries. Late Middle High German had become Early New High German. However, for literary historians the transition from late medieval to early modern is above all defined by the emergence of intellectual, social, political, and aesthetic developments that lie at the heart of our conception of modernity. In particular, the evolution of new types of writing was driven by changes in the milieu that fostered literature, the rise of new literate classes of society, the spread of printing, and a redefinition of the role of writing. A decisive development of the fifteenth century was the importation to Germany of Italian humanism, for which reason the phrase “Northern Renaissance” has been used to sum up the spirit of the age. Equally, several new forms of religious awakening can be characterized as typically late medieval. Bringing all these elements under a common denominator we may say that the intellectual life of the centuries of transition showed a great openness to new ideas — an openness that stands in contrast both to the more rigid cognitive hierarchies of the High Middle Ages and to the entrenched positions of the Reformation.⁴ The resulting diversification of German literature reveals itself in the new forms of writing pioneered by new classes of writers for ever-widening circles of readers. We shall observe this increased diversity in the traditional centers of literary production, the court and the cloister, but even more so in the new literary world of the cities. And we shall see the parallel rise of Jewish literary awareness as belonging in the same broad context.

Courtly Life in Transition

What we call the Middle High German *Blütezeit* (1170–1230) was the zenith of a specifically courtly literature at a time when the great courts were able to provide a level of patronage unknown elsewhere in society. This tradition of poetics sponsored by powerful princes continued throughout the later Middle Ages and well into the early modern period, though it represented an ever-diminishing proportion of the total output of new writing in German. Geographically speaking, courtly patronage of literature continued to spread, northward and eastward; where thirteenth-century German literature had been practiced most actively, in the Austrian and Bavarian courts and to a lesser extent in the Rhineland, we now find courts such as at Prague or Braunschweig becoming literary centers. In the first instance it was the old forms of courtly literature that were promulgated. The courts in this period were, after all, probably the most conservative part of society; at a time when the urban societies and even the peasantry were looking for new ways to define themselves, the nobility wanted to maintain the identity it had enjoyed in the age of chivalry. The main concern of the great territorial princes, whose status was enhanced by the increased privileges granted by the Golden Bull of Charles IV (1356), was to consolidate their power in the face of the rise of

urban society. Meanwhile the lower nobility was losing power to the great nobles above them and the cities below them. More than ever, courtly literature celebrated a world view rooted in an idealized past; and as the discrepancy between this ideal and the realities of courtly life widened, nostalgic calls for restoration of the good old days became more urgent. In view of this conservatism it is no surprise that we seldom find radically new perspectives, or that the “post-classical” courtly novel — everything after Konrad von Würzburg (ca. 1230–87) — turned into an epigonal, tired imitation of the romance of the golden age.

Nevertheless, certain courtly novels of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries became highly successful. At the beginning of the period of transition Johann von Würzburg⁵ wrote an extremely well-received novel, *Wilhelm von Österreich* (1314). Its popularity is attested by the survival of seventeen manuscripts, ten of which are complete, and by the reception of the protagonists Wilhelm and Aglye as ideal lovers in the anonymous mid-fourteenth-century novel *Friedrich von Schwaben*. Johann records that his *Wilhelm von Österreich* was commissioned by the dukes Friedrich and Leopold of Austria — a poignant example of literature serving the purposes of princely legitimacy, in that the eponymous hero, though fictitious, is cast as the patrons’ forebear. The novel tells of the love of young Wilhelm of Austria for the “heathen” princess Aglye, which is frustrated when her father betroths her to King Walwan of Phrygia. Walwan is in conflict with Melchior of Marocco, and Wilhelm joins his expeditions, excelling in all kinds of adventures. In essence a typical *Minne* (love) and *Aventiure* (adventure) romance, *Wilhelm von Österreich* contains much that is traditionally courtly, combining the familiar chivalric concerns with the heightened late medieval interest in the Orient. However, in terms of characterization Johann’s novel represents a step in the direction of modern perspective. In contrast to earlier heroes, such as Erec or Parzival, whose quest was ultimately fulfilled by locating themselves correctly within society, Wilhelm is individualistic: he seeks his identity within himself and cannot come to rest.⁶ This explains why the novel does not have the expected happy ending. Ultimately, Wilhelm and Aglye marry, but he is killed treacherously with a poisoned spear while hunting a unicorn, and she dies of grief, leaving their son Friedrich the throne of Austria. He dies not because, like Tristan or Schionatulander, he has been denied the object of his quest, but because it was granted him and he was not content.

One remarkable courtly novelist of the fifteenth century was Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken (ca. 1393–1456).⁷ Born princess of Lorraine, she governed her principality as regent for over a decade (1429–42) during the minority of her sons. Her four romances, *Herpin*, *Sibille* (ca. 1437, published 1514), *Lober und Maller* (before 1437), and *Huge Scheppel* (1437, published as *Hug Schapler*, 1500), are adaptations of French works, and all are historically anchored, a feature that generally characterizes the later courtly novel in contrast to the classical courtly novel. In Elisabeth’s case, the claim of historical truth seems to be particularly strong, underlined by her use of the generic tag “warhaftige cronik” (true chronicle), and it is in this context that we may

understand why she was one of the first in German to use prose for the writing of a romance: by the fifteenth century the modern view was gaining ground that prose is more suitable than verse for a strictly factual report.

Despite the author's claims, however, *Huge Scheppel* is a fictional account of the tenth-century Hugh Capet, King of France and progenitor of the Capetian dynasty.⁸ The historical Hugh was a grandson of Robert I of France and on his mother's side a nephew of Emperor Otto the Great; in the novel, Huge is the offspring of a nobleman and a butcher's daughter, an inauspicious match that should have condemned the boy to his mother's rank. But Huge is not content with this and declares: "Jch hab wol ein ander besser meynung von mir. Metzlen oder kouffmanschatz zů triben hab ich keynen mūt/oder ouch ochsen oder schwyn ab zů thůn. Ich hab vil ein hübscher hantwerk gelernet" (I have indeed a better opinion of myself. I have no desire to pursue butchery or the merchant's treasures, nor to slaughter oxen or swine. I have learned a far more courtly trade). Thus he seeks out the life of a knight, and by a series of adventures culminating in a royal marriage he attains the French throne. This rags-to-riches story offends the order of chivalric fiction, in which a young Parzival, Tristan, or Lancelot may appear to come from nowhere and succeed through personal merit, only to be revealed in the end to have impeccable parentage; the illusion of the self-made man ultimately confirms rather than undermines the doctrine that one must be born to high estate. The upward mobility of Huge, however, radically challenges this doctrine, and it is surprising to find an author of Elisabeth's rank feeling comfortable with such material. One explanation may be that she herself, like the Huge of the novel, lived through a turbulent period and succeeded in maintaining the stability of her realm by sustaining an alliance with the now powerful urban upper classes. This alliance of noble and patrician worlds lies behind the figure of Huge, and indeed, although the romance was written for the entertainment of the court, it became immensely popular in the literate circles of the cities as well. Besides this, Elisabeth clearly intended her hero to be a role model for her sons, making the work something of a *Fürstenspiegel* (mirror of princes), which teaches the right manner of courtly conduct: young Huge may be a ruffian, but as a king he embodies wisdom and prudence.

Another female author from the highest courtly circles was Eleonore of Scotland (1433–80), also known as Eleonore von Österreich or Eleonore Stuart. A daughter of James I of Scotland, she married Siegmund of Tirol in 1448, and similarly to Elisabeth of Nassau-Saarbrücken she became actively involved in governing the principality during the years of her husband's absence. Though her authorship has been called into question,⁹ it seems certain that the prose novel *Pontus und Sidonia* (1463), another adaptation from the French, was at least written under her patronage at the court of Innsbruck. It tells how Pontus, prince of Galicia, flees to Brittany when his father's kingdom falls to the armies of the sultan. Arriving incognito he proves himself as a knight and wins the love of the princess Sidonia. In subsequent adventures he wins back his father's kingdom, and the couple become ideal rulers of their joint realms. The plot is nostalgic for traditional courtly values, and like Elisabeth's novels, it may be seen as

a mirror of princes. Written shortly after the fall of Constantinople, it highlights the perceived threat of the rising power of Islam, a theme that became increasingly urgent in European literature until the Turkish expansion was contained a century later with the Battle of Lepanto (1571).

In the later fifteenth century a center of literary activity emerged at the court of the Electoral Palatinate in Heidelberg under the reigns of Friedrich der Siegreiche (the Victorious, 1449–76) and Philipp der Aufrichtige (the Honest, 1476–1508); it was inspired in no small part by Friedrich's learned sister Mechthild.¹⁰ The best known of the Heidelberg romancers was Johannes von Soest, whose *Die Kinder von Limburg* (The Children of Limburg, ca. 1480) is a curious blend of Arthurian epic, Tristan romance, *chanson de geste*, and *Antikeroman* (the courtly romance tradition drawing on classical Greek and Roman material), possibly a deliberate synthesis of the familiar strands of courtly fiction. One focus of this group of writers was the rewriting in German of Middle Dutch romances (most of these were themselves translated from French), and Johannes's novel is a fine example. Another is the anonymous *Ogier von Dänemark* (1479), which is particularly interesting for its political implications. Ogier's life is threatened by the vindictiveness of Charles the Great, but he succeeds in establishing his place in the feudal society when it becomes clear that Charles needs him in the fight against the Saracens. In the end Charles holds Ogier's spurs, thus inverting the classical symbol of the acknowledgement of a feudal superior. *Ogier von Dänemark* is often bracketed with the thirteenth-century romances *Gerart van Rossiliun* and *Reinolt von Montelban* under the heading *Empörerepen* (*empören*, "to rebel"), in which the hero is an upstart vassal in conflict with his overlord. In the original French context these may have had their place in the resentments of lower nobility in their little courts far from the eyes of the king. In Germany the background was the independence that the great lords claimed with respect to the emperor, especially in the century after the Golden Bull reinforced princely autonomy. The purpose of such a tale is not to undermine the feudal system but to set limits to its imperial dimension.

Turning to lyrics, we find in the fourteenth century the last phase of the traditional Middle High German genres of *Minnesang* and *Sangspruchdichtung* (aphoristic poetry), which lost vitality as the focus of interest switched to the new urban idiom of *Meistersang* (also called *Meistergesang*, "master song"). Nevertheless, *Minnesang* in the traditional mould is found well into the period of transition.¹¹ Here the literary giant of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century is the Meissen poet Heinrich Frauenlob (ca. 1250–1318).¹² His work covers the full range of courtly lyrics as we know them from the poets of the previous generation, including courtly love songs, political *Sangsprüche*, and a series of formally more complex songs, known as *Leiche*, on the Trinity and the Virgin; many of his melodies have also survived. In his portrait in the *Manessische Handschrift* (the famous Manessa Codex, or Heidelberg Manuscript C, begun during his lifetime), he seems to be conducting a choir of nine singers and players, which suggests the performance of a *Leich*, as only these extended religious pieces would have been performed by

an ensemble. The cognomen *Frauenlob* (praise of Our Lady) probably referred originally to this praise of the Virgin, though later tradition links it to his dispute with the poet Regenbogen about the relative merits of the terms *wîp* (woman) and *vrouwe* (lady). This *wîp/vrouwe* controversy in fact constituted one of the most fascinating episodes in his career.¹³ In the Manessa Codex one group of songs is ascribed alternately to Frauenlob and to “Regenbog,” forming a dialogue in which the Regenbogen stanzas argue for *wîp*, the Frauenlob verses for *vrouwe*. Behind this arrangement lies a romantic notion of singers’ joust, though it is doubtful whether these songs were sung as a contest in quite this form. At any rate, the argument develops with challenge and counter-challenge, until the final piece in the set wins the debate for Frauenlob by producing telling etymologies for the two words: *vrouwe* receives an honorable etymology, from the joy (*vrô*) and pain (*wê*) of love, but for *wîp* the poet invents the story of an unpleasant king:

Vrankriche, ich nenne dich durch Wippeon den künic.
des mut was rünic.
er hiez der kindel varen,
die da meidel waren,
unz sie verlurn der blumen lust mit der meide jaren;
so was im lieb ir stolzer lib unz das sie wurden swanger. (V, 104, 1–6)

[France, I mention you because of King Wippeon. He was fickle. He ordered the children — the girls in that country — to be spied out, until they lost the flower of joy along with their maiden years. Then he rejoiced in their fine figures until they became pregnant.]

If they became pregnant they were banished; but as long as they were neither virgins nor mothers, he took pleasure in them. These in-between women (*mit-tenkünne*, *mittel-sie*) were named *wîp* after the lecherous pedophile Wippeon. Can a word with such origins stand beside the noble *vrouwe*, asks the poet? As it happens, Frauenlob was not so far from the truth with his fictitious etymologies, though he could not have known it. Modern linguistics derives *vrouwe* from Germanic **frawan*, **frōwō* (lord, or lady) from an Indo-European root **per* (first, chief); *wîp* on the other hand is thought to go back to IE **ghwibh-* (pudenda). And indeed, the subsequent semantic development in modern German, which makes *Frau* the standard term and *Weib* derogatory, would seem to answer Frauenlob’s plea.

After Frauenlob, *Sangspruch* went into a sharp decline, though in the later fourteenth century, Heinrich von Mügeln, and in the fifteenth, Muskatblüt and Michel Beheim, were still producing gnomic works for the courts.¹⁴ *Minnesang*, however, was to have one last blossom, as the outstanding singer of the early fifteenth century, the South Tyrolean Oswald von Wolkenstein (1376–1445), at least fleetingly reversed the trend.¹⁵ Unusual for a poet of this period, Oswald’s biography can be reconstructed in detail, thanks in part to frequent autobiographical references in his poems, which testify to a particularly strong authorial self-awareness. His corpus of some 133 songs reveals a highly innovative poet. His love songs are firmly rooted

in the *Minne* tradition, yet he goes new ways in introducing melodies and poetic techniques from Italian, French, and Flemish contemporaries. The thematic breadth of his range of songs is astounding: travel, war, marriage, spring, dawn; songs of the Virgin, repentance, and the city; songs full of social critique and autobiography. How far his technique exceeded that of earlier courtly lyricists can be seen from the opening of one of the travel songs:

Durch Barbarei, Arabia,
durch Hermani in Persia,
durch Tartari in Suria,
durch Romani in Türggia,
Ibernia,
der sprüng han ich vergessen. (Song 44, I, 1–6)

[Through Berberland, Arabia, through Armenia to Persia, through Tartarland to Syria, through Byzantium to Turkey, Georgia, such hops I've long forgotten.]

The short lines and cataloguing effect lend the poem a momentum that suggests the excitement of the journey. Many of Oswald's travel songs have such lists of places, though it is unlikely that he actually visited them all. A conflict of the estates appears in song 25, "Ain burger und ain hofman," a disputation between a knight and a burgher, about which is best fitted to win the love of a young woman; interestingly, the knight comes off rather badly. Oswald was imprisoned twice in his life, and he introduced the new form of prisoner's song to his colorful *oeuvre*. In one song the image of the prisoner is fed back into the love poem:

Gevangen und gefüret
ward ich ainst als ain dieb
mit sailen zü gesnüret;
das schüff meins herzen lieb,
von der ich hab erworben
mein aigen leiden swër.
wer si noch ainst gestorben!
noch ist si mir gevër. (Song 23, III, 9–16)

[Once I was captured and led away like a thief, bound up by ropes. It was the love in my heart that did this, a love that has caused me great suffering. If only this love had died! But still it haunts me.]

Oswald is also noteworthy for his mastery of the relationship between text and music; his melodies, like *Frauenlob*'s, which have been recorded, were often set in polyphony and quite sophisticated, if imitative.¹⁶ This was without doubt the acme of the late medieval lyric. Oswald was exceptional, however, and possibly out of step with the prevailing mood, for after his death his poetry was all but forgotten until modern scholarship rediscovered it. With him died the tradition of the courtly troubadour.

However, if the old forms of courtly literature suffered neglect, the fourteenth century did produce a number of new, specifically courtly forms, which focused on the characteristics that distinguished the nobility from the other classes of society. One was the chessbook, a peculiar form that turned the game into a didactic allegory of the feudal order. The *Schachzabelbuch* (Chessboard Book, 1337) of Konrad von Ammenhausen (b. 1280/90) is the best known of this series of mostly anonymous German verse and prose reworkings of a Latin tract by the Italian Dominican Jacobus de Cessolis (fl. 1288–1322), which takes the chessboard as the starting point for an extended metaphorical exploration of the divinely appointed social structure. King and queen (*chünig*, *chünigin*) head the dignitaries, aided by bishop (*alde*), knight (*ritter*), and rook (*roch*) leading an army of pawns (*venden*).¹⁷ The knights are the easiest of the middle-ranking pieces to locate in the feudal order; in the prose version of the text we read:

Der ritter auf dem schachtzabel sol sitzen auf ainem ross, mit allem harnasch vnd gantzem wappen getzyert vnd angelegt vnd also geschyckht, das er hab ainen helm auf seinem hawpt vnd ain sper in der rechten hant vnd bedecktt in ainem schilt, vnd in der lenken hant ein swert vnd an dem leib ain pantzir, vnd vor ain prustplech, vnd mit armgerät vnd mit paingerät angelegt, vnd sporn an seinen füessen vnd plechhantschuech an seinen henten, vnd vnder im ain pfard, das tzw streit getzogen sey vnd mit einer pfell wedekht.¹⁸

[The knight on the chessboard is to sit on a steed, adorned with full armor and weapons, and to be crafted with a helmet on his head and a lance in his right hand, covered by a shield, and in his left hand a sword and on his body a coat of mail and on his chest a hauberk, and wearing arm and leg protection and spurs on his feet and metal gloves on his hands, and under him a horse that is trained for battle and covered in silk cloth.]

As the pieces were differently shaped from today's, the modern reader is grateful that the text takes time to describe exactly what each one looked like. We thus have the full image of the knight as we know him from battle scenes in courtly novels, mounted on his steed with all the requisite accoutrements, and the text goes on to discuss the virtues he must possess and the tasks with which he is charged. The rook represents the king's deputy and is depicted holding a symbolic rod. The piece called a bishop in English is in Middle High German known simply as the elder, which the text allegorizes as a judge, and the figure on the board can be identified by the open book he is holding. This means that the ecclesiastical princes are not represented on the chessboard at all: the origins of chess lie in the Islamic world, and it was not until the sixteenth century that the English language Christianized the game by upgrading the Middle English archer to a bishop; German never did so. At the bottom of the structure, of course, are the pawns. Where modern German speaks of the *Bauer* (peasant), medieval *vende* (like English pawn) means "foot-soldier."¹⁹ However, since medieval warfare made more use of armed peasants and townspeople than of professional soldiers, the text is free to identify each of the eight pawns as representing a different group of agricultural or urban trades. Despite the

Dominican affiliation of Jacobus, chessbooks were fundamentally courtly in their interest and sought to strengthen feudal power structures by developing idealized models of each estate of secular society.

Another interesting form coming to prominence in the fifteenth century, but not achieving high fashion until the mid-sixteenth, was the *Hauschronik* (housebook), the chronicle of a noble family designed to demonstrate its antiquity and grandeur.²⁰ At a time when humanism was demanding that scholarship pay rigorous attention to sources and distinguish *res factae* from *res fictae*, the housebook became popular among ruling houses — especially those of the lower ranks of the nobility that had recently enjoyed some rise in fortune — to underpin their legitimacy with elaborately embellished accounts of the origins of their bloodlines. In the attempt to meet the expectations of both patrons and peers, humanistically trained historians had to juggle contradictory demands. The *Hauschronik* thus became a hybrid form. Occupying a position between the late medieval chronicle and early modern historiography it integrates elements of mythology, travel literature, biography, genealogy, objective history, and blatant fiction. An early example is the *Schaumburgische Chronik* by Hermann von Lerbeck (fl. 1380), a Dominican theologian working in the service of the dukes Bernhard and Otto von Schaumburg. It runs from 1030 to 1407 and draws on the local history of Minden as well as the history of Hermann's own order but concentrates principally on the successes of the family. The two best-known housebooks, the *Truchsessenchronik* and the *Zimmerische Chronik*, are both sixteenth-century.

As a postscript to this survey of the late medieval courts we must also take note of the bishops' courts, which obviously stand apart from the secular courts and yet are closer in their thinking to the courtly world than to the monasteries. Bishops, after all, were often scions of ruling houses. The best-known writer at a bishop's court in this period was Heinrich Wittenwiler (ca. 1395–1426), whose *Ring* is a comic-didactic verse satire, probably written in the first decade of the fifteenth century.²¹ Wittenwiler was presumably engaged in the service of the bishop of Constance, to whom he would later become *Hofmeister*. In the prologue to the *Ring* he explains that, since pedagogy is usually boring, he has chosen to communicate through the medium of an entertaining tale. The ring of the title is an allusion to the cycle of the world, and he wishes above all to inculcate good manners and right conduct in the world, though he is equally concerned with literary style. In the manuscript, colored marginal stripes identify in green those passages that satirize peasant boorishness and in red those that can serve as stylistic models for young writers; simply put, green is for comic relief, red for the serious or sententious.

The *Ring* tells how the peasant lad Bertschi Triefnas of Lappenhausen sets out to win the love of the unspeakably ugly Mätzli Rüerenzumph. The first green passage in the work describes her virtues in terms perhaps meant to invoke Wolfram's depiction of Cundrie:

Ir wängel rosenlecht sam äschen,
Ir prüstel chlein sam smirtäschen.

Die augen lauchten sam der nebel,
 Der aten smacht ir als der swebel. (ll. 89–92)

[Her cheeks were as rosy as ashes, her breasts as delicate as sacks of fat.
 Her eyes glowed like fog, her breath was scented like sulfur.]

He first woos her in a peasant tournament that parodies the knightly joust, then by singing on her rooftop; and when this results in disaster and Mätzli is locked in her room by her father, he turns to love letters. Unfortunately, neither of them can read. Bertschi seeks the help of the clerk Nabelreiber, and Mätzli turns to the apothecary Chrippenchra, who however takes advantage of her and leaves her pregnant. The young woman is now as keen as her suitor to marry, but the parents' objections must be overcome. Bertschi's family debates the pros and cons of marriage, while Mätzli's requires the groom to undergo an examination to prove his fitness for family life. When these obstacles have been surmounted, the wedding takes place and, despite the unpalatable fare, degenerates into an orgy of gluttony and drunkenness ending in a brawl between the Lappenhausen locals and the Nissingen neighbors. While the happy couple enjoy their wedding night, the two villages go to war, supported by witches, giants, and dwarfs, the only allies they can find. After lengthy campaigns, Lappenhausen is defeated through treachery and razed to the ground; all the inhabitants (including Mätzli) are slaughtered, with the sole exception of Bertschi, who retreats to the Black Forest to live as a hermit.

The basic plot comes from a short *Schwank* (farce) known as *Von Metzen hochzeit* (On Metze's Wedding) and is expanded to some 9,700 lines. As the names of the protagonists suggest, the entire tale is a parody of crude peasant mores. However, Wittenwiler's point is not that peasants in particular are to be condemned for such behavior, but that all who behave in this way are peasants. Thus the courtly sneering at the rural poor is harnessed for the instruction of the reader on all questions concerning, "wie ein man sich halten schol / an sel und leib und gen der welt" (how a man should conduct himself in his soul and body, and in his dealings with the world). Wittenwiler builds into the narrative all kinds of didactic material. For example, Mätzli's father examines Bertschi on his knowledge of religion, health, and managing a household, as well as on general questions of virtue and right conduct. While the element of preaching clearly stands in the forefront, with many dogmas of the church carefully documented, Wittenwiler's clerical and courtly audiences obviously set equal store by the finer points of culinary sophistication, for the hero also has to proclaim in demonstration of his learning: "Chäs nach flaisch und nuss zuo fischen / Geb man uns ze allen tischen!" (At every meal let us be given cheese after the meat, and nuts with the fish!).

Monasticism and New Spiritualities

Medieval European literature was dominated by the church, and despite the explosion of secular literature from the twelfth century onward the traditional

forms of religious writing continued to be produced in vast quantities throughout the later Middle Ages, principally in the monasteries. It is estimated that 75% of all late medieval German manuscripts contain spiritual texts.²² Most were written in Latin, but German-language texts increased proportionately in response to changes in the educational demographics of German society. Biblical texts gradually became available in the vernacular, first as freely related verse narratives, such as Lutwin's *Eva und Adam* (fourteenth c.),²³ then as prose in the tradition of the *Historienbibeln*,²⁴ and from the mid-fourteenth century as more disciplined prose translations. The Augsburg Bible of 1350 contains the first complete New Testament in German; the Wenzel Bible of 1389 added the Old Testament; in 1452–55 the Latin Gutenberg Bible became the first book to be printed with movable type in the Christian West; the Mentel Bible, the first printed German translation, was produced by Johannes Mentel in Strasbourg in 1466; it was followed by the Cologne Bible of 1478–79 and others. The language of Mentel's Bible is archaic, suggesting that he took the text from an early-fourteenth-century manuscript that may predate the 1350 Augsburg text.²⁵ Meanwhile the *Biblia pauperum* (Paupers' Bible) tradition flourished in the fourteenth century, presenting the Bible in opulent painted manuscripts in which illustrations of scenes from the two testaments appear in parallel showing typological relationships; thus a scene from a Gospel would be flanked by one *ante legem* and one *sub lege*²⁶ to illustrate the integrated nature of God's plan of salvation. Some of the large colorful manuscripts with eight roundels on a page were entirely textless, but others, such as those printed as blockbooks,²⁷ had some commentary. Because of the great costs of production, this was clearly not, as the name might suggest, a Bible intended for the poor; the *pauperes* have been interpreted as the uneducated wealthy, but that too is problematic, for the visual program of these works is intellectually demanding. Alongside the Bible the most sought-after vernacular religious texts were legends, that is, biographies of saints, which began to be collected in vast legendaries, such as the various translations of the *Legenda aurea* (Golden Legend, ca. 1260) of Jacobus de Voragine (ca. 1229–98).²⁸ There were also books of discipline, meditative texts, various forms of expository works, and a new fashion for histories of the foundation of monasteries.

In the late Middle Ages, Europe experienced a series of religious renewals, whose origins reached back to the Cluniac reforms of the eleventh century and whose influences reached forward to the Reformation of the sixteenth; from the late thirteenth century they gave rise to uniquely late medieval forms of spirituality. The most important was mysticism.²⁹ Christian mysticism was summed up in the phrase *cognitio Dei experimentalis* (knowing God by experience), a paraphrase of St. Bonaventura's statement, "Optimus enim modus cognoscendi Deum est per experimentum dulcedinis" (The best way to know God is by experiencing his sweetness); similar formulations occur in Thomas Aquinas. Mysticism denotes an intense personal experience in which the believer has a sense of being taken up into oneness with God (*unio mystica*); it is commonly portrayed as a love relationship — with the Almighty, with Jesus,

with the Holy Spirit — and may be drastically erotic.³⁰ Knowledge of self and of God are achieved through self-denial, spiritual exercises, and ecstatic trances. Mysticism held a particular appeal to certain women, who found in its practice an area of religious life that often inspired literary expressions of their special relationship with God. As *religiosae mulieres* (religious women) they were able to participate on an equal basis with men, though many pursued their spiritual enlightenment under the guidance of a male confessor. The great founders of German mysticism were David von Augsburg (ca. 1200–1272), Hadewijch of Brabant (fl. ca. 1240–50), Mechthild von Magdeburg (ca. 1207–ca. 1282), Meister Eckhart (ca. 1260–ca. 1328), Johannes Tauler (ca. 1300–1361), and Heinrich Seuse (ca. 1295–1366). Although their dates give the impression that the golden age of mysticism lay between the mid-thirteenth and the mid-fourteenth centuries, the movement commanded an undiminished popular following in the later fourteenth century too. At the same time, a new wave of piety known as the *Devotio Moderna* was emerging from the Low Countries, inspired above all by the teaching of Geert Groote (1340–84). Geert's influence is visible in the asceticism of the most original fifteenth-century writer on spirituality, Thomas à Kempis (1379–1471). Like mysticism, *Devotio Moderna* stressed experience — better to feel contrition than to be able to define it, as Thomas wrote in the first chapter of his *Imitatio Christi* (ca. 1418) — but it remained wary of visionary rapture; the aim was still closeness to God, but no longer conceived as mystic union.

Thomas was a member of the Augustinian Order, which like the Benedictine Order had exerted decisive influence on German culture throughout the Middle Ages. Though these older orders remained influential, their preference continued to be for writing mainly in Latin. The upsurge of vernacular religious writing was driven by new institutions and by the spiritual awakening of the laity. The Teutonic Order (1190), the Franciscans (1210), and the Dominicans (1215) came into existence during the Middle High German *Blütezeit* but had a significant impact on German literature only later. To these orders we must add the enormously influential lay movement begun in the late twelfth century, the Beguines. It is in these settings that we will find the literary fruits of the new spiritualities.³¹

The Teutonic Order (members may have the letters OT = *Ordo Teutonicus* after their names) was originally established in the Holy Land by Hanseatic crusaders as a medical brotherhood in imitation of the Templars and Hospitallers. In 1198 it was raised to the status of a knightly order comparable to the Maltese Order, and as such it was a religiously based organization of lay people trained in arms for the defense of Christendom. A papal *exemptio* freed it from the jurisdiction of local civil and ecclesiastical authorities, allowing it to take military action almost autonomously. Led by a *Hochmeister* (Grand Master) and organized in provinces, it grew rapidly in the following century and by 1300 had more than 300 *Kommenden* (command posts). In 1224 it turned its force against the “heathen” Prussians and in the ensuing wars not only subdued and Christianized the populations of the eastern Baltic but also established there a Teutonic Order state with its residence at

Königsberg. This territorial entity endured for 300 years and provides part of the historical background to the German-speaking East Prussia of modern times. The Teutonic Knights were eventually dislodged from the Baltic by the rise of Poland in the sixteenth century. A second main concentration was the province of Austria, where the order became involved in the Turkish wars.³²

The literature of the Teutonic Order, which is substantial, was at its most productive in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.³³ Recent scholarship has questioned whether all of it was actually written, or commissioned, by members of the order or merely used by them; for instance, in some of the religious literature they may simply have appropriated existing works. However that may be, the writings found their place in the life of the order and have come down to us as a comprehensive corpus testifying to the literary awareness of the community. The importance of the order for literature has often been underestimated; but the huge volume of knights who passed through its doors in the course of these centuries made it a formidable force in the shaping of early modern German society and culture.

The cult of the Virgin was particularly important for the religiosity of the Teutonic Order; members were sometimes called *Marienritter* (Knights of Mary). A series of works produced by the order are dedicated to her life, foremost among them Bruder Philipp's *Marienleben* (Life of Mary, early fourteenth c.), a particularly fine poem.³⁴ Philipp himself was a Carthusian, but a dedication in his prologue declares he is writing for "den brüdern von dem deutschen hūs" (the brothers of the German Order). St. Martina was also the subject of a number of pious legends originating in the order, and Luder von Braunschweig (1275–1335) wrote a celebrated life of St. Barbara. More generally, the Teutonic Knights' interest in inspirational saints is seen in their two great legends, the *Väterbuch* (Book of the Church Fathers) and the *Passional*, apparently both by the same late-thirteenth-century poet. The focus of these works on the *miles Christi* (soldier of Christ) and on conversion is characteristic of the Teutonic Order.

The extent to which the order contributed to the tradition of the biblical epic may seem surprising. Throughout the first half of the fourteenth century an apparently systematic attempt was made to render the most useful parts of the Bible into German. Besides the *Historia der alden ê* (History of the Old Covenant), which covers longer stretches of biblical history, a series of works reproduce individual books of the Bible: Judith, Esther, Job, the Maccabees, the Book of Acts, and the Apocalypse. The *Hiob-Paraphrase* (Paraphrase of Job) may serve as an example of the method. Each verse receives paraphrase and commentary, so that text and exegesis flow together and the interpretations of the poet appear to fall in the mouth of Job himself.³⁵ The biblical epics are generally anonymous, a possible exception being the *Makkabäer*, tentatively ascribed to Luder von Braunschweig, and there is some question whether the composition of certain of the biblical epics predates their adoption by the order. Among other religious writings to emerge from the Teutonic Order is a curious text by Tilo von Kulm entitled *Von siben ingesigeln* (1331), in just over 6,000 lines of rhyming couplets.³⁶ In allusion to

Revelation 5 and 6, the seven seals of the title are seven theological wonders, sealed to readers lacking insight: the incarnation of Christ, his baptism, passion, resurrection, ascension, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the Last Judgment. *Von siben ingesigeln* is not a narrative account of these events but seeks rather to “unseal” their mystery. The Teutonic Order is not usually known for contemplative writings, but this work is an exception in its sense of inner reflection.

The order also produced a smaller corpus of secular writings. One category beginning in the early fourteenth century was historiography, which chronicled the order’s activities and the regions implicated in its military campaigns. Foremost among these were histories of Prussia: Nikolaus von Jeroschin’s (d. ca. 1345) *Kronike von Pruzinlant*; Peter von Dusburg’s *Cronica terre Prussie*; the *ältere* and *jüngere Livländische Reimchronik*; and the *ältere* and *jüngere Hochmeisterchronik*.³⁷ Other text types include a chessbook — a form that transferred readily from the court to the knightly order — and a life of Marco Polo — perhaps the prototype of the German-language travel report,³⁸ whose observations about the non-Christian East made it of obvious interest to this order of crusaders.

The second influential order to appear in this period was founded in Italy by Francis of Assisi (1182–1226). The Franciscans, also known as Friars Minor (OFM = *Ordo Fratrum Minorum*) or in England as Grey Friars, were a mendicant order committed to extreme poverty, hence their popular name in German: *Barfüßer* (The Barefoot Order). The Italian Thomas of Celano (ca. 1190–1260), a confidant of Francis and his earliest biographer (ca. 1230), was among the first group of Franciscans sent north of the Alps to establish provinces in Germany. The order was popular because of its simple spirituality and service to the poor, and spread rapidly. Important German Franciscans of the early period were Lamprecht von Regensburg, who wrote a *Sanct Franciscan Leben* (Life of St. Francis) around 1238; David von Augsburg, the first German mystic; and David’s pupil, the prolific preacher Berthold von Regensburg (ca. 1220–72). By the beginning of our transition centuries, then, the order was well established and already had a literary tradition.³⁹

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Franciscans were less productive in literary output than other orders, perhaps because their principal calling led them away from the scriptorium. Nevertheless, a complete inventory of Franciscan writings would be extensive. An important center of Franciscan activity developed in Erfurt, and it is notable that this convent had a role in the biographies of many Franciscan authors of the late Middle Ages.⁴⁰ Usually, their work took the form of sermons in German or Latin. Since medieval preachers did not carry scripts into the pulpit, manuscripts of written sermons must have been intended as textbooks or sourcebooks for younger members of the order. Among the notable sermon writers were Berthold of Wiesbaden, Erasmus Schaltendorfer (both fourteenth century), and Hermann Etzen (fifteenth).

In the fifteenth century the Franciscan Order was troubled by an internal conflict. A laxness in observance of the rule led to a reform movement that

reached Germany around 1420, beginning in Cologne, and over the course of the century spread to include the majority of German Franciscans. The Observants, as they were called, insisted on absolute poverty, while the part of the order known as Conventuals permitted property. In 1517 the two groups finally split, the Observants becoming the modern Franciscans, while the Conventuals took the name Minorites. These tensions lie behind the *Chronica Ordinis Minorum Observantium* (Chronicle of the Order of Minor Observants) of Nikolaus Glasberger (d. 1508), which was begun in 1506 and continued by another hand after the author's death. The principal early chronicle of the Franciscans in Germany, it catalogues the observant monasteries and supports their cause. It is in the same context that we must read Bruder Heinrich's *Lob der Armut* (Praise of Poverty), an open letter testifying to his strict adherence to the observant lifestyle.

The most prolific Franciscan writer in late medieval Germany was Marquard von Lindau (ca. 1320–92), who wrote mainly in Latin. *De reparatione hominis* (On the Renewal of Mankind, ca. 1421–26) expounds salvation history in thirty chapters. Marquard also produced a number of important works in German: most notably his elucidation of the Decalogue, a collection of sermons, and tractates on the Book of Job and the Eucharist.⁴¹ The *Dekalogerklärung*, or *Buch der Zehn Gebote* (Decalogue Elucidation, or Book of the Ten Commandments), is a comprehensive guide to Christian living based on scholastic thinking but with strong elements of mysticism and the cult of the Virgin. Formally the text is presented as a dialogue in which a teacher (*der meister*) responds to questions from a student (*der iünger*) with lengthy expositions on each of the commandments. When, for example, the student asks, "Sag mir fürbas von dem dritten gebot als du mir von den andern gesagt hast von seinen synnen vnd materien etc." (Tell me about the third commandment as you told me of the others, about its sense and meaning, etc.), the teacher begins to expound on the holiness of Sunday, beginning with the days of creation.⁴² We are obliged, he explains, to abstain not only from work but also from trade and legal proceedings, "es wer dann vmb fried oder vmb gehörsame oder von notdurft oder das vil guts dovon kôm douon got gelobt wûrd" (unless it be a matter of maintaining the peace, or of obedience, or of urgent necessity, or if much good would come of it, through which God would be praised). The Sabbath begins at vespers, but this varies from place to place, and we should respect local customs. Question: Is it permissible to dance or feast on a Sunday? Answer: Distinctions have to be made, for this is more reprehensible in a cleric than in a layman. All this seems quite legalistic, as an exposition of ancient laws must inevitably be; but soon the discussion moves on to the ways in which Mary kept the commandments, and positive examples take the place of prohibitions: how Mary prepared her prayers, how she listened to the sermon, with what piety she lay down to sleep, and — entirely in the spirit of mysticism — the six stages of her contemplation.

A number of other Franciscan writers of this period are worthy of note, though few were widely known outside the order. Otto von Passau was a religious didactic writer of the second half of the fourteenth century. His most

influential work, *Die vierundzwanzig Alten oder der goldene Thron der minnenden Seele* (The Twenty-Four Elders, or the Golden Throne of the Loving Soul, 1418), contains instructions for the Christian life. Friedrich von Saarburch wrote a poem in rhyming couplets on the antichrist.⁴³ The majority of the best authors wrote in Latin, however. Doubtless the most important Franciscan historian of the fourteenth century was Johannes von Wintertur (ca. 1302–after 1348), whose chronicle was planned to account for world history but never got beyond the years 1190–1348. Rudolf von Biberach (ca. 1270–1326), a mystic theologian, wrote *De septem itineribus aeternitatis* (On the Seven Journeys of Eternity), which describes the ascent of the soul to God in seven stages; Johannes von Erfurt (fl. ca. 1300) was known for his theological, philosophical, and juridical manuals. However, none of these equaled the status of Marquard von Lindau, and few were widely known outside the order. It was only in the sixteenth century, with Thomas Murner, that the Franciscans again produced a writer with great appeal to a secular readership.

The Dominicans, the third new order, were also known as Predicants, or Order of Preachers (OP = *Ordo Praedicatorum*), or in England as Black Friars. Like the Franciscans, on whom to some extent they were modeled, the Dominicans were a mendicant order, but their focus on preaching made them a more aggressive force. Founded by the Spaniard Dominic of Calaruega (ca. 1170–1221), their origins lay in the Albigensian controversy, which had lasting implications for their understanding of their mission.⁴⁴ It motivated them, for example, to high intellectual aspirations in order to be armed for disputations against heresy. Like the Franciscans, they drew many of their neophytes from the cities, but with the difference that their recruitment targeted well-educated people from the upper burgher classes. Many Dominicans had a university education, and the order produced great scholars, foremost among them Albertus Magnus (1193–1280), an authority on everything from biblical exegesis to zoology, and his pupil, the most gifted systematic theologian of the late Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas (1224–74). The darker side of the order's history was its advocacy of the forceful suppression of deviance. As early as 1227 the Dominican Konrad von Marburg was placed in charge of the German Inquisition, which he pursued with extreme cruelty. This facet of the order left a literary testament in the form of the *Hexenhammer* (The Witches' Hammer, 1487) by the Dominican friar Heinrich Kramer (Institoris, 1430–1505), the most notorious treatise on witch hunting of the fifteenth century.⁴⁵

The Dominican Order struggled against perceived pagan tendencies in humanism, and their most powerful response to this competing source of learning was to produce kerygmatics — works on the exposition and preaching of the gospel — of the highest quality. Jakob von Soest (ca. 1360–after 1438) was a scholar of broad distinction whose writings include theological, homiletic, historical, and legal texts. His work on preaching technique may be regarded as his main contribution to the life of the order: *Distinctiones longiores pro arte praedicandi* (Longer Book of Distinctions on the Art of Preaching,⁴⁶ ca. 1400) is an alphabetically arranged encyclopedia of the

sermon genre, with explanatory lemmata on themes, biblical characters, points of doctrine, and theoretical problems. The amassing of comprehensive collections of alphabetically organized information was characteristic of the scholars of this period, though the use of alphabetical order was still far less common than it would become. Johannes Herolt (before 1390–1468) deserves mention as another respected author of preaching aids.

Dominican scholarship produced a number of significant historians in addition to Jakob von Soest. Hermann Korner (1365–1458) must have spent most of his life working on his *Chronica novella*, as he revised it repeatedly in both Latin and German, prose and verse. In essence a compilation of the works of earlier historians, but with personal critique of the events recorded, this chronicle runs from the foundation of Rome down through the sequence of emperors, but focuses particularly on Korner's home town of Lübeck. Hermann von Lerbeck's *Schaumbergische Chronik* was mentioned above; on behalf of his order he also composed ecclesiastical chronicles of Minden.

The Dominicans made a particularly strong contribution to German mysticism, with Meister Eckhart, Heinrich Seuse, and Johannes Tauler all standing in this tradition. The first and greatest was the creative theologian Meister Eckhart.⁴⁷ Eckhart himself never speaks of visionary experiences or emotional catharses, but he laid the philosophical foundation on which many subsequent mystics built their ideas. Eckhart's was more of an intellectual mysticism. He is best known for his German works, particularly his sermons and his *Buoch der goetlichen troestunge* (Book of Divine Consolations, ca. 1314), generally known as the *Trostbüchlein* (Little Book of Consolation), a short, sophisticated work that couches complex spiritual ideas in a dense prose style. It is impossible to understand Eckhart's German correctly without an awareness of certain key ideas that he expounds fully only in his Latin works, and this is no doubt one reason why his intentions have often been confused. Eckhart's mystical teachings take as their starting point the distinction between the temporal and the eternal, whereby only God the Eternal really *is*, while his creatures receive *being* as long as the Creator allows it to flow to them out of himself. Eckhart describes this process by analogy with a mirror, which receives an image though it produces none. The incarnation of the divine logos is thus a divine self-projection into time, and this — like everything in Eckhart's metaphysics — has two aspects: as an act of God it is eternal, but as an event in history it is rooted in time. The same two aspects lie at the root of his understanding of the human soul, whose vital spark, the *scintilla animae*, or *Seelenfünklein*, is both eternal and transitory; it is one with God and thus uncreated, yet at the same time divinely created and bound by the dimensions of this world. This paradox provides the metaphysical basis for Eckhartian mysticism; it became one of the principal complaints in turning the ecclesiastical establishment against him.

Fourteenth-century mysticism had formidable opponents on the conservative side of the church. In 1326 Eckhart became a *cause célèbre* in the political wrangling when the archbishop of Cologne instigated heresy proceedings against him through the Inquisition. It was unusual for this instrument to be

used against a leading theologian working within a major order, and since the Dominicans defended him — papal representative Nikolaus von Strassburg OP declared Eckhart's writings to be free of error — the Franciscans were asked to lead the prosecution. A series of theses, mostly from the *Trostbüchlein*, were adduced as evidence of unorthodoxy, and the defendant's rebuttal focused on the spirit of his intentions rather than the letter of the disputed theses. Ultimately, he appealed to the pope but lost his case, though the verdict of heresy did not fall until 1329, the year after his death.

This institutional disapproval did little to dampen the enthusiasm of those to whom he was a beacon of mystic enlightenment. Most of his Latin writings were translated into German in the subsequent decades, but his popularity went far beyond the reception of his works. The *Eckhart-Legenden*, actually sermon illustrations containing anecdotes of his wisdom, reflect that popularity. Examples are *Meister Eckharts Tochter* (Daughter) or *Meister Eckhart und der nackte Knabe* (and the Naked Boy). In the former, a "daughter" knocks at the monastery door asking for the master and declaring that she is neither virgin nor married nor widow, neither woman nor man; the solution to the riddle is that she exists in a transcendental state of enlightenment, and Eckhart declares her to be the "aller lûstersten menschen" (most enlightened person) he has ever met. The latter story tells how God appears in the form of a poor boy and engages Eckhart in a philosophical dialogue on the nature of divinity and revelation.

Eckhart's younger contemporary, Johannes Tauler, was deeply affected by the master's preaching. Tauler's own sermons are contained in over 200 manuscripts. They explore the *transformatio* or *deificatio* of the believer, which can occur in that divine *scintilla animae*, whereby God perfects the human soul by resolving it to himself. Tauler's influence was enormous, and it is telling that he was valued equally in the sixteenth century by the reformers and by the Jesuits. The other great original thinker to follow in Eckhart's wake was Heinrich Seuse, who as a young man received pastoral counseling from his mentor. Seuse's German writings are classics of mysticism. These include an autobiography, *Vita* (ca. 1362–66), a relatively new form in this period that lent itself to mystic explorations. This book concentrates on his sufferings, likened to Job's, and includes a running analogy with a knightly career: he is raised to spiritual knighthood and wounded in spiritual jousts, but in his tribulations he is comforted by visions, in one of which Meister Eckhart appears.

The Dominicans were keen to bind the new movement of female spirituality into their institution, and thus set up convents of nuns under their auspices.⁴⁸ The *cura monialium*, the pastoral care of women by the brethren, was in fact an obligation placed on both the Franciscans and the Dominicans by the church authorities to bring these women under the discipline of their organizations. For the monks this responsibility was not always welcome, but they pursued it with diligence; indeed, this may be the main reason why a highly intellectual order like the Dominicans produced vernacular literature at all. It has been asserted that Eckhart wrote in German only when he was writing for the nuns. *Yolanda von Vianden*, a 6,000-line verse account by the Trier