SOCIOPOTIC DISCOURSES: LITERARY RESPONSES TO THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF MODERN CULTURE

by

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A Thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto

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In response to the restricted literary values propagated in the nineteenth-century German, French and English university systems, oppositional groups produced what I will call sociopoetic discourses. These forms of writing reproduced non-institutionalized literary life-worlds by being persistent objects of discussion and by promoting the values implicated in "living" literary culture.

Most sociocritical views overlook this sociopoetic element in modern writing, since they view poetry either as a means for transmitting ideology or as a language practice removed from history, politics and other forms of social interaction. Sociopoetic discourses challenge this view because their existence outside the institution requires them to be assimilated into as many social domains as possible.

Nineteenth-Century European poetic treatises also did not account for sociopoetic activity, since they tended to subordinate poetry to reason. This poetic subservience was, however, undone by the repression of poetry that accompanied social modernization and by the affirmation of an autonomous art in opposition to this systematic negation. Sociopoetic discourses address the cultural space left between autonomy and denigration, a gap in modern culture from which poetry has been evacuated.
The writings of Heinrich Heine, Charles Baudelaire and Walt Whitman illustrate this point, as they resist both the systematization of modern life and the affirmation of autonomous cultural institutions. Heine's *Nordseezyklen* construct a parallel between the dissolution of a North-Sea-Island community that results from the modernization of Germany and his own transformation from a late romantic poet to modern journalist and writer of *neuen Gedichten*. Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris* presents a selection of fragmented prose pieces in order to represent an uprooted modern city, one which the readership is ironically invited to restructure at will. Whitman's sweeping work, in contrast, attempts to unify the various transplanted cultures and followers of "absolute individualism" in nineteenth-century America by addressing them as the community of his readers.

Finally, Marcel Proust's discussion of his own reading activity illustrates how the twentieth century transforms the distinction between literary and everyday discourses into an ontological division between worlds. This feature of "high" modernism is just briefly mentioned here, and its full development is left for future research.
Abstract

The modernization of the nineteenth-century German, French and English university systems resulted in the application of classical values to modern literary texts. In response, what I will call sociopoetic discourses promoted alternate literary values, less rigidly controlled cultural practices, not reducible to a systematic code. These texts were the bases for oppositional (sub-)cultures, Bohemian communities, literary cults and other manifestations of literary life-worlds that reacted against the systematization of literary studies, the formation of literary canons and the institutionalization of culture.

To conceptualize these unofficial cultural practices, my first chapter criticizes several modern and post-modern cultural theorists who, because they continue to segregate literary from everyday language practices, overlook this sociopoetic element in modern writing. These theorists all imagine modern poetry to be a communicative act distinct from the everyday one, while sociopoetic discourses participate in a refusal of this distinction. They are linked to life-worlds in which the everyday is literary, and they, therefore, anticipate their continued inclusion in day-to-day communicative actions, insofar as they present themselves not as full texts but as parts of speech acts to be completed by readers. This transformation from a complete utterance to one component in a communicative sequence provides a basis for a literary life-world's renovation and regeneration, as
the cultural values implicated in the text are propagated by the work's continued existence as an object of reading and discussion.

My discussion in chapter two then focuses on the fact that the anti-systematic, sociopoetic discursive quality is frequently mistrusted in modern European poetic treatises. These treatises tended to subordinate poetry to rational activity, although some also affiliated poetic discourse with intuitive knowledge as a means of confirming the workings of reason. Such subservience of poetic to rational discourses is, however, undone in two ways: (1) by the repression of poetry in nineteenth-century urban cultures, a form of negation that accompanies the systematization of modern societies and their stores of knowledge, and (2) by the affirmation of autonomous artistic and literary subcultures in opposition to this systematic negation.

The subsequent chapter examines the poetry of Heinrich Heine, Charles Baudelaire and Walt Whitman in order to outline three ways in which modern poetry resists both the systematization of modern life and the affirmation of autonomous cultural institutions. Heine's work exemplifies the assimilation of poetry into the modern world system. His Nordseezyklen record the dissolution of a North-Sea-Island community and its absorption into modern Germany. He makes this cultural revolution parallel his own transformation from a late romantic poet to modern journalist and writer of neuen Gedichten. Baudelaire's Spleen de Paris presents a selection
of fragmented prose representations of an uprooted modern city, which the readership is ironically invited to restructure at will. The invitation is a defiant one, as the disjunction of the various prose passages prevents any convincing systematic integration of them. Whitman's sweeping work, in contrast, addresses the entire American nation in order to unify the various transplanted cultures and followers of "absolute individualism" by addressing them as the community of his readers. He, at the same time, questions the possibility of this national community, as he constantly reminds his reader that his I is beyond their understanding.

In the conclusion, I use Marcel Proust's discussion of his own reading activity to show how the twentieth century transforms the distinction between literary and everyday discourses into an ontological division between worlds. This feature of "high" modernism is just briefly mentioned here, and its full development is left for future research.
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Introduction: Modern Poetry and the Life-World

Over twenty years ago, Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane noted that modern writing reflected a "bifurcation of the impulse to be modern" (44). According to them, the "high" modernist form of this impulse made sense of the external world's apparent disorder by affirming the existence of a comprehensive socio-symbolic order despite the apparent turmoil. This rather frightened reaction to the transient quality of modern life was allied with the project of cultural modernization epitomized by institutionalization of literary studies. Bradbury and McFarlane claimed that "high" Modernist writing attempted to disclose a cultural order by relating "arcane and private [forms of] art" to what was, in effect, an institutionally transmitted classical tradition (28). They noted, however, that modern writing had a second more "social" side, a side that included the discourses of surrealism and the avant-garde but also the various other

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1Bradbury and McFarlane are elaborating on Lionel Trilling's distinction between Matthew Arnold's positive sense of the term "modern" and the critically biting use of the term that became prevalent towards the end of the nineteenth century ("On the Teaching" 14-15). They also echo Frank Kermode's distinction between "traditionalist" and "anti-traditionalist" modernism (Sense 103).

2See David Lodge on the metaphoric element in modern writing (144), G. Robert Strange on the ways that modern British literature attempts to recover a rural ethos in modern city life (478-9), and Stanley Sultan on modernism and tradition (102-115).

3The frequently cited statements of this orientation are Matthew Arnold's "On the Modern Element in Literature," T. S. Eliot's "Ulysses, Order and Myth" and his "Tradition and the Individual Talent."
forms of modernism that have been the focus of more recent critical writing. These diverse modernisms embraced the variety and disorder of the modern world and reacted against the static aesthetics implicit in European academic humanism.

Heinrich Heine, Charles Baudelaire and Walt Whitman are three precursors of this "social" modernism, as many parts of their works react against the institutionalization of literary studies that was a part of the modernization of nineteenth-century German, French and Anglo-American cultures. These socially reactive passages constitute what I will call sociopoetic discourses, a kind of writing that, unlike the discourses of "high" Modernism, does not construct a cultural order by relating the present to a set of

4The criteria for selection to the assembly of modernist writers has, in recent years, been enlarged. Leftist critics have expanded the temporal boundaries to include almost all of the post-enlightenment period (Berman, Williams, Huyssen, Brooker). Feminist critics have insisted on the inclusion of women writers (Scott, Benstock, Gilbert and Gubar, Suleiman). African-American and other non-European writers have been made participants in modernism (De Jongh, Baker, Jayamanne et al). And, in an even stronger affirmation of proactive cultural pluralization, all markers of difference are given a modernist representation (Griffin).

5As Joseph Ben-David and Awraham Zloczower note, this modernization involved the transformation of the four traditional faculties (theology, philosophy, law and medicine) into a "host of new disciplines" (49, cited by Lundgreen 153). One of these new specialties was the study of modern literature as part of a project to define various national cultures. See Linda Dowling's discussion of how Coleridge theorizes literary discourse as a lingua communis for the English civilization (Dowling 15-31), Klaus Weimar's account of how nineteenth-century German literary studies emphasized the history of national literatures (254-346) and a philologically based notion of "Wissenschaft" (190-203) and the two overviews of the reorganized "secteur académique" in the nineteenth-century French Université by Victor Karady ("Les origines") and Jacques Minot.
traditional symbolic values. Instead, sociopoetic discourses affirm the value of disordered life-worlds by presenting readers with a program of non-traditional and non-profitable literary discourse and, as a result, imply that such inverted literary programs, such discursive counterparts to an underground culture, best represent the radical fluidity of the modern world.6

Heine's Nordseezyklen, Baudelaire's Spleen de Paris and Whitman's Leaves of Grass, all have features that connect them to this cultural flux, and they are all linked to the nineteenth-century cultural underworlds, the various bohematics and subcultures of surplus literacy, that formed in response to it (Bourdieu, Règles 84). These communities were both a product and a reflection of bourgeois culture (Holland 236). They were associated with other hard-to-control by-products of nineteenth-century bourgeois society, like casual laborers, unleashed female sexuality, criminality and disease.7 They also represented an communal fantasy produced

6The notion of life-world is a very important one for this study. Although I outline it rather sketchily at this stage, it will be given a fuller definition later in this chapter (see 18ff). The most important point to note here is that a life-world is the epistemological setting of a living community and its discourse. It is the world inhabited by an identifiable group, the existence of which is implied in the communications of that group insofar as that communication assumes common knowledge about the world.

7For a characterization of this underworld in the city, see Jerrold Seigel's description of Bohemian Paris, Gareth Stedman Jones' study of Outcast London, Sander Gilman's discussions of how the nineteenth century conflated madness and artistic creation (Difference 217-238) and how the male imagination of fin-de-siècle Vienna fantasized about uncontrollable female sexuality (Difference 39-58), Elizabeth
by capitalist societies: the fantasy of being able to buy without having to sell, to enjoy modern pleasures without having to suffer the alienation of modern work, to be a "dandy" without also being a "prostitute" (Holland 238-40).

Although much work has been done on the origins of Bohemia in the literary imagination (especially the literary imagination in nineteenth-century Paris), there are few attempts to articulate a more general socio-historical understanding of why modern cultures produced such fantasies and such communities. The writings of Peter and Christa Bürger on "Institution Kunst" and Pierre Bourdieu's work on the nineteenth-century "field of cultural production" provide us with two exceptions to this general oversight, although in neither case do the authors attempt to articulate the role that an increased popular literacy played in this development. Instead, both the Bürgers and Bourdieu describe the ways in which the values of classical art were made the institutional standard by which modern works were deemed worthwhile and the ways in which artists and writers reacted to this institutionalization of art in order to broaden the category of worthwhile art.

Wilson's view of the city as the place of struggle "between routinized order and pleasurable disorder, the male-female dichotomy" (8) and finally G. Robert Strange's observations on the associations of sexuality and the city in the Victorian imagination.

The Bürgers view the entrenchment of classical values in modern practices as one stage of an historical dialectic that, in a rather mechanically linear fashion, leads to the formation of an oppositional avantgarde and ultimately to the death of art. According to them, every cultural epoch prescribes a function to works of art and favors works that are best suited for this prescription. To this extent, every culture has an institutionalized form of art, an "Institution Künst," favored by "de[n] kunstproduzierende[n] und -distribuierende[n] Apparat" and complying with "d[en] zu einer gegebenen Epoche herrschenden Vorstellungen über Kunst" (P. Bürger, Theorie der Avantgarde 28). However, they also argue that "art" as an autonomous category containing the group of literary, visual, and performing arts, as well as architecture, has only existed since the eighteenth century (P. Bürger, "Institution" 176; C. Bürger. Ursprung 10 [but the entire book treats various aspects of this theme]). It is only in bourgeois (i.e. modern Euro-American) cultures that this more generalized, autonomous and, consequently, indefinite form of art is institutionalized (P. Bürger, Theorie der Avantgarde 22). The resulting institutionalized artistic features promote, instead of greater artistic freedom, a rather rigidly determined development, in which "high art" is first valued as a transcendent form of representation and then negated in an avant-garde reaction against this transcendental aesthetic.

For Peter Bürger, the trajectory of this development
occurs as a result of contradictions in the notion of autonomous art itself. Although, as Bürger suggests, there may have been "in der entfalteten bürgerlichen Gesellschaft eine 'freie Konkurrenz der Kunstauffassungen'" ("Institution" 177), he argues that an historical trend towards greater artistic autonomy and indeterminacy was what, in fact, occurred. According to him, modern western European cultures produced three forms of Institution Kunst: sacred, courtly and bourgeois art (P. Bürger, Theorie der Avantgarde 63-5). The first two, which predominated prior to the beginning of the nineteenth century, were forms of artistic production interwoven into daily life as representations of either the devotion to the sacred presence in the world or to the spectacle of a court's magnificent lifestyle and worldly power (P. Bürger, Theorie der Avantgarde 66). Courtly and sacred forms of art promoted, according to this view, works that, rather than being autonomous, were in service of a religious or a political cult. Sacred art was, in fact, a part of a collective performance before the divinity in which every devotee has, in effect, a prescribed role. Courtly art allowed its practitioners a greater measure of autonomy, as the Bürgers admit that it promoted, first of all, a somewhat unrestrained individual form of artistic production that was only restricted by the need to be presentable to the collective. It consequently displayed political power by the degree of pleasure and magnitude of the artistic spectacle rather than by its conformity to communal orthodoxy (C. Bürger
P. Bürger, *Theorie der Avantgarde* 64}. The result was that, outside the demands for amusement and grandeur, courtly art was often free to represent whatever may be entertaining to its aristocratic audience, whereas sacred art was limited by its need to comply with the cult's belief system.

Bourgeois art, modern Europe's third form of *Institution Kunst*, is distinguished by the Bürgers from both of these engaged forms of institutional art. It emerged, according to them, in the mid-eighteenth century and remained dominant to the middle of the twentieth. During this time, it underwent a transformation from a preference for usefully didactic art forms to the affirmation of artistic autonomy, as the aesthetic sphere becomes increasingly further removed from the realm of daily life (C. Bürger 11-19; P. Bürger, "Problems" 79). Peter Bürger states, on the one hand, that Enlightenment bourgeois culture applied its utilitarian principles to the aesthetic domain and subjected artistic discourse to the exigencies of instrumental reason ("Problems 73-5). He argues, on the other hand, that Post-Enlightenment bourgeois culture attributed an abstract and absolute value to the fine arts (i.e. gives them a classical "gold" standard) and, therefore, distinguished them from the more utilitarian forms of production ("Institution Künst" 176-77). The ramifications of this guarded separation included not only the positing of autonomous notions of art (with the subsequent distinction between high and mass culture) but also the construction of accompanying theories about a
separate cultural realm, perhaps most famously exemplified by
the Marxist distinction between base and superstructure.

It is clear that the Bürgers follow Karl Marx in
affirming that such a separate cultural realm exists and that
this separation, promoted by bourgeois culture, will
eventually be overcome. However, the Bürgers do not see this
change to result in a radical social transformation; instead
the avant-garde's reaction against the bourgeois Institution
Kunst becomes the agency by which only "high" culture is
negated. Since the avant-garde rebels against the
bourgeoisie's institutional art and since this institution
constructs the indefinite general category of art that, in
effect, allows this rebellion, Peter Bürger's avant-garde art
evolves into a generalized negation of institutionalized
"high" culture produced by the bourgeois notion of autonomous
art without bringing about the full cultural transformation
that the Bürgers so much desire.

The logic in which bourgeois culture survives both the
negations of "high" art and the accompanying death of the
historical avant-garde is, according to Peter Bürger,
inherent in the notion of autonomous art itself. Such a
conception, Bürger argues, defends not only an anti-economic
system of aesthetic value based on models taken from some
past classical moment, but also the artistic experiments that
oppose these historically based values (Theorie der
Avantgarde 66-72). An idea of artistic freedom is, as a
result, promoted, but this aesthetic ideology both enables
avant-garde mixtures of high and low culture and allows the proponents of these artistic practices to proclaim the value of them. Therefore, the autonomous conception of art brings about its own death, as it tolerates the reintegration of the aesthetically valued into the everyday world of common values. The distinctions that define a conceptually separate notion of autonomous art are, so Bürger argues, inevitably blurred and the whole project of bourgeois art is seemingly set on a self-annihilating course.

Although Bürger does not see this self-contradictory feature of modern art in the way that Bradbury and McFarlane do (i.e. as part of the "bifurcation in the impulse to be modern"), he nevertheless comes close to making his avant-garde form of art resemble their social form. In suggesting that this aesthetically self-negating process occurs quite late in the modernist period and that it does not really become prevalent before the emergence of French Surrealism, he seems to be describing the emergence of a new social form of art, a synthesis of the artistic and the everyday. He stops short of this possibility because he can really only conceive of art in the narrow sense of his bourgeois Institution Kunst. Because he conflates a general notion of art with this notion of bourgeois art, he has great difficulties with the continuation of art in ways other than the classically modernist forms typical of this category (i.e. Bradbury and McFarlane's "arcane and private art"). Both his and Christa Bürger's conception of art is a rigid
and segregated aesthetic category. They both neglect the fact that cultural production involves a dynamic interplay of values and interests (i.e. it is a sphere of social interaction) in which the very conception of art is always at stake.

Bourdieu's more sociological approach improves on the Bürger's historical theory of art in emphasizing just this factor. He connects the emergence of a general category of art to the rise of capitalist economies in Europe and America by arguing that the proliferation of these market-driven value systems spurred a need to institutionalize an inverted artistic subculture, a separate system of value that was frequently affirmed to be more enduring than those determined by market trends. Bourdieu conceives of "high" culture as the products of such an alternative cultural economy, while remaining, nevertheless, subordinate to the dominant capitalist one. It is by resisting the capitalist systems of value and value production that the cultural economy revises and reproduces the values of art, a process of position-taking and position-changing exemplified by the cultural battles and alliances among French artists in nineteenth-century Paris. In this way, Bourdieu conceives modern culture as a "field" that fluctuates in response to two dominant polarities, which can be characterized in nineteenth-century terms as that of the Bohemian versus the bourgeois.

The distinction does not only identify an aesthetic
opposition but also two opposing domains in which, according to Bourdieu, two opposing economies are operating. He writes that, along with the rise of a free-market economy in France, "un univers économique proprement anti-économique... s'est instauré au pôle économiquement dominé, mais symboliquement dominant, du champ littéraire" (Règles 122). This installation of an aesthetic "gold standard" produced a field in which the market driven values of the dominant economy and the symbolic values of the anti-economy of art were constantly in contention. One of the outcomes of this economic struggle was to polarize the distinction between "pure" aesthetic (i.e. anti-economic) notions (e.g. the poetic, the novelistic, the literary) sanctioned by universities and those involved in more mercenary forms of artistic production (e.g. mass appeal, saleability, economic appreciation). The pure aesthetic concepts needed to be continuously redefined as separate from more transitory and mundane modes of representation, since the practices of "pure art" tended to escape the control of the academic discipline

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9Brian Doyle agrees with Bourdieu in calling this anti-economic pole the site of "culture", although he suggests that its opposition to the economic realm is only an apparent one (English 13-14).

10In fact, because artistic production provides an alternative to these moneyed interests, it is viewed by Benjamin and Williams as a reminder of the pre-urban and pre-modern past and by others (e.g. Saint-Simon, Marx and Marcuse) as an indicator of the coming utopic future. Without discussing the validity of either perspective, the fact that the field of artistic production can be seen as such a social bellwether confirms its function as a preserve for alternate if frequently discordant forms of exchange.
and to be absorbed into the economic market.

In imagining an anti-economic reaction against this absorption, Bourdieu is clearly thinking about French artists like Alfred de Musset, whose artistic practices were encapsulated in the slogan "épater le bourgeois." However, his economic model for such reactions and for the "cénacles" that supported them can, just as easily, be applied to the academic institution. It is in the self-interest of such institutions to resist the assimilation of culture into the economic sphere in order legitimate themselves as places for the arbitration of cultural value. By assigning artworks value on a non-economic (one might say dogmatic) basis, value is accredited to things such as "teachable" texts, texts that promote one's ideological viewpoint, texts that build an artistic or "national character," or texts that provide greater opportunity for the acquisition and display of a special cultural expertise. Academic careers depend on such valorizations, and professorial practices promote, consequently, the reproduction of unprofitable texts (i.e. "difficult texts") that frequently require their specialist guidance in order to make them accessible (Homo Academicus 55). Such cultural authorities must, consequently, promote an alternate system of "cultural capital," in which cultural and academic distinction is purchased by the display of one's accumulated cultural wealth, the wealth that supposedly comes from breadth of reading and depth of research.

In the case of the nineteenth-century academic, this
usually meant the valorization of works that resembled the "classics," since classical art was already deeply entrenched in the traditional university curriculum, since it required a specialist's language and cultural competency to make it readily accessible and since it was, therefore, endowed with academic value. The institution of modern literary studies circulated and, as a result, valorized such forms of "cultural capital" and, accordingly, supported an institutional form of art that canonized modern works as if they were classical ones.

In Germany, this persistence of classical values in modern literary studies can be understood as a part of early nineteenth-century efforts to realize a classical university, "die auf einem neuen Verständnis von Wissenschaftlichkeit basiere, dabei institutionellen Traditionalismus mit wissenschaftlichem Modernismus kombiniere und die Einheit von Lehre und Forschung propagiere" (Rainer Müller 67). However, the emphasis on classical literature also had an exclusionary power that was particularly powerful in secondary education. Harry Liebesohn notes that "retaining the classics [in American institutions of higher education] proved to be a useful means of keeping down the number of public high school graduates and it enhanced the prestige of the American B.A. degree" (177). Fritz Ringer describes how the establishment of lycées (1802) and of the baccalauréat (1808) in the Napoloeonic Université secured the survival and prestige of the classical curriculum in future French educational forms (112-13).

Sociocritics have often identified the desire to reproduce conservative values in the modern context as the "true" underlying purpose of such canon formation (Doyle, English 10; Williams, Writing 180; Eagleton, Literary Theory 22-30). In part, this conservatism reflected the perceived threat arising from the spread of literacy. To ensure that literary values were not eroded by more democratic systems of education, "readers and critics [were encouraged] to see classical and modern culture as episodes in a common, still developing European ineritance" (Gorak 53). Gregory Jusdanis, whose work is primarily concerned with the belated translation of modernity into Greek culture, adds that the resulting determination of a literary canon represented the
The writings of Heine, Baudelaire and Whitman are sociopoetic insofar as they intervene in the resulting cultural field constructed by the interplay among bourgeois, bohemian and academic poles in favor of the bohemian pole. Written at a time when the institutions of modern literary studies and its canons were being put into place, these works valorize verbosity, transient disorder and irreducible discord, seemingly unhealthy literary values that are opposed to the apparently healthy states recognized by the profitability of one's literary production or promoted by emulating classical "sweetness and light." In fact, the construction of a set of modern memorials to antiquity (53). He notes that the Greek root of the word "kanon" means literally a measuring instrument and figuratively that which has correct proportion. The classical canon is then the set of first class models of "pure art," and the modern canon is the selection of works that are said to rival if not to emulate such statuesque compositions.

14Weimar's detailed study of the history of German literary studies demonstrates how their institutionalization was a long process beginning in the early eighteenth century (41) but having the greatest momentum in the first half of the nineteenth century when the German universities were transformed into state run education institutions (205-9). Doyle notes that "the earliest instruction in the English language and literature was provided at University College, London in the 1820s" ("Hidden History" 26). He echoes both Williams and Eagleton in suggesting that this institutionalized study of literature appropriated what was previously viewed as non-academic material in order to market cultural values to those unable to appreciate classical literature (i.e. the literate daughters of middle-class families). Liebersohn states that the study of modern languages and literatures began to creep into the curriculum at American colleges and universities in the 1820s but remained marginal for a half century after that (177). Their full acceptance coincides, according to this view, with the post civil-war industrial growth, with what Russell Reising calls, "the infiltration of American universities by 'big business'" insofar as corporate leaders begin to dominate
hybrid texts produced by these three writers challenge the basic oppositions between popular culture and institutionalized literary studies. They invite us to question the differences between a classical antiquity, identified in the nineteenth century as the basis for a masculine "high" culture, and a modern present, associated with mass effeminacy, as well as the distinction between a manly scientific prose and womanly figurative use of language (Huyssen 55). As a result, they threaten conceptions of modernity that view it as a state of progress from the accumulative cultural wealth of a poetic past to the more practical values of a scientific present or as a degeneration from such a culturally rich past epitomized by a devolution of poetic into everyday language.\(^{14}\)

These views are challenged by Heine's, Baudelaire's and Whitman's sociopoetic writings, insofar as they transform the Governing Boards (41). Reising argues that the construction of American literary canons reflect the presence of the "outside influence" by devaluing the social and political literary elements (41-46).

\(^{14}\)Dowling discusses how a reduction of literature to prose would have been read as a sign of a greater cultural decline when she argues that "the linguistically sanctioned use of non-literary language and slang" in literary texts would, for a Victorian reader, "portend little less that cultural degeneration and collapse" (67). Sandra Siegel further suggests that the announced degeneration was from a healthy masculine civilization to an unhealthy feminine age (208-14). Huyssen extends this view by arguing that the late nineteenth century associated masculinity with "high" culture and femininity with "mass" culture (47-53) and that "high" modernism expresses a reaction formation resulting from a perceived degeneration of "civilization" into an effeminate mass (55). The presence of sociopoetic discourses would indicate that there were opposing views to these anxiety ridden ones.
more transitory and prosaic (i.e. instrumentally rational) modern urban present into living poetry. In this way, they mine the present for the aesthetically valuable, and this reorientation reflects a change in the notion of art, a splitting of Bourdieu's artistic "anti-economy" into sets of pedagogically classical values and of anti-pedagogical contemporary "social" ones. What now needs to be explored is the relationship between this dualist "modern" anti-economy and the transformation of regional cultures into modern industrial societies that resulted in the continuous urbanization of the various Euro-American populations throughout the nineteenth century.

A connection between the transformations in modern Euro-American literatures and this growth of the major European and American urban centers has become relatively commonplace. The works of Raymond Williams, who displays a characteristic late modernist nostalgia for the pre-urban Welsh community of his childhood, and Walter Benjamin, who is nostalgic for a heroic age of great art and whose angel consequently looks back on a lost pre-modern European tradition (Benjamin 1: 477), exemplify these now abundant studies. Both argue for a causal relationship between

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15Too much work has been done on this important and interesting subject to be discussed here. For a sample of the research in this area, I refer the reader to the works of Thomas Bender on New York and metropolitan American culture, to Carl E. Schorske's reflections on the Ringstrasse in turn-of-the-century Vienna (24-115), H.Y. Dyos and Michael Wolff's anthology on Victorian cities, Pierre Citron's work on the poetry of Paris, etc.
Europe's urbanization, its transition from a craft-based to an industrial economy, and the deflation of lyrical value that occurred in the late nineteenth century and that made lyrical poetry, so they argue, into a little read form (Williams, Writing 69; Country 261; Benjamin 1: 644). According to them, the growth of European cities into metropolitan centers in which a large percentage of Europeans lived, the developments in communication and transportation and the spread of literacy among large sections of the new urban masses mark the appearance of what Williams calls a "different civilization" and correlate with the changes in cultural practices that enhance the literary value of the novel (Writing 69-73; but see also "Communications Technologies" 230; Long Revolution 164-172). While these noted parallels between cultural and social history have been the basis for various statements about the

16There was a wide discrepancy in the rate in which European populations were urbanized. Hemann Glaser notes that, although one third of the population of England lived in large cities as early as 1830, German cities did not contain one third of the German population until the second decade of the twentieth century (65). Berlin, nevertheless, became a metropolitan center in the nineteenth century, growing from 197,000 inhabitants in 1815 to over three million in 1905 (Glaser 66).

17In fact, Williams argues that the word "modern," when used to describe culture, refers to the cultural moment when cities developed into metropolises but before these metropolitan cultures became the globalizing "modern transmitting metropolis[es] of the technically advanced and dominant economies" ("Metropolis 14-15). His view gives a determinative power to the fact that the institutions and technologies of modern art ("minority presses and magazines, small galleries and exhibitions, city centre theatres") could only be located in the large metropolitan centres produced in industrial societies ("Metropolis" 13-14).
social determination of literature or the aestheticization of modern culture, an approach sensitive to sociopoetic quality of writing raises questions about these ready affirmations of causality because it insists on the fact that modern poetry is potentially neither materialist nor aestheticist but social. Implicit in this view is a realization about the inherently social nature of discourse. Insofar as all discursive practice involves human activity and as all human activity already has meaning even before any researcher or writer addresses it, modern writings are necessarily implicated in activities of detection, transmission and interpretation of already existing elements in the cultural field. As the products of agents who exist in these societies, modern texts both structure and are structured by an existing cultural field insofar as it shapes and is shaped by the individuals involved in the production and consumption of these texts. The text is an output from this field-individual interaction, the construction of individuals who are, as Bourdieu suggests, both microcosms and microprocessors of the modern social world (Sens pratique 87-111). Neither modern text nor modern individual (Bourdieu's

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18 See chapter two of this dissertation.

19 The discursive features in the already-existing cultural field are what Foucault refers to as the archive (Archéologie 170). Institutionalized versions of the processes of detection, transmission and interpretation are labeled by Habermas as phenomenological, linguistic and hermeneutic approaches to the human sciences (Logik 192; but see also McCarthy's discussion of Gadamer, Danto and Habermas on this point 174-193).
"habitus") are passive reflectors or independent creators of the enveloping socio-cultural domain; they are inseparably structured and structuring phenomena. In fact, it is precisely the discovery and appreciation of the widely disseminated and highly interactive socio-cultural meanings and symbolic values that characterize modern cultural production, a point that I will clarify by making use of Jürgen Habermas's somewhat controversial distinction between system and life-world, although my application of it will be a distinct departure from his formulation.

Habermas develops this distinction in response to two sets of concerns that, insofar as I can briefly summarize his proliferate writings, have a predominant place in his thinking. First, he describes the deterioration of what he calls in the Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, the "bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit" (42). In the young Habermas' idealized conception, this bourgeois public sphere was the essentially democratic arena of early capitalist culture in which free and open discussion between fully formed individuals was to take place, to follow the path of the better argument and to mediate, according to the principles of reason, the disputes between state regulation and the practices of daily life. Believing that such an ideal tolerance of public discussion flourished in the early Enlightenment, Habermas describes how modern societies have fallen away from this ideal, as they have restricted, corrupted and even dissolved much of this public debate
(Strukturwandel 172-217). The degeneration results, especially, from the restriction of access to information that was once part of the public record, from the bourgeois family's inability to produce autonomous participants in the public discussions, from the development of the mass media and their techniques of manipulating public opinion, as well as from the institutionalization of class divisions, partisanship, special interest lobbies, and other exclusive groups, whose communicative practices prevent viewpoints from being heard and the better argument from being freely pursued. These distortions of rational communication cause, according to Habermas, many of the subsequent social problems in modern industrial societies, and they betray the principles of the early Enlightenment, especially those that reconciled state institutions and the various social worlds into which they intrude (Strukturwandel 215-17).

This stream in Habermas's thought terminates in his criticism of both the welfare state and contemporary neoconservatism, the latter of which he associates with a post-modernity that is, for him, only a manifestation of late capitalism. In Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus, he argues that these contemporary phenomena are the results of political attempts to legislate the conflict between the economic values that favor increased systematization of modern society and the socio-cultural values that favor the preservation of traditional ways of constructing and transmitting cultural meanings (99-101). This
institutionalized opposition between the economic and sociocultural values diffuses the contradictions that would otherwise lead to a condition of social crisis (105). The welfare state is, consequently, seen to be a conservative political mechanism, since it preserves the modern capitalist state by placating conflicts inherent in it. For Habermas, the welfare state softens but nevertheless continues the systematization and bureaucratization of daily life, since it transfers to the political system activities that had once been components of informal social relationships. He views this transferral as a symptom of the principle disease of modernity, the institutionalization of modern life, and he recommends a treatment: Ideologiekritik.  

At this point in my schematization of Habermas' thought, we encounter his second main concern, the integration of hermeneutics, as it stems from Wilhelm Dilthey and is developed by Gadamer, with the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, especially its practice of Ideologiekritik. In the Logik der Sozialwissenschaft, Habermas describes hermeneutics as one of three approaches dominant in contemporary sociology, of which the other two are linked with phenomenology and linguistics. In his discussions of these latter two, he develops a preliminary notion of the

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20Habermas actually describes this process as the colonization of the life-world by system. Although his views represent a further elaboration of Weber's notion that modernity involves a process of rationalization, it actually owes a great deal to the later writings of Edmund Husserl (Krisis 132-4).
"Lebenswelt" as he extrapolates it from the works of Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz and as he relates it to the conception of the language game developed by the later Wittgenstein (Logik 205-51). In all cases, Habermas emphasizes how the notion of a Lebenswelt consists of a given set of practices, values, principles, norms, etc. that a community accepts without question and that even constitute the bases for scientific communities (e.g. that I have this body). Since this foundation of science affects the interests of all researchers, the possibility of an objective epistemology based on the autonomous inquiries of a disinterested subject of knowledge and communicated by way of a universal and distortionless metalanguage is denied. Habermas' early idea about free debates in an ideal public sphere had, in fact, presupposed such a possibility. The notion of "Lebenswelt" articulated by the Habermas of Logik puts such ideals into question, as it implies that individuals, who are always already socialized into a language and its culture, have internalized a life-world that subsequently influences their interests. They necessarily

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21 For the sources and background of Habermas' notion, see Husserl's fifth Cartesianische Meditation (123-174), the third part of his Krisis (105-193), Schutz's work on phenomenology and sociology in his Collected Papers, Schutz's and Thomas Luckmann's Strukturen der Lebenswelt and Luckmann's Lebenswelt und Gesellschaft.

22 This idea is derived from Husserl, who develops the conception of "Lebenswelt" to think himself out of the solipsistic consequence of his phenomenological method. In the fifth Cartesianische Meditation he discovers that in the last instance the transcendental ego is not alone, that for
bring this internal baggage to any social encounter, and it constitutes a part of the background that informs these encounters. Researchers who assume a scientific (i.e. disinterested) stance disconnected from this background, phenomenologists who feel themselves capable of integration into another life-world, or sociolinguists who believe that they can become competent in other language games are, in effect, deluding themselves. They fail to see how they participate in their own already existing language games and life-worlds, such as the French academic community's pursuit of prestige, career advancement and funding that Bourdieu studies in *Homo Academicus*.

Habermas then argues that Gadamer's hermeneutics is also guilty of assuming the existence of an ideal public sphere in which rational subjects may acquire the ability to communicate freely. Using Freudian analysis as a model, Habermas shows how Gadamer's hermeneutical method is based on the belief that it is possible to attain knowledge of reality by refining the discourse about this reality into a true

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the ego to be conscious it must be conscious of an objective world (i.e. a world-for-everyone) and that such a world entails the existence of others that are also conscious of this world-for-everyone (123-38). There is consequently a foreign presence in even the most reduced worlds, such that they appear to be intersubjective. Husserl goes on to discuss how this intersubjectivity constitutes not only the natural world but the cultural world (149-57). In fact he argues that any individual experiences a world totality, comprised of both natural and cultural elements, as a given, and he labels this totality the *Lebenswelt*. In *Krisis*, he attacks modern science because it fails to recognize how the subjective-relative nature of this given world necessarily limits scientific inquiry (115-34).
monological metalanguage, a scientific jargon free from all the idiomatic embodiments of any particular context ("Der Universalitätsanspruch" 139-148, 151-2). According to Gadamer, researchers undertake this process of linguistic refinement in continuing their academic discussions in accordance with dialectic principles (1: 372). The development of this "Künst des Gesprachs," universally appreciated by all members of a research community, establishes a form of interpersonal understanding, a "methodisch[e] Verfremdung des Verstehens," for which an object world can be securely posited (Gadamer 2: 239). In this sense, the establishment of topics for discussion and a conversational etiquette in an academic community secures if not constructs its object of study, which is more acutely defined as the methods and discourses of the community become more rigorously determined. The maintenance of the communal consensus, civility and metalanguage assures the stability of its object-world. In contrast, disruptions in language use undermine this stability and threaten the legitimacy of both the research community and its discipline (a condition into which Comparative Literature seems to be continuously thrown).

Although Habermas acknowledges that Gadamer's hermeneutics represents, consequently, an attempt to free knowledge from the technical methodologies of rationalization ("Der Universalitätsanspruch" 128-9), he objects to the possibility of a refined discursive art. For Habermas,
agreement on linguistic practice does not necessarily reflect its referential value; language use is unavoidably full of social, political, economical and other innumerable interests. As a result, researchers cannot free themselves from the bundle of interests that constitute their sociocultural life-worlds, nor can they always distinguish a voluntary scientific consensus from a blind adhesion to authority ("Der Universalitätsanspruch" 156-7).23 Habermas consequently affirms the need for a critical hermeneutics, in which the interpretive act is supplemented by ideological criticism, so that an observer is made aware of the forces inhibiting the free use of language necessary for Gadamer's hermeneutic enterprise. This criticism would necessarily be reflexive, as it would make us aware of our own distortive practices, the inevitability and necessity of all distortions and the impossibility of legitimating both a scientific discourse or its object of study.

These twin concerns with social and personal communicative distortion are both further addressed in Habermas's two-volume opus, Die Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns. In this systematic re-presentation of his thinking, Habermas transforms, to a large extent, his treatment of communication into a grand theoretical

23Gadamer anticipates Habermas' objection by distinguishing two types of authority, that which we surrender to someone when we abdicate reason and that which we recognize in a person when we acknowledge that an individual has had the time to deeply consider issues and is able to make better judgements than we are (1: 284).
redressing of modernity. In effect, he comes dangerously close to ironically demonstrating one of the main points in his own argument. As part of the systematic representation of his thought, he argues that a systematization of the life-world occurs and that it disrupts the communicative exchanges necessary for both critical debate and modern democracy (Theory 2: 181). He avoids the danger of committing a two-volume version of intellectual suicide by developing an alternate conception of modern societies, one that views them as conglomerations of small groups and their life-worlds and that sees its own social theorizing as part of the resulting social interaction (Theory 2: 178). Rather than thinking in terms of a large-scale notion of social system or an organic culture, Habermas grounds his social theory in his rather restrictive notion of the "Lebenswelt" that he has already developed and that limits the possible ways in which something may be understood by any actor in any particular world (e.g. that of the academic community [1: 107]). A Lebenswelt is that collection of preconceptualized notions or partially formulated principles that project an horizon to

24Again Habermas is anticipated here by Husserl, who distinguishes, in Krisis, a notion of a subjective-relative life-world from the modern conception of an objective-scientific reality (133). Husserl then makes the life-world the ground on which scientific societies are formed and on which objective reality is constructed. He suggests that the cultural world is prior to the scientific one, but realizes, at the same time, that the conceptual tools, material and by-products of scientific activity have now been assimilated into modern life-worlds. At the end of this reflection, he somewhat fearfully asks himself what the consequences of this immigration will be (134).
understanding and that, consequently, govern moments of shared agreement and fellowship (Theorie 1: 150). As Habermas exemplifies in his curious commentaries on the relationship between a professor and his students (Theory 1: 411-12), on the beer-drinking practices of a group of construction workers (Theory 2: 185-8) or in his seemingly endless summaries of compatible social theories, this set of lived sociocultural meanings manifests itself most readily in the discernible but often unexamined social behaviors that indicate a communication is understood and acceptable in given specific conditions. Insofar as we adapt our linguistic practices to suit the circumstances in which we find ourselves, we possess a certain number of communicative responses that we apply in different conditions according to the preconceptualized principles that govern our actions in our various life-worlds.

Habermas argues that these pre-rational worlds are not imposed by authoritative individuals, but they are presupposed by two or more individuals engaged in "kommunikativen Handeln" (1: 107). Such communicative actions are not speech acts undertaken for teleological reasons but "Interaktionen, in denen die Beteiligten ihre individuellen Handlungspläne vorbehaltlos auf der Grundlage eines kommunikativ erzielten Einverständnisses koordinieren".

\[25\] It is consequently close to Gadamer's notion of "Vorurteile," the prejudices that interpreters bring to all judgements (1: 275).
They result in voluntary agreements about the appropriateness of "objective," "social" or "subjective" statements by relating them to the presupposed life-world that constitutes the background to the communication (Theorie 1: 150, 2: 183-4). They build an understanding, "wobei sich Sprecher und Hörer aus dem Horizont ihrer vorinterpretierten Lebenswelt gleichzeitig auf etwas in der objektiven, sozialen und subjektiven Welt beziehen, um gemeinsame Situationsdefinitionen auszuhandeln" (Theorie 1: 142). This coordinating function assures that all parties are operating within the same horizon of understanding, that they are voluntary inhabitants of the life-world present in this horizon and that they are able to interpret the utterance in the appropriate factual, normative or subjective manner.

A life-world remains, for Habermas, a significant template for orienting understanding, so long as it is reproduced in communicative actions. When it is subjected to instrumental actions by being formalized into an object of study, reduced to the elements of a systematic model or represented in a rational summaries from an external point of view, the validity of the social relations, ways of knowledge and points of view is ignored or denied (Theorie 2: 258).26

26To a certain extent, Habermas's opus is guilty of the very existence-denying reduction that he criticizes. One can view the scope of his interdisciplinary work as either a dehumanizing attempt to construct a massive modern philosophical system or an ambitious attempt to engage in communicative actions with a wide range of researchers and to integrate their life-worlds.
Insofar as two parties inhabit a life-world and verify their co-habitation by engaging in communicative actions inside its semantic horizon, this denial of validity is avoided, and they can act as bridges for the communication, social integration and subsequent larger-scale life-world generation that would merge the various worlds into which they have successfully assimilated themselves.  

Habermas makes this complex quality of modern city life into that which takes the place of the bourgeois public sphere as the agency for resisting the systemization of modern societies. Instead of an ideal rationalized life-world in which fully formed individuals interact in accordance with the norms of rational debate, a number of differentiated life-world structures exist, each of which has its own norms and hierarchies (Theorie 2: 218-19). These

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In fact, an increased hermeneutic interplay between the various constituencies of modern cosmopolitan societies may provide a remedy for the excessive prominence of "instrumental reason" that critical theory identifies as the modern cultural pathology. If increased communication can be seen to resist the dehumanizing effects of the modern world, then it is understandable how the works of Heine, Baudelaire and Whitman could be granted a redemptive power. The social and cultural diversity of nineteenth-century Euro-American societies meant that they were not composed of single homogeneous life-worlds but of multiple and differentiated ones. A writer, who moved through a day in what has become a segmented but, according to Durkheim, organic city culture, would negotiate passage through any number of these worlds as he or she entered into various domains, engaged in speech acts peculiar to that specific domain, assumed the appropriate position in the social hierarchy and took on the necessary roles required for social interaction. Because of this interworld migration, this writer would become multifaceted, carry on a multiplicity of existences in parallel life-worlds and act as the agent for their integration.
various world structures undergo a form of systematic integration into an objective world, a process that Habermas characterizes as the colonization of the life-world by system, insofar as social interactions have become so complicated that they must be formalized, have theories constructed about them, or be institutionalized as parts of a integrating mechanism, such as the capitalistic market (Theorie 2: 226-7). There persists, Habermas argues, another "social" form of integration, the integration of various life-worlds that occurs when their horizons of understanding are melted together (Theorie 2: 225). These types of "social" integration resembles a hermeneutic practice in which outsiders come to know life-worlds as both participants and critical observers. The foreigners adopt the beliefs, norms and expressive manners of the observed social worlds while, at the same time, preserving a critical distance by maintaining an allegiance to their "native" life-worlds, their criteria for objectivity and their tolerances for subjective judgements. This interworld social integration is in competition with a practice that relates life-worlds to transcendental social systems, as well as with purely subjective views, less rigidly governed by the need to co-habit an horizon of understanding with other persons.

As Habermas holds that both the systematic and social forms of integration are possible, he attributes a multiplicity to modern life, a mixture of personal, social and systematizing worldviews. This cultural complexity is, I
am arguing, reflected both in the cultural sphere's division of institutional and anti-institutional domains and in the resulting discursive practices in which literary tradition is offset by the sociopoetic features of literary modernism. I will now show how it is useful to think about these divisions in terms of Habermas' distinction between life-world and system.

If one applies Habermas' model of social development to the field of cultural production, then one can see how the growth and socioeconomic dominance of the modern European metropolises occur coincidently with the emergence in the early nineteenth century of a systematic, stable but socially insular aesthetic realm, that which Pierre Bourdieu refers to as the "pure aesthetic" pole of the "cultural field of production" (Field 188). This development was not just a result of the social rationalization brought on by the demographic and technological changes of nineteenth-century urban development; it also was an artistic reaction to the fact that life-world collisions were causing a "permanent revolution" in city life, and this social upheaval needed to be reconciled with the desire for cultural stability. Notions of an autonomous, pure aesthetic provided such stabilizing influences on the cultural field, as they articulated a system of communal norms by which aesthetic judgements were legitimated. But there was a social and subjective opposition to this desire, both in the mercenary and the non-mercenary anti-institutional forms. The changes
brought about by industrialization meant that, rather than the representations of stability, the signs of volatility, reactivity and transformation were more highly valued, qualities denounced by Thomas Carlyle in his 1829 "Signs of the Times" as products of the Mechanical Age's unyielding practice of "adapting means to ends" (64) but nevertheless still recognized by Henry Adams at the beginning of the twentieth century as the manifestation of an occult force symbolized, for him, by the dynamo (383).28

Although this valorization of persistent volatility in the material world may have initially been repressed in institutional art, it nevertheless persisted in an underground artistic economy of both small-group based and subjectively affirmed symbolic values. If nineteenth-century institutional art complied with systematically presented aesthetic judgements, anti-pedagogical "sociopoetic" discourses defied such systematic thought by establishing a closer association with various and often turbulent life-worlds, as exemplified by the proliferation of various "isms," small-scale communities and frequently subjective forms of cultural production. In fact, the proto-modernist texts of Heine, Baudelaire and Whitman are not only

28William Leiss characterizes these ambiguous reactions to industrial society and to the machine in nineteenth-century Europe and America as sublime responses to technology (Chamberlin and Gilman 146). Their manifestations in metropolitan French culture are discussed by Peter Collier in "Nineteenth-Century Paris: Vision and Nightmare" (Timms and Kelley 25-44).
preoccupied with the extent that a widespread underground economy of symbolic values intersects with multiple, volatile life-worlds; they are also concerned with the integration of the various elements in this highly active symbolic universe. They attempt to form more durable, all-embracing and yet interactive literary worlds, modern "poetic" worlds posited by the texts as part of their renovating sociopoeisis. In this way, they undertake a form of what Habermas would call social integration, or they share with this side of Habermas a common heritage that has its roots in German Romanticism and that associates poetry, community and the unfettered discourse of daily life.

In the five essays that follow, I will establish the validity of affirming that there is a sociopoetic element in modern poetry and support this view in my critical discussions of Heine's, Baudelaire's and Whitman's works. The interaction between such poetic writings and forms of prose discourse will be especially highlighted, so that nineteenth-century French, German and Anglo-American poetics will be shown to involve a reintegration of poetry and everyday language practices at the same time as these modern cultures were attempting to institutionalize the separation between these two types of speech acts. Since I am arguing that these works undertake the genesis of literary worlds by fusing the fragments of various life-worlds, they contain a contradictory artistic and anti-artistic impetus. They are not merely projects that recenter the modern universe in art,
but rather they reproduce various fragments of the social universe in a literary form, such that the literary and the everyday are coupled. The product issued by this match is not the projection of an otherworldly aesthetic realm, exemplified by classical art; it is rather a form of in-the-world modern art that is not necessarily engaged in modern life but that is, all the same, submerged in it.

Since my aim is to reaffirm this social quality of modern poetry, my discussion must cover three distinct areas: the sociocritical treatment of poetry, the changing notion of poetry in nineteenth-century Euro-American cultures and, finally, the sociopoetic features in Heine's, Baudelaire's and Whitman's works. My dissertation will, consequently, be divided into three chapters, each of which I will now briefly introduce.

My first chapter will construct a poetically sensitive sociological approach to modern literature by making a criticism of two conventional sociocritical practices. The first relates the individual text to a general historical narrative and restates the traditional determinist position in the determinism/free will debate. The practice valorizes texts primarily as expressions of social forces, and individualistic forms of writing, such as the lyric, are reduced to the status of anachronisms, of brief protests against mass culture or of disguised forms of ideological reproduction. The second sociocritical practice develops out of the formalist distinction between literary and
communicative discourses, especially as it is adopted by Jan
Mukařovský, the Bakhtin circle, but further developed by
the early Julia Kristeva and by Paul de Man. This
distinction constructs a boundary around a tradition of
literary discourse and its relationship to any individual
text in order to isolate it from the other discourses and
discourse formations that constitute the social environment.
They consequently preserve a literary history of individual
expression free from a text's sociohistorical context(s),
whether these contexts be thought of as the operations of
other language functions, social dialogue, denotative
language users, or naive readers. Insofar as this tradition
is often equated with poetry, as it is by the Bakhtin circle,
poetry epitomizes this kind of language act, which attempts
to be paradoxically non-communicative (not requiring
feedback or response) but which inevitably participates
nevertheless in acts of communication, especially in
literature departments.

Since both of these approaches separate poetry from
social forms of communicative interaction, the chapter will
conclude by emphasizing the social interaction in which
poetic texts are implicated. Rather than valuing texts for
their large-scale literary or historical significance, I will
demonstrate the particular discursivity of various texts by
which they reproduce literary life-worlds. My argument is
that this process of reproduction occurs insofar as the
literary text solicits subsequent discourse in the form of
supplements, commentaries, intertextual relations and theoretical reflections. The activity creates both a discourse-centered discourse and a community whose members share certain values, norms and practices in their literary exchanges.

My second chapter will survey a prominent forerunner to the institution of literary studies and to "traditional" modernism, the theoretical discourse of aesthetics. Modern systematic approaches to the study of art emerged as part of the Enlightenment and, according to Klaus Baum, made "culture" into a corrective for the one-sidedness "des Verstandes und der in Unwahrheiten sich verfilzenden gesellschaftlichen Praxis" (139). In these early aesthetic treatises, poetry was frequently conceived as a discourse that enhanced the interactions among social beings, natural objects and other individuals by revising the relationships between the concrete and the abstract, between subject and object. Since these aesthetic theories often made art into something that should be ultimately replaced by philosophy, they frequently devalued the historical, material and textual elements in the artistic work, while insisting that art in

29Bourdieu suggests that, after 1850, artists began to produce works for a specific, educated audience rather than for a patron or for a mass public. He argues that the emergence of the cultural movements of modernité in France coincides with the development of a separate artistic field within the larger social structure. This appearance of an artistic culture was, according to Bourdieu, a result of the surplus educated unemployed produced by the French education system (Règles 84).
general, but especially poetic discourse, remained a historically bound mode of embodied subjectivity. Poetry, according to this current of aesthetic thought (the one associated with German idealism), opposed systematic thought by bridging the gap between the play of subjective experience and the working principles involved in objective reality. It was, as a result, seen to be a primer for philosophy, a more mature form of discourse which was removed from both the subjective and material limitations and in which system formation could freely occur.

The consequence of this discursive hierarchy is that poetic texts are given the function of anticipating the subsequent rational prose discourse, in which ideas are freed from the linguistic materiality in which they are communicated. This conception of a poetic discourse mediating between the material life-world and idealized philosophical systems (a middle voice between theory and practice) allowed poetry to be seen as a new rational mythology that linked the particularities of the historical world and the generalities of the world of ideas (Baum 142). Nietzsche's rupturing of this position, undermining the apparent stability of the work world and reducing everything to play, collapses the material/ideal dialectic, that which, according to Habermas, constructs separate subjective and objective worlds. Nietzsche, consequently, reduces the trinity of the life-world (objective, subjective and social) to the simple activity of players at play in a game without rules, an
activity that is purely recreational. It is also an activity epitomized for Nietzsche, by reading, as reading allows Nietzsche to make himself whole by disengaging from the subjective constraints imposed on him by work and fellowship.

The third chapter of my dissertation will explore the literary texts of Heine, Baudelaire, and Whitman in order to illustrate how sociopoetic discourses function. These texts all locate poetry outside of themselves and anticipate a reading activity that rediscovers this poetry in the social worlds of North Germany, Paris and America. The works invite their readers to enter, to re-order or to continue the poetic activity. This reader participation involves the continuation of interpretive behaviors that will reproduce the cultural values, norms and practices of the text-based cultural life-worlds in ways that keep the texts in print and the works modern. At the same time, the revivification of the poetic work by the reader entails the loss of the poetry's historical occasion, so that the poem is constantly pulled between the poet's historical context and the reader's up-dating one.

This process, which can be conceived as the articulation of a communicative field in which a literary life-world is maintained, occurs in different ways in each of the works studied. Heine's Nordsee Zyklon reveal how the contact between a modernizing cosmopolitan culture and a traditional local one results, at first, in the aesthetic exploitation of the local traditions and then in the economic displacement of
the local and the dissolution of its cultural values by an expanding modern urban culture, represented in Heine's case by a conversion from poetry into prose writing. Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris* provides a disorienting view of a culture in its ruptured accounts of modern life in Paris, a metropolitan center representable by a seemingly arbitrary collection of fragmentary prose pieces which the reader is, perhaps ironically, invited to integrate into a poetic composition. Whitman's work, in contrast, implies an inversion of the disruptively modern experience of a transplanted culture, as his *Leaves of Grass* undertakes the project of inventing and constructing a poetic monument to the modern American nation out of an affirmation of absolute individualism. A native of New York, he sings of himself as embodied in almost every individual event in America at large, a practice that seems to make poetry out of a catalogue of the all-encompassing self-reflections of a wandering metropolitan man.

I will argue that these works, insofar as they address both an educated audience, adept in the study of European history and in its classical literary values, and a literate popular audience with its less cultivated tastes must, consequently, play at being insular forms of "high" art while they are also being the interactive components of a participatory "mass culture." In demonstrating this discursive schizophrenia, the writings of Heine, Baudelaire, and Whitman both reinforce the opposing sets of cultural values and, at the same time, blur the distinction between
them. The result is that an opportunity for conversation between all levels of culture is implied and that the elitist values of "high" culture are, in effect, exposed to erosion.

The first chapter's critique of conventional sociocriticism will, consequently, result in a reformulation of the distinction between "high" "autonomous" or "monologic" art and more common discursive practices. It will additionally lay the theoretical groundwork for the poetic challenges to the modern divisions of "high" from "low" brow, "romantic" from "classical" art, and "present" from "ancient" culture studied in the subsequent two chapters.
1.0. Sociopoetics vs. Sociocriticism: Updating Sociological Approaches to Literature.

Roland Barthes' *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* provides a good starting point for our study of the conventional ways in which sociocriticism has regarded modern poetry. This theoretical text, written by a young Barthes, typifies the sociocritical views that link modern writing to the political crises of 1848 (Tony Pinkney 6-7). In it, Barthes provides a "thumbnail sketch" of nineteenth-century literary history,

1These views mostly recapitulate Gyorgy Lukács interwar work on modernism and generally share his commitment to Marxism and to its synthesis of the two historical narratives that Jean-François Lyotard calls the principle "métarécits" of modernity: the stories about the emancipation of the people through techno-scientific progress and the tale of the free pursuit and exchange of information permitted by the formation of liberal institutions (*Postmodernisme* 47, 129; *Condition* 54-57). Modernism is, according to this convention, the artistic expression of the new industrial and urban social reality in which the European middle-class, having gained political dominance, replaced its revolutionary communal aim of shared material freedom with its conservative individual aim of intellectual freedom from material and communal constraint (Lukács, *Essays* 465). The outbreak of revolutionary activity across Europe in 1848 is regularly interpreted as a sign of mass discontent with this change of goals (Lukács, *Essays* 465; Williams, *Writing* 69; *Country* 261; "Communications Technologies" 230; *Long Revolution* 164-172; *Politics* 33 and Benjamin 1: 644). It has also been taken to demonstrate that middle-class individualism and working class solidarity were irreconcilable (Fejtő 101), that national economic elites were in conflict with international worker movements (Robertson 89-90), and that the more traditional and rooted provincial cultures were opposed to the emergence of a modern industrial and urban society (Elton 15). The exposure of these contradictions resulted in an increased cynicism, and it is this loss of idealism that is said to be determinative for modernist literary discourse (Robertson 91). For a critique of the historical view that emphasizes the importance of 1848, see Hall (5), Tony Pinkney (6), or Schulte-Sasse (xii-xv).
According to him, the language of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was held to be "transparence, circulation sans dépôt, concours idéal d'un Esprit universel et d'un signe décoratif sans épaisseur et sans responsabilité" (Dégré 8). He notes, however, that "vers la fin du XVIIIe siècle, cette transparence vient à se troubler; la forme littéraire développe un pouvoir second, indépendant de son économie et de son euphémie; elle fascine, elle dépayse, elle enchante, elle a un poids; on ne sent plus la Littérature comme un mode de circulation socialement privilégié, mais comme un langage consistant profond, plein de secrets, donné à la fois comme rêve et comme menace." 2 Finally he adds that around 1850 the writer ceases to be a witness for the Universal and becomes "une conscience malheureuse" for the modern world. He attributes this change in the status of the writer to a greater social transformation in France:

Or, les années situées alentour 1850 amènent la conjonction de trois grands faits historiques nouveaux; le renversement de la démographie européenne; la substitution de l'industrie métallurgique à l'industrie textile, c'est-à-dire la naissance du capitalisme moderne; la sécession (consommée par les journées de juin 48) de la société française en trois classes

2This effect was probably a consequence of the interest in philology and historical linguistics, areas of research which, as Robert Hodge and Gunther Kress note, were discovering how words contained a whole store of historical meanings and usages (183-84).
ennemies, c'est-à-dire la ruine définitive des illusions du libéralisme. Ces conjonctures jettent la bourgeoisie dans une situation historique nouvelle. Jusqu'alors, c'était l'idéologie bourgeoise qui donnait elle-même la mesure de l'universel, le remplissant sans contestation; l'écrivain bourgeois, seul juge du malheur des autres hommes, n'ayant en face de lui aucun autrui pour le regarder, n'était pas déchiré entre sa condition sociale et sa vocation intellectuelle. Dorénavant, cette même idéologie n'apparaît plus que comme une idéologie parmi d'autres possibles; l'universel lui échappe, elle ne peut se dépasser qu'en se condamnant; l'écrivain devient la proie d'une ambiguïté, puisque sa conscience ne recouvre plus exactement sa condition. Ainsi naît un tragique de la Littérature (Degré 45)

As the revolutionary impulse in nineteenth-century French culture translates into a series of alternating empires and republics, literary language becomes, Barthes argues, no longer the conveyor of universal humanist values but an object of suspicion, a means of criticizing opponents and disseminating the views of either side. This suspicion was further fueled by the fact that the growing interest in "scientific" philology and historical linguistics was valorizing oral language over written literature and showing how this non-literary language was independent of individual speakers (Dowling 46-103; Kress and Hodge 183-84). A person's discourse was seen to contain a kind of social and
linguistic unconscious, the social history of meanings and the linguistic history of usages, traces of which were often discernible in present practices. As a result, poetry's so-called "license" was devalued and displaced both as the arbitrator of proper usage by an empirically based linguistic science and as the standard bearer for literary innovation by what Raymond Williams calls "the emergence of the novel as the major literary form" (Writing 72). The novel's interest in discursive complexity and its sophisticated representations of both social conventions and historical events contrast with a poetic discourse that is increasingly conceived to be a naive form of high culture. Modern poetics responded, according to this mode of thought, by emphasizing complexity, veiled semantic depth and the need to consider the intricacies of language aside from its communicative uses.

In the following chapter, I will argue that

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3As Barthes' text indicates, this view becomes such a widespread presupposition of sociocriticism that it infiltrates thinkers as diverse as Christopher Caudwell, Raymond Williams and Mikhail Bakhtin. Caudwell writes in 1937 that "poetry is the child of Nature just as the developed novel is the child of the sophistication of modern culture" (12). Williams argues, in his 1983 Writing in Society, that, starting with the 1830s, the novel is "regularly the form in which most of the major [English] writers of the period work" because "new kinds of experience, in an essentially different civilization, flowed into the novel and were the bases of its new and extraordinary growth and achievement" (73). Finally, Bakhtin has the novel become dominant "with special force and clarity beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century" and suggests that "almost all the remaining genres are to a greater or lesser extent 'novelized'" or else they appear "stylized" (Dialogic Imagination 5-6).
sociocriticism constructs this version of literary history because it neglects the social nature of modern literary discourse and the communicative activity in which texts, in the modern context, are necessarily implicated. Instead of examining the concrete forms of text-based interactions, sociocritical approaches tend to relate texts to two large sociohistorical generalizations. On the one hand, the sociocritic places literary texts into the historical arena and interprets them as critiques or defenses of various historical states. On the other hand, the artistic work is dissociated from historical events and placed in an aesthetic realm in which the values of "high" art are either hostile to the historical process or irrelevant to it. Both views demonstrate sociocriticism's devaluation of poetry, since the first assimilates the poetic text into historiographic discourse and the second makes poetry vulnerable to accusations of being esoteric and elitist (accusations that further subject literary studies to the threat of "academic restructuring"). I will therefore attempt to redeem a sociocritical value for poetry in the third part of the chapter by arguing that (a) modern poetic discourse is an acute form of communicative action, (b) it affirms a life-world in the context of the modern systematizing forces, and (c) it reproduces the life-world by being both a literary reflection of it as well as the basis for subsequent critical discussions that constitute, themselves, modern literary life-worlds (e.g. those involved in either café cultures or
university literature departments). This final point will lead into the following chapter's discussion of the aesthetic tradition that makes poetry prior to philosophy and that, consequently, attributes to poetry many of the qualities that Habermas assigns to the pre-scientific and unsystematic linguistic-based life-world.

1.1. First Critique of Sociocriticism: Overvaluing the Literary Text as a Historical Document.

Barthes' Degré zéro exemplifies the dogmatic precondition to much sociocritical historicizing, the belief that history has a goal and that this goal-orientation is discernible in literary discourse (Gadamer, "Rhetorik" 68). The faith in the ultimate historicity of literary texts has not resulted in an uncontested sociocritical orthodoxy; a major theoretical schism has occurred. On the one hand, the critical practices typified by Barthes' Degré and Lukács Essays über Realismus (1948) read a work as a reflection of Marxist political history in order to show how literary discourse reflects the progress or lack of it that was being made in fulfilling the Marxist prophecy. On the other hand, a form of sociocriticism has been derived from the work of Louis Althusser and his views on ideological state apparatuses (Positions 96). This approach denies that history is directly representable in artistic works. Instead, a political point of view mediates between artistic text, as a form of representation, and its represented material (i.e. historical reality) and this mediation has
been christened "ideology." 4

In either approach, the textual anomalies that cannot be interpreted as reflections of historical events or expressions of political viewpoints are given little emphasis, as both these forms of sociocriticism engage in what Jean-Paul Sartre calls "une scolastique de la totalité," a "pratique terroriste" of generalization and abstraction seemingly based on the slogan "liquider la particularité" [i.e. especially the particular individual text] (Critique 35). Instead of focusing on the peculiar features of an individual work, representative characteristics are highlighted in order to show the processes of history and to provide us with a painful reminder of their inevitable continuance. As I will illustrate by discussing the critical theories of Fredric Jameson, Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno, this need to integrate specific works into such a general history has three consequences. The individuality of the poetic text and, especially of the lyric, is (i) denied, (ii) mentioned as the reason for ignoring poetic qualities or (iii) interpreted as a sign of a vague discontent with the dominant development in social history. In all three cases, sociocriticism's treatment of poetry reflects the much greater hermeneutic problem of integrating individuals and small-scale events into the larger historical metanarrative,

4For definitions of ideology, see the introductory chapter in Eagleton's Ideology or the chapter on ideology in Williams' Marxism (55-74).
a problem that Habermas describes in terms of the relationship between life-worlds and systems.

1.11. Three Examples of Sociocritical Historicism

Fredric Jameson defends a form of historical hermeneutics that relates all texts to historical events by stating that a true knowledge of "History" is not based on an utopic vision but on our recognition that there is an underlying and unstoppable historical force. He writes in The Political Unconscious:

History . . . is the experience of Necessity, and it is this alone which can forestall its thematization or reification as a mere object of representation or as one master code among many others. Necessity is not in that sense a type of content, but rather the inexorable form of events; it is therefore a narrative category in the enlarged sense of some properly narrative political unconscious . . . , a retextualization of History which does not propose the latter as some new representation or "vision," some new content, but as the formal effects of what Althusser, following Spinoza, calls an "absent cause." Conceived in this sense, History is what hurts, it is what refuses desire and sets inexorable limits to individual as well as collective praxis, which its "ruses" turn into grisly and ironic reversals of their overt intention. (Political Unconscious 102)
The passage redresses the old and pain-ridden problem of determinism and free will. Jameson views "History" as the missing "ultimate ground" in which he discerns a form, an "inexorable logic" of events that limits every kind of human practice, including those acts involved in what Terry Eagleton refers to as the "literary mode of production" (Literary Theory 45; Criticism 45-48). This view of history "in its largest sense" is described by Jameson as one which focuses on the ongoing process of "cultural revolution" in relation to the ultimate Marxist presupposition, the inevitable and total socialist transformation (Political Unconscious 102). It is in the light of this necessarily final and global development that Jameson understands individual agents in specific events. They are to be integrated into a general history that inevitably proceeds as it will, regardless of competing individual frustrations or desires. The progression is mechanical. The international "capitalist" stage must first be fully realized before the subsequent "socialist revolution" can come into being, as the sociohistorical narrative proceeds sequentially to complete one chapter before turning to the next and finally on to the last, a state of grace in which the problems expounded in the earlier chapters are finally resolved.

It is easy to agree with Hayden White when he views this form of Marxist historiography as a tragi-comical narrative in which the separate but contiguous events, which White calls historiographic metonyms, are found, in the end, to be
synecdochic and to fall into place, like the pieces of a puzzle, according to the prescriptions of Marxist teleology (285-8). Jameson, in defending the practice claims, however, not to invent its historical telos, not to impose a prescribed optimistic historical interpretation on what often times seems to be a discouraging selection of data, but to extrapolate the "experience of necessity" in a scientific manner from the "raw material" that history itself provides.

This "scientific" extrapolation involves, we discover, a three-level hermeneutic scheme (Jameson, Political 83-100). Not only may a literary work be interpreted as a reflection of one moment in the general historical revolutionary process, it may also be viewed both as a representation of a local conflict or of its imaginary resolution, and as a participant in the class conflict insofar as a text is seen to expose an element of the dominant ideology. These three levels of historical value have, in Jameson's view, an allegorical presence even in the most solipsistic poetry, but his own work has, nevertheless, a predominantly narratological focus. It seems that narrative and especially "open" narratives are better suited to conventional Marxist perspectives that foreground the overcoming of obstacles to the Marxist notion of history and, especially, of all attempts to impose a premature ending to it (including the affective and subjective compositions of the lyrical self, as it contemplates a vision of beauty or a sign of the infinite). Jameson must consequently denounce what Frank
Kermode identifies as the late nineteenth-century fascination with endings, and he must denigrate what Barbara Herrnstein Smith describes as the various forms of poetic closure. He demonstrates, as a result, the Marxist discomfort with poetry, which is frequently viewed as a particularly individualistic form of expression, devalued for its lack of sociohistorical content or dismissed as an anachronistic genre.5

This rather conventional sociocritic denigration of poetry as an out-of-date form of literary production is also visible in much of Walter Benjamin's work, as Benjamin argues

5Peter Zima, for one, notes that the lyric's focus on the individual subject and the emotions of this subject, particularly in relation to an atemporal experience of beauty, has prevented it from being studied by Marxist critics who emphasized the thematic elements in literature (Manuel de sociocritique 68). Although Zima acknowledges the possibility of a combined social and structural analysis of lyrical works, he only considers it possible through a comparative approach that would relate several poems to each other and to interpret from them a worldview (69). As far as other kinds of poetry are concerned, their narrativity generally makes them much more compatible with sociocritical practice and in fact surprisingly related to Marxist theory. In fact, it is the universalizing tendency of a non-lyrical, "romantische" and "progressive Universalpoesie" that Friedrich Schlegel, writing over forty years before Marx, makes the forerunner of all speculative philosophy and that he associates, like one kind of speculation in particular (i.e. dialectic reason), with the faculty of "Witz" (38-9). This faculty engages in a "logische Chemie" by decomposing, mixing and synthesizing ideas in a way that is directly related to the French Revolution and that anticipates the Marxist notion of cultural revolution (49-50). In addition, the notion of dialogue that underlies the Socratic dialectic would seem to be related to the poetic category conventionally labeled dramatic. Consequently, one might argue that Marxism forgets the literary nature of its own discourse by reducing poetry to an ahistorical individualistic utterance extremely distant from the scientific pretensions of dialectical materialism.
that the stature of poetry diminishes in the second half of the nineteenth century. In "Über einige Motive bei Baudelaire," Benjamin notes, for example, that Baudelaire's works, along with Heine's, exemplify this devaluation of poetic discourse, which occurred in response to the fact that the conditions for the reception of lyrical writing changed in three ways:

Erstens hat der Lyriker aufgehört, für den Poeten an sich zu gelten. Er ist nicht mehr 'der Sänger,' wie noch Lamartine es war; er ist in ein Genre eingetreten. (Verlaine macht diese Spezialisierung handgreiflich; Rimbaud war schon Esoteriker, der das Publikum ex officio von seinem Werke fernhält.) Ein zweites Faktum: ein Massenerfolg lyrischer Poesie ist nach Baudelaire nicht mehr vorgekommen. (Noch Hugos Lyrik fand beim Erscheinen eine mächtige Resonanz. In Deutschland stellt das "Buch der Lieder" die Schwelle dar.) Ein dritter Umstand ist derart mitgegeben: das Publikum wurde spröder auch gegen lyrische Poesie, die ihm von früher her überkommene war. (Benjamin 1: 607).

Benjamin's three reasons for the poetic transformations all, in fact, reflect the conventional sociocritical view of modern history. According to Benjamin, the historical

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6Benjamin, in effect, retells the story of poetry's decline that goes back at least to Vico and that has poetry undergo an evolution from the social expression of emotion in an undifferentiated pre-industrial society to the socially transcendent and anachronistic utterances of individuals like the isolated poet of Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of
transformations in mid-nineteenth-century Europe reduce poetry from the dominant literary mode to un genre littéraire

Shaftsbury (1671-1715). This image of the modern but lonely literary genius assumes that a natural poetic subject survives in modern culture by enclosing itself within a space of creative refuge in which it, paradoxically, escapes social constraints. As Moshe Baresch notes, in a time when artists had to struggle against the practices of oppressive regimes, this affirmation of private inventiveness over public tradition suggests that the secretly unconstrained individual is closer to divine creation than the public person who appears to comply with a regime's decrees (Baresch 39-41). Eagleton argues that a mistaken opposition between the constraints of societal form and a pre-existing "natural" amorphous content underlies this view (Marxism 23). It is a fable which equates a state of freedom with a primitive state, and it therefore parallels accounts which make civilization into a process of confining differentiation (Rousseau), a prison for the individual (Weber), or the cause of anomie (Durkheim). As exemplified by Hegel's Phänomenologie, the opposition leads to the valorization of organic form in which composition involves resistance to received mechanical forms in order to find the formal innovation adequate to the content. It also privileges the trope of irony, the practice of resistance to all formal realizations in order to suggest the liberty that predated or now exists outside of materialized reality. Both Bakhtin's valorization of pre-Renaissance and Rabelaisian practices of mixing laughter and seriousness and Lacan's conception of the imaginary are fashionable versions of this modern myth. The sociocritical form of this romantic fable is epitomized by Christopher Caudwell, who describes the modern poet as the "one man [sic], alone [in industrial society, who], singing a song, still feels his emotions stirred by collective images" (20). In the modern world of this social narrative, the poet remains linked to a popular culture that has been displaced by mass culture and therefore provides nostalgic reminders of premodern or precapitalistic life. In Culture and Society, Williams details how this view is related to the nineteenth-century English conservative critique of modern culture and its loss of stable values and social structures. There is, however, a critical tradition, opposed to such a nostalgic poetic view, that undermines the form-and-content opposition either by making all forms into materials (as Marx proposes) or by making all matter into form (as Hjelmslev argues). See Eagleton (Marxism 26) and Marshall Berman (15) for recent versions of such criticism. Jameson's final chapter in Marxism and Form follows the Marxist convention of offering dialectic thinking as the solution to the issue (306-416). In the next chapter, I will explore the mediatory role that poetry has traditionally played in the opposition.
déclassé. This loss of status in the artistic hierarchy is, for Benjamin, a symptom of the general desacralization of the modern world caused by the fact that technologies of reproduction were making sociocultural events and artefacts highly replicable. According to Benjamin's now well known conception, pre-modern art was a pseudo-religious mystery, one which possessed an "aura" because its unique status as a spatio-temporally specific event tended, according to this particularly nostalgic modernist retrospective view, to endow it with value as a cult object (Benjamin 1: 480-81). With the advent of modern reproductive technologies, beginning with the steam press and the camera in the first half of the nineteenth century, this traditional "use value" of a work of art was displaced by its exchange value, the value established by its potential commodification (its reproducibility) and its fetishization (the desirability of its consumption). Culture was, accordingly, transformed into "culture industry," a change resisted only by discourses that preserved reminders of the forgotten unrepresentable cult-based mysteries and which, consequently, disrupted the modern economy of representational production and consumption.

The modern lyric, according to Benjamin's sociocritical perspectives, became a commemorative form of discourse in which the individual manifests a longing for the mysteries of a simpler collective life. This anachronistic character is seemingly suggested even by Edgar Allan Poe, who, as part of his early nineteenth-century reaction against Romanticism,
viewed the lyric as a poetic remnant, a necessarily brief utterance which "deserves its title [as poetry] only inasmuch as it excites...by elevating the [individual] soul" (Poe 415). Poetry's briefly transitory power to "elevate the soul" associates it with mythical notions of ascension seemingly at odds with the modern world and its complex history. The individual, blessed by poetry, ascends out of the modern world's discord and experiences momentary communion with other elevated souls. The implicit criticism of modernity, as something from which one should rise up, anticipates a third sociocritical view of poetry, one that is illustrated in Theodor Adorno's literary criticism. 7

Like Benjamin, Adorno reduces poetry to the modern lyric, which he also views as a form of cult resistance to modern social discourses. However, this poetic resistance is, for Adorno, not a nostalgic revolt against modernization but an intimation of the future social transformation of capitalism into socialism. According to Adorno, the lyric is the exemplary

7Paul de Man provides another example of the religious treatment of poetry, as he speaks of poetic language as if it were sacramental bread. For him, poetry's literal representations cover a mystery, to which we, as far as de Man is concerned, remain blind because all we can know are the repeated, familiar representations of an unrepresentable novelty or otherness (Blindness 186). De Man's position falls itself into the familiar French notion of allégorie that dates back at least to the Abbé Dubos (1670-1742). In this tradition, an allégorie (translated literally as other speaking) is the representation of the unreal by means of the real (Baresch 33). For De Man, this involves, as we shall see, the speaking of an absent poetry in the communicative language of prose commentary.
discursive form of the l'art pour l'art movement, a movement that, as I have indicated in my first chapter, began as part of the nineteenth-century reaction against mass culture and was perceived by Adorno to be a continuing force during his lifetime. In Adorno's view, the notion of "autonomous art," developed by this movement did not favor the reflection of historical events but the dialectic negation of history. In "Rede über Lyrik und Gesellschaft," he instructed an audience of conventional sociocritics on how they had overlooked poetry's negating power and, consequently, misinterpreted relationship of the modern lyric and society:

Sie empfinden die Lyrik als ein der Gesellschaft Entgegengesetztes, durchaus Individuelles. Ihr Affekt hält daran fest, daß es so bleiben soll, daß der lyrische Ausdruck, gegenständlicher Schwere entronnen, das Bild eines Lebens beschwöre, das frei sei vom Zwang der herrschenden Praxis, der Nützlichkeit, vom Druck der sturen Selbstverhaltung. Diese Forderung an die Lyrik jedoch, die des jungfräulichen Wortes, ist in sich selbst gesellschaftlich. Sie impliziert den Protest gegen einen gesellschaftlichen Zustand, den jeder Einzelne als sich feindlich, fremd, kalt, bedrückend erfährt, und negativ prägt der Zustand dem Gebilde sich ein: je schwerer er lastet, desto
For Adorno, the modern lyric constructed the image of a life that transcended its social context and existed independently of its social condition. However, this liberation of the individual subject does not demonstrate the social irrelevance of this form of discourse. As Adorno notes in Ästhetische Theorie, art is "als Produkt gesellschaftlicher Arbeit des Geistes stets fait social [sic]" (7: 335). In the case of the lyric, Adorno views its "social factuality" in two contradictory ways. On the one hand, he sees it as a form of individual protest against a reified state of existence, as the revolt of the poet against the class-based social structure in the form of his autonomous and afunctional parole's resistance to the collective langue (Schriften 7: 335). On the other hand, the lyric, as an example of Adorno's autonomous art, does not only indict society but also exemplifies its productive possibilities.

Since any society is "nicht bloß die Negativität, welche das ästhetische Formgesetz verurteilt, sondern noch in ihrer fragwürdigsten Gestalt der Inbegriff des sich produzierenden und reproduzierenden Lebens der Menschen," the autonomous art-object affirms by its own production the productive and reproductive potential of its social context. Rather than participating in a negation of mass culture by an elitist
art, Adorno implies (perhaps despite himself) that an affirmation of the social context of artistic production co-exists with a critical negation of it. The result is that the negating individual subject of the work affirms, by way of its need to negate, the existence of a cultural history that, in effect, motivates the negating act. The implicit twisted relationship between subject and historical context exposes the problems that the individualism inherent in poetic discourse presents to sociocritical approaches. I will now address these underlying theoretical problems more directly.

1.12. The Problem of the Subject in Sociocriticism

Like Jameson's notion 'History' as the absent cause present in a text and like Benjamin's conception of post-auratic art, Adorno's mystifying intellectual contortions result from the fact that the notion of the individual "subject," which is at the base of his discussions of the lyric and of autonomous art, poses problems for Marxism and for sociocriticism in general. The two poles around which Adorno contorts, the bipolar view of the individual poet's potential to overcome social constraint while reflecting social productivity, can be restated in contemporary terms as an opposition between Sartre and Louis Althusser. Although these two theorists were hardly concerned with the lyric, their discussions of subjectivity are theoretical reflections of the ways in which sociocriticism dealt with lyricism as well as the general notions of autonomous art. It is
therefore valuable to consider both Sartre's and Althusser's views here, as they will elucidate the underlying principles of a literary discourse conceived both as an individual and a social product.

Both Sartre and Althusser construct theories in response to the liberal notion of the individual subject, perhaps best exemplified by Shaftsbury's influential notion of the lonely genius. This "self" is, according to Will Kymlicka, understood to be a thing-in-itself existing prior to any ends in the world (52). It is a preconceptual state of intransitive being that the subject knows prior to serving the grammatical function of subject for any transitive verb. The initial state of absolute freedom is gradually limited, as the individual's originally open potential is reduced to the historical series of realized actions and interactions that constitutes his or her autobiography. Acting in the world represents, according to this view, a form of self-limitation, an entry into history that eliminates all other possible entrances and histories.

Although Sartre rejects this subjective priority, he nevertheless accepts the possibility that an individual subject may preserve a measure of independence from social and historical determinants. In his early views on literature contained in Situations II, he implies a critique of Shaftsbury's isolated creator by placing his individual writer in an environment of multiple social formations. He argues that this writer, when truthfully situated, is
composed of an assembly of these formations (Situations 2: 22). However, Sartre has an existentialist side to him that persists even in his Marxist phase, as he argues in his 1960 Critique de la raison dialectique that an individual is able to constitute him-/herself as an autonomous subject by willingly undertaking a "project" in which the individual's previous situations are overcome (76). These solipsistic pockets of speculative activity, built on the negation of the irreducible existential constraints of the individual's objective situation (professional status, family, class, etc.), belong to an individual's attempt to overcome the circumstances of his/her existence, to enter into a realm of undetermined possibility and to realize an unlimited potential (Critique 77). It is additionally Sartre's project, as part of his phenomenologically based critique of knowledge without being (objective knowledge independent of a subject), to lead an attack on institutionalized knowledge in order to make the free individual's realizations of the undetermined possible into the ultimate goal of human history. A literary utterance is consequently a discursive version of this project, one in which an individual writer imagines the negation of the individual world in which he is situated in order to realize the potential of undetermined self-expression. Rather than retreat into Shaftsbury's atelier in order to create, Sartre's writer confronts social discourses and imposes his will in a public self-assertive act of individual liberty.
Although Althusser's social determinism contrasts with Sartre's liberating existentialism, it is an equally aggressive assault on the liberalist notion of the individual subject. Since Althusser assigns an underlying social motivation to this apparently autonomous identity, he makes it into a false abstraction that we make from the composite grammatical subjects of the various social discourses in which we articulate ourselves. According to the Althusserian notion of "interpellation," autonomously existing social formations reproduce themselves by parasitically appropriating potential subjects for their discourses or other practices (Lenin 169). These discourses and practices are said to have well-defined roles or "subject-positions" into which they place and determine their appropriated subjects, as if they operated as functions in an institutional grammar. Furthermore, these grammars function as the various parts of the more encompassing system of the state, such that almost any organization (e.g. the Church, Trade Union, Communist Party) functions as an "ideological state apparatus." One is constituted as subject and citizen insofar as one accepts one's role in the syntax of a particular formation, but, just like a unit of discourse, the subject contains the potential for diverse possible situations. It possesses sets of grammatical rules that, in competition with each other, create the potential for an ungrammatical state resistance, and the lyric reflects the subject's grammatical complexity by containing fragments,
metaphors, conventional expressions that implicate the larger contradictory discursive practices and corresponding politically opposed social formations.

The contradiction between the affirmation of social practices in Althusser's multiply positioned subject and negation of the social elements in Sartre's liberating subject, represents the potential range of relationships between the individual agent and the narrative of the sociohistorical world. Although the lyric may be the discursive form in which this relationship is most fully explored, the issue is not confined to this one literary type. The social/individual question, which Adorno makes into a problem for all autonomous art, was formalized as a general opposition between "literariness" and "communication" by the Russian formalists, who used this distinction to define literary discourse (Bennett 49-50). The quality of "literariness" was seen to be the part of an individual literary text that "defamiliarizes" both everyday social discourse and conventionalized literary practices, discursive habit that were thought to be "automatized." The corresponding valorization of an individual text's "literariness," its quality that does not just "make it new" but also makes it strange, is a view that has gradually been eroded by subsequent theoretical reconsiderations. Since the devolution of this conception of "literariness" provides an important precedent for my thinking, I will outline the offensive against it by first discussing two views that
problematize the opposition between social communication and
dividualistic literary expression without totally
abandoning it: the one represented by the work of the Czech
structuralist Jan Mukařovský and the other by the writings
of Bakhtin and his circle. I will then go on to criticize
two more recent attempts to reinscribe the distinction: that
which occurs in the semiotics of the early Julia Kristeva and
in Paul de Man's deconstruction. I will finally conclude
this chapter by indicating how one can think about modern
literature without reducing the individual to a fully
determined historical agent nor separating literary discourse
from a social use of language.

1.2. Second Critique of Sociocriticism: Overvaluing
Poetic Discourse as a Form of Individual
Expression.

If one tendency of sociocriticism was to translate all
discourse into sociohistorical narrative and to make all
individuals into the subject of this narrowly defined
history, a second tendency was to set some form of discourse
aside as ahistorical, individualistic and therefore socially
remote. In the writings of Mukařovský, the Bakhtin circle,
Kristeva and de Man, this separation is both posited and
criticized. These theorists consequently manifest the
contradiction implicit in modernism itself but that is
especially a problem of sociocriticism: the contradictory
relationship of literary discourse to social linguistic
practices.
1.21. Two Sociocritical Attempts to Define Poetry as an Individualistic Genre of Discourse

Mukař ovský's work is particularly concerned with the relation of the literary work to "all other aspects of human culture" (Steiner 178). A key example of this concern is provided in Mukař ovský's 1942 essay, "The Place of the Aesthetic Function among the Other Functions." Developing the relation of the aesthetic function to the extra-aesthetic ones, Mukař ovský places the aesthetic in a classificatory scheme of human functions or "modes of a subject's self-realization vis-à-vis the external world" (Structure 40).

This classification distinguishes four semiotic categories: signs that are oriented towards the immediate reality, that reflect their own semiotic character, that foreground the subject of the utterance or that highlight the object to which they refer. Each of these semiotic categories are given corresponding functions: discourse that foregrounds the object and objective reality is practical, discourse that directs attention onto the subject and its model of reality is theoretical, discourse that emphasizes the semiotic process and its referential relationship to the objective world is symbolic, and discourse that exposes the subjective qualities of the semiotic process is aesthetic. This typology allows Mukař ovský to distinguish the types of sign which, according to their dominant function, are associated with each category: "symbolic and aesthetic signs are objects, whereas signs in the practical and theoretical
functions are instruments" (Structure 45). Since symbolic and aesthetic signs both draw attention to their own semiotic character, they negate the socialized theoretical and practical functions. Instead of instruments of communication, their reflexivity facilitates their transformation into the role of objects for the diverse discourses of other individuals and, consequently, into the occasions for social interaction. Theoretical and practical signs deflect, on the other hand, attention away from themselves and onto the reality which serves as their object. Their function assumes the existence of a transparent social discourse rather than the one that involves the negotiations of individual reflections around a shared text.

In Mukař ovský's system of poly-functional discourse, the aesthetic function is furthermore given special status because it reflects a notion of the dissolving individual subject. The artistic text is, Mukař ovský claims, produced both by the artist's individualism and by the social forces and "cultural phenomena" that are involved in the artist's personality structure (Structure 151-158; Word 145-146). Displaying an underlying aestheticism, Mukař ovský detects

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8Felix Vodička suggests that, in this formulation, Mukař ovský arrives at a "concept of the totality of functions," into which "both the aesthetic function and the historical evolution of art" are integrated (14). In this interpretation, "man in the totality of his function," the "driving force of the historical process" is made the ultimate structure, of which art is a component. Vodička, in this way, foregrounds history over art studies, whereas Mukař ovský always privileges art.
an autonomous creative individual behind the work, since each artistic text "always presents a certain image of the personality of its author both through direct statements which can be related to the creator's personality (the knowledge and views expressed in the work, etc.) and also through the structure" (Word 146). At the same time, the individuality of the art-object reflects the relationship of individual to society. On one level, Mukař ovský regards art as the form of discourse in which the contradictions between the individual and society are overcome; it is "a sign composed of a sensory symbol created by the artist, a 'meaning' . . . lodged in the social consciousness, and a relation to the thing signified--a relation that refers to the entire context of social phenomena" (Structure 82).

9"Personality," as Mukař ovský uses the term, is not directly identifiable with the poet. But it is a representation of the author produced by the work. In this way, the semiotic relationship of the poet and the work is preserved, as each remains a sign for the other.

10In a passage that demonstrates Mukař ovský's structural-functionalism, he writes: "[T]he work of art always disturbs (sometimes slightly, sometimes considerably) an aesthetic norm which is valid for a given moment of artistic development. But even in extreme cases it must also adhere to the norm. Finally, there are periods in the history of art in which adherence to norms obviously predominates over violation of them. But there is always something in the work of art which is bound to the past and something which points to the future" (Aesthetic Function 35).

11Although Mukař ovský refers here to the "autonomous" nature of the work-sign and although he admits that art may also have a "communicative function," he insists on the fact that any communicative meaning of art (reference to a distinctive reality) does not suffice "to characterize fully and unequivocally the intent of a work of art insofar as we
another level, Mukaf ovský makes texts into reflections of the contradictions in an individual's social background. In *Aesthetic Function*, he links aesthetic norms to various social strata or geographic regions (47). Changes in aesthetic values can therefore result from the interaction between these social strata and geographical regions (like the exchanges that result in Bakhtin's "polyglossia" [*Dialogical Imagination* 61]), from the decentralization of a particular social group and the resulting stratification and individual differentiation (effects that produce Bakhtin's "heteroglossia" [*Dialogical Imagination* 67]), or from a more radical overturning of the social hierarchy (Mukař ovský, *Aesthetic Function* 49-50).

As indicated by this scheme, Mukaf ovský's emphasis on the art-sign's relation to potentially conflicting social norms parallels the writings of the Bakhtin circle, particularly as they are encapsulated in V. N. Vološ inov's views about the social orders underlying both individual consciousness and communication between individuals (12). Both approaches affirm that texts may be purely aesthetic and therefore anti-social speech acts (what Vološ inov calls the "finished monologic utterance"), although Vološ inov devalues such forms of writing, as well as critical methods that interpret all texts in this way. As epitomized by contextless philological readings of inscriptions on actual monuments or on artefacts in a museum, these practices tear regard it as an artistic product" (*Structure* 94).
language from "the particular ideological domain of which it is an integral part and [conceive of a text] as if it were a self-sufficient isolated entity" (Vološ inov 72-3). Such disorienting speech acts are especially prevalent, Vološ inov argues, in the form of Saussure's linguistics, which adopts an "abstract objectivist" approach to language study, an approach that treats all language as if it were alien (77). Vološ inov offers, in contrast to this form of linguistics, not the Vosslerian expressive notion of language that has romantic roots (utterance as the externalization of flowing subjectivity), but a notion that makes language acts into the occasions for interaction between the individual and social context in which the flow is not only outward but also inward (the individual participates in the construction of the social world which also constructs the individual). The traditional distinction made between the psyche (studied by psychology) and ideology (studied by sociology) is consequently blurred, and Vološ inov labels the new fused study of the individual and the social together "Behavioral Ideology" (91). Language studied in this perspective is viewed as "a continuous generative process implemented in the social interaction of speakers" (98). It is language observed in the processes of verbal exchange as acts of enunciation in a larger dialogue.\(^{12}\)

\(^{12}\)Vološ inov's views are close to those developed in the field of sociolinguistics. Martinet, for example, has developed a notion of "une synchronie dynamique où
This linguistic attitude, representative of the Bakhtin circle in general, consequently values literary discourse that can be viewed as a dialogized form of communication: language that invites the reader to reaffirm his/her place as a subject in further language acts. It does not, however, eliminate the possibility of viewing literary utterances as complete monologic inscriptions. Mikhail Bakhtin, in fact, l'attention se concentre, certes, sur un seul et même état, mais sans qu'on renonce jamais à y relever des variations et y évaluer le caractère progressif ou récessif de chaque trait. Une telle synchronie ne ressemble guère à la coupe transversale qui a servi à Saussure pour illustrer sa conception d'une présentation synchronique (9).

13Dialogism is the process of communication between two individuals who are not distinguished by "structurally generated conflicts" but only by differences that arise on account of their individual choices. Their verbal interaction is one which seeks "the criticism and appreciation of others" in the way that a scholar offers his published thoughts to the academic community (Kymlicka 118). The offering can be thought of as a submission to dialectic, especially as Sartre explains it in Critique de la raison dialectique. Sartre develops a notion of world interaction which he calls reciprocity and which transforms the opposition between two individuals, living in their private worlds and involved in their specific activities, into a triad, in which Sartre, the observer of the other two individuals, appropriates their two worlds, colonizes them, and combines them by providing the link which connects them and makes them into a human relationship (213-33). The observing Sartre acts as a double agent who plays a role in each of the other two worlds, while actually co-opting them in his own construction. This co-option ends the moment that Sartre turns away and ends his imperialist domination over the world that he surveys. The act is one of epistemological empire-building, in which individual worlds are colonized by a third totalizing power but which undergo an immediate decolonization as personal empires are built, consumed and allowed to disintegrate during the goings-on of our daily lives. However, the transitory nature of the empire-building conscious is arrested once opinion is rewritten as fact, once the world of personal experience is translated into the public discourse of legitimate knowledge, once the dialectic relationship of competing consciousnesses becomes unequal and given to dogmatism.
makes a generic distinction between poetry and prose on this basis. Poetic discourse consists of "a unitary singular language and a unitary, monologically sealed off utterance" (Bakhtin, Dialogic Imagination 296). Prose, on the other hand, indulges in "heteroglossia" and the incorporation of "language diversity" (298). It exploits the interaction between utterances, levels, and social strata; it anticipates the mediation of other utterances between itself and its reception; it is open to insertion into various contexts of "the open-ended dialogue" of life (Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics 293). It is not an appropriation of the processes of language to poetic intention, but a subjection of intention to the active readings of others, as if the text were both a production (mise en scène) of various forerunners and the script to be produced by readers.

For Bakhtin, this dialogic discourse constitutes any text which cannot be given a "formal definition" but only "contextual meaning" occasioned by contact with a "responsive understanding" (Speech Genres 125). He attributes this quality of formal resistance especially to the novel and denies its presence in "high poetry." While the novel exploits the "distinctive links and interrelationships between [diverse] utterances and languages," poetry can, for Bakhtin, include only limited amounts of such "heteroglossia" and "dialogization" because poetic language is, again for Bakhtin, unquestionably and inextricably bound to the poet's consciousness (Dialogic Imagination 286). Poetic style
consequently expresses "indirect, unconditional intentionality" as transcribed in the poet's own individual language and conveyed in "its monologic steadfastness" (286). The poetic word remains always under the poet's control and appears to a reader as a completed product whose meanings may be interpreted but not transformed, constructed or regenerated by the interplay of personal, cultural or historical texts.¹⁴

In so delimiting poetic discourse, Bakhtin manifests his desire to re-valorize novelistic forms of writing in which he finds the dialogic activity that poetry lacks. But one must be careful about where Bakhtin locates this "high poetry." For the younger Bakhtin, whose work from the 1920s is translated in Art and Answerability, the lyric joins the novel in not being such a dead genre of discourse. "Lyrical self-objectification," he writes, "is a seeing and hearing of myself from within with the emotional eyes of the other and in the emotional voice of the other" (170). It is a dialogically alive attempt both to adorn a beloved and to direct the responses of the beloved and poetic audience in a way that reflects favorably on the adoring subject. For the

¹⁴Bakhtin's refusal to allow any indeterminacy to be present in poetic discourse virtually makes modern poetry (any poetry of the present) impossible. As we will see, Paul de Man insists on the indeterminacy of poetic language because he holds it to be another's traces that exist in any reader's present and, therefore, evidence that the sacred continues to survive in modernity (Resistance 76-77). He is therefore highly critical of the Bakhtinian manner of distinguishing poetry and prose (Resistance 111).
mature Bakhtin of the work first published as Voprosy literatury i estetika (1975), the only obvious quality of poetry and its monologic discourse is that it is exemplified by the classics (Dialogic Imagination 19). Such literature consists, according to Bakhtin, of genres that are no longer evolving and by texts that refer to an "absolute" epic past and represent a closed and protected world. These memorialized genres of representation are not subject to a reader's evaluation in what appears to be an effort to build a collection of cultural monuments to mark the valuable human enterprises of the past. They are objectivated forms of discourse that seem to stand alone against a desert silence, an opposition between enduring textual artefact and the absent transitory historical life-world that post-structuralism undermines.

1.22. Two Contemporary Returns to Subjectivity

Julia Kristeva and Paul de Man continue the assault on classical literary monuments in ways which emphasize the relationships between a literary text and other linguistic acts but which, additionally, valorize a moment in the text's prehistory, a moment prior to its being read, a moment of autonomous if scarcely discernible subjectivity. The early Kristeva of Séméiotikè (1969) directs attention to the value

15The dating of Bakhtin's work is precarious as a lag exists between the date of writing and the date of publication. The essays in Dialogic Imagination are clearly written after the Dostoevsky book, which appears in Russian in 1929.
of the subjective meanings surrounding an utterance by taking up Bakhtin's views on dialogism. She, however, modifies these views in order to make dialogic discourse into a defining poetic quality. In a way that reminds us of the formalist distinction between literary and communicative discursive practices, she argues that the "unit" of poetic language has an undetermined meaning because it possesses an absent or weakened denotative capacity (Séméiotikè 150). It is this diminished denotative power that contrasts the poetic word with scientific discourse and that deflects the communicative function of poetic discourse from one based solely on the utterer's intent to one that implicates "intertextuality," a text's relationship to other discursive acts. However, Kristeva acknowledges that some forms of discourse manifest the intertextual network more than others. Whereas monologic discourse (e.g. descriptive, epic, scientific, historical) expresses the conceptualizations of

16Kristeva originally defines intertextuality (which she also labels "paragrammatisme") as the process by which "[l]e signifié poétique renvoie à des signifiés discursifs autres, de sorte que dans l'énoncé poétique plusieurs autres discours sont lisibles. Il se crée, ainsi autour du signifié poétique, un espace textuel multiple dont les éléments sont susceptibles d'être appliqués dans le texte poétique concret. Nous appellerons cet espace intertextuel. Pris dans l'intertextualité, l'énoncé poétique est un sous ensemble d'un ensemble plus grand qui est l'espace des textes appliqués dans notre ensemble" (Semeioticè 255). The relations involved in this space have been rigorously studied and categorized by Gérard Genette (Palimpsestes). Paul Thibault attempts to relate similar intertextual categories to social interaction and apply his findings to a study of the relationship between Vladimir Nabokov's Ada or Ardor: A Family Chronicle and Lolita (119-175)
an authoritative subject of knowledge whose statements revise all previous conceptualizations into a present synthesis. Dialogic discourse (e.g. carnivalesque, polyphonic, or novelistic) occurs in texts which react with other texts in ways that resist such absorption. Such intertextual interactions both individualize the specific texts (mark their differences) and make them part of the expression of a larger cultural subject (Séméiotikê 158). As a result, Kristeva sees Bakhtin's notion of dialogism as one which designates both the intersubjectivity and the intertextuality of writing and which therefore underlines the essential ambivalence of an écriture in which an individual's utterance interacts with the community's discursive chorus as opposed to a notion of literature which overemphasizes the isolated utterances of a few privileged individuals. (Séméiotikê 149).

To make Kristeva's "dialogic discourse" a manifest feature of a work requires a further replication of the

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17 Kristeva defines écriture as "le système mobile de dispositions signifiantes libres, éveillées, en état d'initiative perpétuelle" (Polylogue 49). She goes on to say:

L'écriture est précisément ce 'mouvement spontané' qui transforme une formulation de désir de signifiant en loi objective, puisque le sujet de l'écriture, spécifique, comme nul autre, est 'en-soi-et-pour-soi,' lieu même non pas de la division, mais--en l'important--du mouvement. Il est par conséquent le lieu où la distinction subjectif/objectif est invalidée, s'efface, apparaît comme relevant d'une idéologie (50). Writing is consequently an utterance in the fluid state of coming into being but whose textual body is not yet complete; it is opposed to the notion of literature as fully embodied text.
monologic subject/intertextual intersubject opposition within the text itself as part of the interaction between the dialogue of the characters and the monologue of the narrator or commentator (*Séméiotikê* 156-157). The Kristeva of *Séméiotikê* therefore privileges certain narrative forms (e.g. the polyphonic novel) which establish a distance between the subject who narrates or interprets in the open-ended present and the narrated or interpreted subjects who have completed their actions, interactions and speech acts in the past.18 The structure implies that the narration and commentary function to control and complete the various actions and that polyphony occurs when we start to draw on other sources of commentary and undermine the text's independent authority.19

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18 It may not be a new perception to note the existence of a similar fixation among many contemporary theorists and critics. Linda Hutcheon remarks in *The Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* that "[i]n most of the critical work on postmodernism, it is narrative--be it in literature, history or theory--that has usually been the major focus of attention" (5). As I have suggested above, Lyotard moves away from this tendency. It will be a part of the agenda of this dissertation to help further a withdrawal from this genre-specific addiction.

19 In *S/Z*, Roland Barthes makes this quality into the basis of a distinction between "classical" and "modern" texts. Classical texts are "readable," insofar as they are full, meaningful, gapless, and overdetermined and insofar as their intertwining multiple textual strands of significance are melded into a text's singular "full truth." Barthes opposes this classical text to a modern one, a more "writable" text of which a reader can never attain any full understanding because the blocks, codes and figures that mark the repository of textual meaning are weakened and because the less constrained text, much less than fully determined, includes many passages of which the interpretation remains undecidable. In fact Barthes' distinction between the readable and the writable reflects his early distinction between writing, the universalization of one group's
By the time of *La Révolution du langage poétique* (1974) and of the essays collected in *Polylogue* (1977), Kristeva's need for this containing narrative commentary has disappeared. She values, instead, texts affiliated with a processional space that she labels the *chora* (*Polylogue* 58), and to which she attributes the fecund qualities of a matrix (58), of "une négativité affirmative" that especially negates filiation (63), and of the feminine in general (78). This writing weakens the denotative elements in language by including preconceptual spaces into which readers are seemingly invited to speak. As a result, Kristeva's revised model of the text replaces the notion of dialogism with one discourse, and writing degree-zero, an anonymous form of writing which is both true to all individual paroles and anticipatory of a utopic state of society in which cultural, political and economic disparities are eliminated. In *S/Z*, this zero form of writing is given body in the zero-gender of the castrated Zambinella of Balzac's *Sarrasine*. Zambinella, the castrated figure, is the zero-degree text reflected in the classically constructed Balzacian short story. She/he floats through the story, and is only finally contained by the Marquise's refusal to honor an agreement, the act that concludes Balzac's narrative, and by Barthes' act of fleshing-out the text with an attempted exhaustive commentary. The zero-writing of Zambinella's body precipitates into the level of the Marquise-Chigo exchange and into Barthes' text, as a text that generates further texts, although this text has an origin, the act of castration, and an end that is both contained by the Marquise's refusal and opened by Barthes' erudition. If the classical text constitutes a full and closed literature, the modern text, the text that Barthes' annotations make out of Balzac's text, overflows its container as a form of écriture that demands ever more filling out.

ZoHuyssen questions this gendering of modernist avantgarde discourse, as he notes that the distinction of mass culture and modernism was gendered in the nineteenth century in ways that equated the feminine not with modernist aesthetics but with mass culture (49).
that involves a process of semiotic gestation in which readings, discussions and other textual affiliations are generated.

Paul de Man, who diminishes even further the denotative element in the literary text by insisting on the essential indefiniteness and ambivalence of figurative language, places the possibility of any decidable textual meaning prior to our conceptual horizon. For him, all literary language has a necessarily ambiguous nature insofar as its indirect figural forms of expression will, in some cases, be "misunderstood by being taken literally" and, in other cases, occur in contexts that would suggest resignation to "the necessity of their own misreading" (Blindness 136). De Man gives the name of "allegory" (i.e. other speaking) to literary language's indeterminacy (its self-conscious failure to communicate), and he insists on its presence in poetry because poetic discourse especially exploits the "absolute ambivalence of...a language that is," he claims, "representational and nonrepresentational at the same time."

All representational poetry is always also allegorical, whether it be aware of it or not, and the allegorical power of the language undermines and obscures the specific literal meaning of a representation open to

\[21\text{De Man's categories representational and non-representational discourse resemble Mukařovský's distinction between instrumental discourse (practical and theoretic signs) and discursive objects (symbolic and aesthetic signs). He reiterates, consequently, the formalist distinction between communicative and poetic speech acts.}\]
understanding. But all allegorical poetry must contain a representational element that invites and allows for understanding, only to discover that the understanding it reaches is necessarily in error. (*Blindness* 185)

Poetry is, in this case, a double-edged language act that is accessible to a community of readers because of its representational relevance to the "actual world" and that, at the same time, points to its own irrelevance, meaninglessness, and insurmountable social remoteness.\(^2^2\) When it marks this distance in terms of a temporal distance, de Man refers to it as allegory, the temporalized expression of a single subject who has moved from a mystified position within language to a demystified state beyond it, as this reading subject elevates her-/himself out of a text's communicative level.

A text therefore allegorizes (narrativizes) the individual reader's relationship to community, as the reader transcends the sociolinguistic level of commentary and acquires textual knowledge, as his/her reading progresses from a limited but shared knowledge of the text to a more extensive but private one of its incommunicable silences (*Blindness* 225). When the distance between mystification and demystification has no temporal duration, it no longer reflects a historical development of a continuous and

\[^{22}\text{De Man's notion of "allegory" is anticipated by Derrida, who discusses how representation interlaces with what is represented and, in effect, doubles it (De la grammaologize 55).}\]
identical reading subject but, according to de Man, "recaptures the factitiousness of human existence as a succession of isolated [lyrical?] moments lived by a divided self" (Blindness 226). He gives a traditional literary name to this quality of some language simultaneously to have communicative meaning and to point to its own meaningless artificiality; he calls it irony. But de Man's ironic texts both posit and negate a communicable reading experience, as they implicate, on one level, the social activity involved in the discussion of reading, while, on another level, they assert the silent relationship of individual reader with the text. The underlying assumption is one of a reader who is able to affirm the existence of both an objective text and a measure of subjectivity outside the social world. Such an asocial reading subject, like the nail-paring new-critical creator buried beneath but not discernible in the work, is engaged in a language act in which the social forces of meaning production have been mystified and which is, consequently, meant to be seen as segregated from the everyday social world. What is needed is an approach that exposes the social forces involved in the production of meaning in even the most lyrical discourse, an approach that also emphasizes the collaboration between both the writing and reading halves of this discursive process.

1.3. Sociopoetic Discourses and the Social Activity of Reading

According to all the critical perspectives discussed
above, the production and consumption of modern poetry either reflects an emancipated subjective state or an imprisoning, depersonalized "iron-cage" of modernity. In seeming defiance of these views of, on the one hand, an irrepressible individualism and, on the other, a pessimistically systematic historical determinism, I am arguing that some modern literary texts are "sociopoetic." These forms of writing induce a social activity of reading that relates one singular event (i.e. a reading) with another without transforming them into habitual knowledge about the text being read or subordinating the singular experience to an interpretive authority. These works do not presuppose a store of literary knowledge (e.g. the literary sections of Eco's encyclopedia) nor a professional literary training; instead, they construct a social formation by mediating relations among anonymous readers possessing different knowledge and training. To the extent that they address such a diverse (i.e. unformed) readership as a community, they resist the systematization of the modern social world by invoking a social integration based on shared reading rather than fellow interpretations and values.

This resistance to systematic integration results from the fact that modern poetry is produced in conditions in which poetic texts can only anticipate (in contrast to Althusser's strong sense of interpellate) their anonymous public because their readership no longer inhabits a shared literary system (complete with a common store of knowledge
and an equally accessible educational system) but a modern (i.e. differentiated) literary life-world, an urbanized substitute for Schlegel's poetic Volkstimmé. They consequently resist their full appropriation by interpretive communities and their subjection to critical practices, and they therefore display a fluid resilience to what many critical theorists have identified as the rationalization of modern culture (e.g., the modern state's increased legal regulation of its citizens, the scientific methods valorization of natural laws, and the academic institution's restrictions on the ways that one can treat texts). Sociopoetic discourses do not anticipate mere compliance with such institutional practices; instead, they are radical examples of "textual suppleness" (Baer and O'Brien 89) and, as such, provide foundation for multiple critical practices, commentaries and notoriety, some but not all of which are contained within institutional culture.

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23 This view is to be distinguished from Stanley Fish's polemic on the authority of the interpretive communities within an undefined "literary institution as it is now constituted" (343). What Fish means by literary institution is the unwritten rules and game-playing that govern the academic profession (but what he means by "now" is much more difficult to decide). He extends these presuppositions of an academic game "now" underway to be those that decided what "things are done" within the institution and does not acknowledge the possibility of extra-mural literary activity.

24 These laws and limitations all constitute what Foucault calls the archive and regulate the possible discourses within a discursive practice (L'archéologie 170). Sociopoetic discourses forge their own possibility.

25 In this sense, these texts themselves, not Foucault's authors, have the status of founders of discourse, a "great
This proliferation of a superfluous cultural discursivity relies on the poetic work's resistance to definition in order to promote a literary form of social integration—the communicative activity involved in reading, discussions and writing. In this sense, modern literate cultures value the sociopoetic qualities that a widely printed text makes possible, the fact that, as Richard Rorty puts it in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, such widely disseminated texts preserve their status as privileged cultural phenomena, insofar as they provide occasions for hermeneutic activity (318). They, therefore, provide readers with chances to "fall together" in engaging them in various ongoing and diversified discussions motivated by the hope of a final agreement. They, additionally, provide word" for a reading community, without there necessarily be anyone like Sheldon Wolin's epic theorist to have uttered it (See Foucault, "What is an Author" 132-6; Wohlin 5-13; Baer and O'Brien 8-24). It may, in fact, be this process of obliterating human authorship that determines their status as canonical works (i.e. works belonging to a community of readers rather than to any writer).

This form of resistance is equivalent to what Deleuze and Guattari identify as the processes of decoding and deterritorialization.

Lyotard argues that such texts are, in effect, inversions of oral narratives, whose legitimated recital manifests the historical identity in traditional cultures and constitutes the social for them (*Condition 40*). Oral cultures are, according to this view, constituted by the set of individuals who can act as relays for the transmission of traditional stories. An oral text's ability to be constantly retold is its most important feature in such story-telling societies. In contrast, the printed text's function as a vehicle for cultural reproduction depends on its poetic productivity, its ability to generate new and diverse interpretations along with the discussions involved in the competition among these readings.
opportunities for these readers to practice civility in their discussions while expressing opposing views, so that a community of diversity in a shared undertaking is produced. Behind such a view is Gadamer's notion of hermeneutics, the method that he assigns to the Geisteswissenschaften and that involves the multiplication of individual interpreters who, in personally dealing with a text and discussing their findings, arrive eventually and democratically at a consensus about meaning. However, the possibility of such a consensus about the reading of a literary text has to be reconsidered in order to recognize the role that institutions play in the reading activity and the fact that institutionally sanctioned written commentaries press an authoritative claim over subsequent reading (in order that these commentaries also remain in print). Such written commentaries become tyrannical if they are not subject to further critical reassessment and revision, since any ultimate consensus on a text's meaning would curtail subsequent interest in the work. The yielding reader, who merely submits to the authority of the written critical word, refuses to engage in the social activity that guarantees any text's continued existence and that produces/reproduces the literary institution itself.28

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28Gary Clark makes this point in a very acute manner when he notes that the critical reading required by the humanities resists the formalization of thinking that results from it being fixed in print. He states that critical reading establishes, as a result, a democratic basis for community that is involved in the reproduction of a literate life-world. This reproductive process involves the empowerment of readers as the basis for intellectual community:
Modern literary studies must therefore educate, promote and finally frustrate an overabundance of critically active readers because the institution depends for its survival on the continued desire for critical discussion about literary texts. As long as such texts remain useful for the promotion of such critical activity, they constitute given features of the literary community's life-world, the raw material for both pre-reflexive and critical reading acts on the basis of which readers can acknowledge fellow interest, get funding for various projects and, at the same time, defend a anti-conceptual quality of their reading experience. Texts

the writing of a text is an inherently unethical act that can be made ethical only through the judgment and response of those readers whose common interests it addresses . . . . Only readers who examine texts critically and respond to them responsibly can sustain within a community the kind of consensus that, in turn, sustains conversation there by exposing and exploring ideological conflicts in a process that treats knowledge as the object of discussion. That kind of consensus is constructive rather than destructive of communities, enabling those who compose them to cooperate in the process of authorizing what they will value and believe, and thus do, together. (61)

29This point is clearly stated by Habermas, when he writes:
Kulturelle Überlieferungen haben ihre eigenen und verletzbaren Reproduktionsbedingungen. Sie bleiben "lebendig," solange sie naturwüchsig oder mit hermeneutischem Bewußtsein fortgebildet werden (wobei Hermeneutik als die gelehrt Traditionsauslegung und -anwendung die Eigentümlichkeit hat, die Naturwüchsigkeit weitergegebener Tradition zu brechen und dennoch auf reflexivem Niveau zu erhalten). Die kritische Aneignung der Tradition zerstört die Naturwüchsigkeit im Medium des Diskurses (wobei die Eigentümlichkeit der Kritik in ihrer Doppelfunktion besteht, Geltungsansprüche, die diskursiv nicht eingelöst werden können, ideologiekritisch oder analytisch aufzulösen, aber gleichzeitig die
maintain their symbolic value in such a context on account of
their ability to remain afloat as a topic of conversation
while both promising the possibility of consensus and
resisting any actual attempts to arrive at one.

Now this quality of "remaining afloat" is heightened in
modern sociopoetic texts because they are produced in the
cosmopolitan and widely literate societies in which literary
studies have been institutionalized, and these modern texts
anticipate, therefore, their insertion into multiple
discussions. Written for a metropolitan and a more widely
educated middle-class readership in which the quality of
"textual suppleness" is valued, these works retain their
status in the cultural anti-economy by allowing themselves to
be appropriated into diverse conversations among many
different cultural factions. Insofar as such texts produce
varied responses and interactions and insofar as they
intersect with various sociohistorical contexts, their
ability to initiate and prolong discussion acts as a
cultural bind.

An understanding of how the establishment and evolution

Überlieferung von ihren semantischen Potentialen zu
entbinden). Insofern ist auch Kritik nicht weniger als
Hermeneutik eine Form der Aneignung von Tradition; in
beiden Fällen behalten die angeeigneten kulturellen
Gehalte ihre imperative Kraft, d. h. sie sichern die
Kontinuität einer Geschichte, über die Individuen und
Gruppen sich mit sich und untereinander indentifizieren
können. Genau diese Kraft verliert eine kulturelle
Überlieferung, sobald sie objektivistisch außbereitet
oder strategisch eingesetzt wird. In beiden Fällen
werden Reproduktionsbedingungen kultureller
Überlieferung verletzt und Traditionen ausgehölt.
(Legitimationsprobleme 99-100)
of such reading binds occur can be attained by refining Jean-
Paul Sartre's study of the idealized form of academic
discussion known as "dialectic" and by contrasting it with
Wolfgang Iser's application of Gadamer's hermeneutics to
explain the reading of literary texts.10 Although both these
theories remain firmly in the tradition of philosophy of
consciousness, they implicate models of communicative action
well suited to the verbal exchanges involved in intellectual
discussions.31 I present them here in order to link my notion
of the literary life-world to two examples of the twentieth-
century fascination with reading, a preoccupation that
reflects, I would venture to say, a modern need to
conceptualize this intellectual activity.12

1.31. Sartre's Notion of Critical Dialectic

The communicative interaction that, I am arguing,
sociopoetic texts facilitate is similar to the workings of

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10 For a historical survey of the prevalent forms of
dialectic and their relationship to academic dialogue, see
Kainz (57-74).

31 Eco's notion of the encyclopedia as a non-hierarchical
net of semantic possibility (Semiotics 81) and his conception
of semantic space as a "site of a combinational interplay, of
a highly indeterminate game" on which rules are imposed as
part of the process of sign production (Theory 126), are two
contemporary examples of thinking that can be traced back to
the Sartrian influence on the young Eco's thought.

32 Modern writers and critics must defend their literary
values in conditions in which widespread if highly
diversified literacy make it necessary to determine what
constitutes the reading part of the literary communicative
act. The potential openness of reading (de Man), its
dangerous anarchy (Alan Bloom) or its institutional context
(Stanley Fish) have come to be emphasized.
what Sartre describes as *dialectique critique* and which he opposes to *dialectique dogmatique* (*Critique* 141). The intellectual production of dogmatic dialectic is exemplified by the works of Hegel, historical thought written from a viewpoint of the "last historian," an endview of the history of knowledge based on what Karl-Otto Apel calls "a tacit presupposition of traditional epistemology: namely, that one solitary subject of knowledge could objectify the whole world" (294). In Hegel's case, his "systematic" and "scientific" philosophy endeavors to temper the open possibilities of speculative discourse (consisting of statements based purely on an inner logic) with a containing rational discourse (statements on which a form is imposed). The undertaking is founded on the belief that a speculative content will inevitably attain the realization of its own rational form (Hegel 3: 55). Mystical discourse (which Hegel calls "prophetische[s] Reden") is denigrated by Hegel as unscientific because it fails to temper speculation with reason and therefore produces irrational depths of thought. He writes: "Wie es aber eine leere Breite gibt [i.e rational formalism without speculative content], so auch eine leere Tiefe, wie eine Extension der Substanz, die sich in endliche Mannigfaltigkeit ergießt, ohne Kraft sie zusammenzuhalten, so

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33Baum notes that Hegel's project, part of the Enlightenment attempts to make an encyclopedic restatement of the world, is in part motivated by the desire to represent the divine through its masterwork (i.e. the material universe) and to formulate, consequently, a transparent text of the world (Baum 142).
Hegel argues that his scientific way of knowing would fill the breadth and depth coordinates with appropriate combination of reason and speculation. Sartre's critical dialectic is the consequence of a complete loss of faith in this possibility. Instead, Sartre's renovated dialectic confronts the generalizations and syntheses of formal thought with the particulars and components which constitute them.\(^{34}\) The two states of being-particular and being-general negate each other, and the result is the unmaking and remaking of speculative generalizations and syntheses, such that the

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\(^{34}\) Although the story of Sartre's under-the-table influence of contemporary French thought remains to be written, the parallels between his "dialectique critique" and the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on capitalism and schizophrenia is clear. Guattari and Deleuze would, however, question the ability of Sartre's dialectic to overcome (even momentarily) the contradictions between the general and the particular (le même et l'autre) without producing paranoia or schizophrenia (333-5). For them, all intellectual activity and, indeed, all social activity arrest (i.e. territorialize) and regulate (i.e. code) the workings and sensations of the human "machine désirante," le corps sans organes (40). Their schizoanalytical approach to the study of social formations tries to determine the various schizophrenic and paranoid signatures that different social forms produce. I am suggesting that sociopoetic discourses anticipate a reading practice in which regulation and coding are weak, and as a result, vulnerable both to paranoid transfixations of meaning and to schizophrenic mobility. They consequently radicalize, as Eugene Holland argues to be the case for Baudelaire's works, the processes of deregulation in the interests of capital accumulation inherent in the market-culture of capitalism (15). But they offer another form of capital to be accumulated, cultural capital.
social and political relations involved in the construction of these generalities are exposed and the assertion of universals existing in nature is prevented. The result is a celebration of speculation in which the internal logic of making form and of making sense are seen to be determined as much by their social context and ideological presuppositions as by the text-object itself. Reading becomes a complex expressive activity, involving literary, psychological and social hermeneutics, as well as the combination of all three.

Derrida illustrates how discursive totalities may become dogmatic, when he describes how writing has been anchored by the form of the book to a notion of a pre-existing "logo-centric" totality:

L'idée du livre, c'est l'idée d'une totalité, finie ou infinie, du signifiant; cette totalité du signifiant ne peut être ce qu'elle est, une totalité, que si une totalité constituée du signifié lui préexiste, surveille son inscription et ses signes, en est indépendante dans son idéalité. L'idée du livre, qui renvoie toujours à une totalité naturelle, est profondément étrangère au sens de l'écriture. Elle est la protection encyclopédique de la théologie et du logocentrisme contre la disruption de l'écriture, contre son énergie aphoristique et, nous le préciserons plus loin, contre la différence en général. Si nous distinguons le texte du livre, nous dirons que la destruction du livre, telle qu'elle s'annonce aujourd'hui dans tous les domaines, dénude la surface du texte. (Grammatologie 30-1)

In his eagerness to attack the tradition of Western philosophy, Derrida seems to overlook the obvious conclusion that his observation seems to suggest. The book, the totality of the signifier, does not have to become a totality by referring to a preexisting totality of the signified. The technological limitations of the book, as a form of textual commodity, can require that a totality of the signified be constructed so that a full unit of information be transmitted by a manageable signifying unit. There may be a simple socio-economic explanation of "logocentrism" rather than Derrida's theological one.

Alan Tormey conceives of the artistic text as an
Although it has become, as Eco suggests, a "critical commonplace" to find analogies for artistic practice in scientific discourse (Open Work 14), Sartre's model for this dialectical complex is the chemical reaction (an analogy that recalls Schlegel's "logische Chemie" and that anticipates Deleuze's and Guattari's use of the terms "molar" and "molecular" to label the general and particular modes of apprehension). Sartre, however, almost literalizes the analogy, as he suggests that his dialectic on its most elementary level constitutes the living organism by placing it in a dialectic with its inorganic components. But it is better to simplify the analogy and to think of dialectic in terms of the simpler reaction of a substance in solution, a condition in which the element of synthesis, or of what Sartre calls totalization, is analogous to the precipitant. In the equilibrium of precipitant and solution, synthesis and negation, any intervention brings about a systemic change. The relationship is described by Sartre as a "totalisation en cours" (Critique 133). An individual praxis of any sort re-adjusts the totalization, since any resistance to past totalizations results in the establishment of new ones. The system remains open and cannot be closed without a final intervention to establish what Sartre calls a "totalité

"expressive object," a construct which possesses aesthetic corelates for elements of an "internal state" (43). This state is revealed through the work, just as the behavior of an individual reveals something about character. The activity of reading involves, however, an interaction between a text conceived as an "expressive object" and a reader, who is engaged in the expressive behavior of meaning making.
totalisé' (Critique 168), an act which transforms the dialectic into a dogmatic one. For the dialectic to remain critical (i.e. en cours), it must preserve itself in the open state between the synthesis and its negation, between analysis and dogmatism, between historical realizations and their interpretative reconstructions.

Sartre argues that Marx's "dialectic materialism," in fact, improves on Hegel's dogmatism precisely in this way because it makes the generalities read from history into the raw materials of subsequent historical events, as the process of generalization becomes a part of human action involved in the activity of culture, the human activity of men and women making the world for themselves (Critique 142-43). As objects in the world, ideas become subject to the forces of production and are recycled, just like thrown-away products provide potential raw materials for recovery, reprocessing and re-use. In terms of discourse, this view implies a fluid boundary between one text and all the writings, speech acts and corresponding social practices that surround it, a notion that has been further propagated in the work of Michel Foucault.37

Such interactivity constitutes a long or continuous textual revolution aided by a reading process that is ironic, inherently phenomenological and in accordance with Wolfgang

37Foucault notes that the fluidity of a text's discourse is not contained within the covers of a book but remains linked to larger language activities and discursive forms that it both reproduces and revises.
Iser's general description of the reading act, a parallel that merits some explanation, since Sartre's reflections on dialectic would disallow the distinction between text and reading that Iser assumes. If one discards, however, Iser's conception of an accumulated authoritative reading, then the parallels are more apparent.

1.32. Iser's Wandering Viewpoint

As I have suggested, Sartre's dialectic constantly rebuilds history through an act of continuously revisionist reading comprehension. This form of textual understanding requires, according to Iser in Der Akt des Lesens, the construction of a consistent schema that would emphasize certain parts of a text, in this case the unwritten historical text, and exclude others (Iser 204-5). Because the reader changes this reading scheme, as his/her experience of the present object (moment in history, text or page of text) unfolds the multiplicity of the entire work (history or text), these varied experiences represent what Iser calls "de[n] wandernden Blickpunkt des Lesers" (Iser 178). For Iser, the reader approaches a text with an already formulated conception (Gestalt) of it which each present experience of the wandering viewpoint brings into question. The reader is forced to reassess his/her preconceptions, a process which leads to revisions and reformulations of his/her Gestalt and which Iser equates with a more general learning experience (Iser 132). However, there is a sense in Iser that an ideal reader would not suffer memory loss but would accumulate all
readings and finally exhaust the possibilities for any particular text in the formulation of one masterful, encyclopedic reading. This state at the end of reading corresponds to the final position of intellectual dogmatism attained at the end of the dialectic process or, in other words, at the end of history. It is a reaffirmation of the Hegelian subject implied by both Iser and by the dominant interpretive practice in the traditional paradigm of literary studies, an institutionalized hermeneutics which Antony Easthope calls the convention of "modernist reading" (13). Like de Man's allegorized reader, the subject-at-the-end-of-reading produced by this reading process is finally removed from social world, as the need to communicate different views of a text is transcended.

Both Sartre's critical dialectic and my compatible conception of sociopoetic discourse would make Easthope's notion of "modernist reading" not only practically impossible but theoretically questionable. For Sartre, each of the ongoing multiple and often contradictory totalizing projects, like each of the many acts of building consistency in reading, is incorporated into the historically real itself, which, in the case of literary cultures, is the literary life-world. Just like the daily exchanges of language among acquaintances, one can never reach an authoritative

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\[38\text{Although Easthope uses Empson to exemplify this kind of reading, a theoretical account of it is provided by Stephen Pepper (See Appendix).}\]
interpretive summation of the discursive exchange between readers, external to the reconstructions that more time, more reading and further literary history inevitably bring. As men and women formulate their reading projects in order to construct texts-for-themselves, they act on texts in order to build up their meanings. The record of past meanings becomes the point of departure for future readers, as these readings are a part of the texts' communicative environment (that which I am calling the literary life-world). The notions of an unread or a fully read text, like the notions of a beginning or end to history, are unfathomable, and a text is consequently always involved in a verbal exchange. Textual meaning cannot be either empty or dogmatic in such a discursive climate, since no text is separable from a reader's life-world, the set of discursive habits and interpretive predispositions with which readers engage both texts and other readers, even while reading.39

1.33. Modern Sociopoetic Discourses

If a fundamental quality of modernity is that its discourse opposes dialogue to dogmatism, then all its

39This view is anticipated by Paul Thibault, who writes: Texts are never complete except, perhaps, in a formal or structural sense. There is always the potential for intervention and change in the patterned meaning making practices that enact them. (122). His views represent the recent efforts in semiotics to relate discursive practices to social formations. See also Kress and Hodges' Social Semiotics and Wilson's preference for the notion of carnival rather than a notion of play when thinking about texts, since a carnivalesque representation is anchored in "a critique of a particular sociocultural situation and its corresponding discourse" (71).
projects to establish unity and identity, are, despite Adorno's black pessimism, necessarily incomplete in the way of Sartre's dialectic, and their incompleteness, paradoxically, helps to guarantee life-world continuity. Sociopoetic discourses reflect this social need for a paradoxically completive incompleteness, a statement that runs the risk of absurdity, since it threatens to make a totality of the impossibility of totality. Yet in the nineteenth century, a modern urbanized and literate life-world was built around this absurdity. A cultural field was constituted in which literary activity expanded beyond the control of any one group and was constantly under the influence of competing values, roles, fellowships. This polarized economic/anti-economic and institutional/anti-institutional cultural domain did not merely manifest the surplus of literary values produced by the dominant industrial societies given not just to material overproductions and to the creation of surplus time (i.e. the time of recreation, extended childhood, youth unemployment or early retirement [Eagleton, Marxism 73]) but also to an intellectual overproduction. Nor did it merely produce an erudite notion of a "high art" composed of the activities opposed to everyday social practices (Williams, Culture 10-14). Like the idealist philosophy viewed by Marx and Engels, such conceptions of culture represent the field of cultural production as if it were "stood on its head" (Marx and Engels 3: 26).

Rather than producing a cultural anti-economy that
challenges the dominance of the capitalist economy
sociopoetic discourses were a means of reproducing both
itself and the less-profitable cultural habits, manners and
other life-world segments by way of a process of re-reading,
revision and repeated discussion. Subsequent re-readings of
these text-world matings result in further reproductive
diversifications involving other texts, commentaries or
literary activity. As a result, a history of cultural
exchanges and renovations now accompanies the reading of
almost any modern text, such that the read text recollects a
genealogy of social contexts. Although all texts, as Hodge
and Kress insist, exist in time (168), a modern sociopoetic
text promotes its own productivity by soliciting
contamination by other texts, discourses and social
formations from which it cannot be entirely filtered. A
reading that respects this "genealogy of modern writing,"
must attend to these contaminants and, therefore, examine the
literary life-worlds surrounding both the text's production
and its subsequent consumptions.

Such a reading practice inverts the stream in aesthetic
thought that held poetry to be the necessary externalization
and embodiment of ideas but that additionally anticipated an
eventual disembodied state of thought liberated from all
social activity. Although this line of thought found poetic
discourse to be only fully redeemable by its translation into
philosophy, it valued poetic discourse by making it the
discursive form that corresponded to what was conceived as
the highest form of material being: the rational (i.e. white male) human being. Poetry becomes, in this philosophical discourse, a linguistic practice that lays the ground for metaphysics, insofar as poetic discourse is given value on the basis of its discursivity, its ability to provide a textual body that will ultimately procreate generations of transparent declarative statements about disembodied Being. The next chapter will trace the emergence of this conception of poetry in German Idealist aesthetics in order to provide an indication of the intellectual context in which nineteenth-century writers were working. I will then go on to show how Heine, Baudelaire and Whitman resurrect poetry by insisting on the fact that prose also incarnates poetry, that ideas exist necessarily in poetic embodiments and that they are constantly being given new bodies (i.e. texts, editions, commentaries) and, as a result, new life.
2.0. The Institutionalization of Aesthetics and the Emergence of a Modern Literary Life-World.

Wilhelm Windelband, writing at the beginning of the twentieth century, viewed Aesthetics as the discipline that healed a German nation suffering from the after effects of the Thirty-Years War (Geschichte 1: 511-513). The Germans, he argued, abandoned the public sphere of politics as the basis for their community on account of this war. Instead of using political discourse to construct a German nation, they located the basis for their national community in philosophy and in art. According to Windelband, Germany then underwent a Vereinigung of the two halves of its national character when the discipline of Aesthetics was formulated. The result, according to Windelband, was a national renaissance conceived from the union of philosophy and art. The coincidence of this cultural rebirth, which is reflected in the artistic activity of the Goethezeit and in the emergence of Aesthetics as the theory of this productive reunification, announces the subsequent constitution of the German state (Lehrbuch 455). It also indicates the extent of German integration into European industrial capitalism, since the accompanying transformation of its national Öffentlichkeit into an industrial state's bourgeois symbolic order initially involved, in compliance with Habermas' model, an increased public discussion of artistic values and, later, a more widespread public debate about the political values of a nation-
German Aesthetics is, consequently, an interesting example of the ways in which a modern critically-aware notion of art emerges, since it is a self-conscious attempt to theorize the place of artistic works and, especially, literary texts in the system of modern knowledge. This chapter will trace the emergence of this modern state-making discourse in order to show how this theory formation tries to reconcile, in effect, two opposing forms of what Bürger calls "bürgerliche Institution Kunst": that which conceives of art as an instrument for a philosophical end and that which conceives of the art work as an end in itself.

This attempt at reconciliation, which more or less fails, is symptomatic of various attempts to accommodate self-interest and community-forming discourses, discourses that govern the realms described by Bourdieu as the capitalist and cultural fields of production, discourses that belong to what Habermas identifies as instrumental and communicative reason. A review of some of the key statements from this tradition will show how aesthetic theory first assists in the establishment of these paradoxical equilibriums but then helps to bring about their destabilization by repressing

Weimar argues that this incorporation of literary works as objects of knowledge involves the construction of paradoxical notions about poetry. It is both a technique of writers (a poetics) and a commodity (the object of readers). Poetry is additionally equated with beauty, the knowledge of which ("schöne Wissenschaft") is equally attainable by the production and the consumption of poetic texts (77).
poetry's social function. The third chapter will then discuss three different ways that this repression manifests itself in literary texts.

2.1. The Emergence in Europe of a Rationalized Notion of Poetry

Conventionally, the emergence of modern Aesthetics as a discipline of philosophy is dated either from the appearance of Alexander Baumgarten's aesthetic treatise in 1750 (Eagleton, *Ideology of the Aesthetic* 13; Weimar 67-68) or from the writings of the Third Earl of Shaftsbury, Joseph Addison, Jean Paul de Crousaz and Giambiattisto Vico, all of which appeared in the early eighteenth century (Chytry lxix). In all of these originating formulations, Aesthetics is the discourse of the body that mediates between the "generalities of reason and the particulars of sense" (Eagleton, *Ideology of the Aesthetic* 15). It is more precisely a discourse on the ways to regulate the body's responses or to reconcile them with rational or religious goals, and it has a long history of antecedents. A brief survey of some of the treatises in the Aristotelian tradition of poetics indicates that Enlightenment Aesthetics reiterates several of the conventional views of poetic discourse and, especially, of its functions as an intermediary between history and philosophy, between the lived embodiments of practical knowledge (i.e. ethics) and its systematic reformulations (i.e. reason). This tradition views poetry as useful when it functions as the conciliatory discourse that builds
associations between disembodied systematic generalizations
and the concrete particularities of any life-world. It is,
as we shall see, this synthetic power that is seen to be
poetry's strength and its weakness, as it both contributes to
the rationalization of the lived social relations of the
modern cosmopolitan cultures, and it resists this
systematization of modern life.

2.11. Premodern and Early Modern Views of Poetry.

Neither Plato nor Aristotle dealt too extensively with
poetry's textuality, the power of the discourse to draw
attention to itself as a material medium. Plato's
condemnation of poetry in The Republic was on account of the
distance between its linguistic representations and the
unspeakable ideals accessible only by rational thinking and
on account of poetry's ability to disrupt reason by
constructing false simulacra (339). The Aristotelian
tradition, one of the dominant currents of poetic theory in
the classical, medieval and early modern European thought,
also gave poetry the power to deviate from reality, although
it maintained two links between poetic and historical
discourses. Poetry, a term which designated all literary
practices, was said to mediate between the historically
particular and the philosophically general, and a poem's
freedom as a work of art allowed it to be additionally
concerned with the possible in contrast to the actualities of
For Aristotle, poetry was not bound to the representation of what happened; nor was it limited to the recording of specific and singular events. Instead, it could both ignore temporal actuality and abstract from any temporal location in order to relate the possible or the universal (Aristotle 30-31). Even those literary forms that involved plot had no obligation to represent any specific event; they only had to imitate the form of a complete action (28) in order to maintain the proper ethical balance between momentary passions and the advancement of the course of events, between the attractions of the parts and the whole (38-39), of particular distractions and the completion of the overall enterprise, or, to give an example, of Odysseus' adventures and his finally arriving home and re-establishing order.

According to Aristotle's view, poetry's proper position in the hierarchy of knowledge is one that serves a mediatory function amongst philosophy, history and the passions, but that ultimately yields to philosophy. Momentary passions are subordinated to action in ways that reflect a faith in rational order of events, such that a streamlined and recognizable cause-effect mechanism is taken to be the best way to represent a history. According to Aristotle, the best plots attempt to steer their action along a rational course

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2Abrams discusses how this distinction was still operative in the nineteenth century (299ff), and Eagleton provides a contemporary version of it (Criticism 74).
that leads to the desired end, which was, for Aristotle, its final cause. In order to stay on course, the reasonable had to be followed and other interests repressed. Aristotle does not, however, prohibit complex and even disruptive plot elements. Paul Ricoeur notes how the Aristotelian *muthos* includes both multiplicity and a threat of disorder, features that are frequently made apparent in a moment of seemingly infinite possibility (the *péripétēia*) when everything seems to fall apart (1: 72). These moments of overturning instability are mercifully traversed in order to arrive at a moment of recuperation or recognized restraint, where the order of the represented world and implicitly the reflected order of the actual world are once again reconfirmed. Although this indecisive moment almost seems like a rupture in time, a moment where events hang in the balance, it is a temporal knot quickly unraveled so that the various parts of the represented world recover their appropriate place along the coherent plot lines.

Although Aristotle does not discuss non-dramatic forms of poetry very extensively in his treatise, others following in the Aristotelian tradition have given literature of all kinds a more general but similarly balanced foundation. In addition to demonstrating an ethical balanced structure focused on action, poetry, either in its various genres or as a general underlying force of art, is also said to marshal affectivity by allying the imagination with reason (Bacon 147, Boileau 158), to occupy otherwise dangerously idle parts
of a society (Rousseau 78), to further "die Kultur der Gemütskräfte zur geselligen Mitteillung" (Kant 240), or to raise spirit above external reality while still giving it a concrete manifestation in the form of a Vorstellung (Hegel 3: 530).

This subservience of the poetic momentary to a rational telos is the basis of many favorable philosophical discussions of literary discourse and, as I have suggested in the second chapter, maintains a prominent position in sociocriticism. When literature is not seen to serve a rational end or when its mediation is thought to be overly deceptive, it has often been assumed to be purposeless and subsequently devalued or banished. However, as long as it is seen to be in the middle of a way that leads to a greater good, it serves as a primer for knowledge or as a primordial form of knowledge, to take Sidney's point of view (123). It

3Rousseau suggests that the presence of a theatre in an industrious Geneva would, however, be dangerous because it involves people in a non-productive form of communal activity and therefore corrupts the general will and, especially its will to work, since dramatic performances expose the population to the possibility of enjoying a time outside of work time (76). For Rousseau, dramatic art teaches people to be merely spectators rather than actors and participants in community, and its distraction for the individual spectator would inhibit the communal industry in Geneva (132).

4At least insofar as poetry aspires to be fine art.

5I have followed Charles Taylor's practice of using the German word "Vorstellung" rather than English word representation, since "Vorstellung," in the special Hegelian sense, identifies the condition of a mediated idea in contrast with the unmediated one available, according to Hegel, through philosophical discourse.

6Such rationalized poetry can even operate, as it does for Boethius, as a primer for Christian philosophy. Since
is, like historiography, an initial step toward the generalizations of either philosophical or scientific discourses, and, although poetry and historiography are often easily distinguishable, there is, all the same, an undeniably poetic quality about the writing of history and an equally unrefutable historical character to the poetic text.

Although a poetic text is, in many cases, obviously distinguishable from an historical one, historical writing emulates poetry, as it is defined in the Aristotelian tradition, insofar as historiography inevitably mediates between the recording of singular events and some conception of significance. As Sigfried Kracauer suggests, historiography is subject to aesthetic judgements because it

the poems in The Consolation of Philosophy express momentary flashes of insight, they direct the imprisoned Boethius to overcome his blindness by remembering himself as a subject of the heavenly community. Of course, in order for Boethius to overcome this blindness, poetry has to be rendered servile to philosophy, since the sensuality of poetic discourse binds Boethius to the material world. Poetic discourse, according to this Christianized conception, remains tainted by a worldly particularity that must be eventually transcended by further advancement into philosophy, and faith. In the more secularized and pragmatic nineteenth-century world, the practical concerns of an adult bourgeois replace the Christian occupation with a career-oriented professionalism in a world in which poetic dilletantism signals a youthful surrender to passion eventually overcome by those who undertake more sensible pursuits.

'in terms of this essay, it does not matter if the criteria for significance involves local interest, an institutionalized rhetorical practice, a global metahistory, or a narrative logic. It is now a common perception to note that historiography is not concerned with the mere representation of the everyday world, it selectively represents on the basis of whatever criteria that a historian adopts or unwittingly serves (Butterfield 23, White 427, LaCapra 17)
involves a formative tendency that counteracts its realistic tendency and participates in the shaping of meaning (47). But unlike fictional discourse, historiography is not supposed to invent material in order to enhance the textual style or to reduce the amorphous form of events (55-58). It must, instead, reflect or revise an officially sanctioned version of what happened by complying with an acceptable historical method. Although historical accounts tend to harmonize their parts in ways that Kracauer compares to aestheticization (179-181) and although they may display an ideologically based commitment to a particular "form of knowledge" (White 21), it is undeniable that historical discourse remains bound by some notion of historical accuracy from which poetic discourse is free. As Bacon notes in an early description of the modern intellectual order, poetry is further from the actual world (and the agreed account of what happens in that world) because it can alter events in order to please the mind (82). Historiography, at least in the more Whiggish views of this type of discourse, is supposed to restrain its indulgences in such liberties and maintain its rigor as a scientific discourse (Butterfield 23).

At the same time, poetry's power to invent does not completely void it of historical value, since poetic texts are, like all other cultural products, produced in historical contexts that they frequently can be seen to reflect. Poetic works, like any writing, are marked by their moment of production to the extent that they are frequently used as
source material for the construction of historical records. The awareness of this phenomenality of the text was, furthermore, given significance by modern Aesthetics, which comes to emphasize becoming and the "Tätigkeit" of the world. Ways were sought to harmonize a text's historicity with its internal textual order, especially given the fact that, as Michel Picard points out, the decoding of reading of any text is also both an historical event and, in itself, a temporal process that can be seen to run an historical course.\(^8\)

Gottfried Lessing's views exemplify critical views based on the affinities of historiographic and poetic discourse. Since he articulates them at the moment when the courtly public sphere of the German Kleinstaat was transforming itself into the bourgeois public sphere of modern culture, he continues to think of texts as if they were courtly performances. Lessing argues in *Laokoön* (1766) that a text has a kind of time of performance, the temporality of perception in an individual's silent reading. Although Lessing argues that literary texts should respect this time of reading, he still conceives of it in terms of a text's oral presentation. In fact, this work makes the phenomenality of an orally performed poetic discourse into the determining feature of literary art, the type of

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\(^8\) In the previous chapter, I have already discussed several contemporary ways in which literary scholars themselves treat literary texts as historical documents. I am suggesting here that historians also use literature as part of the raw material for the construction of historical accounts.
discourse that, according to Lessing, constructs illusions.⁹ Poetic discourse is, therefore, able tastefully to represent bodies by dissecting them into a succession of temporalized metonyms and by instigating its public to flesh out its representational schema like a painter who uses poetry as a source for his or her compositions. The resulting illusion-making linguistic practice was to be differentiated from everyday discourse on the basis of its portrayal of bodies in time, a distinction between a form of discourse considered to be a type of art and another without aesthetic value that announces the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere and anticipates both Kant's subjectivization of the aesthetic realm and subsequent notions of "art for art's sake."

2.12. Lessing's Poesie against the Body: His Distinction between redende Kunst and Rede

Lessing's Laokoön is usually read as an aesthetic treatise that criticizes the tradition encapsulated in the Horation dictum of ut pictura poesis (Barasch 32, Frank 7, Gebauer 1). This poetic convention conceives of writing as the primordial form of language and of poetic characters, _——_

⁹Lessing interpreted the fact that the perception of a literary text is a necessarily temporal process to be an indication that a parallel temporality should be followed within the text's fictional world. Literary texts should therefore favor narratives of uncomplicated chronological ordering. This view, as Moshe Barasch notes, does not originate with Lessing, but has forerunners in Jean-Baptiste Dubos' Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture (1719), André Félibien's Entretiens sur la vie et sur les ouvrages des plus excellents peintres (1685) and the literature of the paragone tradition of distinguishing the arts that dates back to antiquity (Barasch 28-33).
fables and visual images as the elementary forms of writing (Vico 138). Lessing's "mehr unordentliche[n] Collecteanea zu einem Buch, als ein Buch" challenges this view by insisting that the artistic uses of modern language's arbitrary signs (uses otherwise labeled by Lessing as poetry or die redende Kunst) should be liberated from "den engern Schranken der Malerei" while the limited visual language of plastic and visual arts be prevented from transgressing on "die ganze weite Sphäre der Poesie" (11). The argument suggests that the frequent use of the pictorial arts to represent narrative subjects is a consequence of the falschen Geschmack of a new but self-limiting artistic public, the emerging and newly lettered German bourgeoisie, whose public taste had been defined by religious icons. To liberate the poetry from this bad taste, Lessing attributes the emancipatory quality of courtly art to the textual practices involved in the spreading literacy. He distinguishes between artistic and inartistic discourse by devaluing the practice of embodying

10 Although Lessing uses the German word for painting here, he actually is referring to the entire sphere of the visual and plastic arts. His distinction is actually between linguistic and iconic signs.

11 Lessing additionally places narrative and dramatic poetry at the top of the poetic hierarchy, a privileging of narrative that, according to David Wellbery, reveals the conventionality of Lessing's theory (211-18). According to Wellbery, Lessing's poetry "attains to illusion by duplicating the structure of perception" in which the reader attends to a "comprehensible whole" within each moment of textual reception, "just as in actual perception the whole object is viewed at once" (215). Wellbery feels that Lessing's narrative poetic requires a "totalizing regard within the present instant" of the text, and it is therefore still viewed within the painting paradigm (227).
stories and knowledge in key pictures and by favoring the writing practice belonging to a life-world in which literate men give public readings to a cultivated audience capable of appreciating them.

Lessing's attack on picture language is, consequently, double-edged, as it denigrates both allegorical painting's narrative pretensions and descriptive poetry's overemphasis of the physical object. The spatially expansive but timeless forms of representation in the visual arts imply, according to Lessing's theory, that they portray only that which was seen in "[einem] einzige[n] Augenblick" and from "einem einzigen Gesichtspunkte" (25), although he later acknowledges that visual art could represent two moments that were so close to each other that they seem as one (118). In contrast to this static and instantaneous form of representation, Lessing suggests that poetry should devalue the representation of the visually concrete. According to him, poetry must restrict both the objects with which it deals and the qualifiers of these objects to those few which are directly relevant to a chronological sequence of events (103). He consequently implies that poetry was an active art form that de-emphasizes juxtaposition of parts or objects, the physical arrangements that he identifies as "Körper," in order to highlight the succession of objects and parts, which he calls "Handlungen" (103) and which is, for him, a far broader category of subject matter, one that de-emphasizes the physical and inspires the poetic audience to move beyond
the representable world.  

Visual art's limited perspective is thus made a potentially barren and materialistic artistic feature that could entrap the imagination within a single set of spatial and temporal horizons, at which the observer would normally soon tire of looking. Paintings that, for Lessing, resist their visual exhaustion and merit repeated consideration require, in addition to the seeing of what was directly present, our subjective input, our imagining of that which "we can think of" and that which "we believe to see" (26). Because good paintings must point to this absence, they have therefore to represent not "die höchste Staffel" of the events in which its represented objects are implicated, but "[jenen] Punkt, in welchen der Betrachter das Äußerste nicht sowohl erblickt, als hinzu denkt, jene Erscheinung, mit der wir den Begriff des Transitorischen nicht so notwendig verbinden, daß uns die Verlängerung derselben in der Kunst mißfallen sollte" (26). In fact, this indirect invocation of the unpaintable absent requires the representation of a so-called "pregnant moment," a moment that gives birth to histories because its bodies are impregnated with potential literary texts.  

Lessing's painter must, as a result, select

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12Udo Bayer suggests that actions are important to Lessing because they necessarily involve both physical bodies (agents) and temporal consciousness. They therefore represent an intermediary between subject and object, and make poetry into a bridge between "Sein und Bewußtsein" (61).

13Schweizer interprets Lessing's notion of the "pregnant moment" as a restatement of the punctum temporis theory, but one which requires painters to select "one moment from the
a moment that is, as far as possible, "fruchtbar," that "der Einbildungskraft freies Spiel läßt," and that "nichts [ausdrückt], was sich nicht anders als transitorisch denken läßt" (25-6). At the same time, such representations still are prohibited by Lessing from including incorporeal as well as transitory elements, both of which would be incompatible with the permanently physical and essentially inactive manner of presentation (26, 103, 124). Pictorial art is still limited to the spatially static, even if its passivity is suppose to arouse the observer to enact its representation in a manner perhaps best illustrated by John Keats' imaginary vivification of a scene engraved on a "Grecian Urn."

This spatial abundance contrasts with the inability of Lessing's poetry to represent duration, to describe anything that is extracted from action, and therefore to focus either on the whole body or on any part that is not implicated in the illusion of an event. Lessing makes good poetry distinct from prose insofar as his notion of good poetry requires that ever changing aspects of nature for their representations" (56). Schweizer adds: "Such a choice has to be made in the most careful manner conceivable, in order to stimulate the imagination of the spectator to enable him to overcome the temporal limitations of the plastic arts. Thus, the most "pregnant ("fruchtbar") moment of particular action has to be chosen, a moment that allows the imagination to dwell freely on what precedes the scene depicted and on what may follow. Lessing holds that the very climax of passion is by no means suitable for representation, because the imagination is forced to descend to a far less interesting level on either side of the Punctum temporis. A merely sighing Laocoon, for example, stimulates the observer to anticipate with horror his impending extremity of pain, whereas a shrieking Laocoon would impel the imagination to contemplate his preceding groans or his succeeding death..." (56).
a corresponding temporal relationship exists between the manner and the content of its representation. Language's willkürliche Zeichen have, he admits, no necessary representational relationship to the objects that they signify. It can therefore designate spatial inactivity and, as a result, the simultaneous existence of all the parts of a whole but only by sacrificing its artistic qualities. Lessing articulates this distinction between artistic and everyday uses of language:

ich spreche nicht der Rede überhaupt das Vermögen ab, ein körperliches Ganze nach seinen Teilen zu schildern; sie kann es, weil ihre Zeichen, ob sie schon aufeinander folgen, dennoch willkürliche Zeichen sind: sondern ich spreche es der Rede als dem Mittel der Poesie ab, weil dergleichen wörtlichen Schilderungen der Körper das Täuschende gebricht, worauf die Poesie vornehmlich geht; und dieses Täuschende, sage ich, muß ihnen darum gebrechen, weil das Koexistierende des Körpers mit dem Konsekutiven der Rede dabei in Kollision kommt, und indem jenes in dieses aufgelöst wird, uns die Zergliederung des Ganzen in seine Teile zwar erleichtert, aber die endliche Wiederzusammensetzung dieser Teile in das Ganze ungemein schwer, und nicht selten unmöglich gemacht wird. (112-13)

Because of the arbitrariness of its signs, language has a far wider range of possible subject matter than painting does; it can indulge in the pleasures of representing bodies in space
and events in time. However, language that represents objects in space is not, according to Lessing, poetic because such language attempts to embody its representations, and, in the poetic arts, the desire for embodiment results both in the excessive enumeration of details and the inappropriate emphasis of the corporeal. As a result, Lessing argues that poetry tends to become Rede to the extent that it attempts to describe a whole object. For language to be considered by Lessing to be poetry, it must express events in time so that its poetic representations stimulate the imaginations of readers and produce a variety of imagined scenes.\(^{14}\) As long as these idealized scenes also remain private illusions, they are not governable by the concerns of taste in the same way that the public representations of the pictorial arts are, and poetry can, consequently, treat subjects that Lessing prohibits painting.

Since, for Lessing, poetry can also not represent a complete physical object, it is therefore incapable of stimulating any attraction to worldly objects. Language that tries to represent physical (i.e. feminine) beauty, for example, is, in Lessing's view, necessarily prosaic and without much aesthetic value. In contrast, the representational voyeurism of the more temporally limited, sensual, and passive, visual arts leads him to view painting

\(^{14}\)As David Wellbery notes, such a position makes the motivated use of verbal signs a condition of an artistic use of language, which is otherwise an unnatural and therefore unartistic medium (201).
as the media for the representation of "körperliche[r] Schönheit." He expressly makes this point at the beginning of chapter twenty:

Körperliche Schönheit entspringt aus der übereinstimmenden Wirkung mannigfaltiger Teile, die sich auf einmal übersehen lassen. Sie erfordert also, daß diese Teile nebeneinander liegen müssen; und da Dinge, deren Teile nebeneinander liegen, der eigentliche Gegenstand der Malerei sind: so kann sie, und nur sie allein körperliche Schönheit nachahmen. (Lessing 129)

A kind of painting that represents the mere disposition of bodies and of which the whole is instantaneously perceived has the power to depict physical beauty, since physical beauty must, for Lessing, be intuited in a glance. Painting's hypostatization of the single moment allows us to esteem a work's individuality, to grasp the wholeness of the representation, to detect the harmony of parts, and, in effect, to be seduced by the embodiment of beauty.

Since physical beauty is, according to Lessing, only indirectly expressed in poetry, it can represent only the effects of physical beauty, events which Lessing described as "die Schönheit in Bewegung" (139). For him, poetic treatments of embodied beauty make desire resemble gravity or magnetism, since Lessing's poetry "transforms "Schönheit" into "Reiz" (the German word can be translated into English both as "charm" and as "physical attraction"). It follows that Lessing's poetry is able to express the historical
effects of beauty and painting its physical manifestations. Poetry represents the processes of beauty's force while painting imitates its embodiments.

As if to compensate for this inability to create the illusion of embodied beauty, Lessing gives poetry access to sublimated beauty, since he holds that poetic discourse can refer to "eine[r] doppelte[n] Gattung von Wesen und Handlungen: sichtbare[n] und unsichtbare[n]" (99). Arbitrary linguistic signs can merely designate an individual or an object as invisible, without having to represent the invisible thing or person. As a result, a literary artist tasks an audience with the responsibility of clothing the words in the illusion of enacted events. A painting that tries to represent the invisible, on the other hand, runs the risk of dissolving the difference between "diese höhere Gattung und jene geringere" (90). For Lessing, such painting overturns universal hierarchy by reducing the metaphysical domain to the scale of the physical world, as visual art is only capable of representing supernatural events as if they were natural. It can only portray invisible beings by providing them with bodies, even if this embodiment is disguised by a cloud, a costume, or other conventions of representation whereby an object was made an arbitrary sign of invisibility and even of insubstantiality (94).

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15Lessing reveals the full significance of this limitation, when he notes that poetry has the power to portray negative beings. He writes: "der Dichter allein besitzt das Kunststück, mit negativen Zügen zu schildern,
In fact, Lessing argues that tasteful painting can not easily represent the invisible on any level, a limitation that explains why the use of drapery was often inappropriate in visual art's portrayals of human forms. In discussing the fact that in the Laokoon sculpture, "ein Königsohn, ein Priester, bei einem Opfer, nackt vorgestellet werde" (49), Lessing notes that, in order for the sculpture to represent physical expression, pain, or indeed the existence of the body, the body must be exposed. Unlike in poetry, where "ein Gewand kein Gewand [ist]," where clothing covers nothing, and where "unsere Einbildungskraft...überall hindurch [sieht]," clothing in painting makes what it covers not only invisible but unimaginable (50). In effect, Lessing suggests that coverings do not exist in paintings because there could be nothing that is covered within the single moment of a visual representation, unless the covering is somehow marked by the imprint of a present or once-present form, a quality that a painter can use to suggest an absent movement by leaving the imprint of a past position of a limb in the present representation of the body's dress (116). In all other

und durch Vermischung dieser negativen mit positiven Zügen, zwei Erscheinin in eine zu bringen. Nicht mehr die holde Venus: nicht mehr das Haar mit goldenen Spangen gehäftet: von keinem azurnen Gewande umflattert; ohne ihren Gürtel; mit andern Flammen, mit größern Pfeilen bewaffnet; in Gesellschaft ihr ähnlicher Furien. Aber weil der Artist dieses Kunststückes entbehren muß, soll sich seiner darum auch der Dichter enthalten? Wenn die Malerei die Schwester der Dichkunst sein will: so sei sie wenigstens keine eifersüchtige Schwester; und die jüngere untersage der älteren nicht alle den Putz, der sie selbst nicht kleidet" (72).
cases, the timeless manner of representation does not allow for the distinction between essence and appearance, since an essence can only be affirmed by the comparison of differing appearances.

Lessing, in effect, genders his distinction between poetry and painting. Painting's permanently stilled voyeurism, its fixed representation of the bodily realm of appearances, makes it something that needs to be both artfully exposed and impregnated by imagined histories, as the visual representation of bodies without histories would, in effect, be both veiled and barren. To prevent both this materialistic infertility and the possibility of inappropriate exhibitions of the body and a subsequent descent into tastelessness, Lessing argues that the visual arts should be systematically legislated by the state and made to follow the "supreme law" of beauty (20). Poetry, on the other hand, is disembodied and, therefore, independent of both physical degenerations and systems of state censure. Its implicitly transitory and immaterial nature render it ultimately less accessible and morally less dangerous. It engenders representations rather than is engendered by them.

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16Wellbery notes how, for Lessing, language is "the vehicle through which mastery over sense experience is attained" (Wellbery 235). Poetry becomes, as a result, an expression of power that places the mind of man outside of its body and lets it hover over the world.

17Schweizer notes that, for Lessing, "the painter can produce only a 'material picture' ('materielles Gemälde'), whereas the poet depicts a 'poetic picture' ('poetisches Gemälde'). The contrast between the two concepts is illuminated by a highly significant footnote in which he
And this productivity is, for Lessing, blind, as the language of poetry loses its power of illusion at the times when it becomes preoccupied with the materially visible.

Readers of Lessing's poetry are consequently free to indulge in imaginary play unconstrained by the material present, its objects or the systems that govern them. Poetry releases them from this objective world, constituted by scientific knowledge and its mechanical time, into a realm in which the time of performance overrules the temporality of the represented world. Poetry promotes, as a result, notions of multiple, interactive worlds and times involved in the lives of individuals, groups and different ontological spheres. At the same time, poetic representations must subordinate these diverse temporalities and worlds to the temporality and reality of the text as lived, such that it acknowledges the undeniable factuality of the actual world and its linear time. The poetic text is, for Lessing, ontologically hybrid, and it is this attribution of a threshold status to poetry that anticipates both the romantic preoccupation with a ruptured notion of time and the developmental models of German idealist philosophy.18 The

contends that the term 'picture' ('Gemälde'), though often used, should really be banned from poetry altogether, since it does suggest a similarity between poetry and painting which in reality does not exist. He would have preferred Longinus' term 'visions' ('Phantasien'), or better still, the 'poetic visions' ('poetische Phantasien') mentioned by Plutarch, instead of the ambiguous 'pictures' or 'images'... [c.f., Lessing 112n]" (67).

18Alan Menhennet sees this romantic rupturing of time to be an effect of the poetic preoccupation with the human
notion that poetry has the power to articulate in the
objective world the hidden non-objective truths unavailable
to the visual imagination or to the scientific mind explains
why it is conceived by Schelling as a non-objective form of
knowledge, by Hegel as the primer for scientific knowledge
and by Marx as the ability to express what history has not
(yet) attained. I will now examine each of these artful ways
in which poetry was conceived to be an interpenetration of a

Gemüt, a focus that provided both a link to the real and a
flight from it (28-9). Marshall Brown sees romantic art as
an attempt to fuse the temporalities of allegory and irony.
He writes: "If allegory looks toward the past out of
nostalgia for a meaning that it is striving to re-create, and
if irony remains caught in an eternally repeated present, the
romantic fusion turns toward the future in hopeful
anticipation of a never fully realized meaning" (99-100).
And James Rolleston sees the function of romantic poetry as
one that reintegrates ruptures in time in to a temporality
that the poem itself constitutes (15). All these views of
romantic art also indicate a connection between it and the
ambiguation of time that the discovery of geological time in
the eighteenth century had already initiated. Geological
science was demonstrating that the earth was very old, both
that it was undergoing a very long-term uniform development
and that it was also affected by repeated cycles of creation
and restoration. Albitron indicates how the discovery of
this feature allowed enough time for the developmental models
that become prevalent in nineteenth-century biology, human
sciences, and philosophy (18). Stephen Gould suggests that
the cyclical notion of the earth as a self-restoring
perpetual motion machine and the ideas about
uniformitarianism that developed from it make time into
something that is thought ambiguously in terms of both lines
of historically unique events and cycles of timeless
immanence (200). Jerome Buckley describes how such notions
became translated into nineteenth-century notions of growth
and decay patterned on the organic metaphor of process (31).
He goes on to argue that the subsequent threat to the
"meaningful order" underlying a universe extended to the
condition of infinite regress led many thinkers to search for
purpose and coherence in the face of the discovered vastness
of time. Since the extension of time makes any end of its
processes virtually beyond understanding (Kracauer 45),
poetry becomes the vehicle for attaining such a pre-
conceptual understanding of the ends of time.
pre-conceptual understanding into the systematic notions of science and history. This chapter will then end by indicating how Nietzsche pulls these two ways of knowing apart. Since he makes, in Ecce Homo, the world of reading antagonistic to the world of rational activity, he begins to drive an ontological wedge between the literary and the everyday life-worlds.

2.2. The Poetics of German Idealism: the Aesthetics of Schelling and Hegel

The aesthetic works of both Schelling and Hegel represent early attempts to give modern university courses on art and, consequently, initial efforts by post-enlightenment academia to institutionalize the artistic experience. The influence of both aesthetic systems was initially more widely disseminated by students than by written texts, and we can only reconstruct the main effects of this institutionalized pedagogy about art by reconsidering what are little more than published and often highly emended course notes (Bungay 6-9). We are, all the same, able to construct a rather consistent presentation of material in order to convey the aesthetic thinking of these two men.

Both academic philosophers follow Lessing in acknowledging that the arbitrary nature of the linguistic sign potentially liberates linguistic representation from the phenomenal realm of the textual body and its representation.
of other bodies (Lessing 110). Participating in the age's radical subjectivization of Aesthetics (McCormick 89-90), this arbitrariness is seen as a potential liberation from the temporalized objective world, a fact that discourses can use to overcome their ontological condition as discourse and provide both the reader and the writer with an exit from this phenomenal into an idealized subjective realm. In both cases, this liberation must be pushed to its ultimate goal. The limitations of poetic discourse, which result from the materiality of its own textual forms, must eventually be overcome either by way of a more direct knowledge of the ideal subject's actions (Schelling) or by the use of a more scientific type of discourse, one in which access to the ideal is not impeded by the material qualities of language (Hegel). The difference between the two reflects the relative value that each places on the rational and intuitive powers of the mind; it also reflects the different roles that each grants poetry as a means by which subjectivity and objectivity are integrated.

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19Schelling claims that, unlike the plastic or the musical arts, literary art is not confined to the representation of the infinite as it appears in the real or finite. Literature (die redende Kunst) has access to the ideal, and it can therefore cultivate a mere indifference of the infinite and finite as a potential rather than as an external realization (Philosophie der Kunst 130). Hegel, on the other hand, argues that, unlike in music or painting, the material element of Poesie, its sound or script, is not presented for its own sake, "sondern erfüllt sich umgekehrt ganz mit dem geistigen Welt und der bestimmten Inhalt der Vorstellung und Anschauung und erscheint als bloße äußere Bezeichnung dieses Gehalts" (Ästhetik 2: 20).
2.21. Schelling: Poetry and Knowledge beyond Philosophy

Known as the philosopher who introduced the problem of history into German idealism (Werner Marx 13), Schelling characterizes "history" first as the continuous and always incomplete revelation of the absolute in time (System 603), and later as the development of God from a potential state to an actual one, a realization of the divine that parallels the time lost in the flow of future possibility into a defined past (Weltalter 121). Schelling's God of the open and undetermined future, is pure potential, whereas the past is fully predicated and fixed. The open potential of the future, Schelling's freedom of God, guarantees the further freedom of the individual, who would turn to God in emulating divine freedom. Freedom of the individual participates in the freeing of God from the past, a past which is the actualization and restriction of potential in a divine process in which God, the free condition of the undetermined future, projects backward into what it was, the known regimes of history. The past, what God was when unfree, is anything that could be defined or determined, and is ruled by the laws of necessity. Since nature is the most readily analyzable in this regard, it is, for Schelling, the lowest potency of God, the divinity bound. Schelling's history moves from nature

\[^{20}\text{This discussion of Schelling borrows freely from the commentaries of Schulte, Marx, Hayner and Bowie, whose ideas are, of course, supplemented by my own reading of Schelling's work.}\]
through subjectivity and the spiritual world to the eventual completely free state of divine existence, while it actualizes, and therefore reduces, the future potential and freedom into a determined and unchangeable past. The movement is circular. The unbinding or the becoming of the absolute begins when Schelling's God freely decides to reveal Itself by projecting an eternal past, the germ of nature, from which it frees itself by becoming divine (Welalter 50).

According to Schelling, humanity participates in this divine becoming by contemplating the lower potencies (nature and humanity's self) and seeing in them this potential for divine presence. Since the absolute is indeterminate, it follows that nature, as the most determined potency, is the lower level of participation in divine becoming and that self-contemplation is higher. It also follows that the completed divinity, in its state of absolute freedom, can never be directly knowable. Its hypothetical existence can only be confirmed by the evidence of history. However, there is, for Schelling, an immediate and ahistorical experience of the divinity, a pure intuition of God which he calls the "intellektuelle Anschauung." This experience is the ultimate confirmation of the absolute, and it demonstrates, for Schelling, that objective knowledge is limited (finite)

21The notion of the "intellektuelle Anschauung" has various meanings for Schelling, and Schulte provides a schematization of its development in Schelling's work (Schulte 101-103). The stable feature of this conception is, however, its appeal to experience in order to confirm a hypothesis developed in the Vernunft.
and that there is an element of Being that exists beyond this knowledge, a subjective and unlimited realm that is, in effect, the basis for a hermeneutic code with which to interpret the more limited objective world.

Art is, in this scheme, one scene in the drama of divine becoming, in which the fully determined and delimited events of the past are reconceived in an artistic representation and which therefore point to the potential freedom of events and especially the freedom of those events belonging to the yet unrealized future. It is the entrance of an unlimited subject onto the stage of the limited objective world in order to embody philosophical ideas in newly defined "symbolic" roles for material objects or events. As the translation of the artistic subject into the object world and as the reinvigoration of the object world by subjectivity, the art work expresses one performance in the drama of God's actualization in history: it gives artistic form to free

\[22\] Since these embodied ideas are visible for all to see and since their meaning is guaranteed by an unformed intuitive knowledge of the divine, they provide a democratic means of knowing divine becoming (Kunst 27). As Eagleton puts it, Schelling's aesthetic notions bring "theory home to everyday social experience as incarnate ideology, the place where all this fine-drawn obscurantist brooding fleshes itself out in spontaneous understanding" (Ideology of the Aesthetic 136). At the same time, Schelling's philosophy of art implies an interpenetration of the natural and the supernatural domains in a way that Lessing in fact denigrates and it allows, consequently, the possibility of a mixed-up or even overturned cosmic order.

\[23\] In System, Schelling describes human activity as a dramatic performance in which the absolute is the director (602). In such a metaphor, art is that action in which the divine directorship is experienced or intuited.
subjectivity and consequently stages one scene in the greater production of divine becoming. There are consequently good and bad renderings of this theatrical event, and Schelling epitomized them by distinguishing between two kinds of discourse, that belonging to the "sprechenden Wort" and that belonging to the "geronnen," "gestorbenen" or what Manfred Frank calls the "gesprochenen Wort" (Einführung 17).

Schelling found examples for the better aesthetic practices in ancient Greek art. He claimed that the artistic practice of the ancient Greeks represented specific symbolic forms that the absolute took in nature and that were parallel to specific ideas, the forms that the absolute took in philosophy. Schelling identified these symbolic forms as the Gods, and he admired ancient Greek art because it constructed a series of stories for these Gods or symbolic forms, a cluster of narratives that eventually become a mythology. Since mythological stories elaborate narratives resulting from an interpenetration of the divine and the physical worlds, it was, in his view, the proper task of all art to construct a similar mythology as part of its manifestation of

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24Kahle notes that, since these symbols are actually found in nature, Schelling's concept of the artist's relation to these symbols effectively reiterates Plato's description of the poet and rhapsode as men possessed by the Muse in The Ion (Kahle 145).

25According to Frank, these two different types of discourses are used to compose two distinct kinds of propositions, "[so daß im ersten Falle die Propositionen transitiv Welt erschlossen, während sie im Zweiten Falle mit den Bedeutungen lediglich arbeiten, welche die vorgängige Welterschließung ihnen in die Hand gegeben hat."
divine becoming (Kunst 14). Art, for Schelling, continues the speech originating in the divine utterance, the embodiment of God in the world and it keeps this divine presence alive, so long as it continues to speak.

Schelling also distinguished the forms of art on the basis of their abilities to relate these mythological narratives. Like Lessing, he grants poetry a greater freedom than the plastic arts, as he follows Lessing in restricting the plastic arts to the mere representation of the finite world. Schelling allows, however, these plastic arts to represent the supernatural insofar as it appears in nature and to suggest, consequently, the mixing of orders (Kunst 49-50). Schelling's literary arts ("die redende Kunst") are, and again he parallels Lessing here, able to deal more directly with the infinite and to show how finite appearances are freely derived from an infinite level of being (Kunst 95-6). In both cases, art's power comes from its ability to direct us beyond the material world, but poetry can turn us more readily from the world of bodies because it can show us how the absolute can not only comply with the necessity that rules over nature but may also act freely, as part of the human capacity to overcome nature (Kunst 130).

Schelling's view makes the artistic qualities of language exactly those which overcome its own embodiment either as a successive presentation of signs or a simultaneous presentation of text. As a result, poetry does not have, for Schelling, the restrictions that it has for
Lessing. Poetic practices are those uses of language that strive to escape the historical conditions of any particular utterance in order to express the universal either in a free state or as it is embodied in a particular historical moment. The reading of particular texts is, consequently, both a collaboration in the pursuit of the absolute and an obstacle to it. Viewed in one way, the reading of a specific text is a liberation of it from its material existence as a text-object is translated into the realm of divine freedom by the proliferation of possible interpretations, all of which contend with attempts to channel them into a single, fully determined reading. Viewed in an opposite way, in the way that Schleiermacher views interpretation, a concerted exegesis makes reading into a process which, similar to the way that Schelling's God reveals Itself by projecting its freedom into a limited past, determines meaning out of the infinite possibilities of language (Schleiermacher 80). The similarity of the processes is not coincidental. Schleiermacher's hermeneutic enterprise begins with the intuitive knowledge of God's existence and concerns itself in the reiteration of the divine spirit in all discourse in general, but certainly in biblical discourse in particular. Such a reading practice resembles, therefore, the manner that Schelling gains intuitive knowledge of the divine Being and finds it becoming revealed in history. The particularity of any text is lost beneath the generations of interpretive activity, in which the openness of the text generates a
sequence of historical readings and limits the potential of other meanings. The projection of a text beyond these reading processes is like Schelling's conception of the future, the projection of a free state of being beyond all historical occurrences and only knowable through the insights of the intellectual intuition. Since Hegel makes a similar projection without appealing to any intuitive capacity for knowing this ahistorical state of being, he provides a view of poetry written in a condition of groundless knowledge. It is therefore appropriate that I now discuss the Hegelian view of poetry as an intermediary between the opacity of concrete experience and the clarity of philosophical discourse.

2.22. Hegel: Poetry as a Philosophical Primer

Hegel, like Schelling, defines art as the expression of the "Spirit" in a sensory concrete body, a mixture of subjective thought and objective reality for which humans are model beings (13: 103). As a concretization of the divine subject, art participates, for Hegel as it does for Schelling, in divine becoming. Since Hegel sees the process of this becoming as one of increasing self-reflection, art participates in the process insofar as it constructs Vorstellungen, embodiments of philosophical ideas in an immature state. When fully mature, these ideas will exist without bodies and thinking will be an activity free from life, a state in which the subject will have the strength and courage to face its condition of "absolute[er] Zerrissenheit"
and to recognize that redemption from this condition involves a logical rather than an aesthetic synthesis.

Art, for Hegel, prepares for this final philosophical synthesis by reacting against the realizations of the past, against the material embodiments of ideas in the various artistic media, while it anticipates the future state of a fully self-conscious philosophy and its pure ideas. In traversing this series of reactions and anticipations, art undergoes a historical development that Hegel divides into three great ages: the symbolic, the classical and the romantic. Each of these stages has its characteristic way in which the ideal and the actual are related. Emulating the Hegelian subject which must first divide in order to unite later (Taylor 86), the universal and natural worlds are represented as separate in symbolic art, as synthesized in the classical world, and as a synthesis that is transcended by the artistic works of what Hegel calls the romantic era and in which he includes all of Christian Europe.

As an Aufhebung of the two earlier stages, romantic art represents the spirit's movement out of the world, a movement initiated by the representations of Christ's ascension. It, consequently, deemphasizes sensory perceptions and representations of material objects in favor of the expression of an artistic temperament ("Gemüt"), a spirit of creation represented as being free of individual objects and instances. These particularities and the material qualities of the media of representation are said by Hegel to be
accidental to the manifestation of Geist in romantic art. Instead, the distance between the absolute freedom of the spiritual realm and the conditioned nature of the material world is made apparent.

As a result, Hegel makes romantic art into a form of artistic "Auflösung," in which subjective expression, which Hegel claims to be the producer of tragic art, is separated from objective humor, which Hegel makes the producer of comic art. This bifurcation of art along the line of subject and object implies that ethically formed individuals would be given to subjective or tragic art and unformed persons to the objective or comic forms. The first form involves the Spirit's attempt to know itself as Spirit; the second involves the mere recognition of the absence of Spirit in the material world (14: 222). When complete separation occurs, Hegel notes that there is also a total segregation of art from life and the world is seen to be nakedly prosaic, a world in which the construction of Vorstellungen is no longer possible (14: 223).

Hegel's notion of poetry redresses this separation because it unites subjective expression and representation by holding them together as separate (15: 224-5). In Hegel's terms, poetry is capable of painting's visual representation of external appearances and music's auditory expression of internal subjective activity. At the same time, poetry transcends both of these other art forms. Painting's distribution of color makes it, for Hegel, less restrictive
than, for example, sculpture, which must contend with actual physical laws in creating its works; but painting must nevertheless deal with material phenomena. Music's translation of subjectivity into sound means that it must also manipulate physical properties, especially those involving the temporality of sound-wave production. Poetry's use of words, the sound of which is independent of their meaning, allows poetry to represent subjective elements in the physical world as nevertheless independent of that world (15: 228-9).

This quality makes poetry, for Hegel, the least restrictive mode of art; he writes that
die Poesie die Totalität des Inhalts und der Kunstformen in sich aufzunehmen imstande ist. Auch dies haben wir als das Erringen einer Totalität anzusehen, das wissenschaftlich nur als Aufheben der Beschränktheit im Besonderen kann dargetan werden, wozu wiederum die vorausgegangene Betrachtung der Einseitigkeiten gehört, deren alleinige Gültigkeit durch die Totalität negiert wird. (15: 234)
The poetic imagination is not restricted to what the physical properties of its medium allow, but is seen to be free of these properties (Karelis xxii). The textuality of poetry is seen to be an accidental feature, necessarily arranged in order to eliminate the free play of external aspects (15: 228-9). Poetry's actual material consists of spiritual forms (ideas, feelings, intuitions, etc.) rather than any
physical materials, such as marble, bronze, color and musical tones (15: 229-30). Poetry has, as a result, an almost unrestricted realm of possibility. Since it conveys subjective activity, it can be concerned with anything that is involved in this activity, including all the objects and modes of expression used by the other arts.

Poetic openness comes from the fact that it is primarily occupied with the universal element in art, rather than with the refashioning of any specific material (15: 234). Although poetry is still a form of objectification of the spirit, its operation is one in which all the particularities of the various artistic modes are dissolved into the totality of the artistic process itself. For Hegel, art provides a transition between the prose of finitude and the universal spheres of religion and philosophy (15: 234-5). Poetry is merely the most radical form of this transition; it is art on the point of dissolution into religious pictorial thinking and scientific prose. In its advanced stages, poetic discourse separates thought from the practices of artistic embodiment. It must ultimately transform its own material (i.e. die Vorstellungen) into meaningless signs in order to enact the dissolution of art into, on the one hand, "inner consciousness" and, on the other, scientific prose: the divided state of "absolute Zerrissenheit."

Hegel's discussion of poetry comes very close at this point of reducing it to the prose of inner consciousness, and several modern works could be found to exemplify such poetic
prose. But Hegel is also careful to distinguish poetry from prose works. Since poetry is concerned with spiritual or subjective elements, it is primarily an expressive art (15: 239). Its representations of the external world must be related to subjective activity, and its expression of subjective activity is not separable from the experience of what is. According to Hegel, poetry "ist das ursprüngliche Vorstellen des Wahren, ein Wissen, welches das Allgemeine noch nicht von seiner lebendigen Existenz im einzelnen trennt, Gesetz und Erscheinung, Zweck und Mittel einander noch nicht gegenüberstellt und aufeinander dann wieder räsonierend bezieht, sondern das eine nur im anderen und durch das andere faßt" (15: 240). Poetry presents all subject matter as a complete totality in itself, including both the general and the individual together, the law and appearance, the end and its means (15: 241). It is self-consciously expression for its own sake and, therefore, distinguishable both from prose and primitive or unintentional poetry, which, Hegel claims, predates the emergence of prose. Although any expression may be unintentionally poetic, true poetry must be contrary to prose and therefore can only develop in opposition to philosophy and its scientific discourse, "so daß von dem prosaischen Standpunkte aus die poetische Vorstellung kann als ein Umweg und nutzloser Überfluß angesehen werden" (15: 278). Hegelian poetry is not a primitive form of language, but rather a genre of discourse that emerges simultaneously with
instrumental reason and rational discourse.

Hegel, consequently, develops his notion of poetry by contrasting it with prosaic forms of discourse. He describes prose, in its most anti-poetic and scientific forms, as the systematic discourse of analytical thought; it is language that denies its existence as language and that pretends to convey the understanding of phenomena in all their contingency. Prose discourse is, for Hegel, purely instrumental; it does not have any figurative purposes but serves only practical ends (15: 280); it strives for pure clarity, and it consequently produces translatable text, so long as the text produced in any language or semiotic system is another piece of pure prose (Taylor 479). Prose is furthermore teleological, and it therefore deemphasizes the present object in favor of a more general understanding of an abstract object that is never fully present in any instance. Whereas Hegel claims that poetry values its subject-matter as it appears (15: 281), he argues that everyday prose values appearances only insofar as they serve to relate events to conventions of understanding (15: 243), and scientific prose values them only so far as they help understand the world and its relations in terms of general laws and categories (15: 243).

Since poetry, in contrast to both these forms of prose, represents "das individualisierte Vernünftige" (15: 245), it reflects the particularity of various historical periods, national characters, and life-worlds (Hegel, for instance, is
able to make the general distinction between a more poetic orient and a more rational occident). At the same time, a sense of oneness permeates all particularizations and gives individual works a universal appeal. According to Hegel, the poetic work of art interweaves individuality with the universal (15: 248), while it, at the same time, shows the universal to be independent of this particular embodiment (15: 250).

This transition through particularity to the universal occurs, furthermore, almost by accident. The Hegelian poetic work develops each of its parts in their particularity, and in lingering in this particularity, discovers that a unity exists among parts. In establishing the autonomy of parts and treating them all independently, each part is shown to have a life of its own and to participate freely in the assembly of the whole (15: 252). The independent parts assemble, on the basis of their common origin, the fundamental representation (idea) presented in the work. Although Hegel acknowledges the fact that diversity and inconsistencies may occur in poetry, he argues that an inner bond holds a poetic work together, almost as if the apparent discrepancies were unintentionally connected (15: 254). This latent identity is revealed by dialectical reason, through which poetry manifests its unity without expressly emphasizing it (15: 255). Poetic unity is inner and implicit, like the soul in the body, whereas prose is unified by its function as a vehicle of instrumental reason, valued
for its efficacy in the conveyance of information and appreciated for its economical use of words.

Since a poetic use of words is appreciated for its manner of composition, poetry is valued for the communicative bond that it constructs in order to convey its message (15: 275). Hegel, who wants to transform all relations into logical ones, must denigrate this form of aesthetic bonding as an indication of intellectual immaturity. Marx reiterates Hegel on this point, but his denial of poetic discourse does not result from an overvaluation of logical relationships but of economic ones, especially those that, according to Marx, lead to the development of class consciousness. In this way, Marx replaces the function that printed texts play in the establishment of community with the sense of class membership that results from restricted ownership of the means of production, the consequent alienation of labour, and the unequal distribution of surplus value.

2.4. The Segregation of Poetry from the Prosaic World of Work

2.41. Marx's Childhood Discourse

The Marxist tradition exemplifies arguably the ultimate level of poetry's repression insofar as Marxism makes poetry into a disguised form of historiography or cloisters it in a socially irrelevant category of autonomous literature.²⁶ This separation of poetry from the life-world can be taken to

²⁶See chapter 1.
represent the fact that mature communication was being equated with purposeful, scientific and, therefore, non-poetic prose and that a message coded as such became a sign of the seriousness of the work. As Marxist discourse also demonstrates, this "scientific" writing seldom fully escaped the childish play of language identified with poetry, and these discursive memories of poetry are often formative ones for even the most systematic uses of language.

A brief discussion of the aesthetic presence in Marxist discourse will demonstrate this point.27 The affirmation of such a presence opposes views, like the one expressed by Louis Althusser, that proclaim a radical transformation of the Marx cultured in the German education system and the one who conceives of Marxism.28 This assertion of a "coupure épistemologique" that distances Marxist doctrine from the

27 Some critical attention has now been given to the fact that, despite the scientific pretensions of Marxist discourse, many of its notions have an artistic basis, as they represent Marx's revision of concepts traceable to German idealist philosophy and to the humanist tradition, which Marx tries to integrate into his economic theories (Georg-Lauer 37). This view is reiterated by Habermas and by Margaret Rose. Habermas points out that the Marxist reinterpretation of several ideas rather poetically expressed by Schelling in his later philosophy is an effort to find a neutral "scientific" discourse and to retreat from artistic theogonies ("Dialektischer Idealismus" 216). Rose sees this development as a generalization of Marx's original interest in artistic production to cover all types of production (78). Accordingly, Marx translates aesthetic concepts into socioeconomic ones and initiates the critical divide discussed above.

28 Althusser's bifurcated Marx undergoes a metamorphosis from an immature "ideological" to a mature "scientific" stage in which he finally founds all "real value" on human labor (Althusser, Pour Marx 26).
less rigorous thinking of the young Karl is complicated by the fact that the mature Marx could never totally deny his appreciation of things which belong to what he would otherwise consider to be immature, pre-scientific and non-economic systems of value. In fact, it is the continued presence of humanism's artistic values, as they had been preserved in the writings of Lessing, Schelling, Hegel and others, that causes problems for the anti-humanist version of a Marx who sheds the false consciousness of idealist philosophy to discover the real economic basis of the social structure.

If we examine the famous passage from his unpublished introduction to the *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, we can discern the humanism of the later Marx. He inasmuch as confesses to the fact that infantile desires persist in his adult, scientific self, insofar as he continues to appreciate the art of classical Greece, despite the fact that it is produced by a culture based on a primitive mode of production. In trying to comprehend how such an immature culture could produce such value-laden artifacts, he writes:

Aber die Schwierigkeit liegt nicht darin, zu verstehen, daß griechische Kunst und Epos an gewisse gesellschaftliche Entwicklungsformen geknüpft sind. Die Schwierigkeit ist, daß sie für uns noch Kunstgenuß gewähren und in gewisser Beziehung als Norm unerreichtbare Muster gelten.


A breathtaking shift occurs in this passage. The relation of modern cultures to ancient Greece is made analogous to the relation of an adult to a rather ordinary child. The modern individual admires the works of Greek art as an adult admires the play of children, into which the adult can never again enter without becoming childish. Cultural history, conceived as a being that undergoes a linear development like that of a child into an adult, has matured into a prosaic modernity and, as a result, poetic and idealistic conceptions have been
outgrown. At the same time, the poet is not a figure who is totally assigned to the past. As Josef Chytry notes, "Marx's powerful vision culminates the ideals of German classicism and idealism by anticipating humanity's ultimate vocation as an aesthetic universality, a creativeness playing with all forms and unifying humans and nature in a free 'Gemeinwesen'" (265). The adult must recover or reinvent some of the child in order to attain Marx's ideal state, and he makes this recovery by essentially re-poeticizing the everyday work world.

In attempting to show itself not to be a "Kindisch" poetic vision but to be one of the products of the scientific adult, Marxism must forget the poetic basis of its own discursive practice while positing that a childlike existence will be recovered once humanity is finally free of capitalism's work time. One of the reasons for this deferring of memory is that Marxist discourse divorces itself from the intellectual heritage that precedes it. It must furthermore overlook the poetically based notion of philosophical paradox underlying Hegelian dialectic (and Marxist historical materialism), in which "two opposed or contradictory ideas are joined together in such a way that they complement and confirm each other, and transform themselves into each other" (Kainz 109).

Such synthetic power of dialectic, being not far from the "endoplastic" power that Coleridge attributes to the imagination, is often cited as a characteristic of poetic
discourse. In fact, it is directly linked to the universalizing tendency of a non-lyrical, "romantische" and "progressive Universalpoesie" that Friedrich Schlegel, writing over forty years before Marx, makes the forerunner of all speculative philosophy and that he associates with the faculty of "Witz" (38-9). This faculty engages in a "logische Chemie" by decomposing, mixing and synthesizing ideas in a way that is directly related to the French Revolution and that anticipates the Marxist notion of cultural revolution (49-50).

This poetic element has, as a consequence, a latent presence in Marxist prose, despite Marxist claims about the scientific nature of its discourse. Poetry has, as we have seen, a similar status in Hegel's philosophy, although Hegel views poetic composition as the infancy of philosophy. In both cases, poetry is a form of discourse that preserves both the self-defining freedom of the modern subject and a traditional notion of unity, which is projected both onto humanity and nature. This dichotomy, between the affirmation of freedom and of communion, is one which is also reflected in the division of public discourse from the private sphere of imaginative self-expression, fantasy and play. The

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29 The literary nature of Marxist discourse is not lost on Hayden White, who finds a latent romanticism in Marxist historiographic practices (Metahistory 282). The kinship, in which Marxism is seen to be a post-Kunstperiod poetic vision (i.e. a form of Universalpoesie in prose), also underlies statements, like the suggestion, made by Terry Eagleton, that poetry provides a major test for sociological approaches to literature.
individual's private sphere becomes the one in which subjectivity is freely embodied, whereas the public sphere transforms into one of systematic definition, legislation and bureaucratization, a transformation whose increasingly acute division is illustrated by Nietzsche's definitive separation of the pre-rational realm consisting of art, play and reading from the rational world of work, system and instrumental reason.

2.42. **Nietzsche's Unreflective Reading**

For Nietzsche, play is pure pre-rational activity (Spariosu 25). It is the play of forces beyond the control of reason in which the "Überfluß" of energy spends itself gratuitously. This "Überfluß" of pre-rational play energy echoes the directionless "überflüssige," the word which Nietzsche uses to designate the crowd. The suggestion is that there are two parameters to the individual, the emptiness of being one of the herd and the formlessness of being always at play. Zarathustra is able to rise above and descend into these two "überflüße," and the descending and ascending Zarathustra, who constantly returns to his cave, parallels the dichotomy between philosophy and nihilism that Harry Neumann finds in Nietzsche's work (Neumann 168) and between each moment of time and its negation (in eternity) that Stambaugh uses to characterize Nietzsche's purposeless temporality, i.e. his notion of eternal return (114).

The best example of this vacillation occurs not in Zarathustra, but in *Ecce Homo*, when Nietzsche describes his
reading experience. For Nietzsche, reading is an act of "Erholung" (282) [a word which is often translated as "recreation" but which also means "recuperation"]. Reading allows Nietzsche to escape his earnestness into a kind of distraction or playfulness, a realm outside of useful time. But Nietzsche also feels that, for him personally, this recovery time also has its appropriate value, as he writes:

Bücher! (Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 282)

Books are opposed to Nietzsche at work, since their
distraction, their representations of speaking or thinking,
are disruptive to Nietzsche's actions when engaged in an
enterprise. When in the dominant mode of this work time,
recuperative time is only an annoyance, du temps perdu. But
when recuperative time is allowed to become dominant, when
Nietzsche opens the gates to his walled-in self by opening a
book, the recalling of Nietzsche out of the time of his
working into another accidental time recovers him from his
own intentions, from the moment of being present only to
himself. Books belong to another time than the time felt by
Nietzsche when at work, and it is this altotemporality which
makes them attractive. Nietzsche can sense how his own work
could also have a certain attraction for others, since he
begins the proclamation of their value by stating that he
also is "noch nicht an der Zeit" (296). Nietzsche does imply
his own re-entry into well-used time (when time catches up to
him), but, as he is one thing and his writing another, the
value of Nietzsche's texts perhaps lies in their remaining
ever in the condition of being played always out-of-time (in
a state of returned eternity).

This extratemporality is especially important for
Nietzsche because the time of his contemporaries is uniformly
that which has use and which therefore is translatable into
units of work. If such a quantifiable time can be said to be
the dominant mode of time in modernity, then the play time
that books present and that recuperares Nietzsche from himself is the time that interrupts the history of modern seriousness and detours it from its end. Nietzsche's model for this disruption of productivity is given in his interpretation of the Biblical creation story:

War es Gott selber, der sich als Schlange am Ende seines Tagewerks unter den Baum der Erkenntniss legte: Er erholte sich so davon, Gott zu sein ... Er hatte alles zu schön gemacht ... Der Teufel is bloß der Müßiggang Gottes an jedem siebenten Tage ... (Nietzsche, Ecce Homo 349).

The moment of idleness, the moment of play, is the recuperative moment, when creation passes over into its opposite--recreation--and recovers that which has been excluded from original creation (the eternity of the wind blowing over the water). Similarly, I will argue, modern poetic practices recover that which has been excluded from a time conceived either as potential productivity or as a continuous historical sequence of particulars. Insofar as the poetic text draws attention to its own play, it draws attention to itself as a gratuitous moment, a floating particular that may, indeed, initiate temporal sequences, be they periods of reading, idleness or prolonged discussion but that inevitably leads to nothing, the downfall of one literary life-world after another.

It is, however, an intense process of poetic creation, falling-down and regrouping that marks the history of modern
These alternating moments of literary opposition and return to the quantifiable time of the workday bourgeois world break up the systematic nature of that world. I will now turn to three case-studies of this poetic fragmentation.
3.0. Three Examples of Modern Sociopoetic Discourse: Poetry as a Means of Reconstructing Modern Life-worlds

Although the poetic qualities of Heine's three Nordseezyklen, Baudelaire's prose poems collected as Spleen de Paris or Petits poèmes en prose and Whitman's Leaves of Grass are quite different, they are nevertheless comparable, since they all participate in the transition from romanticism to modernism in three different national literatures. In the case of Whitman and Heine, their poetry demonstrates, Russell Berman argues, a commitment to "the transformation of the prevailing [i.e. romantic] institution of lyric verse in such a way so as to explore the possibility of a genuine poetry

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1Although Nordsee: dritte Abteilung is not a typical poetic cycle and, although it is published separately from the other two Nordsee texts, Heine intended that it be joined together with the first two cycles in a projected collected edition of his works (Sammons 72-3). I am therefore viewing it as the conclusion of the reaction against romantic poetry that Heine begins in the first Nordseezyklen.

2Romanticism was, itself, originally conceived as a modernization of culture. Friedrich Sengle notes how the German word Romantik meant in the first half of the nineteenth century "Literatur, die nicht an die Antike orientiert ist" (1: 243). The French "romantique" had a similar sense, a fact demonstrated by Stendhal's famous definition of "romanticisme" in Racine et Shakespeare: "Le romantisme est l'art de présenter aux peuples les œuvres littéraires qui, dans l'état actuel de leurs habitudes et de leurs croyances, sont susceptibles de leur donner le plus de plaisir possible" (71). The notion that romanticism is a form of literature oriented towards the middle ages is, for Sengle, a product of later nineteenth-century effort to distinguish the modern (that which is still current) from the medieval (that which has become dogmatic). The works of Heine, Baudelaire and Whitman participate in this process of constructing a distinctly fluent (a superfluent) modern present.
for the [modern bourgeois] republic" (204). In Baudelaire's case, one must acknowledge that his youthful republicanism was tempered with a large measure of cynicism about life under the second empire. His pessimism does not, all the same, prevent him from joining both Whitman and Heine as a poet who is engaged in "the demolition of tradition," in "the radical break with inherited forms in art and politics" and, consequently, in the "revolutionary gesture" of democratizing poetry (Berman 220). What Berman stops short of saying, and what I am arguing in this study, is that the poetic gestures of these three writers all involve an effort to level the cultural values of their respective literary publics in order to dissolve the sedimented traditions that were being institutionalized in nineteenth-century Germany, France and America.

In making this argument, I will first discuss how Heine's three Nordsee texts manifest a changing relationship between everyday discourse typified by journalistic writing and the synthetic powers attributed to poetry, a questioning of generic boundaries that I will also explore in my discussions of Baudelaire's prose poems and Whitman's Leaves. Heine's North-Sea cycles imply, however, that a parallel exists between liberal versification and social liberalism. In distinguishing himself, a Jewish writer who has, in his own eyes, assimilated into nineteenth-century German society, from both the North-Sea Islanders, whose sea-faring way of life still preserved a pre-modern cultural identity, and his
romantic predecessors, who were promoting a German cultural
chauvinism, he identifies himself with the rising tide of an
increasingly powerful and mobile German bourgeoisie. The
Nordsee texts display a regret for the necessary cultural
devolution that results from this modernization but
celebrate, at the same time, the need to renovate the various
German Kleinstaaten, regional cultures and traditional life-
worlds in order to found a new open and cosmopolitan society.

3.1 Heinrich Heine's Nordseezyklen: Poetry and the
Modernization of German Culture

As Heine's Nordsee cycles display this necessity of
social and poetic modernization, they demonstrate a poetic
change of will from the earlier poetry of Buch der Lieder. In
Much of the criticism of this anthology reads the collection
as the record of Heine's youthful attempts to construct
himself as a suffering romantic poet by writing "songs" about
unrequited love (Sammons 28, Berendsohn 33). In a series of

3In writing the lyrics collected in Buch der Lieder,
Heine demonstrates his ability to compose the form of poetry
conceived in the Biedermeierzeit to be an especially German
and a especially modern type of poetic discourse (Sengle 2:
471-3).

4Alberto Destro goes so far as to suggest that Heine, in
the 1820s, was primarily concerned with the securing of his
position as a professional man of letters (61). He
consequently adhered to the conventions of late romantic
lyricism in order to appeal to the bourgeois public for that
type of writing. Destro adds that Heine's use of irony and
parody demonstrates his inability to comply fully with market
demands. His eventual conversion to a writer of
predominantly journalistic prose can either be interpreted as
a final refusal of the lyrical conventions valued by literary
consumers or as a re-adjustment to market conditions when
lyrical discourse was no longer saleable.
alternating self-aggrandizements and deflations, Heine imagines himself as an individual who is capable of great love but whose failures in love and poetry result in pathos, self-ridicule and the feeling of being "zerrissen." The resulting lyricism, which had, by the middle 1820s, already become an overworked cliché, is itself disrupted on account of Heine's irony (Heißenbüttel 59). His frequent disruptions of the lyrical mode, which are radicalized in the first two Nordseezyklen, demonstrate not only the self-styled conventionality of Biedermeier lyrical poetry but also Heine's distaste for this playful indulgence in the poetic anachronisms popular in late romantic German writing.6

6The term belongs to the tradition of German love poetry, where the lover's heart is often "zerrissen" by a merciless beloved, often to be made whole by the beloved's later, more sympathetic care (See Heine's "Fresko-Sonette an Christian S." for an example of this convention [1: 123]). It also occurs in Hegel's Phänomenologie, in which he describes the need for the subject to be in condition of "absolute Zerrissenheit" before it can undergo final synthesis and experience the absolute wholeness of Being. Heine uses the term to describe the modern life-world, which is both loveless and fragmented (Feise 98-101). It is a state in which the love poet ends, as the poet of Buch does, in becoming a "lyrisches Subjekt mit der 'rote(n) Weltgeistnase'" (Jokl 19). It is a state in which poets, like Byron, write about both spiritual and bodily matters (7; 95). It is finally the state of the world in which subjectivity and objectivity are irreconcilably divided and that literary discourse is divided into a self-indulgent lyricism or a mechanical prose. Habermas' notion of life-world as a locus for social integration can be viewed as an attempt to overcome this divide.

6According to Helmut Heißenbüttel, the North-Sea poems initiate a modernization of Heine's poetic practice by refusing to distinguish either lyric and prose or literary and journalistic prose (62), by reflecting Heine's desire to replace metaphorical with non-metaphorical discourse (65) and by an increasingly more parodic use of romantic clichés, a
The first two Nordsee cycles (1825-26) expose the inadequacy of these poetic practices in comparison with the medieval life-world still existing on the North-Sea Islands, and Nordsee: Dritte Abteilung demonstrates how they are also inappropriate practices for the modern society that Heine believes to be coming into existence in France. These poetic texts announce the future political journalist and poetic satirist, as they project the enlarged reverberations of Heine's lyrical I onto North-Sea Island culture, giving his own lyricism social and, in Johann Jokl's eyes, cosmic dimensions (229-30). The poet's fluctuations are radicalized literary trait somewhat characteristic of all Biedermeier poetry.

7In Nordsee: dritte Abteilung, Heine contrasts Germany with a France that he identifies as a nation of living poetry:
Wir Deutschen schreiben auch epische Gedichte, aber die Helden derselben existiren bloß in unserem Kopfe. Hingegen die Helden des französischen Epos sind wirkliche Helden, die viel größere Thaten vollbracht, und viel größere Leiden gelitten, als wir in unseren Dachstübenkchen ersinnen können. Und wir haben doch viel Phantasie, und die Franzosen haben nur wenig. Vielleicht hat deshalb der liebe Gott den Franzosen auf eine andere Art nachgeholten, und sie brauchen nur treu zu erzählen, was sie in den letzten dreyzig Jahren gesehen und gethan, und sie haben eine erlebte Literatur, wie noch kein Volk und keine Zeit sie hervorgebracht. Diese Memoiren von Staatsleuten, Soldaten und edlen Frauen, wie sie in Frankreich täglich erscheinen, bilden einen Sagenkreis, woran die Nachwelt genug zu denken und zu singen hat, und worin, als dessen Mittelpunkt, das Leben des großen Kaisers, wie ein Riesenbaum, emporragt. (Heine 6: 162)

8Laura Hofrichter sees the Nordsezyklen as one of Heine's early efforts to renovate lyrical discourse by breaking "the spell of song-writing" (46). She reads Heine's conversion to prose and his seventeen-year abstention from the publication of any new poetry as an indication of his resistance to the folksong conventions of German romanticism.
to the point that he vacillates between poetic visions about the Islanders' charming way of life and the realization that the increased contact with nineteenth-century German bourgeois culture, resulting from an increasingly popular "Badetourismus," must bring this communal life to an end (Futterknecht 266).

At the same time, Heine participates in the destruction of this local culture, the symbolic genocide of the romantic folk living on the North-Sea islands, as the North-Sea poems are, in effect, Reisebilder in verse. This form of Reisebeschreibung, usually written in prose, promoted the tourist impulses of a literary public who, in sharing a writer's reflexions about a place, would desire to emulate them in subsequent guided tours. The resulting cultural negation spreads the social fragmentation of the modern world to the Northern margins of Germany, but it also precipitates,

that he had, at first, consciously appropriated but into which his own writing had become fully assimilated. Hofrichter argues that Heine's later career can be understood as a resistance to this poetic assimilation (Hofrichter 34-5), and we might add that it consequently ends with a final rejection of the German liberalism and a return to Judaism.

9 Reisebeschreibung was a genre of ambiguous status that included the travel notes of both "men of letters" and writers of Trivialliteratur (Sengle 2: 239). Its status was also undermined by the fact that its reading public was predominantly Biedermeierdamen who, as Sengle notes, "in der Regel von den noch immer unbequemen und gefährlichen Reisen ausgeschlossen [sind]" (2: 239).

10 Lloyd S. Kramer describes how Heine later exploits his ability to be a cultural mediator (102-119). According to Kramer, Heine saw that his status as an insider in both French and German culture enabled him to act as an agent for a European cultural union in trying to bring idealist Germany and materialist France together.
in the eyes of a revolutionary idealist like the young Heine, the eventual transcendence of the modern world in a later and greater poetic synthesis, that which Heine states in Nordsee: Dritte Abteilung to be personified by Napoleon or by anyone who embodies the Geist der Zeit. The poetic representation of this destructive conflict reflects the opposition between Heine's modern cosmopolitanism and his romantic German nationalism, while it translates his individual struggle into a universalizing discourse about the possibility of heroic poetry in the modern world.\[^{11}\]

3.11. Nordsee: Erster Zyklus--The Poet's Desire for a Romantic Life-world

The Nordseezyklen reflect, consequently, Heine's transition from young poet to mature journalist, from composer of romantic love lyrics to professional writer, poetic satirist and cultural mediator. The first two cycles are written in a form of free verse, rather than the folk-ballad forms of the earlier sections of Buch, as if to suggest that the poet's encounters with the North Sea and its

\[^{11}\]Heine had already begun this transition by publishing a mixture of poetry and prose descriptions of his walking tours around Northern Germany. The Nordsee cycles are all either byproducts or parts of this series of Reisebilder, and they demonstrate this association by linking Heine's poetic discourse with his travel journalism. The North-Sea poems affiliate writing and the perambulatory activity of the Müßiggänger, as well as poetic inspiration and the impressions that a foreign poet has about a local culture.
Islander culture cannot be easily measured. Die Nordsee: Dritte Abteilung is a straightforward prose description of travel and political commentary, also suggesting a change in Heine's writing practice. His attention shifts from transcribing personal emotion in terms of past literary convention (in imitation of deutsche Volkslieder) to a professional engagement in both the public forum and in the events of his historical present.

This transition to a less ruly form of communicative activity is announced right at the beginning of Nordsee: Erster Cyclus as a displacement of the preceding lyrical cycles with the writing inspired by a new devotion. The poet proclaims that he is serving a new Königin in a way that acknowledges his "impulse to be modern," but his rather traditional invocation of a muse also indicates a continued adherence to lyrical conventions and, consequently, a continued romantic medievalism:

Ihr Lieder! Ihr meine guten Lieder!
Auf, auf! und wappnet Euch!
Laßt die Trompeten klingen,
Und hebt mir auf den Schild
Dies junge Mädchen,

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12 Joachim Müller argues that this use of free verse allowed Heine to represent some of restlessness of the North Sea in his poetic rhythms (193).
Demonstrating Heine's desire to enter the world of German letters, the poem continues the romantic valorization of mediveal traditions, insofar as the poetic language is, as Jeffrey Sammons suggests, "mannered and courtly" (Elusive Poet 75). The present cycle of poems is, in accordance with this poetic tradition, commanded by the poet to serve the new (mercenary?) monarch, to be her military force, to sing her praises and to win a victory over the monarch that the poet serves in the earlier works of Buch der Lieder, if not also over the poetic muse that his immediate romantic predecessors had also served. Heine rejects the conventionalized medievalism of these earlier forms of writing by affirming his devotion to the present in what still amounts to a

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13Capitalization and spelling according to Windfuhr's edition.

14The new muse is, as Sammons notes, addressed as "Agnes" in "Erklärung" and "Evelina" in Nordsee: dritte Abteilung (Elusive Poet 79). Jost Hermand, in his notes for "Die Harzreise" in the Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe, says that both names are veiled references to Heine's cousin Amalia (Heine 6: 636). Sammons, however, argues that the new muse is an internalization of the poet's object of desire, whom he now, in effect, possesses (Elusive Poet 78). For a discussion of the possibility of a biographical source for Heine's love, see William Rose, The Early Love Poetry of Heinrich Heine.
deliberately anachronistic use of medievalistic convention.\textsuperscript{15} He replaces the now absent woman who has ruled over his heart (and his poetry) with a present if disembodied beloved, who appears as that which is absent from the realized past, as well as from the material present.\textsuperscript{16}

Proclaiming, to an almost absurd excess, his condition of absolute Zerrissenheit, the poet no longer looks for an external object of his subjective desire. He is, therefore, able to continue the use of poetic discourse strongly recollective of medieval lyrics, while he, ironically, suggests that these past medievalisms no longer have a place

\textsuperscript{15}In this way, "Kronung" provides support for Franz Futterknecht, who argues that Heine opposes the retrogressive conception of time implicit in romantic invocations of idealized medieval worlds (Futterknecht 271).

\textsuperscript{16}The new muse, although named, is not given an external body but, like the sea, is loved by the poet as if she were his own soul. The association of the love with this totally immaterial part of the poet’s subjectivity paradoxically attests to the veracity of the love object, which is made real because of its purely spiritual qualities. The poet states this power of his soul to affirm the ontological status of communicated events more clearly in the third Nordsee text:

Ich liebe das Meer, wie meine Seele.

Oft wird mir sogar zu Muthe, als sey das Meer eigentlich meine Seele selbst; und wie es im Meere verborgene Wasserpflanzen gibt, die nur im Augenblick des Aufblühens an dessen Oberfläche heraufschwimmen, und im Augenblick des Verblühens wieder hinabtauchen: so kommen zuweilen auch wunderbare Blumenbilder heraufgeschwommen aus der Tiefe meiner Seele, und duften und leuchten und verschwinden wieder—"Evelina!"

Man sagt, unfern dieser Insel, wo jetzt nichts als Wasser ist, hätten einst die schönsten Dörfer und Städte gestanden, das Meer habe sie plötzlich all überschwemmt, und bey klarem Wetter sähen die Schiffer noch die leuchtenden Spitzen der versunkenen Kirchthürme, und mancher habe dort, in der Sonntagsfrühe, sogar ein frommes Glockengelälte gehört. Die Geschichte ist wahr; denn das Meer ist meine Seele— (Heine 6: 150)
in the modern world. His unabashed imitations of medieval folk songs and love conventions, express a purely fluent subjective longing, one that is not fixed on any specific woman but is rather an abstract desire for a modern poetic counterpart, to whom he will surrender the last of his good sense and whom he will now serve with his "bisschen Verstand, / Das mir aus Mitleid noch gelassen hat/ D[ie] Vorgängerin im Reich" (1: 359). Now, in a last return to a romantic image of the knight who kneels before his lady, the poet humbles himself before his beloved at the beginning of a cycle that notably turns away from the conventions of romantic love poetry.

The fact that this indulgence in poetic cliché is inappropriate for the poet's North-Sea setting is made more apparent in the next two poems. In two main ways they exploit the jarring contrast between the quietude of love-lyric conventions and the harsh parade of nights on the North-European sea-coast. First, the rhythmic sound of the surf at sunset recalls a moment from his youth when he heard old stories and admired a girl who sat in the window across the street ("Abenddämmerung"). The repetitive crashing of waves collides with a return to the poet's romantic source, as if to suggest an opposition with the subjective acquiescent permanence and the active present. Second, "Sonnenuntergang" makes the cycles of the sun and the moon into the travels of a married couple, who endlessly are in flight, one in pursuit of the other, on account of the fact
that the moon works the night shift, while the duties of the sun keep him busy during the day:

Jetzt am Tage, in einsamer Pracht,
Ergeht sich dort oben der Sonnengott,
Ob seiner Herrlichkeit
Angebetet und vielbesungen
Von stolzen, glückgehärteten Menschen.
Aber des Nachts,
Am Himmel, wandelt Luna,
Die arme Mutter
Mit ihren verwaisten Sternenkindern,
Und sie glänzt in stiller Wehmuth,
Und liebende Mädchen und sanfte Dichter
Weihen ihr Tränen und Lieder.

(Heine 1: 363)

Rather than, as Joachim Müller suggests, being a "lyrischer Mythus" about the tormented love that motivates the solar and lunar cycles (194), this overly sentimentalized and rather kitsch indulgence in the pathetic fallacy turns the daily cycle of time into an endlessly repeated narrative about the love and tears of a couple whose employment keeps them apart. This tale further trivializes the poet's own personal tales of love and loss, since its cosmic events are made into restatements of the poet's own lyricism, a lyricism which echos the consecrated tears and songs of "liebende[n] Mädchen
These self-indulgent songs, products of "[b]öse[n] zischende[n] Zungen," impose human suffering on the gods, and make them wander "qualvoll,/ Trostlos unendliche Bahnen." In turning over the last "bißchen Verstand" to the present queen of his poetry, the poet also turns away from this chorus and makes an individualistic vow in terms of his own love songs by affirming: "Ich klage nicht länger" (Heine 1:365).

Instead, he turns, in "Die Nacht am Strande," to the Gothic songs that the North Wind brings him, songs which, in a sense, counter the sunny mythical tales of Sol and Luna that the breeze has brought from the Mediterranean and that "[b]öse Zungen" have trivialized. The starless and cold northern night brings a rougher singing, a ruder form of poetry which, in many ways, anticipates both Stéphane Mallarmé's sterile frost and Whitman's proliferating long lines:

Und über dem Meer', platt auf dem Bauch,
Liegst der ungestaltete Nordwind,
Und heimlich, mit ächzend gedämpfter Stimme,

17In his "Bäder von Lukka," Heine writes of his youthful poems as examples of moments when he complained a lot about the lack of wholeness in the world: "Jüngst, mit vieler Mühe, verschaffte ich mir in Berlin die Gedichte eines jener Ganzheitdichter, der über meine byronische Zerrissenheit so sehr geklagt, und bey den erlegenen Grünlängkeiten, den zarten Naturgefühlen, die mir da, wie frisches Heu, entgegenufteteten, wäre mein armes Herz, das schon hinlänglich zerrissen ist, fast auch vor Lachen geborsten" (7:95).
Heine is, in these lines, referring to the Old Norse literary tradition and its written record of Germanic mythology. The children of the North-Sea Islands still embody this poetry, and their play shows that its wild and proud spirit ("Uebermuth") still permeates their life-world. As both a modern poet and a Jew, Heine is excluded from this living poetry, as he is from the now dead conventions of the classical and medieval traditions. His poetic discourse can reflect only the absence of such poetic living and his contradictory desire for its return and its transcendence, a desire somewhat characteristic of a tourist, who expresses his condescending admiration for an endearingly simple manner of living.
In "Die Nacht am Strande," a fishing hut provides the setting for such an encounter between a condescending modern tourist and a pre-modern culture, a situation that also allows Heine to parody the theme of the flirtation with a fisher woman that he had exploited in "D[er] Heimkehr" (Sammons 77). Huts were conventional buildings frequently found in romantic landscapes as the house of uncorrupted beauty as opposed to the tainted beauty found in palaces. As a symbol of the social inequality dividing the peasant from the aristocrat, huts also are a common topos in Jacobin rhetoric (Grab 32). The particular hut that the tourist-poet enters in this poem is a place of feminine refuge, a space of domestic calmness in which "mutterseelallein blieb . . . die Fischertochter." In contrast with the unbalanced forces of unleashed nature that swirl around it and that overmatch the physical presence of an inadequate poet, the hut provides a shelter for the poet from the North Sea's and the North Wind's incantations and runic spells. This singing of energetic if ill-proportioned Germanic tales that transform the sea into a jumping, rejoicing, intoxicated turbulence contrasts with the Mediterranean calmness sung by the trival tongues that had honored the Luna and Sol love affair.

In such an incomprehensible romantic storm, the "Fremdling," a little stranger to the sea-coast, is not just a misplaced city-dweller in the wilds of rural Northern Germany, he is out of time with the age represented by this
A modern man in a romantic poem, he does not retreat into either the clichés of classical calmness nor into those of romantic imbalance. Instead, he must take shelter with the women in the "Fischerhütte," one from which all other men are absent, but in which the desirous Fischertochter appears, although half-dressed, to be occupied with the hearth. The image of erotic domesticity that she projects calms the ferocity of the romantic tumult outside, as the roar of the waves is replaced by the hum of the kettle and flickering red light of the fire.

The romantic poet here is in danger of being waylaid on his quest among the unleashed forces of nature by both the spiritual rest and physical attraction that the young woman represents. His sense of cosmic imbalance is quickly forgotten when confronted by a vulnerable object of his sexual desire (the mother is a strange absent presence in this setting), especially as this object secretly communicates its eavesdropping shoulder and the fine hips that the woman's underskirts cover.

The danger that the poet represents, in contrast to the hidden female sexuality of the woman in the home, is one of foreign invasion. His threat is not just one of when the

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18 Adorno identifies this sense of homelessness, of being exiled from the object of desire, as the underlying cause of Heine's poetic suffering. He furthermore suggests that this pain of being alienated from the communal life-world is part of the modern disease, an element of the Jewish disease of being without a homeland that has been universalized (Adorno 11: 100).
fishermen are away the poet will play. His cosmopolitanism threatens to banalize the local setting by transforming it into the pastoral and pagan allegories sung by the trivializing "evil tongues." His presence is, like the North-Sea storm, a grand gesture that he first compares to a return of a mythical age of heroes and gods but then immediately undermines:

Siehst du, mein Kind, ich halte Wort,
Und ich komme, und mit mir kommt
Die alte Zeit, wo die Götter des Himmels
Niederstiegen zu Töchtern der Menschen,
Und die Töchter der Menschen umarmten,
Und mit ihnen zeugten
Zeptertragende Königsgeschlechter
Und Helden, Wunder der Welt.
Doch staune, mein Kind, nicht länger
Ob meiner Göttlichkeit,
Und ich bitte dich, koche mir Thee mit Rum,
Denn draußen war's kalt,
Und bei solcher Nachtluft
Frieren auch wir, wir ewigen Götter,
Und kriegen wir leicht den gottlichsten Schnupfen,
Und einen unsterblichen Husten.

(Heine 1: 367-9)
Speaking in a paternalistic voice, one adopted by a modern and educated man who addresses a simple and child-like fisherwoman, the little stranger transforms himself into a returning storyteller, who like the Grimm brothers, was bringing back the old ages of heroes and gods. He passes himself off as a divine coming, with the purpose of conceiving a new race of heroes. This divine conception is, however, shown to be fraudulent, as the stranger appears more comfortable next to the steaming water of the tea kettle than the storminess of his promised tales. He is a modern god only, one who suffers more intensely the sicknesses of mortals. In fact, the story is one of poetic deflation, in which a foreign-poet, a little seducer, attempts to perform a grand seduction in order to impress one of the local women. His threat appears feeble in the presence of the natural scene, and his presence as the power of poetry is reduced to the level of banter and self-inflation.

The poem demonstrates the poet's ambiguous desire for the calmness of the small balanced worlds illustrated by the domestic scene and for the old-world mythologies that he wants to reintroduce into this small world in order to convert it into a cosmic order.

This desire to Hellenize the Modern world by giving small events cosmic significance is further belittled in the next poem. In Walter Berendson's words, the poet of "Poseidon" succeeds masterfully, at first, in resurrecting "einige sehr wesentlich Züge der griechischen Welt" (92), but
this return to the Greek life-world is immediately undermined by the poet's fear of sea travel and by a mocking Poseidon, who ridicules the poet's sense of self-importance:

Fürchte dich nicht, Poetlein!
Ich will nicht im geringsten gefährden
Dein armes Schiffchen,
Und nicht dein liebes Leben beängst'gen
Mit allzubedenklichem Schaukeln.
Denn du, Poetlein, hast nie mich erzürnt,
Du hast kein einziges Türmchen verletzt
An Priamos' heiliger Veste,
Kein einziges Härschen hast du versengt
Am Aug' meines Sohns Polyphemos,
Und dich hat niemals rathend beschützt
Die Göttin der Klugheit, Pallas Athene.

(Heine 1: 371)

Parallel to the little stranger in the external elements of the sea-coast, the little poet is out of his element on the sea. Since he interprets the sea's danger as a personal assault on himself, the words of Poseidon belittle this narcissistic presumption, as they indicate that this modern lyricist is insignificant in comparison with the ancient poets capable of representing the heroic acts of mythical figures. Since the poet is a modern man, he is shown to live in a disenchanted world of smaller scale actions that are
only overblown by comparison to heroic deeds. Even the hint of the poet's comparison to the ancient figures is blown apart by Poseidon's scorn, and subjected to cosmic laughter.

Although such deflations of the poetic illusion can be found throughout Heine's Buch der Lieder they attain a critical density in the North-Sea poems. In these two final sections of Buch, the disruptions of the romantic project not only bring the poet down to earth; they also undermine the hermeneutic project that would read the world in ways which would permit the return of heroic or poetic ages. The grandeur of such poetic gestures is subjected to irony, to the extent that even the poetic trope which associates ocean depths with psychological depths and the immersion into revery with submergence beneath the sea's surface is undone. The poet is, as a result, continuously thrown back to the surface of himself and back into the currents of modern history.

Perhaps the clearest example of this confrontation between sleepy romanticism and an actively modernizing world occurs in "Meeresstille," when a drowsy scene of a drifting

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19Müller suggests that this view of the modern poet represents a reminder of his own poetic limitations that Heine sends to himself (Müller 198).

20This tension between Heine's desire for "Ruhe" and his continual re-entries into History and poetic engagement is discussed by Mark William Roche in a monograph that unfortunately overemphasizes Heine's desire for progress and revolution in his later writing (178-244). There is a desire for rest visible here and elsewhere in Heine's work, but it is the rest of a post-historical world forged from ever greater syntheses rather than the sleepy illusions and bowers of romantic convention.
boat on which the helmsman is sleeping and a cabin boy lounges lazily is disrupted by the sudden appearance of the ship's captain, who accuses the boy of a petty theft:

Denn der Capitän steht vor ihm,
Tobt und flucht und schilt ihn: Spitzbub.
»Spitzbub! einen Hering hast du
Aus der Tonne mir gestohlen!«

(Heine 1: 383)

As Müller notes, the dreaminess of the warm sun on a calm ocean is interrupted by the social reality of life aboard a working fishing boat encapsulated in the accusations of the petty theft (205). This interruption of poetry by a discourse that borders on social commentary is, however, only temporary, as the intrusion of reality makes a slight ripple on the lyrical sea, one that quickly passes by, as the poetic contemplation returns to the contemplation of nature, in which a guiltless gull steals a little fish from the water's surface.

Such an interruption demonstrates how the imaginary world of the poet, the one to which he is native, attempts to negate the social world before him, in which he is a stranger. The dreamy artifice of the poet seems more attractive and natural for this poetic subjectivity than the living world, in which the poetic age no longer has a place. The poetic realm has been submerged into a depth, one which
draws the poet towards it but which also excludes him on account of his attachments to the modern world. To enter the poetic world, the poet must die out of the actual one, the island world of life on the North Sea, and into the undersea world of calm depths (or death).

A segment from "Seegespenst," a poem which reformulates his desire for a fantasy woman into a more general romantic desire for the poetic world of a city under the sea (Sammons 80), illustrates this association of poetry and death. Looking into the sea as if he were looking into a dream or memory image, the poet perceives in the ocean's depths a city from the old time, the poetic age mingled with the time of childhood memory. This city from another time is submerged, and its medieval undertones remind us of the medieval Holy Roman Empire, the institutions of which are being submerged by the emerging modern German state. But the poet focuses on a single house and on a young girl, an "armes, vergessenes Kind" that he knows. He then addresses this girl-child under the sea:

So tief, meertief also
Versteckest du dich vor mir,
Aus kindischer Laune,
Und konntest nicht mehr herauf,
Und saßest fremd unter fremden Leuten,
Jahrhunderte lang,
Derweilen ich, die Seele voll Gram,
Auf der ganzen Erde dich suchte,
Und immer dich suchte,
Du Immergeliebte,
Du Längstverlorene,
Du Endlichgefundene,--
Ich hab dich gefunden und schaue wieder
Dein süßes Gesicht,
Die klugen, treuen Augen,
Das liebe Lächeln--
Und nimmer will ich dich wieder verlassen
Und ich komme hinab zu dir,
Und mit ausgebreiteten Armen
Stürz ich hinab an dein Herz--

(Heine 1: 387)

The poet has sought over the surface of the earth for this child, who has been hiding in the depths, without being able to return to live as a stranger among strangers on the earth. Like the earlier expressed desire to be a god in the modern world of man, the poet has sought to bring this child of the depths into the actual world. These ocean depths remind us of the depths of the imagination, and the imagination in the world is now drowned. Only the poet's well-developed perception which allows him to perceive beneath the sea's mirror surface enables him to discover this child in the distance. To approach the infant requires that poet also be drowned, an act of final withdrawal from the actual world.
into a poetic one that is keyed to us by the use of the verb "hinabkommen" instead of "kommen." Additionally, when he says, "Stürz ich hinab an dein Herz~~," the figurative meaning collapses into a literal one, a figural downfall that the abundant use of dashes to indicate the falling of the poetic lines into the sea's depths, a space that a stanza break further imitates.

Before falling into the sea, into the maid's arms and into death, the poet is again rudely disturbed by an intrusive actual world, as another sea captain again breaks into the poet's romantic revery:

Aber zur rechten Zeit noch
Ergriff mich beim Fuß der Capitän,
Und zog mich vom Schiffsrand,
Und rief, ärgerlich lachend:
Doktor, sind Sie des Teufels?

(Heine 1: 388)

Engaged in a narcissistic gaze into water, the poet nearly suffers the fate of drowning because of a too strong attachment to the image that he sees in a body of water. The parallels between the Narcissus myth are evident, and this poem makes the "vergessenes Kind" into a kind of gender-switching representation of the poet's own reflected beauty. The poet sees himself in an immaculate condition, and he associates it with a virgin child's life in an aestheticized
medieval city. The vision nearly draws the poet into it, and, as in Goethe's Faust, acquiescence to beauty brings death, in this case by drowning. But the poet is able to stay aloft because mundane life, in the form of the captain, grabs him by the foot and breaks the illusion. The captain's final mocking question ("Doktor, sind Sie des Teufels?"), which both questions the poet's sanity and echoes again Goethe's Faust, makes the price of paradise regained perfectly clear. To find an enduring beauty, one which both returns the past and satiates desire, the price is the final materialist reduction: death.

The subsequent poem in the cycle indicates a cleansing of the attractions of such a stillness, the stillness of youthful dreams that would find the satiation of all desire in death. The poet leaves these romantic illusions behind, as he has left his childhood loves, in order to continue his living movement, represented here as a sea voyage:

Bleib' du in deiner Meerestiefe,
Wahnsinniger Traum,
Der du einst so manche Nacht
Mein Herz mit falschem Glück gequält hast,
Und jetzt, als See-Gespenst,
Sogar am hellen Tag' mich bedrohest--
Bleib' du dort unten, in Ewigkeit,
Und ich werfe noch zu dir hinab
All meine Schmerzen und Sünden,
Und die Schellenkappe der Thorheit,
Die so lange mein Haupt umklingelt,
Und die kalte, gleißende Schlangenhaut
Der Heuchelei,
Die mir so lang' die Seele umwunden,
Die kranke Seele,
Die gottverleugnende, engelverleugnende,
Unselige Seele--
Hoiho! hoiho! Da kommt der Wind!
Die Segel auf! Sie flattern und schwellen!
Über die stillverderbliche Fläche
Eilet das Schiff,
Und es jauchzt die befreite Seele.
(Heine 1: 389)

The "Traum" has become "Torheit," as it was only an illusion of youth that arrested the movement of the poet on the sea and drew him into a motionless contemplation. The poetic dissimulation had made him into a fool rather than a hero, and had transformed his soul into a forsaken one. But this transformation is also a liberation. The soul forsaken by both god and its muse as the sailor is forsaken by the wind, awaits only a new gust to free it from its torments. The implication is that for the soul, as for the sailor, movement is liberation, and movement results from renewed inspiration, from new queens of the heart, and from a new pantheon of gods. Lack of change, lack of wind, breeds a lyrical
obsession, the madness of seamen adrift on a windless sea.

The windless sea is also the sign of a godless life. But in the final poem of Nordsee: Erster Zyklus, the image of Christ, like a vision beneath the calm sea, appears to provide the poet with a perhaps equally illusory guiding star. Returning to the joys of the world, a return to the land that Baudelaire will also celebrate in "Déjà," the poet's sea voyage is watched over by a Christian vision which transforms a sunset into a Christ figure (Heine 1: 391). In the landscape dominated by this vision, the cities are not the active places that the Baudelairean voyager anticipates. Instead, they resemble the medieval town that the poet had perceived beneath the waves in "Seegespenst." They are cities transformed into Christian communities that closely resemble Saint-Simonian utopias in which love and fellowship construct idealized (Saint-Simonian?) communities. Unlike Baudelaire's return from the sea of dreams to life of the city, Heine returns from life to the dreamy quietism of a Christian community, and this return, like the return to heavenly paradise that death announces, is marked by a cyclical end, in this case the end of the first cycle of North-Sea poems.

Heine's subsequent excursions to the North-Sea Islands and the two corresponding sequels to this first encounter continue to mark his foreignness from such deadly worlds as both a promise of redemption and a sign of weakness. He is both the poetic hero who returns the romantic past to the
present, and he is "zerrissen" both by his exclusion from love and from the underworld of his romantic vision. Although he vows at the end of "Sonnenuntergang" no longer to complain about his condition, there is a temptation to read into the admiration with which he portrays the pre-modern community of the North-Sea islands the recognition of the falseness in the notion of a fellowship of "reasonable men" that, according to Habermas, composed the idealized public sphere of the modern-living-world. But this romantic nostalgia for a healthy anti-modern Germanic culture disguises its restrictiveness, one which, in reality, did not accept a German Jew, even one who had paid the price for a ticket into European culture by converting to protestantism.


By the time of his publishing Die Romantische Schule (1833) and Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland (1834), Heine is fully denouncing all traces of what he identifies as the body-denying spiritualism spread throughout early Christian Europe, "wie eine ansteckende Krankheit" by the Catholic church (8: 16). In Heine's eyes, this sickly spiritualism was such a persistent pest that the sufferings it caused "das ganze Mittelalter hindurch dauerten . . ., manchmal Fieberwuth, manchmal Abspannung, und wir Modernen fühlen noch immer Krämpfe und Schwäche in dem Gliedern" (8: 16-17). This disease, which denigrated the body, was transmitted, according to Heine, from India to
Western Europe via Judaism, was proliferated in Europe by Catholicism and was still persistent in the nineteenth century, as exemplified the writings and doctrines of German Romanticism. It is a strain in European culture viewed by Heine to be anti-modern, anti-materialist, anti-French and politically archaic (8: 126-8). His identification with protestant Germany, its modern development in enlightenment philosophy and its political realizations in France is based on a belief that it opposes this ascetic tradition, a form of cultural puritanism that had, he believed, even infected the protestant world, especially as this unhealthy segment of the modern world was typified by the Hannoverians.

If the poet of Nordsee: Erster Zyklus already displays an awareness of his own unhealthy romanticism, the writer of Zweiter Zyklus demonstrates both a emerging resistance to the disease and a fear that he might be, despite himself, a carrier of it. Although frequently seduced by the North-Sea island communities, the poet's sickness (his Jewishness would identify him as a carrier of the spiritualist illness) excludes him from this community of apparently healthy Northern-German bodies. At the same time, he maintains the posture of a suffering figure who is bringing about the new modern Germany in the form of the world-moving-towards-progress and who must, consequently, destroy the traditions of historical German culture. He consequently both exposes the North-Sea community to the modern world and quarantines himself from this community and from its romantic cultural
traditions, an inconsistent political reaction to his modern condition that is immediately apparent in the second cycle.

This series of poems begins by a return not to the romantically violent North Sea but to a sea greeted by the poet with words out of the classical world of Greek mythology. As Baumann suggests, there is, however, a change in the use of classical allusion that distinguishes the second from the first cycle of poems (24 n7). The poet of the second cycle greets the sea with language rooted in the Homeric tradition of international European culture, but it is also language placed in the subordinate voices not heard in the Homeric poems. It is a poetic rendering of the drowning men that calls:

Thallatta! Thalatta!
Sey mir gegrüßt, du ewiges Meer!
Sey mir gegrüßt zehntausendmal.
Aus jauchzendem Herzen,
Wie einst dich begrüßten
Zehntausend Griechenherzen,
Unglückbekämpfende, heimathverlangende,
Weltberühmte Griechenherzen.

(Heine 1: 395)

The greeting reasserts the poetic assumption of a mythical voice that had been previously ridiculed by Poseidon. In fact, Heine implies in this greeting, a stronger mythological
interpretation of the North Sea, one which transforms it, its sounds and sights into a poetic Aegean. But the poet does not assume the heroic voice of Odysseus in this greeting; he rather speaks with the voice of ten thousand drowned foot soldiers, the forgotten participants in the Greek myths who are now dwelling under the sea. It is their deaths that inspire the poetic metamorphoses of the subsequent poetic sequence and convert the poetic trope of the city under the sea to one that represents the forgotten in history.

As well as the sea's associations with these unheralded dead, its connections to childhood make it into an image of the infantile simplicity and dreams, such that it represents not only the non-subjective characters of the Odyssey but also the non-speaking parts of the poet's own pre-formed subjectivity. His greeting to the sea recollects not just long lost cultural memories but also personal remembrances lost to the fully conscious adult poet:

Sey mir gegrüßt, du ewiges Meer!
Wie Sprache der Heimath rauscht mir dein Wasser,
Wie Träume der Kindheit seh' ich es flimmern
Auf deinem wogenden Wellengebiet,
Und alte Erinn'run g erzählt mir auf's neue
Von all dem lieben, herrlichen Spielzeug,
Von all blinkendem Weihnachtsgaben,
Von all den rothen Corallenbäumen,
Goldfischen, Perlen und bunten Muscheln,
Die du geheimnißvoll bewahrst,
Dort unten im klaren Kristallhaus.

(Heine 1: 397)

The rush of the sea water recalls the sounds of the childhood homeland, and the flickering light dispersed on its surface reflects the dreams, toys and gifts of the child's life there. The sea treasures are physical manifestations of infantile images guarded in memory, a transparent hoard house represented both on the ocean's surface and in its depths. Diving into the internal world of memory is portrayed in the external world as the activity of diving for the natural treasures beneath the waves. The retrieval of these relics from the subjective depths is an act of salvaging previously sunken life-fragments, while warding off the overvaluation of subjectivity which can result only in becoming dead to the material world.

The resulting analogy between survival at sea and the survival from the self is further detailed in "Der Schiffbrüchige," the third poem of the cycle, when the poet imagines himself as a castaway survivor of a ship wreck:

Vor mir woget die Wasserwüste,
Hinter mir liegt nur Kummer und Elend,
Und über mich hin ziehen die Wolken,
Die formlos grauen Töchter der Luft,
Die aus dem Meer', in Nebeleimern,
Das Wasser schöpfen,
Und es mühsam schleppen und schleppen,
Und es wieder verschütten in's Meer,
Ein trübes, langweil'ges Geschäft,
Und nutzlos, wie mein eigenes Leben.

(Heine 1: 401)

The remarkable thing about this metaphor is that it finds in nature an emblem for the poet's interior that is in itself cyclical. The greyness of the atmosphere reflects the gloominess of the poet's spirit, who sees his life in a series of Sisyphean repetitions. But the greyness also reminds the poet of the water cycle, the endless repetitions of evaporation and precipitation that he takes as a representation of his external life. The water cycle is imagined as a water wheel, and its cycling provides a kind of rhythmic percussion for the rest of the poem in which the repetitive sounds of waves and gulls are also heard. And this returns the poet to a memory of the love of a northern woman whose eye is like a black sun, as opposed to the white sun of the south. It is this image of the beloved that transforms the poet into a shipwrecked man, as if she were a siren who has drawn him out of the Mediterranean world (in which thousands drown) and onto the rocks of the Northern German sea-coast (where he is currently alive).

The tension between the natural setting and a subjective image or story is perhaps best exemplified in "Die Götter
Griechenlands." Here the poet consciously transforms cloud formations into Gods and imagines them in their ancient magnificence. In a sense, the poet transforms the natural world into a world of art. And then, like an classical hero, prepares to defend the artistic world, the world of the ancient gods, against the new gods, a reformation brought on by the subsequent movement of the clouds:

Doch heil'ges Erbarmen und schauriges Mitleid
Durchströmt mein Herz,
Wenn ich Euch jetzt dadroben schaue,
Verlassene Götter,
Todte, nachtwandelnde Schatten,
Nebelschwache, die der Wind verscheucht--
Und wenn ich bedenke, wie feig und windig
Die Götter sind, die Euch besiegten,
Die neuen, herrschenden, tristen Götter,
Die Schadenfrohen in Schafspelz der Demuth--
O da faßt mich ein düsterer Groll,
Und brechen möcht' ich die neuen Tempel,
Und kämpfen für Euch, Ihr alten Götter,
Für Euch un Eu'r gutes ambrosisches Recht,
Und vor Euren hohen Altären,
Den wiedergebauten, den opferdumpfenden,
Möcht ich selber knien und beten,
Und flehend die Arme erheben--

(Heine 1: 415-17)
The poetic retreat into the poetic world cannot completely deny this physical world. Despite the poet's efforts of transformation and his efforts to recycle the old stories of Greek mythology, his gods do not undergo a complete transformation. They continue to have the qualities of clouds, and like clouds, are unable to defend themselves against the dictates of the wind. These new gods, those to which the wind and dampness belong, are sad substitutes for the glories of old, the glories for which the poet pledges to battle and to which he offers his devotion. It is to these new and victorious material gods that the poet allies the people in general, and against these people he romantically takes the part of the old world. But he is unable to maintain even the image of this world, and this poetic incompetency undermines his heroic pledge.

This inability to maintain a heroic posture by reconstructing the natural world as spiritual myth is doubled in the subsequent poem, entitled "Fragen." In it, the poet poses a number of great questions directly to the natural world and asks the particular events of nature to respond to his great questions about the mysteries of life and the universe. The world of nature is, of course, indifferent to his inquiries:

Es murmeln die Wogen ihr ew'ges Gemurmel,
Es wehet der Wind, es fliehen die Wolken,
Es blinken die Sterne, gleichgültig und kalt,
Und ein Narr wartet auf Antwort.

(Heine 1: 419)

The contact between the poetic imagination and the natural world is broken. The poet is unable to read any of its signs or interpret any of its sounds and movements. The language of nature has become opaque, a lost language. It no longer reflects or repeats greater stories. It is indifferent to poetic creations. And its indifference and rupture from inspiration renders the spiritualizing poet into a fool.

At other times, as in the next poem, the poet hears and sees the sea's activity and is able to interpret it as a chant of love. But his poetic conceit is regularly undermined, as exemplified by "Im Hafen," in which the sounds of the sea are transformed into the foam of the beer glass. And the poetic notion of the symbol, the trope by which a microcosm of beer reflects the macrocosm of the sea, makes the beer of a harbour pub into a rather ridiculous representation of the poet's love:

O, wie schön! wie schön bist du, Geliebte!
Du bist wie eine Rose!
Nicht wie die Rose von Schiras,
Die hafisbesungene Nachtigallbraut;
Nicht wie die Rose von Saron,
Die heiligrothe, prophetengefeierte;--
Du bist wie die Ros' im Rathskeller zu Bremen.
Das ist die Rose der Rosen,
Je älter sie wird, je lieblicher blüht sie,
Und ihr himmlischer Duft, er hat mich beseligt,
Er hat mich begeistert, er hat mich berauscht,
Und hielt mich nicht fest, am Schopfe fest,
Der Rathskellermeister von Bremen,
Ich wäre gepurzelt!

(Heine 1: 423)

Transforming the head of a beer (in German, "die Blume") into a very special flower, "eine Rose," the poem plays on a pun that runs from the foam of the sea shore, through the foam of his beer and the analogy with a rose to the symbol of his love. The consumption of a glass of beer becomes, as a result, the consumption of both the sea and the rose, two symbols of the infinite and of longing which are poured into what the poet calls his "durstige Herz." The act of beer drinking takes on a mocking symbolic significance that undermines the pretense of the poetic project.

Poetry, and the drinking fest are, as a result, given a near religious fervor, indicated to us by the biblical allusions in the poem and by the resemblance between the poet's words and the Lord's Prayer. The poet goes so far as to find God in the society of his fellow drinkers in the pub. But the celebration of the society of common men in the tavern toddles on the edge of absurdity, as the entire
religious experience is founded on the rose, aroma and foam of a beer, a basis which undermines the poetic significance. The spiritualization of the world is equated with momentary intoxication, as it involves a loss of physical feeling and threatens a more permanent numbing of the body.

The poet leaves us not with a unified vision of an ideal poetic world but with a dizzying vision of a drunken embodied one:

Du braver Rathskellermeister von Bremen!
Siehst du, auf den Dächern der Häuser sitzen
Die Engel und sind betrunken und singen;
Die glühende Sonne dort oben
Ist nur eine rothe, betrunkenene Nase,
Die Nase des Weltgeist's;
Und um die rothe Weltgeist-Nase
Dreht sich die ganze, betrunkenene Welt.

(Heine 1: 425)

Instead of a single black-eye of a sorceress, the sun is metamorphosed into the red nose of a drunk, around which the world spins in a fit of dizziness. The poetic vision is made equivalent to a drunken image, as the cycles of poetry transform into a spinning intoxication. Not only is the romantic notion of poetry totally deflated, but the reality of the daily experience of the society of men celebrated in the local Ratskeller is ennobled. This leveling of the
poetic and common anticipates both Heine's political writings and his later return to the North Sea. Poetry is not eliminated from this world, but it is given a different role, one in which the body is not denied and its welfare not neglected.

3.13. Actual Poetry and the Presenting of the Past--

Nordsee: Dritte Abteilung

In the final Nordsee text, Heine also demonstrates an awareness that the coming of the "neue Zeit" extracts a price from the individual poet or community. He recognizes that the cultural singularity of the North-Sea islanders was under attack by one consequence of the new age, the growth of tourism. He predicts that this onslaught will break apart the small world of the islands, but also suggests that the material gains of an improved economy and lifestyle would compensate for this loss of local color. With this loss he also recognizes a subsequent loss of a certain kind of poetry, one which he identifies in Romantische Schule as romantic, feudalistic, and the kind that he as a young man admired. In its place, Heine will offer the fluid discourse of the modern German journalist, of the professional writer who is trying to live by his pen, of the cultural critic who is trying to respond to the fashions of literary taste.

Heine enacts this poetic loss in his second return to
the North-Sea Islands. This time he comes as a travel writer, who reports both on the local sights and people as well as on the types of reflexions inspired by the geographical setting. It is consequently a journalist's voice that begins Nordsee: Dritte Abteilung and that is seemingly going to report on the characteristics and charms of Nordeney. The reporter reflects, however, very little on the local customs but rather on the contrasts between the community of the islanders and the alienation of his reading public. The islanders, he states, are joined together not by the "innig mystische[n] Gefühl der Liebe, als vielmehr [von der] Gewohnheit, [vom] naturgemäße Ineinander-Minüberleben, [von der] gemeninschaftliche[n] Unmittelbarkeit" (6: 141). They share the same needs and wants, the same experiences and sensibilities and, therefore, the same easily communicated understandings among one another. Both Heine and his readers have contrastingly separate and insular ways of life:

21Feise indicates the fluid nature of Nordsee: dritte Abteilung by giving "a consecutive list of subjects treated or touched upon":
The islanders of Nordeney, power and decline of the Catholic Church, deteriorating influence of the summer guests on the morals of the islanders, Hannoverian nobility, Goethe, legends of the sea, the sea and the poet's soul, on hunting and the hunted, walks on the sea shore and the poet's soul, metempsychosis, questionableness of knowledge, Germanic prehistory and bathing beauties of Nordeney, the liberty-loving Frisians, liberalizing influence of English anti-Napoleonic campaigns on Hannoverian officers, empty pride of the Hannoverian nobility, mediatized German princes, Napoleon, Scott's forthcoming biography of the Emperor, Scott's romanticism, Ségur's Histoire de Napoléon as a national epic, lack of national unity in German political and cultural life. (91-2)
Denn wir leben im Grunde geistig einsam, durch eine besondere Erziehungsmethode oder zufällig gewählte, besondere Lektüre hat jeder von uns eine verschiedene Charakterrichtung empfangen, jeder von uns, geistig verlarvt, denkt, fühlt und strebt anders als die Andern, und des Mißverstandnisses wird so viel, und selbst in weiten Häusern wird das Zusammenleben so schwer, und wir sind überall beengt, überall fremd, und überall in der Fremde. (Heine 6: 141-2)

Heine plays here on the opposition between the sociable Insulanern and the insular society of the mainland, and he uses this opposition to introduce what Feise calls the "real theme" of Nordsee: Dritte Abteilung--the modern "state of 'Zerrissenheit'" (96). The islanders continue to live in a way that was similar to the medievel ways of life in Catholic Europe, although the Catholic Church had to use oppressive means to maintain this homogeneous community. Modern Europe has undergone reformation and maturation, so that Europeans no longer live in such child-like communities; nor can its writers continue to employ corresponding medieval forms of discourse. Instead, modern European societies are bound together by particular relationships rather than by a shared life-world complete with a widely held cosmology and unproblematic set of common meanings. Modern writers cannot, accordingly, resort to conventional forms of discourse to express general understandings but must provide readers with a list of observations that individual readers are charged to
assemble into general categories from a distance (the distance that converts ethnography into systematic anthropology).\textsuperscript{22}

The modern condition is one of disease, insofar as the communal body exists in a state of disintegration and the individual body no longer exists in a life-world of shared meanings. There is a corresponding shrinking in the size of events and the size of human action, as it no longer has cosmological ramifications. Men of such action belong, according to Heine, to a poetic past:

Es sind schon viele große Männer über diese Erde geschritten, hier und da sehen wir die leuchtenden Spuren ihrer Fußstapfen, und in heiligen Stunden treten sie, wie Nebelgebilde vor unsere Seele; aber ein ebenfalls großer Mann sieht seine Vorgänger weit deutlicher, aus einzelnen Funken ihrer irdischen Lichtspur erkennt er ihr geheimstes Thun, aus einem

\textsuperscript{22}Heine displays an interestingly underhanded influence of Schelling in this essay, despite the abuse that he will heap on Schelling in *Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland*. He thinks of Great Men, such as Goethe and Napoleon, as men who are capable of synthesizing life-worlds by force of their literary or political wills. He writes:

Ein solcher Geist ist es, worauf Kant hindeutet, wenn er sagt: daß wir uns einen Verstand denken können, der, weil er nicht wie der unserige diskursiv, sondern intuitiv ist, vom synthetisch Allgemeinen, der Anschauung eines Ganzen als eines solchen, zum Besonderen geht, das ist, von dem Ganzen zu den Theilen. Ja, was wir durch langsames analytisches Nachdenken und lange Schlußfolgen erkennen, das hatte jener Geist im selben Momente angeschaut und tief begriffen. Daher sein Talent die Zeit, die Gegenwart zu verstehen, ihren Geist zu kajoliren, ihn nie zu beleidigen, und immer zu benutzen. (Heine 6: 159)
einzigen hinterlassenen Worte erkennt er alle Falten ihres Herzens; und solchermaßen, in einer mystischen Gemeinschaft, leben die großen Männer aller Zeiten, über die Jahrtausende hinweg nicken sie einander zu, und sehen sich an bedeutungsvoll, und ihre Blicke begegnet sich auf den Gräbern untergegangener Geschlechter, die sich zwischen sie gedrängt hatten, und sie verstehen sich und haben sich lieb. Wir Kleinen aber, die wir nicht so intimen Umgang pflegen können mit den Großen der Vergangenheit, wovon wir nur selten die Spur und Nebelformen sehen, für uns ist es vom höchsten Werthe, wenn wir über einen solchen Großen so viel erfahren, daß es uns leicht wird, ihn ganz lebensklar in unsre Seele aufzunehmen, und dadurch unsre Seele zu erweitern.

(Heine 6: 159)

Here is Heine's version of history, in which humanity has regressed into a modern state of decadence. Human stature has, in general, diminished, so that modern powers of vision seldom allow one to see anything but the ghostly leavings and traces of past deeds, in the manner that Heine sees the cloud-gods in "D[en] Götter Grichenlands." There are, in Heine's eyes, two major exceptions to this modern unhealthy state of poor vision and diminished human activity. We are not so absorbed, "in unsren Kranken, zerrissenem, romantischen Gefühlen [he writes]... als daß wir unmittelbar sehen könnten, wie gesund, einheitlich und plastisch sich Goethe in seinen Werken zeigt" (Heine 6: 147-
8). We also feel our lives clarified and our souls broadened by Napoleon, a rare example of a modern great man of action. Such figures hold ironic positions in history, as they look clearly both backwards to the great heroic past that they return to the present in the form of their works, as Goethe does in fusing both the classical and the romantic worlds and as Napoleon does in trying to revive ancient Rome in modern Paris. They also reflect, for Heine, the ambivalence of the present, with its forward and backward looking character. He consequently writes:

Da aber dieser Geist der Zeit nicht bloß revoluzionär ist, sondern durch den Zusammenfluß beider Ansichten, der revoluzionären und der contrреволюционäre, gebildet worden, so handelte Napoleon nie ganz revoluzionär und nie ganz contrреволюционär, sondern immer in Sinne beider Ansichten, beider Prinzipien, beider Bestrebungen, die in ihm ihre Vereinigung fanden, und demnach handelte er beständig naturgemäß, einfach, groß, nie krampfhaft barsch, immer ruhig milde. Daher intriguirte er nie im Einzelnen, und seine Schläge geschahen immer durch seine Kunst, die Massen zu begreifen und zu lenken. Zur verwickelten, langsamen Intrigue neigen sich kleine, analytische Geister, hingegen synthetische, intuitive Geister wissen auf wunderbar geniale Weise die Mittel,
die ihnen die Gegenwart bietet, so zu verbinden, daß sie
dieselben zu ihrem Zwecke schnell benutzen können.

(Heine 6: 159-60)

Coming dangerously close to recommending capitulation to the
great men of history, Heine argues that there is a union of
the degenerative and the progressive, of the past and the
future in a Great Man's present. These figures represent
worlds that, in pulling towards the past and towards the
present, balance in a peaceful equilibrium of present
greatness. They do not meddle in individual cases but think
intuitively in syntheses and generalities that bind the
masses. Their power comes from the fact that they embody the
group consciousness, the past and present of its life-world
and are, consequently cultural gods--the physical
manifestation of social worlds that exist in unreflected
state of contradiction. The events that subsequently occur,
whether they bring liberation or genocide, are admirable
because they are great and because they magnify the
contradictions and fragmentation of the modern world.

The Germans, a nation that existed in a state of
cultural disintegration, were potentially capable of
producing great actors and actions, but since these
individuals could not embody the will of an entire nation,
their efforts were much more small scale than events were in
France. Germans were, for Heine, a diminutive and analytical
people, a nation built by the enumeration of different
elements and individuals rather than by the fusion of these
elements and individuals into some kind of totality. The absence of a national creator resulted in the modern condition of multiple and often competing regional cultures, in which the individual had divided loyalties and, consequently, engaged in less significant action. Heine contrasts this German state of disorder with the historically centered and tumultuous state of French society:

Wir [Deutschen] haben auch in der letzten Zeit viel gesehen, viel ertragen . . . and wir haben unser edelstes Blut hingegben . . . das noch jetzt jährlich eine anständige Summe, für abgeschossene deutsche Arme und Beine, ihren ehemaligen Eigenthümern zu bezahlen hat; x und wir haben im Kleinen so viel Großes gethan, daß wenn man es zusammenrechnete, die größten Thaten herauskämen . . . und wir haben viel verloren . . . und dennoch, mit allen Verlüssen, Opfern, Entbehrungen, Malheurs und Großthaten, hat unsere Literatur kein einziges solcher Denkmäler des Ruhmes gewonnen, wie sie bey unseren Nachbaren, gleich ewigen Trophäen, täglich emporsteigen.

(Heine 6: 164)

Heine seems to have forgotten his admiration for Goethe in this passage (or he has given German culture the same negative caricature attached to Jewish culture), as he reduces German letters to "Bagatell-Literatur." He has consigned Goethe, as he will Napoleon, to the heroic past and looks for reincarnations of Napoleon's and Goethe's in a post-1830 world. Insofar as he sees such a reincorporation
of both the empire and the monarchy to be occurring in France, he manifests his pro-French political fervor, making Paris into the site of living poetry. At the same time, he sees the unrealized poetry of Germany as a sign of its potential to reintegrate the poetic conceptions into its history.

Although the third Nordsee text, a prose piece published separately from the Buch der Lieder, abandons the poetic representation of the the North-Sea islanders, it does not suggest that poetry has been evacuated from the world. The text rejects the young Heine's preoccupation with romantic poetry because of its conventionalized artificiality but recovers poetry in individuals (or individual texts) that charismatically embody generalized cultural life-worlds. Given this acknowledgement of poetry's in-the-world existence, it is, consequently, noteworthy that, after the publication of this work, Heine returns less frequently to lyrical writing and becomes a political poet writing predominantly satiric verse and prose about the disenchanted, desacralized state of the modern world (Baumann 24 n7, Jokl 18-19). This transition manifests not just a rejection of the cult of pure poetry and its pedagogical anti-economy; it also displays an affirmation of a poetic discourse that wants to redress a world fallen into poetic pieces and to heal the zerrissen modern life-world of a disunited Germany.23

23 Feise argues that Heine responds to the "extreme subjectivism [of his age] in drawing pictures of this world..."
will now discuss Baudelaire's effort to produce poetry in the Parisian counterpart to this disintegrated nineteenth-century German culture, and then follow this discussion up by examining Whitman's attempt to produce an integrated poetic America.

and destroying them, taking himself seriously in doing it and laughing about his own seriousness, siding now with the inarticulate, now with genius, longing for his Archimedian point outside of the world or inside his own soul, enjoying his own freedom of change and lamenting it, feeling now raised to godlike stature in his phantasmagoric flight, now antlike and but an atom in the cosmic realm, but always conscious of the fleetingness of time in which he passes from one mood to another, which again he lifts into consciousness without being able to make any one moment his own permanently" (104).
3.2. Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris*: The Poetic Fragments for a Modern Life-World Under Construction

Baudelaire's later work, which constitutes most of the pieces collected as *Le Spleen de Paris* or the *Petits poèmes en prose*, can be summed up as an effort to reconcile two types of communicative actions: the refined discourse of poetry and the practical prose of everyday life. *Spleen* is a collection of seemingly banal prose pieces which the poet mines for nuggets of poetic value in a task that deliberately sets out to render the distinction between poetry and prose "dysfunctional" (Johnson 37). Produced against the background of a Parisian society which, during the second empire, was dominated by an indiscriminate economic power and by an indifferent, *arriviste* bourgeoisie, Baudelaire's prose poems attempt a parallel leveling of literary value. The resulting colorless and caricaturing fragments compose a discursive field in which intermittent expressions of Baudelairean lyrical desire foreground jarring moments of poetic insight. At the same time, the collection represents a literary acquiescence to the modernizing currents of French history, in which the poetic subject is, reluctantly, submerged. The result is that the work undertakes a parallel modernization of poetic discourse, by reacting against both a literary romanticism that had become conventional and a contemporary culture that was overemphasizing systematic values, such as those that promoted a purely instrumental use.
of language and its literary counterpart: realist discourse. In opposition to both features of the nineteenth-century French cultural field, the prose poems of Spleen affirm a life-world composing process by presenting fragments of individual self-reflection, social commentary and conventional imagery reassembled from the upheaval of a modernizing Paris and requiring his reader to integrate the diverse prose-poems at will.

This transfer of the overall compositional function from the poet to the reader both demonstrates Baudelaire's cynicism and radicalizes, as Eugene Holland suggests, the processes of commodification required by the capitalist market's need to present consumers with new cultural goods and to produce new desires for these goods (251-7). The Baudelairean prose-poet, a modern writer whose status is diminished in comparison with the patronized artist of the "ancien régime," disparages the present state his literary career and of French culture. In the prose-poems, he laments the fact that "le Temps règne" and that it leads ultimately to an empty (i.e unsung) death, "le seul vrai but de la détestable vie" (Baudelaire 1: 352). At the same time, the poet attempts to set himself outside of his sociohistorical context, by constructing a new Temps (both a new age and a different temporality), one that is neither connected to a program of social progress nor to a notion of personal success. Instead this "new age" will transform the communal store of representations by creating a new world
from the cluster of the various prose-poem fragments that constitute his poetic record, fragments that will gain a measure of poetic endurance (and continued market value) by being flexible enough to be in accord with various changes in literary fashion.

In the Salon de 1859, Baudelaire describes this "open" artistic practice in the form of a learned colleague's attack on realist attempts to represent nature impersonally:

"La nature n'est qu'un dictionnaire," répétait-il fréquemment. Pour bien comprendre l'étendue du sens impliqué dans cette phrase, il faut se figurer les usages nombreux et ordinaires du dictionnaire. On y cherche le sens des mots, la génération des mots, l'étymologie des mots; enfin on en extrait tous les éléments qui composent une phrase et un récit; mais personne n'a jamais considéré le dictionnaire comme une composition dans le sens poétique du mot. Les peintres qui obéissent à l'imagination cherchent dans leur dictionnaire les éléments qui s'accordent à leur conception; encore, en les ajustant avec un certain art, leur donnent-ils une physionomie toute nouvelle. Ceux qui n'ont pas d'imagination copient le dictionnaire. Il en résulte un très-grand vice, le vice de la banalité, qui est plus particulièrement propre à ceux d'entre les peintres que leur spécialité rapproche davantage de la nature extérieure, par exemple les paysagistes, qui généralement considèrent comme un triomphe de ne pas
In part this view expresses avant-gardist attitudes towards the dominant artistic practice which it desires to devour. However, it also expresses an aesthetic view which values the power of art to transform its assembled raw material and to construct an artistic life-world. Art, in this passage, is not spiritual, an adjective that Baudelaire elsewhere makes a synonym for "bête" (Baudelaire 2: 615). It is rather the procedure that conducts a kind of plastic surgery on the world, possessing and renovating the world's appearance in a way that resembles the practice of revising its reference book (but one should not get lost in the metaphor here). The individual artistic subject possesses the communal practices of representation and subjects them to his or her imagination which, as the many sadistic passages of the prose poems demonstrate, is the tormentor of these shared conventions. The possession breaks down the representation of modern French culture as a self-consistent and historically rational social system by confronting this view with images of the unforecastable throws of Parisian daily life.

As the products of this new confrontational poetics, the Spleen pieces are writing that construct continuously refigured life-worlds in a manner that seems as changeable as the weather. In recasting and revising takes on the multiple aspects, activities and anecdotes of daily Parisian life, their omnidirectional discourse represents a record both of
the modern world's antagonism to one who seeks an eternal present in poetry and of the sequence of ultimately meaningless encounters in which the poet's meaningful (i.e. infinite) present is ultimately contaminated.

As a result, the Baudelairean prose-poet is both in and out of time with his age. And if, as Leo Bersani suggests, his condition as poetic subject is reflected in the text, the structural indeterminacy of the rather purposively amorphous poetic collection, the ambiguous relationship of the lyrical subject with the multiform crowd, and the poet's indifferent fascination for Paris, his city, paradoxically engage and insulate the poetic subjectivity.1 Reflected as an indeterminately individual and collective project, the individual (Freudian ego) and collective (superego) pulls on the subject appear irreconcilable, or they are reconciled only as part of a collection that is more or less arbitrarily constructed by an outsider, such as the editor or reader of a volume of poetry, whose arbitrary and externally imposed order is unsettling.2

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1 Marshall Berman refers to a similar phenomenon as the pastoral and counter-pastoral elements in Baudelaire's work (137).

2 A reader like J.A. Hiddleston is consequently led to comment that, in comparison to Les Fleurs du mal, "the prose poems appear more disillusioned and pessimistic, since what remains after our reading of the fifty pieces is an impression of perpetual clash and moral anarchy. Fragmentation, discontinuity, external and internal chaos are the essential elements of this work, itself only a fragment, which is meant to depict the disharmony of modern man by its context and by its form" (3).
When read together, the prose poems are conflicting representations of a disorderly, modern urban world, a world which, like the snake that eats its own tail, was destroying and reconstructing itself during the period of Haussmann's civic renovation of Paris. They contradict each other, displaying a sympathy for the impoverished in one instance ("Les Yeux des pauvres") and an intolerance of them in another ("Assomons les pauvres"). They also express admiration for an individual who acts (pun intended) heroically in the face of his immanent execution ("Une Mort héroïque") or who insists on his own individuality in the face of the banality of modern existence ("Les Vocations"). At times the poet expresses a transcendent desire for the infinite as perceptible in the evening sky ("Le Cresspuscule du soir"); at other times this desire seems to be for nothing more than mere escapism ("Anywhere out of the world"). The poetic collection samples a broad range of communicative actions in the modern city of Paris, as it relates the complex net of discursive reactions in which the modern citizen-poet is entangled.

The disconcerting eclecticism of the collection is immediately announced in the letter to Arsène Houssaye, a topsy-turvy piece of writing that takes the place of an introduction to the Spleen.\(^3\) In this communication to an

\[^3\]The value of this declaration has received a great deal of speculation in the Baudelaire criticism. Suzanne Bernard [cont.]
editor whom Baudelaire did not greatly admire, the poet
demonstrates a degree of awareness about his function as a
writer of the work and his position in the process of
literary production. In the manner of an alienated
participant in this production, he acknowledges his lack of
control over the finished product:

Mon cher ami, je vous envoie un petit ouvrage dont on ne
pourrait pas dire sans injustice, qu'il n'a ni queue ni
tête, puisque tout au contraire, y est à la fois tête et
queue, alternativement et réciproquement. Considérez, je
vous prie, quelles admirables commodités cette
combinaison nous offre à tous, à vous, à moi et au
lecteur. Nous pouvons couper où nous voulons, moi ma
rêverie, vous le manuscrit, le lecteur sa lecture; car
je ne suspends pas la volonté rétive de celui-ci au fil
interminable d'une intrigue superflue. (Baudelaire 1: 275)

The projected work is conceived as if it were an irrational
piece of nonsense, composed without head nor tail (god nor
devil, rhyme nor reason). As Johnson notes, Baudelaire
describes this letter as a "véritable manifeste" for a new
form of writing (146). Barbara Johnson sees it only as the
initial prose-poem, one that exposes the modern problem of
reading poetry (23). Edward Kaplan, on the other hand,
exemplifies the view that holds that this letter was not
intended to be a dedication for the poetic volume, but that
it was only an ironic letter written to a poor editor. It
therefore should be ignored by "the more astute reader," the
one who, like Kaplan, can discern a linear and differentiated
structure in the prose-poem collection (10-11).
suggests with this figure that his work will deform the hierarchical element based on the head (Johnson 27). Like the unplanned sprawl of a densely populated city that has overgrown its medieval fortifications, the work overruns any possible thematic structure. According to Johnson, this deformation implies the undermining of the very statements made in this dédicace, and it turns the "manifeste" into a Quixotic windmill "qui finit par pulveriser toutes les définitions qu'on essaie d'en extraire" (28). However, the poems also reveal the pulverized fragments of Parisian society whose head, the king, has been beheaded and replaced by "encore un Bonaparte" (Baudelaire perhaps suggesting the society remains headless). The work's life-like disorder defies Louis-Napoleon's attempt to reorder Paris by subjecting it to a major reconstruction and to bind the city with a system of boulevards that disrupt working-class neighborhoods, and, in a sense, decapitates the ancien régimes of the capital. Baudelaire's poetic discourse

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4For a discussion of the sprawling and densely populated city of Paris before Haussmann's renovations, see the first chapter of David Pinkney (3-24).

5Stenzel notes that, after 1848, Baudelaire abandons the notion of progress in history, an idea that suggests that history itself is without a plan and therefore both headless and Godless (193). This condition is reflected in the headlessness of Parisian society and in the paradoxically deliberate unintentionality of Baudelaire's last poetic project.

6Berman describes the connection between the reconstruction of Baudelaire's urban setting and the [cont.]
exposes diverse parts of the poetic city, but a city that lacks the order imposed by the capital I of the poet-subject at its center and that, lacking this centering reference mark, is neither infernal nor celestial, neither Babylon nor Jerusalem, neither medieval nor modern.

Insofar as Spleen parallels the turmoil of this modernized urban setting, Baudelaire's poetic act is one that overgrows systematic themes and verse forms in a work that revolutionizes the symbolic order. The headless text turns the metaphor of the organic poem into an image of a mutilated dog corpse, an imaginary disfigurement of the creatures who prefer the smell of excrement to perfume in "Le chien et le flacon" and who seem to populate the world in "Les Bons Chiens." At the same time, the decapitated state of the work doubles another beheading, the imaginary decapitation of the individual psyche: "[Baudelaire's] best Parisian writing belongs to the precise historical moment when, under the authority of Napoleon III and the direction of Haussmann, the city was being systematically torn apart and rebuilt. Even as Baudelaire worked in Paris, the work of its modernization was going on alongside him and over his head and under his feet. He saw himself not only as a spectator, but as a participant and a protagonist in this ongoing work; his own Parisian work expresses its drama and trauma. Baudelaire shows us something that no other writer sees so well: how the modernization of the city at once inspires the modernization of its citizens' souls" (147). Pinkney also notes that Haussmann's rebuilding of Paris obliterates the medieval origins of that city. In this way, one can view Baudelaire's work as a parallel modernization of poetic discourse.

Lois Hyslop argues that Baudelaire's engagement in the 1848 revolution was not only sincere but that he never lost his political sentiments, despite the fact that the coup d'état of December 1851 may have "physically" depoliticized him (93).
mistress in "Le Galant Tireur" by a lover, who halts his "voiture" in order to shoot "quelques balles pour tuer le Temps" (Baudelaire 1: 349). The modern muse-mistress is apparently no longer loved in poetry but assaulted by it, or perceived as another form of externally imposed order and killed through it. This imaginary act of violence, which reinforces the separation of beauty and the worldly, seemingly implies that the project of poetry in prose continues to conceive of the poetically beautiful as something outside of prose but subjected to it in the modern world. The violence may however be seen to enforce the

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8Barbara Johnson has suggested that the graphic disfigurations of this cliché (cursive script, capitalization) shift attention onto its buried figures (84-87). The man wishes to occupy himself (s'enivrer in the sense suggested in "Enivrez-vous") by taking a few shots at a shooting gallery, a desire that implies that the company of his mistress is somewhat tiresome. However, the capitalized Temps is marked as a proper noun, a name for a living figure that the marksman then kills and, through this sacrificial assassination, kills both historical time and the age in which he lives (le Temps = l'époque). This figure of time is additionally a more specific substitute for the mistress, a substitution detectable in the pun on tuer le Temps and tu es le temps. To kill time is to kill the mistress, an act which the marksman metaphorically performs in imagining the death of his mistress when he shoots at a doll's head. In addition, it is the mistress who has inspired the shot. She serves as the muse figure of the act, such that to kill time is to kill "son inévitable et impitoyable Muse," who is perhaps an embodiment of the inevitable and merciless historical process that undermines the poet's idealism, corrupts the illusions of 1848, and informs the social context of the present age.

9Suzanne Guerlac interprets the Baudelairean prose-poem as a poetic practice that still makes an equation between prose and the worldly and poetry and transcendent beauty. Prose poetry either reduces the beautiful to an element in
separation in another manner. The female, as the embodiment and reminder of worldly desire, is destroyed as part of a male fantasy that tries to eliminate worldly desire by killing its object. In this case the worldly embodiment of beauty would parallel the worldly embodiment of poetry, and the liberation of beauty from the world by destroying the female body would thematize in a masculine fantasy the liberation of poetry by the disfigurement of its textual body.

In so liberating the poetic from rigorous lyricism by conceiving of it as an act of textual mutilation motivated by a will to formlessness, the Baudelairian poet paradoxically both counteracts and facilitates the co-opting and commodification of his revolutionary discourse. His textual deformations offer a conception of poetic structure which draws attention to its conditions of production, exposes in itself "le processus réel de sa constitution" and shows "comment une diversité réelle d'éléments compose l'oeuvre" (Macherey 62). This production is not rendered consistent, as it is in a work structured on an "intrigue superflue," but it exists as a series of commodifiable pieces of writing in a modern structure which, as Baudelaire himself suggests, negates the romantic notion of the organically whole work:

the world of its themes or aspires for an art without art, a poetry that is prose (97). In this way she still ascribes to the distinction between poetry (or literary discourse) and prose, a distinction that Baudelaire's prose poems efface (97).
Enlevez un vertèbre, et les deux morceaux de cette
tortueuse fantaisie se rejoindront sans peine. Hachez-la
en nombreux fragments, et vous verrez que chacun peut
exister à part. Dans l'espérance que quelques-uns de ces
tronçons seront assez vivants pour vous plaire et vous
amuser, j'ose vous dédier le serpent tout entier.

(Baudelaire 1: 275)

Disfiguring the romantic organism, this statement in effect
surprisingly reaffirms the rationalist notion of unity in
multiplicity, inherent in the idea of the nationalistic
republic. As the French nation exists in each of its
citizens, as Paris exists in every Parisian, as humanity
exists in each member of the human "fraternité," each
individual poem carries the totality of its context in the
sequence within itself, such that the individual reflects the
texture of the poetic mass. This form, rather than a
hierarchy, is described as a snake, the fundamental earth
symbol and symbol of inert time against which mythical
individuals construct their hierarchically structured
political order (as the Christian mythos builds its moral
order in opposition to the disorder of which the snake is a
symbol).

The projected snake-like structure of the prose-poem
sequence both provides the ground and the grave for any total
thematic or narrative ordering, such that the text appears to
have undergone a "dislocation" (Hiddleston 4) or a repression
of the "phase thétique," an expression that Julia Kristeva
uses to designate the separation of subject from object through the subject's ideological positioning in terms of the object \((\text{R} \text{év} \text{olution} \ 41)\). The projected undifferentiated organization undermines the structural integrity that would make the work a sign-expression of an individual subject.

The subject's refusal of intentionality, its refusal to become the ideological responsible identity behind the work, results in a double displacement of the poetic. As a collection of poems in prose, the structure reacts against the institutionalized rhetoric of a communal subject and its inherent centralist ideology that constructs rules which regulate even individual poetic discourse. As a series of prose pieces, the form also reacts against the individualistic romantic notion that places the poetic within the individual subject, as part of a male genius, the manifestation of which transforms language into poetry. The poorly delineated, fragmented subject of Baudelaire's poems dreams of his poetry as a kind of miraculous occurrence in the production process of prose:

Quel est celui de nous qui n'a pas, dans ses jours d'ambition, rêvé le miracle d'une prose poétique, musicale sans rythme et sans rime, assez souple et assez heurtée pour s'adapter aux mouvements lyriques de l'âme, aux ondulations de la rêverie, aux soubresauts de la conscience. \((\text{Baudelaire} \ 1: \ 275-276)\)

Such "soubresauts de la conscience" are both destructive and reconstructive of the language of a society in which the
market determines value. Instead of the collected extracts of language anthologized into a volume that can be offered as a commodity (or common ditties), the poetic occurs as an effect of language's adaptability to lyrical movements, dreams, and shocks of consciousness, unanticipated by the poet-flâneur as he ambles through the accidental possibilities of his fragmented prose. On such wanderings, Marshall Berman has Baudelaire find "primal scenes: experiences that arise from the concrete everyday life of Bonaparte's and Haussmann's Paris but carry a mythic resonance and depth that propel them beyond their place and time and transform them into archetypes of modern life" (148). These scenes occur almost as if they were found art, particular moments that happen to occur on account of the "innombrables rapports" possible in the urban setting.\(^{10}\) Benjamin goes so far as to suggest that an equation is made in the poems between the shocks involved in such encounters, and "der Berührung mit den großstädtischen Massen" (1: 618). He further states that Baudelaire's does not identify these masses with any class, but "[e]s handelt sich um nichts anderes als um die amorphe Menge, um Straßenpublikum" for which the flâneur tried to construct a soul and to articulate a culture of the crowd (a mass culture) that would oppose the

\(^{10}\) Berman feels that the urban reconstruction which resulted in Haussmann's boulevards facilitated these encounters (150-153).
dominance of the bourgeoisie.¹¹

Both these views find the poetic in moments which lay bare the ideological disarming that bourgeois individualism imposes on the disenfranchised and disempowered.¹² The poet's annoyance at his mistress' insensitivity to the sight of the impoverished family in "Les Yeux des pauvres" illustrates such a reading. The fact that this poem is addressed directly to vous, "le plus bel exemple d'imperméabilité féminine," gives the reader the fictional role of a silent mistress in this dialogue (Baudelaire 1: 317). But the conflation of heartless muse and unresponsive readership also turns the poem into a political one about the general insensitivity of the modern urban public and specifically the public who read the feuilletons in la Presse. Modernization, the dominant ideology of this public, is exposed as one which is unconsciously oppressive when, after a day that the poet and this vous have spent in union, they sit "devant un café neuf qui formait le coin d'un boulevard neuf, encore tout plein de gravois et montrant déjà glorieusement ses splendeurs inachevées" (Baudelaire 1: 318). The newness of the setting resembles an artificially constructed and

¹¹Oskar Sahlberg suggests that the crowd was a symbol of political opposition during the period of Louis-Napoleon's reign. Consequently, the shock of contact with the crowd is in part the shock of discovery that an opposition existed to the political and moral order of the bourgeoisie (163).

¹²In this way, Baudelaire's work is, according to Althusser's definition, ideological (Jameson, Marxism 253).
illuminated paradise, full of modern, *arriviste* splendours, all of which are, in effect, blinding:

Le gaz lui-même y déployait toute l'ardeur d'un début, et éclairait de toutes ses forces les murs aveuglants de blancheur, les nappes éblouissantes des miroirs, les ors des baguettes et des corniches, les pages aux joues rebondies trainées par les chiens en laisse, les dames riant au faucon perché sur leur poing, les nymphes et les déesses portant sur leur têtes les fruits, des pâtés et du gibier, les Hébées et les Ganymèdes présentant à bras tendu la petite amphore à bavaroises ou l'obélisque bicolore des glaces panachées; toute l'histoire et toute la mythologie mises au service de la goinfrerie" (Baudelaire 1: 318).

The novel brilliance attracts eyes from without as well as clients within, and it is the admiration in the looks of an impoverished family, who are enthralled by the spectacle of the café that appeals to the poet and makes him conscious of his own excesses. The café is the manifestation of the beautiful in these poor eyes, and the pathetic nature of this audience along with the pretentiousness of the affluent display disturbs the poet. He therefore reads his own thoughts in the mind of the vous who accompanies him, and this figure, whose green eyes "si beaux et si bizarrement doux" are "habités par le Caprice et inspirées par la Lune," responds:

"Ces gens-là me sont insupportables avec leurs yeux
ouverts comme des portes cochères! Ne pourriez-vous pas prier le maître du café de les éloigner d’ici?"
(Baudelaire 1: 319)
The eyes of the moon turn other eyes into open courtyard entrance ways, showing an incapacity to imagine a figure outside the urban experience and reminding us of an experience that marks the end of a theatrical evening. Seeing eyes in the street observing the café spectacle provides us with a reminder of the people who live outside the walled middle-class living quarters. Although the request certainly denies the theatre of the bourgeois spectacle to these people existing outside of the bourgeois space and who are not wealthy enough to enter into its theatricality, it also gives the power to restrict the beautiful to that which is seen from the outside by the deprived. The family of poor eyes observes and admires the artificial beauty of the poet and his muse, who are exposed to their gaze in an over-bright modern, artificial paradise. In reaction to being so positioned as an unattainable observed object, the poet has the addressee of the piece express a desire to exclude all traces of the unintended and undesired audience, whose apparition reminds us that such modern beauty is not equally visible to those inside nor accessible to all those outside. And this state of being blind or excluded is, in effect, repeated in Baudelaire's poetic practice, since the double boundary of the poem in prose both excludes the poor vision of the simply prosaic and
blinds the beautiful unless it is made distant by a poetic estrangement of the kind to which the prose-poem aspires.

This intolerance of the impoverished, banal and therefore prosaic is additionally exposed when the poet shares the discriminating public's ideological position, as he does in "Assomons les pauvres." This second example makes concrete the notions of equality and liberty that compose a part of the common-sense notion: "Celui-là seul est l'égal d'un autre qui le prouve, et celui-là seul est digne de la liberté, qui sait la conquérir" (Baudelaire 1: 355). The subsequent beating of a beggar, during which the beggar miraculously finds the strength to return the blows of his attacker, demonstrates the absurdity of such an ideological position and provides "un bon augure" of the inevitable consequences of the concretization of a disguised ideological principle that turns social relations into confrontations.

The poem also demonstrates an example of Baudelairean iconoclasm, which converts an act based on an ethical self-contradiction into a poetic trope and which, in a sense, undermines the destructive and ideologically critical elements in the poem through the foregrounding of the word-play involved in the ambiguity of the statement "vous êtes mon égal" (Baudelaire 1: 356). Similar to this poeticization of social reality, an unromantic poet can find "tout l'esprit de la France" concentrated not in a heroic individualism but in a fatuous bourgeois who jokingly extends a conventional polite greeting to a donkey (Baudelaire 1:
The joke, based upon the possible confusion of fellow gentlemen with jackasses, demonstrates how a generally insincere social discourse, in caricaturizing communication, is able to produce an essentially communicative (i.e. poetic) speech act. This occurrence assaults the generic isolationism of the poetic subject and reveals the proximity of the poet with the social figures that he portrays and despises, since acts of poetic appropriation are counterparts to the socially exploitative commodifications and fetishizations which they represent.

Nevertheless, the Spleen also does not abandon the lyrical subject's quest for instances of politically and morally indifferent beauty, as exemplified by the dream associations that the poet makes with his lover's hair in "Un Hémisphère dans une chevelure" (Baudelaire 1: 300-301). This poem, explicated in detail by Johnson among others, demonstrates how the Baudelairean poetic of world creation and multiplication has a particular historical reality (le cheveux de l'aimée) as one of its sources, one which the poem displaces by making an imaginary chain of associations with the beloved's hair, a hairy beloved who otherwise remains bodiless. The series of four alternative imaginings, each beginning by the word "Dans," demonstrates how poetry can cover its initial impulse (Baudelaire 1: 301). However, the poet's comical abuse of the "mauvais vitrier" because he dares to wander through a poor neighborhood, when he cannot provide "de verres de couleur? des verres roses, rouges,
bleus, des vitres magiques, des vitres de paradis?" suggests that even this desire for a beatific vision has an underlying political motivation (Baudelaire 1: 287). Baudelaire's attempts to find a new musicality in prose is the expression of an artist who feels capable of artistic production even in the worst linguistic neighborhoods, an aesthetic practice which both attributes a transformative power to special individual subjects and democratizes artistic content in a way that compliments the possibility of prosy poetry.¹³

This double-edged affirmation and denigration of the poetic subject further reiterates the structural decentering of the unity in the poetic text, a unity enforced by the rigorous intentionality of the poetic subject. Bakhtin describes the conventions of this linguistically homogenizing subject of poetic discourse who takes "responsibility for the language of the work as a whole" and who assumes "a full solidarity with each of the work's aspects, tones, nuances" (286). He also discusses the tension implicit in the inevitable resistance of the communal langue to the strict rule of the subject's parole:

As a result of this work [the subordination of language to the subject's intentionality]--stripping all aspects of language of the intentions and accents of other

¹³According to Arnold Hausser, this aesthetic practice motivates the entire naturalist movement in the middle of the nineteenth century (65).
people--a tension filled unity of language is achieved in the poetic work. The unity may be naive, and present only in those extremely rare epochs of poetry, when poetry had not yet exceed the limits of a closed, unitary, undifferentiated social circle whose language and ideology were not yet stratified. More often than not, we experience a profound and conscious tension through which the unitary poetic language of a work rises from the heteroglot and language-diverse chaos of the literary language contemporary to it. (Bakhtin 298)

Baudelaire's incursion into prose is precisely such a diversification of his poetic language. The Spleen is first of all marked by the inclusion of dialogue and various linguistic registers within individual poems. Examples of political, economic, aesthetic, and religious vocabulary can be found throughout, often undermined by a parallel presentation of the concrete reality to which they refer.\(^\text{14}\)

Secondly, the work is characterized by a number of oppositions that suggest an ideological heterogeneity within the poetic subject itself. This atomization undercuts the experiential and ideological (liberal) blandness of the

\(^{14}\)The beginning of "Le Thyrse" exemplifies this last point: "Qu'est-ce qu'un thyrse? Selon le sens moral et poétique, c'est un emblème sacerdotal dans la main des prêtres ou des prêtresses célébrant la divinité dont ils sont les interprètes et les serviteurs. Mais physiquement ce n'est qu'un bâton, un pur bâton, tuteur de vigne, sec, dur et droit" (1: 335).
subject through the juxtaposition of radically polarized life-world experiences.\textsuperscript{15}

The various manifestations of the poetic subject, its self-affirmation, its fragmentations as a result of encounters or stances taken in individual poems, and its disintegration into the non-entity of the amorphous crowd, provide perhaps the ultimate example of this heteronomy. In this sense, the two poems, "Les Foules" and "La Solitude," represent the opposite poles of this self-disfigurement. In "Les Foules," the poet, "à qui une fée a insoufflé dans son berceau le goût de travestissement et du masque, la haine du domicile et la passion du voyage," is given almost a magical power to be "lui-même et autrui" (Baudelaire 1: 291). This privilege allows him to individualize himself, to exclude himself from the world around him and to people this private domain in any desired manner. Paradoxically, it is also a privilege that allows him to fuse himself into the crowd and to lose his individuality in the reality of others. The poet-subject has access to everyone and to everywhere; "[p]our lui seul tout est vacant." His incursions into these vacant places gives them a form, in the way that the

\textsuperscript{15}Jameson makes a similar observation when he notes that "[a]ll of Baudelaire's work, on a thematic and ethical level, can be seen as the reduplication of...[the] paradoxical mingling of contraries in order to distinguish them: dandyism, sadomasochism, blasphemy: so many attempts, on the psychological plane, to flee the insipidity of pastel, of harmonic, of consonance or sentimental effusion, by soiling it with its opposite" (Marxism 317).
individual poem is informed by a particularity of expression rather than from its compliance to a prescribed standard of versification or social poetic norm. But, since the crowd is also that part of humanity which is subject to history (subjected by history), this identification makes him vulnerable to time and it is therefore both repressed and repudiated.

The poet's denial of historical time involves the arrest of a desire which has the conjunction of the crowd and woman as its object. However, the moments when the poetic-subject communes with the crowd are not instances of a spiritually transcendent experience. The expressions that the Baudelairean poet uses to describe this union are explicitly corporeal and sexual:

Le promeneur solitaire et pensif tire une singulièr ivresse de cette universale communion. Celui-là qui épouse facilement la foule connait des jouissances fiévreuses, dont seront éternellement privés l'égoïste, fermé comme un coffre, et paresseux, interné comme un mollusque. Il adopte comme siennes toutes les professions, toutes les joies et toutes les misères que la circonstance lui présente. (Baudelaire 1: 291)

Drunken on this universal communion, drunk in a way which the Baudelairean poet prescribes as necessary "[p]our n'être pas les esclaves martyrised du Temps" (Baudelaire 1: 337),
the solitary walker marries the crowd and acts as a
prostitute for it. As the lover of the mass, he experiences
the physical pleasures more intensely than he would in a love
affair between individuals. The communion is a form of
sacred prostitution (like a marriage), which suggests both
parallels and contrasts with worldly prostitution. It is a
love which implies the diffusion of the poetic subject into
an undifferentiated other, a formless erotic other, since
eroticism is, as Benjamin notes, a quality that the
Baudelairean poet ascribes to Paris and its crowd (Baudelaire
1: 547). However, like the historical setting of these
poems, the crowd always has a "secret presence," or it exists
as an "absent cause," an undifferentiated background history
for the shocks, fantastic anecdotes, extraordinary
experiences of the poetic foreplay. As poetry of spasmodic
excitement, its episodes erect poetic intrusions into the

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*Sahlberg sees this dual relationship which reflects the
essential hermaphroditism of the poet who is both the male-
husband and female-prostitute for the crowd (158). This view
demonstrates Sahlberg's own middle-class value system in his
notion of who marries whom and who engages in prostitution.
What is more likely occurring in the poem is a class
distinction around sexuality where the middle-class poet
marries his sexual partner whereas, when a crowd member, he
engages in an act of prostitution.

*Benjamin draws attention to the fact that unlike the
Paris of Victor Hugo, Baudelaire's Paris is always associated
with the thrill of overcrowded activity. Benjamin writes:
"Baudelaire schildert weder die Einwohnerschaft noch die
Stadt. Dieser Verzicht hat ihn in den Stand gesetzt, die
eine in der Gestalt der anderen heraufzurufen. Seine Menge
ist immer die der Großstadt; sein Paris immer ein
übervölkertes" (1: 621).
crowd, discourse whose movement into an unmentioned background is coupled by the print on the whiteness of the page. The crowd surrounds these experiences, encloses them within moments when the poet is able to give himself "à l'imprévu qui se monte, à l'inconnu qui passe." Such intermittent moments of verbal elucidation individuate and give form to fragments of the background crowd and are distinct from the places that remain unmentioned and that "ne valent pas la peine d'être visitées."

The Baudelairean prose-poet does not, however, lose himself in an act of universal intercourse. The snake-like prose-poem collection prefigures an unrealized end with a series of little deaths and regenerations. In contrast with the poet who is lost in the crowd, the poet of "La Solitude" defends his own separateness and isolation against the attacks of a "gazetier philanthrope" who feels that "la solitude est mauvaise pour l'homme." This journalist, homologue of the poet in "Les Foules" and of Baudelaire's own persona as a feuilleton writer, is in this poem given an antagonistic position. The poet who prefers the solitude, a much more banal figure, differentiates himself from the type of person for which solitude is dangerous:

Je sais que le Démon fréquente volontiers les lieux arides, et que l'Esprit de meurtre et de lubricité s'enflamme merveilleusement dans les solitudes. Mais il serait possible que cette solitude ne fût dangereuse que
pour l'âme oisive et divagante que le peuple de ses passions et de ses chimères. (Baudelaire 1: 313)

The poetic subject has this forbidden knowledge, a knowledge that can only be obtained by encountering the Devil in an unfertile place and by experiencing the criminal impulse come alive in a period of solitude. The poet, who, in other poems in the sequence, narrates his encounters with the devil and describes his own murderous impulses, draws attention to the dangers in the very acts of invention that were lauded in "Les Foules." In this poem, there is a danger in such activity, a subversive element that counters the speech-making or law-making activity of those individuals "dont le suprême plaisir consiste à parler du haut d'une chair ou d'une tribune." This activity also parallels the actions of those who can only accept "le supplice suprême" ("le Temps" in both its synchronic and diachronic senses?) "s'il leur était permis de faire du haut de l'échafaud une copieuse harangue." Withdrawing into silence, like the disintegration of the subject in the crowd, enacts a kind of rebellion against the egoistic polemicists. The withdrawal also results in the substitution of contemporary voices with the male literary voices of the past (La Bruyère, Pascal and Sterne) that enter the poet's solitude like the devil, as if the masculine literary tradition is morally devalued and subverted when exposed to a modern context.

As an opposition to the contemporary movement, urban traffic and bustle, the quietude expressed in literary aphorisms transforms the solitude of the individual into a
preserve for the idyllic, a fortified privacy and sanctuary against the urban sprawl:

"Presque tous nos malheurs nous viennent de n'avoir pas su rester dans notre chambre", dit un autre sage, Pascal, je crois, rappelant ainsi dans la cellule du recueillement tous ces affolés qui cherchent le bonheur dans le mouvement et dans une prostitution que je pourrais appeler fraternitaire, si je voulais parler la belle langue de mon siècle. (Baudelaire 1: 314)

The silence and the solitude in the idyllic setting of "notre chambre" replace the communion with the crowd in the street. Opposing the French revolutionary notion of "fraternité" with another fraternity, that of the medieval monk, the individual subject defends its privacy against the onslaught of urban life and admires an existence that builds a kind of barricade against the follies of modernity, one which is perhaps more resilient than those that stood against the Second Empire.

In a sense this solitude represents a refuge from two aspects of Baudelaire's present. In his room, the poet retreats from time, back to an era which accepted that both Pascal's wisdom and the literary discourse that conveyed it were enduring. He also retreats from the disorganized prose of the contemporary, socially-mixed, urban language practices, the "belle langue de [son] siècle," in order to secure a quieter and more stable semiotic environment for his own parole.

It is interesting to view this linguistic retreat against the background of Benjamin's discussion of the modern
lyric, in which he characterizes Les Fleurs du mal, a
collection of poems composed simultaneously with many of the
prose poems, as "das letzte lyrische Werk . . . das eine
europäischer Wirkung hat" (Baudelaire 1: 650) and as a work
which dealt with motifs that "die Möglichkeit lyrischer
Poesie problematisch machen" (Baudelaire 1: 651). It is a
view that continues to value a lyrical vision separate from
the banal, crowded and rather prosaic reality of bourgeois
urban life. As I am arguing for a devaluing of this
distinction, I question Benjamin's conclusion that Baudelaire
takes his place as the last in the line of the European
lyrical tradition.

At the same time as the Baudelairean poet makes plaints
against his submersion in an unpoetic modern world, he
manifests an attraction for the processes of urban life,
especially as it is embodied in figures who survive despite
an often cruel, disinterested, banal environment. He admires
"la vieille" and "les pauvres," characters who appear
repeatedly in the poem sequence and who possess a certain
heroism as they face the condition of their modern lives
(e.g. the men who carry on their backs "un énorme Chimère,
aussi lourde qu'un sac de farine ou de charbon" in "Chacun sa
Chimère" 1: 282). His enthusiasm for life also appears in
moments like the passage at the end of "Déjà," in which he

18See p. 51 above.
finds consolation for the excitement lost at the end of a stormy sea voyage in "les musiques de la vie" on land (Baudelaire 1: 338). It is as if the distant tumult and daily torments of this activity draws the poet out of himself in a way that is both ecstatic and mortifying, that both generates poetic visions and dissolves them in the banal reality of urban life.

There are two conclusions that we might draw from these two faces of the Baudelairean poetic subject as represented by his later work. First, Baudelaire's prose poetry constructs a new lyricism, one that is not marked as an isolated, congealed or removed form of discourse in which a male poetic subject reaffirms its special totalities. Instead, these prose pieces contain a lyricism not of a male subject-in-itself but of a male subject-in-the-world, who assembles a number of diverse life-world fragments into a flexible collection. Despite the difficulties implied in the existence of the lyrical subject in such an ill-defined context, its recurrence in the prose poems, its persistence against silence, its resilience against the amorphous social background and a directionless historical moment, demonstrate individualized moments of romantic optimism, shocks of hope, that exist despite what Jameson describes as the

19Bersani views the prose poems as literature that constructs miniature totalities arresting the movements of desire documented in Baudelaire's early love poetry.
"decentering" of consciousness in the modern world (Political Unconscious 283). The necessary history that overruns the revolution of 1848 and inverts it into the society of the second empire also undercuts the romantic ideology of the Baudelairean poet. Le Spleen de Paris shows the poet in a process of an ideological restructuring and a rediscovery of an agitated lyricism in this new social context. But this form of socially enveloped lyrical expression is never discursively secure nor able to subordinate discourse to intention. Instead the modern, male prosy-poetic subject appears immersed in a mixture of undifferentiated discourse, in which the control implicit in a prolonged lyricism and which would successively exclude any temporal trace, is undercut by the discursive variety represented by each individual entry in the collection.

The second conclusion to be extracted from the Baudelairean poet's ambiguous sociability/individualism has a much more conventional sociocritical bent. Implicit in Baudelaire's writing is a continuation of the discontent, already discernible in Heine's work, about the cosmopolitanism of the modern world into which the modern lyric poet is thrown. Although Heine's poetry shows that he had many reservations about modern culture, it also indicates that he nevertheless valued its material benefits and that he deflated the romantic overvaluation of the past. Baudelaire, writing some thirty years after Heine published his Buch, shows how the cosmopolitan notion of man is under a great
deal more revaluation in his time. His poems can, consequently, be read as inversions of Heine's work. Whereas Heine's poet represents the threat of modernization of the North-Sea Islanders lives, Baudelaire defends his private cultural sanctuary against the urbanizing forces in poems like "Solitude" and celebrates the mass forces of modern urban culture in poems like "Les Foules." The difference may be attributed not just to the historical events that separate Baudelaire from Heine but also to Baudelaire's class and national membership, as well as to the urban setting of his poetry. In contrast to the individualistic and modernizing foreign poet in the sea-coast setting of Heine's Nordsee, the Baudelairean poet is a bourgeois city dweller, just like many anonymous others that he meets on the Parisian streets. His distinctiveness as a poet must be defended in such a circumstance, and it is defended by taking refuge in literary traditions in order to affirm his modern lyricism. Solitude and insularity of silent reading are, consequently, the guardians of difference against the anonymous universality with which the crowd threatens the poet. In defence against this reduction to the lowest common denominator, the state of being a mere crowd member, the poet retreats into a community of letters, an asceticism that has both medieval and monastic overtones and which builds the kind of perfected, lyrical cosmology, the quiet balanced world also perceived in Heine's fishing hut, and one that is traditionally associated with the symbol of the circle.
I will now discuss Whitman's attempts to reinvent this circle by expanding the lyrical poetic subject to the point that it takes on both national and global dimensions. The poetic worlds that it construct are not the piecemeal products of insular episodes, as is the case with the Baudelairean poet. Whitman's makes his poem into an all-inclusive cultural program that affirms the value of American life-worlds and their democratic integration.
3.3. Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*: Poetry and the Founding of a "New World" Culture.

If Heine's poetry draws attention to the dissonance between the actual and the poetic, and Baudelaire's work brings about a reconciliation by finding pieces of the poetic in the disorganized or unrevised state of everyday life, then Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* is an attempt to endow everyday life and, especially, everyday American linguistic usage with poetic value. Whitman's poem includes discourse that does not comply with the traditions of European poetics but that is proclaimed nevertheless to be poetry in order to suggest that the liberal-democratic American state has a beauty equivalent to the most beautiful poem. *Leaves* demonstrates this national beauty by including a wide variety of utterances and observations in its epic project, but this inclusiveness also implies a critique of the project that the work undertakes. The ambitious extent of this collection threatens the identity and distinctiveness of the literary text itself. Like a state with poorly defined borders and institutions, a work that intends to articulate such an inclusive democratic poetic voice challenges the necessary formal distinctiveness that would recognizably make it a form of literary discourse. The result is that *Leaves* both builds and indirectly criticizes the very enterprise that it undertakes: the poetic affirmation of the liberal American culture.¹

¹Kerry Larson discusses how Whitman's use of the metaphor of "grass" symptomatic of the problems in Whitman's project.
Within the work, this project is announced in "Starting from Paumanok," a piece that was originally titled "Proto-Leaf" and that serves as a general introduction to the entire *Leaves*. In it, the poet takes his birthplace as his point of poetic departure and provides a list of the scarcely formed, raw materials from which the poem and nation are to be composed. He associates his personal vision with the growth of America, and this conjunction of individual, natural progress and nation building enables him to "strike up for a New World":

Victory, union, faith, identity, time,
The indissoluble compacts, riches, mystery,
Eternal progress, the kosmos, and the modern reports.

This then is life,
Here is what has come to the surface after so many throes and convulsions.

According to Larson, the poet's response to the child's question, "What is the grass?" in "Song of Myself" begins to articulate the opening suggested by the many associations linked to this "uniform hieroglyphic" (118). However, Larson also argues that this hieroglyphic becomes burdensome by the time of the writing of "Calamus." For Larson, "Scented Herbage" expresses how the original metaphor has come to stifle Whitman's poetry (79). The image's implicit cycle of repetition and death becomes a trap for a poet looking for a more rapid growth of a new order and for a development in his own poetry. The identification of poetry with grass begins to remind the poet of the limitations of all earthly things, including the nation which he imagines.
How curious! how real!
Underfoot the divine soil, overhead the sun.

See revolving the globe,
The ancestor-continents away group'd together,
The present and future continents north and south, with the isthmus between.

See, vast trackless spaces,
As in a dream they change, they swiftly fill,
Countless masses debouch upon them,
They are now cover'd with the foremost people, arts, institution known.

See projected through time,
For me an audience interminable.

With firm and regular step they wend, they never stop,
Successions of men, Americanos, a hundred millions,
One generation playing its part and passing on,
Another generation playing its part and passing on in its turn,
With faces turn'd sideways or backward towards me to listen,
With eyes retrospective towards me.

(Whitman, Leaves 16-17)

This poetic declaration demonstrates the union of poet, nation and "kosmos" imported into the American continents as
part of the liberal ideology which justified a settler culture. The initial poetic enumeration displaces the "New World," the empty, pristine world that Whitman imagines the pre-Columbian Americas to be and that he introduces at the end of the preceding stanza. These displacements are listed as if they were both the products of human actions and the natural generations of the American continents themselves. Whitman's America is the product of "victory," "union," "faith," and "identity," human achievements of which the poem constructs a shorthand "New World" history. However, this past of European conquest is also seen to be in harmony with the natural processes of "progress" and the "kosmos." Like the birth of a child, America is the result of convulsions and throes, events which illicit expressions of amazement ("How curious! how real!/ Underfoot the divine soil, overhead the sun"). America is "[h]ere," always present in this place that surfaces, and it is therefore living in Whitman's poetry, insofar as the poem celebrates this new life and opposes the implicitly distant and dead, artificial worlds of Europe and the pre-Columbian "ancestor-continents." The reader is directed to observe the historical movements that have led to the surfacing of the present, spread-out continents ("north and south, with the isthmus in between"), the waves and floods of a settler population, and the future thriving of this new people (an interminable audience for the poet and poem). Or, if a reader reads the three stanzas that begin with "see" as three syntactic particles which, taken together, constitute a
fragmented sentence, sun and soil become the nurturing witnesses of the world's transformations wrought by human activity—the continuous progression of one resettling generation after another. All look back at the fathering "I" of the poem, which acts like the isthmus between the expanding American continents and which links the two temporal halves of what Whitman will refer to as the expanding American nation, the time and space represented by the writer and his "audience interminable."

Now it has often been mentioned that Whitman, in composing his work, saw himself to be undertaking an act of nation building. But it should be further understood that Whitman's poetry validates American settlement and expansionism by suggesting that they are both the poetic

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2Many commentators have suggested that Whitman's Leaves associates the notions of self, poetry, democracy and America (Lynen 286, Levine 376, Duncan 167, Thomas). John Blair suggests that Whitman conceived of poetry as "simulacrum of the nation" (55). And Betsy Erkkila argues that "Whitman mythologized the 'entire faith and acceptance' of the American republic in a poetic persona who is at once a model of democratic character and a figure of democratic union" (93). Whitman himself describes Americans in his 1855 preface as a people who "of all nations at any time upon the earth have probably the fullest poetic nature" (Leaves 709). Additionally, in Democratic Vistas, he writes: "I shall use the words of America and democracy as convertible terms" (Whitman, Prose 2: 363). In making this statement, Whitman shows us that, even relatively late in his life, the national myth of America as the standard bearer of freedom was still in operation. The myth of course disguises an expansionist ideology that contemporary America continues, at least on the economic front. But Whitman was probably entirely convinced of the possibility of liberation through Americanization, and we, as later readers of the text, are left with the task of weighing the poetic dream against the actual history of the enterprises allowed by the ideology of which Whitman's poem is prophetic.
outcomes of natural processes and the progressive consequences of willful human activity. His poetic act attempts to testify to the cultural naturalization of an immigrant settler population, who would live under a political practice in which their natural rights would be recognized. In Democratic Vistas, he argues that American autonomy can only be confirmed by developing a poetry which corresponds to this harmonization of human community and natural setting, and which reflects the resulting institutional freedom:

I say that democracy can never prove itself beyond cavil, until it founds and luxuriantly grows its own forms of art, poems, schools, theology, displacing all that exists, or that has been produced anywhere in the past, under opposite influences. It is curious to me that while so many voices, pens, minds, in the press, lecture-rooms, in our Congress, &c., are discussing intellectual topics, pecuniary dangers, legislative problems, the suffrage, tariff and labor questions, and the various business and benevolent needs of America, with propositions, remedies, often worth deep attention, there is one need, a hiatus the profundest, that no eye seems to perceive, no voice to state. Our fundamental want today in the United States, with closest, amplest reference

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3In this way, Leaves participates in the social integration which, as Donald Pease states, "enabled the nineteenth-century American to create a second scene, a veritable world elsewhere where he could rewrite and reread national policies of commercialism and expansionism in quite ideal terms" (46).
to present conditions, and to the future, is of a class, and the clear idea of a class, of native authors, literatures, far different, far higher in grade, than any yet known, sacerdotal, modern, fit to cope with our occasions, lands, permeating the whole mass of American mentality, taste, belief, breathing into it a new breath of life, giving it decision, affecting politics far more than the popular superficial suffrage, with results inside and underneath the elections of Presidents of Congresses--radiating, begetting appropriate teachers, schools, manners, and, as its grandest result, accomplishing (what neither the schools nor the churches and their clergy have hitherto accomplish'd, and without which this nation will no more stand, permanently, soundly, than a house will stand without a substratum), a religious and moral character beneath the political and productive and intellectual bases for the States.

(Whitman, Prose 2: 365)

The excerpt expresses an essentially Darwinist cultural view that connects authentic cultural expression to geography. Whitman dismisses the appropriateness of foreign cultural values and even universal suffrage in order to promote the development of an appropriate modern (i.e. American) form of expression, a project begun by Miriam Webster's revision of the dictionary. According to Whitman, true American culture is neglected in political discussions and in established cultural institutions, despite the fact that the new American
discursive practices are the products of ethically superior individuals. Inferior foreign models remain dominant in the organized parts of American society, and superficial issues dominate political discussions. The qualitatively superior American cultural production occurs in disorganized spaces, and it is here that Whitman finds the ethical foundation for a new literary "class." Just as native grasses grow despite efforts to supplant them with non-native crops, it is in the non-institutionalized locales that immigrant individuals and elements undergo a conversion to the realities of a new geographical and socio-political landscape. And it is there that American democracy is in the process of developing its own native cultural program.4

To uncover this "true American" culture, Whitman must deny historical ties to European traditions and, paradoxically, make America culturally autonomous by unmaking the historical developments that have resulted in the establishment of its settler culture. The "true American" is conceived as a return to a natural order, a realignment of human activity with the natural world. In effect, this view conceives nature as creation, an ongoing poetic activity,

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4Whitman's poetry remained full of foreign influences, since all his views were those imported by a settler culture. The fact that this importation is forgotten is the interesting point. Bloom suggests that this occurs because "Whitman's ego, in his most sublime transformations, wholly absorbs and thus pragmatically forgets the fathering force" (265). Kenneth Price views Whitman more simply as paradoxically both an innovator and a "perpetuator of other works through his own" (67).
which nations and poems may reflect insofar as they align the national or poetic subject with a divine creator, and make poetry and politics harmonize with the divine creation that Emerson calls the "poetry already written before time was" (8). This already written poem is present to all those who live from day to day, but a special poetic "class" have the hermeneutic skill to interpret it in writing. Like a new priesthood, Whitman's "class of poets" would replace the enforced values of pre-existing aboriginal cultures or of lengthy European traditions with newly recognized "democratic" ones: those validated by a continuously renovating American nation in which all citizens are, unwittingly, potential poets. The new Whitmanian and nationalist priesthood includes potentially all of America's citizens, and its mission is directed towards the conversion of the unconverted and the transformation of the world into the poem that is America.

Such a poetic practice implies a new relationship between

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5In "The Poet," Emerson writes that the true poet reveals the previously unknown parts of the "poetry already written before time was," and he produces faithful if imperfect transcripts that "become the songs of nations" (Emerson 8).

6Mary Austin criticizes Whitman precisely because he does not live up to his billing of the poet whose writing would contain all and innovatively transform it into a national culture (Austin 17). She writes: "Whitman was by no means so deep in the wilderness as he supposed himself to be. He was seldom far from the rutted pioneer track, a place of chucks and wallows, dust choked in his time with the passing armies. Out of this dust, sweaty and raucous, we hear him chanting, principally of what he sees, so that his rhythms, more often than not, are mere unpatterned street noise" (17).
cultural producer and consumer, as well as a more egalitarian notion of culture to match Whitman's idealized vision of an expanding single-(i.e. middle-)class, American democracy. Whitman saw his work as great poetry, the kind of poetic discourse which, he says in the preface to the 1855 edition of Leaves, is only the beginning of the poetic act, a starting point for anonymous, expanding and never-ending readings:

A great poem is for ages and ages in common and for all degrees and complexions and all departments and sects and for a woman as much as a man and a man as much as a woman. A great poem is no finish to a man or woman but rather a beginning. Has any one fancied he could sit at last under some due authority and rest satisfied with explanations and realize and be content and full? To no such terminus does the greatest poet bring . . . he brings neither cessation or sheltered fatness and ease. The touch of him tells in action. Whom he takes with firm sure grasp into live regions previously unattained . . . thenceforward is no rest . . . they see the space and ineffable sheen that turn the old spots and lights into dead vacuums. (Whitman, Leaves 727)

Great poetry is the model for liberated production; it induces reading that has no end, no point where a final authoritative account can be given and a final poetic value credited. Instead, it initiates ceaseless and noisy activity, activity which mines "live regions previously unattained" without ever formulating the finish of a man, what one can imagine to be
the end of his working career and the ease of the life in retirement. Whitman values the activity and the enterprise that unearth new poetic wealth over the "old spots and lights" of a heritage that deadens life because it does not leave any place for living creativity, the ongoing activity of poetic production.

The resulting open notion of culture and its productive poetry resemble Habermas's notions of life-world and communicative action. They are, consequently, opposed to a more systematic conception of "high" culture, such as the one Matthew Arnold holds. For Arnold, culture involves "the study and pursuit of perfection" of which "beauty and intelligence or, in other words, sweetness and light, are the main characters" (72). According to Allan Trachtenberg, such notions take culture to mean "cultivation" (175), or what Whitman describes as "a theory of character grown of feudal aristocracies, or form'd by merely literary standards, or from any ultramarine full-dress formulas for culture, polish, caste, etc." (Prose 2: 402). In contrast with this view, Whitman calls for a "radical change of category":

I should demand a programme of culture, drawn out, not for a single class alone, or for the parlors or lecture-rooms, but with an eye to practical life, the west, the working-men, the facts of farms and jack-planes and engineers, and of the broad range of the women also of the middle and working strata, and with reference to the perfect equality of women, and of a grand and powerful
motherhood. I should demand of this programme or theory a scope generous enough to include the widest human area. It must have for its spinal meaning the formation of a typical personality of character, eligible to the uses of the high average of men—and not restricted by conditions ineligible to the masses. The best culture will always be that of the manly and courageous instincts, and loving perceptions, and of self-respect—aiming to form, over this continent, an idiocracy of universalism, which, true child of America, will bring joy to its mother, returning to her in her own spirit, recruiting myriads of offspring, able, natural, perceptive, tolerant, devout believers in her, America, and with some definite instinct why and for what she has arisen, most vast, most formidable of historic births, and is, now and here, with wonderful step, journeying through Time. (Whitman, Prose 2: 396)

Unlike Arnold's narrow notion of culture, the term is given here a broad sense. It is the wide field of activity that envelops "the uses of a high average of men," including the "masses." It is that which aims to produce an "idiocracy of universalism," an expression which I take to mean that cultural precepts should be based on a compact of individuals, who, in Whitman's view, have the qualities of "manly and courageous instinct," "loving perceptions," and "self-respect." Culture is constituted by the statistical average of ideas or by the rule by majority within the franchise
limited to these individuals, the nation's men and women who accept their specialized and gendered roles, and who voluntarily partake in the American "idiocrasy." Whitman, as the poetic representative for this voluntary compact of individuals, manages the enterprise so that it produces a chorus and not a cacaphony. His poetic project aims, consequently, to harmonize the national diversity, "the variety and vastness of its territories, its material, its inventive activity, and the splendid practicality of its people" (Whitman, Prose 2: 413). He must furthermore incant a culture worthy of the America's ambitious geographical spread, a truly American heritage that, in order to produce a cultural subject composed of "omnes," must be liberally inclusive and permissive rather than conservatively selective and restrictive.

Because this discursive project is undertaken in service of such a geographically diverse muse, masculine virility and potency are made two of the criteria for entry into Whitman's poetic class, as he constructs parallels between poetic production and human reproduction. American culture is the offspring of a female America, a cultural mother whom "manly" settlers supposedly inseminate. Women, who have only restricted access to this "manly and courageous" cultural program, are seen ideally as maternal restatements of America herself, a "race of perfect mothers" (Prose 2: 372). They are identified with the land, on which, like Whitman's poetic leaves, the culture-making poet propagates national culture.
Similar to the settlers who make the land or its surrogates bear a new cultural offspring, the male poet produces poetry by mating with this natural mothering force, an act in which he must, in Mary Austin's terms, demonstrate his adequacy. His procreative powers are exhibited by the enormity of his poetic productivity, an exhibition by which he charges his readers to rival his potency in the creativity of the reading act. We become Americans insofar as we reproduce the poet's generative power in the "now and here," and, in reinvigorating the act of poetic conception, gain entry into the male community that Whitman calls the American poetic "class."

This Americanization and masculinization of the human race becomes Leaves' ultimate cultural objective, one which Whitman fuses with notions about the democratization and liberation of the world. He constructs, in this way, a myth of a "New World Order," for which the poem, like a father-substitute for the nation-founding-poet, disseminates the new democratic seed. This latter point is evident throughout the

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7Austin, who states that "[p]oetry is a man's game," offers, from an opposite perspective, a view that corresponds to Whitman's poetics. She typifies Whitman as the "American type" who was "sensitive to the bigness of things, which he mistook for universality, moved about a great deal, speculated freely, and was unclear in his conclusions" (17). She adds: "His whole personality swaggered with what more or less dominated the movement of the American procession, the consciousness of being entirely [sexually] adequate to the environment. America was a woman, and the poet, though slightly befuddled by her effect upon him, had proved his manhood upon her" (17). The connection between sex and continental possessiveness, the expanding nation-culture-poem and the expanding phallus, implied in this statement is obvious.
poem, but clearly demonstrated in two places. First, in "Children of Adam," the Whitman poet writes of his poetry almost as if he were boasting of his own sexual potency and of the fertility of a patriarchal current sourced in Adam:

Ages and ages returning at intervals,
Undestroy'd, wandering immortal,
Lusty, phallic, with the potent original loins, perfectly sweet,
I, chanter of Adamic songs,
Through the new garden the West, the great cities calling, Deliriate, thus prelude what is generated, offering these, offering myself,
Bathing myself, bathing my songs in Sex,
Offspring of my loins.

(Whitman, Leaves 107)

Second, in "So Long!" the Whitman poet writes of his text as if it were his body, when he tells his reader: "Camarado, this is no book,/ Who touches this touches a man" (Leaves 505). The text, both "offspring" and "man," constructs a link between what is and what will be. It is the poem that, in continuing itself as a discursive form, becomes the model for the continuous generation of its community of readers, who transform themselves into poets, the subsequent regenerators of the poem. The circle places Whitman at the center of its rotation, as the continuance of Leaves is equated with the
continuation of the discursive activity of America, a
discursive continuum which Whitman transcribes into a poetic
text.

In fact, Leaves and the accumulated utterances of all
Americans are parallel texts, since Whitman would transform
all discourse uttered within the temporal and spatial limits
of his expanding American state, the enclosed ground against
which "you and me and all" stand out, into poetry. So long as
this America continues to grow, it provides a broadening
horizon for Whitman's poetic productivity, the work that
establishes the cultural discourse formation within this
expanding frame.8 There is a clear similarity between this
national text and phenomenological notions of poetic
composition, such as Jan Mukař ovský 's concept of "semantic
accumulation."9 Poetic meaning accumulates in the American
poetic text, just as cultural texts accumulate in national
museums. One need only conceive of the relationship of single
poem to poetic collection as that of a cultural artifact to a
cultural whole in order to make the analogy blatantly obvious.
However, the poetry of Whitman's living American culture is
unlike a composed and completed poetic collection which

8Taken to the extreme, this cultural enterprise would
articulate an infinite series of cultural encyclopediae, each
of which would provide what Umberto Eco calls "the background
encyclopedic knowledge" for their corresponding cultures (68).

9Wendy and Peter Steiner apply Mukař ovský 's notion of
"semantic accumulation" to poetic texts and construct a scheme
where reading transforms elements presented in time and holds
them in a simultaneity in which all elements are present for
interpretation (Steiner and Steiner 82).
provides us with an overall hermeneutic gestalt through which to view any poetic piece. It is also unlike a dead culture whose cultural production, having terminated, can be summed up in some general poetic compilation. *Leaves*, a poem in the process of being written and a piece of living culture, transforms the reading act into a sequence of poetic re-writings. All readers are engaged in the poetic act, as their interpretation is equated with creation, and they all have the potential to gain entry into the democratic "class" of poets by contributing to the continuing poem.

As the resulting poetic mode of production is clearly journalistic, it is not surprising that it reflects the discursive practices which, according to Benedict Anderson, characterize the newspaper (30-37). Anderson argues that the juxtaposed presentation of various texts about daily life on a broadsheet reinforces the interpretive practices of seeing similarity in diversity. This mode of presentation gives readers the sense that the various texts should enact a bond and that readers should consume these texts as parts of a cultural whole. Additionally, the awareness that a reader is one of many anonymous consumers of the text promotes the imaginary construction of fellowship among widely different and anonymous individuals (37). For Anderson, the practice establishes a community of individuals who share in the consumption of a number of simultaneously presented stories on any given day. Each daily-constructed reading community is broken or displaced by the next day's reading, which either
updates or forgets yesterday's news. A parallel exists between the limits of a state national culture and the contiguity of these communities, which in the modern mediated world would be complemented by the audiences of other mass media. Similarly, a poem composed of a number of separately written parts which constantly erase, revise and re-read both the landscape and the cultural heritage is one that attempts to replace all the earlier texts, cultural pasts and relations to the land with the ever present one represented by the writing before our eyes. But it also obliges us, if we want to be poetic rather than just journalistic Americans, to read this present writing as a part of a greater poetic production, one native to the modern American culture, one of which we are also the writers, and one which will only be fully formulated in some utopic future, when the final word on America can be given.

Since Whitman can only write a limited segment of this yet-to-be-fully-formulated journalistic American poem, he invokes collaborators to continue his poem-nation, the "you" who is Libertad, America, but also the reader. It is the person addressed as "you" who, as the receiver of the poetic utterance, is charged with the role of the nation-moving-towards-freedom and who embodies Whitman's image of the developing American culture. But this "you" is not just a passive spectator to Whitman's poetic production; the "you" is also the autonomous individual who can continue the poetic activity, substitute new poems for the failures of the past
and regenerate the "New World." Whitman, himself, provides an example of this undertaking, when, after the Civil war, he still incites "Libertad" to turn from "the glories of the past" to "the world, the triumphs reserv'd and to come," as well as to "where the future greater than all the past/ Is swiftly, surely preparing for you" ("Drum Taps," Leaves 327). However, in other parts of the poem, he also recognizes that his death will make it impossible to continue this role and that the poetic act of continuing both his America and his poem must be handed down to some other.

American culture is consequently envisioned as the activity involved in the continuation and transmission of Whitman's poetic project. Poetry is, for Whitman, not just a discursive genre but the "non-subordinated SOUL" of the land of the unsubordinated soul (Prose 2: 413). It is, for him, the very essence of individual freedom, one which renovates and rewrites all past projects and greater wholes as part of an open future. For a particular poetic text to maintain itself in this liberated state, each individual part must affirm its autonomy from compositional or hermeneutic schemes, just like the living nation must constantly generate the next day's news or overflow its national boundaries and settle new frontiers. As if to exemplify this point, the range of

10Blasing suggests that each individual poem recapitulates the larger collection "much as ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" (43). She does not extend this analogy, in the way that I do here, to suggest that the poem aims to recapitulate other elements outside the text itself, especially the nation and a general notion of history.
speech acts within Whitman's poetic collection tends to defy their reading as parts of some encompassing poetic form. Individual pieces are paraded before the reader in a process like the "dance of substitutions" that Harold Bloom describes in Poetry and Repression (26). One poetic entry dissolves the meaning precipitated on other parts of the work in order to allow new formulations, to project the construction of stable meaning into the future, and to give the responsibility for this meaning to its potential readers.

This constant activity of reading and revision, reminiscent of Anderson's notion of newspaper reading as a culture affirming daily practice, represents, in small, a repetition of the American revolution and its emphasis on individual freedom. Rather than an activity that discloses a text by relating it to an encyclopedia of past learning, each reading reproduces America, the life-world that provides the horizon of understanding for the poem, and it gives both the poem and its imagined American state a fresh start, one which, like Whitman's "Starting out from Paumanok," makes the "American dream of an orgiastic future" into "a last hope" for any present (Irwin 113-4). Such poetry remains, consequently, in the "state of liminality" which Victor Turner describes as the moment of the emergence of communitas (46-7, 232). It is poetry of anti-structural association based on undifferentiated, egalitarian, direct, nonrational relationships between individuals who commune directly with the natural world, each being potentially one of Emerson's
poets. In Whitman's terms, all would be practitioners of personalism, the religion described in Democratic Vistas as "the noiseless operation of one's isolated Self," as it endeavors "to enter the pure ether of veneration, reach the divine levels, and commune with the unutterable" (Prose 2: 399). Based on a sanctified egoism, the "divine pride of man in himself (the radical foundation of the new religion)" (Prose 2: 412), such a communion with the unutterable is described as an individual poetic undertaking in which one imagines the non-actual on a purely personal level.

In this way, intense individualism is made the basis of the poem's and the nation's life-world, but it is an individualism that must, all the same, be subjected to both objectifiable truths and social norms. The liberty to express individual identity and difference becomes the basis for community and for communal poetry. But to make all the possible resulting idiosyncracies cohere, a way must be found to reconcile individualized practices and beliefs.

The problem . . . presented to the New World [Whitman notes in Democratic Vistas], is, under permanent law and order, and after preserving cohesion (ensemble-Individuality), at all hazards, to vitalize man's free play of special Personalism, recognizing in it something that calls ever more to be consider'd, fed, and adopted as the substratum for the best that belongs to us (government indeed is for it), including all the new esthetics of our future. (Prose 2: 396)
Insofar as Whitman proposes a solution for this political problem (one which is inherent in liberalism), he adopts the Americanized versions of the English language as models for the concordance of permanent law and special individualism, and he especially emphasizes the diverse and isolated forms of expression developed in response to local conditions. Whitman views these local discourses as unwritten poetry, and in attempting to display at length the possible variety of such poetry, he writes that "the infant genius of American poetic expression . . . lies sleeping, aside, unrecking itself, in some western idiom, or native Michigan or Tennessee repartee, or stump speech--or in Kentucky or Georgia, or the Carolinas--or in some slang or local song or allusion of the Manhattan, Boston, Philadelphia, or Baltimore mechanic--or up in the Maine woods--or off in the hut of the California miner, or crossing the Rocky Mountains, or along the Pacific railroad--or on the breast of the young farmers of the northwest, or Canada, or boatmen of the lakes" (Prose 2: 412-3).

The continental survey of raw poetic material reads like one of Whitman's famous lists, a series of language acts which settle into poetry and form a journalistic "progression of one mode of sensuous immediacy to another" (Rosenthal and Gall 28). Such enumerations reduce poetry to a simple

\[11\] Perhaps the best example of the relationship between Whitman's poetry and the everyday world is given by the fact that the poet was able to transform many parts of his 1855 preface into poetry. Carol Hollis argues that this transformation was possible because the preface already possessed poetic qualities (231). It would be more precise to
accounting of that which surfaces from a fluid amorphous background or matrix ("mother-ocean" as a symbol of non-being). This imaginary background flood, which effectively effaces history, recurs under various guises in the writing. It is visible when he writes about how America envelops all in "Birds of Passage" (Leaves 228), how the world surrounds the day in "A Broadway Pageant" (Leaves 245), or how the mother-ocean envelops Paumanok along with "[t]hese little shreds indeed standing for you and me and all" ("As I Ebb'd with the Ocean of Life," Leaves 255). Enveloping everything within a specific temporal or spatial frame of reference ("these States"), this blanketing tide provides a "tabula rasa" on which to write a national culture within an effacing historical horizon. Whitman's poetry becomes the shared settler activity of building community in this vacated space, the space in which the American continents are made into blank pages and in which individual pioneers are seen to be engaged in a form of poesis.

However, as poetry which aspires to the continuity and inclusiveness of journalistic discourse, Whitman's Leaves must say that Whitman's poetry is indeed not very far from his journalistic discourse, and this fact reflects his efforts to make poetic discourse conform to his democratic ideals.

Kronick equates this underlying matrix, which he calls Whitman's sea, with Emerson's notion of intuition ("On the Border" 63). This puts it squarely in the tradition of German idealism exemplified by Schelling, and his distinction between intellectual and material perception. The poem projects a timelessness where it exists as a whole, but it is a timeless wholeness that it places outside of its own text. This opposition of course reminds us of Mallarmé but also of the constructions of understanding in hermeneutic practices.
not only provide a survey of all the various poetic arrivals from the sea; it must also write itself against the silencing of culturally completing acts, such as readings that would formulate a systematic understanding for Whitman's poem. A poetic revision of his 1855 preface demonstrates as well as describes the types of poetic readings that his "true" poetry demands:

The words of the true poems give you more than poems,
They give you to form for yourself poems, religions, politics, war, peace, behavior, histories, essays, daily life, and everything else,
They balance ranks, colors, races, creeds, and the sexes,
They do not seek beauty, they are sought,
Forever touching them or close upon them follows beauty,
longing, fain, love-sick,

They prepare for death, yet they are not the finish, but rather the outset,
They bring none to his or her terminus or to be content and full,
Whom they take they take into space to behold the birth of stars, to learn one of the meanings,
To launch off with absolute faith, to sweep through the ceaseless rings and never be quiet again.

(Whitman, Leaves 170)

"True poems" avail themselves of repeated beginnings as if
they were new landings. They initiate an aesthetic drive to undertake explorations, trail-blazings and groundings, of which the satiation is associated with death. They unleash an unsatisfied will to beauty, a will inhibited by the social tranquility implemented by artificially limiting forms, such as national boundaries, cultural institutions and defined poetic genres. "True poems" liberate us from these forms and, as the final line suggests, are able to inspire us to transcend even the discipleship that, for Whitman, our silent reading implies.

To remain American, readers must consequently even resist Whitman's own interpretation of his project, the poetic expression of the American nation. As has already been suggested, readers remain free of this institution of reading by "never [being] quiet again." They must not interpret the poem in any complete sense and consequently silence all future encounters. Instead they must revitalize the poetic text by their own voluntary participation in the poetic creation, an involvement which makes reading into a poetic act and which initiates the reader into the "class of poets." Complete poetic compositions, like complete national cultures, mark the final boundary which, in ending all the previous beginnings and preventing any further ones, constitute the death of both culture and poetry.

In order to keep the project going, the poet must surrender his intention to the whims of future readers who reinvent the work in reading it. Whitman consequently
acknowledges both his own poetic discourse and his vision of the American nation are, like newspaper articles, transitory constructs. They are, as his salutation to the reader at the end of "Calamus" suggests, forms of discourse that do not endure:

Full of life now, compact, visible,
I, forty years old the eighty-third year of the States,
To one a century hence or any number of centuries hence,
To you yet unborn these, seeking you.

When you read these I that was visible am become invisible,
Now it is you, compact, visible, realizing my poems, seeking me,
Fancying how happy you were if I could be with you and become your comrade;
Be it as if I were with you. (Be not too certain but I am now with you.)

(Whitman, Leaves 136)

As Joseph Kronick suggests to be the case in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (American Poetics 106), the poet here addresses his future, his "unborn" audience composed of us in our present. We offer him the unrealized fellowships that either the poet or his poetic leavings ("these") are seeking. In an alternate manner of reading these lines, the word "these" is in apposition with "you," such that it is the future realizations of his poem that the poet addresses, an
interpretation that reaffirms both the association of Whitman’s poetry with American culture and the reader’s ongoing participation in the poetic and cultural activity. The "now," of the poem may be similarly located in the poet’s present (and our past), or we may resist this subordination of our present to that of the poet and insist on seeing what is "now, compact, visible" for us. In any case, the acceptance of one present denies the possibility of the other. And the simultaneity of poet and reader, the simultaneity assured by the communication of an autonomous, completed text, is brought into question.

The finalized and atemporal conception of the poem as a whole is further complicated by the first line of the second stanza. Just as "these" and "you" are two words that slide together in the fourth line of the first stanza, in the beginning of the second part "these" and "I" are associated by their juxtaposition. The combination "these I" anticipates its misreading as "these Is" or as "this I," so that we see the visible I’s of the poem as individual moments visible to us in a succession of print and made subsequently invisible (but perhaps recoverable) as the reading eye passes on. The poet projects this movement of the reading eye as a part of his future, and he foresees that the movement will be embodied after the disembodying of himself. But onto this future embodiment the poet also projects his desire ("Fancying how happy you were if I could be with you and become your comrade"). This desire, which in effect assumes future bodies
and their desires resemble the poet's own, is both allowed by
the next line, and troubled by the use of "but" in the middle
of the parenthesis. The occurrence invites its misprision as
"that," and yet the "but" implies a disjunction between the
reader's certainty of the poet's presence as text and his
actual presence. As long as we remain uncertain and
undogmatic about our communion, we are paradoxically assured
of it. In fact, the uncertainty of our interpretation implies
an awareness of our role in the constitution of the poem, and
this recognition of our own constructive involvement in
reading acknowledges the reader's participation not only in
the poetic act but in the democratization or leveling of a
literary culture which requires such involvement.

This acknowledgement, which seems to imply that
communication occurs only when it is abandoned, reiterates the
poet's affirmation, made in an earlier section of "Calamus,"
that he escapes us when we think that we have "unquestionably"
captured him ("Whenever you are holding me now in hand,"
Leaves 116). In part this is a further affirmation of the
poet's individual autonomy, but it also confirms Paul Bové's
contention that American poetry is "temporal, indirect--i.e.
historically aware and destructive--and endless" (146).
Insofar as Whitman's unknown future readership still shares
his vision of American life, despite the passage of time and
the events of subsequent history, there is an openness and
future-orientation to Whitman's poetic discourse that would
make it the ultimate democratic form of expression. But at
the same time, the Whitman poet seems aware that any future realization of this vision, like any communion with the past, would be an appropriation of the "New World" by the old one, a return of England over America and, as a result, an overturning of the envisioned, new liberal order.

Similar to Leaves’ reader-oriented poetry, the political vision in the poem, the continuous expansion and flourishing of "these States," requires that America remain an unstable construct which resists the patriarchal tradition affirmed in other parts of the work. The poem therefore has to turn on itself in order to value only that which remains present, and it even suggests that which remains present may be foreign.13 "Sea Drift" exemplifies this self-critical part of Whitman’s "vista," which now resists its own imperialistic vision, its own affirmation of America to the detriment of all future ones. Instead, Whitman’s poem is comparable to the faint sound of voices over the sea and to the temporary surfacing of land above the engulfing ocean:

13One can see this transformation of the poetic exercise as part of what Price sees to be Whitman’s assumption of the role of the "old grey poet." Price convincingly argues that Whitman takes a conventional turn in the 1860s and attempts to assume the role of national poet-laureate by imitating, among others, Tennyson (73). Price explains this change in Whitman: "Tired of charges that his work lacked artistry and anxious to assume the role of public poet, Whitman attempted to enrich his verse by incorporating other voices without abandoning his own distinctive sound and manner" (73). One might add, however, that Whitman’s preoccupation with death and with his future existence in poetry makes him aware of other presences in his own language.
As I wend to the shores I know not,
As I list to the dirge, the voices of men and women wreck'd,
As I inhale the impalpable breezes that set in upon me,
As the ocean so mysterious rolls toward me closer and closer,
I too but signify at the utmost a little wash'd up drift,
A few sands and dead leaves to gather,
Gather, and merge myself as part of the sands and drift.

(Leaves 254)

The distant voices over the waves echo the poet's own compositions, which now not only express the relation of individuals to the mother nation but surface from the wash of a nurturing and destructive "mother ocean." However, the fact that the voices from the sea are largely obscured also suggests that they may be counterfeit, hidden in the way that the poet is both revealed and disguised by his words or in the fashion that the "real" and "inaudible words of the earth" are overshadowed by the "audible" words of the poetic text ("A song of the Rolling Earth," Leaves 219-20). For the poet, these "audible" words are parts of human language and therefore deceptive. It is the language that remains unheard or unread where Emerson's "already written" poetry is to be found. However, this statement is more than an acknowledgement of the validity of the natural or unconscious; it places value on the unrealized. It is the future poems to which the poet turns in order to escape the completed text viewed as the cemetery for words. In a statement which
suggests that his poetry overflows its own textual banks and initiates an ongoing American poetic flood, the Whitman poet concedes that, despite the general availability of poetic truths, true words and, therefore, his fully realized poem must remain always a part of the unspoken future:

The earth does not withhold, it is generous enough,
The truths of the earth continually wait, they are not so conceal either,
They are calm, subtle, untransmissible by print,
They are imbued through all things conveying themselves willingly
Conveying a sentiment and invitation, I utter and utter,
I speak not, yet if you hear me not of what avail am I to you?
To bear, to better, lacking these of what avail am I?

(Leaves 220)

In so expressing the temptation to articulate what cannot at present be stated, Whitman's Leaves ultimately reflects the ambiguity of liberalism, which wants to make individual liberty into the basis of a permanent cultural forms. As the textual product of one individual, the poem displays an awareness of the limits to the poetic qualities that it can attain, and it urges us to explore further, to refine the poetic discourse, and to realize the poetry of America. It presents us with its various printed parts but additionally imagines a mythical future when a willing reader will integrate it into a whole. The acceptance of the liberal
ideology, which makes this whole a part of the national future, builds or dismantles the work. Since, in the case of Whitman's *Leaves*, the ideology also involves the celebration and expression of openness, equality and freedom, qualities which poetic acts of ideological exhibitionism seem to exemplify, the work invites its own critical exposure. It is by the text's own undressing of itself as an artificial construct that the poem is best reflected in the sexual analogies that it offers. Thorough disclosure is offered as the poetry of a liberal American nation-state, an exhibition not meant to shock the reader into an Arnoldian defence of culture, but to transform the reader into a liberated individual (read European male immigrant) who is aware of the poetry in daily American life. Although the work makes poetry of the day-to-day living of the diverse settlers and immigrants who participated in American expansionism, it also urges us to see this national ideology as a pathway to a future emancipation.
Conclusion: Do Artistic and Mainstream Life-Worlds Become Ontologically Distinct?

In this dissertation, I have been arguing that there is a close association between poetic discourse and the socio-phenomenological notion of the "Lebenswelt," especially as Habermas develops the concept. I have further suggested that a literary life-world emerges in nineteenth-century urbanized European cultures, and it produces a literature known as modernist. The three examples of this literature that I have examined all celebrate both the modernization of the European world and the emergence of a literary culture that provides a place of refuge from modernization and a prospect from which a critical perspective can be maintained. I now want to suggest that, as my discussion of Nietzsche has already indicated, this phenomenological division of the worlds becomes conceived as an ontological one in the twentieth century and that a prime example of this revised conception is provided by Marcel Proust's A la recherche du temps perdu. A brief discussion of this work and especially of Proust's notion of reading that is linked with it will serve as evidence for this speculative conclusion.

1.0. Creative Reading in A la recherche du temps perdu.

Recent commentators have insisted on the importance that reading and interpretation play in Proust's Recherche
The work relates, to a large extent, what Gilles Deleuze describes as the hero's apprenticeship in interpretation (2). Its narrator-hero experiences moments of sensation in which he senses a "depth," one which he tries to clarify by re-encountering these moments in his memory.¹ At the same time, clarification of these moments eludes the hero, until he theorizes an artistic practice in Le Temps retrouvé and constructs a prophetic theory for the writing of a book which remains à venir at the end of the writing.² This prophecy opens a gap between the announced project and the existing book, an opening that has two possible consequences. It is a gap which the reader may fill by undertaking a project of consistency-building in order to reconcile the theory and its

¹Kristeva claims that this project, which traditionally belongs to poetry, overtakes the more fundamentally novelistic strategies of Proust's work, the construction of a social space (Proust and the Sense of Time 6). Serge Doubrovsky, on the other hand, identifies this process of self-exploration as an act of appropriation which, he claims, is an inevitable part of any interpretive act. Typified by psychoanalytical interpretation, this act makes use of a "phénomène imaginaire" to codify discourse and to subsume "les tendances partielles, les mouvements contradictoires, les moments complémentaires, mais disjoints, du discours inconscient, sous une structure synthétique sans laquelle la pure discontinuité serait la simple incohérence" (148). This practice is, for Doubrovsky, a disfigurement of the personal textual body by the critic-papa, but, as I will show, the inflicted texts turn out to be rebellious children indeed.

²Although readings of the Recherche as the story of its own origins are plentiful, both Blanchot and Doubrovsky insist on the disjunction between the fictional and the actual by maintaining the distinction between the written work and the work to be written (Blanchot 23, Doubrovsky 141). For Blanchot, this distinction is necessary in order for the work to be perceived as a never-ending fictionalization of itself.
actualization, or it is an unfillable space in which the many metaphors used to characterize the Proustian artistic project are seen to move and to resist the kind of mythologization that, according to Jacques Derrida, produces "la vérité" (Morges 258). The Recherche opens a space for such integrative or deconstructive reading because it tries to translate into the stable general statements of an esthetic theory, a "poetic" discourse which, in the tradition of European literary theory, remains linked to unexpressible and intuitive elements (in this case, of memory).

2.0. "Combray" as the Model for Artistic Production in this Gapped World

The distance between the spontaneous discovery of Combray and its textual elaboration sets the basic parameters for Proust's artistic process. This distance is represented in the text by one of Proust's few chapter breaks. In the famous "Madeleine" passage at the end of the initial segment, the narrator-hero describes how the taste of a "Madeleine"

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3As mentioned above, the notion of consistency-building is developed by Iser in Der Akt des Lesens (204-5).

4Roger Paultre interprets this episode as one in which the narrator-hero discovers that repeated acts are rites which disclose the existence of a mythical time. Paultre writes: "Le rite (manger la madeleine) a eu pouvoir de recréer dans le présent un événement qui s'est produit en un temps indéterminé, 'en ce temps-là', passé mythique de l'événement qu'on charge de symboles. Il existe ainsi deux temps: le temps profane, temps historique aussi, qui s'écoule inexorablement dans un seul sens, et le temps hiérophanique, magico-religieux qui se caractérise à la fois par la possibilité de rendre rituellement présent le passé mythique et, par voie de conséquence, d'échapper au temps profane pour figer un éternel présent" (119).
doused in tea recalls earlier analogous experiences (Proust, Recherche 1: 43-47). The poetic flow of sensations is, at first, scarcely utterable, but after a little time images of Combray spill from a tea cup, a sort of narrative birthing vessel for his childhood memories, and constitute a total vision for "tout Combray." The proclamation of this flowing encyclopedic vision is separated by a chapter break from the narrative of the childhood summer weekends spent at the residence of Tante Léonie, the hero's paternal aunt. It is as if this rupture signaled a transition from the initial encyclopedic collection of the sensations that stream from involuntary memory to the cinematographic accounts composed by a transcription of the voluntary memories that contextualize the initial spurt. The chapter break also marks a move away from the hero's fixation on a mother made vulnerable to the hero's desire by the unexpected removal of a paternal interdiction, a mother who skips over the romantic passages in her reading of François le Champi and who becomes associated with the redness of the book's cover in the hero's memory.

The space on the page, which separates the two joys of a maternal night reading and of an encompassing vision from the textual reconstructions that clarify their meaning, also reminds us of the binding seam which Mallarmé associates with

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5The readings that connect the "Madeleine" episode with maternity, birth and sexuality are now quite numerous. Notable among these are Lejeune ("Écriture et sexualité") and Doubrovsky.
the grave in *Le livre, instrument spirituel*. It is a silent blankness and purity of the unread book that is sacrificed to the reader who takes it up and spreads its pages. It is no coincidence that the reader's penetration into the Proustian vision is imagined as a separation from the mother (and her maternal readings). Proust embodies his subsequent reading, especially in his zealous attempts to possess Albertine. In effect, Proust loses his ability to read at this point and he does not reclaim it until the "Adoration perpetuelle" section of *Temps retrouvé*. I will now discuss his principle text on reading, published as "*Journées de lecture,*" in which he reveals exactly what he has lost.

3.0. Reading as a Transcendental Experience

In the first half of "*Journées de lecture,*" Proust tries to convey to us his childhood experiences of reading. He tells us how his routine of reading is constantly disturbed by various daily episodes which impinge on Proust's progression through a work. What the account sets up is a tension between the experiences of a book, which one might say belong to the inside world of the reader, and the external daily occurrences necessitated by the body's need for nourishment, by domestic operations, by family and social obligations, and by various moments of conversation which almost seem to be invasions into the sanctity of reading. In Proust's memory, this latter mode of language seems to be

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*First published as "Sur la lecture" in 1905.*
able to overpower written discourse, and even to take precedence over the experience of the reading child. He needs to take refuge in areas of isolation (his bedroom, a labyrinth) in order to defend his reading from the business of the phenomenal world. In describing how the event of reading is connected to various historical moments, he writes:

Sans doute je n'ai que trop prouvé par la longueur et le caractère du développement qui précède ce que j'avais d'abord avancé [de charmantes lectures de l'enfance dont le souvenir doit rester pour chacun de nous une bénéédiction]: que ce qu'elles laissent surtout en nous, c'est l'image des lieux et des jours où nous les avons faites. Je n'ai pas échappé à leur sortilège: voulant parler d'elles, j'ai parlé de toute autre chose que des livres parce que ce n'est pas d'eux qu'elles m'ont parlé. (Contre Sainte-Beuve 171)

The activity of reading is presented by Proust as a metonym for life, as the various incursions into books carry with them all the lived experience that surrounds them, such that reading is a recollection of the past moments in which it is implicated. This point is made most clear in the moment of

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7In this way, reading has the function of what Coleridge calls an "after-consciousness" (60). As Coleridge conceives it, this term refers to the links between movements and ideas in the mind that recall the total impression of experiences with which the remembered mental events had co-existed. The Proustian notion of reading differs, however, from Coleridge's idea because, for Proust, the key experience is the one that is unrecoverable.
reflection that the hero of the Recherche spends in the Guermantes library in Le Temps retrouvé. There, he finds a volume of François le Champi and recognizes that all that was happening in his life when he previously read George Sand's work is now attached to the book and recalled by it whenever it is taken from the shelf (Recherche 4: 461-466). The act of reading this book becomes, as a result, a metaphor for the living of his life, and the analogy is perhaps so strong that days of future reading and days of past living are made inseparable.

The problem with this Proustian vision is that the metaphor of the life-book is so regularly disrupted by the self-consciousness of the remembering subject that, even when the Proustian hero is alone, he differentiates a present experience from a past one. As is the case with the Proustian hero's revised opinions about François le Champi, the present can rob the past of its artistic value, as revised opinions make the original reading experience vanish. Reading, a phenomenal activity that involves real-world objects (i.e. books), is made an experience that is only locatable in terms of the intersection of the aesthetic with the phenomenal and not conceivable as part of the phenomenal alone. As a result, Proust describes his remembered reading experience as that which actually escapes his present, despite his best efforts to recuperate it. Furthermore, in

8 Proust's direct experience of his childhood readings is not conveyed in his writing about them. And in fact, his
his discussion of Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*, the text for which Proust's essay originally served as a preface, the Ruskin work vanishes beneath Proust's own present discourse. Remembered enjoyment of these works is now detached from them, and has become a disembodied pleasure, so to speak. This fact is made evident when Proust tries to provide an example of the kind of passage that caused him such enjoyment during his childhood riverside readings. He composes a sentence that he claims to have excerpted from Théophile Gautier's *Le Capitaine Fracasse*, the work that was read in the episodes remembered from childhood in the first part of the essay. But in a footnote, he admits that the line is not from Gautier:

> En réalité, cette phrase ne se trouve pas, au moins sous cette forme, dans *Le Capitaine Fracasse*. . . . [J]e me suis permis, pour que l'exemple fût plus frappant pour le lecteur, de fondre [les] beautés [de plusieurs phrases] en une, aujourd'hui que je n'ai plus pour [ces beautés], à vrai dire, de respect religieux. . . . Toutefois je ne suis plus capable de retrouver avec assez d'exactitude ces joies oubliées pour être assuré que je n'ai pas forcé la note et dépassé la mesure en accumulant en une seule phrase tant de merveilles! Je ne le crois pas pourtant. Et je pense avec regret que l'exaltation avec laquelle je répétais la phrase du *Capitaine Fracasse* aux iris et aux pervenches penchés au bord de la rivière, en pétinant les cailloux de l'allée, aurait été plus délicieuse encore si j'avais pu trouver en une seule phrase de Gautier tant de ses charmes que mon propre artifice réunit aujourd'hui, sans parvenir, hélas! à me donner aucun plaisir. (176n)

Just as the memories of childhood are unable to reproduce the texts that were read, the encounter with a real text cannot replicate the remembered pleasure of the earliest reading. To a certain extent, these readings have been enriched by subsequent re-readings of memory and by further encounters with other parts of the writer's work in which the writer documents a quest for beauty. The accumulated production is a constitution of the reader, so that the actual re-encounter of any existing text pales by comparison with this reader-construction. Proust can attempt, but rather unsuccessfully, to incite the remembered pleasure through a compilation of present pleasures in a single formulation, but this form of enrichment is disconnected from any remembered experience, as a text alone cannot compete with the metaphoric combination of reading and living that Proust reads in his own memory. The result is that, not only does the text resist reading but that reading resists the text, and in this preface, in fact, effaces it.
Ruskin's text is absent from this part of the essay, as Proust tries only to reflect in his turn on the same subject that Ruskin identifies in "Of King's Treasuries" as "the utility of Reading" (131). But Proust does acknowledge that, in making his own views known, he articulates his opposition to Ruskin and makes an indirect criticism of the English writer, such that Proust's critical reflection resists Ruskin's text in a way similar to the manner in which childhood distractions impede the young Proust's attempts to read Gautier.

In fact, as one continues to read Proust's text, one gets the impression that both the books read in childhood and the Ruskin essay are almost transplanted by Proust's writing. In the case of Ruskin's essay, Proust does cite a long passage from it, but his use of this citation demonstrates only his manner of misreading the text. The passage is, in fact, radically abridged, and Proust admittedly does not always note his own omissions (Contre Sainte-Beuve 173-4). The extract is therefore not only a translation of Ruskin's work but a representation of it, a representation that more or less serves as a pretext for Proust's own writing.

Such a practice is legitimate for Proust because for him the actual words on the page constitute only a part of the

9Remarkably, Proust translates Ruskin into Descartes by offering one of Descartes' observations as a summary of Ruskin's position: "la lecture de tous les bons livres est comme une conversation avec les plus honnêtes gens des siècles passés qui en ont été les auteurs" (173).
reading process. He explains this as the power of incitation that great works have to compel us to seek further for more of their thought (Contre Sainte-Beuve 176). For Proust, reading involves mental activity that only starts with the encounter of a text or of an author's work. The individual text is here and elsewhere seen to be only capable of providing a partial and imperfect view of a writer's construction. When we encounter this part, we are given desires to see more, so we seek in other works by the same writer moments where we can fill out our vision. But in the end we never complete it and arrive at truth or at beauty. We only attain the clearest and fullest version of beauty that a writer is able to assemble and to convey through the total experience of the writer's corpus. To get even this version of totality, the writer must, of course, be dead. Therefore we can only experience the totality of a creation and the totality of a creating subject through books, which are made, in effect, a way of raising the dead. But this totalization of the book has real dangers, and Proust spends a great deal of the rest of the essay both describing these dangers and providing examples of individuals who have avoided them. We can become text-bound like the so-called men of letters and therefore entrapped only in this limited vision that the text provides. We can also interpret the text literally when we should be going beyond this literal level, and are therefore blinded by prosaic meanings. For Proust, the text should only be the beginning of the mental
activity that surrounds it, the mental activity that leads to the truth and beauty that we ourselves alone can come to know in an otherworldly state.

Texts therefore only serve a minor function in Proust's reading process, and it is in the transcending of this phenomenal level that a reader arrives at a kind of spiritual life, which can in turn be incarnated through the writing of another text. The model has a Hegelian quality to it, as the activity of reading writing becomes the vehicle by which the spirit realizes itself as a document in history. But unlike Hegel's vision of absolute knowledge at the end of the Phänomenologie, Proust's textual model projects no final conception, only more extensive and better approximations of what is ultimately inconceivable, paraphrasings of recollected pleasure, which are inevitably incomplete. In effect, Proust's account of reading an author's work parallels Socrates' attitude toward the approaching end of his life that he expresses in The Phaedo. Death is the escape from life into a new freedom, a passage which men, if they are philosophers, should welcome, since philosophy's preoccupation with spiritual ideas only anticipates a final liberation from the material world (Phaedo 465-472).

Similarly, the death of the Proustian writer is a liberation from his texts, since the writer's completed work can no longer appropriate or exclude readings by modifying his corpus; nor can he continue to pursue that which eludes him. It is left to the reader to continue the pursuit. But just
as the moment of death liberates the reader from a writer's text, the further textualizing process continues a history where the writing spirit becomes the written work. The reader transcends and recovers the writer (hebt ihn auf) in producing a new text, just as Proust transcends and recovers Ruskin in the composition of his prefaces.

Again we return to notions of a development toward an end that cannot be attained because whatever is realized can also be transcended. This conception is typical of romantic views of history. But it also has been seen to be a quality of the literary, which, if one takes a Hegelian perspective, expresses the different ways in which the spirit has appeared in history, before it is finally known to itself. As a result, the literary, insofar as one can describe it as thus entangled in the phenomenal world, is actually located in another realm, ontologically distinct from both the objective discourse of realistic historiography and the systematic propositions of philosophy.

Enveloped by a timeless knowledge designated by language and a temporalized knowledge represented in narrative discourse, the blank space between Proust's poetic vision and his elaboration of "Combray" signals the reader's need to attend to the notions of interpretation involved in Proust's

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10According to Schlegel, "[d]er Historiker ist ein rückwärts gekehrter Prophet" (32). Schlegel's prophet-historian provides knowledge so long as he does not focus on the present but only on the "allgemeinen Bildung der ganzen Menschheit," that which is beyond any actual historical realization (48).
work and to note how we are inverting them by our own reading. Like poetry in the European theoretical tradition, the Proustian text hovers among a general understanding, the singular events in the account of the hero's life, and our readings of them. The *Recherche* maintains this equilibrium by arousing a desire for total vision, providing a mediator for this desire in the figure of the hero who is able to recover his past, but frustrating this desire by using a kind of flirtatious narrative exposure of various moments in the hero's life. In this way, the work suggests the existence of an artistic world outside-of-time, and it anticipates the many twentieth-century attempts to enter into this foreign aesthetic space.

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11As we have seen, these signals are also important in some of the modern poetic discourse that I have been examining in this dissertation.

12Paultre calls the narrative form of the *Recherche* "une structure en plaques" in which layers of memory are constructed by an author-demiurge and interpreted by the narrator-hero. My metaphor of the strip-tease, as well as implying a type of masculine desire implicit in the narrative act, also suggests that beneath all the layers one hopes to exhibit an object of desire, which is, in Proust's case, an enduring being. Paradoxically, this being can only endure so long as it remains, not only veiled from our temporal readings, but also "perdu" to our sincere belief in its existence.
Appendix: A Theoretical Model of Modernist Reading

In *Aesthetic Quality: A Contextualist Theory of Beauty*, Stephen Pepper describes the complex perception of a work of art after multiple experiences of it in ways which account for the power of later readings of a text both to revise and to conserve previous ones. In his chapter entitled "Aesthetic Quality," Pepper outlines a range of cognitive attitudes which perceivers of a work of art may hold. In a sense, he graphs the ways in which individuals may receive a work between the two poles of extreme rational analysis and extreme qualitative intuition (Pepper, *Aesthetic Quality* 26). Analysis uncovers the strands or the individual events involved in perception and their texture or ways in which various strands relate to each other. Qualitative intuition or aesthetic experience reveals the quality of the total work, its "realization." Pepper can therefore distinguish artistic and scientific ways of perception on the basis of the extent to which they are concerned with the "realization" of the total work:

Art is...fully as cognitive, fully as knowing as science, so that contextualists are fond of calling the intuition of quality a "realization." If scientific, analytical knowledge has scope, it nevertheless lacks intimacy and realization. The artist like the scientist is a man whose function it is to lead us to a better knowledge of nature—not, however, by showing us how to
control her, but how to realize her. (Pepper, *Aesthetic Quality* 31)

According to this distinction, concerns with the reception of a work aim at an artistic means of knowing a work of art. Pepper talks about a work's "quality," a term which seems somewhat similar to Iser's use of the term "Gestalt" or Sartre's "totalisation." The difference between these terms reflects the degrees in which the totality, the gestalt or quality are implicit in their object. For Iser, the gestalt of a work indeterminate and is largely left for the reader to construct, while Pepper's quality is a more readily verifiable concept based on the structural corroboration of repeated, converging perceptions of one or a number of individuals. For Pepper, every event, every experience of a work or of a part of a work has its own quality. In addition, successive events or perceptions of a work or of its parts also have a degree of quality which he labels "relationship quality" and which he defines as the similarity or individuality of multiple events (Pepper, *Aesthetic Quality* 40) "Relationship quality" establishes both the integrity or "fusion" of parts into the total work and a sense of continuity between repeated perceptions of a work. In a discussion of a print from Hiroshige's Tokaido series, Pepper calls this process of qualitative accumulation "funding":

We are...able to talk about the character or quality of the print, meaning not any one perception of it, but
the cumulative continuity or train of perceptions of it. For earlier perceptions have effects upon later ones, and the event quality of each perception becomes gradually enriched. This is called "funding". The later more richly funded event qualities are recognized as presenting ever more and more truly the full individual quality or character of the print (Pepper, Aesthetic Quality 43).

The quality of a work of art arises out of the situation which the reader/spectator "funds" through the relationship of the present situation with previous ones. The aesthetic object is the cumulative succession of intermittent perceptions built into the fullest possible realization of the work. This process involves the renovation of the work as a result of its relationship to each succeeding situation, the retrieval of remembered situations in the manner which Proust describes in the above cited passage, the interventions of other people's experiences, as one individual's realization will likely supplement others. This intersubjective potential of the aesthetic object can produce a tradition of valuation and lead to the establishment of cultural artifacts, objects which are aestheticized from generation to generation.

It is easy to see why Pepper thinks that this contextualist conception of the work of art is the "soundest and most fruitful to appear" (Pepper, Basis of Criticism 72). It satisfies the criteria of structural corroboration which
Pepper outlines in World Hypotheses: A Study in Evidence (74-83). However, when adapted to the reading process, Pepper's contextualism implies that a reader is able to develop continuously fuller readings without acknowledging that both forgetting and loss of interest may intervene. In effect, Pepper considers the experience of a work of art to be something that occurs all at once, in one synchronic formulation. Pepper's reader would be able to alter this formulation only by expanding it or increasing its aesthetic quality. This pattern of thinking about the aesthetic object in terms of a formulation of its total experience reflects the fact that Pepper is, himself, trapped in a literary mode of thought which conceives of thought only in its completed, rhetorical formulation typified by the dissertation. The growing fullness of the aesthetic experience must always be integrated into a comprehensive, communicable structure and this structure, if corroborated by satisfying the criteria of adequacy and scope, validates its constitutive elements. It seems that Pepper bases his notion of structural corroboraton on an organicist world hypothesis which also demands integration, a criterion which, as every composition student learns, is also an important one in essay writing.
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