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LITERARY EXPERIMENT - CRITICAL EXPERIMENT ?

A STUDY OF  
FOUR GERMAN WRITERS  
OF THE 1960s

by

KATHRYN ROONEY



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Tony Phelan for his advice, encouragement and criticism; thanks also must go to the other staff of the Warwick German Department for the discussions of the literature of the Sixties, particularly during the M.A. course.

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## INTRODUCTION

The body of literature which this thesis will examine forms a relatively neglected thread of literary development in Germany during the 1960s. I stress the question of development because this work will not seek to deal with main stream writers such as Günter Grass, Heinrich Böll, Martin Walser or Uwe Johnson. Accepting that such figures form the dominant corpus of literary activity, then the first and more widely discussed area of development in the Sixties encompasses the relationship between literature, politics and society, and the drive to make literature more politically and socially relevant.

This development itself had different elements. Firstly, documentary writing sought on the one hand to project historical and objective fact, as in the dramas of Hochhuth, Kipphardt, and Weiß, and on the other to present authenticity, through autobiography, tape-recorded interviews or the fictionalised but documentary reports of working life by Günther Wallraff and the accounts of historical events by Alexander Kluge. Another movement towards workers' writing emerged later. (1)

Alongside this general interest ran a current of literary activity which attracted the epithet 'experimental'. It would be inaccurate to speak in terms of an experimental movement because the writing which attracted the tag 'experimental' varied considerably, indeed its application was so wide that one critic exclaimed in despair:

Unbestimmt wie die Texte selbst, wenn man sie an die traditionellen Mustern des Erzählens mißt, ist der Begriff der experimentellen Prosa. (2)

However, the four writers I have chosen have all been labelled thus and I will hope to show in what ways their writing can be linked and in what ways their works differ. They are Helmut Weibull, Franz Mon, Jürgen Becker and Ror Wolf. (3) In those writers, literary self-consciousness based on a questioning of language creates texts where the processes of articulation rather than what is articulated come to the fore. In this, these four writers do not stand alone. Figures from earlier -

Arno Schmidt, the Expressionists, Döblin, Brech, Hofmannsthal, the Naturalists especially Arno Holz, could also justly demand inclusion in a work discussing writing as 'experimental'. In the Sixties, too, the Wiener Gruppe, and poets such as Gombringer could also claim consideration. Even, within the area of prose, rather than poetry, many others could vie for consideration: for example, the 'pop' writers such as Wolf Wondratschek, Uwe Brandner, Bazon Brock and Wolf Vostell; the short texts of Reinhard Lettau, or the 'Maulwürfe' by Gunther Eich; the works of Helga Novak, Friederike Mayröcker, Peter Bichsel, Michael Scharang. All of these could lend themselves profitably to examination in this context.

I have limited the main textual analysis to one work by each of the four writers. This is because much of the available criticism of these writers and their work consists of newspaper reviews and brief articles or references within articles and this has led to a tendency for the critic to be satisfied with generalisation and comment rather than analysis. A more consistent foundation for understanding writing of this kind is needed in order to show what a detailed critical reading of such texts can achieve.

The four writers to be considered each represent one facet of the wider canvas of literary experimentation during the Sixties. Ror Wolf's work Fortsetzung des Berichts is a long prose-text concerned with questions of perception and articulation which also occupied Becker in his shorter texts, with very different results. All the writers concern themselves with these two issues: Franz Mon stands closest to the concrete poets and the Wiener Gruppe; herzzero is an interesting attempt to maintain the techniques of such poetry in a longer context, a concrete novel. Finally, Heißenbüttel is the most prominent of the writers both in literary and critical terms. His six Textbücher published between 1960 and 1967 provide an opportunity to view his development over a longer period from the more poetical early texts to the collages of the last Textbuch.



This selection of writers and works will also facilitate examination of a range of problems involved in approaching self-consciously experimental literature and contemporary works as a whole. An initial account of the issues raised by writing of this kind for the immediate context of cultural awareness may be derived from a consideration of the uses to which the term experimental was put in Germany during the Sixties.

## 1. CRITICAL CONTEXTS

The range of literary experiment in the Sixties was accompanied by attempts by critics to deal with such literature. The purpose of this first chapter is to set the critical scene for the writers with whom this work will deal. The range of issues which attracted attention in this context are important and useful background to the texts themselves and can help to clarify the situation which produced the literary experiments of the Sixties.

The term experimental became a tag for writing which seemed not to fall within more conventional literary categories. However, the use of the term, particularly by the press, did not receive an unreserved welcome. For example, Hans Magnus Enzensberger devoted a whole essay to the problem. He felt the term experimental had become too firmly established:

Das "Experiment" als ästhetischer Begriff ist längst in den Sprachschatz der Bewußtseins-Industrie eingegangen. Im Umlauf gebracht von der Avantgarde, verwendet als Beschwörungsformel, abgegriffen und unaufgeklärt, sucht es Tagungen und Kulturgespräche heim und setzt sich in Rezensionen und Essays fest. (1)

Nor is he the only critic to note the prominence of the idea of literary experiment, Hans Schwerte for example comments:

Wer heute im literarischen Betrieb sich umhört, in der Literaturkritik, im literarischen Essay, auch in literaturwissenschaftlichen Abhandlungen zur Moderne, wird unweigerlich auf das Wort "Experiment" stoßen. (2)

However, neither welcomes this wholeheartedly. Schwerte feels the terms experiment and experimental are merely 'modische[s] Gerede', while Enzensberger is far more sweeping in his condemnation. He sees the experimental in terms of its scientific origin and limits his definition of it accordingly:

Experimentum bedeutet "das Erfahrene". ... Sinnvoll ist ein Experiment nur, wenn die auftretenden Variablen bekannt sind und begrenzt werden können. Als weitere Bedingung tritt hinzu: Jedes Experiment muß nachprüfbar sein und bei seiner Wiederholung stets zu ein und demselben, eindeutigen Resultat

führen. Das heißt: ein Experiment kann gelingen oder scheitern nur im Hinblick auf ein vorher genau definiertes Ziel. ... Bilder, Gedichte, (3) Aufführungen genügen diese Bedingungen nicht.

Enzensberger uses the narrowness of his definition of experiment to help prove his contention that 'Jede heutige Avantgarde ist Wiederholung, Betrug oder Selbstbetrug. ... Avantgarde ... ist zum Anachronismus geworden.' (4)

Another major critic of the Sixties, Holmut Heißenbüttel, shares Enzensberger's misgivings about literary experiment. In the 'Frankfurter Vorlesungen über Poetik 1963', he observes:

Immer noch hat der Schriftsteller jede Möglichkeit zu probieren, was ihm angemessen scheint. ... Das ist kein Experiment, denn ein Experiment belegt ja nur, was man schon weiß.

Heißenbüttel then links this view of the experimental specifically to the writer at work:

Das Probieren des Schriftstellers ... bedeutet, daß der Schriftsteller noch nicht weiß, was er macht, wenn er es macht. Erst das Gemachte erweist, was es ist. (5)

Thus for the writer at work the idea of experimentation is of little relevance. Enzensberger saw this in terms of 'die moralische Immunität' of the experimenter. He feels that the concept of experiment relieves the writer of any responsibility:

Der Begriff des Experiments soll sie gegen das Risiko aller ästhetischen Produktion versichern. (6) dient als Handelsmarke und Tarnkappe zugleich.

Here Enzensberger has shifted his emphasis from his initial association of experimental with conferences, reviews and essays to the writer creating a literary experiment. However, Enzensberger seems unaware of possible implications of this shift. Enzensberger and Heißenbüttel have shown that 'experiment' cannot be profitably applied to literature, if its definition is restricted to the science-based notion of demonstrating hypotheses and some image of the writer at work.

While Enzensberger kept his focus on the narrow, science based view of experimental, Heißenbüttel, in an essay 'Keine Experimente ? Anmerkungen zu einem Schlagwort', transfers the focus from the writer to the critic. This shift does not negate the views about experiment and the writer but widens the scope of their applicability. Heißenbüttel maintains:

Der Gebrauch des Begriffs einer experimentellen Kunst, Literatur usw. läßt sich gar nicht eindeutig erklären in Hinblick auf die Objekte, auf die er angewendet wird, sondern nur als Kennzeichen dorer, die ihn gebrauchen. So gesehen, hat er nicht die Funktion einer Sachbestimmung, sondern die einer publizistischen und gesellschaftlichen Sprachregelung.

As subsequent discussion will indicate, Heißenbüttel has perhaps overstated his case in saying that the concept of an experimental art can only be explained with any clarity as an indication about those who use it. However, this emphasis on the user of the term is important because, in experiment:

die öffentliche Meinung findet einen Schlagwort, mit dem sie etwas, das ihr nicht unmittelbar deutlich ist, das sie aber beunruhigt, eingrenzen kann, einen Namen, der zugleich polemisch und neutralisierend zu verwenden ist. (7)

Thus experiment can provide a convenient label for something which cannot be easily brought within existing modes of comprehension or critical terminologies. It serves as a 'Schlagwort', categorising the otherwise uncomprehended and uncomprehendable. It neutralises what it refers to by bringing it under some sort of heading and thereby channelling the reader's disquiet. It hides a lack of understanding behind apparent definition. The text thus labelled seems to have been brought within the bounds of the reader's comprehension.

A few short examples will illustrate aspects of this usage of experiment. The examples may appear unimportant but they indicate one area of usage, usually in newspapers or periodical reviews, which resulted in the trivialisation of the term and the consequent reaction to it illustrated by Enzensberger's outright condemnation and Schwerte's view of experimental as

part of fashionable talk.

For example, Hannelore Neves in an article on concrete poetry: 'Konkrete Poesie ist populärer denn je - Versuch eines Überblicks', the title of which highlights the superficiality of her approach, begins by pointing out the widespread concern with literary experimentation in Germany:

Die Zweiteilung der Literatur in Tradition und Experiment ist nicht neu. Neu und bemerkenswert aber sind Gewicht und Bedeutung, die die experimentelle Literatur in den letzten Jahren gewonnen hat - in Deutschland mehr als in Frankreich, Italien oder gar England, wo die traditionellen Erzählweisen noch immer viel mehr Glauben finden.

This statement is not unreasonable, indeed this emphasis on experiment in Germany during the Sixties underlies the whole of this present discussion. However, she proceeds to define experimental in an overwhelmingly superficial fashion:

Was interessant ist und diskutiert wird, ist experimentell. (8)

Such a definition amply justifies Enzensberger's concern at the way the term is used. The remainder of the article bears out the impression of glib generalisation combined with an absence of critical awareness.

Imprecision also characterises many of the attempts to deal with the experimental in more literary and academic journals and works. Hans Reiss, in an article on the experimental novel offers the following definition:

Wer mit der Sprache und Dichtung experimentiert, besitzt den Willen anders zu schreiben, als vorher gebräuchlich war. (9)

It is perhaps unfortunate that he contents himself with stating the obvious and does not attempt to develop this insight. Clemens Meselhaus in deutsche lyrik der moderne offers the bland statement:

Der experimentelle Charakter der modernen Lyrik entspricht durchaus dem Experimentalcharakter der modernen Zivilisation. (10)

He does not define the experimental character of modern civilisation, and is only slightly more specific in regard to poetry.

Peter O. Chotjewitz's essay 'Was heißt experimentelle Literatur?' begins:

Einsichtig ist, daß, wer fortschreitet, das prinzipielle Richtige tut. ... Nicht begründet zu werden braucht, daß, wer experimentiert, gleichfalls das prinzipiell Richtige tut. Experimentieren verstehe ich so, daß es die Bedingungen des Fortschreitens verfügbar macht. (11)

The conclusion of the essay maintains equally vaguely:

Wir müssen in der Literatur bleiben, dort, wo sie am fortschrittlichsten ist ... wir müssen beschreiben, bezeichnen, demonstrieren, analysieren und agitieren. (12)

Chotjewitz here is using 'experimental' in a polemic sense to mean an ongoing process in which literature would aid, abet and stimulate social progress by changing consciousness and awareness. Such a view could help establish useful common ground with more politically orientated literature. Unfortunately, here Chotjewitz contents himself with polemic.

These attempts at definition do not prove that the terms experiment or experimental have to be vague to the point of uselessness. Nor are the usages cited the only contexts in which the terms appeared. What they do illustrate, however, is the trivialisation which results from an overhasty or ill-considered application of terms which, like experiment or experimental, can appear to convey something about texts but which, as those loose definitions have revealed, need much more rigorous usage than was here apparent.

Other critical terms have also suffered from this lack of rigour in application. For example, earlier manifestations of what would have tended to be called experimental in the Sixties were often brought under the general heading of 'avant-garde'. Some critical works dealing with the 'avant-garde' have fallen into the same trap as critics using 'experimental' - lack of definition and over-eagerness to generalise. However, 'avant-

'garde' has been used to describe the same type of phenomena as experimental, namely works of art which do not coincide with current convention and expectation. The history of the term 'avant-garde' throughout this century <sup>(13)</sup> emphasises that rapid changes in writing have continually been accompanied by a time-lag in criticism when criticism has had to catch up on the new practical developments. As Renato Poggioli points out, one of the problems resulting from this is that pundits and instant theorists can tend to come to the fore:

Unfortunately, avant-garde criticism ... has too often let itself be determined, in both the positive and negative way, by the avant-garde spirit ... Critical judgement, in other words, instead of tending towards a conscious construction of the ambience of the works or towards an intelligent interpretation thereof, has preferred to develop the subordinate task of controversy and polemic, of propaganda for or against. <sup>(14)</sup>

The continuity of the problem of dealing with such literature, as Poggioli shows, includes developing a new critical approach and adapting critical terminology to deal with new phenomena. This perhaps accounts for the joy with which earlier critics latched onto the term 'avant-garde' and with which 'experimental' was used during the Sixties. 'Avant-garde' and 'experimental' both fulfilled the function of labelling and thus bringing within some sort of meaningful and discursive order works which otherwise would have evaded the critic.

'Avant-garde' was used to describe both innovation and reaction; the same applies to experimental. Chotjewitz defined experimental in terms of progress. Other critics have chosen the opposite route and seen modern experiment in the context of reaction to tradition and convention. Erich von Kahler, for example, condemns experiments 'in denen ... der wesentliche Sinn von Kunst verloren ist'. He views experiment as a failure to grasp 'ein Ganzes' and because of this such writing, he concludes, fails to be 'Art':

Gegenwärtig aber sehen wir Experimente, denen auf der Suche nach neuer Realität und ihrem Ausdruck jegliche zusammenhängende Realität, ja schließlich jegliche Realität überhaupt hinschwindet, denen

Realität so hoffnungslos zersplissen ist, daß sie, unfähig ein Ganzes noch zu erfassen, entweder auf das bloße höhnische Aufzeigen der nackten Bruchstücke unserer heutigen Materialität zurückfallen oder in bare Abstraktion geraten, das heißt Form durch technische Konstruktion ersetzen; Experimente, in denen solcherweise der wesentliche Sinn von Kunst verloren ist. (15)

Despite Kahler's sweeping and undefined generalisation, he successfully isolates one element which recurs in critical discussions of the experimental. He mentions the search for new reality and says that in such experimental writing reality is 'hoffnungslos zersplissen'. This implies that the changes in writing result not from the sheer capriciousness of the writer (as Kahler implies) but from some change in what writers perceive and express. Hans Reiss provides a corollary to this, in terms of literary convention:

Das Experimentieren im modernen Roman ist das Ergebnis einer immer klarer werdenden Erkenntnis, daß die Formen des Erzählens der Forderung des Tages nicht mehr genügen. Die alten Erzählungsarten sind alle abgeschmeckt worden. (16)

Although he does not argue that reality has changed, the view that literary genres can no longer meet the demands of the day clearly implies some alteration in the latter to which literature must accommodate itself.

The nature of the change in reality which such critics either point out specifically or imply remains unclear. However, it seems reasonable to assume that they refer in some part to the historical, social and political changes in Germany after 1945, the establishment, growth and stabilisation of the Federal Republic, its conventions and structures. However, such pointers to a change in reality also tend to include awareness of longer-term alterations, for example, industrial and technological developments. Expression of these changes may take the form of reaction to the social, economic, political and psychological pressures which they place on the individual.<sup>(17)</sup> However, it is difficult to distinguish these changes qualitatively from the changes alluded to, for example, by Expressionist writers in explaining why they had to alter or fracture



previous poetical forms, and for this reason looking to a 'change' in reality may provide the critic or writer not with an explanation for changes in writing but rather an a posteriori justification for such changes.

In the Sixties questioning of traditional literary convention and genre was coupled with acknowledgement of the growing mistrust of the idea of the closed fictional world of the novel. Walter Weiss, for example, sees in contemporary literature 'ein doppeltes Mißtrauen' which

richtet sich zum einen gegen die vertraute Glaubwürdigkeit einer geschlossenen Fiktion, zum anderen gegen die unbefragte Geborgenheit in herkömmlichen Gattungen. (18)

This mistrust of the closed fictional world of the novel is seen as resulting from a change in the relationship between the writer and his reality to which the text gives expression. No longer, it would seem, does the writer convey a generally acceptable picture of a generally accepted reality; the range of writing has become more limited:

Die der modernen Welt angepaßte Darstellungsform ist ... eine offene Schreibweise. Sie zielt nicht auf die sinnvolle Ganzheit einer fiktiven Welt, sondern bekennt sich, manchmal im Pluralismus der Stile, beispielhaft zu einem spannungsreichen Partikularismus. (19)

Erwin Theodor Rosenthal agrees with Weiss's view of the increasing particularism which characterises contemporary writing:

Die neue Wirklichkeitserfahrung verlangt nach einer neuen Sprache, die sich als Experiment aus dem begrenzt-logischen Denken löst und die engen Grenzen des Begriffs [des Romans] sprengt. Der Romanschriftsteller gestaltet die Personen und seine Welt je nach der persönlichen Wirklichkeitsauffassung ... Die Welt seines Romans hängt einzig von ihm ab. (20)

This narrow band of reality conveyed in the text can result, as Weiss noted, in stylistic variety and a valuable tension between the different elements. However, critics have also seen this in more negative terms. In the last quotation,

Rosenthal notes briefly the reduction of reality in writing to the personal perception of the author. Later he explores what results from this:

Der heutige realistische Roman stellt ...  
unser Verhältnis zur Wirklichkeit in Frage,  
und die Realität der Dinge um uns ist  
weniger wichtig als unsere eigene Problematik. (21)

Such a view of the relationship between the writer, reality and the work produced indicates an important change in emphasis. Accepting, in broad terms, Weiss's implied definition of the novel as a closed fiction, the mistrust of the closed fictional world of the novel which he registers manifests itself in the exploration and feeling out of reality in language rather than the delineation of a stable and discernible relationship with that reality. This exploration, in Rosenthal's opinion, emerges from the changed relationship with reality which is now characterised by questioning rather than depicting a given situation or set of parameters. The stylistic pluralism which Weiss points to (and which will emerge particularly in the analyses of Becker and Heißenbüttel) then appears as the outlining of different strands in this exploration. Rosenthal sees this as a personal questioning ('unsere eigene Problematik') which now takes precedence over reality ('die Realität der Dinge').

Bodo Heimann expresses this phenomenon more precisely in his article 'Experimentelle Prosa'. The dilemma of the writer

zeigt sich darin, daß sich Wirklichkeit  
in Beispielen moderner Prosa problematisiert,  
daß sie sich auflöst oder hypothetisch wird. (22)

These critics agree that in contemporary writing the focus has shifted from a portrayal of reality to the delineation of a problematical relationship with reality. Writing no longer takes in a broad canvas, illuminated by the writer's hand but confines itself to a narrow band, which may be limited to the writer's field of perception. Such works are characterised not by unity of style but by shifting perspective and stylistic variety, not by a stable view and portrait of a given reality, but by rumination, questioning and doubt.

Heimann shows one way in which these characteristics are manifested. The writer's dilemma, he continues:

zeigt sich auch darin, daß sich die Bewältigung von Wirklichkeit zunehmend auf das Problem der Bewältigung von Sprache reduziert. Existenzprobleme werden zu semantischen Problemen. (23)

This extends Heimann's earlier view that reality becomes a specific problem. Here he sees the writer's function in terms of mastering reality and points to the kernel of the problem for both writers and critics - language. Expressing reality now seems not simply to entail selecting le mot juste, problems of existence have become semantic problems. Language no longer serves as the writer's tool, it has become his specific and explicit concern. In the words of Christian Wagenknecht:

Die experimentelle Dichtung der jüngsten Zeit konzentriert sich in einer bisher unbekanntem Weise auf die Mittel der Darstellung selbst. Die Sprache bildet nicht allein ihr Medium, sie bildet auch ihren Gegenstand. (24)

On the one hand, any writer at any time must concern himself with language. On the other, the repeated and emphasised concern with problems of language in texts and criticism forms one major characteristic of this aspect of German literary development during the Sixties. (25) In addition, the problems of reality already mentioned tend to be discussed in terms of the place of language in the text. Language becomes both the medium for communication and expression, and the subject of that communication.

Thomas Pelster sums this up well:

Das Vertrauen in die Sprache, in der die Dichter sich verständlich machen wollen und mit der die die Welt fassen zu können glauben, schwindet; Sprache wird zum Problem. Sie fragen und erproben nun, wie weit sie von der Sprache abhängig sind und inwieweit sie sich frei bewegen; sie erkunden die Bedingungen der Sprache und ihre Möglichkeiten; sie erforschen die Leistung der Sprache bei der Erfassung der Dinge und bei der Übermittlung von Aussagen. (26)

In Pelster's view language becomes a problem for the writer because the writer's trust in language itself is dwindling. The terms which Pelster uses closely resemble Weiss's discussion of the growing mistrust of the closed fictional world of the novel. Indeed the two areas of discussion cannot be kept completely separate. The 'problem' of reality is almost always discussed in terms of the 'problem' of language, and vice versa.

Pelster points out three ways in which writers show that language has become a problem. Firstly they question and test the extent of their dependence on language. Secondly they examine the conditions which language imposes on them and the potential it offers. Thirdly they explore language in terms of its ability to grasp reality and communicate information. Pelster does not entertain the possibility that writers may try to move outside or beyond language. Rather, in his view, they are examining the limits of language as a framework, a series of 'Bedingungen' within which they must work. In his third proposal, Pelster points to the area of ambivalence in the relationship between language and reality on which writing increasingly seems to concentrate. Indeed this is also the reason why discussion of the 'problems' of reality and language overlap - such writing focusses on the shifting relationship between them.

Pelster also briefly refers to two different aspects of language: firstly to its descriptive and expressive function, the 'Erfassung der Dinge', and secondly its communicative function the 'Übermittlung von Aussagen'. (These two elements will form an important part of subsequent textual analyses in this study.) While Pelster did not look beyond the conventional framework of language, other writers and critics did, and in such discussions these two aspects of language become relevant. In a discussion of concrete poetry Gisela Dischner, for example, stated:

Durch die Isolation von Wörtern aus dem gewohnten 'Ablauf' der Sprache erscheint das Selbstverständliche der Sprachgewohnheit plötzlich neu, fragwürdig, unverständlich; die internalisierten Sprachgewohnheiten werden aufgebrochen. (27)

Concrete poetry became a label for various extreme forms of experimentation usually with poetic rather than prose forms. It attempted to remove language from the conventions and codes which govern its everyday usage. This rejection included sweeping aside both grammar and conventions of contextual meaning. Other writers, including Mon and Heißenbüttel, were also seen by critics in this light. (28)

If grammar and syntax form important aspects of the general framework of language, then they will be of major concern to a writer wishing to explore the limits of that structure. If grammar can be seen in basic terms as a series of conventions, sometimes developed into rules, for guiding and governing the everyday use of language, then a piece of writing which chooses to reject and disregard those conventions will differ radically from writing which tends to adhere more to them. The analyses of the texts will examine how Wolf, Mon, Becker and Heißenbüttel deal with questions of linguistic convention.

Where linguistic and grammatical convention holds sway, words become meaningful for the reader in two main ways. They gain meaning firstly from their individual area of reference and association and secondly from their position and function in context. This contextual meaning can emerge because conventions of grammar and syntax are (assumed to be) functioning. However, if the word-order changes, the words themselves remain identical but the contextual connections may no longer emerge because grammatical and syntactical conventions have been violated. Gisela Dischner is referring to this conscious violation of convention when she talks of 'die Isolation von Wörtern aus dem gewohnten "Ablauf" der Sprache'. This elimination of contextual meaning in concrete poetry was one of the most obvious ways in which such writing sought to experiment by challenging readers' assumptions, 'die internalisierten Sprachgewohnheiten', and by questioning 'das Selbstverständliche der Sprachgewohnheit'.

Concrete poetry formed an extreme manifestation of a general questioning not only of language itself but more

precisely of the contextual side of meaning, and this characterised a significant section of German experimental writing of this period. This questioning not only took the form of an attempt to reject grammar and syntax. It also emerged in attempts to bring out in the text the processes by which the reader produces meaning from what is read. Rejection of the contextual side of meaning-production involves rejecting one of the main means by which, for example, novelists construct the world of their novels and communicate a sequential narrative. If contextual significance can no longer be generated, the reader is left with individual words. He can then no longer rely on assumption and convention and must himself attempt to produce meaning from the text. The question of whether this shift from context and sequence to individual words in turn gives rise to new kinds of convention must wait until the analysis of specific texts.

Those analyses must also deal with the related question of how the experience of reading prose which tries to reject convention, grammatical and otherwise, differs from reading a sequential narrative. However, it is worth noting here that, if a writer seeks to emancipate his readers by breaking away from convention, he is assuming that his readers will expect such conventions to be in operation. Such writing thus works from the basis that (grammatical) conventions exist and are known. Therefore the effect of such writing depends to some extent at least on the degree of disjunction between the readers' assumptions about grammar and convention, and the extent to which such assumptions are denied. This places what might have appeared as a new literary development firmly within the foregoing tradition as a conscious antithesis to the thesis of grammatical convention. Renate Beyer's essay 'Innovation oder traditioneller Rekurs?' makes this point by maintaining that for its effect concrete poetry

auf ein traditionelles Sprach- und Dichtungsverständnis rekurriert, ja daß oft erst die traditionelle Dichtung als notwendiger Bezugsbereich die emanzipatorische Absicht der konkreten Poesie verwirklichen kann. (29)

Like Dischner, Beyer sees the intention of concrete poetry as the emancipation of the reader from the ties and strictures of grammar and generic convention. This effect can only be gained from concrete poetry's rejection of convention if the reader shares the poet's view of what expectations about the experience of reading are in operation. Emancipation depends closely on the degree of conventional assumption.

The question of emancipation recalls Heißenbüttel's view of experimental as a neutralising slogan which offers an uncomprehending reader a critical label with which to blanket uncertainty and embarrassment. Clearly, if the confused reader does no more than label as experimental those texts which seek to emancipate him from convention and assumption, then the emancipatory function has failed. 'Experimental' becomes a panacea and the questions and doubts which the text raises remain unanswered and perhaps unconsidered.

The relationship between the experimental and tradition has also been used by critics to provide an escape from dealing with such texts. For example, B. Keith-Smith's introduction to Ermahnende Ausdeutungen, a collection of short stories states:

The selection lacks any really experimental prose in the styles of such writers as Franz Mon, Jürgen Becker, Peter Handke or Arno Schmidt because it neither seeks to be representative nor to introduce young readers to forms of literature for which they are unlikely yet to have the necessary critical background. (30)

The quotation shares the view of Dischner and Beyer that experimental writing depends heavily on a knowledge and awareness of tradition. However, Keith-Smith does not consider the possibility that 'young readers' may be more receptive to such writing because their expectations have not been formed and precisely because they lack the 'necessary' critical background.

It is also possible that a weighty critical background may hinder rather than help a critic approach such texts by burying it under a weight of critical theory not directly relevant to the text. Victor Lange, for example, in an otherwise

illuminating and perceptive essay conjures up this spectacle. He feels that to speak 'with anything like adequacy' of the way in which works such as Joyce's Ulysses, Mann's Dr Faustus or Pound's Cantos are about the realisation of consciousness in language

would presume, no less, an understanding of the views, casual or systematic, that are held at a given time of the function and structure of language itself. (31)

However, the remainder of Lange's essay shows that he can at least discuss such texts without overloading his approach with critical background. Both Keith-Smith and Lange touch on an important aspect of approaching experimental texts. While some awareness of tradition and convention is unavoidable and indeed necessary, it would seem important for the critic to try to deal with the text qua text, rather than feeling obliged to interpose a consideration of the whole gamut of twentieth century linguistic philosophy and literary development. Lange's essay sketches the background to the writing in Germany which will be discussed. Our analyses of the texts will not concern themselves specifically with this background; however, in the present discussion, Lange's essay provides a useful summary of questions raised here.

The essay starts with a statement which brings together well what discussion of the 'problem' of language and of reality has already implied:

It is one of the central assumptions of contemporary criticism that the most dramatic shift of purpose and perspective in modern art has been the change from an effort to represent the concrete world about us to an accounting, both analytical and imaginative, of the process of consciousness by which the virtual world of art is produced.

The emphasis here on process is very important. Lange talks in terms of the 'process of consciousness' and of 'the accounting', not just an account, of reality. Writing is not static. Writing and perception are both processes, reality itself is no longer static or given. This emphasis on process cannot be separated from the concentration on the ambivalent and shifting



relationship between language and reality to which this writing gives expression. Language no longer focusses on 'an effort to represent the concrete world about us', but itself becomes one major element in the process of accounting reality. Lange echoes Heilmann and Wagenknecht when he continues:

A singularly striking consequence of this shift has been the manner in which language has ceased to be merely the object of conscious qualitative scrutiny and has become the very topic of poetry and fiction. (32)

This too sums up what the other critics said, although he expresses the disjunction between language as tool and language as subject more succinctly. 'Conscious qualitative scrutiny' encapsulates well the type of problem which language has always posed for any writer: the search for le mot juste.

The shift, brought about in the twentieth century by writers such as Joyce, Proust, Mann, Musil and Broch, to the 'process of consciousness' became a specific concern to writers in Germany during the Sixties. Lange mentions Becker and Heißenbüttel as writers of 'experimental prose' and points out where these writers differ from their precursors, Proust, Mann, Kafka and even Beckett, in the general twentieth century concern with language in a literary context. Proust, Mann and Beckett, he feels, concerned themselves with 'the adequacy of individual, speculative or 'poetic' speech'. By this I take him to mean that to these writers exploration of language became a way of delineating and thereby defining the individual and reality. It became an affirmation of the existence of the individual personality within, in some cases, a questioning, by means of language, of socially proscribed norms and conventions. However, in the German writers (and Sarraute and Songe to whom he also refers):

Fiction, it is now asserted, is no longer capable of offering us a reassuring picture of the world, and corroded by its destructive preoccupation with the fathoming of consciousness it must ... confine itself to an exploration of the perspectives of the world of language that determine our experience. The narrative act, narrowly qualified in its

constituent material, is not, as in the tradition of epic purpose, a symbolizing act but a procedure, appealing and even urgent to an age of finite scruples, of duplicating the world in non-symbolic speech. (34)

While Lange does not amplify why he feels the 'fathoming of consciousness' is a 'destructive preoccupation', this summary highlights some important features of experimental prose in the Sixties. Firstly, the world portrayed does not reassure or answer questions. It raises questions and leaves them unanswered. Secondly, that world is narrow, turns inward, confining itself to the exploration of a narrow band of subjective consciousness and perception. However, perception can only be expressed in language. The inward-turned delineation of consciousness then depends on a language which that consciousness cannot determine. The consciousness cannot define itself in its own terms but depends on language-structures which can come to determine and circumscribe, rather than express and communicate, experience. The inward act of subjective exploration thus becomes a 'procedure ... of duplicating the world'. In this view, the concern of the Sixties with language shows that the earlier assertion of individuality over the external pressures of reality by means of language has been inverted. Language has come to define and determine individual perception and consciousness. In such writing language does not symbolize a reality. Its language is 'non-symbolic' because the relationship between the symbol and what it stands for has become blurred and indistinct. If language defines the individual's perception, it also determines what reality is. What Lange earlier termed the 'virtual world of art' has become the actual world of language.

This increased importance of language manifests itself in concentration on individual words at the expense of sequential and contextual connections and also in a questioning and, in some cases, rejection of the conventions of grammar, syntax and word-order. In terms of plot, such writing appears to focus on separate moments. 'Partikularismus' and pluralism become more appropriate stylistic designations than unity or coherence. Chronological sequence, perspective and character give way to

fragmentation and disintegration. Such writing concentrates not on delineating a more or less stable and given reality but focuses on outlining processes of consciousness, of perception, of expression. Reality becomes fluid and shifting, as does the language which seeks to express it.

The problems which critics faced in trying to deal with such writing can, to some extent at least, be accounted for in terms of this flux and fluidity. The texts appeared to offer little to hold on to in terms, say, of plot, convention or structure. On the surface, the texts often have little in common. What they share, however, is a concern to examine the relationships between language and reality within the scope of a literary text. This concern found a different solution in each case. The four writers selected for discussion show four such routes to expression. Wolf attempts to assimilate insights about language, perception and reality into a long, quasi-novel structure in Fortsetzung des Berichts. Becker's stylistic pluralism is more suitably encompassed in a shorter form. Felder shows varied approaches to the problem of delineating consciousness. Mon's herzzero tries to accommodate the extreme linguistic tricks of concrete poetry in a longer structure. Heißenbüttel's six Textbücher illustrate the development of his concern with language and reality throughout the Sixties, and, because of Heißenbüttel's importance as both writer and critic, they have, in the words of Renate Matthaei, a particular 'zeitsymptomatische Bedeutung',<sup>(35)</sup> which will emerge in discussion of the more general literary context of the Sixties in the final chapter.

This examination of the critical context in which Wolf, Becker, Mon and Heißenbüttel wrote has clarified some important issues which occupied both writers and critics during the period. However, let us leave the final summary of the critical view of German experimental prose of the Sixties to an American. Peter Spycher in an article about 'texts' as a possible new prose form brings together much of what this chapter has discussed:

... the "progressive" younger German writers ... display an aversion to "invented facts", the well-concatenated plot, the well-rounded character, the unified personal stylization, the complete, "closed" work, the neatly circumscribed genre, the representative viewpoint of the author, the symbolic vision, the idea of a microcosmic-macrocosmic, organic harmonious totality; and a predilection for experimentation: with bits and pieces of personally observed and experienced segments of reality, with old and new techniques, forms, structures both of literature and other arts ... and above all with words and sentences. (36)

The critical contexts examined here have illustrated the use of the term experimental in German criticism of the Sixties and some of its implications. The final phrase of the quotation emphasises the connection which this criticism has made both explicitly and implicitly between the term experimental and a marked specific preoccupation with language in the writing to which it is applied. Before proceeding to examine the texts in detail I wish to give more attention to one main question which the link between experiment and preoccupation with language raises for the critic - namely the difficulties which he faces in designating the relationship between language and reality in a text, the problem of 'realism'.

## 2. THE PROBLEM OF 'REALISM'

Discussion of the critical issues raised by experimental texts in Germany during the Sixties touched on the question of the reality conveyed there. We will now examine the possible role of a 'realist' approach to such literature firstly in a historical context and then as part of a discussion of the application of structuralist insights to literary criticism. The chapter will then assess to what extent structuralist ideas which aroused such international interest during the Sixties can be applied to texts which frustrate more conventional critical approaches.

Virginia Woolf's essay 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown'<sup>(1)</sup> can provide a historical dimension to the question of realism as discussed in Germany during the Sixties particularly by Jürgen Becker, whose work Felder will be analysed later. The object of this discussion is to compare the terms in which the two writers discussed realism and the issues it raises, and to show where their treatment of it differs. Virginia Woolf's essay also provides some historical perspectives on the applicability of a realist approach, which examines literature in terms of its resemblance or non-resemblance to an external reality, to the experimental writing of the Sixties.

The examination of aspects of structuralist literary criticism will develop the problems of 'realism' further and offer some assessment of the suitability of this kind of critical theory, which was largely contemporaneous with the works considered here, as a model more adequate to the processes of the critical activity than those employed by many of the critics referred to in the first chapter.

In that discussion, Kahler, for example, maintained:

Gegenwärtig aber sehen wir Experimente, denen auf der Suche nach neuer Realität und ihrem Ausdruck jegliche zusammenhängende Realität, ja schließlich jegliche Realität überhaupt hinschwindet. <sup>(2)</sup>

Kahler is here dismissing this type of writing because it fails to match his idea of reality. Kahler's concept of the literary representation of reality is therefore highly prescriptive. Other critics examined in the previous chapter showed that the question of portraying reality was itself a major and explicit concern for these writers in the Sixties and that the portrayal of reality had itself changed. Kahler's dismissal of writing which does not coincide with his definition of 'reality' makes it clear at the outset that our examination of the problem of realism should not be based on a prescriptive view of the relationship between work, reality and the reader.

One example of the type of argument between critics with such prescriptive views will show that the issues centre on the relative nature of the terms 'reality' and 'realism' and on developments in their application. The debate between Arnold Bennett and Virginia Woolf, delineated particularly in her essay 'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown', was carried on in terms particularly relevant for our purpose as it concentrates specifically on the emphasis given to an internalised view of reality by the new novelists at the expense of Bennett's more externalised perspective. In considering this debate about conflicting views of reality I shall concentrate on the terms in which the discussion was conducted rather than on the actual results of the argument.

In her essay Virginia Woolf acknowledges the importance of character portrayal to novelists (Woolf, p.321); and it is this which forms the basis of her dispute with Bennett. She disagrees with Arnold Bennett's view of character, which she quotes:

"The foundation of good fiction is character creating and nothing else. ... Style counts; plot counts; originality of outlook counts. But none of these counts anything like so much as the convincingness of the characters ... "  
(Woolf, p.319)

Their debate centres not on whether character is important, but on the interpretation of the terms character since Bennett argues that the modern novelists

(referring particularly to Woolf and Forster) are unable to create characters who are 'real, true and convincing' (Woolf, p.319).

'Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown' provides a good synopsis of both Bennett's viewpoint, broadly speaking that of the nineteenth century Realist tradition, where emphasis tends to lie on the external, the concrete and the objective, and of Woolf's views on the subjective nature of reality and her rejection of the external and supposedly objective as illusory. Woolf summarises Bennett's position:

... we can only hear Mr. Bennett's voice telling us facts ... he is trying to make us imagine for him; he is trying to hypnotize us into the belief that, because he has made a house, there must be a person living there. (Woolf, p.330)

Woolf feels that novelists like Bennett

have looked very powerfully, searchingly, and sympathetically out of the window ...but never at life, never at human nature. (Woolf, p.330)

Virginia Woolf thus maintains that the reality portrayed in Bennett's novels is not a 'real, true and convincing' rendering of reality. She seeks to redefine reality as the inner and subjective. In the conclusion of the essay she exhorts the reader to recognise that Mrs. Brown (or any fictional character):

is an old lady of unlimited capacity and infinite variety; capable of appearing in any place; wearing any dress; saying anything and doing heaven knows what. But the things she says and the things she does and her eyes and her nose and her speech and her silence have an overwhelming fascination, for she is, of course, the spirit we live by, life itself. (Woolf, p.337)

Woolf, then, considers that her view of reality and character provide a closer and truer rendering of life than that of the earlier novelists such as Bennett.

This type of argument that new perspectives give a truer rendering of reality is often accompanied by an assertion

that this occurs because reality itself has changed or is changing. Virginia Woolf declares '... on or about December, 1910, human character changed' (Woolf, p.320). Similarly, Kurt Pinthus in his 1919 introduction to the anthology Menschheitsdämmerung argues that the new poetry of Expressionism formed a response and reaction to the cataclysm of the First World War;

Der wirkliche Kampf gegen die Wirklichkeit hatte begonnen mit jenen furchtbaren Ausbrüchen, die zugleich die Welt vernichten und eine neue Welt aus dem Menschen heraus schaffen sollten. Man versuchte, das Menschliche im Menschen zu erkennen, zu retten und zu erwecken. (3)

Thus an opposition between different views of reality and its portrayal in language is concomitant with a view that reality itself has changed and that the new perception of reality forms a response to and expression of that change. (4)

However, how can such an opposition be useful to the critic? The authors quoted here clearly have other than critical concerns in mind. Pinthus was trying to bring together the seemingly disparate poets of Expressionism, and Virginia Woolf was defending herself and her fellow novelists. Her essay forms as much a justification of her own literary practices as hints and advice for the prospective critic.

However, such an opposition between different views of reality can help the critic because it offers a framework within which to place the work he is trying to deal with. Kahler used this tactic when he declared that 'ja schließlich jegliche Realität überhaupt hinschwindet'. Comparison of the work he was reading with his critical view of literary representation of reality revealed no common features, therefore there was no reality in the work. This also shows the dangers of such a comparative ploy: comparison all too easily, as in Kahler's case, becomes prescription, rather than examination of the areas of difference and how this difference is manifested. A critical work which comes to terms with the notion of a changing reality from an analysis



which centres on texts themselves, could also permit the autonomous construction of the relationship between author, language, and reality.

Erich Auerbach's Mimesis,<sup>(5)</sup> which typifies such an approach, concerns itself, as the subtitle puts it, with 'the representation of reality in Western literature'. While Auerbach may offer to explain the factors which gave rise to his book in its particular form (pp. 554 - 557), its twenty textual examinations in fact proceed entirely from those texts, engaging wider issues only as the works in question permit and demand. This summary does scant justice to the breadth and scope of Mimesis, but it conveys its basic critical stance. The text is paramount in the examination of the representation of reality therein. Further, Auerbach works from the assumption that there is some necessary relationship between reality and the literary work and Mimesis attempts to delineate the varieties of this relationship. Two chapters are particularly relevant to us, those on Stendhal and Woolf. They deal with the basis of her argument, the dichotomy between the 'realities' of the nineteenth and of the twentieth century novel.

In the chapter 'In the Hôtel de la Mole' Auerbach deals not only with Stendhal but also with Balzac and Flaubert as 'realist' authors. Auerbach's analysis concentrates on the links between the portrayal of reality in the novels and the contemporary reality as experienced by the authors. He links the varied fortune of Stendhal the writer with the particular portrayal of forces for change and of social instability in his works, reaching the conclusion that:

The reality which he encountered was so constituted that, without permanent reference to the immense changes of the immediate past and without a premonitory searching after the imminent changes of the future, one could not represent it; all the human figures and all the human events in his work appear upon a ground politically and socially disturbed. (Auerbach, p.463)

Stendhal's work, then, rests on that disturbance to which he gives expression. Of Balzac, Auerbach says:

to him every milieu becomes a moral and physical atmosphere which impregnates the landscape, the dwelling, furniture, implements, clothing, physique, character, surroundings, ideas, activities, and fates of men, and at the same time the general historical situation reappears as a total atmosphere which envelops all its several milieux. ... Balzac's atmospheric realism is a product of his period. (Auerbach, p.473)

Finally, in his analysis of Flaubert, Auerbach reaches the conclusion:

The essence of the happenings of ordinary contemporary life seemed to Flaubert to consist not in tempestuous actions and passions, not in demonic men and forces, but in the prolonged chronic state whose surface movement is mere empty bustle, while underneath it there is another movement, almost imperceptible but universal and unceasing, so that the political, economic, and social subsoil appears comparatively stable and at the same time intolerably charged with tension. (Auerbach, pp.490 - 491)

Despite their apparently divergent conclusions, the three passages share a common basis. In Auerbach's view the realist novels he is discussing concerned themselves specifically and at length with portraying their contemporary reality, albeit in very different ways, and, in addition, this was a realism which encompassed the possibility of tragedy arising from social forces.<sup>(6)</sup> His analysis shows three possible approaches to the portrayal of external social reality: the individual within the historical and social in Stendhal; the individual as product and expression of the social and historical in Balzac, and, with Flaubert, the individual above but containing and expressing the social and historical. But all three approaches proceed from the basis that the novel represents contemporary social and historical reality.

The only twentieth century work with which Mimesis deals at length is Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse. In this work Auerbach sees manifested the changes which came over the representation of reality which had characterised the nineteenth century 'Realist' novel:

The writer as narrator of objective facts has almost completely vanished; almost everything stated appears by way of reflection in the consciousness of the dramatis personae. ... we are not taken into Virginia Woolf's confidence and allowed to share her knowledge of Mrs. Ramsay's character; we are given her character as it is reflected in and as it affects various figures in the novel. ... there actually seems to be no viewpoint at all outside the novel from which the people and events within it are observed, any more than there seems to be an objective reality apart from what is in the consciousness of the characters. (Auerbach, p.534)

This summarises concisely the scope of the change Woolf has accomplished: the demise of the narrator, the rise of internalised reflection; the contrast between interior and exterior time; and the reduction of exterior life by cutting away the direct significance of staple events in an external world.<sup>(7)</sup>

The difference between Auerbach's investigation and the critical and theoretical situation delineated in Virginia Woolf's essay does not lie in the basic substance of the argument. Both Woolf and Auerbach agree that the representation of reality in the novel has changed. Auerbach, however, views that change in positive terms as a development from and not just an abandoning of past techniques and views (pp.535 - 6). This is not merely a difference of tone and commitment, it rests on an assumption that literature, reality and the representation of reality in literature cannot alter abruptly, cannot change 'on or about December, 1910'; that such changes are part of a more gradual and more extensive development.

The argument thus hinges on the relativity of terms such as reality and realism, on shifting relationships not sharp reversals in semantics and language usage. The achievement of Mimesis is to combine lengthy discussion of the particular in a balance with consideration of wider issues and implications so that this relativity emerges.

This is important in discussing Germany of the Sixties, because the argument on behalf of the 'experimental' then was

conducted in terms and a tone often almost indistinguishable from those of Woolf. In discussing 'reality' and 'realism' in the Sixties, I will deal firstly with statements made by Jürgen Becker, not because he was the only writer to voice such views but because the extremeness of his tone makes the general position clearer. That position, however, is not unrepresentative of the general view during that period, as the later analysis of texts will show.

Becker does not conduct his argument in terms of German literature or even post-war German literature, but in terms of the nineteenth century novel, a tradition of chronological and coherent narrative representing an ordered and orderable reality.<sup>(8)</sup> He thus works from the same basis as Woolf, but forty years later. He sees the novel thus:

Den Roman ... sehe ich als Ausdruck des Bürgertums des 19. Jahrhunderts. Im Roman sah dieses Bürgertum sich selber in einer Art von Selbsterklärung, einer Art von Interpretation jener Welt, in der dieses Bürgertum mehr oder weniger geschlossen lebte. Diese Welt existiert nicht mehr, und das Bürgertum selber existiert in dieser Form nicht mehr. Unsere gesellschaftlichen Formen sind heute offen, diese Welt ist anders, und ein Roman, glaube ich, ist da nicht mehr imstande, diese Gesellschaft, die so aufgestückelt ist in Einzelheiten, so zu repräsentieren, wie das im 19. Jahrhundert möglich gewesen ist.<sup>(9)</sup>

Becker views society and social structures as 'open' (although he does not define what he means by this), and feels that therefore the closed fictional world of the novel is no longer the suitable literary form for that society. This is, in fact, a re-statement of Woolf's opinion that reality had changed and therefore the representation of that reality must itself change. However, Becker's conclusion goes further. In an essay published in 1964 he states:

Nicht die Verkleidungen des Romans, sein Äußerliches, seine Fiktionen und Handlungsverläufe künden von den Erfahrungen, die das Individuum seinen Ausdruck suchen lassen. Erst jenseits des Romans findet das Schreiben den Sinn des Authentischen.<sup>(10)</sup>

Here, then, not only the nineteenth century novel, but the novel as genre and narrative is to be abandoned. It is clear that 'Verkleidungen', 'Äußerliches' and 'Handlungsverläufe'

belong to the same type of argument that Woolf pursued against Bennett, Becker is rejecting the externalised, ordered and enclosed reality of the nineteenth century novel. Becker's rejection would seem to encompass both the mode and the substance of the representation of reality in the nineteenth century novel. The argument continues in the same manner, advocating that a new, radical portrayal of reality alone can give an authentic rendering of that reality. In the interview quoted earlier Becker continues:

Ich verkleide die Erfahrung nicht, ich kostümiere das Ereignis nicht. Ich lasse es beim Authentischen. Ich bin, sozusagen, ein Fanatiker des Authentischen, ich möchte die Dinge authentisch haben, wie ich sie erlebt habe - d.h. nicht nur konkret auf der Straße, sondern wie ich sie durchs Denken erlebt habe, wie ich sie in der Phantasie erlebt habe, so möchte ich sie eigentlich genau rekapitulieren in der Sprache. (11)

The 'more real than previous realisms' argument here is transacted in the repetition of 'authentic'. This authentic experience of reality seems to mean some sort of direct absorption and expression of the experienced world, a transcription without the ordering and forming hand of a narrator or evidence of authorial control - 'ich verkleide die Erfahrung nicht, ich kostümiere das Ereignis nicht'.<sup>(12)</sup> Becker's view combines an absorption of matters external, the things 'konkret auf der Straße' with the active participation of the experience of imagination. Becker also seems to be proposing a dynamic and mutable view of reality, to correspond with the changing perspective and experience of the subjective consciousness. His view of the personal, subjective and narrow perspective on reality can be seen as an extension of Woolf's emphasis on the inner and spiritual nature of reality. However, while she could still use a created character, Becker claims to be unable to move beyond himself and his own reality '... ich möchte die Dinge authentisch haben, wie ich sie erlebt habe'. Becker's view of reality is not the same as Woolf's and Bennett's. Unlike them, he does not deal with an existing, substantial world which the writing 'expresses' but with a multi-faceted, fragmented reality:

Bewußtsein: das ist meines in seinen Schichten,  
Brüchen und Verstörungen ... Sie lesen nur  
Mittellungen aus meinem Erfahrungsbereich. (13)

These quotations have not touched on the relationship which Becker sees between language and reality. This is clarified in a reference to Heißenbüttel who, in Becker's opinion, showed 'daß unsere Verständniungsweise der Wirklichkeit bereits vorbestimmt ist durch das syntaktische System unserer Sprache'. (14) Language and reality, then, cannot be separated. This corresponds with the idea that in Felder the mode of articulation of each field is suited to and produced from within the event which occasions it. Becker reflects the different elements in his perception:

in einer jeweils veränderten Sprechweise, die aus dem jeweiligen Vorgang kommt. (15)

One further quotation will clarify Becker's views on language in the novel:

Das Schreiben von Romanen wird gemeinhin weniger als Wortkunst denn als Deskription dessen betrieben, was das sogenannte Leben an freundlichen oder tristen Begebenheiten hergibt. Sprache wird dabei als vorhandenes Verständigungsmittel vorausgesetzt, um als Vehikel der Handlung deren Bestandteile zu transportieren. (16)

Thus he rejects language as an assumed 'vorhandenes Verständigungsmittel' which carries or transports the plot 'als Vehikel der Handlung'. (17) However, unlike Becker, neither Woolf nor Bennett found it necessary to question the language in which they wrote; they accepted its essentially instrumental character; they simply differed about what they wanted it to convey. For Becker, then, reality and language are inseparable, the 'Sprechweise' forms one element in a myriad of overlapping non-exclusive fields of reality.

Becker thus sees writing as something in which the 'action' becomes transferred to language itself, the practice of language becomes the construction of the reality. This raises the question of the limits of that reality. In an interview with Lettau, Becker remarks:

Und das interessiert mich beim Schreiben immer sehr, auf die Schichten des Bewußtseins zu stoßen, die wirklich noch offen, die wirklich frei sind. (18)

This corresponds with his earlier contrasting of the 'offen' social forms of contemporary society with the more closed forms of the nineteenth century which produced the 'closed' reality of the Realist novel. Contemporary society is not only 'offen' but also 'aufgestückelt in Einzelheiten' (19) which seems to correspond with the dynamic movement which Becker is proposing for his writing which, in his view, would allow freedom of reflection and interplay between the different fields of consciousness expressed.

Later analysis of some of Becker's work will examine how and to what extent he carries out these theories in practice. For our current purposes we must concentrate on the terms he uses and their implications for a critical approach to literary texts. Becker's ideas have been extracted from a fabric of rather naive assumption and imprecise definition which besets Becker's mode of expression. For example, he fails to define 'wirklich frei' and 'wirklich ... offen'; similarly he does not elaborate on what his 'gesellschaftlichen Formen' are or on the implications and manifestations of the fragmentation 'in Einzelheiten' to which he draws attention. This lack of definition emerges most strongly in the use of 'authentic' to describe the type of experience he wishes to convey:

ich kostümiere das Ereignis nicht. Ich lasse es  
beim Authentischen ... ich möchte die Dinge (20)  
authentisch haben, wie ich sie erlebt habe.

'Authentic' has the advantage of sounding, to a less than critical ear, both plausible and possible. But were Woolf and Bennett also not seeking to render experience and reality authentically? Did their argument not centre precisely on the question of what type of reality and realism was the more authentic? It is clear from the context that Becker would define authentic as adequate to his own experience, as reflecting that experience, but surely so would Woolf and Bennett. However, Becker fails to acknowledge or develop the critical implications of the realism problem; he merely restates it.

As will emerge in subsequent examination, the terms and direction of Becker's views seem to indicate that he had some

contact with the criticism and ideas of the French nouveau roman.<sup>(21)</sup> This shows one direction in which authors at least were looking during the Sixties.

The situation outlined so far in this thesis: the critical uncertainty and lack of definition, the failure to reach beyond re-statement of old problems and the dressing up of old ideas in new guises all point to the need for a different and new approach to the problems involved in criticising contemporary literature. One possibility comes from the French structuralist critics who came into prominence at the same time as the development of the nouveau roman but who have also concerned themselves with other areas of literature.

In this context it would be neither practicable nor useful to examine either the history and development of what has come to be called structuralism, or the precise delineations of the meaning and application of the term.<sup>(22)</sup> Rather our task here is to introduce the facets of that critical stance and its terminology which perhaps attracted the attention of authors and critics in Germany during the Sixties.

It will be useful to provide an introduction to these ideas at this juncture rather than letting them emerge during the analysis because of their complexity and variety, not because they do not emerge in practice in the writing of the Sixties. Structuralism has its base in linguistics and shares with that discipline a rich descriptive and critical vocabulary, some elements of which we will try to elucidate here. The bewildering and often pseudo-scientific complexity of such terms at times serves to confuse rather than to clarify. For this reason I will attempt to keep my own use of such terms to a minimum and to indicate here possible areas of their application.

A brief example of the terminological confusion are the two, very different sounding terms 'structuralism' and 'semiology'. The latter comes from Ferdinand de Saussure's Course in General Linguistics and refers to 'a science that studies the life of signs within society',<sup>(23)</sup> an as yet undeveloped science, of



which linguistics, the study of language as 'a system of signs', would form a significant part. The term 'structuralism' has a mixed origin developing from the influence of the Russian Formalists and the Prague Linguistic Circle, as a term referring to the structure of the linguistic system.<sup>(24)</sup> Thus both terms rest on a concept of language as system. In the application and development of such ideas in relation to literature and literary criticism, as opposed to the myriad other possible sign systems or semiologies, the two terms in practice have examined largely similar phenomena. For example in Jonathan Culler's view a structuralist poetics asks what is the nature of the implicit knowledge which literary experience affords in approaching a literary work and what are 'those codes and conventions, that may be postulated to account for our ability to read and understand literary works.'<sup>(25)</sup> Stephen Heath, on the other hand, talks of 'the prospect of a textual semiotics as exactly the comprehension of the literary work as writing and the analysis of its processes of signification'.<sup>(26)</sup> The concern of both lies with accounting for the processes, codes and conventions by which a literary work comes to mean something to the reader; thus providing a model of the particular possibilities and constraints present in the 'productive process' of any text. Because of this basic similarity of usage I will use the term structuralist and structuralism, except if dealing with a non-literary or non-linguistic sign system.

My argument on realisms thus far has been conducted in terms of relative perceptions of what is real. The same argument is conducted by structuralist critics such as Roland Barthes with greater emphasis on the reader's perception and reception of the work. This is one major shift of critical emphasis, from the relationship between the author and the work to the relationship between the reader and the work, emphasising the codes and conventions of the literary system from the recipient's viewpoint. The acts of writing and reading emerge as moments of process in the creation of the text.

S/Z, Barthes's study of Balzac's Sarrasine,<sup>(27)</sup> works from the basis of two types of text, 'lisible' and 'scriptible'.<sup>(28)</sup>

This type of dichotomy has characterised Barthes's criticism since the early Le degré zéro de l'écriture which outlines Barthes's first rejection of past realisms concluding that 'aucune écriture n'est plus artificielle que celle qui a prétendu dépeindre au plus près la Nature'.<sup>(29)</sup> When Barthes elaborates his views in less polemic and more coherent style in S/Z, the grounds for the rejection become clearer. The 'lisible' is a text which can be absorbed and soaked up by the reader, which poses no or few demands upon his critical faculties because, among other reasons, that text confirms and identifies a world which the reader can recognise and whose assumptions both he and the author can then take for granted. For example, such a code can be seen operating in the opening sentences of several of Theodor Fontane's novels where names of streets and references to Berlin place the action of the novels culturally as well as geographically.<sup>(30)</sup>

In Barthes's view this all too frequent authorial ploy makes the reader's life far too easy:

Ce lecteur est ... plongé dans une sorte d'oisiveté, d'intransitivité, et, pour tout dire, de sérieux: au lieu de jouer lui-même, d'accéder pleinement à l'enchantement du signifiant, à la volupté de l'écriture, il ne lui reste plus en partage que la pauvre liberté de recevoir ou de rejeter le texte: la lecture n'est plus qu'un referendum. (S/Z p.10)

This readability of a text with its 'valeur négative, réactive' is set against the 'scriptible' in which the reader becomes 'non plus un consommateur mais un producteur du texte', the reader approaches such texts by accepting the challenge 'd'écrire (de ré-écrire)' (p.10). Barthes does not define these terms exactly - if indeed that is possible. He becomes somewhat rhapsodic about the 'scriptible' without offering directions for further exploration. While the 'lisible' is dismissed as 'la masse énorme de notre littérature', the 'scriptible' is

un présent perpétuel ... le romanesque sans le roman, la poésie sans le poème, l'essai sans la dissertation, l'écriture sans le style, la production sans le produit, la structuration sans la structure. (S/Z p.11)

The exact relationship between these terms and the subsequent textual analysis in S/Z remains unclear. Nevertheless, the two terms are useful because they focus on the mechanisms of reading. The Woolf-Bennett discussion now emerges as a dispute about degrees of 'lisibilité', about which view of reality could be more readily absorbed and soaked up. The criticisms dealt with in the first chapter may now be seen as attempts to make 'lisible' those texts which tended more towards the 'scriptible'.

I find in S/Z nothing which supports Culler's assumption that Barthes necessarily means the nouveau roman when he refers to a text 'scriptible'.<sup>(31)</sup> Indeed Barthes seems to mean a utopian, non-existent text which is never tied down but always in process: 'le texte scriptible n'est pas une chose, on le trouvera mal en librairie' (S/Z p.11). However, clearly one step towards a possible text 'scriptible' would be a text which defies conventional criticism, thus both the nouveau roman and the experimental German texts appear suitable candidates.

Recent German literary theory has proposed certain terms related to but distinct from those of Barthes. I here refer to the development of 'Textgrammatik' developed from linguistics (although there are also other linguistic approaches to literature.)<sup>(32)</sup> A 'Textgrammatik' seeks to define and delineate general structures in a literary work.<sup>(33)</sup> This approach seems to be derived from Propp's analysis of the Russian folk-tale into functions which always occur in the same order in each tale. They also look to the ideas on grammar as 'the whole of the systematic description of language' found particularly and influentially in Chomsky's later work.<sup>(34)</sup> The text-grammarians attempt to use descriptive techniques along the lines of transformational grammar in working out the grammar of a text. The success of such a project is less certain.

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of the notion of text', (35) 'Prologomena zu einer Theorie des "Narrativen"', for example, states:

Wir versuchen, einige der Regularitäten, die Texten im allgemeinen und narrativen Texten im besonderen zugrundeliegen, durch Kategorien und Regeln zu rekonstruieren. (36)

The emphasis always lies on the system, the rules and categories first, with the text itself coming a very poor second. In my view, this explains why such attempts rarely move beyond the discussion of terminology, or, if they do, fail to provide an account of the specific text. (37) Mathematics and theory smother the text instead of providing either a grammar of its specificity or a general grammar of its progression. The fundamental short-comings of the approach emerge in the conclusions of the attempts where such statements proliferate:

[oe] ist evident, daß die von uns skizzierte Globalstruktur nur einen ersten, sehr tentativen, heuristischen Zugang zu dem damit bezeichneten Phänomen darstellt. Weitere Untersuchungen werden hier nötig. (38)

This single example might merely indicate the academic modesty of the writers. However, the failure of such attempts to move beyond this stage indicates that, as yet, approaching a text from the viewpoint of a general grammar and theory only reduces that text to a minimal sketch of itself; while at the same time their failure, by comparison, underlines Barthes's achievement in S/Z. By moving from the general to the particular this type of approach tends to ignore the specific attributes of the text. After all, it is the specificity of the text which stimulates the critic or reader. From this, then, it would seem more satisfactory to approach the text in its specificity rather than impose an initial prescriptive definition on it. The later textual analysis may indicate whether it is possible to move from such specific approaches towards a general statement about 'texts'.

It does not, however, seem ultimately unreasonable to talk of the possible grammar of a particular text, the structures and codes on which it is founded and which function as we read it. The assumptions of Barthes's 'texte lisible'

constitute part of the grammar of that text, and the codes he uses in S/Z help construct the particular 'grammar' of Balzac's story. Dismissing the more linguistically oriented text grammars does not necessarily dismiss the notion of a system, merely the application of that idea in a narrow and over-theoretical context.

This failure of the prescriptive linguistics text grammar approach relates back to our differentiation between structuralist criticism and previous criticisms in terms of the increased emphasis on the relationship between reader and work because 'text grammars' fail to account for the activity of the text. Two terms 'recuperation' and 'naturalization' (cf. Culler, p.137) are used to express the emphasis on the activity and process of reading, of producing meaning from the text, of, in Barthes's terms, the critic's writing, 'ré-écriture', of the text. These terms are based on the view of the intelligibility of nineteenth century Realism. For the sake of clarity and simplicity I will briefly refer to summaries of these ideas made by Heath and Culler, not their original expression, since many of Barthes's fellows share the unhelpful complexity and density of his style and syntax. Heath states:

For a particular society, ... the work that is realistic is that which repeats the received forms of 'Reality'. It is a question of reiterating the society's system of intelligibility. (Heath, p.21)

This describes the 'innocence' of Balzac's realism, for instance, where 'the writing itself does not in any way represent a problem' (p.15). In this situation, that of Barthes's 'texte lisible' or 'texte classique', the text becomes readable:

This readability is relayed by a series of codes and conventions, by the text of the already known and written: that work is readable, therefore, which is cast within their horizon, which repeats them in their naturalized transparency. In these terms, the novel, through the development of realist writing ... has become the form of a certain social seeing; a form, like other social forms ... to be learned, repeated and consumed. (Heath, p.21)

Thus nineteenth century realism is 'naturalized' because the constructive processes of writing and meaning production are

concealed by being placed within those systems of intelligibility readily available to the reader. Jonathan Culler expresses this well:

To understand the language of a work is to recognise the world to which it refers. (Culler, p. 135) (39)

Heath sees the 'realism' of the nouveau roman as 'the deconstruction of the very "innocence" of realism' (p.22):

Its 'realism' is not the mirroring of some 'Reality' but an attention to the forms of the intelligibility in which the real is produced, a dramatization of possibilities of language, forms of articulation, limitations, of its own horizon. (Heath, p.22)

This shares Barthes's emphasis on activity and process, 'forms of intelligibility', the production of the 'real'.

The structuralist approach then offers a new formulation to describe the phenomenon of the text in terms of the processes of producing meaning rather than in terms of discovering a meaning inherent in the text. (40) This approach can also be used to re-assess previous realisms by highlighting the reader's part in the process of creating the text and so avoids the tendency to ignore the reader and the reading process. This concentration on the processes of criticism (seen now as the articulation of a reading) thus offers a meta-criticism, a way of examining and criticising the critical tools and assumptions of previous, as well as present, critics. We shall first examine this approach applied to a work of the nineteenth century realist tradition.

A structuralist criticism wishes to offer not the way of approaching a text, not the sense or meaning of a text, but mechanisms by which different meanings are produced from the text; as Culler puts it:

Interpretation is no longer an attempt to discover a lost meaning but a series of operations applied to a text to produce meaning. (41)

Barthes's S/Z attempts at length to explore routes by which a reader produces meaning in reading one text, Balzac's Sarrasine:

La lecture ... ne consiste pas à arrêter la chaîne des systèmes, à fonder une vérité, une légalité du texte et par conséquent à provoquer les "fautes" de son lecteur; elle consiste à embrayer ces systèmes non selon leur quantité finie, mais selon leur pluralité. (S/Z, p.18) (42)

Barthes divides Sarrasine into 561 'lexies' or units of text which he interprets individually because 'il faut bien renoncer à structurer ce texte par grandes masses' (p.18). This allows the text to emerge in the plurality of its possible meanings:

Relever systématiquement pour chaque lexie ces signifiés ne vise pas à établir la vérité du texte (sa structure profonde, stratégique) mais son pluriel. (S/Z, p.21)

These text units, which range from two or three words to whole sentences, are examined in relation to five codes which Barthes discovers in the first sentence of the story (pp.24 - 28). These codes offer areas of interpretation within which the reader produces meaning from the text.

We will examine briefly two of Barthes's codes, the hermeneutic and proairetic, because they deal primarily with the basic structuring processes which go into the reading of a text, the others being largely refinements and elaborations of these two. The proairetic code, also known as the 'code des actions, voix de l'Empirie' (p.267), refers to the structuring of sequences of actions as the story progresses, in other words to plot sequence. Barthes points out that such sequences only come into existence in the process of reading:

la séquence proaïrétique n'est jamais que l'effet d'un artifice de lecture; quiconque lit le texte rassemble certaines informations sous quelque nom générique d'actions (Promenade, Assassinat, Rendez-vous), et c'est le nom que fait la séquence; la séquence n'existe qu'au moment où et parce qu'on peut la nommer, elle se développe au rythme de la nomination qui se cherche ou se confirme. (S/Z, p.26)

This emphasis on the creation by naming of sequences of actions is important because it is one obvious area of naturalization and recuperation: by naming an action and placing it in a sequence one is bringing it within one's own intelli-



gibility. Interestingly, Barthes does not point out this factor in his code, and does not attempt to differentiate between elements of recuperation, which, it would seem, are inevitable in any criticism or interpretation, and the 'lisibilité' which he has condemned. Perhaps the explanation is that the proairetic code is only one of several codes in Barthes's pantheon while in the other realist modes of interpretation it occupied a much more major position.

The hermeneutic code works from some implied series of questions and answers. The text provokes the reader into asking questions which tend to stimulate further reading. For example, the title of the story Sarrasine engenders such a series of questions:

Le titre ouvre une question: Sarrasine, qu'est-ce que c'est que ça? Un nom commun? un nom propre? une chose? un homme? une femme? (S/Z, p.24)

The hermeneutic code thus tantalises the reader until the questions asked, which are caused by the enigmas, the unexplained elements in the text, are answered. This code serves:

à distinguer les différents termes (formels), au gré desquels une énigme se centre, se pose, se formule, puis se retarde et enfin se dévoile. (S/Z, p.26)

These two codes seek to give a framework to two hitherto somewhat neglected and unarticulated aspects of the interpretative process: the desire to know what happens next and the desire to understand what something means in the context of the text. The analysis of Sarrasine attempts to show how the text answers these questions as it is being read and how such questions contribute to its structure.

Barthes's analysis of Sarrasine does not achieve its ends merely because it concentrates on small units of text. Rather this concentration enables Barthes to focus on the structuring of the language more than on what he might assume it to say. (This is a danger of dealing with larger textual units.) The small text units draw attention to the construction of an

impression of reality, the construction of a 'reality' in the work; as Philip Thody puts it, Barthes looks at 'the way language creates rather than reflects what we call reality.'<sup>(43)</sup>

The significance of such structuralist approaches to literary texts emerges more clearly when compared briefly with the short-comings of a more traditional approach to, for example, the novels of Alain Robbe-Grillet. Bruce Morrissette's Les romans de Robbe-Grillet<sup>(44)</sup> attempts to 'dégager la ligne rationnelle qui relie les éléments de l'action' (cf. Heath, p.120). This restricts the novels to a single formula according to which Dans le Labyrinthe concerns a soldier suffering from amnesia, Les Gommes an Oedipus complex and so on. Thus for Morrissette criticism of these novels becomes 'a quest for meaning' which 'reduces the plurality of the work in the name of a representational readability' (Heath, p.120).

Morrissette's critical gyrations hide the challenge which the nouveau roman presents to more conventional critical recuperation of a text because it calls into question and undermines precisely those codes and conventions on which such an approach rests, (cf. Heath, pp.122 - 123). Accordingly, the nouveau roman is unreadable, 'illisible', in conventional terms:

The 'undoing' of the novel poses problems of reading. In relation to expectations of reading defined within the natural attitude examples of the nouveau roman ... produce an effect of unreadability; they remain unavailable for consumption, which means in fact - and this is the unease they cause - that they have to be read. (Heath, p.30)

This reading of the text, the reader's active participation in structuring the text because it does not fall within his accepted immediate bounds of intelligibility, coincides with Barthes's emphasis on the reader as recipient and on the processes of the reception of the text. This shows that such an approach is suitable for these more modern texts as well as for a Balzac text. Heath's analysis also shows in the nouveau roman conscious reaction to a tradition, to traditional ways

of looking at, writing and reading a work of literature. The French nouveau roman thus presents a body of self-consciously experimental writing. Just as Becker sets out to demolish the nineteenth century novel so the nouveau roman undoes the novel of tradition. It deconstructs the 'innocence' of Balzacian realism by making it impossible, or utterly banal, to recuperate the literary product in the same way because this deconstruction takes the form of a consciously language-centred writing, where the 'reality' of the work is indivisible from the language of the text.

It is now clear that Morrissette's attempts to 'explain' Robbe-Grillet's works can be compared with those critics looked at in the first chapter. They sidestepped the problems in the texts by recuperating them using the label 'experimental', either positively by affirming the work, even when not understanding it, or, negatively, by dismissing it as not worth bothering about.

One problem which those critics failed to deal with is that of the readability of the texts. The texts invite the label 'experimental' because they are different from other texts which fall within the accepted literary critical canon. The use of the term experimental as a panacea, which we saw in Chapter 1 is very similar to Morrissette's delighted grab at amnesia to explain away the otherwise - in traditional 'realist' terms - incoherent and incomprehensible ramblings of Dans le Labyrinthe. In addition, assuming that, as Heath suggests, the specific aim of the nouveau roman is to deconstruct the assumptions of Balzacian realism, then, even if one could read the text without such assumptions, it would lose much of its effect. The nouveau roman, even in the terms of a critical approach which seems to offer some sort of satisfactory potential reading of the text, remains tied to the tradition it seeks to reject. This self-consciousness of reaction to tradition, shared as we have seen by Becker, thus presents another parallel with the experimental literature of Germany in the Sixties.

It is clear that the structuralist critical approach examined here has certain advantages for dealing with contemporary and near contemporary literature. Firstly an approach which concentrates on the processes of reaction to a text maybe better able to deal with texts which consciously seek to break down literary assumption in the reader. Secondly, given the critical failures shown in the previous chapter, attention to the processes of interpretation, the activity of reading the text, of structuring it in that reading, may provide a more fruitful approach to works which seek to construct a language-centred 'reality' and also, as Heath put it, to deconstruct the innocence of realism by giving attention to 'the forms of intelligibility in which the real is produced' (Heath, p.22). The third advantage of this approach is that the concentration on the activities of reading and interpretation also provides a means for discussing other critical approaches which do not take account of the processes of interpretation. For, just as Barthes seeks to bring out the plurality of Sarrasine, so this process of interpretation does not seek to impose one view on a work but provides a mechanism by means of which potentially any number of 'readings' is possible. (45)

Thus our examination of the reality problem has led to the conclusion that, given the apparent and evident inability of critics to find a way of dealing with experimental literature, the structuralist emphasis on the process and activity of interpretation represents in Jonathan Culler's words:

[which] a willingness to think of literature as an institution composed of a variety of interpretative operations [makes one more open to the most challenging of innovatory texts, which are precisely those that are difficult to process according to received modes of understanding. (Culler, p.129)

With this in mind, let us move on to the texts.

3. ROR WOLF'S FORTSETZUNG DES BERICHTS -  
READING THE TEXT

Critics dealing with Fortsetzung des Berichts <sup>(1)</sup> by Ror Wolf which was published in 1964 discussed it in terms familiar to us from the first two chapters of this study, the importance of language and the process of meaning production. For example, Günter Blöcker refers to

Welterfahrung und Weltentschlüsselung aus den  
Impulsen eines unstillbaren Benennungsdranges. <sup>(2)</sup>

Marianne Kesting in Die Zeit compares the form of Fortsetzung des Berichts with

einem Prozeß, der im Fortwuchern und Assoziieren, dem dschungelhaften Ausbreiten und Verdichten der Sätze ein ebenso wucherndes und dschungelhaftes Geschehen wiedergibt ... . Wörter und Sätze werden ... selbsttätig. <sup>(3)</sup>

Rainer Scheunemann describes the work in terms of a circular process:

die Lektüre dieses Buches vollzieht sich zirkulär:  
die Einsichten, die es vermittelt, setzt es zu  
seinem Verständnis schon voraus. <sup>(4)</sup>

In the view of these three critics, then, Fortsetzung des Berichts combines an unquenchable desire to name things and words which have an independent life in a stream of association and the reader experiences these elements in a reading process which becomes circular. In order to elucidate the possible significance of the first and second observations, we will attempt to follow the third and give a reading of Fortsetzung des Berichts.

One critic has already examined a short text by Ror Wolf in the way suggested in the previous chapter. Chris Bezzel's examination of the opening of Ror Wolf's second book Pilger und Pelger, <sup>(5)</sup> 'Warenform und Metafiktion', <sup>(6)</sup> does not state that it is a structuralist approach but the 'Schichten' into which he divides the text bear a close resemblance to Barthes's

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codes and the analysis views the process of reading the text as 'productive consumption'. Bezzel states that 'man als Leser diesen Text wegen seiner Komplexität nur produktiv konsumieren kann' (Bezzel, p.107). Bezzel's concept of productive consumption refers to what we have hitherto called the process of producing meanings from the text. Bezzel's 'Schichten' form individual but overlapping elements in the production of meaning in the text. His approach shows one possible variation on Barthes's division of the text into codes and provides a potentially flexible reading of the text.

The layers which Bezzel discerns in the opening of Pelzer und Pelzer are the 'Ereignisschicht' the movement of plot, which when present is reduced to a minimum and does not adhere to any causal or logical idea of space and time. The 'reflektierter Erinnerungsprozess' does not present coherent memories but rather provides reflection on the processes of memory and comment on the reduced elements of plot. The other layers relate to language. The 'Klischeeschicht' draws attention to the use of set linguistic formulae in the text, emphasising the formulaic and fixed language structures which Bezzel sees in contemporary 'Schriftsprache' where emphasis is on 'das Förmliche und das (literarisch) Abgegriffene' (Bezzel, p.109). Both the 'Bewertungsschicht' and the 'Vergewisserungsschicht' (Bezzel, pp.109 - 110), like the memory layer, emphasise the process of constructing the text in language. The former deals with evaluations such as 'gut', 'wirklich ganz einfach'. The latter examines the processes of uncertainty in the text: uncertainty of expression 'ja, wie soll ich das sagen' and of knowledge 'Vielleicht heute' (Bezzel, p.110). In addition to these layers, Bezzel examines elements of time, space, character, as well as the vocal structure, syntax and vocabulary of the text. His conclusions deal with 'Pseudo-Affirmation', which he defines as the delineation of 'die Scheinhaftigkeit der spätbürgerlich-affirmativen Glücks- und Realitätsvorstellungen' (Bezzel, p.118); with 'Realisationswert', in terms of Marxist views of exchange value, production and consumption; with 'Meta-

fiktion', perhaps the most interesting of his conclusions, which sees in the text a fiction about fictionality which contributes to a 'materialistische Emanzipation der Fantasie' (Bezzel, p.122). The overall analysis is then related to the idea of the productive consumption of the text.

Although this analysis achieves much in terms of seeing how the text is constructed in terms of what the reader is actually reading in the text, the sample is too small and therefore the analysis can do little more than note the existence of and give examples of the elements in the text. It could not, for example, attempt comparison of interaction between the layers or show their function in the rest of the work.

If we wish to attempt a similar examination of Fortsetzung des Berichts, its length will present obvious problems given that Barthes took 270 pages to analyse the 31 pages of Sarrasine and Bezzel's reading of 19 lines of Pilzer und Pelzer is 23 pages long. It would clearly be impossible to examine all the 272 pages of Fortsetzung des Berichts in the same detail. On the other hand, Stephen Heath's approach which selects and isolates elements of text for critical consideration runs the danger of being little different to the tendency to gloss over the text which the structuralists condemned in other critics. Our present analysis, therefore, will attempt to combine these approaches and to minimise the disadvantages of both by treating parts but not all of the text in detail and then examining the organising elements in the fabric of the whole text.

Bezzel's concept of layers will form the starting point for our examination of the text of Fortsetzung des Berichts and we will first look at the opening section. In any work the opening is of particular importance because it conventionally establishes the parameters of the text and forms the basis for the reader's experience of the book. Since this



applies to any text, the opening will be even more important in a text which may be trying to provide the reader with a non-conventional reading experience because it will help establish the degree to which convention is being maintained or abandoned.

The first sentence raises one of the main questions of the work, that of fictional closure, which must be touched on here, although it will be examined more fully later in the context of the whole book:

Nun, nachdem ich alles beschrieben habe ...  
nähere ich mich dem Ende des Berichts. (p.7)

In this first sentence the reader discovers that the work is concerned with a pre-existing and continuing descriptive process 'nachdem ich alles beschrieben habe ...', and with ending not beginning the 'Bericht'. So here, insofar as the opening establishes parameters, they emerge as parameters of uncertainty and of the reversal of expectation. This presents the first challenge to the reader's assumptions:<sup>(7)</sup> the opening is not giving information from which the reader can work and establish a relationship with the text. Rather it places the reader in the midst of a pre-existing process without providing points of orientation. The reader must produce his own meaning in the reading process, rather than assimilating a text which works from shared assumption.

The repeated mention of textual closure, of the demands of ending and beginning heightens the emphasis on process in the surrounding text. End and beginning emerge as arbitrary impositions on a continuous descriptive process which itself has no self-imposed start or finish. The consciousness of beginning and ending continues, but they both remain unachieved or inverted as the book starts with mention of an ending and ends with mention of 'was kommt' (p.272). This inversion, however, just gestures towards end and beginning; the text has no sense of beginning and conclusion. In this first sentence emphasis on process emerges in the verbs 'beschrieben

habe' which points backwards in the process and 'nähere ich mich' which indicates continuation. Thus the consciousness of closure accompanies an openended descriptive process. We shall call these two elements the layers of consciousness, firstly, of closure and, secondly, of the descriptive process.

The uncertainty engendered by the opening sentence continues in what Bezzel termed the 'Vergewisserungsschicht' which occurs in the phrases 'vielleicht', 'ich weiß nicht ich glaube', 'wie es scheint' etc. (pp.7 - 8). In Bezzel's analysis this was only a 'kleine Schicht', here it assumes greater significance because of the prevalence of the expressions of uncertainty in the passage. However, the two do share the same purpose; as Bezzel puts it:

... der Erzähler tritt aus der narrativen Funktion heraus, er spricht über seine Erzählung.  
(Bezzel, p.110)

This layer then is extraneous to any sense of plot or event. It consists of self-conscious reflection by the narrative consciousness, the 'ich' voice, upon the writing process. This reflects uncertainty in two directions: about what is described 'wie es scheint', 'es ist schwer zu beschreiben', 'wie ich würde sagen', and secondly about the language in which the description is expressed 'vielleicht', 'ich weiß nicht ich glaube', 'warum nicht', 'von dem ich ... sagen könnte ...'. (These two sides are not mutually exclusive, 'ich weiß nicht' and 'vielleicht', for example, could belong to either.) However, this 'Vergewisserung', the process of reaching a state of certainty, remains unachieved. It casts doubt both on the narrative consciousness's perception and ability to perceive, and on the language which expresses that perception. Since this device spreads the awareness of uncertainty throughout the text, we will call it the layer of uncertainty.

This reiterated uncertainty in the narrative voice emphasises the consciousness of the process of formulating

language. The second sentence states:

Vielleicht wird es jetzt aufhören, dieses ich weiß  
nicht ich glaube Sitzen, ja das ist das Wort,  
Sitzen. (p.7)

Here the uncertainty rests not on the perception but on the ways of expressing that perception. It is uncertainty in and about language. This continues the process established in the first sentence of breaking down assumption about the existence of a definite narrative situation by questioning the vehicle of that narrative, language. This further underlines Bozzel's point about the disjunction which arises between the narrative function and the comments extraneous to that function. This extra-narrative commentary casts doubt on the ability of the narrative voice to formulate linguistic expression and on the suitability of that language for expressing perception. This layer of uncertainty continues throughout the text, but it is important to note the emphasis laid upon it at the start.

The questioning of language then continues in a rather different guise:

Ich spüre eine abgeschabte ledrige Mulde unter mir,  
eine wie es scheint von vielen Körpern vor mir  
eingedrückte Polsterung. Meine Handflächen gleiten  
an hartgeformten ich glaube Knollen, ich weiß nicht,  
gedrechselten Stuhlbeinen hinab. (p.7)

In addition the narrative voice now questions both his perception and the language which expresses it by giving a complex description of an everyday object - thus the chair seat becomes 'eine abgeschabte ledrige Mulde' and the twisted chair legs 'hartgeformten ... Knollen'. Even the final admission that 'ich weiß nicht, gedrechselten Stuhlbeinen', does not actually refer to the whole chair, only to its legs. This procedure forces the reader to quarry after what is being referred to and to break through the barrier of the language. He thus enters a quest for the material/information which the language simultaneously expresses and hides by cloaking it in tortuous phrasing, and by offering no more than vestiges of narrative information.

Here the perspective is important. The narrative voice gives details of the chair's construction, its worn seat and convoluted legs, rather than describing the whole object. The narrative voice is so near the object that the description of detail becomes distorted. This is the opposite of the extra-narrative commentary above. It is the perspective of a photograph of magnified detail which places an ordinary object outside its usual perspective, thereby forcing the viewer (or reader) to re-assess past perspectives. This device continues throughout the work, making the reader solve puzzles, or, like a crossword-puzzler, decipher information which is given but designed to mislead or deceive.

Bezzel's layer of the reflected memory process also occurs in this passage:

Ich erinnere mich an Stimmen, an Worte, in halbvollen Mündern verkaute Sätze, die herantreiben, zusammen mit den Geräuschen des Essens dem erst fernen dann näheren Klang von Geschirr, dem Löffeln, Schlürfen von Suppe. (p.7)

The present tense of 'erinnern' helps emphasise that the memory here is not just a recollection of past event, but is an integral part of the immediate experience of the narrative consciousness. The verb 'herantreiben' and the shift of perspective in 'dem erst fernen dann näheren Klang' represent the memory welling up until it supercedes present experience, taking over the narrative voice's perception completely. As the sentence continues any vestigial temporal perspective on the memory disappears, it has become present experience:

dem Klatschen, mit dem die Klöße weich auf die wartenden Teller fallen, dem Plätschern, mit dem die Brühe dunkel über das Weiß der geöffneten Klöße rinnt. (p.7)

This lack of differentiation between past and present pervades Fortsetzung des Berichts. Some areas of experience can be differentiated but not in terms of chronology; each element of the narrative voice's perception is direct and immediate, so that memory and immediate experience cannot be

qualitatively distinguished. Memory forms one element in the perception, inseparable from any other. This too challenges any possible assumption about chronology and an ordered (or orderable) progression of event in the narrative, since chronology cannot exist if past and present are not distinguishable.

Here too the emphasis is on the process of memory, as it was on the process of creating uncertainty and of perceiving the details of the chair. The welling-up of the memory into the forefront of the perception encapsulates processes of perceiving and formulating that perception.

These two elements emerge more specifically in the following:

Mit der Zeit treten diese Aufwölbungen, Verbiegungen aus der von Zigarrenrauch und Speisendampf vernebelten Ferne hervor und wachsen zusammen zu diesen birnenförmigen und kürbisförmigen, wenn auch nur im ganzen und groben birnenförmigen kürbisförmigen Köpfen, diesen aufgeschütteten Körpern mit vorgestreckten warum nicht vorgestreckten Händen. (pp.7 - 8)

The verbs 'hervortreten' and 'zusammenwachsen' express the dynamic nature of the acts of perceiving and expressing and are reinforced by the notion of clarity emerging from obscuring clouds of smoke and steam. Here the process of formulation itself seems to contribute to the increasing clarity, but this is at once undercut by the terms of uncertainty 'wenn auch nur im ganzen und groben' and 'warum nicht vorgestreckten', so that the clarity which has emerged remains relative and the doubts about language, its expression and formulation persist.

This emphasis on the processes of perception and formulation continues in the next sentence:

es ist ein Bild, das ich vor mir habe, alles in allem, von dem ich, wenn ich das abüße, was mich täuschen könnte, sagen könnte, daß es ein Zimmer ist. (p.8)

Unlike the last example, where the physical description mirrored the linguistic clarification process, the process here is purely linguistic because it emerges through the syntactic complexity of the subordinate clauses as well as the direct expressions of uncertainty. Like the 'definition' of the chair, the conclusion that 'es ein Zimmer ist' is an anti-climax, the banality of the conclusion undermining the complexity of the route which reaches it.

Another aspect of the layer of descriptive process is the proliferation of detail expressed in the lists. One example occurs in the first sentence:

diese zurückliegende Zeit, diesen Weg, mit den Bewegungen und Erscheinungen, den Bildern und Geräuschen, diese Landschaften, mit den Knollen, Kuppeln und Buckeln, den Rinnen, Wannen und Gruben.  
(p.7)

This has much in common with the list at the end of the passage:

Dieser Tisch, rund schwer hölzern wie er ist, mit seiner borkigen Oberfläche, dieser Stuhl, steif aufragend abgewetzt knollig, diese klappende zuckende nach oben schießende Uhr, diese Wände, diese Döcke, diese Fenster, Türen, Schränke, Spiegel und in den Spiegeln die geschwürkelten Aufsätze dieser Schränke, die Ziffern dieser Uhr, die Ausschnitte dieser Wände Türen Fenster mit schimmernden Landschaftsbildern, die gebrochenen gebogenen geschwungenen Merkwürdigkeiten dieses Zimmers, in dem ich sitze, ich weiß nicht, an einem Abend, die Sonne fällt langsam hinter das Fensterbrett zurück. (p.8)

Both passages define and delineate the descriptive process by means of which the narrative voice's perception expresses itself. In the first the past, defined as a road, appears to be made specific in the series of dative-case nouns. However, this is illusory. The vagueness of the nouns 'Bewegungen', 'Erscheinungen', 'Bildern', 'Geräuschen', 'Landschaften' offer little further definition while the two series of virtual synonyms could describe phenomena as widely separated as mountains and valleys, or slight undulations. The overall fragmentation of perception emerges through the disjointed

sentence structure which groups the nouns into separate units divided by commas.

The second example combines these features with the close perspective of the chair description. Lists of the contents of the room: doors, windows, cupboards, mirrors and clock focus on small detail 'die geschnörkelten Aufsätze dieser Schränke, die Ziffern dieser Uhr, die Ausschnitte dieser Wände' (p.8). The last of these, the pieces cut out of the walls, refers to the doors and windows, but here again the reader must delve into the language to extract the meaning.

If one conventional purpose of description is to place language and what is described into some recognisable order, neither of these passages fulfil that function. The nouns expressing the past remain separate and fragmented. The objects in the room stand in no relationship to one another, other than their position in the sentence, for example, 'diese ... Uhr, diese Wände, diese Decke, diese Fenster, Türen, Schränke, Spiegel'. Thus the listing gives minimal information without imparting order or relationship.

Further to this, the passages show two ways of conveying fragmentation and lack of order by means of the presence or absence of adjectives. In the first example no adjectives occur, leaving the nouns unspecified and general. In the second example the extreme specificity of the adjectives, paradoxically, has a similar effect. The chair attracts the adjectives 'steif aufragend abgewetzt knollig', the clock is 'diese klappende zuckende nach oben schießende Uhr' and we find reference to 'die gebrochenen gebogenen geschwungenen Merkwürdigkeiten dieses Zimmers'. Like the noun lists, these adjectives remain unrelated to one another. They appear to give information and detail but, because of that lack of relation and of the obscurity of many of the adjectives themselves, they undercut attempts to relate the adjectives to one another, or even the nouns thus qualified to each other.

From this it is clear that the layer of descriptive process in Fortsetzung des Berichts takes to an extreme and thus distorts the rhetoric of description associated with the realist novel where descriptive passages impart details which aid the reader in constructing the 'world' of the novel from that information. The details in the Wolf text cannot be made to cohere.

This disjunction between general terms and an appearance of specificity affects the elements of plot, the 'Ereignisschicht'. The analysis thus far has drawn attention to the emphasis on process in the text - the processes of description, of uncertainty, of language formulation and of perception itself. Insofar as this passage has an 'Ereignisschicht', it is based on stasis, not on events: the narrative consciousness is sitting, in a room. The nearest to action emerges in the last clause 'die Sonne fällt langsam hinter das Fensterbrett zurück' (p.8).

However, Bezzel's description of the 'Ereignisschicht' in the opening section of Pilzer und Pelzer illustrates the weakness of Morrisette's approach to Robbe-Grillet. Bezzel summarises as follows:

Der Himmel war sehr blau. Am Horizont lief plötzlich rasch ein Mann. Es war zu Beginn der schönen Jahreszeit. Der Himmel war etwas mehlig. Der rasch laufende Mann verschwand in der Ferne ...  
(Bezzel, p.108)

Bezzel describes this as a 'logisch nicht zu integrierenden Bewegungsvorgang' (Bezzel, p.108). The banality of Bezzel's resumé shows that the attempt to isolate the event from the fabric of the prose ignores so much of the text that the whole exercise becomes questionable.

This realisation indicates the pitfalls of trying to establish a layer of plot in this type of text. Awareness of plot, or elements of plot, as a possibility in the text should not develop into an attempt to bludgeon a plot thread out of the text.



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Analysis of this first section of Ror Wolf's Fortsetzung des Berichts, then, has shown that this text centres on what varying processes of articulation involve - both for the writer in composing and formulating the language, and for the reader in reading and delving after the language and sense of the text. It is a work which seeks to outline the dynamic processes of expression by articulating them and by forcing the reader to participate in them, rather than letting the reader simply assimilate the text. Thus, this opening passage does after all establish the parameters and concerns of the text which must now be examined in the rest of the work.

In the whole text two main narrative situations recur - a meal in which the narrative voice participates and a walk which he undertakes. In the first section both situations are indicated - in the 'Landschaften' and in the sounds of eating. While these two aspects do not make up the whole text they form strands uniting the otherwise apparently disparate elements of the text. However, neither constitutes a coherent sense of progression or movement through the text, they merely give two discernible areas of experience which emerge in the text in an often repetitive and/or contradictory way. The fields of experience are not completely discrete, they overlap at various points. This points to the unordered perception of the narrative consciousness, which emerged in the first section. The perception of the narrative consciousness provides no differentiation or ordering within the particular descriptions and the same occurs in the various fields of perception which intermingle throughout the work. This shows one aspect of the work's possible open-endedness because, if the areas constantly overlap, each being equally valid and important as an individual manifestation of the perception of the narrative consciousness, then, no conclusion or finale may be attainable within the parameters of the work. The critics, then, must attempt to convey this potential openness. To this end, we will first look at two sections, one concerned with the meal and the other with the walk, before trying to show some ways in which the different instances of

the two strands interact and contrast with one another.

The first section deals with the first appearance of the sailor in the text, pp.78 - 9. Previous sections have dealt with the preparation of soup by the wife, its arrival at the table, and with figures at the table. This section includes the sailor for the first time among those eating the meal. The observation of the sailor by the narrative consciousness occurs through a mirror 'im angetrübten Oval des Spiegels ... erkenne ich jetzt'. This distances the observer and implies the possibility of distortion. The description thus shows the mirror image of any action; the reality is mediated by the mirror, not expressed directly. The first sentence establishes the strangeness of that mediated reality:

Neben dem Fenster, im angetrübten Oval des Spiegels, der die Schnörkel Zapfen Bogen und Knicke dieses Zimmers einfängt und zu neuen sonderbaren Gegenständen verkuppelt, erkenne ich jetzt eine Bewegung, die mir früher nicht aufgefallen ist, und für die ich auch im Zimmer keine Entsprechung finden kann. (p.78)

In the mirror the room possesses curves, angles, scroll ornaments, the mirror catches this, connecting these attributes with new and strange objects. The room and the meal provide a general narrative situation, but neither stays static, they provide constant new sources of perception. This applies not only to the changing physical attributes of the room but also to the actions occurring in it - hence the previously unnoticed movement. The last clause throws into relief the possible distortion in the mirror but, not, apparently, in the room itself. This glance at perspective outside the mirror disappears when the definition of the movement, the taking off and putting on of a sailor's cap, is balanced by the acknowledgement that the narrative consciousness cannot read the letters on the cap 'dessen Buchstaben ich, weil sie im Spiegel umgekehrt erscheinen nicht lesen kann' (p.78). This further emphasises the distortion of the perspective. Similarly the shift from one element to another provides no order or overall view. Focus moves from the movement to the

hat-band, to the mouth underneath, concentrating on detail not on the person with the mouth who wears the hat,

Attention centres on details of the action:

eine Hand mit einer Gabel, an deren Zinken ein Kloß steckt, hebt sich, im Spiegel, dieser Mundöffnung zu und schiebt den Kloß unzerkleinert, wobei sich auf eine unbegreifliche Weise die Mundwinkel ausweiten und dieser Mund nun wahrhaftig zu einer großen dunklen Grube wird, in den Mund. (p.78)

The interpolated details smother the simplicity of the action: 'eine Hand ... hebt sich ... und schiebt den Kloß ... in den Mund' thereby fragmenting the execution of the action and forcing attention onto the more minor details. However, whilst encapsulating the opening of the mouth in the wider action does help express the simultaneity of the two, the syntactic complexity of the clause construction makes this more difficult to grasp.

Thus, as in the first section, the processes of perception, description and formulation are emphasised here. This continues in the description of chewing and swallowing the food where the details of the action balance with reflection about the process. 'Im Spiegel, nach meinem Eindruck' reasserts the mirror perspective as well as implying the possibility of the impression being wrong. This brief mention expands in the following sentence which refers to past views of the room as well as to the present:

Diese Person, die mir bisher am Tisch nicht aufgefallen ist, die entweder nicht am Tisch, oder aber verdeckt für mich am Tisch sitzen muß, eine eigentümlich ich würde sagen in einen Matrosenanzug gekleidete Person, legt sich nach diesem Vorgang, den ich im Spiegel verfolgt habe, zurück, und fällt aus dem Spiegel heraus. (pp.78 - 9)

This defines the limitations of the perspective of the narrative consciousness. Thus the sailor has not been seen before either because he was not sitting at the table previously, or because he was invisible to the narrative consciousness and thus did not enter the range of perception.

In this passage that perception is circumscribed by the limitations imposed by the mirror - thus the sailor disappears when no longer reflected in the mirror. This limited and distorted view contrasts with novels which create in language the parameters of a physical and mental world which the text can then amplify.

However, here as in the opening, any comment casts doubt on the elements of the text, while emphasising the processes involved in creating that text. The narrowness and uncertainty of the perspective is heightened by expressions of uncertainty ('nach meinem Eindruck' and 'ich würde sagen'). In the last sentence, the conclusion 'dort also, hinter dem Schrank, sitzt der Matrose' emerges from observation of the director and Krogge gazing intently into one corner of the room. The description of their gazing contains nothing to link it with the previous description of the sailor.

Thus this passage too expresses a shifting, fragmented, unordered and unordering perception and emphasises the processes involved in reaching that expression. In reading the text these two aspects combine in the constant and paradoxical awareness of the simultaneous creating and undercutting of a reality which is achieved in and by means of language.

In Bezzel's terms this passage contains no 'reflektierter Erinnerungsprozeß'. The 'Ereignisschicht' consists of the raising and lowering of the hat, the eating and swallowing of the food, the sailor disappearing from the mirror and the gazing into the corner. Again this provides a most unsatisfactory resumé, because the passage also focuses on the processes of perception and formulation rather than on description of action.

The final section (pp.224 - 226) to be examined in such detail belongs to the other general narrative strand - the walk and the country. This contrasts with the previous

sections because, at first glance, there is greater apparent attention on description rather than on the processes involved in reaching a description. The first verb emphasises the shift not only to description but to description of action: 'trete ich aus dem Wald in ein offenes Gelände hinaus' (p.224). This section contains many more verbs of action, applying both to the narrative consciousness and to what is being described: 'ich ... komme', 'die Hinterteile ... verschwinden', 'die Bewohner treten ... antreten', 'trete ich' (p.225). The narrative consciousness takes a more active part in the events he describes rather than serving solely as observer, while still fulfilling the latter function. The verbs of action which apply to him place him in a position to observe the town and inhabitants. He steps out from the wood and describes what he sees, likewise he steps into 'die erste schmale Öffnung des Ortes hinein' (p.225) and describes his observations there - 'sehe ich die Bewohner'.

The earlier concentration on detail is also important here. But this detail occurs within a wider given context: it is evening 'an diesem Abend, im Schein der untergehenden Sonne' (p.224); the narrative consciousness emerges from the wood 'trete ich aus dem Wald' (p.224), and proceeds towards Rößblitz and describes the first houses. All this could form part of a conventional - if minimal - plot description delineating action and context. However, in the midst of this apparent convention, the narrative consciousness focuses on one image which because of its incongruous effect detracts from the surrounding description:

... trete ich aus dem Wald in ein offenes Gelände hinaus, mit Kuhkörpern, schwankend und trotzend in langen Reihen. Es ist dieses Viehtreiben, das von allen Seiten zugleich einsetzt, ein Stückereschwingen, ein Dungfallen, ein Hinaufbrüllen aus geöffneten Schnauzen, dieses augenblickliche Bild mit dem ich nach Rößblitz komme. (pp.224 - 225)

The apparent progression of action is interrupted by this concentration on the cows being driven, the details of the sounds they make and their actions. The pace engendered by

the verbs of action, 'trete' and 'komme' is decelerated by the static verbal nouns 'Viehtreiben', 'Stückeschwingen', 'Dungfallen', and 'Hinaufbrüllen'.

Wolf's technique of listing verbal nouns recurs throughout the work. Here they slow down the pace - however limited - introduced by the active form of the other verbs, and they also help to emphasise the formulation of language by distancing the reader from the process of the action being conveyed in the closed form of the verbal noun and thus diverting attention from the on-going action.

Verbal nouns also make the description general, or rather, prevent it becoming specific, thus 'dieses Viehtreiben', 'ein Stückeschwingen', etc., convey the general import of the action without differentiating it from any other such action. The absence of adjectives furthers this. Repetition of 'ein' and 'dieses' increases the impression of fragmentation, since the elements of the description remain unconnected. The linguistic and syntactic formulation conveys no connection between the stick-swinging and the cattle-driving. A general connection is not impossible, but its precise nature remains ambiguous. Thus, despite an initial impression of greater action and participation, the bulk of the description remains distanced, fragmented and general.

The next sentence is also general despite an initial impression of more conventional description:

Dort, vor mir, mit geschwärzten aufgesprungenen Mauern, mit dampfenden Schornsteinen, mit dunklen eingebrochenen Fenstern, liegen die ersten Häuser, in denen die Hinterteile der Kühe verschwinden und aus denen, im Augenblick darauf, zum Ausgang gerüstet, gebürstet, die Bewohner treten und mit langen Schritten, schwarzen harten Hüten, den Weg in eine gemeinsame Richtung antreten, deren Ziel im Inneren des Ortes liegen muß. (p.225)

Whilst the general attributes of a conventional description remain, e.g. walls, chimneys, houses, inhabitants, etc., the

text provides no perspective. Adjectives serve more to obscure than to clarify - the walls are blackened, the chimneys smoke, the windows are dark and broken.

The syntax of this sentence undercuts the impression of description and progression imparted by the verbs of action. The first and main clause reads 'Dort ... liegen die ersten Häuser'. However, before specifying the houses, the text describes the walls, chimneys and windows, once more focussing on the detail rather than giving an overall view. Similarly, the second subordinate clause is widely spaced 'aus denen ... die Bewohner treten'. Interspersing the subordinate clauses with descriptive phrases forces the reader to work out the structure of the sentence and therefore of its possible meaning because that structure is not obvious. Similarly, the complex syntactic structure with clauses and phrases separated by commas, heightens the fragmentation engendered by the previous sentence by focussing on individual elements in the description.

This fragmentation continues in the next sentence:

Nun, an diesem Abend, ich bin aus dem Wald getreten und alles, was mit diesem Wald und auch der Zeit vor dem Wald in Verbindung gebracht werden kann, liegt hinter mir, trete ich in die erste schmale Öffnung des Ortes hinein. (p.225)

This is a statement of the fragmented nature of the perception noted in previous contexts. The perception links neither elements of the particular situation nor the different areas of experience. Any possible connections result from the reader's participation in structuring the text. The narrative consciousness mentions a possibility of connection, 'alles, was ... in Verbindung gebracht werden kann', but it is not developed, it 'liegt hinter mir'. The connection may exist but the narrative consciousness will not make it. It is the reader's task to do so.

In this fragmentation of perception, the concentration on detail allows no perspective on the experience being



described to emerge. This is furthered in the juxtaposition of the walls of the houses and 'die großen behaarten Fliegenkörper' in the following sentence:

Zu meinen beiden Seiten befinden sich die gekalkten, gerissenen, von nassen Flecken gemusterten Hauswände, auf denen, in der Abendsonne, zu schwarzen Klumpen zusammengedrängt, die großen behaarten Fliegenkörper sitzen. (p.225)

Here too the verbal clauses are dispersed by the inclusion of descriptive subordinate clauses and we read the description of the flies before being informed that they are flies. However, the main point here is the lack of differentiated perspective between the walls of the houses and the flies on them. The reader cannot relate the adjective 'groß' to the other elements of the sentence. This section shows clearly how the parameters of this text constantly change, and, as the perspective shifts, how appearance of conventional description is undercut and brought into question.

We learn that the destination of the inhabitants 'im Inneren des Ortes liegen muß'. This deduction by the narrative consciousness continues in the details that they 'in die Sonntagskleidung geschlüpft sein müssen' and 'die Hüte auf die Köpfe gestülpt haben müssen'. This procedure reinforces the narrow and subjective nature of the perception. The narrative consciousness even goes out of his way to draw attention to his weaknesses by making apparent but misleading deductions from the situation:

Weit vor mir ... sehe ich die Bewohner, die mit äußerster Geschwindigkeit ihre Arbeitskleidung abgestreift haben ...

This contains no apparent element of doubt. In the next line, however, this certainty comes into question

... abgestreift haben und in die Sonntagskleidung geschlüpft sein müssen. (p.225)

This reveals that the 'haben' governing 'abgestreift' is not the third person plural perfect, but an infinitive qualified by 'müssen'. 'Must have' forms a much less definite unit

than 'have', and again the reader is forced to re-assess his reading of what has gone before.

This process of re-assessment runs parallel to an emphasis on movement. The repeated physical movements of the narrative consciousness highlight the changing impressions he experiences. For example:

In diesem Moment des Dahingehens, unter den Eindrücken dieses Abends, an den kleinen zurückgezogenen Fenstern vorbei, mit ihren breiten, vermoosten, von weißem Taubenmist bespritzten Simsens ...  
(pp.225 - 226)

'Moment' emphasises the transitoriness of the experience, an emphasis which continues in the plural 'Eindrücken' contrasting with the repeated emphasis on short time spans, e.g. 'dieses Abends'. The descriptions of the windows focuses again on extraneous detail: the mossy sills covered in pigeon droppings.

The text now proceeds to an encounter with Wobser and his tales which are referred to throughout the text. In this context the inclusion of memory and of Wobser's tale give the text added potential in terms of narrative perception and scope. 'Erinnere ich mich' shifts the focus from the windows to an area of past experience, which then comes to the forefront of the consciousness. However, because this memory is indirect, consisting of a tale told by Wobser which the narrative consciousness only experiences at second hand, both the consciousness and the reader remain distanced from that tale. The story is perceived only in language, in Wobser's narration of it, and is doubly distanced in this case because it is a memory and not an immediate experience for the narrative consciousness. This comes out in the past tense of the verbs 'nannte' and 'handelte':

erinnere ich mich an eine von Wobser's Geschichten, die er "Hinter dem Fenster" nannte, sie handelte von einem großen knolligen Gebilde, einer Art Gesicht, das er hinter einer Fensterscheibe gesehen haben will, mit einem saugend gegen das Fensterglas gepreßten Mund. (p.226)

The link between the story and the precoding passage is the use of window in the description and in the title, however, they remain separated by several lines and clauses. Here Wobser's tale does not consist of any action or plot but of a mouth pressed against a window, the face 'hinter dem Fenster'. The verbal construction 'das er ... gesehen haben will' casts doubt on either his perception, or the belief of the narrative consciousness in that perception, or both. This undermines any possible reliance on Wobser as a source of ordered narrative and on an idea of a 'Geschichte' as a vehicle of narrative. Linguistically, the most interesting feature of this sentence is the description 'einem großen knolligen Gebilde' which we are then informed is 'eine Art Gesicht'. This juxtaposition shows once more how concentration on detail, 'knollig', in conjunction with general terms 'Gebilde', 'Art', 'Gesicht', 'groß', combines to startle the reader by calling a face a large lumpy formation. This section thus rests on the tension between an appearance of description, detail and narrative information and the undercutting of that appearance in the language, syntax, vocabulary and construction of the passage. This furthers awareness of the processes of language formulation and description which is in turn heightened by the presence of the layer of uncertainty.

Examining different sections of Fortsetzung des Berichts has shown how each works individually. In turning now to the text as a whole we will attempt to give some account of aspects of the work which demand to be viewed over the whole length of the text. The first of these aspects returns to Bezzel's critique of Pilzer und Pelzer, the 'Ereignisschicht' or plot elements. The previous analyses have shown on the one hand that fragmented particles of plot event were interspersed in the sections while on the other the remainder of the text sought in varying ways to undercut this.

Fortsetzung des Berichts is divided into unnumbered and untitled sections of varying lengths. Counting each spacing

in the text as a section division, the text contains 102 sections, some as long as 13 pages (pp.129 - 141), some as short as one line (pp.223, 224). Of the two basic narrative situations, the meal figures particularly at the start of the book, taking up the first five sections (pp.7 - 17). Although the walk and landscape receive mention in these sections, interest concentrates more on the meal. In sections 6 to 8 (pp.17 - 36) the walk, landscape and memory become dominant, before the meal returns on pp.36 - 42. This helps set out the two situations at the start of the work. While it is clearly a more irregular arrangement than a simple one-to-one correlation it is possible to discern recurring plot strands through the work. For example, on page 97 the narrative consciousness delineates a possible love-making scene:

Folgendes könnte nun, vielleicht nicht in dieser, aber einer dieser entsprechenden Reihenfolge geschehen: das Abschneiden der Strumpfbänder, das Einschnappen des Riegels, das Aufknöpfen des Schürzenkleides. (p.97)

This listing of verbal nouns to encapsulate the possible scene continues on to the next page, where, in the same section, the description starts again 'Ich brauche einen neuen Ansatz, vielleicht sollte ich mit ihrem Herankommen beginnen' (p.98). This lasts for a page and a half, until the end of the section. The next, very short, section brings the focus back to the meal 'Mein Gesicht spiegelt sich in der Suppe' (p.100). After these two lines, the description of the love-making starts again 'Oder doch, vielleicht sollte ich nur anders beginnen, etwa mit der Beschreibung des Bettes ...' (p.100). The same descriptive procedure is repeated. At the end of this section, on p.102, another extremely short section shifts back to the meal: 'Nein. In die Schöpflöffelbewegung hinein ...!', before yet another attempt to describe the scene 'Ich könnte versuchen an einer anderen Stelle einzusetzen, etwa beim Hineintreten ins Zimmer ...'. On p.105, the same appears to be about to occur - the short section returns to the meal and the following section starts 'Noch einmal nehme ich einen Anlauf ...'.

However, at this juncture the cook's wife distracts the train of thought and becomes the focus of the text.

This series of alternations shows at its more obvious a technique which runs throughout the work. From p.125 to p.161, for example, there is a series of different, often repetitious descriptions of the walk in the country, seeing a group of women at work in the fields, the farmer, the body of a horse, a stubble fire, entering a factory, the arrival at a pub and meeting someone called Schön. This progression, however tenuous, is interrupted on pp.128 - 9, 141 and 147 - 8, by a return to the meal. One can find throughout the text repeated snippets of description, re-expressions of actions already described and new contexts for old participants.

However, it is impossible to construct a chronological or coherent order from the various elements in the plot layer. Although in parts of the text the alternation seems fairly obvious, the different areas are not discrete enough to enable the reader to (re-)construct an order from the fragments. The text, therefore, cannot be read as a puzzle to which a careful reader might find the key. One reason for this lies in the quasi-repetition found, for example, in the love-making sections. These sections show different attempts by the narrative consciousness to formulate the actions in language, different ways of expressing the perception. It is impossible to reduce the elements of the text to a fragmented but orderable plot because none of the sections are necessarily definitive, none provides a more authoritative expression of that moment or event. While the love-making scenes draw explicit attention to the possibility of repetition, so this possibility is implicit in the rest of the text. Thus Fortsetzung des Berichts presents changing or potentially changeable versions of a limited range of experience. Instead of authoritative delineations of experience or event, the reader meets versions, verging on repetition, of moments of perception which overlap with one another throughout the work. The love-making sections

emphasise the differences in language and linguistic construction, while in the walk the virtual repetitions of seeing the women in the fields, the horse's body and the fire, of entering and leaving the wood and the changing combinations of these elements, reveal a varying of the perception itself rather than just of its linguistic expression by the narrative consciousness.

This raises the question of what until now has been referred to as the narrative consciousness. The whole text is related by an 'ich', what one would usually term a first person narrator. Discussion of the plot elements and of the individual passages has shown that the narrative consciousness does not act as guide to the reader or as conscious controller of the material. This emerges in the first sentence where 'ich' informs the reader that the end of the 'Bericht' is near, although for the reader it is just starting. The narrative consciousness provides no help to the reader trying to find a way through the text - and for this reason I have avoided using the more conventional term 'narrator' in discussing the text.

The first person awareness serves as a central focus through which the perception passes and which expresses that perception in language. The narrative consciousness acts as a receiver of sensory perception. This emerges in the repetition of and emphasis on areas of sense perception: for example, in the first section, the feeling of sitting, the smell of cooking, hearing the noises from the kitchen, tasting the soup and food, but above all the act of seeing. The analyses have discussed the fragmentary visual impressions which form a major part of the text. It is as if the eye of a camera pans across a scene, absorbing the detail without giving perspective or placing the perception within a coherent frame or context. The lists of objects impart no idea of the relationship, if any, between them, or a perspective from which to view them. The narrator, then, observes, senses, and absorbs

those perceptions. He is more a passive observer than an active participant. He partakes of the meal without really appearing to participate in the activity just as, on the walk, he tends to observe rather than playing an active role. The relationship between these observations and their expression in language can be seen in the series of passages which deal with love-making.

In the first (pp.97 - 8) the list of verbal nouns in apposition makes the events quite impersonal: actions occur without any attribution to participants, merely 'das Abschnallen ... , das Einschnappen', etc. The use of verbal nouns here, as elsewhere in the text, fragments the action by dividing it into individual components. The narrative consciousness does not state that this is a love-making scene, the reader must extract this from the component parts of the description.

The second description (pp.98 - 9) is personal, includes the narrative consciousness in a rare active role as one of the two participants:

Sie kommt mit aufgerollter Frisur, sie kommt mit erhobenen Händen, mit ausgestreckten, gastfreundlich geöffneten Armen mir entgegen. (p.98)

This emphasises the areas of perception and the certainty of that perception: 'Ich täusche mich nicht ... Ich sehe die ... Gesichtsfläche ... Ich spüre das Drücken ... ich höre das Keuchen' (pp.98 - 9). The third description (pp.100 - 101) focuses on the objects, the bed and its covers and their appearance, and on the woman's body. Uncertainty is more explicit: 'etwas wie die Wärme', 'diese wie sagt man zarten wie sagt man die Lenden' (p.100), 'etwas wie Zittern' (p.101). The fourth description (pp.102 - 104) lists objects and obstacles in the way of the couple going to the bedroom, e.g. 'diesen Sesseln in Schonbezügen diesen Tischen und Wannen Kartons Zubern Schachteln Koffern und Kisten' (p.102). Attention then reverts to the impersonal.

Not only do the passages differ stylistically, they also cover different aspects of the love-making. The first deals solely and precisely with the physical act from getting undressed to 'das Lösen der Türkette, das Hinaustreten auf die Straße'. The second has the woman welcoming the man and leading him to the bedroom and stops in mid stream with the exclamation 'Nein' (p.99); the third has the act completed when a man with a revolver enters the room, while the fourth does not let the couple reach the bed despite their desire to do so (p.104).

The narrative consciousness makes clear that these are not descriptions of different events, but different versions of the same events stemming from uncertainty about the act of narration: 'vielleicht sollte ich nur anders beginnen' (p.100). These four descriptions form variations on a theme of sex. They share a common subject but the perception and expression of the described reality differs in each case. The first emphasises the individual actions involved in getting undressed, making love and getting dressed again, spotlighting the small and unconnected action. The second explicitly contradicts the fourth, in the former the woman welcomes the man into the room, in the latter the two together never reach the room; while the third stops just before the physical sex act starts. Thus they are variations on a theme of sex rather than the encapsulation in language of a specific perception.

The close focus on immediate sense perception and the overlapping areas of experience revealed in these scenes help break down in the text any appearance of (and in the reader any expectation of) narrative order. The emphasis on memory throughout Fortsetzung des Berichts also contributes to this. The shifting memories are not merely fragmentary, they also prevent the reader from constructing an order in his reading of the text. Faced by a text with a fragmented time scheme, for example, the reader attempts to construct an order within that scheme, just as in a film, calling a scene a flashback



brings it into a chronological order which its position in the film, and in the watcher's experience, does not initially justify. However, Fortsetzung des Berichts reveals no overall temporal context into which the reader can locate the experiences on a past/present/future scale.

The walk, for example, appears as both memory and present experience; the meal is seen as memory and as immediate perception; Wobser tells his tales to the narrative consciousness but the latter also recalls them in his memory. Memory is another device for separating the various areas of experience, and it does not function on a chronological level. The experiences labelled as memory are, for the narrative consciousness, as immediate and direct as any other experience because they supplant any foregoing experience and there is no qualitative, stylistic or quantitative difference between 'present' and 'past' perception. The past does not illumine the present, nor does the present clarify the past because each is no more than a separate but equally direct area of perception. Thus in Fortsetzung des Berichts the whole idea of memory is deceptive because it implies the possibility of ordering experience while in practice augmenting its fragmentation.

Other devices which recur throughout the work have the same effect. For example, Wobser's stories and those told by others, e.g. the story of the cook's son who chops off his arm (pp.111 - 115), deflect the attention of the narrative consciousness, and therefore also of the reader, from the 'narrative'. This narrative interrupting narrative widens the scope of the narrative consciousness's perception by providing material he can express, without its forming part of his direct experience. Because he only experiences them indirectly, the tales exist not only for the reader only in language (as does the whole text), but they also exist solely in that form for the narrative consciousness. Thus the tales give a second layer of purely linguistic perception.

Another similar device is the repetition of 'Bild' in order to emphasise the limitations of the perception:

Bei diesem Bild und bei dem sich mit diesem Bild verbindenden Geräusch erinnere ich mich an ein ähnliches Bild aus der Vergangenheit. (p.56)

The separate images shift into one another, stimulated by common elements while remaining separate and independent entities in the perception. The noise provides the only connection. The image is fragile:

Zitternd zieht sich dieses Bild mit einem Mal zusammen und wird von einem plötzlich aus heiterem Himmel fallenden kurzen Regen durchschossen (p.72)

Such swift and arbitrary changes of focus increase the impression of fragmentation. The 'Bilder', discrete images of momentary visions, emphasise the incoherence of the perception, delineate the contours and limits of the perception and indicate arbitrary areas of closure. When the perception shifts, the reader is thrown off course.

Throughout Fortsetzung des Berichts fragmentation of perception is paralleled by the general nature of the events and experiences referred to. This consists in the reversal of narrative conventions of plot, character and context. Analysis of different sections has already revealed how any sense of narrative thread or progression is interrupted, fragmented and undermined. Character too is reduced to a minimum. The names of people who figure in the text verge on the indistinguishable (e.g. Schlötzer, Schützer, Wurzer, Schrader, e.g. p.57). They fulfil no individual role in the text and descriptions of them, when they are seated around the table for example, are so general that they easily merge in the reader's mind. For example we see Schlötzer 'mit einem in das Gesicht geschlitzten Mund, einem tiefen Einschnitt, vor dem er die Gabel hält' and Wurzer 'die Gabel sticht hier wie in geschlossenes Fleisch hinein, in ein süßiges weiches Gesicht' (p.50). The general terms and

repetition of 'Gabel' and 'Gesicht' highlight similarity rather than difference. This is exploited when Krogge mistakes the narrative consciousness for Schrader (p.200).

This lack of specificity also applies to place names. There is a town called simply 'S' (p.59) which is at times the destination of the walk and at others somewhere it passes through. Other place names share the similarity of the character names, e.g. 'eine neue Ortschaft, vielleicht Tauschwitz Munschwitz, ich weiß nicht, Reschwitz' (p.45). Just as the reader cannot clearly identify characters so, this prevents him from gaining any geographical bearings in the text, and contributes to the process of undermining any concept of a fixed reality in the text.

The context of Fortsetzung des Berichts is also reduced to a minimum. No specific social, historical or political dimension emerges. The alternating situations of the walk and the meal provide the work's only defining referential context. They both, however, shift and change. The room in which the meal takes place changes in size and characteristics; the destination and route of the walk also vary. Similarly the terms in which these are described remain general and undefined. We learn of the women, the kitchen, the meal, the walk, the women, the farmer, the horse. These do not build up into a coherent or orderable structure. The reader can gain no secure and defined base in the text.

In S/Z Barthes points out that narrative builds up the illusion of a real world by answering possible questions posed by the reader about future action, causality and context for example. Fortsetzung des Berichts does not attempt to do this. The reader must find the answers to any questions for himself or not at all. A referential context shared by author and reader covers over the fictional status of the work because the novel appears to correspond with the reader's experience and/or knowledge. In Fortsetzung des Berichts

this fictionality is emphasised and played up, rather than being minimised or disregarded because that context is missing. The differences in the rendering of supposedly the same sex act throw into relief the fictional, un-real and linguistic nature of the literary act. None is more or less 'realistic', each is equally important.

The linguistic devices in the text further this. For example the use of verbal nouns throughout the text, as in the different sections, builds up the impression of fragmentation in the perception since the various elements in the description are rendered separately. This also highlights the narrative consciousness's own awareness of the process of formulating language because the verbal nouns undercut the 'natural' appearance of any more fluid description of action by breaking it down into individual and unconnected components.

Other lists have a rather different linguistic function, for example:

noch einen Teller verlangte von ihren Suppen,  
Fischsuppen, Kohlsuppen, Brotsuppen, Biersuppen,  
Mehlsuppen, Milchsuppen, Grießsuppen, Pilzsuppen,  
Reissuppen, Obatsuppen, Wuratsuppen, Schleimsuppen,  
Nudelsuppen, Wurzelsuppen, Bohnensuppen, Erbsensuppen,  
Linsensuppen, Mährensuppen, Graupensuppen, Hühner-  
suppen, Tomatensuppen, Gemüsesuppen, Kartoffelsuppen ...  
(p.83)

This list does not have the effect of confirming the myriad reality it encapsulates, rather it calls into question what possible sort of soup is being asked for. This variation on a theme of soup has the same effect of fragmentation and uncertainty as the earlier variation on a theme of sex. However, here, in addition, a verbal rhythm develops both from the repetition of '-suppen' and from the gradual and regular increases of the prefix syllables - 'Fisch-', 'Nudel-', 'Tomaten-'. This may appear to counter the impression of fragmentation but because the rhythm only persists for a short time, it offers no way of linking the whole text. Thus despite

the rhythm, this list does not construct a soup-centred reality but undercuts anything which one might call 'soup'.

Such lists bring us back to what was earlier called the layer of consciousness of the descriptive process. The uncertainty which this passage engenders arises because it postulates so many possible descriptions of the soup. The simple, everyday dish suddenly takes on kaleidoscopic potential. At the same time the 'reality' of the soup itself is never called into question; this is conveyed in the repetition of '-suppen' which occurs 23 times. The fact of the existence of the soup is asserted, it is the precise nature of the soup which is explored. The possible types of soup illustrate that the vagueness of the term 'soup' does not approach the complexity of the potential inherent in the word 'soup'. This also reveals the many routes towards the linguistic encapsulation of perception.

Much of Fortsetzung des Berichts is concerned with this descriptive process. In the work the fact of perception, or of the perceptive experience, is not called into question, the text constantly asserts the primacy of perception; indeed it centres on ways of describing and expressing that perception. The text forms a series of explorations of the relationship between perception and language.

As we saw briefly at the start, critics and reviewers of Fortsetzung des Berichts concentrated on the language of the work.<sup>(8)</sup> Peter Laregh describes the work as 'ein Kraftakt dreister Wortartistik'<sup>(9)</sup>, while Gisela Elsner in Der Spiegel sums up the work as 'Worttiraden'.<sup>(10)</sup> In her longer essay Gisela Dischner combines psychology and Marxism in order to reach the conclusion that in Fortsetzung des Berichts:

Die Dynamik der Bewußtseinsstruktur wird bei Ror Wolf nicht uminterpretiert in kausallogisches Denken und Sprechen, sie wird modellhaft durch die Dynamik der Sprachstruktur dargestellt.<sup>(11)</sup>

The 'Dynamik' to which she refers has emerged in the analysis through the constantly changing perspective and perceptions of the narrative consciousness. Similarly the lack of 'kausallogisches Denken und Sprechen' points to the fragmentation in the perception and the lack of order placed on event by a controlling narrator. Dischner's essay examines Fortsetzung des Berichts in terms of the relationship between the structure of consciousness and the structure of language, the latter depicting and reflecting the chaotic state of the former. By implication, she is saying, Wolf as author is undermining the unitary nature of inner monologue by revealing language to be an imprecise tool of articulation, while nevertheless remaining substantially confident in language.

Thus, the relationship between the 'Dynamik der Bewusstseinsstruktur' and 'Dynamik der Sprachstruktur' is important for any overall view of the text. The other critics' terms 'Wortartistik' and 'Worttiraden' would seem to imply a conscious and virtuoso performance in language, and this emphasis is misleading because of the close link between the consciousness and language structures. The language structures depict the attempts of the consciousness to pin down and express perception, they also reflect the chaotic nature of that perception. The text is built up on the shifting and changing relationship between language and consciousness. For example, the list of soups calls into question what soup is and also shows the potential in the one word 'soup'. Likewise, the opening section and the layer of uncertainty in the work show the narrative consciousness attempting to achieve greater precision in the relationship between language and perception. Thus the language of Fortsetzung des Berichts is not an artistic 'performance', rather it shows the complexity of the routes towards an articulation of perception which, because of that complexity, is present more as a possibility than achievement. Dischner's terms, the dynamics of the consciousness and language structures, thus help us see the text as,

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in Heath's terms, an articulation of the practice of writing.

This is emphasised by the openness or closure of the work mentioned earlier. The juxtapositioning of the end of the report opening the text and its last words being 'was kommt' calls into question the concept of a text as a closed, complete and intact work. Just as the perception of the narrative consciousness is not only fragmented but perceives the supposedly same event differently and in different but overlapping layers of description, so the start and finish of the work appear throughout as changing possibilities:

Bis zu dieser Stelle bin ich also gekommen, hier ist vielleicht das Ende meines Berichts oder, wenn ich genau sein will, nicht das Ende, aber der Augenblick vor dem Ende, oder vielleicht im Gegenteil, nicht das Ende, nicht einmal der Augenblick vor dem Ende, sondern erst der Anfang, oder auch nicht der Anfang, sondern vielleicht etwas anderes, drittes, zwischen Anfang und Ende. (p.200)

This work does not have a perceptible inception and conclusion of a series of described actions. This lack of beginning and end emerges through the repeatedly articulated and constantly unachieved consciousness of the possibility of closure. In the quotation, for example, end and beginning appear as interchangeable, while the something 'zwischen Anfang und Ende' refers both to the lack of specific start or finish in the material, thus to the possibility of an open-ended text.

In a practical sense the text is, of course, not open-ended: it starts on page 7 and ends on page 272. Fortsetzung des Berichts does, however, present a lengthy and sustained attempt to emphasise the fictionality of a literary work. The text seeks to make the reader aware of himself as reader, an active participant in the text rather than a passive assimilator, by articulating and undercutting conventions and assumptions which the reader may entertain thus making him conscious of them - such as startling him by saying at the start that the end is near. This is achieved by the overlapping



areas of perception which cannot be easily separated, by the different and/or repetitious versions of the same/similar perception, by highlighting doubts about the perception and by not guiding the reader and so making him find his own way about the text.

The reader's consciousness of his role is increased by the tension which the text engenders between the awareness of convention and the conscious attempt to deconstruct that awareness. The text achieves this by reducing elements of the convention to a minimum, for example the minimalisation of plot, context, character which helps focus attention on the perceptive and descriptive processes.

These processes also further the emphasis on the fictionality of the work. Viewing the text as an articulation of the writing process by the reader underlines the plurality of potential meaning in the text, its open-endedness. Bezzel describes this as follows:

Der Lesevorgang wird so von einem einseitigen  
Übertragungsvorgang Autor - Leser zu einer  
vielseitigen Interpretationstätigkeit des Lesers.  
(Bezzel, p.119)

This brings us back to Bezzel's initial concept of 'productive consumption' as a description of the process of reading this text.

The consumption of the text is productive because the reader must produce the meaning of the text, for himself, in the reading process. For this reason, what is presented in this chapter is not the reading of this text, but a reading, which claims neither to be complete nor definitive. Rather it seeks to show possible routes towards an approach which tries to deal with a text which presents an articulation of the writing process, in terms of an articulation of the reading process.

Fortsetzung des Berichts has illustrated in practice many of the questions raised in a critical context in the first two chapters in terms of what the text contains and how the critic approaches it. It has been particularly suitable as the first text in this examination of experimental writing because it combines the length and unified structure associated with the novel with insights into perception and language which other works explored in more obviously innovatory ways, for example Jürgen Becker in Felder.

4. JÜRGEN BECKER'S FELDER -  
THE DELINEATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Jürgen Becker and Ror Wolf occupied broadly similar positions in the German literary scene of the mid and late Sixties. Their first books both appeared in 1964, both published by Suhrkamp, and both were greeted with relative critical acclaim.<sup>(1)</sup> They both wrote two more prose works before branching out into other fields<sup>(2)</sup> - Wolf to concern himself with football as social and cultural phenomenon and Becker to poetry and photography.<sup>(3)</sup> In the Seventies their output in terms of prose has diminished.<sup>(4)</sup> Our analysis of Becker will start from the same basis as that of Wolf to see to what extent these superficial similarities carry over into their works.

While not attempting a complete structuralist reading of Fortsetzung des Berichts, the preceding analysis usefully employed Bezzel's structuralist idea of overlapping 'Schichten' in the text. This relates to Becker's view of the 'fields' of his own text, he even uses the term 'Schichten' in describing his intentions:

Dieser Text demonstriert nur die Bewegungen eines Bewußtseins durch die Wirklichkeit und deren Verwandlung in Sprache. Bewußtsein: das ist meines in seinen Schichten, Brüchen und Verstörungen; Wirklichkeit: das ist die tägliche, vergangene, imaginierte. Sie lesen nur Mitteilungen aus meinem Erfahrungsbereich. (5)

Becker's statement bears out Rosenthal's earlier contention that writers now concern themselves with a personal view of reality, such that the scope of the text is gradually reduced to the perspective of a single individual. Fortsetzung des Berichts demonstrated one type of individual perspective in the unified although fragmented vision of the first person consciousness. Felder will demonstrate a rather different

personal vision. There are three important elements in Becker's view of his writing. Firstly he sees it as a dynamic process, not a static reflection. He refers to 'die Bewegungen eines Bewußtseins' through reality. Secondly consciousness (Becker uses the term 'Bewußtsein' where our earlier analysis has used the term 'perception') is seen as the author's own perception and as being fragmented and disjointed. Similarly the third element, reality, is also seen from the author's personal perspective and has three aspects: the present, memory and imagination.

Bezzel's layers and Barthes's codes both describe aspects of the text which recur and build up into a network. They form: 'une espèce de réseau, de topique à travers quoi tout le texte passe (on plutôt : en y passant, il se fait texte)',<sup>(6)</sup> In examining Felder some codes or 'Schichten' may emerge; the 'fields' of Felder, however, are rather different. On the one hand, each numbered section can be seen as a 'field', one brief 'Bewegung' of the consciousness. On the other hand, within each section certain distinct aspects may overlap. The earlier quotation continues:

... das ist die Stadt hier, mein tägliches Leben, die Straße, die Erinnerung. All das reflektiere ich in einer jeweils veränderten Sprechweise, die aus dem jeweiligen Vorgang kommt. So entstehen Felder: Sprachfelder, Realitätsfelder etc.

Bezzel and Barthes used their terms as critical approaches to the texts, Becker here uses 'Felder' both as the title of his work and a descriptive term for what he writes.

These overlapping and non-exclusive fields of perception provide a constantly changing view of the perceiving consciousness. Felder does not have the single narrative focus unifying the strands of the text which characterised Fortsetzung des Berichts. It does contain an overall first person perception which varies from being explicit, as in

section 1, or implicit (sections 2 and 7, for example), to being totally absent (e.g. sections 30, 34). The variations on the first person voice will form the first main aspect of the delineation of consciousness in Felder.

The first of the 101 numbered sections makes little or no conventional sense. Apart from introducing the first person narrative voice it contains little obvious information:

ist der Mond nun auf(?)            fahr ich  
hoch im Bette sitzend und ich kratz mich  
gleich noch tot: indes unsere Sonne sozial ge-  
sinnt, ist schon totaler denn ihre Verfinste-  
rung in dieser knochenfahlen Frühe; na; so  
gegens schräge Licht zu blinzeln auf der Hut  
und steh!: haut dir einer drauf sonst und be-  
dient und bescheuert weiß ich nicht wer und  
mit wem in meiner Dämmerung

(p.7)

One critical approach might explain the text in terms of a direct transcription or mechanical representation of experience by saying that the disjointed syntax and clause structure reflect and emphasise the lack of wakefulness of the I-figure who, having been until recently asleep, is still just waking up and is even confused about whether it is day or night (hence the moon/sun contrast).

However, this might merely summarise the vestiges of information in the text at the expense of its language, structure and layout. The text starts two-thirds down the page with a (half-) question. The first word does not have a capital letter and thus perhaps postulates, like the opening of Fortsetzung des Berichts, that it is not a beginning but the continuation of an ongoing process. 'Nun' reinforces this by implying a time when the moon was not up.

This section describes the thoughts and actions of the first person consciousness in a fragmentary way. The gap between the opening question and the next phrase reflects a

disjointed state of mind and the mental slowness of the waking figure. The lack of a coherent sense pattern and the puzzling combinations of words (for example 'unsre Sonne, sozial gesinnt') and the absence of conventional punctuation augment the impression of incoherence. The language shifts from the colloquial ('fahr', 'kratz', 'totaler denn') to the rather more formal phraseology which appears incongruous in context ('sozial gesinnt', 'Verfinsterung'). These factors combine to give the section a varied texture and reinforce the view that the language and its ramifications outweigh the importance of the minimal informational content of the passage.

This opening passage thus shows the narrative consciousness waking up and reflects the lack of coherence in this process, not by describing this from an external perspective but by following the perception of the waking person and delineating the process linguistically, semantically and visually. The second section continues this but without explicit mention of the focus. The perspective is revealed implicitly in the 15 present participles which give an impression of immediacy and simultaneity in getting up and washing. For example, the repetition of 'kauend' towards the end of the passage reflects the repetitious action of chewing. While the first section concentrated exclusively on the perceptions of the first person consciousness, in the second external stimuli impinge more, for example, 'Kuniberts Geläut', a Köln church, the time of year 'diese herbatlichen Symptome' and noise from outside 'der Sägen Kreischen da unten'.

These two opening sections form the basis of the perception which runs through the rest of the work. In the majority of sections the focus is narrow and tied to the individual perspective. Section 7, for example, does not specifically mention the first person but the list of present participles gives the passage one perspective which links back to the

explicit first person consciousness in the preceding sections. Those passages where the first person perspective emerges divide broadly into two groups. The first communicates action in direct but varied ways. Sections 1, 2 and 7 are examples.<sup>(7)</sup> The second group is more reflective, offering different comments on what has been described, on the nature of perception, fiction, writing, reality and memory.<sup>(8)</sup>

Section 9 can serve as an example for this second group. It contains both perception and reflection on that perception and is similar in some ways to the reiterated uncertainties in Wolf's prose:

in diesen Momenten von unbestimmbar  
wie soll ich sagen, nein, ich sage nicht  
Lähmung. Oder nichts als ein elendes Semi-  
finale auch das nicht es redet, es sind vielmehr  
Abrisse und keine Bilder, der Hund von Wer-  
heits bellt, der also auch, mehr Stimmen,  
Kopfstimmen, Ohrenstimmen, Augestim-  
men, Schüsse, weiter. Dies verwandelt sich in  
meinem Kopf in eine tickende Kette. (p.14)

The statements in this passage are interrupted by comments on what he is or should be saying. The juxtaposition of the two becomes resolved in the last sentence which sums up the process of absorbing the conflicting perceptions and thoughts - the 'tickende Kette' can perhaps be seen as what appears on the paper. The repetition of '-stimmen' serves to increase awareness of the variety of different stimuli which comprise the 'Felder', while 'Abrisse und keine Bilder' makes specific the fragmentation of the perception revealed in the preceding passages.

This section also provides the first statement of the multiple nature of the perceiving consciousness:

Vier Zwischenräume später, und ich vergesse  
den kommenden Satz, ich vermute einen tau-  
tologischen, das macht nichts. Zum Beispiel

wen meinte ich und sprach ich von mir? das  
sind noch immer mehrere, mitunter zählbare,  
viel Nachwuchs [..] Einer von mir nimmt teil.  
(p. 14 - 15)

This multiple narrative consciousness provides both the explanation of and to some extent the justification for the varied structure of Felder. The narrative consciousness accommodates and expresses in different ways the voices and perceptions impinging on him. This is captured well in the image of the 'Radiokopf' in section 10 (p.15).<sup>(9)</sup> The narrative consciousness acts as a radio beacon receiving and re-laying stimuli. Obviously this image cannot be interpreted too literally because the author himself must act as the controller and modulator of his material. But it is both possible and profitable to look at Felder as a text which tries to create the impression of immediate and direct expression of perception.

In section 100 which forms a summing up and assessment of the remainder of the work Becker defines the narrative consciousness in two ways. Firstly he follows the 'Radiokopf' image and views the 'ich' as an instrument recording the reality it encounters:

ich bewege mich zwischen den Leuten als lebte  
ich mit ihnen; aber ich lese und höre sie nur  
ab und trage sie ins Wörterbuch ein (p. 141)

This expresses the lack of involvement of the narrative voice in much of the work. For example in the passages about the traffic accident, the fate of the pigeons and the data about Köln area there is no individual perspective.

The second definition takes this idea further and posits a consciousness which is simply the sum of its perceptions:

was Ich ist erkennen in dem, was Ich wahr-  
nimmt, erfährt, unternimmt, redet, treibt,  
auflöst, verläßt, verschluckt, vergißt (p. 141)



Both these quotations attempt to minimise the mediating function of the narrative consciousness and this is consistent with the rest of Felder. On the one hand the narrative consciousness conveys the action and perception, on the other it reflects on those processes. But it always tries to give an impression that neither of those aspects is mediated or determined by narrative or authorial control.

Memory forms an important element in both the active and reflective sections of Felder. It has a similar function to the 'reflektierter Erinnerungsprozeß' pointed out by Bezzel in Pilzer und Pelzer. The recurrent memory adds a different dimension to the portrayal of the present. As in Fortsetzung des Berichts and Pilzer und Pelzer the depiction of the past does not differ qualitatively from that of the present. As in the Wolf texts also the sections which can be attributed to memory cannot be resolved into a coherent time scale, they simply appear at random among the other perceptions. There are two distinct areas of memory. The first refers to time long past, childhood, youth and the war. The second is concerned with time closer to the present or some unspecified time(s) when actions took place, perhaps repeatedly. Both these types of memory are accompanied by reflection on the recollection. Sections 58 - 61 show the scope of the memory.

Section 58 describes a repeated action, the narrative consciousness cruising around on a motorcycle in the early hours of the morning 'die kalte Zweihurstille'. The passage leaves open whether this habit still goes on or not-'oft hier rumgekurvt nachts' could mean either that he used to or that he has and still does drive around late at night. This passage remains a brief glimpse, a fragment of past action which does not link up with other parts of the text.

The following passage is a similar but reflective fragment about the past which reveals an ambivalent attitude to it:

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The following passage is a similar but reflective fragment about the past which reveals an ambivalent attitude to it:

und  
es waren doch einmal innige Jahre: ja zehn  
Jahre genau, und keines davon wollen wir  
streichen; wir hören nur auf zu sprechen, da-  
von, von uns

(p.65)

Here too the actual time remains ambiguous, the text does not specify which ten years are being referred to. The narrative consciousness does not wish to obliterate those years but also does not wish to discuss them. However, these admissions, occurring as they do between recollections of time past, may be ironic, revealing that the consciousness cannot control the material. The memories creep in involuntarily. The texts do not present enough evidence to make this clear but they do leave this open as one possibility. This section interpolated between the memories highlights the independence of the individual sections while showing as ironic the main possible relationship between them.

Section 60 is similar to 58 in structure, the memory appears as a stream of consciousness, the perception following the actions and sensations of the summer day:

in den alten rappenden Wagen noch der Linie 12, [..] noch im Fahren sprang ich immer ab [..] ... moderig roch es vom Friedhof her, stechend im Frühjahr, alt im Herbst, grün die Kendenicher Straße ...

(pp.65 - 66) (19)

The shift from summer to spring and autumn shows that this too is a scene repeated over a span of time. The rest of the passage deals with a youthful love ('unsere beiden Pappeln DU/ICH') and an unspecified family scene. The shifts between them are similar to the movements of a scanning camera which surveys a scene without pause for reflection.

Section 61 works in the same way. The passage moves from statement to conversation, from description to comment and back again giving a varied and fragmented depiction of a time of material deprivation:

weißt du noch kein Licht bloß Kerzen erst bis  
in den Winter kein Abfluß bloß der Stinkeimer  
ewig nur der Abtritt durch die rohe Mauer  
neben der Küche [...] wie können wir bloß leben  
ohne ein sicheres Geld oder gar keins [...] ]  
dreißig Mark Mann dieses Geld in  
Tabak Blumen Zigaretten Zitsch Eier Bier  
Brot Margarine Wurst Kartoffeln [...] ]  
der geschossene Salat die verkommenen Tomaten der  
Sieg von Petersilie und Schnittlauch tagelang aufs  
Brot mit Tee aus tagelangem Teefixbeutel

(p.67)

References to the money issued to German citizens and later to 'RMarkzeit' and to drinking 'den Krieg von der Seele' (p.68) tie the section to the post-war period. The first lines of the quotation portray physical and material deprivation: there is no electricity or sanitation. The flash of conversation shows the concern with the lack of a stable financial base, by implication both personal and national. The 30 marks release frantic desires for edible delicacies, taken for granted in more normal times. The last three lines bring back the reality of a diet without protein, its monotony emphasised by the repetition of 'tagelang' and the lack of luxury brought out by the reference to the much used tea bag. The language of war which impinges on the food ('der geschossene Salat', 'der Sieg von Petersilie') brings the text back to the cause of the deprivation.

This passage illustrates well the way in which an apparently jumbled and disordered text in fact contains a series of neat images and references which combine into a fragmented but wide-ranging picture of aspects of life in post-war Germany. The passage builds personal impressions and general perspectives into a many-faceted and densely written word-picture.

Throughout Felder the memory sections provide a contrast with those passages depicting present-day society. Those passages which can be placed temporally mainly concern childhood innocence, e.g. section 58, and the war and post-war

period, e.g. section 61. These two areas give added perspective to the portrayal of the present with its extreme materialism and underlying mood of dissatisfaction. The aimless motorcycle riding in section 58, for example, is given an added perspective by the subsequent contrast with the young love affair and the witty verbal portrait of post-war deprivation. The contrast has two aspects. The first contrasts details of the present with a more vague and idealised and rather clichéd personal past of first love, summer and names carved on trees. The second main contrast is more ironical because the war and immediate post-war passages are so well and wittily written that the period of hardship tends to appear more attractive than the material well-being of the present.

The majority of texts in Felder, however, deal with immediate perception rather than with the recollection and reconstruction of perception and it is the combination of memory and the variety of present impression which builds into the multiple narrative consciousness of the book as a whole.

The sections dealing with immediate perception vary in style, subject and approach. They develop as the work progresses from the personal concerns of the early sections (waking, getting up, dressing) to a more public arena of the station, cathedral and newspaper campaigns. The progression of the text from personal to public is extremely important for the delineation of consciousness in the work because the text retains the narrow, personal focus of the opening passages when dealing with the wider social reality of the city of Köln. The shift from personal to public is neither consistent nor complete. (At the beginning of Felder, section 5, for example, gives data of beer consumption while sections 98 and 100 present personal rumination and reflection.) Given this, however, Felder broadly changes its emphasis from the purely personal and individual to the impact of the public world on the indi-

vidual consciousness as the book advances. We have looked at the earlier passages where the parameters of the work become established as the articulation and reflection of perception; we will therefore now turn to the more public side.

The first series of sections dealing with less immediately personal material describes a lorry accident (sections 18, 20, 21, 23). The intervening sections are extremely short and hardly interrupt the flow. Each section is different stylistically. Section 18 eschews personal perspective and describes the events baldly and concisely:

ein Kraftfahrer beschloß, von der Fahrbahn  
ab und in eine rechterhand gelegene Parkstätte  
einzubiegen. Kurz zuvor verlangsamte er die  
Geschwindigkeit seines Fahrzeuges, betätigte  
seinen rechten Fahrtrichtungsanzeiger

(p.22)

This objective account forms the basis for comparing the later variations. For example, section 20 covers the same ground but the passage is interspersed with conversational questions and phrases: 'bedenken Sie', 'nich', 'das siehste doch wohl ein', 'sagen wir mal', 'das merken Sie sich' (pp.22-23). Section 21 deals with calling police after the accident in formal and legal-sounding language: 'in der pflichtmäßigen Erwartung der Ankunft des amtlichen Fahrzeuges' (p.24).

The clarity of the description in section 18 becomes clouded with uncertainty in section 20 where the interpolated conversational phrases and modal verbs (e.g. 'seine Geschwindigkeit herabmäßigen will') combine to blur the definition in the previous description and thereby to emphasise the uncertainty of individual perception. The linguistic contortions in section 21 where making the telephone call becomes 'Korrespondenz ... über den mündlichen Weg einer Sprechmuschel' (p.24), places the original event at an even greater remove. These two sections lend perspective to the simple account of events. The differences between the sections underline that

each presents a possible description and that none is the way of describing the event. Taken together these sections do not raise doubts about the events themselves but focus attention on how society deals with such situations in language. These are recurrent concerns in Felder.

Similar shifts in perspective and language occur when the narrative consciousness enters the station (sections 36 - 50, pp. 38 - 54). Section 36 gives the location ('Die Nordseite des Hauptbahnhofs') and alternates prepositions with a variety of slogans and phrases concerning the weather, politics, the stock exchange. The prepositions are quite separate from the phrases and help isolate them from one another. In section 37 the narrative consciousness walks around the station, stopping at a photograph machine. The text follows his perceptions:

rein ins Fotofix was süßern stinkt: ratschdich  
den Lappen Vorhang und Schemeldreh in  
Augenhöhe: Stück Mark reingeschlitzt ins  
rote Summen und Blink: kommt ein  
Vögelchen raus

(p. 39)

The series of questions in section 38 reflects on the nature of 'ein automatischer Vorgang' providing a reflective interlude until the black line in section 39, continued from section 37, indicates that the 2 1/2 minute wait for the photographs to be developed is over.

The language in these sections, which remains consistent within each section, varies according to the focus of the passage. As the quotation shows, the movement around the station is jerky, unordered and fragmented reflecting the variegated impressions received from the environment. The series of reflective questions with their complex clause structures indicates a more controlled and introverted thought pattern consistent with the wait for the photographs. The slogans and prepositions of section 36 make no pretence



to describe action or perception but show language as used by society in the media, for example, This language, like that of section 21 is divorced from reality because it is perceived by the narrative consciousness as preformed language. This forms one of the main, implicit areas of social criticism which Felder contains. If the function of the narrative consciousness is to transcribe perception then the process of transcription can be compared to a digesting and absorbing process. However, if what is perceived already exists in linguistic form it is also to some extent digested and this therefore gnaws away at the individuality of the consciousness by taking over one of its functions. (However, this line of argument is never made explicit in Felder, not least, perhaps, because of its implications for the writer (and reader) of a written work.)

Another aspect of the media-associated language emerges in the description of the fate of the pigeon population of Köln. Section 48 which deals with the pigeons consists of description of the campaign against the birds interspersed with journalistic slogans and phrases such as 'Aktion Blausäure gegen das gurrende Taubenvolk', 'Volksschädling Nr.1', 'den virtuellen Volkswillen' (pp. 50 - 51). Bringing together the thread of the description and the media-influenced phrases adds an ironic dimension to the text. For example the pigeons become 'die öffentlich knurrenden Friedensträger' (p.51) and the city is described as the 'rheinischen Vatikans-filiale' (p.52). The ironic content comes out fully at the end of the section when the lies of the politicians and journalists are juxtaposed with the motto on the 'Taubenbrunnen' (p.53).

A similar combination of description and language which undercuts that description occurs in the tour of the cathedral (section 57). The text is made up of snatches of conversation combined with guide-book facts about the cathedral. It

ragt gen Himmel, wo ca. 870 der Erzbischoff Hil-  
debold die bekannte karolingische Pfeilerbasi-  
lika eingeweiht hatte [5.] Wir hatten eigentlich  
ordentlich Durst von der ewigen Lauferel [5.]  
Sachen kann man da erleben (pp.63 - 64)

Recounting the visit forms the basis of the section. The guide-  
book phrases reflect the ways in which an individual absorbs  
and then uses linguistic material presented to him. The  
abbreviations and flowing turns of phrase are out of place in  
terms of syntax and vocabulary but are used without apparent  
awareness of their incongruity.

These insights into language-use in Felder lead into  
another main aspect of the work. It belongs unmistakably  
to Köln and the 1960s. References to contemporary events and  
to products, advertising slogans, songs and other aspects of  
the linguistic content of contemporary life in Felder establish  
what Barthes would term its 'code culturel'. The work refers  
to Kennedy (p. 64), de Gaulle, the Algerian crisis, South East  
Asia (pp. 30 - 1), Adenauer (p. 53, pp. 79 - 81), and Brandt  
(p. 94). It contains many contemporary cultural references  
to music, singers, jazz groups, writers etc. (pp. 15,69). We  
have already seen that Köln and its surroundings figure pro-  
minently in different sections of the text. This includes  
reference to buildings - the cathedral, St. Kunibert's church,  
the station and particularly the 'Angaben zur Kölner Bucht'  
(section 85).

However, in relation to the text's language the more  
important part of the cultural code in Felder is what we have  
termed the linguistic content of the reality being described.  
Perhaps the most obvious aspect of this is the references to  
products and firms which often appear in the text in capital  
letters. In section 89, for example, we find Revlon's  
'NATURAL WONDER', 'LUX' soap (pp. 112 - 113). There is re-  
peated reference to newspapers and magazines. The Kölnischer Stadt-  
Anzeiger figures in the pigeon saga; section 89 mentions

'SPIEJEL' and 'HÖR ... ZU'. Elsewhere we find Bild am Sonntag, Die Welt, Die Zeit, Monat, Schöner Wohnen (p.45). As in Barthes's delineation of the cultural code in Sarrassine, these references in Felder tie the work to its own time. Becker does not provide the reader with a stable framework of culturally determined parameters such as Barthes detected in Balzac. The references remain, like the rest of the work, fragmented and scattered, but they do locate Felder in a specific time and place.

Advertising slogans pervade the text almost imperceptibly. We will only examine one section from this point of view but it shows Becker's demonstration of the permeation of language with such phrases. Section 2 when the narrative consciousness is just waking up and where the language mirrors the awakening process contains several direct references to advertising and products and also phrases which show the influence of advertising on perception. The sensation of the jumper, for example, is 'das neue Perlongefühl aktiviert'; looking in the mirror is described in terms of 'Sorge um die Folgen lässiger Sorge der Haut'; water from the tap becomes (in the language of an imaginary advertisement) 'das köstlichste Chlornaß' (p.8). In context, these phrases form part of the narrative consciousness' perception of his own awakening, they do not describe products or advertisements he is then perceiving. This indicates the beginning of the work that the narrative consciousness defines himself and his individual sensations in terms of such pre-formed phrases.

The advertising material is one side of the clichéd use of language to which Becker calls attention in his writing. Such slogans would form part of the 'Klischeeschicht' in Bezzel's analysis of Wolf. They serve the same function as the types of conversational clichés which Bezzel points out in Wolf's prose. Critics of Felder also drew attention to Becker's use of clichés. Walter Hinck, for example, in his

essay 'Die offene Schreibweise Jürgen Beckers' maintains:

Wie kaum ein anderer Autor der Gegenwart macht er bewußt, wie sehr unsere Sprache durchsetzt ist mit Klischees, die zu bequemen Gebrauch bereitliegen - mit Formeln der sprachlichen Situationsanpassung, welche die stereotypen Verhaltensweisen sichtbar machen, in denen wir uns bewegen. (11)

In describing waking up, the narrative consciousness makes 'bequemen Gebrauch' of clichéd phrases rather than manipulating the language himself. The phrases interpolated in the accident description (section 20) are formulae which recur constantly in conversation and which mean nothing. Sections 79 and 99 consist entirely of lists of such clichés, for example:

Nun erst recht.  
Lieber nicht.  
Nun mit allem Drum und Dran.  
Schon vorbei. (p.133)

By isolating such phrases from any defining context Becker emphasises their meaninglessness. Such phrases recur throughout Felder and one effect of isolating them in this way is to make the reader conscious of their presence in another context. Clichés, as we have seen, permeate the narrative figure's view of himself and pre-form much of the reality he describes. There are also the less obvious clichés such as the guide-book jargon amid the conversational description of the cathedral tour. They appear in the combination of data and vivid description (e.g. 'Pappeln säumen die Flußufer' p.104) of the 'Kölner Bucht' in section 85. The advertising slogans, product names and media language pervade what the narrative consciousness perceives and thus language itself forms part of the perceived reality.

In this way Felder brings out the social and linguistic pressures on the individual. The perception of contemporary reality, the text maintains, is so woven through with language that the articulation of that perception involves not only putting non-linguistic sensation into language. It also

includes repeating phrases and words which already form part of the perception. It is clear that if an author sees himself as recording reality then language, for example, in conversations must form some part of his perception of reality. However, Becker reveals the extent to which language pervades every level of our perception of reality. The individual is surrounded by language. Of itself this may not be significant. However, throughout Felder it becomes clear that the language in the surrounding reality is absorbed by the consciousness without in any way being mediated, criticised or changed by that consciousness. The language impinges on the consciousness and forms such a large part of perception, that it is taken up unaltered, and comes to provide the substance of other elements in the perception. This is how water becomes 'das köstlichste Chlornaß'.

This chapter is trying to show how the narrative voice of Felder unfolds as the text proceeds. It is now becoming clear that one of the main ways that the narrative voice experiences himself is in terms of language. He does not express himself in his own language but tends to reproduce phrases from the reality which he is perceiving. In this way what Becker described as 'die Bewegungen eines Bewußtseins durch die Wirklichkeit' has become 'die Bewegungen eines Bewußtseins durch die Sprache'. The perceived reality consists to a large extent, it would seem, of language.

It is becoming clear that the nature of the perception and the precise relationship between it, the world and language cannot be brought under one heading or pinned down easily. On the one hand, Becker distinguishes between experience and transcription of experience ('die Bewegungen eines Bewußtseins und deren Verwandlung in Sprache'). Further, that perception is identified with Becker's own consciousness. He stated this repeatedly, for example, 'Bewußtsein: das ist meines in seinen Schichten, Brüchen und Verstörungen' and 'Ich versuche

Erfahrung so unmittelbar wie möglich zu fixieren: meine Erfahrung'.<sup>(12)</sup> On the other hand, however, the text shows that individual and personal experience cannot be defined and specified in individual terms but, because of the language-soaked nature of reality and the encroachment of clichés and pre-formed phrase on perception, not only what is perceived but also how it is perceived is dictated from outside.

Thus, Becker's emphasis on the importance of the personal and authentic nature of the experience<sup>(13)</sup> expressed in his writing at first sight would seem to imply a view of the individual as independent and in some way containing a discernible quality of 'individuality'. However, the texts show the individual consciousness to be determined not just by his perceptions but also by the linguistic nature of those perceptions. So, if we return briefly to the earlier quotation (p. 141) which defines the 'Ich' in Felder as the sum of his perceptions, we can now see that he is at once the sum of his own perceptions expressed in language and the sum of perceptions dictated by language. (Further ramifications of this ambiguity will emerge as the analysis progresses.)

One section in particular reveals an awareness of this ambiguity. In the description of the man walking around the city the inescapable influence of external elements on the individual's perception is emphasised while the integrity and individuality of the man is brought out by the capital letters which express visually the position of the individual as outside and not totally subsumed to that impinging reality:

Was unser Mann wahrnimmt, nimmt nicht unbedingt ER wahr. Wenn er den Mund auftut, redet ER nicht allein. Der Aufenthalt im allgemeinen Leben bleibt nicht ohne Folgen auf die Art und Weise des Wahrnehmens und Sichäußerns. Beides wird von Verhältnissen bestimmt, in die er, unterwegs, hineingerät, an denen er teilhat.

(pp. 130 - 131)

We have already seen that as Felder progresses it shifts broadly from individual perspective to more public contexts. The stated awareness of its own fictiveness also becomes increasingly explicit. This awareness emerges in two ways. Firstly, as in the quotation above, the text states what it is doing. Our analysis has shown that and how linguistic and external pressures work on the individual. The quotation takes one step back from direct depiction of experience and comments on what has been written. Secondly Felder also contains more general discussion on the nature of fiction and fictiveness which has implications for the text as a whole and for the process of reading. These aspects of the text do not amount to the pervasive reflection on the status of the work as fiction found in Fortsetzung des Berichts. Rather they build up towards the end of Felder into a more compact comment on the whole work.

Section 98, from which we have already quoted, is particularly relevant to this. The basis of the section is a man imagined by the narrative voice:

Wir stellen uns einen Mann vor, der an einem schönen Morgen aus seinem Haus hinausgeht.

The figure moves about the city in a confused fashion, unable to control or order his experiences:

Unser Mann ist oft anderswo, in freier Gegend, zwischen Hügeln, in erinnerter Landschaft, an vergangenem Ort. Nicht immer ist er kenntlich. Ein Geräusch kann ihn schrumpfen lassen, eine Wahrnehmung ihn blühen. [G.] Indem er durch die Stadt geht, nein, indem er in der Stadt hin und her geht, bewegt er sich im Bereich seiner Erfahrung. [G.] Diesen Bereich bestimmt die unmittelbare Gegenwart dessen, was vergangen, erdacht, möglich, anwesend und augenblicklich wirksam ist. (pp. 128 - 129)

The wanderings of this imagined figure parallel the road taken by the narrative consciousness throughout Felder. At the beginning of Felder he is waking up, gets dressed and leaves

the house. He wanders around the city, noting events, at the mercy of his confused and jumbled perceptions. He does not go through the city because that implies purpose and direction, he wanders about in it. The resemblance between the general progression of the book and the specific description here makes it reasonable to see this passage as summarizing and commenting on the rest of the work.

Section 98 also contains comment on the composition of the book. The following:

die Wiederherstellung, [G.] die Zuhilfenahme dessen, [G.], was wir einmal als Fiktion bezeichnet und für unser Tun zurückgewiesen haben (p.129)

clearly refers to Becker's own vehement dismissal of fiction and conventions of narrative prose.<sup>(14)</sup> Secondly 'Drei Jahre sind keine Zeit' (p. 146) refers to the time Felder was being written, which appears again in the last section, 101: 'vorne ist vor drei Jahren, hinten ist jetzt' (p. 146). The purpose of this is not to make claims for Felder as autobiographical but to show the type of awareness it contains of its own status as a text and also to examine the concept of fictiveness which the work reveals.

As we saw above the text reveals an awareness of the discrepancy between Becker's dismissal of fiction and the conventions of the novel, and the idea of fictiveness which emerges in his own works. Becker rejected the novel and sequential narrative which he saw as a product of a more ordered and orderable nineteenth century reality because the novel has no relevance for contemporary writing.<sup>(15)</sup> However, when the idea of fictiveness appears in Felder it is not in the sense of a nineteenth century fictional narrative sequence. Although it is impossible to pin down precisely what 'Fiktion', 'Fiktivität' and 'fiktiv' do mean in Felder, they occupy an important place in the work. The definition of 'Fiktion' in section 98



is clearest:

Er ist nicht unsere Aufgabe und Absicht, vorgefundene Fiktionen zu reproduzieren. Wir demonstrieren aber, wie sie auf uns einwirken; und wir gestehen, daß wir nicht immun sind. (p. 130)

'Fiktion' here seems to mean an element in reality which pre-exists perception - 'vorgefundene Fiktionen'. As we have seen, the text does reproduce them because, as we saw in the clichés, showing how such fictions affect the individual involves demonstrating what these fictions are.

'Fictive' has a similar definition:

... bestreiten wir nicht die Anwesenheit des Fiktiven. Es ist ja da, immer, es umgibt uns und zeigt sich als Welt, in der wir leben, als sei sie übersehbar wie diese Fläche Papier. (pp. 129 - 130)

This equates the fictive with external reality which surrounds the individual. The flow of the sentence points to the fictive being 'Welt, in der wir leben', equating reality and the fictive totally. To define all reality in terms of fictiveness is too sweeping to be of any use in the present context. It would seem more reasonable to view fictive like the noun 'Fiktion' as referring to elements of reality which appear to be already ordered or potentially so ('als sei sie übersehbar ...'), and this would then include preformed language. Later in the section we find:

Der Umgang mit solcher Fiktivität ist notwendig kritisch; nur die Zerstörung des Fiktiven setzt frei, was nun wirklich ist, was nun wirklich gewesen ist, oder was sein könnte. (p.130)

This further corroborates our definition. If 'fictive' describes ordered elements in the perception of reality then the 'Zerstörung des Fiktiven' would refer to breaking down that ordering, for example, by increasing awareness of the fictive elements in reality. However, this two-layer notion of reality which such a view implies does not emerge clearly in Felder; that is, such a view of the relationship between the fictive

and reality remains undeveloped and is simply one insight which the reader can contemplate in relation to the text.

The emphasis on the fiction and the fictive, even bearing in mind their lack of specific definition, adds to the ways in which the text makes the reader aware of the work as a text (as opposed to the text building up into a facsimile reality).<sup>(16)</sup> Felder does not seek to create a mimetic image of Köln in the 1960s, rather its shifting focus and stylistic variety contribute to creating an awareness of how the text is being produced. The concern of Felder is not, as some critics would have us believe, the city life of Köln, rather it is also how one writes about the perception of city life.

Before assessing Felder in more general terms, we must point out some of its weaknesses. Some of the sections achieve no more than stylistic or typographical cuteness. I refer in particular to sections 72 (pp. 77 - 8) and 82 (pp. 96 - 8) where the change from spaced to unspaced layout adds little to the text. Similar criticism applies to section 14 where the dots and joining together of words seem to have little purpose or effect. Section 5 also shares this. The lack of punctuation, wide spaces between phrases and the lack of coherence in the section when it is read unavoidably point to a large degree of fragmentation, similar, one might think, to the perceptual fragmentation noted in other passages. However, here the reader can easily establish the method of construction. The text consists of several coherent strands which are jumbled to create the impression of fragmentation.<sup>(17)</sup> This procedure may be intended to capture the simultaneity of experience and to undercut any ordered description. If this is so, Becker has done no more than to construct an easily soluble puzzle for the reader. However, even though this is so obviously easy to decipher, as an initiative this procedure does make the reader work actively with the components of the text.

A playful attitude to language is important in Felder. Often, as we have seen, it leads to insights about how the text is working and what it is describing. Sometimes, however, the idea of playing with and in language gives an impression of triviality. For example, section 74, dealing with Adenauer's speech on the re-occupation of the Rhineland seems to have little purpose except to repeat time and time again the Rhein- ish 'je-' instead of the harder 'ge-'. This point could have been made rather more concisely. Similarly, sections such as 46 which consists of exclamations and an unusual typographical layout add nothing but brief variety to the remainder of the text.

However, despite this danger of triviality and appearance of cuteness, the variety of layout is one important way in which Felder presents a challenge to the reader and is one of its more obviously experimental features. This variety and the brevity of the sections do not allow the reader to settle into any one way of reading Felder. As soon as one section becomes established, it ends or the style varies as in section 26. In Chapter 1 we cited critics who used terms such as particularism and pluralism to try to convey the shifting focus of texts such as Felder which makes such works so hard for any reader to pin down. Unsettling the reader in this fashion is thus an important element in the impact of the work as a whole.

We must now examine that impact. So far we have outlined ways in which the text works without considering how Felder as a whole makes its points. Individual sections have demonstrated in varying ways aspects of the delineation of perception in Felder. Examining these sections has amounted to an analysis which in some respects any detailed critical approach could have achieved. The text as analysed so far would seem to present the critic with few difficulties. Those difficulties become clearer when we turn to the work as a whole.

One of the best essays about Becker's writing, to which we have already made reference, is entitled 'Die "offene Schreibweise" Jürgen Beckers'. This openness only emerges when Felder is considered as a whole, and this is also where the significance of the emphasis on fictiveness emerges. Fortsetzung des Berichts was a text limited to and by the focus of its first person narrator and formed an articulation of the process of writing to which the reader responded not only by reading but also by becoming aware of the act of reading as a process. Fortsetzung des Berichts worked specifically against the background of the novel, reducing elements such as plot and character to a minimum in order to facilitate concentration on the perceptive and descriptive processes. Felder, however, has both a more open style and a more open structure. The style of Felder can be called 'open' because its linguistic, stylistic and perceptual variety implies the possibility of further variation, similarly its structure is open because the variety of length, layout and visual impact seems also to offer the potential for further such development. This constant change and variety lies at the root of the unsettling of the reader mentioned earlier. Felder lacks the comparative unity of style, perception, approach or subject matter normally associated with the world of the novel; equally its 101 sections contain elements which link them together and which therefore prevent the reader merely seeing them as independent and unconnected texts. In this way the the reader constantly has to re-assess not only what he is reading but also his own position and attitude towards that material. This emerges, for example, in the shifting and uneasy first person narrative presence.

If Fortsetzung des Berichts would not lend itself to conventional critical interpretation, Felder presents the critic with even greater problems. The first of these is that on the whole the text contains an overall first person aware-

ness, although the narrative voice shifts, changes and, on occasion, disappears. Our analysis of individual sections has already demonstrated this. Thus Felder lacks the unified voice of Fortsetzung des Berichts, but what can be said of the narrative voice over the whole text? To a great extent Becker has achieved his aim of reflecting perception directly:

... ich versuche Erfahrung so unmittelbar wie möglich zu fixieren, meine Erfahrung.

Obviously the author mediates the experience by putting it into words and obviously the critic cannot attempt to assess to what extent Felder corresponds with Becker's own experience. However, the text does give an impression of immediacy of experience, of unmediated and unordered perception, of a chaotic environment. It achieves this by means of what we may call its openness.

Many of the sections of Felder are fragments. As we saw in the opening section many passages have no clearly definable beginning or ending, they remain fragments of perception. Even where sections do seem to have an ending which is consistent with and determined by the content of that section (e.g. the descriptions of the four photographs in 40), they tend not to have any sense of a conclusion, of the canvas being complete. Section 40 stops at the end of the description, but it might also have continued the ramble around the station. Similarly the openings of passages seem equally arbitrary. This is emphasised by the varying indentations on opening lines, (e.g. sections 24, 41, 50, 51) which undercut any impression of a conventional beginning. The same effect is achieved by the absence of any indentation (e.g. sections 75 - 77) which implies continuity rather than the initiation of a process. In combination these devices stimulate uncertainty in the reader. The uncertainty arises because the texts thwart expectation of some sort of fictional closure or at least a gesture towards beginning and end.<sup>(18)</sup> The structure

of Felder is open because coherent limits cannot be imposed either on individual sections or the whole text.

In one very obvious way Felder does appear to have a conventional structure. It consists of 101 consecutively numbered sections which could be compared with the numbered chapters of a novel. However, the numbering of the sections also serves to mislead and distract the reader because it implies sequence and progression which the texts themselves in no way provide. It is therefore perhaps a mildly ironic reference to the conventions of the novel.

Individual sections of Felder depict a variety of open-ended fragments of perception. This impression increases as the sections can be seen in combination. Individual sections thwart expectation of closure, and so does the whole work. It is impossible to relate them all to one another in any coherent way. Some clearly do deal with the same event, for example, the photograph machine and the lorry accident, but they tend not to provide fragmented narratives which can be joined together by a careful reader. The fields of Felder form an irregular patchwork with undefined edges. Sometimes elements in the texts cohere or overlap, at others they remain discrete. Because this never builds up into a conventional narrative, it becomes important for the critic to consider and try to establish the limits of the text. In other words, the critic must try to map out those areas, or fields which the written text covers and thereby to gain some idea of its boundaries, or in this case lack of boundaries. In Fortsetzung des Berichts, the narrative consciousness emerged as the limit of the perception in the text while the constant focus on unachieved beginnings and ends provided a continual awareness of closure. Felder too, as we have seen, contains some comments on the time the text was being composed, especially in sections 100 and 101. It also does have an ending:

all das noch in die Maschine; lesen ändern fort-  
schicken; vorne ist vor drei Jahren, hinten ist  
jetzt; Felder

(p.146)

But what has ended ? The material of Felder cannot be said to have reached a conclusion, it is simply the act of composition which has been brought to a close. That closing section could have appeared after 50 or 250 pages - it happens to occur on p. 146. Thomas Zenke's essay which discusses Becker's prose in terms of the process of experience sums this up well using a quotation from Felder:

Der Prozeß der Erfahrung ... ist ... für Becker bestimmt durch seine offene Struktur. Es ist nicht zu beenden. "Schreiben solange das Nächste unbekannt bleibt". (19)

It was this openness of structure which caused critics and reviewers of Felder many problems. Most of them agreed that Felder was an important work. Heinrich Böll, for example, stated unequivocally '... Beckers Experiment ist gelungen',<sup>(20)</sup> while Roland Wiegenstein had no doubt that 'Die Felder sind ein wichtiges Buch',<sup>(21)</sup> Despite the critics' enthusiasm, actually approaching the work presented them with problems. They tended to summarise the impression the work made on them, but found greater difficulty explaining how the text achieved its effects. Gerd Fuchs, for example, refers to:

dem ganzen Chaos von Eindrücken, jener Wirrnis aus Empfindungen, Reflexionen, Erinnerungen und Wahrnehmungen. (22)

This shows the impact the text made on one reader. Our analysis has been much more extended than the demands of a newspaper review allowed Fuchs, and it has taken considerable space to show, from the text, how these confused and chaotic impressions are created.<sup>(23)</sup>

This difficulty in dealing with this text in brief points to what one might term the 'Schwerverständlichkeit' of Becker's

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writing, its relative unreadability. Taken in conjunction with Bezzel's 24 page analysis of less than one page of Pilzer und Pelzer, this would seem to indicate that such texts demand lengthy and extremely detailed exegesis from the critic in order to show in any way how the texts work. Texts such as Felder and Fortsetzung des Berichts are difficult to understand because they do not coincide with convention or expectation. If we return to the language of structuralism, they cannot be recuperated or naturalized. The only type of recuperation open to the critic is, like Fuchs, to talk in terms of chaos and confusion. But Fuchs fails to elaborate on ways in which that chaos is created and conveyed. One way in which Felder is particularly hard to understand is the personal nature of many of the codes operating in the text which to some extent arises from the very narrow band of reality with which the text deals. As we have already established, the reader cannot verify the autobiographical details in Felder and therefore many of the more personal elements will tend to remain inaccessible to the reader. Personal codes would include, for example, the names of friends which, to the author, would form a network of acquaintances but which to the reader can be no more than names. (There are one or two exceptions such as the reference to 'the Lettaus', p. 69, which surely refers to the writer Reinhard Lettau and his family.) Similarly to the author the fragments of memory form part of a larger (but not necessarily more ordered) reservoir; to the reader they can only remain fragments. This does not necessarily amount to a deliberate undermining of assumption in the reader, it simply attests to the personal vision which emerges in Becker's writing which is not accessible to the reader.

Another facet of the 'Schwerverständlichkeit' of Felder is that it is impossible to recuperate any overall 'sense' from the text - it seems to say little. Bodo Heimann is dismissive about Felder for this very reason:

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Pluralistische Prosa Felder ist, ihrem Wesen nach auflösend, weltanschaulich leer, schwebend, mehrdeutig unbedeutend, ohne tragende Sinnmitte. Die verschiedenen Partikel neutralisieren einander, heben einander auf. Hinter allem steht durchaus: nichts. (24)

Heimann's impression arises because Felder encompasses a series of potentially and certainly ambiguous views on elements fundamental to the text, such as reality, perception and language. The areas of ambiguity have been established gradually in the examination of individual sections. For example, the opening section demonstrated the direct transcription of experience with the writing following the movement of the perception while other sections revealed language as defining and determining perception. Felder's non-resolution of these ambiguities shows why Heimann reached his conclusions. However, Felder could also be presenting and demonstrating a serious and important dilemma.

The analyses have shown in the narrative consciousness shifting ideas about the self and about perception. On the one hand the narrative consciousness absorbs perceptions of a given and accepted external reality and transcribes them into language. On the other, reality and language are seen as general and public and become intruders into the privacy of the individual consciousness, the self. Felder reveals a concept of the self which embraces apparently contradictory elements. The self is viewed as private, outside society, rarely participating in action, passively observing, open to memories, imagination and dreams. (25) At the same time the self is no more than the sum of external perception, an undeniably public figure in a wholly public world. Section 100 could be seen to present as the conclusion of Felder the impossibility of the private and individual sphere: 'Er wird aufgesaugt und verschluckt. ... Ihm wird beigebracht, so zu sein, wie man's ihm beibringt', if section 101 did not return to the notation of perception, the possibility of which seemed to have been denied. This illustrates that Felder

encompasses both these ideas and leaves both possibilities open as parallels in an unsolved dilemma.

The language reveals the same type of coexisting oppositions which has the effect of establishing and maintaining areas of ambiguity in the text. On the one hand, language is the medium, used largely without problem, for transcribing and denoting perception. On the other, it is seen as the origin and arbiter of perception. An extreme form of psychological naturalism in the almost 'Sekundenstil' transcription of immediate experience<sup>(26)</sup> coexists with an implicitly critical view of public language, clichés and slogans as so pervading reality that they come to determine and dictate the perception of that reality.

Similarly language figures in the ambiguity of the role of the fictive. The psychological mapping of consciousness is seen as being not only immediate but also in some way 'authentic' to that experience, i.e. avoiding any fictionalisation of the experience. The 'self' in Felder is, to Becker at least, his own self; the 'Bewußtsein' is his own; the experience is authentic, stemming, in his words, from 'meinem Erfahrungsbereich'. This notion of the elimination of the fictional runs parallel to the realisation that the transcription of experience into language, the 'Verwandlung in Sprache', itself becomes the creation of a fiction.<sup>(27)</sup> The uneasy discussion of fiction and fictive in section 98 perhaps indicates an awareness of this dilemma and an unwillingness to deal with it.

This question of language in Felder is further complicated by another factor. Despite the seemingly contradictory views which the texts reveal, others show a delight in the potential of language. The author seems to revel in playing games with and manipulating language, typography and layout for unusual visual or amusing effect. This aspect of Felder

does not coincide with either of the previous and more serious aspects, although it will form a major element in the examination of the next work, Franz Mon's herzzero.

Reality also forms part of this interweaving of ambiguity and contradiction. On the one hand reality is brash, aggressive and materialistic and is seen almost as forcing itself upon the narrative consciousness. On the other hand, reality is the inner and private world of the self, full of private perception, memories, dreams and imagination.

The tripartite relationship in Felder between language, consciousness and the world is not fixed or static, it is constantly in a state of flux. In the book these areas of ambiguity do not stand out immediately because the shortness of the sections and the swift changes in style and perspective tend to prevent any one view from becoming firmly enough established for the reader to be able to achieve sufficient critical distance from the text.

This constant shifting gives Felder its dynamic quality and creates the impression of constant movement through areas of perception and from one area to another. However, these shifts enable the text to sustain all the different potential contradictions discussed above. The writer becomes like a juggler, trying to keep all the balls in the air at once.

The juggler succeeds. Felder presents no solution to the dilemma of choice between inner and outer. Indeed the question of choice does not even seem a possibility. The achievement of Felder is precisely that it demonstrates the problem without finding or offering an answer. These ambiguities are central to the text, they in a very large part constitute its openness and account for the work's 'Schwerverständlichkeit' because it poses problems rather than presenting statements or solutions.

The 'productive consumption' of this text by the reader, then, involves not only processes of reading and meaning production, it also involves tracing the dilemma of a writer who wishes to present experience authentically but finds that language is corrupt, while remaining alive to its playful possibilities; who seeks to abolish the fictive only to find that merely transcribing experience into language creates fiction; who is fascinated by a language-saturated, materialistic world while condemning its effect on him; who retains a view of the self as essentially private and individual while being unable to prevent the public and external world impinging on him. In short, Felder reveals an author writing almost despite himself and who is unable to articulate or resolve the dilemma which faces him. The fascination of Felder emerges from the tensions which these unresolved dilemmas generate, and it is this fascination which shows why Felder warranted the following accolade from Heinrich Vorweg for whom it

gehört bis heute zu den wichtigsten Texten der neuen, vom Sprachexperiment her inaugurierten Literatur. (28)

## 5. FRANZ MON - THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONCRETE NOVEL ?

Concrete poetry, as it developed during the Fifties and Sixties, shares with the texts already examined a conscious desire to innovate and experiment. Its history goes back, if not directly to George Herbert's 'Easter Wings' or the visual constructions of some German Baroque poetry, then at least to the innovative exercises of Expressionism and Dada. Franz Mon's herzzero,<sup>(1)</sup> a text printed in two columns, each in a different type, attempts to transfer ideas established in concrete poetry to a longer more novel-like context. This study of herzzero will seek to show the results of such innovation in a longer text.

Franz Mon took part in both the theory and practice of concrete poetry - his editing of movens with Walter Höllerer and later of prinzip collage<sup>(2)</sup> reveals the range of his interests. Having produced theoretical works and volumes of texts, notably the 1967 collection losebuch,<sup>(3)</sup> he produced a 'novel', herzzero, in 1968. As was the case with Becker, some of Mon's theoretical views and statements give useful pointers to his other work.

Mon shares with other concrete poets a view that language has been contaminated by conventional social usage because it is (pre-)moulded by society's ideas, expectations and assumptions. Gisela Dischner puts it this way:

Die Sprache ist also von der menschlichen Gesellschaftsform vor-geprägt,<sup>(4)</sup> weil menschliches Denken sich in ihr artikuliert.

Michael Butler expresses a similar view more forcibly:

... because social reality is mediated via pre-formed and manipulated language, it is to that extent distorted.<sup>(5)</sup>

These bear many resemblances to Becker's views on language as the definer of perception. Mon, and as we shall see later

Heißenbüttel, share these views but Mon places a different emphasis on them. For him, reality equals that which is already formulated or can be formulated and this formulation gradually attains the status of reality itself:

daß ... die Wirklichkeit, mit der die Sprache es heute zu tun hat, als Realität nur besteht und anerkannt wird, insofern sie formulierbar ist. Wirklich ist nur das Formulierte. ... Der unaufhörliche und unübersehbare Sage- und Redestrom, der unsere Welt durchdringt, das endlose Gemurmel der Wissenschaften, der Reklame und der Politik, der Informationbüros, der Presse, des Funks, der Tagungen und Begegnungen hat darin seinen Grund. (6)

Here Mon maintains that language has come to define and predefine reality and thus to exclude any other way of perceiving that reality. Taken logically, this implies that language can keep people away from the direct experience of that reality. As a corollary it also implies that the process of ordering the perception of reality in language has taken precedence over and replaced any other perception of reality, so that language has taken over from the reality itself. A later extract from the same essay takes this further:

... auch die Realwelt ist von uns erfunden, durch und durch künstlich, und es schrumpfen in ihr die ursprünglichen naturgegebenen Verhältnisse, denen der Mensch hilflos verehrend und beschwörend gegenüberstand, immer weiter hinweg. (7)

In this view language has developed away from reality, creating its own, linguistic simulacrum of reality. It also implies that there was a time when this was not the case, as Mon says more concisely elsewhere:

Die Worte waren Gehäuse der Dinge, jetzt sind sie eine neue Art, von Dingen selbst, ebenso innig wahrgenommen. (8)

Mon tackles two main implications of the views: first he sees the split between language and reality in terms of a language which can no longer express suitably the reality it seeks to reflect. Of Heißenbüttel's 'Deutschland 44', a text which works from precisely this disjunction, he says:



die naive hoffnung, wort und sprache könnten übereinstimmen, ist zerschlossen unter der beobachtung der unaufhörlichen kluft zwischen dem, was sich in unserer realität abspielt und abgespielt hat, und den sprachmitteln, welche die gesellschaft bereit hält, damit fertig zu werden. (9)

This historical view corresponds with his opinions elsewhere on language as developing, not as fixed and standard. (10) The quotation above also implies that Mon does not view a return to a past utopia, the recovery of words as 'Gehäuse der Dinge', as the solution to the dilemma; this is a 'naive hoffnung', and the solution must therefore lie elsewhere.

Unlike Becker, Mon realises the implications of a wide-ranging condemnation of language and its use, and, seeks to find a compromise solution to the problem:

in dieser allgemeinen situation von sprache und realität gibt es nur zwei verhaltensweisen: entweder sich jeder sprachlichen präsentation zu enthalten ... oder die realitätsfragmente so zu behandeln, daß sie sich nicht mit dem sprachlichen medium amalgamieren können ... die sprachlichen erscheinungen gelten als das, was sie sind, nämlich beliebige versatzstücke, verdingtes material, das neuen formintentionen zur verfügung steht. (11)

The first realisation, that one solution points to silence, is countered by the second, that another solution lies in emphasising the gap between reality and language, by using that medium in such a way that the two cannot fuse together. The crusading tone of the second solution is tempered by the first which reveals a broad awareness of the implications of too sweeping a condemnation of conventional language usage.

Language as 'verdingtes material' could also be applied to Jürgen Becker's moments of playing games with language when potential referential context is replaced by the sheer delight in manipulating language. In herzzer0 Mon applied this idea in both a more consistent and a more extreme way. Language as object and material belongs very much to the

theories of concrete poetry. For example, in the view of Siegfried J. Schmidt a concrete text:

drückt nichts aus, er teilt nichts mit. Er zeigt, wie es sich mit der Sprache verhält, indem er an ihrem Verbrauch nicht teilnimmt, sie nicht als Mittel zu Zwecken gebraucht, sondern sie sein läßt, was sie konkret ist: ein Zeichensperre, eine Vertextungstechnik, ein System möglicher symbolischer Handlungen. (12)

Or in more simple terms 'Das konkrete Gedicht ist Mitteilung seiner eigener Struktur'. (13) Mary Ellen Solt agrees with this:

the concrete poet is concerned with establishing his linguistic materials in a new relationship to space ... and/or to time ... the concrete poet is concerned with making an object to be perceived rather than read. (14)

Language, then, according to both these views, is to be used as a visual system not as a vehicle for expressing what words or letters in themselves do not contain or imply. This creates a text to be perceived not read, which therefore steps outside the demands of syntax, grammar, and indeed, as the international flavour of collections of such works demonstrates, outside the demands of any single language. (15)

One way in which concrete poets treated words as objects is revealed, for example, in the poems such as Reinhard Döhl's apple/worm or Eugen Gomringer's 'schweigen' where the words build into a visual image of the subject of the poem. (16) Men tended to use a different technique, that of permutation, treating words as objects by simply swapping them around, for example:

man muß was tun  
muß man was tun (17)  
tun muß man was.

However, this functions on levels other than the permutational or visual level. In stanzas 1 and 3, with the apparently simple variation on four words, repetition and change focuses

attention on the individual words, but at the same time the text makes a progression from 'man muß was tun' to 'was muß man tun', inverting a statement which might have relevance to an ordinary experience of language into a questioning of that statement. Many poems in this collection show how using the techniques and insights of other concrete poetry. For example, the shaped poem which progresses in a diamond from 'n - non' and back from 'tot - t' (18) shares the strengths and weaknesses of other poems of this type. It shows neatly and graphically the construction and deconstruction of words, highlighting the constituent letters and asking the reader no longer to look on the word as given and immutable. Its weakness arises because it cannot go beyond this single moment of demonstration, its initial impact. This is perhaps why the majority of the lesebuch texts concentrate more on permutation, variation and repetition.

The purpose of such techniques was not only to increase awareness of language as object but also to break down assumption and expectation in the reader. Gisela Dischner places this in terms of the general aims of concrete poetry:

Durch die Isolation von Wörtern aus dem gewohnten 'Ablauf' der Sprache erscheint das Selbstverständliche der Sprachgewohnheit plötzlich neu, fragwürdig, unverständlich; die internalisierten Sprachgewohnheiten werden aufgebrochen. (19)

herzzero then belongs in the context of a much more radical and extreme attitude to language and writing than Fortsetzung des Berichts or Felder.

The analyses of Wolf and Becker focused on the basic questions of the experience of reading the text. In Wolf this emerged as the delineation of a single consciousness, in Becker as the outlining of varying facets of perception. herzzero is a very different text. It is divided into two, more or less continuous columns, printed in helvetica; the righthand column in heavier type than the left. This remains consistent.

Thus, while it was not impossible to read either Fortsetzung des Berichts or Felder as a continuous text, this cannot apply to herzzero unless one reads each column consistently for itself. A continuous reading of the text could be attempted in the following ways - to read each column in its entirety, individually; to read one section of each column alternately (both divide into sections of varying length); to read each column alternately across each page, allowing the page length to dictate how the reading progresses. Each of these approaches has drawbacks. Reading one column consecutively makes the text into one column of twice the length and prevents any relationship between the two emerging. Reading section by section, alternately, has the opposite effect of allowing horizontal but not vertical relationships in the text to emerge. Reading each column on each page would reveal some horizontal and some vertical relationships but would ignore the section divisions in the text itself. Each of these possibilities is highly unsatisfactory, and so in one sense we may conclude that herzzero is ultimately unreadable, that is to say non-'lisible', non-recuperable.

What follows from this? The Wolf and Becker texts formed different attempts to make the reader participate in structuring and creating the text to a much greater extent than, say, in the traditional novel where material and structure were based on assumptions shared between author and reader and expressed in the text. However, this attempt still operated within certain assumptions about reading. One assumption in our analyses has been that some general structure could emerge from the text and that it was the route which critics have previously followed which in some way did not match up to the text and not the implicit view of the text as in some way structured. For example, while neither Wolf nor Becker shows a continuous and coherent progressive narrative, both their texts can be read from cover to cover, i.e. linearly. But with herzzero this procedure would violate or at least ignore

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the structure of the text on even a superficial and purely visual level. Thus even before we start to read, herzzero has already undermined many of the conventional processes involved in an initial approach to a text.

In the 'vorbemerkung' Mon gives the reader specific instructions about how to read the text:

der text erscheint in zwei fassungen, die durch die drucktype unterschieden sind. es ist also jeweils die linke beziehungsweise die rechte spalte im zusammenhang zu lesen. niemand ist es jedoch verwehrt, von der linken in die rechte oder von der rechten in die linke hinüberzulesen.

es wird empfohlen, mit bleistift, kugelschreiber und filzstift zu lesen. mit dem bleistift streicht man die stellen an, die zusammengehören, auch wenn sie weit auseinander oder in verschiedenen spalten stehen. mit dem kugelschreiber korrigiert man, was korrekturbedürftig erscheint, ergänzt, was einem zur ergänzung einfällt, nicht nur die anführungszeichen an stellen, wo man jemanden sprechen hört, sondern auch wörter, saltzteile, redensarten, sprichwörter, zitate (auch selbstgemachte, vom himmel gefallene, denkbare, sagbare). der filzstift macht unleserlich, was überflüssig erscheint. bedenken sie dabei, daß seine schwarzen würmer zum text gehören werden.

(p. 5)

Mon does not view the text as a fixed entity but as a basis for development, correction and improvement by the reader. On the one hand each column is 'im zusammenhang zu lesen', on the other, the reader can move from one column to the other. The text is made up of two largely independent versions. The reader is to participate actively in the text, following the author's recommendations.

Non indicates that the text contains quotations, clichés and colloquial phrases, and invites the reader to define what he means by quotation, inviting him to include 'auch selbst-gemachte, von himmel gefallene, denkbare, sagbare'. Just as concrete poetry showed the word as an object to be manipulated here the text itself is not immutable, but is to be changed, corrected and altered by the reader. This posits a more specific and radical conception of the text than emerged from Wolf or Becker. Thus to a much greater extent than in previously examined works this text really only comes into existence when the reader has carried out his part in its creation. This forms the end-result of co-operation between author and reader with the 'schwarzen wärmer' of the felt-tip pen forming an integral part of the text.

With this in mind, we will first examine some of the techniques which occur in both columns of the text, before proceeding to assess how the text as a whole works. The most obvious techniques concern language usage. Alliteration and assonance, for example, occur throughout the text:

klumpfern knausern kneifern  
knapsern knatterern knödlern  
knöpfern knuffern knurrern  
knutschern kohlern koksern köpfern  
kotzern krallern kratzern kraulern  
krebsern kreischern kreuchern  
kriechern krischern kritzlern krötern  
krümlern (p. 157, LH)

The alliterated 'k' links this passage together, as do the rhythm arising from the alphabetical progression of the second letter from 'kl-' through 'kn-' and 'ko-' to 'kr-' and the two-syllable word construction. This technique only occurs over a few lines, bringing those particular lines together, giving rhythm and acoustic unity to part of a section of one column. The linguistic structuring of this passage emerges entirely from Non's use of alphabetical sequence.

Other passages (e.g. p. 56, LH) use a similar technique. A definite structure can be detected within the list of 72

infinitives beginning with 'ab-', as it progresses alphabetically from 'abbalgen' to 'abzwicken'. It divides into two twelve line sections, one containing 37 infinitives, the other 35. All lines contain three infinitives except the first in each section which has four 'abbeissen abputzen abtreten abbilden' and 'ablesen ablisten abmalen abmessen', and two consecutive lines in the second section with only two infinitives: 'abschiessen abschlichten/ abschmieren abschnappen'. However, because of syllabic inconsistency, this passage lacks the rhythm of the previous example. While most of the infinitives have three syllables, 'abfertigen', 'abmontieren' and 'absorbieren' have four and this disrupts the rhythm of the remainder. In addition, 'absorbieren' is the only infinitive which is not an 'ab-' compound, this disrupts the potential unity of the remaining verbal compounds in the section. These points show how consistency is always undercut in this passage.

Both examples share similar endings '-ern' in the first and the 'n' or '-en' infinitive ending of the second, and one final example will show how repetition of a stronger ending can almost develop into rhyme and help additionally to hold the passage together:

zum beispiel alle wörter mit ung,  
soweit sie auf ihre haltbarkeit getestet  
sind wie verantwortung verwässerung  
vernenschlichung verbesserung  
vernehmung verleumdung verfügung  
verfehlung vertagung verheerung  
vergeudung verhandlung verhaftung  
verselbständigung vernichtung  
verwesung

(p. 132, LH)

Similar to the repetition of 'k-' and 'ab-', the repeated 'ver-' brings the disparate words together into a single linguistic though not semantic unit. Use of the final '-ung' ending resembles the use of the repeated '-ern' and infinitive endings. The stronger rhythm of this passage indicates an awareness of rhyme convention and a desire to make reference to it in order to undermine it.



These three passages show how small sections of herzzero are tied together by linguistic devices, which bear no relationship to any idea of the passages making sense. In this way they differ from similar lists and repetitions in Wolf, where, the list of soups, for example, presented a variation on a theme of soup which demonstrated an idea of reality as not easily captured and simply expressed, the list presenting one way of approximating to the uncapturable reality. In herzzero, however, the passages seem to work more from the merely linguistic side, concentrating on the mechanics of alliteration and assonance. This creates a text with a much reduced - or perhaps non-existent - concept of subject-matter or material, a text which may seek not to emphasise the gulf between language and reality in the way both Wolf and Becker tried to, but to write as if such a relationship did not and could not exist (or was of little interest).

However, the last quotation contains a residual awareness of content in the contrast between 'soweit sie auf ihre haltbarkeit getestet' and the implications of negation, disintegration and breakdown in the prefix 'ver-'. The combination of 'ver-' and '-ung' points to negative processes, diluting in 'verwässerung', decaying in 'verwesung' and destroying in 'vernichtung'. The isolated position of 'verwesung' in the last line also undermines the postulated permanence of 'haltbarkeit'.

However, this is no more than a glance at convention. There is no indication whether 'verbesserung' for example, refers to correction, improvement, refinement, advancement, or even a legal amendment. Any idea of the meaning of the words in this or any other context has little relevance, what counts is the position, rhythm, rhyme and assonance of the word in that specific and purely linguistic context. The passage contains no sense of a possible semantic context. Individually the words have failed the test of durability

which the text mentions and any concept of their meaning has undergone a process of 'verwesung', but the rhythm, alliteration and assonance give rise to a unity and structure in the combination of words in which 'verwesung' emerges as a positive element in a passage founded on sound and rhythm.

Alliteration, repetition of letter or syllable, develops into the repetition of whole words to give a passage similar rhythmic and structural unity. In this instance, which I will only quote in part, 'solange' occurs 28 times:

solange du noch klein bist. solange es  
noch hell ist. solange du lust hast.  
solange du kannst. solange es nicht  
auffällt. solange man denken kann.  
solange es nicht rauskommt. solange  
es nicht regnet. solange es sich lohnt.  
solange keiner kommt. solange es  
keiner merkt. solange bis er bricht. (p. 39, RH)

The repetition of 'solange' and the subordinate adverbial clauses without a main clause bear a closer resemblance to the variation on a theme found in Wolf. This passage demonstrates the potential for variation in language, its conventions and assumptions, around just one word 'solange'. In this way 'solange' changes in the course of the passage from being a conjunction to being adverbial and adjectival:

... solange wie  
breit. solange wie hose. solange wie  
zerronnen. solange wie bismarck.  
solange würltchen. solange dünne  
würste. solange gelegen. ... (p. 39, RH)

Here, grammatically 'solange' should be written 'so lange' with the nouns and 'gelegen', and 'so lang' with 'breit'. Thus the apparent repetition of one word raises problems of grammatical convention and proves that while the eye may deceive the reader into assuming a correspondence between the form and function of 'solange', usage and assumption militate against this. Each of the 'solange' clauses contains an expectation of or perhaps a potential for addition, because they each lack a main clause. The only two in the whole section which do not

start with 'solange' do not provide a main clause either: 'bieg dich oder ich fress dich', 'noch ist kein meister auf den kopf gefallen'. Indeed these phrases are so irrelevant to any of the surrounding context that they probably appear in order to distract and disorient the reader further. The unfinished feeling transmitted by the subordinate clauses contrasts with the fullstops which separate the clauses into discrete units. This form of punctuation heightens the separateness and self-contained completeness of the clauses. Fullstops conventionally used to end sentences here throw doubt on grammatical convention by making these subordinate clauses stand alone.

The repetition of 'es' on p. 105 (LH) works in a similar way. The first three clauses begin with 'dass' and a conventional predicate follows, e.g. 'wussten sie schon'. Then the 'dass' is omitted:

... die erde keine kugel ist  
... die kugel keine kugel ist  
... blaue bohnen nicht jeder verträgt

This precedes a series of similar semi-clauses starting with 'es':

... es der mann im mond war  
... es gar nicht wahr ist  
... es gar niemand gewesen sein kann  
... es keiner gewollt hat  
... es keiner gemerkt hat  
... es niemand wieder tun will, auch wenn er es nicht gewesen ist, und dann erst recht nicht

(p. 105, LH)

The 'dass' which can be assumed to some extent from the first three clauses does not reduce the contrast in these clauses between their negative content and the positive appearance of the repeated 'es', which is defined in purely negative terms. This reflects the grammatical construction in which 'es' serves solely as subject or object demanded by the verb, without any

independent or semantic function. The repetition and parallel clause formation emphasise this.

The repetition of 'brachen ... auf' and 'lagerten' on pp. 116 - 117 (LH) serves a rather different purpose. The paratactic structure of the passage, its clauses linked solely by 'und', the whole comprising one long incomplete sentence, gains a Biblical air which the Biblical sounding names tend to confirm. The alternation of 'brachen ... auf' and 'lagerten', the latter occurring 39 times and the former 38 with two 'brachen ... ab' clauses at the end, gives the text its rhythm which, despite a break in the 'und' construction, continues through the transition from apparent place-names to adjectives and adverbs, for example

lagerten in hor-hagadgad brachen  
von hor-hagadgad auf und lagerten  
in hebrona brachen von hebrona auf  
und lagerten anderswo brachen  
anderswo auf und lagerten innerlich  
brachen innerlich auf und lagerten  
vorderhand brachen vorderhand auf  
lagerten unterderhand ... (p. 117, LH)

The rhythm and construction established with the alternation of the same verbs and the supposed place-names propel the passage on in the same vein even with words which do not fall in that orbit. 'Anderswo', a relative term relying on comparison with 'wo', is not inconsistent when used with 'hebrona' but becomes so when used as a place-name in 'brachen anderswo auf'. These first new terms share some hint of place: 'innerlich', 'vorderhand', 'allerseits', but this becomes extended to terms which have no connection with or resemblance to places, such as 'ohnedies', 'vorläufig', 'vorsichtshalber'. Thus this passage progressively breaks down the apparent referential context established with the place-names. Within the convention of a novel the reader tends to accept names of imaginary places as existing within the terms of that novel. Mon takes this to an extreme and confronts the reader with a list of apparent place-names, following them with words which function in the

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clauses just as the places did, but which, in normal grammatical use, would be adverbs and thus could not function as accusative objects. The whole passage, then, builds on the alternation of the verbs and forms a rhythmic construct in language which questions both the place-names and the adverbial objects. The construction of the rhythm parallels the deconstruction of the appearance of a narrative framework by using adverbs and adjectives and place-names. In this *Mon* makes minimal reference to the conventions of narrative construction - action and places - in order to undercut the illusion that such a convention may be at work.

Each of the examples examined shows one particular technique governing the structure of the particular passage to the exclusion of all else. We have not found a combination of approach at work. These are not separate sections of the text but parts of such sections and this indicates that despite its overall length the text as a whole works in very small units, with little regard to the columning and actual section divisions.

In *herzzero* such techniques function like short hammer blows, making an undeniable but brief impact. There are also some techniques which occur throughout the book and work in a rather less blatant way. For example, rather than, as above, seeking to establish a unity based on sound and language, *Mon* also alters words. He frequently changes single vowels in a word, particularly substituting 'e' for 'ä' in 'lecherlich' (p. 23, LH), 'allmehlich' (p. 29, RH), or 'sentlich' (p. 72)<sup>(20)</sup>. These changes attempt to bring spelling closer to pronunciation and make the reader consider the relationship between written and spoken words in order to increase awareness of the possible gap between them. This contrasts with the less subtle use of lists and alliteration. These changes are scattered unobtrusively throughout the text and thus contribute to a general and continuous awareness, rather than creating an immediate

and forceful but more short-lived effect.

Just as these changes in words help call into question the view of language as immutable and authoritative, so another series of references appears to construct a network of cultural reference which ties herzzero to the twentieth century in general and in particular to the late Sixties, the time which produced it. This is achieved firstly by references to historical figures such as Bismarck; to the Bible and Christian tradition; to the novel and its tradition, for example, 'don quichote', 'effi briest'; and finally to German culture, for example, 'mozart', 'heidegger', 'meyerbeer'. The names of Hitler and Hindenburg are reduced to 'hiddler' and 'hindenburch'. The latter gains added effect by being contrasted with 'vorneburch'. Similar touches occur in 'laurence nightingale' for Florence Nightingale and the anagram of Hamsun in 'hunsam'.<sup>(21)</sup> Such references indicate both an awareness of cultural, literary and historical tradition and an ability to use such references to extend the reader's awareness of the writer using, manipulating and playing with language.

Secondly, the text contains references to contemporary figures such as Walt Disney, Lollobrigida, Grandma Moses and de Gaulle.<sup>(22)</sup> Mention of 'kap kennedy' in particular ties the text to the late Sixties. Advertising and commercial references link the text with the consumer society. One page, for example, mentions 'panam', 'airfrance', 'osramlicht', 'persil', 'omo' and 'dralon' (p. 32). These references all give the work a smattering of cultural and contemporary references which it would otherwise have lacked.

Such references, however, can work in two ways. Either they can help assimilate the text into the time to which it refers, i.e. making herzzero a product of the 1960s and linking it with that period, or they can undermine any view

of the work as product and mirror of its times. In herzzero the references show awareness of tradition and at the same time link that awareness to the breaking down of the tradition in the course of the text.

A similar effect is achieved in the repetition of phrases and proverbs which are subtly altered. For example 'Wo ein Wille ist, ist ein Weg' as 'wo ein wille ist, da ist auch ein weg' (p. 38, RH), 'wo ein wille, da ist ein weg' (pp. 44, RH, 150, LH), 'wo ein wille, da ist auch ein führer' (p. 76, LH) and 'wo ein wille ist, ist auch ein weg' (p. 135, LH). A more extreme change strengthens the effect of altering 'ein Schwalbe macht noch keinen Sommer' to 'eine fliege macht noch keinen sommer' (p. 14, PH) and 'eine fliege macht (keinen sommer' (p. 31, RH).<sup>(23)</sup>

Colloquialisms appear both changed and unchanged. For example, 'das geht ja wie geschmiert' (pp. 14, LH, 22, LH, 23, RH), 'auf die Schippe genommen' (p. 35, LH) and 'lügen haben kurze beine' (p. 145, RH). However, we also find the altered forms, for example, the infinitive form 'die ohren steifhalten' (p. 128, LH) rather than the more common usage 'halt die Ohren steif', and the second person plural 'weil euch die spucke wegbleibt' (p. 65, LH), a phrase more usually found in the first person 'mir bleibt die Spucke weg'. Phrases also appear incomplete, for example 'wie geschmiert' (p. 49, LH). This applies particularly to 'wo gehobelt wird fallen späne' which appears as 'wo gehobelt wird' (pp. 60, LH, 154, LH), and 'wo späne fallen' (p. 118, LH) or in the altered form 'wo gehobelt wird, bleibt kein auge trocken' (p. 161, RH).

Such phrases form an important part of colloquial usage and thus seem particularly well suited to Mon's purpose, because they lend themselves to manipulation and can effectively make the reader aware of language as an object to be used, moulded and changed, rather than accepted for what it may



appear to encapsulate and express. This is heightened by the figurative usage of such phrases - for instance, one is not urging a person to keep their ears stiff, but in a similar English usage to keep their chin up. Putting this phrase from its normal colloquial second person usage into the virtually non-existent infinitive makes this point. Similarly such alterations can have an amusing effect, such as substituting fly for 'schwalbe'. These phrases and their variations recur throughout the text so they form a fairly consistent factor in the process of reading.

Quotations form another area of reference and resonance. Non gives the titles of contemporary literary works such as the repeated reference to Zuckmayer's als wir's ein Stück von mir (e.g. pp. 50, LH, 131, RH), to Françoise Sagan's Aimez-vous Brahms (p. 153, RH) and to John Osborne in 'blick nicht zurück im zorn' (p. 148, RH), (albeit a negation of the play's title). However, the major area of literary exploration is the use of quotations from Goethe: for example, 'füllet wieder busch und tal' (p. 13, LH) from 'An den Mond', and 'wie im morgenglanze du rings mich anglühst' (pp. 153, LH, 161, RH), the opening of 'Ganymed'. The text also echoes the rhythm of the second 'Wandrer's Nachtlid' in the lines 'trocken von tränen treten zum beten/ grinsen sie nicht' (p. 14, LH). This has the repeated same rhythm as the line 'warte nur, balde', which itself occurs on p. 95, RH. These quotations have an effect similar to the alteration of set phrases because this places these famous lines in an unfamiliar context, even just by altering conventions of capital letters and line divisions. Using Goethe in this context serves to undermine conventional views of literary language, precisely because Goethe is such a major German literary figure. At the same time it could be maintained that Non wished to assimilate the greatest of the tradition into his new work in order to modernise and revitalise that tradition. However, like the use of phrases and names this reveals an ambivalent attitude

towards the tradition which is apparently being rejected with the result that the quotations sit uneasily in the work.

The techniques used in herzzero thus far all attempt to throw the language of the text into relief. The text achieves this by distorting assumption and convention in colloquial phrases, by repeating syllables or letters so that the rhythm engendered dominates the passage and by using quotation in new, potentially disturbing contexts.

This use of language is matched throughout by the stated awareness of language in the text itself. Reviewers of herzzero noted this. The Ibbenbürener Volkszeitung, for example, states 'Die Sprache selbst, die deutsche Umgangssprache ist sein Thema',<sup>(24)</sup> while junge stimme maintains:

Das Material sind die Sprechvorgänge, Redensarten, Sprichwörter und immer wieder die Grundformen der Sprache; Sätze, Worte, Wortketten, Wortumstellungen und Verballhornungen. Jeder Satz bedeutet nur das, was er sagt. <sup>(25)</sup>

Stating that the material of the work consists of speech acts, phrases, ways of talking, proverbs and then saying it only means what it says posits a text without a mimetic framework, without a defined relationship with the reality which the language of the text seeks to express. Despite the brief references to cultural tradition and contemporary affairs our reading of the text so far would seem to bear this out.

The text contains a repeated image of using language as eating, as consumption, which relates to this question and which provides an apt textual reference to Bezzel's 'productive consumption' of the text as well as <sup>a</sup>parallel to the obsession with food and eating in Fortsetzung des Berichts. For example:

die stellen sich ja alle schon  
auf, und sie kauen auch schon  
vielleicht reden sie nur  
wenn sie hunger haben, können sie

kauen, auch ohne zu essen  
oder sie kauen und reden darüber,  
was sie essen könnten, zum beispiel  
sprichwörter einsilbig gehackte  
adjektive alle wörter mit ung  
gegrillte vokative gedünstete satz-  
blasen schnabelspäne nullen  
konsonantenklösschen labialröllchen  
glasierte vokale mit schreischäum  
bedeckte frikative knusprige guttural-  
fladen

(p. 34, RH)

Eating and speaking are paralleled in the first six lines so that the humorous mixture of food and language follows easily. Apart from 'konsonantenklösschen labialröllchen/ glasierte vokale mit schreischäum/ bedeckte frikative' as an image of language as object, consonants as dumplings, labial rolls and fricatives (a pun on 'Frikadellen' perhaps ?) covered in spit give expression to what language consists of and how it is used. The identification of eating and speaking also points to an unthinking consumption of language. It implies that using language instead of being an act to savour and to give gourmet consideration to tends to become the automatic and unthinking act of consuming of meals. This emerges from the first lines 'und sie kauen auch schon/ vielleicht reden sie nur/ wonn sie hunger haben, können sie/ kauen, auch ohne zu essen' which equates the two processes. The contrast which this makes with the details of grilled vocatives and pickled sentences indicates that general consumption comes before gourmandising.

In relation to previous analyses these techniques attempt to highlight the particular delights and the variety of language - the glazed vowels and crispy gutturals - above the general consumption and absorption of whole meals of language without thought, appreciation or awareness. So this passage becomes a metaphor for what the text as a whole seeks to achieve - the appreciation of the particular over the general, and an awareness of language as a series of individual and

varied dishes rather than an ordinary and uninteresting meal to be consumed without thought.

Elsewhere this consciousness of language pervades both columns of the text. On p. 16 the lefthand column, for example, states:

die zunge reibt sich  
am gausen: wer hätte gedacht, dass  
es so viele wörter gibt. ineinander  
stocken sie wie eine zwiebel wie  
mutter und gabel (p. 16, LH)

and in the other:

die zunge steht still,  
während ihr den spruch memoriert,  
sicherheitshalber. wer hätte gedacht,  
dass es so viele wörter gibt, sie  
stocken ineinander wie eine zwiebel,  
die augen tränen (pp. 16 - 17, RH)

These extracts have much in common, and precisely this is misleading. The central sections where the individual words and their order are identical (apart from 'so viele' and 'sovieler') emerge from a different context and have different results. In the first line of each the tongue is doing opposite things - either remaining still or rubbing against the gum. The simile with the onion in the first passage moves on to a second 'wie mutter und gabel', a hybrid of 'wie Mutter und Kind' and 'wie Messer und Gabel', while in the second the onion functions more literally - the eyes start to water.

The slight variations here relate back to the previous passage. A general glance, an unthinking consumption of the text, would tend to skip over the differences between them, as the majority of the words are identical, but more discerning examination shows wide areas of potential difference such as the slight difference in between 'so viele' and 'sovieler' or between 'ineinander/ stocken sie' which gives emphasis to 'ineinander' and 'sie stocken ineinander' which brings out 'they'.

In the same way the varying line divisions and punctuation differentiate these apparently similar passages.

Concern with how to use language also permeates the text. For comparison, I will again quote both columns:

wo viele worte eine gasse bilden  
wenns hochkommt ducken sich die  
köpfe rollen durchs ganze alphabet  
um das elende verschen wieder zu  
finden die zunge juckt jubelt der faden  
ist weg (p. 17, LH)

and

jetzt kannst du anfangen, dich durchs  
alphabet zu tasten, vielleicht daß eine  
stelle kommt, wo das gedächtnis  
wieder einspringt. die beine bewegen  
sich rasend, auch die zunge muss es,  
damit sie zurecht kommt. sie braucht  
nur das alphabet zu wälzen, und das  
wiegt fast nichts, sie wird nicht so  
leicht ermüden. (p. 17, RH)

The first concerns itself with the process of finding or retrieving rhyme, 'das elende verschen'; however, 'der faden ist weg', the thread of composition and/or a coherent thread of meaning has gone. This forms a metaphor for the attempt in herzzero to find a new mode of linguistic expression because the thread, the momentum of former modes of writing and expression, has disappeared. These passages belong together because the second also concerns moving through the alphabet, trying to find a new starting point 'vielleicht daß eine/ stelle kommt, wo das gedächtnis/ wieder einspringt.' In the second passage the attempt to begin follows the realisation expressed in the first that the past is gone.<sup>(26)</sup> But, both columns imply that this new start does not succeed in looking back and moving forward simultaneously. However, the final 'sie wird nicht so/ leicht ermüden' hints optimistically that, using the alphabet, the component elements of words and language, the tongue will once more become fruitful, it is not yet exhausted.

The second example of concern with the use of language concerns awareness of closure in the structuring of the text like that which emerged in Wolf and Becker. For example:

er merkt: einen anfang machen ist  
nicht schwer, nicht schwerer jeden-  
falls als schlussmachen. hat er schluss  
gemacht, merkt er plötzlich, es ist noch  
gar kein anfang gemacht, und er will  
kehrtmachen.

(p. 160, RH)

The start and finish are the two main points where the reader most easily becomes aware of the author's hand in a work. They are the two points where, no matter how well the author may hide his presence in the bulk of the work, he must assert his authority over his material. If the work is a simple narrative progression from A to C via B, then the author has to determine A and C, although he can have B emerge as the inevitable and necessary midpoint demanded by the conjunction of A and C. One reason for the explicit concern with closure throughout these texts is to stimulate the reader's awareness of the arbitrariness of imposed closures in other contexts.

However, the concept of closure depends to a great extent on some idea of progression whether simple and linear, the inverted movement in Fortsetzung des Berichts or the overlapping areas of Becker's texts. What does Mon offer? The other analyses examined both specific passages and the text as a whole; with Mon analysis has perforce been confined to short sections. This is because the text as a whole offers the critic only a conglomeration of individual passages. In Wolf a single narrative viewpoint emerged in the reading, in Becker various sections were seen to be tied together by style, subject or viewpoint, Mon's text offers no such wider perspective. Reviewers found precisely this problem, and could not deal with it. Rosemarie Waldrop, for example, states:

I find it hard to read through the whole book.  
But in small doses, it is full of surprises and  
small delights.

She sees those small delights as:

a dense mosaic of puns, quotes, clichés, proverbs, children's rhymes, songs, lexical fields, dialogue fragments, catalogues, (all linked by various forms of association. (27))

If, as our examination indeed seems to indicate, the text resembles a mosaic of small fragments, its form like that of any mosaic, can only emerge from contemplating the overall creation; but can one achieve this in herzzero? Waldrop states that the text fragments are drawn together by various forms of association, but unfortunately, she defines this no further. The text has revealed some forms of association within short passages and some links between such passages in the same or different column. This examination of herzzero may appear to have deliberately neglected to look at wider types of association, but this is merely because none has emerged in the reading of the text, as did emerge from both Fortsetzung des Berichts and Felder.

The surface of the work consists largely of colloquial phrases, either completely unconnected, connected briefly by particular linguistic techniques, or with minimal associative links of short duration. The reader attempting to come to terms with the entire text encounters the difficulties which Waldrop outlines, compounded by the problem of remembering what has been read.

In a novel this usually presents little difficulty, since the plot can be assimilated and remembered. Similarly in Fortsetzung des Berichts it is possible to recall the text in terms of its material - the meal and the walk, even if a succinct summary of narrative progression is impossible. Becker's texts, too, retain sufficient remnants of narrative material to be recalled - e.g. the station, the threatened pigeons, the cathedral. But apart from the minimal and randomly scattered references to current events and cultural

tradition, there is little in herzzero which could be called content, apart from the range of linguistic material such as colloquialisms and clichés.

The concrete poets condemned language for acting as if language (still) houses things, as if no gap exists between object and word. One solution to this was to use language as an object. The opposite route leads to a writing which is all language and no object, where any relationship between language and object is minimised to the point of non-existence. To a great extent, this sums up the text of herzzero. Indeed even the title, heart at zero point, indicates this. Emotion, heart, feeling, and their communication are at zero degree, language is self-sufficient, existing merely in and for itself. (28)

The implications of this are relevant in general critical terms. herzzero is a text which could only be brought within the type of approach used on other texts in certain strictly limited ways. The text as a whole seems to slip away from under the critic's gaze. The fault may lie with the critic's methods or with the text itself. Both previous texts have shown experimentation and innovation while, as analysis has indicated, in some respects remaining in touch with or at least aware of traditions and conventions of prose fiction. This applies much less to herzzero.

Is herzzero then a text which presents not a controlled and structured portrayal of fragmentation and disorder such as found in Fortsetzung des Berichts but a work which presents that disorder in such a way that no order - or interpretation - can emerge from it? In other words, is it a text to defeat the approach of any critic? The book opens with a passage about (lack of) knowledge:

weiss. ich weiss  
ich weiss nicht  
ich weiss: ich weiss nichts  
weist du nicht, was ein anderer  
man vergisst das nicht so leicht

[p. 6)



This page does not fall into the dual column format of the remainder and it may to some extent be seen as a motto for the text. The bald alternation of contradictory alternatives 'ich weiss: ich weiss nichts' and the 'weisst du nicht, machts ein anderer' forms a rather desperate statement of uncertainty about what or how to write and the process of writing. This emerges more clearly later:

auf jeden fall weiss man: es ist einmal gesagt worden  
was einmal gesagt worden ist, kann wieder gesagt werden  
was sich wiederholen lässt, kann nicht völlig vergessen  
werden  
wird nicht dasselbe gesagt, wird etwas ähnliches gesagt

(p. 6)

This again expresses uncertainty, and voices some doubt about originality, or the possibility of being original. herzere thus starts from this basis of self-conscious uncertainty. The rather stumbling form of expression continues when the two columns start:

fang einfach an  
was  
fang mich  
du bist mir einer. fang du lieber an  
ehe es überhaupt anfing  
was "es"? "es" kann alles mögliche  
sein

(p. 7, LH)

This apparent dialogue reinforces the impression that the text will feel its way forward without overall plan or idea.

However, it is easy to see how basic forms of association emerge in short passages of this text. For example, the second section of righthand column starts:

fang einfach an  
wen denn  
es, wie man so schön sagt: "mit gott  
fang an, mit gott hör auf, das ist der  
schönste"  
du bist mir einer  
bist du dir denn keiner  
fang du lieber was an

(p. 7, RH)

Association arises from a basis of resemblance and variation. The interpolation of 'bist du dir denn keiner' in the right-hand column forms a response to the first phrase and undermines it by putting it in an unfamiliar negative and interrogative context. The two columns show a variation on a shared beginning which continues, on occasion, throughout the work. Sometimes the variation is minimal, for example, 'ein fieder' (p. 7, LH) becomes 'eine feder' (p. 7, RH), or they express opposites: 'und wenn es wieder hell ist' (p. 9, LH) and 'wenns dunkel ist' (p. 9, RH), or differences of verbal mood 'es könnte wer kommen' (p. 9, LH) and 'es kommt wer' (p. 9, RH). They sometimes repeat each other, for example, the rhyming phrase:

zeig mal den daumen  
der wackelt im gaumen.

This occurs repeatedly in the text, in different parts of both columns on p. 14, for example. The lists of names and 'ja' which starts on p. 26 in the lefthand column is repeated in the righthand one beginning on p. 27, with minor variations. The righthand column occasionally links up with the lefthand on the following page, such as the repetition of 'wo ist wilhelm/ im siegerland' on pp. 24 and 25. In general such direct links occur earlier in the text, the later links coming from echoing of phrases more than specific repetition.

From this it is clear that parts of the columns do relate to one another but in an inconsistent way. This is a relationship of similarity with variation and opposition rather than of any discernible overall connection. There is, for example, little direct movement between the columns. If we use Mon's own initial instructions, these are relations, some but not all of which can be joined by pencil. The columns resemble two wavering lines which converge and diverge arbitrarily.

Closer resemblances between the columns do occur and may engender a rather different effect. On p. 126, for

example, two passages start on the same line but proceed differently:

wenn die hähne krähn  
die können sich gratulieren  
die fliegen setzen sich schon dran  
sie werden die schnauze auch noch  
vollkriegen

(p. 126, LH)

and

wenn die hähne krähn  
wo der daumen ist  
der schüttelt die pflaumen  
wie aus dem gesicht geschnitten  
die füsse nach vorn den rücken nach  
vorn die hände geschultert ein auge  
nach vorn

(p. 126, RH)

This comparison shows how little of Mon's text makes sense, or can be brought within any scope of general meaning. Each of the lefthand phrases is virtually independent whereas the righthand column gives a minimal description of a figure and its posture - but how can one have 'den rücken nach vorn' as well as 'ein auge/ nach vorn' ? Any relationship, even just within the passage, is thus somewhat tenuous while connections between them apart from the first line, seem absent. The grouping of both sets of phrases appears arbitrary and unconnected. There is also nothing in the language (except the brief 'daumen/'pflaumen' assonance) to hold the words together.

Here no relationship with any empirical reality can be discerned - unless in the nugatory sense that the text wishes to negate the possibility of any such relationship. The work does not 'make sense' because one cannot produce meaning from the text or establish an ordered perception of and reaction to it. We have already dealt, in a theoretical context, with Heath's argument against Morriquette's approach to the nouveau roman which shows that Morriquette 'recovers' the 'meaning' of Robbe-Grillet's novels by bringing them into a discursive order at the expense of the verbal surface of the text. Jonathan Culler puts it thus:

The poet or novelist succeeds in challenging naturalization not by going beyond the bounds of sense but by creating a verbal surface whose fascination is greater than that of any possible naturalization and which thereby challenges the models by which we attempt to comprehend and circumscribe it. (29)

herzzero eludes 'naturalization' except in an unsatisfactory, negative way, but does the fascination of the verbal surface give a richer perception of the text? Or does herzzero go beyond the bounds of that? This focuses attention once more on the process of reading.

Other reviewers shared Ms. Waldrop's misgivings about reading the text except in 'small doses'. For example, the Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger felt:

Der Text wird zum intelligenten Puzzlespiel, das fertige Buch schließlich ein Produkt von Autor und Leser. Lektüre als Konsum wird unmöglich. (30)

Karl Krowlow shared these sentiments:

Der Leser kann, wenn er will, mit-spielen, mit-dichten, wenn er bereit ist, aus der überkommenen Lese-Gewohnheit zu fallen. (31)

Ludwig Harig expands on these points:

Das Ärgerliche für viele Leute an Franz Mon ist nun nicht, daß er so schreibt wie er schreibt, sondern daß der Leser nicht so lesen kann, wie er lesen möchte ... und das möchte der Leser eigentlich gar nicht, weil er etwas braucht, woran er sich halten kann (nämlich zuerst an den ersten und zuletzt an den letzten Satz) aber bei Franz Mon kann er sich an nichts halten als an das Wort, das da steht ... (32)

All three agree that the experience of reading herzzero is different. Reading cannot here equal consumption, the reader must get out of convention and assumption about reading and cannot read the text as he likes to read other 'easier' texts, because here he has nothing to hold on to. Thus they agree that Mon has succeeded in challenging naturalization.

The examinations of Wolf and Becker indicated that, while the texts evaded any exact or complete naturalization, the verbal surface, the language and its structuring made reading the text a rewarding exercise. In those texts the fascination of the way in which language was used and manipulated served to explain why reviewers had experienced such difficulty when they tried to rely on a set approach. These texts did challenge 'the models by which we attempt to comprehend and circumscribe' the text, i.e. the approaches of the critics, but they challenged these models by offering something to take their place, not a model or even series of models, but a critical language with a potential for different and varying readings.

This examination of herzzero, however, has tended to confirm Waldrop's contention that the text is rewarding in small rather than large doses. What, then, is the effect of the sheer length of the text? The Times Literary Supplement felt that

this fascinating book ... seems to confirm that the methods of concrete poetry lend themselves to short poster-like texts which steadily lose in effect as they gain in length. (33)

Our examination seems to support the view that a short concrete poem cannot be extended to 157 pages and retain the fascination and/or impact of a short poem or individual passage. In Wolf particularly the verbal surface of individual passages tied in with the language of the whole text, whereas in herzzero although certain isolated passages stimulate interest, the verbal surface of the whole text fails to emerge let alone to fascinate. This indicates that, while short passages can work using specific techniques within that short scope, a longer text demands additional - or at least different - techniques. Thus while both Wolf and Becker used similar techniques to Mon's of listing, alliteration, etc., their texts also sustained a longer reading, because of the ways in which such

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skills were tied together and fused into the whole text. herzzero, in any but a typographical sense, lacks any such general structure. This lack of structure does not even emerge as a negative structuring, sheer variety fails to spice the life of this text.

herzzero also lacks the general but undefined awareness of a possible mimetic context which the other texts contain. This awareness which ties Fortsetzung des Berichts and Felder to a view of reality as potentially definable and to an idea of potential narrative, makes it possible to see these texts as explorations towards new types of narrative or description. herzzero, however, remains a purely abstract, linguistic construct which indicates no potential in this or any other direction.

The reason for these negative conclusions about herzzero lies with the aims of concrete poetry which Mon attempted to extend into a 'concrete novel'. One idea basic to concrete poetry is that it communicates its own structure, as Siegfried J. Schmidt says 'Das konkrete Gedicht ist Mitteilung seiner eigener Struktur'. The visual impact of many concrete poems demonstrate this by showing that language has properties and functions other than to communicate meaning. In concrete poetry the visual and acoustic elements of language which are not orientated to conveying meaning become of prime importance, for example:

Die konkrete Poesie geht davon aus, daß die Sprache als geschriebene Sprache optische Elemente, als gesprochene Sprache akustische, Ton-, Laut- und rhythmische Elemente enthält, die man mehr oder weniger losgelöst von jeder Information oder semantischen Bedeutung als Baumaterial für rein ästhetische, optische bzw. akustische Gebilde verwenden kann. (34)

Concrete poetry, then is to unleash the hitherto largely ignored or hidden properties of language in order to undermine

conventions of communication. The object of this exercise is to challenge assumption and habit, in order to bring language back into a closer relationship with reality. In this way concrete poetry forms an extreme restatement of Virginia Woolf's 'realism' argument examined in Chapter 2. Gisela Dischner expresses this in terms of the polydimensionality of reality:

Die Hauptfunktion experimenteller Kunst besteht darin, eindimensionale Denk- und Sprachformen aufzusprengen und die Vieldimensionalität konkreter Wirklichkeit zu zeigen. (35)

This harking back to an argument about realism is implied even in the name 'concrete' poetry. For while 'concrete' may refer to the idea of language and poem as object rather than communicator of some meaning, concrete also implies a close relationship with reality.

In its attempts to carry out such ideas, herzzero used the techniques which concrete poetry developed and which, in apparent contradiction to its desire to escape convention, soon became the conventions of concrete poetry. Analysis of the text has shown these at work in herzzero, but they can be briefly summed up as firstly the breakdown of linguistic convention by visually breaking down and reassembling words into constituent letters and into new words and word combinations, permutating letters and word elements; secondly, the repetition of words and phrases serving to remove them from a conventional context by means of emphasis, as in Rühm's 'die bluse' and 'du und'; thirdly, combining opposites to emphasise paradox. (36)

herzzero fails to achieve the 'concrete novel' because these techniques depend on making a short but sharp impact on the reader. herzzero, a text of 157 pages, neither sustains this type of impact or even a series of such impacts, nor



offers anything to compensate for this. It lacks a wide, overall linguistic fascination, structure other than the purely visual column division; and the range of concrete poetry's techniques varies little throughout. The lack of even a minimal referential context and the consequent completely abstract language fails to create an independent interest which can balance the challenge to the reader. herzzero renders 'Lektüre als Konsum', even the 'produktive Konsumtion' of the previous analyses impossible. Non has attempted to escape entirely from the traps of language, convention and narrative tradition, but in so doing has created a text which cannot be read.

6. HELMUT HEIßENBÜTTEL'S TEXTBÜCHER  
- TEXT AS CONTEXT

In the spectrum of German literature of the 1960s, Helmut Heißenbüttel occupies two main positions - that of major critic and theoretician and that of writer of poems, texts and latterly of longer 'Projekte'. We will here examine his second role, concentrating on the six Textbücher which appeared between 1960 and 1967.<sup>(1)</sup>

Heißenbüttel has been linked with the exponents of concrete poetry<sup>(2)</sup> although many of his texts do not belong in this mould. However, his early poetry<sup>(3)</sup> some of which re-appears in Textbuch 1,<sup>(4)</sup> makes early use of concrete techniques such as permutation and repetition although largely without much typographical innovation. Ohne weiteres bekannt contains early versions of some of the prose texts of Textbuch 2<sup>(5)</sup> ('Der Wassermaler', 'Psychologischer Vorgang'), while texte ohne komma<sup>(6)</sup> contains a version of 'Politische Grammatik' which re-appears in Textbuch 2. This work, published by Eugen Gomringer demonstrates Heißenbüttel's increased interest in language as object and in concrete techniques. These early texts are specially significant because the repetition of parts of them in the subsequent Textbücher indicates the continuity and consistency of Heißenbüttel's interest and shows that the Textbücher encompass Heißenbüttel's interests over a longer period than the publication of the Textbücher in the Sixties.

Examining the Textbücher in chronological order will allow the texts themselves to be assessed as well as enabling an overall view to emerge. The previous chapters have focused on two main underlying aspects of all the texts - the relationship between language, reality and text, and secondly, the consciousness, as it emerges in the texts, of the convention

being used or rejected in the text and of the fictiveness of the text. In each of the three chapters this has taken different forms, and different avenues have been followed, but in each case these general questions have emerged from the texts. Also these analyses have viewed the texts in terms of the experience of reading them, as part of a process of meaning production, a process of productive consumption. This implies that any meaning in the text comes into being as the text is read.

In one of the few English language articles to deal with Heißenbüttel, Rosmarie Waldrop places Heißenbüttel and his work firmly in the framework of the other writers examined in this study. In her view Heißenbüttel's whole work has been given to exploring the structure of language and its limits.<sup>(7)</sup> She calls him a 'poet of contexts', arguing that his texts explore language through a particular 'interest in context and combination', and that they play 'with the basic rules of the language to the point of seeming gibberish if looked at superficially', and avoid those rules and conventions of language and syntax which apparently contain and transmit meaning and sense. The texts thus give particular emphasis to the ways in which they deconstruct possible external context and in which they establish their own context.

Textbuch 1 shows more affinity with poetry than prose. However, even the titles of the groups of texts in that work show a concern with general questions of language and convention: 'einfache Sätze', 'das Sagbare sagen' and 'einfache grammatische Mediationen', for example. These very early texts, the first dated 1953 and several 1954, taken from Heißenbüttel's earlier work lack the structural and technical innovation of some of the later texts. They remain generally within a poetic mould whilst demonstrating some interest in the questions of language which were to continue

to occupy him. For example, the text beginning 'das Sagbare sagen' and ending 'das nicht beendbare nicht beenden' (p. 6), shows manipulation of language without any referential context outside the text itself. The parallel construction of 'das Sagbare sagen' and in the second stanza 'das nicht Sagbare' creates a juxtaposition which the double negative in the last line resolves. The impersonality of the poem - who may say the sayable? - reinforces the limpidity of the simple language, which seems to indicate that, if one says the sayable only 'das nicht Sagbare' remains, and that ultimately one can merely not finish the unfinishable. The text here thus determines the context.

The same applies to the texts in 'Pamphlete' which show Heißenbüttel's early interest in quotation which was to occupy him more both in the later Textbücher, particularly the last, and in his two projects, D'Alemberts Ende and Das Durchhauen des Kohlhaupts.<sup>(9)</sup> The first of the 'pamphlets' states categorically where this interest lies:

Gegenwart übt die Liturgie der vergeblichen Redeweise  
 entfärbte Zitate  
 fuhlose Gedanken entdecken die melancholischen adverbialen  
 Bestimmungen Umstandswörter  
 Schlagertexte überdauern die Zeit.

(I, p. 11)

Like Becker, Heißenbüttel is here concerned with the linguistic surface of life, the extent to which language has replaced perception, and, in addition, the extent to which language is pre-formed and pre-digested until it has become merely a 'Redeweise' and 'entfärbte Zitate'. Thought, expressed in 'Bestimmungen', is rootless and becomes fixed not only in but also by means of language.

These early texts work in two ways. Firstly, they state their general concern with language directly. Secondly, they form a collection of disparate perception which attracts attention to the articulation of that perception in language:

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meine biblische Geschichte beginnt mit dem Geruch der  
 Heide in August  
 mein Paläolithikum reicht nur bis in meine eigene Kindheit  
 Prosodie der Eisenbahnwagen  
 der unkontinuierliche Ablauf der Zeit  
 gestern war vor drei wochen (I, p. 11)

These lines are not tied together by a defining perception, nor by a unified subject matter, nor by rhythm, assonance or metre. Three of the five do refer briefly to time and its passing, but that is the only and tenuous link between them. In this way each line becomes - as the third of the 'Pamphlete' states specifically - like a motto, a brief phrase out of any context. The function of context here is to destroy an impression or assumption of an overview or general perception. 'Mein' in the first two lines points to a first person, which although it disappears in the middle lines, returns in the last three thus encapsulating the disparate central section. The whole then creates an impression of lack of unity and of disparateness while at the same time being enclosed within the perception of an 'I' figure. Thus the disparateness of the seemingly unrelated perception belongs in a general, but unemphasised and undefined first person context.

Many of the other texts in the first Textbuch also combine first person perception and apparent lack of connection. They vary from the 'poems' of 'Pamphlete' (pp. 9 - 15) and 'Topographien' (pp. 17 - 20) to the 'prose' of 'Achterbahn' (pp. 21 - 26), and 'Cinemascope 59/60' (pp. 27 - 31). The lack of connection between the individual lines of such texts has a bearing on the first of the general questions relevant to the six Textbücher: the relationship between language, reality and the text. The lines quoted make reference to elements of an external reality - the heather in August, the railway carriage, childhood. However, these fragments do not build up into an overall context. Just as the perceptions are fragmentary, so the elements of a posited 'reality' outside the text are even more fragmented and minimal than in

Becker for example. Examination of the later textbooks will attempt to trace the development of this relationship.

The second main strand of analysis, like that of the other texts, will deal with any awareness of fictiveness which may emerge in the reading. This will include consciousness of convention at work being rejected and mechanisms whereby assumption in the reader is broken down during the reading of the text. This question figures particularly in the last sections of the first textbook, especially in 'einfache grammatische Meditationen' (pp. 33 - 36) and 'Einsätze' (pp. 37 - 40). In the first, repetition and tautology undercut any expectation of definition or clarification through language. For example:

der Schatten den ich werfe ist der Schatten den ich werfe  
die Lage in die ich gekommen bin ist die Lage in die ich  
gekommen bin  
(I, p. 35)

This section, labelled 'Tautologismen' constructs the text as language without external context firstly by only defining the shadow or situation in terms of itself, tautologically; and secondly by then combining those 'defined' elements together, as in the last line:

Gruppen von Gruppen bewegen sich über den Schatten den  
ich werfe und verschwinden (I, p. 35)

Here the only new element, 'und verschwinden', expresses what has happened to language as an expression of external reality. By being defined solely in its own terms, it has disappeared. The words alone remain.

Similarly, in the third section, labelled 'konjunktivisch', the lack of context emphasises the starkness of the language, repeated and negated:

als ob als ob  
wahrscheinlich wahrscheinlich  
auf sich genommen nicht auf sich genommen  
unentschieden  
vorläufig vorläufig (I, p. 35)

Here repetition is furthered by the similarity between the words denoting comparison and uncertainty, the latter also expressed by the negation in line 3.

This demonstrates creation of context by association through the language. The different terms of uncertainty form one type of association, that of theme. In the last section, 'partizipial', a different type of purely verbal association occurs:

wartend warten gewartet haben  
gewartet werden  
rumgebringt nicht rumgekriegt rumgekriegt worden sein  
widerrufene Widerrufung (I, p. 36)

Changing in tense and mood, using the negative and constructing words from the same root all indicate this process of association and show how the immediate context of the text is the sole area of possible reference.

The eight sections of 'Einsätze' thus show a combination of arbitrary fragments and the building-up of association within the text. They also demonstrate a greater degree of technical innovation in that, although nouns still retain their capital letters, the only punctuation is a colon between each phrase or word combination. There is also a more explicit consciousness of fictiveness than in the other texts of Textbuch 1. In the third section, for example, the repetition of the phrase 'absolute Kombinatorik' provides comment on the method of composition:

absolute Kombinatorik: Denkfäden Denkpflützen  
die absolute Kombinatorik phantastisch Phantastik  
Unermöglichkeit aufkommt: (I, p. 39)

Bringing together combination and imagination shows in the text itself some awareness of the processes involved in composing that text. The last line of the eighth section reinforces this 'Thema nicht Thema aus tief Unthema aus tief aus:'. Theme, non-theme and untheme come together, the



texts have no subject as such, their only subject is themselves.

None of these texts achieves the complexity and technical virtuosity of the later texts in undercutting convention. They do, however, prefigure the concerns of much of Heißenbüttel's later work; they are not major statements but signposts to the future.

Heißenbüttel's second Textbuch, which appeared in 1961, contains twenty-five texts which indicate a greater conscious awareness of fictiveness than the first textbook. This emerges in the use of terminology associated with the novel. The texts have titles such as 'Roman', 'Variationen über den Anfang eines Romans', 'psychologischer Vorgang'. Titles also indicate possible description: 'Ein Zimmer in meiner Wohnung', 'Gegenden und Landschaften', 'Etwa ein Ping-Pong Ball oder eine Billiardkugel' and 'Situation', and potential delineation of character: 'Ich der Ermordete', 'Der Wassermaler' and 'Der rücksichtsvollste Mensch der Welt.' So the terminology is matched by apparent concern with conventions associated with the novel - plot, character and situation.

This emphasis in the titles of the texts on terms associated with the novel indicates that they work with an awareness of specific convention and that innovation will take place against such a background. This differs from Men's attempt at innovation with a minimum of conscious reference to or awareness of tradition. It also shows a rather more explicit emphasis on conventions of prose fiction than was encountered in either Wolf or Becker where this tended to emerge through the texture of the language.

Before looking directly at the texts we should take cognisance of the two mottoes which stand at the head of this series of texts. The first by Husserl states that

'das Ganze mehr ist als die Summe seiner Teile' indicating the importance of the combination of texts as well as each individually. The second motto, from René Wellek, states 'A work of literature is, first of all, an organised, purposeful sequence of words'. These two mottoes reinforce the stated awareness of literature and writing as fiction and as linguistic creation, which was noted in the titles of the texts; indeed, in the 1970 Luchterhand edition of all six textbooks the second textbook gained a general title 'Quasiroman'.

The organisation mentioned by Wellek figures in titles such as 'Vorschlag zu einer Systematik' and (ignoring for the moment the paradoxical construction) 'Charakteristik eines Ordens den es nicht gibt', or 'Gruppentheorie' and 'Politische Grammatik' which all indicates awareness of system and organisation. Thus Textbuch 2 encompasses awareness of the conventions and traditions of the novel and of processes of organisation and structure.

The first text, 'Ein Zimmer in meiner Wohnung' (pp. 7 - 8) delineates processes of interaction between a first person narrative consciousness trying to articulate, and its surroundings. These processes are characterised by an apparent inability to organise or build up perception into a stable foundation for action. This emerges in the uncertainty about immediate perception and about previous perception. The 'ich' cannot remember where in the flat this room is. The plan cannot be found, there is none, 'oder er ist verloren gegangen'. Similarly, recollection of how he entered the room is undercut by an inability to recall the plans: 'Ich weiß sogar nicht einmal mehr was für eine Art von Plänen es gewesen sein könnte'. This inability to organise or make deductions from perception emerges too in the unfamiliarity with the face (his own) reflected in the mirror, just as the voice is 'Meine mir eigene fremde Stimme'.

This uncertainty and unfamiliarity is underlined by the paradoxical parallels throughout the text. The first sentence illustrates this. It states that there is a room 'in meiner Wohnung'; but this is immediately undermined and almost contradicted in 'das ich kaum kannte'. The 'ich' hardly knows the room in the flat, yet he has already considered bricking and papering it over; he searches for the plan, thus assenting to its existence but then declares 'es gibt keinen'; after stating that he cannot recall how he entered the room he then describes it and remembers the feeling of 'eine Art Wiedersehen'. The text thus combines articulation of immediate perception and awareness of memory and past with a concomitant inability to impose organisation or structure. This reveals an inability to build up a coherent or cohesive image of reality in language. Given the stress on conventions and terms associated with the novel in these texts, this points to the text attempting not only to portray fragmented processes of consciousness but also, in so doing, to undercut any assumption which the reader might entertain about the portrayal of cohesive or coherent action, character or perception.

Although the text only implies this, it is re-inforced by the language and the stress on the processes of perceiving and articulating, for example:

Ich blickte auf. Ich sah ein Gesicht. Ein müdes ein müde und angespannt beobachtendes Gesicht. Müde und angespannt beobachtende Augen. Einmal waren diese Augen zuversichtlich gewesen einmal waren diese Augen böse gewesen. Alle das war vorbeigegangen und hatte nichts geändert. (II, p. 8)

While the text refers to lack of structure and organisation, the language of the text and the short sentences and phrases reveal both structure and organisation. The repetition and different usages of the two main qualifiers 'müde' and 'beobachtend' together with the repetition of 'Gesicht' and 'Augen' form the basis for the whole description which is

constructed from very few linguistic units. Changes in parts of speech, such as 'müde' from adjective to adverb, help forge an awareness of language as a shifting and unfixed vehicle. The structuring of the language at once indicates a level of organisation beyond that of the perception of the 'ich' and, in the brevity of the sentences and phrases, mirrors a fragmented perception by corresponding with and conveying the shifts, jumps and overall uncertainty of the 'ich' about itself, its thoughts, past and location.

Thus language here functions as a structuring and organising device which can bring order to an assertion of disorganisation. The use of square brackets to expand the perception and to further underline uncertainty, e.g. 'so schion mir', furthers this because it provides a visual indication of structure and differentiation, by separating elements of the text from one another.

The variation at the end further emphasises the text's concern with the delineation in ordered language of a fragmentary consciousness. By moving outside the consciousness of the first person, which defined the parameters of the whole text, the 'Variante', although not an integral part of the text, points up the unreliability of the perception in the text, because it states that there was only one door which had always been open. This apparent contradiction of the context established in the text itself helps to further awareness of the fictiveness of the text, in this instance by throwing into relief the fact of linguistic construction using the brief contradiction, in language, of what the language of the text itself sought to express. In this way, this organised and purposeful sequence of words undermines any appearance which might have been created of either organisation or purposefulness.

The second text, 'In Erwartung des roten Flecks' (pp. 8 -

10) also uses the first person, square brackets and an - albeit extended - 'Variante', but it does not attempt to define a narrative consciousness but rather demonstrates a process of reducing any appearance of narrative still further. The text pivots on statement and redefinition of statement:

Ich bin eine schwarze Gerade die sich vorwärts bewegt.  
Das was ich als das begreife was ich bin begreife ich  
als etwas das sich vorwärts bewegt schwarz ist gerade  
ist. (II, p. 8)

Tortuous and verbose recasting of the initial statement creates uncertainty by undercutting the definiteness of the opening. The repetition of this same technique throughout ensures that this uncertainty remains constant and that focus centres on the processes of perception and definition. The lists of questions in the third and fourth paragraphs reinforce this. The assertion of uncertainty points to the variation 'annäherend Null', and precisely this is the goal of the text. The text approaches nothing, approaches tautology and complete linguistic self-definition because the re-wordings break down all that is asserted. The repetition and variation of a minimum of words creates a 'reduced' writing. This is the opposite of a text which seeks to expand from a central basis and delineates a centripetal rather than centrifugal process.

The term 'reduction' touched on in previous analyses appears on the cover of the collected Textbuch as one of the bases for the re-ordering of texts: 'Reduktion - des Textablaufs, der Syntax, der semantischen Bezüge zum Beispiel'.<sup>(10)</sup> In this text, reduction takes the form of juxtaposing and repeating a minimum of words which helps centre attention on the individual words of the text rather than on the processes of expanding and extending vocabulary and textual definition. The basics of the text - its language and structuring - can thus emerge more easily, because expansive contextual association can no longer distract attention from the words used.

In the first two paragraphs 90 out of 112 words occur at least twice, 60 appear in both paragraphs. The text, then, is built around a tiny number of words particularly 'ich', 'begriffe', 'das', 'was' and 'als'. The text thus delineates a process of definition and re-definition whilst the concentration on relative pronouns makes these definitions purely relative. This is reinforced especially by 'als' which induces comparison and also implies possible doubt.

The punctuation aids concentration on language and on individual words. As in the first text, there are no commas, but there are question-marks as well as fullstops. The text thus divides into units within which the reader must find his own way as there is no indication of modulation within the units. It is possible to divide the text into clauses, e.g.

Ich vertraue [ , ] auf das [ , ] was ich als das begriffe [ , ]  
was ich bin [ , ] was ich als eine schwarze Gerade  
begriffe [ , ] als etwas [ , ] das ich als unaufhaltsam  
als unwiderruflich begriffe. (II, p.9)

But by splitting the sentence into clauses, units of meaning, the reader is working with the given language, showing awareness of how it can function in the text and not passively absorbing a predetermined language and sense structure.

The variation deals with nothingness in an abstract and technical vocabulary. While the text attempts to deal with concrete words, the variation shifts to abstractions, e.g. 'Unter Ausschluß dessen was man Möglichkeit nennt' (p. 9). This delineation of abstract processes in abstract terms augments what had been implicit in the text. As any external referential context is diminished, so the words only relate to and gain significance from one another. In the variation, this frame of reference is reduced to nothing. However, because language can try to come to terms with the concept 'Null', this then becomes not negative but positive. Thus

although the text can be reduced and thereby can increase awareness of words and language and although the text can explicitly concern itself with nothing, it nevertheless remains a text, a positive assertion of and in language.

In this Textbuch, 'Roman' (pp. 26 - 27) takes the notion of reduction furthest. The twenty-one short numbered sections deal with the concept of a novel. The text is constructed from repetition and a minimum of amplification and elaboration, e.g.:

I Ich bin eine Geschichte. / II Ich bin eine  
Geschichte von jemand. / III Jemand von dem ich  
eine Geschichte bin ist die Geschichte die ich  
bin. Ich bin jemand der eine Geschichte ist. (II, p.26)

As in the previous texts, this throws the individual words into relief. In addition, the vagueness of the words 'jemand', 'Geschichte', 'passieren', while appearing to amplify the initial promise, keeps the text to a minimum by not providing information or widening vocabulary and frame of reference. The text is indeed an 'organised, purposeful structure of words' but one in which the words relate solely to one another, a text which establishes and maintains its own context which is self-enclosed and self-defining.

However, the text not only presents reduction in language but also in the conventions of the novel itself. The title, after all, is 'Roman'. It makes brief and minimal references to plot (XI, XII), to narrative perception (XIII), to chronology and time scale (X, XIV), to structuring a narrative sequence (XV - XVII) and to narration itself (IV, V). Indeed, even those sections which do not coincide with this (VI, IX) can be seen as potential subject matter, i.e. varied perceptions which might form part of the 'Geschichte' which might be 'erzählt'. The last two sections 'Da' and 'Unumkehrbar da' assert the existence of the text. Reduced though it may be,

the text is still definitely and inescapably there.

Is this text a 'Roman' ? For example, can E.M. Forster's definition of the novel as 'a fiction in prose of a certain extent' be applied to 'Roman' ?<sup>(11)</sup> Obviously it does not coincide with Forster's assumptions, particularly that 'a certain extent' means some 50,000 words. However, this text does resemble 'prose', it can be seen as a 'fiction' and it does cover 'a certain extent'. Twisting Forster's definition thus is merely doing to that definition what Heißenbüttel has done to the convention and terminology of the novel in 'Roman'. By stripping Forster's definition of its assumptions and resonances Heißenbüttel's text can be fitted into it, just as Heißenbüttel has used the terms associated with the novel in a context which removes them from possible areas of resonance and assumption. Clearly this process functions more effectively against a background of such assumption, but this does not detract from Heißenbüttel's achievement in undermining such assumption and simultaneously creating a different and more reduced text but one which still asserts itself and is 'unumkehrbar da'.

The final text in this collection, 'Politische Grammatik' (pp. 38 - 39) uses the idea of reduction differently. The text focuses on permutation and variation of the root 'verfolg' which occurs in nouns (Verfolger, Nichtverfolger, Verfolgte, Nichtverfolgte, das Verfolgen, das Nichtverfolgen), verbs (verfolgen, verfolgte, werden ... verfolgt), adjectives (verfolgende, verfolgte, nicht verfolgende). The remaining words are the definite article, simple verbs ('werden', 'machen'), prepositions ('aus', 'in', 'von'), and conjunctions ('und', 'indem', 'aber', 'weder noch'). The text is thus even more reduced than 'Roman' and concentrates exclusively on the permutational possibilities of the single root. The text starts by juxtaposing the opposites 'Verfolger' and 'Verfolgte', which differ from one another linguistically in



only one letter. The apparently simple, grammatical construction of the opening sentence 'Verfolger verfolgen die Verfolgten' is reversed in the next 'Verfolgte aber werden Verfolger'. As the sense of the first sentence depends on the logic of the grammatical construction and because no other context emerges, the reversal in the second sentence undermines the first thus indicating that the context established in the first sentence is entirely linguistic and without an external frame of reference. The distinction between pursuer and pursued has been blurred.

The remainder of the first section explores the immediate permutational possibilities, ending abruptly with 'Und so ad infinitum' (p. 38). This points to endless possible permutation and closes off the activity before it becomes simply mechanical. The second and third paragraphs introduce the negative. The former is divided into 'weder ... noch' sentences which further the effects of the first paragraph; the latter consists of questions without answers, except the conclusion:

Nicht verfolgende Verfolgte und verfolgte  
Verfolger. Sondern Verfolger und Verfolgte  
zugleich. (II, p. 39)

This synthesis is quite in keeping with the pattern of the remainder, obscuring apparently wide differences in meaning by means of linguistic combination and thereby drawing attention to the fact that the text is no more than a linguistic construct. The exceptions to the permutational pattern further this. 'Außerhalb des grammatischen Zirkels' in the middle of the second paragraph points to the grammatical circle of the text which forms a variation on a theme of grammatical construction. The second, 'eigentlich' in 'die eigentlichen Verfolger' and 'die eigentlich Verfolgten' indicates that 'real' has no meaning or reference within the turning grammatical circle.

The 'grammar' of the title refers to the permutation and variation which structure the text and the 'political' to the idea of pursuit, of pursuers and pursued, and also to the manipulation of language and the shifts of (apparent) meaning in the text. This text also makes a political point by highlighting in a more directly political context ways in which language can be used, manipulated and developed into an apparently meaningful context and construct without an external frame of reference.

This examination of Textbuch 2 has not referred to all the texts but the selection has shown some ways in which the texts increase awareness of language and fictiveness by the ways in which the language is used to exploit and undercut assumption through variation and repetition and to construct a text honed down to its barest essentials. The third Textbuch, which appeared in 1962, contains two main groups of texts offering a slightly different approach to these questions. The texts of 'Verallgemeinerungen' (pp. 11 - 25) bear many similarities to those of the previous textbook. They are in prose, split into paragraphs; the nouns have capital letters; they are all of a similar length. They do, however, differ in their lack of punctuation which makes any sense-structure in the texts less obvious than in Textbuch 2 where fullstops divided the texts into small units which the reader could digest individually. In 'Verallgemeinerungen' the sole divisions are square brackets and paragraph shifts.

Textbuch 2 also featured square brackets which functioned as additional ways of dividing the text into smaller units. They acted as asides, '[wie man sagt]' (p. 74); as indications of perspective, '[sagte er]', '[rief sie]' (p. 18); as comments giving some external perspective '[was Außenstehende hätten vermuten können]' (p. 13); and to provide contrast as in 'Mittwochsgespräch' (pp. 17 - 18), where the bracketed words describe the 'Wirklichkeit' being discussed in the alternate

sections. Because of the lack of other punctuation in Textbuch 3 the brackets become more important. In 'Verallgemeinerungen' they provide external perspective and indicate active control over the material. In 'soviel zu zahlen', for example, '[unendliche Möglichkeiten]' and '[das kann ich genau sagen]' do this, while in 'Hochzeitsgesellschaft' and 'Hutmacher' they amplify and continue the pattern of repetition established in the rest of the text. In 'taktische Reminiscenzen' (p. 17) the isolation in brackets of words like 'politisch' and 'moralisch' throws into relief how much such terms change the meaning and resonances of the adjectives they qualify. The shift from '[politisch] nonkonformistisch' to 'arme Schweine [theologisch]' furthers this by reducing it to an absurd level. The brackets here also make the grammatical function of the words ambiguous, 'politisch' for example, could belong to the list of adjectives ending in '-isch' or could adverbially qualify 'nonkonformistisch'. In sum, the brackets serve similar functions in the two series of texts but are more important in 'Verallgemeinerungen' because of the lack of other punctuation. They increase and emphasise particular elements of the text by breaking it up typographically thereby focussing attention on its language.

The question of punctuation is thus important for all the textbooks. In Textbuch 2, for example, the fullstops splitting the texts into sentence and sense units helped the reader progress through the text. Lack of punctuation in Textbuch 3 gives no indication of sense structure or pause in the language and shifts attention on to individual words which form the only possible points of orientation for the reader. These words appear in isolation and not in sentence and phrase units. If the reader wishes to extract sense from the text he must divide it up for himself, or allow the stream of text to carry him along. In both cases the lack of punctuation throws the language into relief, by making more usual ways of reading more difficult or impossible.

The next texts, 'Evergreens', (pp. 27 - 34) deal more with creating and maintaining a reduced impression of reality. This is a change in emphasis rather than a new departure. Previous texts such as 'Ich der Ermordete' and 'Der Wassermaler' attempted this but it was counteracted by the overall emphasis on language. In 'Evergreens', however, permutation and variation have largely vanished, and creation of context becomes a specific concern.

These texts show an increased range of vocabulary and emphasis on association, rather than the previous reduction of context in order to reveal the mechanisms of language-structuring. The features examined in other texts are not abandoned, but they are less central. This change emerges most clearly in 'Staatsbegräbnis' (III, pp. 33 - 34) which uses a vocabulary of death and funeral based on three words: 'tot' ('ein Toter', 'Todesopfer'); 'Leiche' ('Einzelleichen', 'Leichenhaufen', 'Leichenbegängnisse', 'Leichengeruch'); and 'Opfer' ('Todesopfer', 'Verkehrsoffer', 'Kriegsopferversorgung', 'Opfermut'). This text does not use these in the same way as 'verfolg' in 'Politische Grammatik' or 'reden' in 'Grammatikalische Reduktion' where variation kept as close to the root word as possible. 'Staatsbegräbnis' moves outwards from the word, emphasising differentiation and discrimination rather than similarity:

heißt was unterscheiden was von was und jemanden  
von jemandem oder einfach nur daß es kommt drauf  
an wie macht man das unterscheiden (III, p. 33)

Assonance, repetition and variation are used not, as in the previous texts, to heighten similarity but to create awareness of difference and variation in meaning and resonance despite superficial linguistic similarities. Thus:

unterscheiden was ist oder so oder so so oder  
ganz was anderes Einzelheiten von Einzelheiten  
Einzelleichen von Leichenhaufen (III, pp. 33 - 34)

The assonance of the 'ei' vowels transfers attention from details to corpses while a rhythm arises which pushes the text onwards.

'Staatsbegräbnis' integrates phrases unconnected with the root words into the text which function both as part of the text and as comment on it. These link up with the theme of death but have added political and social-critical overtones. 'Opfer des Regimes und Vernichtungslager', 'Verkehrsoffer', 'die Gestorbenen eines Jahres' alternate with expressions of ennoblement in death 'ein nationaler Held' and 'Staatsbegräbnis'. Two opposing views of death - that of the national hero and that of the anonymous victim combine: 'einer den jeder gekannt hat und viele die keiner' (III, p. 34). The text concludes that death is the leveller, 'Leiche' and its variants being repeated and juxtaposed with both views of death.

While this analysis in terms of national heroes, etc. might indicate that this text is concerned with politics, it makes no political statement. Any implied criticism must apply to both sides, the German 'Opfer' carrying the senses of victim and sacrifice. The text's dense structure of elaboration and juxtaposition implies the political element but leaves any conclusion open. In this respect it is more complex than 'politische Grammatik' because it integrates several threads into one structure, rather than concentrating on one strand. Although it makes no statement, this text has wider concerns than previous texts because it places linguistic reduction into the arena of political and social terminology.

Textbuch 3, then, shows some development from the previous textbooks. Concentration on variation, repetition and permutation has expanded to include material with wider ranges of implication within a more complex structure while maintaining the notion of reduction.

Textbuch 4 is, for our purposes, perhaps the least interesting of the six. It recalls much of Heißenbüttel's earlier poetry and shows distinct similarities with concrete poetry. The texts of 'Sprech-Wörter' are short, occupying little more than a quarter of the page. Perhaps the most successful is the man and his biscuit:

1	Mann	auf	1	Bank
1	Zwieback	in	1	Hand

which concludes with the line: 'Krümel' (IV, p. 15). Apart from this last line, repetition of the four nouns and two prepositions with 'und' makes up the whole poem. The permutation (e.g. 'wie die so man' p. 18) is amusing as are many of the other poems in the section, but, like the concrete poetry examined earlier, it goes no further than this. The 'Sprech-Wörter' poems seem to be exercises in repetition and the occupation of space. The structure appears arbitrarily imposed and has little connection with the language. Spreading the words over the page stimulates some awareness of them as individual entities, but, as the same point is made in all the texts without development or elaboration, the exercise offers no more than some piquant juxtapositions.

The seven texts of 'Siebensachen' (pp. 25 - 33) each divide into seven sections with four lines of the same length. In contrast to the varied visual space of the 'Sprech-Wörter', the lines are dense and the texts resemble each other closely. The combination of words seems arbitrary and bears little relation to the titles, such as 'Gedicht über Hoffnung' (p. 27), 'Gedicht über Nachdenken' or 'Gedicht über Phantasie' (pp. 30 - 31). The structure determines the distribution of the language, particularly where at the end of lines or stanzas, in order to maintain the same line-length, the words are carried over into the next:

Stücke Anschauung dessen womits rekapituliert rück-  
spricht rückgesprochen Rücksprache halbhoch Pano-  
rama geblendet vor Draufsohn blickblinddraufstoßend  
stürzend gestürzt unaufhaltsam spiralenförmig herbb-  
bewegt (p. 31)

The structural strictness contrasts with the lack of connection between the individual words. In the stanza quoted links emerge in the repetition of 'rück-', variations on 'Sprache' ('rückspricht', 'rückgesprochen', 'Rücksprache') and to a lesser extent in 'geblendet' and 'blickblind' which, with 'Panorama', refer to seeing and the visual. As a whole the seven texts illustrate that merely bringing together words and placing them within a strict and formal structure does not necessarily produce a stimulating text because the contrast between the strict structure and the lack of connection or cohesion in the language and perception is not made specific enough to engage further debate.

These two groups of text illustrate two extremes of visual structure. In 'Sprech-Wörter' the spaces between the words and the emphasis in the title on the acoustic receive as much attention as the repeated words. The context develops from the association of the few words across space in new combinations. In 'Siebensachen' on the other hand, the individual words of the text are subsumed to a strict and arbitrary structure. Juxtaposing these two different types of text, however, is not developed further. In comparison with the preceding texts and with the two last Textbücher, these texts do not engage the more major questions treated there.

The publication of Textbuch 5 marked a pronounced shift of emphasis in Heißenbüttel's texts. The largely implied concern with questions of the political and social use and application of language seen in Textbuch 3 becomes broader and more specific in Textbuch 5, the '3 x 13 mehr oder

weniger Geschichten'. The subtitle indicates that concern with the terminology of narrative and criticism re-emerges in these texts. We will look firstly at the political questions which arise at the beginning and end of the 39 texts.

While 'schematische Entwicklung der Tradition' (p. 5) is not specifically political, it returns to the earlier manipulation and variation of a small number of language units which in the earlier texts helped focus on language's potential for variation and manipulation. This opening text prepares the ground for the more specifically political questions in subsequent texts.

The second text 'Adam oder nicht' (pp. 6 - 8) raises doubts about the awareness, definition and differentiation which language apparently conveys. The text contains a mini-development of political (and social) consciousness. The initial problems seen through Adam and Eve and the concepts of good and evil are not solved by the end despite, or rather because of, the rise of rules, groups, class, technology and of increasingly complex and impenetrable language. Good and evil initially seem meaningful to Adam and Eve: 'zuerst war alles gut und dann war alles böse' (p. 6). Development and sophistication not only fail to solve the problem, but also lead to conceptual and linguistic confusion: good and evil may seem to exist no longer because language can simply reposit the question in terms of 'das was richtig ist und was nicht richtig ist' (p. 8). The complete lack of punctuation effectively conveys the increasing complexity and the muddle in thought. The opening lines divide easily into sense units 'Adam war allein bis er Eva traf später gab es Ärger mit den Kindern ...' (p. 6), while by the end subordinate clauses and verbal phrases mirror in linguistic construction the increasing obscuring of idea and content which the text expresses. Although the relation between politics and language is examined in a seemingly light-hearted way, it, however,



does not obscure the two main issues it raises: what are the implications of increasing sophistication for language and how can language deal with this burden? Although no conclusion emerges, the complexity and confusion of the last lines and their attempt at redefinition show that this question has no easy answer.

Discussion of political matters becomes both more and less specific in the subsequent texts. The central examination of the manipulation of language in a political context in areas of both current and historical concern, 'Apartheid' and 'Endlösung' particularly, is centred on a silence about the actual subject of the text. In 'contrat social' for example, the social contract referred to is probably marriage, 'einer ist mit einem', the text dealing with the breakdown of marriage on an increasingly wide scale; but nowhere is this overtly stated. 'Apartheid' again makes no specific statement, but uses the terms 'auf dieser Seite', 'auf die andere Seite' (p. 9) to establish the gulf of separation. The 'Kalkulation über was alle gewußt haben' again lacks specific statement, but by implication, shows the mechanism of silence which obscured domestic events in the Third Reich. The language, as in the other texts, masks the event. Expressing apartheid in the neat and comfortable terms of 'this' and 'the other' side naturalises it by making it seem harmless. Similarly, the real silence at the core of 'Kalkulation' is hidden by the phrases which blur the border between knowledge and ignorance. Only the disjunction between 'was alle gewußt haben' and their silence remains. The general pronouns underline the impersonality, lack of personal involvement and anonymity of both individual and authority with the individual's consequent denial of personal responsibility.

The combination of knowledge and silence with its implication of tacit support is combined with the implicit

but unstated admission that this was wrong. This emerges, for example, in the juxtaposition and repetition of 'Mit-' and 'Übel-' in:

und wie durch Mitwissen Mitwisser und Mitwisser zu  
Mittätern Mittäter zu Übelwissern Übelwisser zu  
Übeltätern usw. /.../ konnten auch Mitwisser zu  
Mittätern Mittäter zu Überwissern Überwisser zu  
Übeltätern usw. die haben es schon gewußt (V, p. 11)

A similar intensification of statement, implication and involvement is encapsulated in the juxtaposition of 'wissen', 'mitmachen', and 'helfen' in paragraph 2 and 'wissen', 'passieren', 'funktionieren' in paragraph 6. The patterns of variation on basic word roots, particularly 'wissen', further emphasises the main concern of the text: 'natürlich haben alle was gewußt'. The text moves through silence, verbal gyration and excuse to the final realisation 'und so hat es funktioniert'.

As in 'Adas oder nicht', the texture of the language reflects and comments on the content of the text. The final phrase is clearly a comment on the mechanisms of language which mask rather than express in order to deceive oneself and others about perception and knowledge. Thus the language of this text functions in two ways. Firstly it expresses the text's concern with the disjunction between knowledge and silence; and secondly the construction of the language unveils the linguistic mechanisms which made the first deceitful disjunction possible. The variation on a minimal number of language units which would appear to offer definition and specification in fact becomes a vehicle for a refusal to define and to admit silence and responsibility.

'Endlösung', presumably the final solution for the Jews, uses the same techniques to convey desire for anonymity, refusal to personalise or admit responsibility and the urge to

place the burden on the equally anonymous 'others'. Here, too, the last line is particularly significant in clarifying the whole dimension of comment: 'und als solche sind das denen sowas einfach so einfällt'. So the anonymity of both sides throughout the text results in the two becoming indistinguishable. The processes of pseudo-definition of who was involved in conjunction with the repetition of so many phrases undermines any definition, the language here once more expressing and thereby undercutting what is apparently being expressed. The repeated alternation of 'sich etwas ausdenken' implying planning and calculation, and 'einfallen' implying chance and coincidence and hence lack of control and responsibility, forms the main vehicle for blurring the distinction between we and they. Neither text gives any answers; nor, however, do they overtly state criticism. The texts simultaneously show a social and political situation (the denial of personal responsibility) and the processes and mechanisms in language itself which rendered this possible. Significantly, the texts stop at this point. They neither move towards the blanket condemnation of language, nor do they imply that the situation has improved.

This reveals Heißenbüttel's awareness of the problem of how to use language to criticise language, and of what the limits on this exercise are. In these texts Heißenbüttel illustrates a particular aspect of language in a social, historical and political context, and also uses that illustration to give the texts a dimension of self-criticism. The more general concern with language which this implies becomes clearer in the next text, 'Rezept eines Ganges' (pp. 13 - 14) where the reverse of the central silence in the previous texts emerges. The lists of catch-phrases, slogans and clichés show how articulation can also act as a masking device, because it has an appearance of precision. The lists of abstractions call into question the apparent meaning of such phrases, while the cyclical process of support,

condemnation and rehabilitation demonstrates how such phrases are manipulated. This furthers the earlier questioning.

The same processes of covering over and remaining silent about the actual subject of the text recur in a more light-hearted, though nonetheless illuminating context, that of personal relationships which forms the subject of the six texts, pp. 25 - 31. Here sex remains unspecified, expressed only in the euphemistic 'es'. 'Shortstory' (pp. 26 - 27), for example, states 'er hatte es mit ihr sie hatte es mit ihm', while 'eine einfache Geschichte' merely states:

er war gewesen ihr  
sie war gewesen sein. (V, p. 27)

In 'Bremen wodu' (pp. 30 - 31) question and answer build up to the final statement, 'jadahabenvirdasallezusammeninBremen-  
getan' and the amusingly bathetic 'unddassokurzvorWeihnachten' (p. 31). These texts share with the previous text the use of general pronouns and the consequent anonymity. The same mechanisms of deceit recur. Other texts also assert articulation in the same way as 'Rezept eines Ganges'. 'William-Walter-Jenkins-Story' (pp. 25 - 26) deals with 'Kontakt' and its compounds; the problem of definition and identity occurs 'der Mann der lesbisch würde' (p. 28) where distinctions between man and woman become purely linguistic; and 'Familienpolitik' (pp. 29 - 30) where the complexity of interrelationships and the alphabetical names culminates in the pithy 'im Ubrigen ist dies ein Modell das sich beliebig erweitern verlieren und komplizieren läßt' (p. 30). They also show that apparent articulation and specification are little different from the covering-over of truth by empty and anonymous phrases. These texts thus reveal ways in which language in two major but distinct areas of individual experience serves not to express and clarify but to disguise and obscure by delineating the process and simultaneously providing an implicit critique of it.

The next text 'Nach dem Sittenskandal' (pp. 31 - 32) brings the two areas, sex and politics, together. It is constructed on a different principle, consisting of repetitions of single phrases in different sequences, using more units than previous texts, but without variation. They fall into two main types: generalisations about the scandal and specific statements about the person. These phrases which might come from newspapers (although this is never specified) highlight society's morbid but stereotyped interest in such scandals. The euphemistic 'Erregungszustände' and 'Bettgeflüsterauftonband' are juxtaposed with the sensationalising 'Salon des Lasters', 'Origen im Amtsräumen' and 'Striptease im Wartesaal'. The sensational and sexual 'Dienerinnen der Perversion', 'Stenotypistin als Lockvogel' and 'Vierzehnjährige als Dienerinnen der Liebe' are contrasted with the more mundane and personal 'er war immer korrekt gekleidet', 'er sah so harmlos aus', 'seine Frau sagt'. The varying combinations emphasise the arbitrary nature of the linguistic composition of the phrases and how they fulfil prurient and sensational expectations. This emerges from the way in which the same or similar words occur in different contexts, such as 'Schwäche eines hohen Beamten' and 'hoher Beamter liebt'. The repetition of the 'high official' brings out the contrast between his 'Schwäche' and the more neutral statement that he loves. Society is only interested in his 'weakness'.

This selection of texts from '3 x 13 mehr oder weniger Geschichten' show how Heißenbüttel's ideas have advanced since the earlier works. There he concerned himself with developing and exploiting certain techniques of repetition, variation and permutation in order to stimulate focus on language as word units rather than as a given and easily assimilated construction of reality. In Textbuch 5 he has taken those ideas one step further. Using the same and similar techniques he has combined the linguistic awareness which the earlier texts engendered with subject-matter of

greater social (and literary) significance. These texts have a more fundamental grounding than the earlier ones because the fascination of the language and techniques is now balanced, to a greater degree than in the earlier texts, by a subject-matter which succeeds in highlighting those linguistic techniques and the awareness which they induce and in relating them to matters of more general significance. The earlier texts now emerge as a preliminary stage in this subsequent combination. In those earlier texts the induced awareness of language remained limited to that particular context. Textbuch 5 transfers this awareness to politics, the individual's personal responsibility and role in a political and in a personal context. The specific analyses of the texts have shown the extent to which the two elements, language and subject-matter, reach a mutually illuminating balance in these texts.

This balance between language and subject-matter is achieved through stimulating awareness that language provides the only common, or in any way communicable, definition of reality. These texts do not concern themselves with the expression of perception in language, as did Per Wolf's text, but with the communication of fragments of a linguistically determined reality. The balance between language and subject rests on the implicit assumption that language defines and circumscribes the limits of one's world in terms not of perception but of communication. While, in the case of Wolf, the reader could to a limited extent, naturalise the text and 'create' the reality perceived by the 'ich', this is not possible in Heißenbüttel's texts. This is not because of their brevity, but because any element or remnant of an external reality or of a relationship with it has disappeared. These texts do not concern themselves specifically with the act of perception and of expressing that perception. In these texts, the limits of language define the limits of reality because there is no sense of an actual or potential external referential

context; reality is defined in terms of language not in terms of perception and its expression. Thus we can see some sense of progression from Wolf where perception and its expression were paramount through Becker and Men who vacillated between the two, to Heißenbüttel's texts, where the communication of formulated language has taken precedence over immediate perception.

Heißenbüttel's sixth and last Textbuch has received more attention from the critics than any of the others.<sup>(12)</sup> The seven texts dedicated to Wolfgang Kooppen all share the same structure, 13 stanzas each of 13 lines. The length of the lines varies - 'vokabulär' (pp. 11 - 15) and 'abc-Ballade' being shorter than the rest. The layout too is consistent. Each text has its first stanza at the bottom of one page and the remaining 12, divided three to each page, over the next four pages.<sup>(13)</sup> All the lines in the texts are of the same length, resembling the approach used in 'Siebenschachen' (Textbuch 4). Above we tried to show that in Heißenbüttel's texts the lack of a dimension of external reality emphasises that the limits of the language define the limits of the reality, language determines reality and communication; and at the same time these texts seek to make the reader aware of language and the fictiveness of the text. In Textbuch 6, the final textbook, Heißenbüttel uses a different approach. He takes the view of language seen in Textbuch 5 one step further and works with entirely preformed language - quotations.

Heißenbüttel uses a similar procedure in 'Zusammensetzungen' (Textbuch 4) but in Textbuch 6 he offers no clue as to the origins of the quotation, except the vague 'Über einen Satz von Sigmund Freud' (pp. 17 - 21). Although Heißenbüttel has taken this technique still further in D'Alemberts Ende and Das Durchhauen des Kehlhauptes, we will restrict ourselves here to Textbuch 6. As the provenance of the quotations remains unspecified, the reader cannot concern himself with

any balance between quotation and original material. Similarly, the origins of the quotations are largely irrelevant to actually reading the text. This irrelevance is inadvertently revealed by the painstaking researches of Jörn Stücker into the origins of the quotations in 'Deutschland 1944'.<sup>(14)</sup> He bases his analysis on a narrow view of the 'documentary' which assumes that 'Deutschland 1944' can be dealt with solely in terms of the authenticity of its adherence to and expression of a historical reality which leads him to conclude that the lack of complete adherence to 1944 in the quotations calls the whole exercise into question. This, however, shows a rather too simple view of Heißenbüttel's use of quotation which presents a one-sided view of the text and ignores how the language units are combined and structured.

The assembling of quotation in these texts makes them into a type of collage, but they differ fundamentally from the collages of Dadaism or similar recent texts.<sup>(15)</sup> Textbuch 6 does not try to shock or startle the reader's eye. On the contrary, the material is placed into a unified, regular, overall structure, the 13 x 13 scheme. The texts look alike, having a regular, visible pattern. In these texts the author's role is to combine and structure the given material rather than, as in the texts by Wolf or Becker, concentrating on the process of articulating material.

These texts, 'Deutschland 1944' in particular, demonstrate a concern with structure, form and shape, which can help the reader reach a new awareness of language as definer - and therefore arbiter - of reality.<sup>(16)</sup> Ror Wolf's writing concentrated on the processes of perception and where the reader, in reading, became a participant in that process. Heißenbüttel reaches this awareness by a different route. By distancing himself from referential context through quotation and by combining this with the techniques which have developed throughout the six textbooks, in Textbuch 6 he succeeds in



creating texts which stimulate awareness of how form and structure are imposed by and through language, not by making the reader participate in this process, but by distancing the reader from it. Our analyses have constantly emphasised the importance of process in the writing and in the reading of the texts. These last Textbuch texts give us something different.

Fortsetzung des Berichts engendered awareness of language at work by suffusing the reader with the language and the shifting expression of fragmented perception, which the reader has to sort out. In Heißenbüttel's last textbook the piling up of quotation in an unordered - but visually highly structured - fashion serves not to make the reader aware of the perception at work but to distance the reader from any perception leaving him solely with the language itself. Let us take, for example, the first section 'Über einen Satz von Sigmund Freud' (pp. 17 - 21):

kann Gemachtes nicht ungemacht worden  
noch hört etwas auf zukünftig zu sein wenn  
nicht vergegenwärtigt glaube ich doch die Ge-  
gend besser zu kennen nichts zugleich ist und  
ist nicht aber nicht spurlos untergegangen eine  
Art von Erinnerung hatte sich erhalten ver-  
dunkelt und entstellt die aus dem Hintergrund  
gleichsam zu wirken fortfuhr all das ist voll-  
kommen deutlich für ein aufmerksames Auge  
und kann doch leicht unbeobachtet bleiben  
von den meisten daß dies Ich das heißt die  
Seele durch die ich das bin was ich bin völlig  
unterscheidbar ist vom Körper und sogar.

(VI, p. 17)

This does not have sentences or easily discernible sense-units; its beginning and end are arbitrary and it is not readily accessible to naturalization. The first line, a question, does make sense, but the second and subsequent lines do not form an amplification of it. By juxtaposing half sentences and phrases of quotation out of context, Heißenbüttel is in a sense unmaking 'Gemachtes', i.e. the original context of these phrases, and also re-making them by placing them in

a new context. The last lines on the division between body and soul do 'make sense' in themselves, as do most of the other individual phrases. Awareness of language is then achieved by juxtaposing different elements in such a way that the short and particular context emerges at the expense of any general overall context. The original context of these phrases would probably have formed part of an overall sense structure. By removing the phrases from this context and jumbling them together, the text breaks down any concept of 'sense' and concentrates attention on the particular and individual linguistic formulation. The combination of such formations engenders awareness of the lack of correspondence with any external reality without involving the reader in the process or articulation which earlier texts by Heißenbüttel and the other writers attempted.

However, these texts appear somewhat uniform. Textbuch 6 lacks the variety and humour of Textbuch 5, in texts such as 'Aladdins Wunderlampe danach' (V, pp. 32 - 34) or 'Hiobsbotschaft' (V, pp. 39 - 40). Although the specific, critical role of language in Textbuch 6 is more pronounced than in the previous work, the resulting texts tend to lack the sparkle of the earlier ones, but this is quite consistent with the view of language which they show. The price for 'Kombinatorik, Montage, Collage' mentioned on the cover of Das Textbuch is the uniformity of the regular and arbitrary structure.

The question of language links up with the question of fictiveness. The techniques examined in Heißenbüttel's earlier texts revealed awareness of fictiveness because they sought to challenge assumption by flouting conventions which could be easily naturalised and brought simply into the reader's real or imaginable area of experience. Language is relevant to this because that area of experience can only be defined, articulated and communicated in language. In this view of language and reality there can be no distinction

between the language of 'real' life and the language of 'fiction'.

Thus if Heißenbüttel's literary and fictive texts increase an awareness of language as construct by emphasising and drawing attention to it, then the corollary of this is that those conclusions can apply equally to real life, to actual personal experience, outside text and literature. As we shall see in the next chapter, writers in the Sixties concerned with political commitment tended to accuse these writers of being isolated in an ivory tower of aesthetic experiment. However, as Heißenbüttel's texts have shown, the awareness of language which such specific concentration on convention (or lack of convention), on the assertion of technique and structure stimulates, does not apply only within the narrow context of that text. It also has a direct bearing on the language outside that context, because the language which defines the reality of the text is the language which also comes to define reality outside a literary context.

Thus writers such as Heißenbüttel, Hon, Hocke and Wolf, in their different ways and with varying success, do not just inhabit an ivory tower of experimentation. Their texts achieve a focus on language and how it works, by increasing in the reader possible awareness of ways in which language is manipulated in a literary context. This concentration on language may also help stimulate consciousness of the ways in which language also defines the limits of reality in non-literary and thus less obviously language-centred areas of experience. If the nineteenth century broadly sought to blur the distinction between external reality and the world created in literature by language, then these German writers of the Sixties, by seeming to assert the difference between reality and literature in the way they use language, in practice, demonstrate that language links the two inextricably.

Heißenbüttel's Textbücher are particularly appropriate as the final texts analysed in this study because they show development over the years in which experimental writing flourished and also because the six books demonstrate the range of possibilities in experimental writing. Although the analysis has shown concern with language and consciousness of fictiveness as two threads which characterise the majority of texts in the Textbücher the six works illustrate the exploration of a wide range of different types of experimentation. The school overtones in the title 'textbook' is an important signpost to this because the texts form exercises in approach and technique which build up into the demonstration of a repertoire of experimental potential. Each of the previous works analysed contained certain elements which characterised the whole of that work, such as the absence of a referential context in herzzero and the awareness of the (unattained) possibility of such a context in Fortsetzung des Berichts. The Textbücher include the earlier, more poem-like texts with their potential emotional content as well as the permutational, visual concrete texts, the texts which make reference to and use conventions of the novel and narrative and finally the quotation collages of Textbuch 6. The range of the achievement of these texts is conveyed in the different views of language which they bring together and through which they create a wide-ranging critical awareness of language. In this scheme 'Deutschland 44' emerges as the summit of achievement in the Textbücher because the impact it makes on the emotions occurs when the reader has come to terms with the language of the text and its status as quotation. The Textbücher have thus demonstrated a full circle of possibility within the experimental mode. They have shown language as a questionable vehicle for communication, have explored possibilities of language as material without referential context and conventional assumption and finally re-established the possibility of an impact on the reader's emotions as well as of a historical referential context through the use of language entirely

in quotation.

The best conclusion for the Textbücher perhaps comes from Textbuch 1:

... weil der Versuch die einzige Gewähr ist  
weil der Versuch der einzige Beweis ist.

Experimentation, constant change and alteration is the proof  
of and guarantee for continuing literary expressiveness.

## 7. LITERARY EXPERIMENT - CRITICAL EXPERIMENT ?

It now remains for us to tie the threads of the examination of the four writers together and to establish what common ground - if any - they occupy, where their interests and concerns converge and diverge and to ascertain what position they occupy in the wider literary concerns of the Sixties.

We began with the critical term 'experimental' and outlined some of the pitfalls encountered in using such a term and some of the problems it raises. It has, however, been used on occasion to describe the writing under discussion, following Heißenbüttel's pragmatic attitude:

Ich selbst halte den Begriff der experimentellen Dichtung für ein Produkt der bildungspolitischen Taktik, der sachlich nicht standhält. Dennoch, (1) kann man sich mit seiner Hilfe verständigen.

We must now establish more clearly what such experimental literature involves and what it has achieved.

In the notion of literary experiment we can see the possibility firstly of reaction to preceding tradition and/or convention and secondly of innovation which changes that tradition and/or convention. In order to illustrate how the texts examined have reacted to convention we will briefly try to assess them in terms of conventional attributes of the novel, namely character, plot and style. Fortsetzung des Berichts is the work which retains most, albeit vestigial traces of character. Wobser and the people seated at table, the farmer and women appear at intervals in the work but never achieve an independent status within it. Felder does not even contain that residue. Names recur, family and friends are mentioned but only in passing, the concern of

the narrative consciousness with the processes of his perception seems to take precedence over any notion of character. herzzero reveals a similar lack of character apart from this fleeting mention of names. No characters develop to take part in plot or action. The case of Heißenbüttel, however, is more complex because of the varied nature of the different Textbücher. Those which were seen to bear more relationship to novel conventions, such as '3 x 13 mehr oder weniger Geschichten' contains some idea of character (e.g. 'Aladdins Wunderlampe danach' and 'Liebsbotschaft') but even here it is in a greatly reduced sense. The brevity of the texts allows neither a sense of development nor of character detail to emerge.

The same applies to the idea of plot. The same texts by Heißenbüttel tend to contain a minimal sense of plot, the progression of action, but that progression is also reduced - it is not located within a referential context and creates none for itself. The plots, like the characters in Heißenbüttel's text are reductions of conventional expectations. Wolf retains some but again reduced sense of plot. Fortsetzung des Berichts is full of action and movement, but like the action and movement which also replaces plot progression in Felder, it forms no coherently assimilable structure, develops no referential framework and does not delineate a sequence of actions. herzzero reveals no sense of plot or action whatever, like some of the non novel-related texts in the Textbücher it seems to exist outside any concept of plot or narrative action.

The question of style, which in any case provokes a terminology more like that conventionally used for poetry, perhaps shows more potential for dealing with these texts. We noted the unified perspective of Fortsetzung des Berichts and, to some extent, the unified approach in herzzero, as well as the variety of the style of Felder and the even greater variation in the Textbücher. It is here that a more

substantial critical approach to these texts becomes available because a discussion of details of style involves dealing with how the text is built up rather than what it contains (by way of character, plot or action). Discussion of style in our analyses has largely been conducted in terms of language.

The use of and attitude to language which these texts reveal marks one of the main areas of innovation in this writing. It is impossible to trace the exact course of this change of attitude to language, although as Heißenbüttel's review of Gertrude Stein indicates, such questions were of major concern long before the Sixties. He maintains that the literature of the twentieth century shows an opposition to the idea of 'Inhalt als etwas Ablösbares, etwas Erzählbares, etwas Erklärbares' which

reduziert den Inhalt und löst die Form in ihren traditionellen Erscheinungsweisen auf. Sie ist getragen von den Intentionen einer neuen Sprechmöglichkeit. Diese neue Sprechmöglichkeit wird gesehen in der Rückführung und Rückbesinnung der Sprache auf sich selbst. In dieser Rückbesinnung wird die Frage nach Form und Inhalt gegenstandslos. (2)

This reduction of the text to concentrate on language

hat sie [die Sprache] ihrem traditionellen Kommunikationscharakter entzogen, sie aus der Sphäre der gemeinverbindlichen Mitteilung herauslöst. Sie erklärt nicht etwas, steht nicht für etwas, beschreibt nicht, sondern ist selbständig, autonom, in sich verkapselt. (3)

The significance of these views applies not just to Heißenbüttel's texts but also to the other texts examined. The greatly reduced role of plot in the texts marks in them the demise of the idea of content. The main concern of Fortsetzung des Berichts is to tell something but it never becomes clear what that something is, the text retains an awareness



of the 'Erzählbares' and the language and style constantly attempt - and fail - to show that perception is 'etwas Erklärbares'.

Felder takes the position of Fortsetzung des Berichts further. Felder combines the concentration on processes of perception which figured in Fortsetzung des Berichts with an awareness of language as object. Language is viewed as something with which the author plays outside any actual or potential referential context as well as presenting a view of an external reality so saturated with language that it can come to define rather than just express perception. herzzero concentrates almost entirely on these latter two ideas. Instead of mixing them together as Felder does, herzzero consists of a series of games with language, puns, wordplay and linguistic elements of everyday experience such as slogans and clichés. The text does not reveal any discernible sense of a world which it attempts to describe like that which came through in Fortsetzung des Berichts as a very vague, undefined and ultimately undefinable context for action.

herzzero demonstrates much more language as 'selbständig, autonom, in sich verkapselt'. The language of Fortsetzung des Berichts and Felder was still attempting to communicate but that process had become problematical and the texts therefore concentrated on the possibility or impossibility of delineating the processes of perception, writing, description and communication. Such concerns seem almost irrelevant to herzzero where the language seems to exist in a limbo lacking a referential context outside the two columns of the text. The brief references to a cultural and historical tradition and to events during the Sixties do not permit the construction of a coherent awareness. The references form another area of linguistic and associative exploration rather than a referential context for the rest of the work. The dryness and abstraction of herzzero as a whole are as such a result

of its 'autonomous' language as is the delight in wordplay in short passages of the text. It would seem that a longer context demands some thread other than the autonomy of language.

The attitude of language in the Textbücher varies considerably. The earlier texts reveal an awareness of and willingness to use convention together with a developing technique of using word as object, as Mon did in herzzero. Textbuch 6, on the other hand, demonstrates one way of showing language to be an autonomous, self-encapsulating sphere by creating a collage of language fragments.

Language as object in these works tends to be paralleled by a view of language as defining element in perception. Heißenbüttel makes this point in the Briefwechsel über Literatur with Heinrich Vormweg:

Wir befinden uns in einem Zustand, in dem unser Bewußtsein mitbestimmt wird von der Einsicht, daß wir nicht sagen können, was wir meinen, sondern etwas, das die Sprache uns vorschreibt. (11)

The correspondence between these two critics presents a wide-ranging discussion of issues in literature and criticism which were of particular importance in Germany in the Sixties, and it becomes clear that this view of language as defining rather than expressing perception and the writer's awareness of this became of widespread concern at that time. Heißenbüttel expresses this more forcibly later: 'Sachen haben wir allein als Wörter'.

This perspective on language results partly at least from a critical attitude to the demands of language. It is recognised that language is a system with certain rules. Heißenbüttel sees language as 'ihrem Wesen nach konventionell und konservativ'. One reaction to that system takes the form

of antigrammatical writing. Heißenbittel places this sort of development in the context of twentieth century writing, both novels and poetry.<sup>(5)</sup> The writing we have examined varies in the degree and nature of its antigrammaticalness which, however, forms one important element linking the texts. Fortsetzung des Berichts, once again, remains more consistently related to conventional forms of narrative prose. The text does not consist entirely of sentences with subject, verb and object. However, even where the syntactical complexity of a sentence or paragraph becomes virtually impossible to decipher, that complexity is developed from a conventional syntactical model. The strings of relative clauses exploit that model, they do not reject it.

Felder varies in its use of or awareness of syntax and grammar. By and large it makes less use of such convention than did Fortsetzung des Berichts and where it does reveal awareness of convention, it develops in a more obvious reaction to rather than by a direct usage of convention. The opening section, for example, delineates the muddled waking process through the disjointed syntax, grammar and punctuation. The repetitions and typographically innovative sections, however, show a rejection of such convention.

herzzero, in keeping with the general pattern of development in these texts, is more extreme in its rejection of grammatical convention. It completely disregards German usage of capitals, alternates between omission of punctuation and over-punctuation together with unusual uses of fullstops, colons and commas. The punctuation where it is used helps to structure the text, but in a visual way only. It does not divide the text into assimilable sense units. Syntax too plays little part in herzzero. It contains what could be described as sentences but these occur in a broken fabric of individual words and unlinked phrases which bears little resemblance to conventional syntactical structures.

Heißenbüttel presents the most varied awareness of the antigrammatical in its widest sense. The texts which resemble poetry make little use of grammar, syntax or punctuation, while the texts which relate more to the novel show awareness of such convention either by using it in a reduced and stylised way (as in 'Quasiroman') or by reacting to it by omitting punctuation in order to force the reader to establish the grammar and syntax of the text, as in some of the '3 x 13 mehr oder weniger Geschichten' or in 'Siebensachen'. In the latter the clear visual structure depicts another form of the rejection of grammar.

Concrete poetry represents one of the most consistent attempts to embody both the use of language as object and the rejection of language as system, and, as we have seen, both Mon and Heißenbüttel took part in its theoretical and practical development. The rejection of conventions of language and syntax took the form of asserting the visual, acoustic and other potential 'material' elements of language over its function of communicating meaning. Both Heißenbüttel's more 'concrete' texts and the visual impact of herzzero's division into columns, use of different type-faces and isolation of words bear witness to the visual element in language. Felder (e.g. sections 14, 26, 94) shares this and it forms one of the ways in which the text creates a critical awareness of language in the reader. Fortsetzung des Berichts does not make the same type of varied visual impact as the other texts but the visual element is nevertheless relevant in this context. The irregular section lengths and the dense blocks of text visually reflect the fragmentary perception of the narrative consciousness and the intensity of his efforts to reach a linguistic delineation of perception.

The attempt to increase awareness of language by questioning its conventions becomes clearer when it is viewed in a

comparative and historical context. It is significant that the age to which both Heißenbüttel and Vormweg turned for such comparison was the Baroque. Many of the techniques found in the texts examined, such as permutation, repetition, visual impact, 'Worthäufungen', also formed part of the repertoire of the Baroque author. Despite the apparent similarities - Vormweg compares a passage by Wolf with one by Fischart - the Baroque texts reveal a different attitude to language. Vormweg summed up the difference thus:

Der Unterschied zwischen der Prosa des frühbarocken Autors und den modernen Texten ... scheint ein Unterschied der Vitalität und Selbstsicherheit zu sein. Fischart überläßt sich mit spontaner Lust den Wörtern, er greift ins Volle, greift in die Masse der Wörter, als fasse er mit ihnen lauter Sachen, Dinge. ... Die neuen Texte haben dafür ... meist etwas Zaudern-<sup>(6)</sup> des, Bewußtes, analytisch Grübelndes, Experimentelles.

Heißenbüttel echoes this:

Die Ähnlichkeit zwischen den vokabulären Methoden der Literatur im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert mit denen der heutigen Literatur täuscht. Wir stehen auf der anderen Seite. Für den Barockautor war das Wort die Sache und die Sache das Wort. Für uns gibt es Sachen nur noch in der Form von Wörtern. <sup>(7)</sup>

The lists in Fortsetzung des Berichts, for example, do not demonstrate the author's pleasure in naming objects, they throw doubt on whether an object such as soup can be named, can be tied down by language and doubt about how to achieve that goal. Becker and Mon show how language has become separated from the reality it supposedly conveys - in Felder water is no longer simply water, it has become 'das köstlichste Chlornaß', while herzzero teems with clichéd phrases which have no possible relationship with an external reality. Textbuch 6 demonstrates the gulf between word and reality which Vormweg and Heißenbüttel point to because it is constructed

with purely linguistic material. The sense of historical reality which emerges from 'Deutschland 44' is achieved when the reader has traversed the inscription of that reality in linguistic forms.

This comparison with the Baroque would form a substantial part of any argument which attempted to see the experiments of the Sixties in terms of historical development either as the end of the narrative tradition of the novel (of which the Baroque age saw the inception in Germany) or as the beginning of a new type of writing to replace the exhausted conventions of prose narrative (as the Baroque age saw the start of a new genre). It is not the function of this chapter to try to elaborate this type of historical view, but it is worth pointing out the role the Baroque would play in such a development.

Vornweg also pointed to levels of awareness about language, what Vornweg termed 'etwas ... Bewußtes', as another area of difference between Baroque and modern writing. The individual textual studies have noted the awareness not only of language but also of the status of the work as fiction. In the texts the awareness of fictionality differs from that in Don Quixote, for example, where the initial layering of narrative levels attempts to account for the status of the fictional work to answer possible objections from the reader. The modern version of this awareness also differs from that in Fielding, Sterne or Wieland, for example, where the narrators use the potential of the fictional form to play with and mislead the reader. The awareness of fictionality in the texts dealt with here does not reveal a delight in exploiting the possibilities of the narrative form, rather the texts reveal uncertainty about whether it is still possible to write. Narrative convention is no longer a framework to explore and develop, rather it is seen as a

straitjacket from which these texts attempt to escape. However, none of them succeed entirely. Even herzzero reveals a fleeting if largely inarticulated awareness of narrative convention and of narrative, while Heißenbüttel's Textbuch 2 and '3 x 13 mehr oder weniger Geschichten' and Wolf's Fortsetzung des Berichts demonstrate different developments from conventions of narrative. Felder provides the most sustained attempts to combine awareness of fictionality and more language-conscious writing into a work which both questions past convention and tries to offer something to replace it.

The more extreme exponents of concrete poetry saw their critique of language as a forerunner to the attempt to establish a new and purified language. Gomringer referred to the 'große Reinigungsprozeß' by which the present language should be examined and purged so that what remains thereafter will form the nucleus of a new and more meaningful language. This utopian approach would involve not only changing language (in a usually undefined way) semantically and syntactically, it also implies a changed and more critical attitude to and awareness of language. The writers under consideration would not go as far as Gomringer, indeed as Heißenbüttel remarks:

Eine Literatur, die sich heute realistisch nennen wollte, könnte nicht, so denke ich. Sprache neu aktivieren (etwa durch Erfindung neuer Kombinationen), eine faktisch und (dem Bewußtsein nach veränderte Welt) zu beschreiben. (8)

However, they would share Gomringer's desire to create a new awareness of language in the reader. Mon, whose text reveals the most radical view of linguistic convention, recognised the impracticability of Gomringer's aims. Becker's attitude to language is too vacillating for us to conclude that he wished to coin a new and uncorrupt language, although

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this would be one implication of some of his more extreme theoretical statements. Whilst Heißenbüttel does not seek to replace present language, he wishes to increase awareness of how language functions and of language as definer of perception. His view of a possible 'realistic' contemporary writing shows this:

Realistisch wäre eine Literatur, die in ihren Modellen den unauflösbaren Zusammenhang zeigt zwischen der faktisch veränderten Welt und der Unmöglichkeit, diese Veränderung direkt und unreflektiert zu benennen... . Realistisch wäre eine Literatur, die Welt und Sachen im abgelösten Sprachzitat zu verdoppeln suchte und in dieser Verdoppelung zeigte, daß wir nicht sinngebend und ordnend in die Welt einzudringen vermögen... (9)

Heißenbüttel's view of the impossibility of regenerating language forms part of his opinion that the simple fact of describing or naming something is no longer possible, so that a realistic literature (and I think we must assume that Heißenbüttel is using the term 'realistic' itself to show in practice what he means about contemporary use of words) would not describe a given reality but would reveal the connection between an altered reality and the fact that it is not possible to describe that change in any simple way. By this I take Heißenbüttel to mean that language has not and cannot alter in order to have with a qualitatively altered world the same simple relationship that was possible for a Baroque writer or even a nineteenth century novelist. But at the same time language and reality remain inextricably linked. In consequence a 'realistic' writing would concentrate not on the description of reality but on revealing the relationship between language and that reality because the two cannot be seen separately.

It is for this reason that Heißenbüttel then describes a 'realistic' literature as one which 'die Welt und Sachen in

abgelösten Sprachzitat zu verdoppeln suchte'. Here he sees reality and language as parallel spheres. Language no longer just serves to describe the outside world but now forms an independent reflection of that world. While it is clear that Heißenbüttel attempted this 'Verdoppelung' in the collages of the sixth Textbuch and his later Projekte, I do not think that he developed the implications of these theoretical views in terms of epistemology or a philosophy of language and perception.

Nevertheless Heißenbüttel is expressing a view of a problem about language which was shared by the other writers, examined, the view that in such writing language has a qualitatively different role from that of the novel or of sequential narratives where language conveyed information. Vormweg expressed this change thus - in experimental writing words

dienen ... offensichtlich nicht dazu, Gedanken, Erlebnisse, Empfindungen, innere Zustände des Autors zu transportieren, sondern es ist ihnen Eigenkraft, Eigenwelt zugeschrieben. Sie dienen nicht, sie haben Autonomie. (10)

The writings examined in this study have revealed two main ways of dealing with these views of language. Firstly language, rather than describing an external world and creating a literary portrayal of a 'reality' delineates primarily an individual and subjective consciousness which is usually identified with that of the author himself (not least by those authors themselves). This delineation takes place in terms of an external world, but it is a world which exists solely in terms of the individual perception. The writing then forms an articulation in language of the individual rather than the creation and communication of an illusion of a supposedly objective reality. Secondly both Non's and Heißenbüttel's use of quotation and cliché eliminates the individual perspective much more and presents a clear

doubling of the world in language because no relationship can be traced between the words the reader perceives and an external world; the world is that of language. Thus the reaction to language as convention and institution takes the form both of a subjectivisation and objectification.

The reaction to language and previous literary convention manifests itself also in the shortness of the texts. Although both Fortsetzung des Berichts and herzzero are long texts they are characterised on the one hand by the absence of any coherent sense structure and on the other by the short and fragmentary nature of the sections in the work. The length of the Wolf text consists of fragmented, shifting moments of perception while herzzero contains short linguistic units with no overall connections between them. The Becker and Heißenbüttel texts are more obviously short. They also tend to form flashes of either perceptual or linguistic insight which occasionally but not always link in with the rest of the text.

This study has so far concentrated on viewing the writing examined in terms of conventions of narrative, and it has not really considered the possible links between this writing and conventional, non-concrete poetry. Critics have pointed to connections which might be established in this area particularly in the case of Heißenbüttel's earlier texts. However, even Heißenbüttel's writing is seen as an attempt to break with previous convention. For example, Garland maintains:

A leading figure in this type of poetry which seeks a complete break with the past is Helmut Heißenbüttel (1921 - ) with his series of Textbücher (annually 1960 - 7). [sic] (11)

However, it would seem more reasonable to discuss this type of writing as an attempted reaction to all convention including those of poetry and prose, but a reaction which never entirely escaped what preceded it.

Reaction to convention also emerges in these texts' avoidance of genre allegiance and categories. The term 'text'<sup>(12)</sup> itself has been tried as a new genre classification but has proved too wide-ranging to be of any real use to the critics. Another such attempt centred on the term 'Kurzprosa'<sup>(13)</sup> which developed from critical interest in the short story. Writings by Heißenbüttel and Becker may be both short and in prose but labelling them 'Kurzprosa' adds nothing to the obvious. In discussing the texts I have consciously avoided using terms such as prose and poetry where possible because they may carry with them implications inappropriate for these texts. Reluctance to deal at any length with questions of genre allocation stems from a feeling that such a procedure inevitably tends to minimise the individuality of the texts by concentrating on and over-emphasising similarities. This is not to dismiss genre classification per se, but merely to advocate caution in trying to label and associate works which, with added historical perspective, may emerge as belonging more within developments of previous genre fields or, on the other hand, may prove too disparate for any classification at all.

As the first chapter indicated, the use of the term 'experimental' often stemmed from a similar attempt to tie together texts, the variety of which was perhaps a rather salient feature. 'Pluralism' is a term which has been used to designate not only the style of an individual work such as Felder but also the variety of experimental texts. Bodo Heimann uses the term in relation to such writing, he describes the use of quotation in these texts in terms of its

pluralistische Struktur, die gewollte Mannigfaltigkeit und Unvereinbarkeit der Zitate, die so etwas wie eine objektive disparate Öffentlichkeit erstellen sollen, eine pluralistische Wirklichkeit, die nicht mehr individuell zu gestalten ist. <sup>(14)</sup>

For example, Becker viewed reality as multiple and rejected

the apparent objectivity of the novel because reality had so changed that neither the form nor the language of the novel was capable of or suited to representing 'diese Gesellschaft, die so aufgestückelt ist in Einzelheiten'. The reality with which these writers are dealing is seen not in terms of action or concrete objects but as a reservoir of language. Ror Wolf describes the material of his writing as

Fundstücke aus meiner Umwelt, Satzstümpfe und Wortbrocken ... . Es ist der ganze Wortschwall der Gesellschaft, die vor meinen Augen mit verteilten Rollen auftritt. (15)

Similarly, as we have already seen, Hon defines reality in terms of 'das Formuliert':

... der unaufhörliche und unabsehbare Sage- und Redestrom, ... das endlose Gemurmel der Wissenschaften, der Reklame und der Politik, der Informationsbüros, der Presse, der Tagungen und Begegnungen ... (16)

The variety of style and perception shared by the texts points to a view of reality as fragmented and superficial. Heimann refers to pluralistic prose structure reflecting

nicht nur das desintegrierte Bewußtsein einzelner, sondern auch die inhaltlich leeren, offener, zu reiner Funktionalität reduzierte Wesenszüge unserer westlichen Industriegesellschaft. (17)

The pluralistic perception, language, construction, topography and focus of the works examined reflect such a view of reality, although the individual writers might not agree with Heimann's terminology.

The pluralistic structure of the works is heightened by the openness which they each reveal in different ways. (18)  
The concentration on a narrow band of perception and on the

processes of delineating consciousness in Fortsetzung des Berichts and Felder demonstrates the potential for endless development within a subjective perception. The novel tends to construct parameters within which the narrative takes place, but in both these works the entire text consists of the processes of delineating possible parameters without ever reaching any sense of closure or conclusion, and the fragmentary structure of both works emphasises this. The openness of herzzero consists in the absence of an unifying focus, of (a sense of) content and closure. Language comes over as a fund of inexhaustible possibilities while the two columns of text resemble the flow of two parallel and potentially never-ending rivers. The text does end of course but in an arbitrary way and, as with the other two texts, there seems little reason why it should not have continued for another 50 pages or so.

Heißenbüttel's Textbücher form rather different units of text. They consist of explorations of the possibilities of writing (he liked to call them 'Demonstrationen!') written over a period of years which exemplify attitudes and ideas developing. Individual texts and groups of texts are linked by technique, theme and approach. The openness of the texts as a whole lies in their potential for endless explorations of different facets of the relationship between reality and language.

This openness accounts at least in part for the 'Schwerverständlichkeit' of the works, the fact that they cannot be brought satisfactorily into received modes of comprehension. As we have seen they frustrate attempts to classify them as prose or poetry; they reveal differing uses of language but all share a desire to increase awareness of language as a system of convention. This is what makes the image of 'produktive Konsumtion' an apt general description of the process of reading these texts. In a discussion of the texts

it would have seemed plausible to view them as no more than image of or metaphors for a reality which has become chaotic or incomprehensible. However, although this is a factor in these texts, such a recuperation makes it easy to ignore the route by which the texts express this. 'Making sense' of a word of literature is a process:

To make sense of something is to bring it within a discursive order, to naturalize it or reduce its strangeness so that it speaks to us in an idiom we can understand. (19)

Thus to describe Felder as showing the chaos that is the reality of contemporary Köln or Germany does no more than place it 'in an idiom we can understand'. This reduces the strangeness and difficulty of the text.

However, it is precisely the strangeness and difficulty of these texts which the critic must give some account of. Talking in general terms about conventions of reading and the reader's assumptions may appear to classify all works which fall broadly into these areas as completely conventional or completely in accordance with the reader's expectations. This is clearly not the case. In reading a 'novel', for example, the reader's interest is stimulated by the tension between the reality being constructed according to broadly recognisable regulative norms and the individuality of events and characters which, while remaining plausible, may not be entirely predictable. To put it more baldly, a novel which coincided in every respect with one's expectations and assumptions would make pretty dull reading.

In the texts dealt with, however, this tension has been overbalanced in favour of the unpredictable. The balance between general expectations and the particular written performance which stimulates interest is weighted in favour of

the specific and individual. For this reason no general 'way of reading' these texts has become possible, because each must be approached in and for itself. Although the actual practice of structuralist theory of literature has not proved a single answer to the problem of critical approach, it has helped give emphasis to a critical reading of texts individually by laying weight on the processes of reading/writing, the processes of perceiving the text. Barthes's early underlining of the 'convention du réel', the ways in which novels particularly have come to seem 'real' and 'natural' developed into the importance in his criticism of the processes of creating the text in reading it. The usual 'pratique confortable de la lecture'<sup>(20)</sup> is what these texts undercut and what any attempt to criticise them must make of primary importance.

This awareness of reading as a process may seem so self-evident that it is hardly worth stating. However, the meaning or sense of a text can perhaps be compared with Berkeley's tree - the text exists if one is not looking at it but its meaning only exists when it is read, meaning is produced in the reading process.<sup>(21)</sup> Now, this process is one victim of the easy illusion of realism. If reading involves largely the absorption of a sense-structure which in general conforms with expectation and convention, that act develops a self-sustaining rhythm and the process becomes subsumed in the overall assimilation of the text as a repetition. The text itself can then seem indivisible from the meaning of the text.

However, as soon as a text no longer conforms in general terms with expectation and convention, the process of reading comes to the fore. While many works of literature have long fallen into that category, the critical tools to deal with this have tended to lag behind. Barthes expresses this disjunction:



Lisez lentement, lisez tout d'un roman de Zola, le livre vous tombera des mains; lisez vite, par bribes, un text moderne, le texte devient opaque, forclos à votre plaisir: vous voulez qu'il arrive quelquechose, et il n'arrive rien; car ce qui arrive au langage n'arrive pas au discours: ce qui "arrive", ce qui "s'en va" ... se produit dans le volume des langages, dans l'énonciation, non dans la suite des énoncés .... (22)

Zola may become boring if read slowly because the sense structures being built up in the reading do not challenge expectation or convention in any major way. Similarly, the quick reading of the 'texte moderne', such as those examined, may prove less than illuminating because the sense structures being produced cannot occur at a micro-level, as it were, and correspond with general conventions which make a 'quick reading' possible. For this reason in these texts the reading process itself becomes a vital part of the critical process. The act of enunciating the text, both by writer and reader, and not the information given in a sequential narrative, comes to define the point at which its meaning is available.

Literature depends on conventions which form the base of its communicative function, as Culler puts it:

The institution of literature is a repository of conventions and assumptions, expectations and interpretative operations, which enable readers to take up a text, order it and produce meaning from that ordering. (23)

Thus far the works under discussion here have been seen in terms of reaction to existing conventions and expectations which has demanded a different type of critical approach, but has this body of literature developed its own conventions and engendered its own expectations in the reader? The analyses have all talked in terms of consciousness, language, perception, fragmentation; they have revealed similarities of

technique shared by some, but not necessarily all the texts. However, these factors seem too general to justify describing them as new conventions which characterise 'experimental' developments in Germany in the Sixties.

There is nevertheless one other way in which conventions could be developing in this writing, and that is within the writing of one writer. In order to facilitate a close reading of the texts, this study has concentrated on one work by each writer to the exclusion of other works and it is these works which reveal tendencies to develop conventions of the experimental. Just as concrete poetry quickly came to use certain techniques and approaches, so these writers have stylistic and other characteristics which so mark the works of each that it is not unreasonable to talk in terms of a 'conventional' way of reading Ror Wolf or Jürgen Becker.

As we noted earlier, these two writers have much in common in terms of their literary output. The analysis of their first books has revealed certain striking features in each - in Wolf, for example, the lists of words, use of verbal nouns, focus on minute detail, shifts in perspective and in Becker the use of references to Köln, unusual punctuation and typography, fragmentary perception. The later prose works of each reveal many of the same elements. It is possible to point to the increased use of empty space in Becker's Händer and more conventional-looking prose and punctuation of Umgebungen, but both also use the same types of techniques and approach which Felder demonstrated for the first time. Wolf's latest prose text, like the intervening volumes Pilzer und Pelzer and Danke schön, nichts zu danken, while each has some individual characteristics such as the use of 'Trivialstoffe' in Pilzer und Pelzer, shares many of the techniques developed in Fortsetzung des Berichts. It would seem that each writer has certain techniques and insights which marked out his first work and which he tends not either

to develop strikingly or to abandon.

Such comparison is not possible with Mon because he has written relatively little after herzzero but the same type of conclusions can, to some extent, be drawn from Heißenbüttel's Projekte published after the last Textbuch, which use quotation and collage in a greatly extended context. These writers, however, wrote not only the texts mentioned. Wolf turned to football as a cultural phenomenon; Becker published a volume of photographs with a minimum of text (which can be seen as one extreme answer to his dilemma about language), and some poetry; they both also wrote plays for radio. Mon edited anthologies and published essays, but his output is definitely the smallest of the four.<sup>(24)</sup> Heißenbüttel's work has two distinct sides - texts and theory. In the Sixties and early Seventies the two balanced one another, while in recent years both aspects of his work seem to have declined. What does this relative decline in activity indicate about the works and writers under scrutiny here ?

An answer to this question must involve the wider areas of literary activity in the Sixties in Germany. Heißenbüttel is the only one of these writers who could be called a major literary figure, and this status derives not only from his textbooks and creative writing but also from his theories, some of which we have examined briefly. The concerns of the writing examined in this study do not obviously fall within the main area of literary interest in the Sixties which can be briefly summed up as the relationship between literature and politics.

That decade saw a wide-ranging literary debate with the different facets of the literature-politics relationship (for example 'Engagement' the documentary, workers' literature) occupying the centre of the stage. The decade was a time of questioning, self-assessment and new developments

in German literature, as Renate Matthaei remarks in the introduction to Grenzverschiebung:

Kein Jahrzehnt hat die deutsche Literatur so in Frage gestellt wie die 60er Jahre, in keinem war sie so irritierbar, so unsicher und zugleich angereizt, unentwegt effektiv zu sein. ... Die deutsche Literatur der 60er Jahre ist eine Literatur der Anfänge. (25)

Matthaei continues to set the scene in terms of movement and change, she talks in terms of 'Sprünge', 'ein ständiges Verändern' and 'ein Ausschreiten in verschiedene Richtungen'. Literature in Upheaval shares this view of a decade of literary change:

The challenge of the Sixties was varied and many-sided. ... There was the challenge ... on the issue of the role and function of the writer, of the validity of fiction and narrative, of the authenticity of literature, of what is and what is not literature, of the range and character of the themes it should deal with, of the relation of literature and politics, of the possibilities of an 'alternative' culture. (26)

Heinrich Vormweg in 'Deutsche Literatur 1945 - 1960 : Keine Stunde Null', a survey of literary developments in those fifteen years, places the developments of the Sixties in a historical context:

Fünfzehn Jahre später war die Literatur in Deutschland noch immer dabei, die Angebote durchzuprobieren, die eine mit Verspätung rezipierte Tradition ihr in großer Vielfalt gemacht hatte. Doch sie hatte schon Offenheit erarbeitet. (Sie war offen für Veränderung wie kaum jemals zuvor. (27)

The end of this catching-up process (28) coincided with signs of disturbance which were beginning to appear in the fabric of the Federal Republic's political and economic stability. (29)  
The coincidence of these factors sets the scene for the

developments of the Sixties.

The above summaries of the elements of the challenge which faced writers in the Sixties do not contain any obvious reference to those writers discussed. This is because such writing tended to seem peripheral to the main issues. However, I hope to show that this writing raised questions which were pertinent to the more major areas of literary interest.

The debate about the 'end of literature' was closely linked with the question of the politicisation of literature,<sup>(30)</sup> It came into prominence with the publication of Kursbuch 15, particularly in two essays, Hans Magnus Enzensberger's 'Gemeinplätze, die neueste Literatur betreffend', and Karl Markus Michel's 'Ein Kranz für die Literatur'.<sup>(31)</sup> These essays made a great impact throughout Germany,<sup>(32)</sup> but they contain certain weaknesses which are relevant here. They both examine the position of the author and of writing in contemporary Germany and the background to that position, find the situation wanting in terms of the political impact or critical effectiveness of literature and make proposals to remedy this situation. Michel salutes the slogans on the walls of Nanterre University during the 1968 student revolt as one escape route from the institutionalised status of literary activity which he sees in terms of the television studio and the newspaper; what literature says:

... ist ein Luxus, etwas für den Sonntag (für die Feuilleton-Seite, das Abendstudio, das Literaturseminar), aber er will die Realität treffen; er vermittelt die Illusion, Realität nicht nur zu deuten, sondern auch zu bedeuten. ... Der Dichter <sup>(33)</sup> steht hoch im Kurs, aber er hat nichts zu melden.

This 'Vorharmlosung' of writers and their work is seen by Enzensberger as a result of literature in the Fifties developing from a politically affirmative standpoint, condemning Fascism and confirming current political and economic stability,

into a mood of vague and unfocussed criticism of and opposition to the status quo:

... Je mehr die westdeutsche Gesellschaft sich stabilisierte, desto dringender verlangte sie nach Gesellschaftskritik in der Literatur; je folgenloser das Engagement der Schriftsteller blieb, desto lauter wurde nach ihm gerufen.

The results of this are seen in the institutionalised and bourgeois nature of every type of literary output:

Bürgerlich bestimmt sind sozialer Realismus und abstrakte Poesie, Literatur der Affirmation und Literatur des Protestes, absurdes und dokumentarisches Theater. (34)

Michel concurs with this:

... Literatur ist eine Institution. ... Die Institutionalisierung schreitet fort, denn der Bedarf ist enorm gestiegen, man arbeitet für den Konsum, zugleich aber auch gegen ihn; das schlechte Gewissen wütet gegen sich selbst, die Literatur erzeugt aus sich heraus eine Anti-Literatur, durchaus in "immanenter" Entwicklung, deren Logik aber mindestens abensuehr eine des Marktes wie eine der Form ist. (35)

He places the writing of Heißenbüttel (and presumably therefore of the other writers in this study) in this category. Michel summarises Heißenbüttel's views on the relationship between language and reality (which were examined earlier) and then concludes:

Diese für die literarische Avantgarde repräsentative Theorie ist radikal und in sich stimmig - falls man davon absieht, daß sie ihrem eigenen Spruch zufolge fauler Zauber ist, weil in einer Sprache formuliert, die ex definitione falsches Bewußtsein reproduziert. (36)

This conclusion, however, takes Michel's own summary of Heißenbüttel's views too baldly. Heißenbüttel's advocacy of a literature which consisted of quotation might have as an ultimate aim that language be, in Michel's phrase, 'radikal abgebaut', but Michel fails to give reasonable consideration to the route by which Heißenbüttel proposes that this would be achieved, which Michel quotes:

"... Nur indem wir den im Wort gespeicherten Sachbezug zitieren, vermögen wir uns dem zu nähern, was man außerhalb der Sprache Welt nennen könnte." (37)

The complete deconstruction of language which Michel attributes almost en passant as an aim to Heißenbüttel does not figure as an explicit and stated goal. It remains an implication, but Heißenbüttel's interest centres on the route which might make that aim less impractical and idealistic. However, in contradiction to Michel's assumption, Heißenbüttel does not propose total lack of communication or total silence, in order to avoid using the tainted material of language. He advocates an attempt to create a critical attitude to language in all its manifestations, and this is to be done by undermining conventional assumption by means of revealing language as an autonomous, self-generating and self-defining sphere which has become detached from the reality it once expressed. This critical perspective on language which all the writers studied here sought to instil in their readers forms no radical break. It shows an attempt to foster awareness of the fact that language is a system and institution, that it pervades reality and the perception of the world through the media, advertising and indeed through the prevalence of literature itself, and that lack of awareness of this has social, political and ideological implications because uncritical use and assimilation of language can further the cause of (in Michel's words) 'falsches Bewußtsein, Vorurteile, Sinnbezüge'.

It cannot be denied that, given the critical attitude of these writers to language as institution, one logical way-out would be to stop writing, and in this sense Michel is right that whatever such writers now say 'ex definitione falsches Bewußtsein reproduziert'. However, this oversimplifies Heißenbüttel's solutions. Nowhere does Michel deny Heißenbüttel's view of language, instead he simply dismisses Heißenbüttel's proposed solution as 'statt schlechtem Einverständnis - radikaler Bruch; statt falscher Kommunikation - gar keine'. Not only does this ignore the critical perspective on language central to Heißenbüttel's views, but it also, by implication, seems to condone the idea of 'schlechte Einverständnis' and 'falscher Kommunikation'. But Heißenbüttel wishes to create awareness of the falseness in such communication, the pitfalls in apparent comprehension.

Heißenbüttel is not so naive as to advocate or expect a sudden revitalisation of some long-lost (or previously unattained) authentic and meaningful language, nor does he view the writer's solution as silence. Rather, he wishes a critical attitude and perspective on language to emerge from writing which nevertheless must use that language as its medium. The experimental techniques, challenges to the reader's assumptions syntactical, semantic and typographical innovation, which the writings examined in this study have demonstrated, all contribute to the creation of this awareness. It is not insignificant that Michel's conclusion is 'daß unsere Welt sich nicht mehr poetisieren läßt, nur noch verändern', i.e. silence, the same fate as he proposed for Heißenbüttel.

Enzensberger reaches a more positive conclusion in putting forward a literature which would achieve 'die politische Alphabetisierung Deutschlands', a literature in the service of politics which would combine self-criticism by writers and 'eine kritische Wechselwirkung, ein feedback zwischen Leser und Schreiber'.<sup>(38)</sup> And this 'Alphabetisierung', feedback and



new writing would presumably depend on the institution of language unchanged from the world of the bourgeois and media-orientated culture which both critics so condemned.

The weakness in these essays, then, does not lie in their view of literature as social and political institution in the service of maintaining an undesired status quo by avoiding confrontation, coherent criticism or articulate opposition. Nor does it lie in the vagueness of their proposals, although this is one symptom of that weakness. The weakness which both these essays share is that neither acknowledges the position of language (and not just of literature) as an institution. Literature in Upheaval points out that factors unifying the whole of the 'end of literature' debate were authority and the 'image of power', and that the reasons for the importance of such matters in Germany lay with the background of National Socialism.<sup>(39)</sup> Enzensberger and Michel isolated literature and the writer for criticism without taking the next step of critically assessing language, the vehicle which creates the literature, which conveys the statement, slogans and clichés, which is the medium of the message. We have already seen that such an assessment cannot aim at replacing or purifying language but it can, as the writing examined has shown, create a critical awareness of language's demands, pitfalls and traps and, ultimately, awareness of language as authority, language as image and seat of power. The awareness of language stimulated by these texts was anti-authoritarian and political in a very wide sense. Thus the experimental writing may not be often overtly political in theme or content but it is highly relevant to the political debates of the Sixties.

In this way the awareness of language which these experimental texts engender has a significance beyond the bounds of their immediate context. The critical perspective on language in the texts applies not just to the language of that

one text but to other, subsequent occasions where the reader may meet the same type of slogan, cliché or any similar use of language. This argument has been put forward in connection with the political possibilities of concrete poetry. Chris Bezzel, for example, maintains:

..., daß unser sprachsystem, das ein deutlich hierarchisches ist, das system unserer sozialen hierarchien in allen abstufungen spiegelt.

From this he concludes

..., daß sich der revolutionäre schriftsteller mit den grundphänomenen der hierarchischen fassung der sprache beschäftigen muß. ... (40)

This expresses more bluntly the view of language implicit in Heißenbüttel's theories (although he would be unlikely to agree with Bezzel's conclusions).<sup>(41)</sup> Such writing, both in concrete poetry and in the texts under consideration here, thus uses that particular manifestation of language which is the text to forge a critical relationship in the reader to language - and not just to the language of that text but to language as it is used in everyday discourse.

This is emphasised in the ordinariness of much of the language of these texts - they contain relatively few obscure words (although some could of course be cited). This undermines the charge of the detractors of such writing that it belongs in an aesthetic ivory tower, which is the implication for example of Michel's stance. Nevertheless the bulk of language in these texts forms part of potential everyday use. herzhero, for example, avoids the obscurities of some of Mon's more poetical texts.<sup>(42)</sup> The effects of Wolf's descriptions derive not so much from the use of archaic or unusual words but from the application of normal words in unexpected contexts such as the description of the chair. Much

of Becker's and Heißenbüttel's language is influenced by contact with the media. The reader is unlikely to misunderstand many of the actual words in these texts; their effect derives from the way ordinary language is employed. The impact of these texts on awareness of language as a whole thus increases because the language is that of day-to-day communication, not the obscurantism of an ivory tower.

However, just as the literature of West Germany did not become totally politicised, so the language of that society, its advertising and clichés have continued. Thus, on the surface, neither the more acknowledged major political trend nor the less acknowledged experimental one in German literature of the 1960s achieved its aims entirely. Indeed, in one assessment, the challenge of the Sixties seems to have achieved little:

The 'politicisation of literature' got mixed up with attitudes attaching a vaguer and more inward significance to the idea of the political. Literature, called into question, was reaffirmed. Documentary methods with their promise of 'authenticity', began to look less convincing ... . Attempts to involve writers in themes from the industrial world proved little more than an episode ... (43)

This contains no obvious reference to the writing examined in this study. It remained on the fringes of publishing programmes - Suhrkamp and Luchterhand, both large enough concerns to subsidise such non-profitmaking, small market ventures, continued to lend their support. However, both editions and market remained small. Even the apparently best selling works such as the collected Das Textbuch, which appeared in 1970, took three printings to reach 11,000 copies while by its third printing in 1969 Felder had printed no more than 17,000 copies. In comparison with real best sellers these figures are miniscule. (44) A further factor pointing to negative conclusions about the texts is that the activity of the writers under consideration,

even Helmut Weissenbüttel, has declined, or they have turned from prose to other (more lucrative) activities such as writing radio plays.

The writing also seemed to present few answers to the problems it raised. The notion of a critical awareness of language remains vague and impossible to pin-point exactly, and yet it is what these texts share. Fortsetzung des Berichts, Felder, Herzzero and the Textbücher delineated some problems and offered pointers to a solution, they did not present one definitive, experimental way of writing nor a new and more meaningful, untainted language. However, they have illustrated the myriad possibilities which a term such as 'experimental' can cover like an umbrella. Also, examining the texts on a broadly structuralist basis in terms of the process of meaning production in the act of reading has allowed those individual characteristics to emerge. The texts form a body of writing largely dissimilar in terms of content, style, perspective and layout but which is linked by a common concern with language. The writers did not dismiss language and resort to silence as a result of their criticisms of language, they tried to work with language in order to create a wider awareness of language as system and institution. This has consequences for the status of literature. These texts called into question conventions of narrative and genre but they did not dismiss literature or writing themselves. This questioning was not designed to herald or accompany the death of literature, it reinforced the potential of language as vehicle of literature by illustrating the varied possibilities for using language in a way which also provided a critical perspective on it. This experimental writing did not signify the last stages of literature, on the contrary and, as this study has shown, it revealed the possibilities still open to the writer in the act of writing, or as Rene Wellek puts it:

Zweifel an der Sprache und ihrer Fassungskraft können die Bemühungen der Dichter nur verstärken, der Sprache abzufordern, was mit ihrer Hilfe so schwierig auszudrücken ist; sie können ihn und uns nur argwöhnisch machen gegen die Entwürdigung des Wortes durch Propaganda, Reklame und schlechten Journalismus. Voraussagen über das Ende des Lesens und Schreibens ... sollten uns die Notwendigkeit einer literarischen Kultur bewußter machen. (45)

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. For more detailed discussion of these questions cf. R. Hinton Thomas and Keith Bullivant, Literature in Upheaval, Manchester, 1974 especially Chapters 2 - 5, pp. 31 - 154.
2. Edigna Schrembs, 'Experimentelle Prosa der letzten Jahre und ihr Verhältnis zur gesellschaftlichen Wirklichkeit', Der Deutschunterricht, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1973, pp. 68 - 82, p. 68.
3. For example, Bodo Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa' in Die deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart. Aspekte und Tendenzen, ed. Manfred Durzack, Stuttgart, 1971, pp. 230 - 256, discusses Heißenbüttel, Mon and Becker as experimental writers while Edinga Schrembs, 'Experimentelle Prosa', deals with Wolf and Becker in these terms. A British critic B. Keith-Smith refers to both Franz Mon and Jürgen Becker as writers of 'experimental prose' in Ermahnende Ausdeutungen, London, 1971, p. xiv. As both Helmut Heißenbüttel and Jürgen Becker attracted more attention from the critics, references to them as 'experimental' are correspondingly more frequent. References to Heißenbüttel as experimental occur, for example, in Jürgen Becker's essay 'Helmut Heißenbüttel' in Schriftsteller der Gegenwart. Deutsche Literatur. 53 Portraits, ed. Klaus Nonnemann, Olten, 1963, pp. 143 - 150, p. 144; Peter Demetz, Postwar German Literature - a critical introduction, New York, 1970, p. 84. The following also refer to Jürgen Becker as experimental: Heinrich Böll, 'Jürgen Becker: "Felder"', Neue Rundschau, Vol. 76, 1965, pp. 142 - 144; Heinrich Vormweg 'Mechanismen für Erlebtes' in Eine andere Lesart, Neuwied und Berlin, 1972, pp. 156 - 165, p. 156; Renate Matthaei in the introduction to Grenzverschiebung, Köln, 1970, p. 24.

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3. For example, Bodo Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa' in Die deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart. Aspekte und Tendenzen, ed. Manfred Durzack, Stuttgart, 1971, pp. 230 - 256, discusses Heißenbüttel, Mon and Becker as experimental writers while Edinga Schrembs, 'Experimentelle Prosa', deals with Wolf and Becker in these terms. A British critic B. Keith-Smith refers to both Franz Mon and Jürgen Becker as writers of 'experimental prose' in Ermahnende Ausdeutungen, London, 1971, p. xiv. As both Helmut Heißenbüttel and Jürgen Becker attracted more attention from the critics, references to them as 'experimental' are correspondingly more frequent. References to Heißenbüttel as experimental occur, for example, in Jürgen Becker's essay 'Helmut Heißenbüttel' in Schriftsteller der Gegenwart. Deutsche Literatur. 53 Portraits, ed. Klaus Nonnewann, Olten, 1963, pp. 143 - 150, p. 144; Peter Demetz, Postwar German Literature - a critical introduction, New York, 1970, p. 84. The following also refer to Jürgen Becker as experimental: Heinrich Böll, 'Jürgen Becker: "Felder"', Neue Rundschau, Vol. 76, 1965, pp. 142 - 144; Heinrich Vormweg 'Mechanismen für Erlebtes' in Eine andere Lesart, Neuwied und Berlin, 1972, pp. 156 - 165, p. 156; Renate Matthaei in the introduction to Grenzverschiebung, Köln, 1970, p. 24.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. Hans Magnus Enzensberger, 'Die Aporien der Avantgarde' in Einzelheiten, Frankfurt am Main, 1962, pp. 290 - 315, p. 309.
2. Hans Schwerte, 'Der Begriff des Experiments in der Dichtung' in Literatur und Geistesgeschichte. Festgabe für Heinz Otto Bürger, ed. R. Grimm and C. Weidemann, Berlin, 1968, pp. 387 - 405, p. 387. For other critical discussions of experimental literature in this context see for example: Werner Stolz (ed.) Experiment und Erfahrung in Wissenschaft und Kunst, München, 1963, esp. pp. 266 - 296; Helmut Mocketat, Tradition und Experiment, Frankfurt/Main und Bonn, 1962; Karl Krolow, Die Rolle des Autors in experimentellen Gedicht, Wiesbaden, 1962; Wolfgang Paulsen (ed.) Revolte und Experiment, Heidelberg, 1972. A rather different view emerges in H.M. Waldson, 'Experiment and tradition: some German fiction since 1945', German Life and Letters, Vol. 7., N.S., pp. 109 - 115. A discussion of similar developments in American literature can be found in Jerome Klinkowitz, Literary Disruptions. The Making of a Post-Contemporary American Fiction, Urbana, Chicago, London, 1975.
3. Enzensberger, 'Aporien', p. 309.
4. Enzensberger, 'Aporien', p. 314.
5. Helmut Heißenbüttel, 'Frankfurter Vorlesungen über Poetik', in Über Literatur, München, 1970, pp. 116 - 195, p. 131.
6. Enzensberger, 'Aporien', p. 311.
7. Helmut Heißenbüttel, 'Keine Experimente? Anmerkungen zu einem Schlagwort' in Tradition der Moderne, Neuwied und Berlin, 1972, pp. 126 - 135, p. 133.
8. Hannelore Neves, 'Die Fern ist streng, die Stimmung luftig, heiter', Welt der Literatur, Vol. 6, No. 23, 1969, pp. 9 - 11, p. 9.



9. Hans Reiss, 'Stil und Struktur im modernen europäischen experimentellen Roman', Akzente, Vol. 5, 1958, pp. 202 - 213, p. 203.
10. Clemens Heselhaus, deutsche lyrik der moderne, Düsseldorf, 1961, p. 458.
11. Peter O. Chotjewitz, 'Was heißt "experimentelle Literatur"?', Akzente, Vol. 15, 1968, pp. 412 - 428, p. 412.
12. Chotjewitz, p. 428.
13. Cf. Alfred Andersch, Europäische Avantgarde, Frankfurt/Main, 1949; Avantgarde, Geschichte und Krise einer Idee, München, 1966; H.E. Holthusen, Avantgardismus und die Zukunft der modernen Kunst, München, 1964; Miklós Szabolcsi, 'Avant-garde, Neo-avant-garde-Modernism: Questions and Suggestions', New Literary History, Vol. 3, 1971 - 2, pp. 49 - 70; Times Literary Supplement, 3.9.1964; John Weightman, The Concept of the Avant-Garde, London, 1973; Harold Rosenberg, The Tradition of the New, London, 1970.
14. Renato Poggioli, The Theory of the Avant-Garde, Cambridge, Mass., 1968, pp. 149 - 150.
15. Erich von Kahler, 'Form und Entformung', Merkur, Vol. 19, 1965, pp. 318 - 355, and 413 - 428, p. 332.
16. Reiss, p. 204.
17. These types of argument occur, for example, in Heimann 'Experimentelle Prosa', p. 253; Matthaei Grenzverschiebung, pp. 15 - 15; Liselotte Gumpel "Concrete" poetry from East and West Germany, New Haven and London, 1976, pp. 1 - 11, 34 - 66; Dieter Wellershof's collection of essays Literatur und Veränderung, München, 1971, especially 'Fiktion und Praxis', pp. 9 - 25, 'Wiederherstellung der Fremdheit', pp. 62 - 72 and 'Die Instanzen der Abwehr und das totale Environment' pp. 36 - 48, deals with the psychological pressuring of the individual and its consequences for the literary activity.
18. Walter Weiss, Gegenwartsliteratur, Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz, 1973, p. 64.

19. Weiss, Gegenwartsliteratur, p. 67. Bodo Heimann's 'Experimentelle Prosa' uses the term 'pluralism' (p. 251) to designate what Weiss has called 'Partikularismus'. His general attitude is more negative than Weiss. Heimann equates the writing process with 'die Ansammlung nicht mehr verketteter, entbündelten Partikel' (p. 245) and describes pluralistic prose as 'ihrem Wesen nach auflösend, weltanschaulich leer, schwebend, mehrdeutig unbedeutend, ohne tragende Sinnmitte.
20. Erwin Theodor Rosenthal, 'Wirklichkeitsdarstellungen im modernen Roman', Wirkendes Wort, Vol. 20, 1970, pp. 126 - 133, p. 126.
21. Rosenthal, 'Wirklichkeitsdarstellungen', p. 128.
22. Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa', p. 231.
23. Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa', p. 231.
24. Christian Wagenknecht, 'Proteus oder Permutation', Text und Kritik, No. 30, 1971, pp. 1 - 10, p. 7.
25. For example, this forms one of the main characteristics of west German literature examined in an East German context by Kurt Datt in Die Exekution des Erzählers. Westdeutsche Romane zwischen 1968 und 1972. Frankfurt/Main, 1974, pp. 7 - 8, 50 - 65.
26. Thomas Pelster, 'Das Motiv der Sprachnot in der modernen Lyrik', Der Deutschunterricht, No. 22, 1970, No. 1, pp. 38 - 58, pp. 39 - 40. Language as specific problem also emerges in this period as an aspect of earlier writing which now receives increased critical attention. See for example: Walter Weiss, 'Zur Thematisierung der Sprache in der Literatur der Gegenwart', Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur, Vol. 94, 1972, Sonderheft, pp. 669 - 693; Helmut Mocketat, Tradition und Experiment, Frankfurt am Main, Bonn, 1962; Eva M. Lüders, 'Das lyrische Ich und das gezeichnete Ich', Wirkendes Wort, Vol. 15, 1965, pp. 361 - 365; Klaus Gert, 'Absolute Dichtung? Zu einem Begriff in der Poetik Gottfried Benns', Der Deutschunterricht, Vol. 20, 1968, No. 4, pp. 69 - 85.

Similar analyses of contemporary works appear, for example, in Silvio Vietta, Sprache und Sprachreflexion in der modernen Lyrik. Bad Homburg von der Höhe, Berlin, Zürich, 1970, esp. pp. 11 ff; and H. -J. Mähl, 'Die Mystik der Worte. Zum Sprachproblem in der modernen deutschen Dichtung', Wirkendes Wort, Vol. 13, 1963, pp. 289 - 303.

27. Gisela Dischner, 'Konkrete Kunst und Gesellschaft', Text und Kritik, No. 25, 1970, pp. 37 - 41, p. 38.
28. cf. Harald Hartung, 'Antigrammatische Poesie und Poetik', Neue Rundschau, Vol. 79, 1968, pp. 480 - 494.
29. Renate Beyer, 'Innovation oder traditioneller Rekurs?', Text und Kritik, 1970, No. 30, pp. 23 - 32, p. 32.
30. B. Keith-Smith, Ermahnende Ausdeutungen, p. xiv.
31. Victor Lange, 'Language as the Topic of Modern Fiction' in The Discontinuous Tradition, ed. P.F. Ganz, Oxford, 1971, pp. 260 - 272, p. 260.
32. Lange, 'Language as Topic', p. 260.
33. This type of awareness was not new to Germany but earlier examples (e.g. Hofmannsthal's 'Der Brief' and Rilke's Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids. Brigge) differ slightly in that they portray a state where language has become a problem in a language which itself reflects little awareness of this problem. Expressionism too used language to portray a changed reality and tended not to show a qualitatively different relationship between language and the reality being expressed. Döblin's Berlin Alexanderplatz showed an increasing awareness of the language-impregnated and language-defined nature of reality in the advertising slogans, weather forecasts, rhymes and songs which intersperse the narrative and help characterise the mindscape of Biberkopf. In addition the extreme manifestations of the Surrealists and Dadaists in art and literature contributed to creating an awareness of language as material to be manipulated and not just as communicator for a given meaning understood by author and recipient. After the war Arno Schmidt and Wolfgang Koeppen in particular attempted

to follow in the footsteps of Joyce, dos Passos, Döblin, etc., but they remained somewhat isolated figures. In the Sixties, however, such concerns with language became of more widespread concern both in the texts themselves and as we have seen in criticism.

34. Lange, 'Language as Topic', p. 272.

35. Matthaer, Grenzverschiebung, p. 23.

36. Peter Spycher, "'Texts': a new prose form in contemporary German literature?", Books Abroad, Vol. 44, 1970, pp. 415 - 419, p. 416.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. In Virginia Woolf, Collected Essays, Vol. 1, London, 1966, pp. 319 - 337. Page references will appear in brackets in the text.
2. Kahler, 'Form und Entformung', p. 332.
3. Kurt Pinthus (ed.) Menschheitsdämmerung, Reinbek, 1959, p. 27
4. A not dissimilar view has been taken by critics of the early years of the Sixties when the stability established during the Fifties, social, political, and literary, was about to be torn by self-generated reaction and criticism. Thomas and Bullivant summarise the situation thus, 'By now [the early Sixties] the period of political and economic stability which had characterised the Fifties under the leadership of Adenauer and the CDU was beginning to close, and strains and stresses were beginning to reveal themselves. 1962 was a year of crisis ...' (Literature in Upheaval, p. viii). Among critics Renate Matthaei saw this period as one full of 'ungeheueren Potential an Veränderungsmöglichkeiten' (Grenzverschiebung, p.16) while Heinrich Vorweg states that by the early Sixties German literature was 'offen für Veränderung wie kaum jemals zuvor' ('Deutsche Literatur 1945 - 1960: Keine Stunde Null' in Durzack, Deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart, pp. 7 - 29, p. 29). The texts we will examine form part of the literary expression of and reaction to the continuing and pervasive atmosphere of crisis.
5. Erich Auerbach, Mimesis, Princeton, 1953. Page references will appear in brackets in the text.
6. Auerbach sets this potential for tragedy against the more comic or satirical view of much of the eighteenth century (p. 481).
7. cf. Malcolm Bradbury, Possibilities, Essays on the State of the Novel, London, 1973, p. 122.
8. It is reasonable to assume that in discussing the nineteenth century novel Becker means the European

rather than just German genre because the ideas he points to cannot be so easily applied to the purely German product, for, as J.P. Stern points out the German 'realist' novels viewed the world 'from points of view other than that of the common and commonly explored social certainties of their age', Reinterpretations, London, 1964, p. 2.

9. Jürgen Becker, interview with Reinhard Lettau, in Selbstanzeige, ed. Werner Koch, Frankfurt am Main, 1971, pp. 77 - 88, p. 78.
10. Jürgen Becker, 'Gegen die Erhaltung des literarischen status quo', Sprache im technischen Zeitalter, 1964, No. 9 - 10, pp. 694 - 698; reprinted in Über Jürgen Becker, ed. Leo Kreutzer, Frankfurt am Main, pp. 13 - 19, p. 19.
11. Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 83.
12. Analysis of Felder will assess the success or otherwise of Becker's attempts to do this in practice.
13. Quoted in Hans Magnus Enzensberger (ed.), Vorzeichen, Frankfurt am Main, 1962, p. 16.
14. Kreutzer, Über Jürgen Becker, p. 15.
15. Enzensberger, Vorzeichen, p. 16.
16. Jürgen Becker, 'Im Zaunzeug der Sprache', Neue deutsche Hefte, Vol. 7, 1960 - 1961, pp. 550 - 551, p. 550.
17. Helmut Heißenbüttel has a similar view of the function of language in contemporary writing from which he concludes: 'Realistisch wäre eine Literatur, die in ihren Modellen den unauflösbaren Zusammenhang zeigt zwischen der faktisch veränderten Welt und der Unmöglichkeit, diese Veränderung direkt und unreflektiert zu benennen', Helmut Heißenbüttel and Heinrich Vormweg, Briefwechsel über Literatur, Neuwied und Berlin, 1969, p. 28 - 9.

18. Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 84. Dieter Wellershoff also advocates this type of 'consciousness' writing, especially in 'Wiederherstellung der Fremdheit' in Literatur und Veränderung, pp. 62 - 72.
19. Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 78.
20. Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 83.
21. This is borne out by references to the 'Neuen Franzosen' (Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 78) and to Michel Butor (Kreutzer, Über Jürgen Becker, p. 16).
22. For general introductions to structuralism, and its applicability and application to literature, see:
- Michael Lane (ed.), Structuralism: A Reader, London, 1970;  
 Günther Schiwy, Der französische Strukturalismus, Reinbek, 1969;  
 Günther Schiwy, Neue Aspekte des Strukturalismus, München, 1971;  
 Robert Scholes Structuralism in Literature, New Haven, London 1974;  
Alternative, No. 62 -63, 1966;  
Yale French Studies, No. 36 - 7, 1966;  
Twentieth Century Studies, No. 3, May, 1970;  
 Manfred Bierwisch, 'Strukturalismus: Geschichte, Probleme und Methoden', Kursbuch 5, 1966, pp. 96 - 115.
- For precursors to some ideas in literary structuralism see:
- Käte Hamburger, Die Logik der Dichtung, Stuttgart, 1957;  
 Roman Ingarden, Das Literarische Kunstwerk, 2nd edition, Tübingen, 1960;  
 Roman Ingarden, Vom Erkennen des Literarischen Kunstwerks, Darmstadt, 1968.
- For literary structuralism see:
- Roland Barthes, Le degré zéro de l'écriture, Paris, 1953;  
 " 'Éléments de sémiologie', Communications No. 4, 1964, pp. 91 - 135;  
 " 'Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits', Communications, No. 8, 1966, pp. 1 - 27;  
 " Critique et vérité, Paris, 1966;  
 " Mythologies, Paris, 1970;  
 " Le Plaisir du Texte, Paris, 1973;

- Julia Kristeva, 'La productivité dite texte', Communications, No. 11, 1968, pp. 59 - 83;
- Julia Kristeva, Essays in Semiotics, Hague, Paris, (ed.) 1971;
- Julia Kristeva, Le texte du roman, Hague, 1970;
- Jurij M. Lotman, Vorlesungen zu einer Strukturalen Poetik, München, 1972;
- Vladimir Propp, Morphology of the Folktale, Bloomington, 1958;
- Tsetvan Todorov, 'Les catégories du récit littéraire', Communications, No. 8, 1966, pp. 125 - 151;
- " Poétique de la Prose, Paris, 1971.

My examination of the literary critical approach of the structuralists is heavily indebted to two works, written in English:

- Jonathan Culler, Structuralist Poetics, London 1975;
- Stephen Heath, The Nouveau Roman, a study in the practice of writing, London 1972.

Page references to both these works will occur in brackets in the text.

One German critic has made a particular study of the significance of the reading process, see:

- Wolfgang Iser, Der Implizierte Leser, München, 1972;
- 'Der Leser als Kompositionselement im realistischen Roman' in Bernard Fabian, Ulrich Suerbaum (eds.), Festschrift für Edgar Hertner, München, 1969, pp. 273 - 292;
- Die Appellstruktur der Text, Konstanz, 1970; 'Image und Montage' in Immanente Ästhetik Ästhetische Reflexion, ed. W. Iser, München, 1966, pp. 361 - 393;
- 'The reading process - a phenomenological approach', New Literary History, Vol. 3, 1972, pp. 279 - 299;
- 'Reduktionsformen der Subjektivität' in Poetik und Hermeneutik, Vol. III ed. H.R. Jaub, München, 1968, pp. 435 - 491.

23. Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Reidlinger, trans. Wade Baskin, intro. Jonathan Culler, Glasgow, 1974, p. 16.
24. See David Robey (ed.), Structuralism: an introduction, London, 1973, pp. 1 - 4.



25. Jonathan Culler, 'The Linguistic Basis of Structuralism', in Hobey, pp. 20 - 36, p. 30.
26. Stephen Heath, 'Towards a textual semiotics' in Signs of the Times. Introductory Readings in Textual Semiotics, Cambridge, n.d., pp. 16 - 36, p. 28.
27. Roland Barthes, S/Z, Paris, 1970. Page references will appear in brackets in the text.
28. This opposition appears in a new formulation - the 'texte de plaisir' and 'texte de jouissance' respectively in Le plaisir du texte, passim.
29. Barthes, degré zéro, p. 49.
30. This applies particularly to Irrungen Wirrungen, Die Poggenpuhle and Frau Jenny Treibel. In the opening of Effi Briest the stress on history and the past serves a similar function.
31. Culler, Structuralist Poetics, p. 190.
32. See, for example, the non-semiotic, structural approach in Style in Language, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok, Cambridge, Mass., 1960, especially, pp. 69 - 81, 82 - 93, 221 - 235.
33. See, for example: František Daneš 'Zur linguistischen Analyse der Textstruktur', Folia linguistica, Vol. 4, 1970, pp. 72 - 78; Elizabeth Güllich, et al. linguistische textanalyse, Hamburg, 1974; Jens Ihwe (ed.) Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik, (2 vols.), Frankfurt am Main, 1972, 1973; Jens Ihwe, On the validation of text grammars in the "study of literature", Hamburg, 1974; Janós S. Petöfi, 'Text grammars, text theory and the theory of literature', Poetics, No. 7, 1973, pp. 36 - 76; Siegfried J. Schmidt, Elemente einer Textpoetik, München, 1974; Siegfried J. Schmidt, text. bedeutung. ästhetik, München, 1970; Wolf-Dieter Stempel, Beiträge zur Textlinguistik, München, 1971; Götz Wienold, Formulierungstheorie. Poetik, Strukturelle Literaturgeschichte, Frankfurt am Main, 1971; Götz Wienold, Semiotik der Literatur, Frankfurt am Main, 1972.

34. See John Lyons, Chomsky, London, 1970, p. 24.
35. Ihwe, On validation, p. 7.
36. T.A. van Dijk, Jens Ihwe, J.S. Petöfi, Hannes Rieser 'Prologemena zu einer Theorie des "Narrativen"', in Ihwe, Literaturwissenschaft, pp. 51 - 77, p. 51.
37. This occurs, for example, in the 'grammar' of the Thurber text in GÜlich's linguistische textanalyse which fails to mention, let alone account for, the levels of humour or irony in the fable.
38. Ihwe, Literaturwissenschaft, p. 76, see also p. 61 and Wienold, Semiotik, p. 204.
39. Heinrich Vormweg notes this also when he states that in the conventions of the nineteenth century realist novel '... nicht auf Sprache war beim Romanschreiben zu reflektieren, man war an dem interessiert, was die Sprache zu transportieren hatte', Briefwechsel über Literatur, Neuwied und Berlin, 1969, p. 49 (written with Helmut Heißenbüttel).
40. cf. Culler, pp. 131 - 160.
41. Jonathan Culler, 'Making Sense', Twentieth Century Studies, No. 12, December 1974, pp. 27 - 36, p. 29, my italics.
42. Barthes's differentiation between 'lisible' and 'scriptible' remains rather inexplicit. For example, he declares that a Balzac text cannot be entirely re-written (S/Z, p. 211). But his examination of the story was conducted in terms of Sarrasine belonging to the 'lisible', non-challenging and traditional mode. However, later Sarrasine can no longer be classified wholly as 'lisible': 'le texte classique est pensif: plein de sens ... il semble toujours garder en réserve un dernier sens, qu'il n'exprime pas, mais dont il tient la place libre et signifiante ...'. Thus at the base of Barthes's rejection of the realist texts as merely 'lisible' there is an admission that this viewpoint does not contain the whole explanation, even a 'lisible' text cannot be 'read' completely.

43. Philip Thody, 'Are Literature's myths really so empty?', Times Higher Education Supplement, 18 July 1975, p. 13.
44. Bruce Morrissette, Les Romans de Robbe-Grillet. Paris, 1963.
45. See Robey, Structuralism, p. 24

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. Ror Wolf, Fortsetzung des Berichts, Frankfurt am Main, 1964. All page references which will occur in the text are to the 'edition Suhrkamp' edition, Frankfurt am Main, 1970.
2. Günter Blöcker, 'Dämonisierter Plüsch', Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 20 March, 1965.
3. Marianne Kesting, 'Die Welt eine Wohnküche', Die Zeit, 5 March, 1965.
4. Rainer Scheunemann, 'Erzählen im Kreise', Frankfurter Hefte, November, 1965, reprinted in Über Ror Wolf, ed. Lothar Baier, Frankfurt am Main, 1962, pp. 28 - 34, p. 34.
5. Ror Wolf, Pilzer und Felzer. Eine Abenteuersonne, Frankfurt am Main, 1967.
6. Chris Bezzel, 'Warenform und Metafiktion' in Über Ror Wolf, pp. 101 - 124. Page references will appear in the text.
7. The question of assumption should be mentioned at this stage. It is impossible for any reader or critic to establish precisely what assumptions whether social, cultural or linguistic are at work in the writing or reading of a text. Language itself, for example, teems with unarticulated assumption, indeed any verbal communication must be based on shared assumptions about words. As the earlier reference to Fontane showed some obvious areas of cultural assumption can be indicated, but no criticism can hope to isolate every assumption contained in a text.  
The same applies to a text which tries to reject assumption. Certain alterations of clearly established convention in a text can be said to challenge the reader's assumptions. However, as the extent of assumption cannot be established, delineation of reaction to it must depend greatly on the weight given to such changes. Consistent alterations in syntax, for example, may show one such challenge whilst occasional unusual sentence structure may not.

When this study talks of the breakdown of assumption it will not try to delineate this completely but will try to point to areas where such a breakdown can be traced in the text beyond reasonable doubt and will attempt to ascertain as far as possible the effect of such practices on the reading of the text and therefore the production of meaning from it.

Two ways in which assumption may be called into question suggest themselves at the outset. On the one hand the fracturing of grammatical assumption (as we shall see in concrete poetry) is based on language as a tissue of historically derived conventions; on the other hand stylistic and structural innovation and experiment may undermine a sense of the 'natural' in terms of content as well as visual and material structure. Barthes notes this in Le degré zéro de l'écriture when he writes, 'L'écriture est ... ce compromis entre une liberté et un souvenir' (p. 16), a compromise between the liberty to innovate and the memory of past and convention. In our study of some of the experimental writing produced in Germany during the Sixties we will be examining the degrees of liberty and memory which such writing reveals.

8. The problem of identity also attracted the reviewers' attention. Gisela Dischner's article, for example, is entitled 'Das Ende des bürgerlichen Ichs' (Über Ror Wolf, pp. 71 - 100). Thomas and Bullivant feel that 'uncertainty of identity' is 'a paramount motif' in Wolf's work (Literature in Upheaval, p. 14). While Fortsetzung des Berichts does not present either a 'bürgerliches Ich' or 'certainty' of identity, I feel that to see the text in terms of 'uncertainty' of identity gives it a slightly wrong emphasis because this tends to imply that 'certainty' of identity can be seen as goal or at least as desirable. Fortsetzung des Berichts, however, does not raise explicitly or implicitly the question of identity, its certainty or uncertainty. The changes in appearance noted in Literature in Upheaval (p. 15) seem to attest to lack of awareness of identity as an idea or possibility rather than to uncertainty about a concept of identity. The narrative consciousness is a shifting and disjointed perceptive focus which revels in its plurality rather than revealing a sense of uncertainty of identity.
  
9. Peter Laregh, 'Fortsetzung des Berichts', Die Bücherkommentare, 4 Quartal, 1964.

10. Gisela Elsner, 'Was man sich einverleibt', Der Spiegel, 18 November 1964.  
Marlis Gerhardt in Schwäbisch - Donau Zeitung refers to the text having a 'geradezu barocker Sprachbesessenheit', (20 November 1964).

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. Jürgen Becker, Felder, Frankfurt am Main, 1964. All page references will appear in brackets in the text. Cf. reviews detailed in the bibliography and in Über Ror Wolf and Über Jürgen Becker.
2. Ror Wolf, Pilzer und Pelzer. Eine Abenteuerserie; and Danke schön. Nichts zu danken, Frankfurt am Main, 1969. Jürgen Becker, Ränder, Frankfurt am Main, 1968; Umgebungen, Frankfurt am Main, 1970.
3. Ror Wolf, Punkt ist Punkt. Fußball-Spiele, Frankfurt am Main, 1971; Punkt ist Punkt. Alte und neue Fußball-spiele, Frankfurt am Main, 1973. Jürgen Becker, Schnee. Gedichte, Berlin, 1971; Eine Zeit ohne Wörter, Frankfurt, am Main, 1971; Das Ende der Landschaftsmalerei. Gedichte, Frankfurt am Main, 1974.
4. However, they have both written plays for radio, cf. Jürgen Becker, Bilder. Häuser. Hausfreunde. Drei Hör-spiele, Frankfurt am Main, 1969 and Ror Wolf, Auf der Suche nach Doktor Q. Hörspiel-Trilogie, Frankfurt am Main, 1976.
5. Enzensberger, Vorzeichen, p. 16.
6. S/Z, p. 22.
7. See also sections 13, 26, 28, 36, 45, 55 - 57, 63, 70 - 71, 75, 84, 88, 95, 97.
8. Sections which come under this heading include, 10 - 12, 26, 38, 49, 51, 62, 71, 77, 81, 83, 92, 98.
9. For similar references to the head as the centre of the perceptive process see p. 26 ('umsonst sonst nichts in meinem Kopf'), p. 33 ('strömt immer durch meinen dunklen Kopf'), p. 131 ('die Stimmen, die durcheinanderreden in seinen Köpfen').

10. The square brackets are mine passim.
11. Walter Hinck, 'Die "Offene Schreibweise" Jürgen Beckers' in Über Jürgen Becker, pp. 119 - 138, p. 121 (first published in Basis, Jahrbuch für deutsche Gegenwartsliteratur, Vol. 1, 1970, pp. 186 - 203).
12. Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 80.
13. For discussion of the question of the 'authenticity' of the narrative consciousness in Becker and other contemporary writing cf. Volker Hage 'Über das Entstehen der Bücher beim Schreiben oder: Der authentische Ich-Erzähler', Akzente, Vol. 21, 1974, pp. 453 - 468, pp. 454 - 464.
14. Cf. especially 'Gegen die Erhaltung des literarischen status quo', Über Jürgen Becker, pp. 13 - 19 and Koch, Selbstanzeige, pp. 77 - 88.
15. Koch, Selbstanzeige, p. 78.
16. Cf. the examination of Barthes and Heath in Chapter 2.
17. Section 5 appears unconnected and fragmented but consists of jumbled elements of a simple description of barrels being rolled into a cellar viewed from a window. The text contains narrative description, details of surroundings, the pigeon and church bells, characters, the landlord, workman and driver and an overall narrative situation, the 'ich' watching the scene in the street and reporting it. The impression of fragmentation created can be easily reduced into its simple components.  
The first strand describes Wirt Martin and what is perceived outside: '... es steht ... der Bierwagen unten ... Wirt Martin steht da ... Wirt Martin zählt mit ... Wirt Martin äugelt ... zum Himmel ... und nickt'; 'recht kühl ... ist der Morgen'. Then comes the barrels: 'das nächste Faß ... fällt auf den Sack ... auf der Straße', the driver's actions: 'der Fahrer rollt ... das Faß ... fort zur Falltür ... der Fahrer seilt ... das Faß an ... und läßt es durch die Falltür ... hinunter in den Keller ... der Fahre schlürft zurück', and the worker waiting in the cellar: 'der Kumpel wartet ... im Bierkeller unten ... der Kumpel pfeift'. The pigeon provides another strand:



'im Gulli ... pickt eine Taube ... ein Korn auf ... die Taube klappert auf ...', as does the church 'Sankt Kunibert läutet ... pünktlich ... zur Andacht'. Finally, there is the most general strand, direct reference to perception and the act of perceiving as opposed to the description of what is and has been perceived: 'hinab ... das Fenster ist auf ... ich unterbreche das Kauen in der Küche ... und kucke raus ... ich kucke zu ... fern bläst ein Kapitän ... ich rieche ... den Mief vom Müll'. 'Hinab' can be said to belong here as it gives the overall direction of the visual perception of the 'I'.

18. For general discussion of the impulse towards fictional closure see Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending, London, Oxford, New York, 1967 and for more specific discussion of closure in poetry see Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Poetic Closure. A study of how poems end, Chicago, London, 1968.
19. Thomas Zenke, 'Vom Prozeß der Erfahrung. Zu Jürgen Beckers Prosa', in Über Jürgen Becker, pp. 140 - 154, p. 154.
20. Heinrich B811, 'Jürgen Becker, "Felder"', Neue Rundschau, Vol. 76, 1965, pp. 142 - 144, in Über Jürgen Becker, pp. 58 - 60, p. 59.
21. Roland H. Wiegenstein, 'Die Sprache soll es schaffen', Frankfurter Hefte, Vol. 19, 1964, pp. 441 - 444, p. 444; reprinted in Über Jürgen Becker, pp. 47 - 52, p. 52; cf. also Peter Härtling's assessment 'Der Versuch gelang ihm. Er bewegt wie alle gute Literatur' in 'Die Stimme und die Felder' Der Monat, No. 187, April 1964, pp. 76 - 78, p. 78; reprinted in Über Jürgen Becker, pp. 52 - 57, p. 57.
22. Gerd Fuchs, 'ICH in einer verwüsteten Welt. Jürgen Beckers literarische Notwehr', Die Welt der Literatur, 11 Juni 1964.
23. We have already made reference to two essays which attempt to do this, Minck's 'Die "Offene Schreibweise" Jürgen Beckers' and Zenke's 'Vom Prozeß der Erfahrung'. A third essay which also tries to treat a section of Felder specifically in this way is Hartmut Laufhütte, 'Über eine Folge von Abschnitten aus Jürgen Beckers Buch "Felder"', Jahrbuch Deutsch als Fremdsprache, Vol. 1, 1975, pp. 27 - 39.

24. Bodo Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa', p. 251.
25. Peter Demetz points this out also; in his view Becker 'concentrates on the continuous processes of his own subjective perception; his reality is constituted by his consciousness, incessantly absorbing the "outside" into whirlpools of memories, dreams and hopes' in Postwar German Literature, New York, 1970, p. 167.
26. Heinrich Vormweg, for example, refers to 'der scheinbare Naturalismus der unmittelbaren Umwelterfahrung, wie etwa Jürgen Becker ihn praktiziert', 'Die Renaissance des Barock', Frankfurter Hefte, Vol. 21, 1966, pp. 413 - 426, p. 423.
27. See, for example, Thomas Zenke's summary of the concept of 'fiction' conveyed in Becker's prose: 'Der Versuch, das gegenwärtige Geschehen im Bewußtsein des Gleichzeitigen in Sprache umzusetzen, liefert eine Fiktion', Über Jürgen Becker, p. 150.
28. Heinrich Vormweg, 'Mechanismen für Erlebtes' in Eine andere Lesart. Über neue Literatur, pp. 156 - 165, p. 156.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

1. Franz Mon, herzzero, Neuwied und Berlin, 1968. All page references will appear in brackets in the text. In addition, RH. and LH will indicate which column, right or left, the quotation comes from.
2. Franz Mon and Walter Höllerer (eds.), movens, Wiesbaden, 1960; Franz Mon (ed.) prinzip collage, Neuwied und Berlin, 1968.
3. Franz Mon, lesebuch, Neuwied, Berlin, 1967. See also Franz Mon, Artikulationen, Pfullingen, 1959.
4. Gisela Dischner, 'Konkrete Kunst und Gesellschaft', Text und Kritik, No. 25, 1970, pp. 37 - 41, p. 37.
5. Michael Butler, 'Concrete Poetry and the crisis of language' New German Studies, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1973, pp. 99 - 115, p. 111.
6. Franz Mon, 'An einer Stelle die Gleichgültigkeit durchbrechen', Akzente, Vol. 8, 1961, pp. 27 - 32; reprinted in Texte über Texte, Neuwied und Berlin, 1970, pp. 35 - 39, p. 36.
7. Mon, Texte, p. 38.
8. Franz Mon, 'Die zwei Ebenen des Gedichts' in Texte, pp. 7 - 10, p. 9.
9. Mon, prinzip collage, p. 61.
10. Mon, Texte, p. 90.
11. Mon, prinzip collage, p. 52.
12. Siegfried J. Schmidt, Ästhetische Prozesse, Köln und Berlin, 1971, p. 154.

13. Siegfried J. Schmidt, 'Konkrete Dichtung: Theorie und Konstitution', Poetica, Vol. 14, 1971, pp. 13 - 32, p. 15.
  
14. Mary Ellen Solt (ed.), Concrete Poetry, a world view. London, 1968, p. 7. See also Siegfried J. Schmidt, 'Visuelle Poesie und konkrete Dichtung', Replik, No. 4/5, 1970, pp. 33 - 44, pp. 44; H.-J. Schmitt, 'Poetische Konstellationen', Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 11 April 1969; Peter Schneider, 'Konkrete Dichtung', Sprache im technischen Zeitalter, No. 15, 1965, pp. 1197 - 1214, p. 1199; Berold van der Auwera, 'Theorie und Praxis konkreter Poesie', Text und Kritik, No. 30, 1971, pp. 33 - 41, p. 35; Mary Ellen Solt, 'Concrete Poetry', Books Abroad, Vol. 44, 1970, pp. 421 - 425, p. 422; Heinz Gappmayr, 'Was ist konkrete Poesie?', Text und Kritik, No. 25, 1970, pp. 5 - 9, p. 5.
  
15. For example, Solt, Concrete Poetry, and Emmet Williams (ed.), An Anthology of concrete poetry, New York, 1967.
  
16. Reinhard Döhl's poem appears in eugen gomringer (ed.) konkrete poesie, stuttgart, 1972, p. 38; Gomringer's 'schweigen' p. 58. For a slightly different use of the visual impact forming an image of the subject of the poem cf. claus bremer's 'lesbares in unlesbares übersetzen' konkrete poesie, p. 29.
  
17. Mon, Lesebuch, p. 27.
  
18. Mon, Lesebuch, p. 17.
  
19. Dischner, 'Konkrete Kunst', p. 38.
  
20. See also 'derf' instead of 'darf' (p. 35, LH), 'ai' for 'ei' (pp. 44, LH) and 'gezeichnet' for 'gezeichnet' (pp. 75, LH; 76, RH; 80, LH), and 'ainerlei' for 'einerlei' (p. 156, RH).
  
21. references to Bismarck occur pp. 12, LH; 15, LH; 43, RH; 134, RH; 152, LH; to the Bible and Christian tradition on pp. 87, RH, 95, RH (Joseph and Potiphar), p. 117, LH (Abraham) and pp. 35, RH, 141, RH (Jesus); to the novel and its tradition p. 95, RH (Don Quixote); pp. 27, LH, 28, RH (Effi Briest); p. 46, RH (Karl May),

p. 74, LH ('Schneewittchen'); p. 14, LH (winnetou); to German culture p. 100, RH (Mozart), p. 37, RH (Heidegger), p. 34, LH (Meyerbeer). 'Hiddler' appears on pp. 37, RH, 39 RH, 44 RH and 'hindenburch' pp. 38 LH, 39 LH, 45 RH. 'Vorneburch' occurs p. 38 LH. 'laurence nightingale' appears p. 100 RH, and 'hunsam' p. 44 RH.

22. Reference to Walt Disney and Gromyko occurs p. 32 LH; to Lollobrigida p. 90 RH; to Grandma Moses, p. 100 RH; de Gaulle, p. 156, LH.
23. However, this single bracket may simply be a misprint.
24. anonymous review, Ibbenbürener Volkszeitung, 10 June 1968.
25. anonymous review, Junge Stimme, 21 September, 1968.
26. This perhaps parallels the references to memory in both Fortsetzung des Berichts and Felder.
27. Rosmarie Waldrop, untitled review of herzzero, Books Abroad, Vol. 43, 1969.
28. herzzero as a title may also be making some reference to Roland Barthes's Le degré zéro de l'écriture, but this is nowhere made specific.
29. Jonathan Culler, 'Making sense', Twentieth Century Studies, No. 12, December 1974, pp. 27 - 36, p. 33.
30. Armin Halstenberg, 'Texte zum Stereo-Lesen', Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 24 March, 1970.  
It is interesting to note that Halstenberg uses about herzzero the same image of reading as consumption which Bezzel coined about Pilzer und Pelzer.
31. Karl Krolow, untitled review, Die Bücherkommentare, 15 June 1968.
32. Ludwig Harig, 'Wörter zum Festhalten' Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 27 July 1968.

33. anonymous review, Times Literary Supplement, 11 July 1968.
34. Heinz Appenzeller, 'Neue Mittel und Möglichkeiten akustischen Erlebens', Schweizer Rundschau, Vol. 70, 1971, pp. 276 - 281, p. 278.
35. Dischner, 'Konkrete Kunst', p. 38
36. See Solt, pp. 107, 113, 129, 134, 216 and Gomringer, p. 63; Solt, pp. 132, 133; Gomringer, pp. 49 - 50, cf. also Mon, Texte, pp. 138 - 139.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

1. Helmut Heißenbüttel Textbuch 1, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau, 1960; Textbuch 2, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau, 1961; Textbuch 3, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau, 1962; Textbuch 4, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau, 1964; Textbuch 5, Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau, 1965; Textbuch 6, Neuwied und Berlin, 1967. All page references to these editions will be given in the text with a Roman numeral denoting which textbook it appears in. Most of the textbooks were republished under one paperback cover: Helmut Heißenbüttel, Das Textbuch, Neuwied und Berlin, 1970.
2. Texts by Heißenbüttel appear in Gomringer, konkrete poesie, pp. 65 - 74, for example.
3. Helmut Heißenbüttel, Kombinationen, Gedichte 1951 - 1954, Eblingen, 1954; Topographien, Gedichte 1954 - 1955, Eblingen, 1956.
4. 'Pamphlete', 'Topographien' and 'einfache grammatische Meditationen' reappear in Textbuch 1.
5. Helmut Heißenbüttel, Ohne weiteres bekannt, Kurzporträts, Stierstadt, 1958. 'Der Wassermaler' and 'Psychologischer Vorgang' reappear in Textbuch 2.
6. Helmut Heißenbüttel, texte ohne komma, Frauenfeld, 1960.
7. Rosmarie Waldrop, 'Helmut Heißenbüttel, poet of contexts', Germanic Review, Vol. 44, 1969, pp. 132 - 142, p. 132.
8. Waldrop, 'Helmut Heißenbüttel', p. 134, p. 132.
9. Helmut Heißenbüttel, Projekt Nr. 1, D'Alemberts Ende, Neuwied und Berlin, 1970; das Durchhauen des Kohlhaupts, Dreizehn Lehrgedichte, Projekt Nr. 2, Darmstadt und Neuwied, 1974.

10. The cover of Das Textbuch states 'Wenn nun der Gesamtkomplex der 6 Textbücher unter dem Titel "Das Textbuch" zusammengefaßt wird, geschieht das nicht als Reproduktion der chronologisch publizierten Einzelheft, sondern im Versuch der methodischen Gruppierung. Eine Gruppe ist unter dem Stichwort der Reduktion - des Textablaufs, der Syntax, der semantischen Bezüge zum Beispiel - zu fassen, die andere unter Stichworten wie Kombinatorik, Montage, Collage'.
11. See E.M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel, Harmondsworth, 1968, p. 13. The definition was coined by the French critic Abel Chevalley in Le Roman anglais de notre temps, Paris, 1921.
12. See reviews detailed in the bibliography.
13. In Das Textbuch the texts are divided differently, but also across five pages.
14. For example, Jörn Stückrath, 'Zur Poetik der Zitatmontage. Helmut Heißenbüttels Text "Deutschland 1944"' Replik, No. 4/5, 1970, pp. 16 - 32.
15. For example, Carl Weissner (ed.) Cut-up. Der Sezierte Bildschirm der Worte. Darmstadt, 1969. See also Herta Wescher Die Collage. Geschichte eines künstlerischen Ausdrucksmittels. Köln, 1968, a survey with examples, illustrated.
16. Franz Non discusses 'Deutschland 44' in terms of its breaking through the veils and illusion of language and exposing its reader to the harshness of reality (cf. Prinzip Collage, p. 52).



NOTES TO CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Helmut Heißenbüttel, Über Literatur, pp. 116 - 195, p. 146.
2. Helmut Heißenbüttel, 'Reduzierte Sprache. Über einen Text von Gertrude Stein', in Über Literatur, pp. 9 - 19, p. 9.
3. Heißenbüttel, Über Literatur, p. 18.
4. Helmut Heißenbüttel, Heinrich Vormweg, Briefwechsel über Literatur, Neuwied und Berlin, 1969, p. 27.
5. Heißenbüttel, Über Literatur, pp. 142 - 146, 146 - 156.
6. Heinrich Vormweg, 'Die Renaissance des Barock', Frankfurter Hefte, Vol. 12, 1966, pp. 413 - 426, p. 418.
7. Heißenbüttel, Vormweg, Briefwechsel über Literatur, p.29.
8. Heißenbüttel, Vormweg, Briefwechsel über Literatur, p.28.
9. Heißenbüttel, Vormweg, Briefwechsel über Literatur, pp. 28 - 29.
10. Vormweg, 'Barock' p. 418.
11. H.B. Garland, A Concise Survey of German Literature, 2nd edition, London, 1976, p. 129.
12. Cf. Peter Spycher, 'Texts', a new prose form in contemporary German literature', Books Abroad, Vol. 44, 1970, pp. 415 - 419.
13. See, for example, Walter Urbanek (ed.) Kaleidoskop. Kurzformen moderner Prosa, Bamberg, 1960; spiegelungen. moderne deutsche kurzprosa, Bamberg, 1966. For discussions of the history and development of the short

story see Klaus Doderer, Die Kurzgeschichte in Deutschland, Darmstadt, 1969; 'Die Kurzgeschichte als literarische Form', Wirkendes Wort, Vol. 8, 1957-8, pp. 90-100; Ruth J. Kilchenmann, Die Kurzgeschichte, Formen und Entwicklung, Stuttgart, 1967; Ruth Lorbe, 'Die deutsche Kurzgeschichte der Jahrhundertmitte', Der Deutschunterricht, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1957, pp. 36 - 54; Norman Friedman, 'What makes a short story short?', Modern Fiction Studies, Vol. 4, 1958, pp. 103 - 117; Walter Höllerer, 'Die kurze Form der Prosa', Akzente, Vol. 9, 1962, pp. 226 - 245. Kilchenmann contains an extensive bibliography.

14. Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa', p. 250.
15. Ror Wolf, 'Meine Voraussetzungen' in Über Ror Wolf, pp. 7 - 14, p. 9.
16. Mon, Texte, p. 36.
17. Heimann, 'Experimentelle Prosa', p. 253.
18. Cf. Bezzel's discussion of Pilzer und Pelzer where he refers to 'ein offenes System' (Über Ror Wolf, p. 106)!
19. Jonathan Culler, 'Making sense', Twentieth Century Studies, No. 12, December 1974, pp. 27 - 36, p. 30.
20. Roland Barthes Le Plaisir du Texte, p. 25.
21. Such insights have not been restricted to the structuralists, however; Mr. C.H. Rickwood in 'A Note on Fiction' in 1926 prefigures this approach: 'The form of the novel only exists as a balance of response of the reader. Hence schematic plot is a construction of the reader's that corresponds to an aspect of the response and stands in merely diagrammatic relation to the source. Only as precipitates from memory are plot or character tangible; yet only in solution have either any emotive valency'. (in The Calendar of Modern Letters, October, 1926).
22. Barthes, Plaisir, p. 23.

23. Jonathan Culler, Flaubert, The Uses of Uncertainty, London, 1974, p. 18.
24. See details in bibliography.
25. Matthaei, Grenzverschiebung, p. 13.
26. Thomas, Bullivant, Literature in Upheaval, p. vii.
27. Vormweg, 'Keine Stunde Null', in Durzack, Deutsche Literatur der Gegenwart, p. 29.
28. For example: 'Almost immediately [after the end of the war] German periodicals rediscovered Joyce, and large printings of his works were made available to the average German reader for the first time. ... It soon became evident that Joyce was to be a meaningful figure for postwar German literature' in Breon Mitchell, James Joyce and the German novel 1922 - 1933, Athens, Ohio, 1976, p. 178.
29. Cf. Literature in Upheaval, p. viii; Demetz, Postwar German Literature, p. 57.
30. Literature in Upheaval, p. 67
31. Karl Markus Michel, 'Ein Kranz für die Literatur', Kursbuch 15, pp. 169 - 186; Hans Magnus Enzensberger, 'Gemeinplätze, die Neueste Literatur betreffend', Kursbuch 15, pp. 187 - 197.
32. Literature in Upheaval, p. 69. Chapter 3 of this work forms a more detailed discussion of the questions raised by the end of literature debate (pp. 67 - 90).
33. Michel, 'Kranz', p. 174.
34. Enzensberger, 'Gemeinplätze', p. 190, p. 193.
35. Michel, 'Kranz', pp. 174, 175 - 6.

36. Michel, 'Kranz', p. 182.
37. Michel, 'Kranz', p. 182.
38. Enzensberger, 'Gemeinplätze', p. 197.
39. pp. 73 - 74.
40. Chris Bezzel, 'dichtung und revolution', Text und Kritik, No. 25, 1970, pp. 35 - 36.
41. For further examination of the political implications of Heißenbüttel's views on and use of language in the context of concrete poetry see Robert A. Burns, Commitment, Language and Reality: an introduction to the work of Helmut Heißenbüttel, University of Warwick Occasional Papers in German Studies, No. 7, Coventry, 1975.
42. For an examination of this aspect of Mon, see Christopher Middleton, 'On translating a text by Franz Mon', Delos, No. 1, 1968, pp. 67 - 69.
43. Literature in Upheaval, p. 184.
44. For example by May 1970 the Fischer paperback edition of Günter Grass Die Blechtrommel had printed 703,000 copies.
45. René Wellek, 'Der Angriff auf die Literatur', Arcadia, Vol. 10, 1975, pp. 1 - 15, p. 12.

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1. Works by and criticism on the individual writers.
2. Works cited.
3. Selected works consulted but not cited.

The following abbreviations are used throughout:

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung                      FAZ

Sprache im technischen Zeitalter                      STZ

Times Literary Supplement                      TLS

Frankfurt refers throughout to Frankfurt am Main.

1. The bibliographies of the writers will divide as follows:

- I books by the author, in chronological order
- II critical works by the author
- III short texts and critical essays
- IV reviews of individual works
- V critical essays and books
- VI bibliographies

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