

FASHION RESTRUCTURES THE LITERARY FIELD

Bücher=menge.

Deß Bücherschreibens ist so viel/ man schreibet sie mit hauffen;
Niemand wird Bücher schreiben mehr/ so niemand wird sie kauffen.

Crowd of Books

Of writing books there is so much, they are written by the heap;
No one would write more books, if no one would buy them.

—FRIEDRICH VON LOGAU, *Three Thousand German Epigrams* (Breslau, 1654)

In 1654, poet Friedrich von Logau (1605–1655) briefly commented on an age-old problem: the willy-nilly proliferation of books. Unlike Logau, others had already spilled quantities of ink on such ubiquity. Gutenberg’s invention had, they groused, made a bad problem worse. Every fool believed his scribblings to merit wider circulation, Erasmus—and many subsequently—had noted.¹ The cleverness of Logau’s quick formulation lies in its divergence from the biblical verse “Of making books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh” (Ecclesiastes 12:12). Many, Logau hints, bemoan the unfettered spread of letters—every Tom,

1. Calls abound in the vernaculars that the “presses be oppressed” across early modern literature. In Erasmus’s *Encomium moriae*, for example, Folly opines: “But how much happier is this my writer’s dotage who never studies for anything but puts in writing whatever he pleases or what comes first in his head, though it be but his dreams; and all this with small waste of paper, as well knowing that the vainer those trifles are, the higher esteem they will have with the greater number, that is to say all the fools and unlearned. And what matter is it to slight those few learned if yet they ever read them? Or of what authority will the censure of so few wise men be against so great a cloud of gainsayers?” (56). Burton writes in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*: “’Tis most true, tenet insanabile multos scribendi cacoethes, and ‘there is no end of writing of books’, as the wise man found of old, in this scribbling age especially, wherein the ‘number of books is without number’ (as a worthy man saith), ‘presses be oppressed’” (qtd. in Köppenfels 209). Ann Blair cites additional examples in her investigations of strategies cultivated by early modern scholars to manage information.

Dick, and Harry's (or worse, Jane's) wish to see their lines gathered in a book. Yet those who grumble have only themselves to blame, for these very complainers belong to the book-buying public, and "No one would write more books, if no one would buy them."

Logau dashed off the epigram "Crowd of Books"—one of his *Deutscher Sinn-Getichte drey-tausend* (Three Thousand German Epigrams) (Breslau, 1654)—in response to profound changes in the European book world. Like other *literati* in the seventeenth century, Logau bore witness to upheavals in the field of power in which early modern letters were embedded. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Logau reacted to these changes with good humor, tongue firmly in cheek. Well into the seventeenth century, this world remained small, its inhabitants highly educated and overwhelmingly male. Criteria for membership in this elite were rigorously upheld and consisted, with precious few exceptions, of university training and a thorough acquaintance with past masters, from Homer and Aristotle to Ronsard and Scaliger. The most esteemed among them became elected members of academic societies. But, in spite of the best efforts of *literati* to police their field's borders, by century's end their world had been overrun.

Logau's "Crowd of Books" provided the perfect synecdoche for the influx of new participants into the world of letters. By the seventeenth century, the book had become the *sine qua non* of academic life and letters. It was a medium, however, over which academics were rapidly losing control. While bemoaning writing's proliferation on the pages of far too many books, Logau's quip acknowledged that the book also belonged to a world whose values ran counter to timeless ideals of truth and beauty. No longer exclusively the domain of the learned, the book by the middle of the seventeenth century had become part and parcel of the world of commerce. Its value could thus be determined like any other commodity; its price was set by the contingent and mercurial preferences of the marketplace.

This marketplace, as Logau's anonymous "crowd" and nameless "heap" indicate, teemed with participants: men and even some women, whose levels of literacy often fell short of the erudition possessed by men such as Logau. Nowhere was this marketplace more fractious—the collision of erudition and commerce more jarring—than in the case of poetry. Everyone, the *literati* alleged, attempted his or her hand at verse. Some even had the audacity to see their efforts into print. In Walter Benjamin's rich terms, these early modern intellectuals considered poetry's aura tarnished, if not already lost, by its ceaseless proliferation and reproduction. Beyond the small world of the erudite elite, poetry was being transformed into a workaday item of no certain value, a commodity available to anyone of sufficient means. Intellectuals questioned others' abilities to cull the wheat from the chaff, fine verse from maculature. The boundaries that had tightly circumscribed the academic arena of poetry's production and distribution had grown distressingly porous. Members of poetry's traditional elite were eager to shore up the lines of demarcation—and their own status—in a landscape whose terrain shifted under their feet.

This transformation of the early modern literary field of power is particularly legible in the pages of the poetic handbooks written and published over the course of the century. As a genre in the vernacular, “rule poetics” (*Regelpoetik*) first flourished and then rapidly multiplied in German after the unprecedented, surprise success of Martin Opitz’s *Buch der Deutschen Poeterey* (1624).² Alight with patriotic fervor, Opitz (1597–1639) had urged fellow Germans to cultivate their native tongue, refining its lyric capacity. German, Opitz argued, countering strong opinions to the contrary, was no less a poetic language than the French for which Ronsard had labored so tirelessly in the previous century to promote as a language equal to Petrarch’s Italian or even Latin. Like the French, Germans must learn to imitate classical poetic models, importing them into the vernacular.

But the vernacularization of poetry preached by Opitzian acolytes brought mixed blessings. When it was mixed with the black arts of the printer, vernacular poetry easily escaped the rarified circles of the highly literate and slid into the fractious pell-mell of the marketplace. Handbooks, of which Opitz’s remains by far the best-known German example, had to navigate a perilous course. Seeking to elevate the status of vernacular poetry, these vade mecums claimed that it was a divine gift, equal in stature to Latinate, Greek, or even Hebrew poetry.³ At the same time, these guides laid bare the rules for its creation, rendering its composition increasingly transparent and accessible. Such handbooks aimed to tutor a wide range of would-be poets, some more divinely inspired than others. Examples of these handbooks encompassed full-blown prosodies and sophisticated meditations on the nature of verse versus prose; others included comparative histories of poetry in the various vernaculars; some introduced poetic forms and the niceties of scansion; still others contented themselves with providing handy rhyming dictionaries. As a genre, the *Regelpoetik* captures the inherent paradoxes of the seventeenth-century literary field: it promoted vernacular poetry while ridiculing vernacular poets; it took inspiration from models in other vernaculars while resenting foreign superiority.

The proliferation of this new, internally conflicted genre also suggests a surge in demand for poetry. Verse—and versifiers—had become fashionable. It was the insurgence of fashion into the literary field, this chapter explains, that first transformed poetry from a learned pursuit to one enjoyed by men and women beyond the ivory tower and the academic societies. And the alchemy worked by fashion on poetry caused additional metamorphoses. As poetry won new writers and readers, poetic forms too—including some in prose—proliferated. Fashion, at first enjoyed by a small elite, soon bred popularity. With popularity came, of course, contempt.

2. As Nicola Kaminski notes, “How the birth of [Opitz’s] *Deutschen Poeterey* from the spirit of such a modest text could have happened in 1624, written by a still largely unknown author not yet twenty-seven-years-old, remains today one of the unfathomable facts in literary history” (16).

3. In the complex world of seventeenth-century language politics and the hierarchy of the vernaculars, German-language theorists were eager to increase their vernacular’s stature. To do so, some, including Enoch Hanmann (1621–1680), argued that German derived from Hebrew.

From Opitz in Silesia to Thomas Browne (1605–1682) in Leiden and Oxford, scholars across Europe decried the popularization of poetry. In his *Religio medici*, for example, Browne wished “to condemn to the fire those swarms and millions of *Rhapsodies*, begotten only to distract and abuse the weaker judgements of Scholars, and to maintaine the Trade and Mystery of Typographers” (qtd. in Köppenfels 209). Poetry and letters, these men recognized, had become commodified. Writers active across Europe in the decades around 1700 were only too well aware that they brought goods to market. In a typically unconcerned remark, philosopher Christian Thomasius (1655–1728) congratulated himself that “die Buchführer kommen und überbiethen immer einer den anderen/ und geben mir noch die besten Worte dazu/ daß ich ihnen für andern mein Werckgen in Verlag geben wolle” (qtd. in Wittman 103). (Publishers approach me and outbid one another, saying the nicest things if I will only reward them with my next little work.) Less well-known and financially less-successful writers also approached the book market as a place to earn quick money, whether honoraria paid by publishers in exchange for speedy translations or compilations, or commissions to celebrate memorable occasions. Grub Street proliferated in publishing centers across Europe, from London to Leipzig.

While university students in particular won infamy for their willingness to oblige any segment of market demand, more established academics were similarly loath to miss out on money to be made, a fact captured in Johann Burckhard Mencke’s (1674–1732) *De charlataneria eruditorum* (1715), translated into German as *Die Märcktschreyerey der Gelehrten* (Intellectuals Hawking Their Wares at Market).⁴ Selimantes (Christoph Gottlieb Wend), most famous today as Telemann’s librettist, chose in 1729 to call his latest lyric collection simply *Poetische Waaren* (Poetical Wares). While literary history long relegated the lustre of lucre to its margins, we increasingly insist on considering money’s role in the creation of the institutions necessary for the invention of modern literature. Financial concerns stood squarely in the middle of the century’s writerly activities—despite most men’s unwillingness to display the candor of Thomasius.⁵

Guesses about numbers of seventeenth-century readers differ radically.⁶ Alberto Martino influentially estimated the reading public for what is today called

4. Mencke, also editor of the famed *Acta eruditorum*, fittingly enjoyed market success with the *Charlataneria*. It appeared quickly in Latin editions printed in Leipzig and Amsterdam as well as in rapid German (1716) and French (1721) translations. The translated German edition printed in Leipzig makes repeated mention of an earlier Halle edition of the same year and also in German that I have been unable to locate.

5. For all his excoriations of Grub Street, Alexander Pope, as Kernan shows, masterfully invented new ways to earn handsomely from his writerly activities. The significance of occasional poetry (*Kasualpoesie* or *Gelegenheitsgedichte*) in the German context is no longer underestimated (Stockinger). Given the sheer number of sheets men such as poet Simon Dach, for example, produced for specific occasions, we can no longer regard such production as a product of “spare time” (*Nebenstunden*) (see Wittmann, *Geschichte* 101).

6. The best current survey of the literature about reading publics is Schön, “Lesestoffe.”

German baroque literature to be at century's end a mere five thousand people. Martin Welke, one of the few experts on the early modern newspaper, has argued for a considerably larger number of German readers who skimmed the monthly, weekly, or daily news, arriving at a figure of 250,000 buyers for the fifty to sixty German newspapers that appeared regularly by the last third of the century.⁷ Each purchaser presumably passed his or her paper on to ten or more other readers—all in all a far higher figure than we are accustomed to estimate for the German-language market.⁸ Disputing the view that the seventeenth century's violent tumult curbed the growth of the book market, Johannes Weber has amplified Welke's call to reconsider the size of the German reading public, insisting that we understand the long war not only as a hindrance to publishing but also as a "mentor" to the print industry, helping news sheets to "bloom in every corner and quickly mature." The war created demand for news, or, as Weber states, "Europe became small at this time, or better: it drew dangerously close together" ("Deutsche Presse" 144).

The creation of this market for print novelties—fashionable poetic forms in verse and prose, newspapers and journals—ended the exclusive reign of the *literati* over the book in the decades around 1700. Subsequently, the book would no longer be a curiosity intended only for an elite few. Rendered fashionable commodities, poetry and the world of the book grew in demand. Baptized a thing of fashion, the book's popularization gained momentum over the eighteenth century with the spread of new forms, the novel chief among them. As the book slipped its academic confines, the market for letters finally segmented into high and low with the eventual creation of the thoroughly modern, Romantic category of literature.

This chapter traces the polemics about poetry and fashion that raged throughout the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century and profoundly shaped the literary field. It foregrounds one novel, fashionable genre: the internally conflicted vernacular poetic handbook. The vitriol on display there is unmistakable. From our vantage point, removed from the battlefield by more than three centuries, the jabs and pokes are often quite funny. Those directly stung by the barbs must have found it somewhat harder to laugh. This chapter surveys only some of the poisoned

7. The first news daily began in 1605 in Strasbourg. Selected parts of the 2005 exhibition curated by Welke at the Gutenberg Museum commemorating the four-hundredth anniversary of the newspaper, including pictures of Johann Carolus's petition to Strasbourg's council to grant him a monopoly for his printed paper, remain available online: <http://www.mainz.de/WGAPublisher/online/html/de/fault/mkuz-6bthj9.de.html> (9 March 2010).

8. Conventionally, the creation of a more sizable German reading public, and subsequently a German public sphere, is thought to have lagged behind France and England, in large part a result of the devastation wrought by the Thirty Years' War. See, for example, Berghahn.

In a series of articles taking on Engelsing's influential model of a reading revolution whereby masses of readers abandoned traditional practices of intensive reading for extensive at the end of the eighteenth century, Welke spiritedly argues that the early and continuous growth of printed news media throughout the seventeenth century belies any argument for a revolutionary change in the early modern reading public. Engelsing's model has most famously been critiqued by Reinhard Wittmann, who, like Welke, disputes any abrupt change in reading habits, arguing for a "reading evolution." See also Blair (13).

darts from the 1620s to the beginning of the next century, roughly from Opitz to Magnus Daniel Omeis (1646–1708), the last notable *Präsident* (President) of Nuremberg's influential poetic society, the Pegnesischer Blumenorden (Order of Flowers on the Pegnitz). But before discussing these men and the parvenus they decry, we first turn briefly to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the literary field to adapt it for the early modern world of letters. An excursus into the birth of fashion, commodity culture, and the world of goods then provides a bridge to the exploration of seventeenth-century poetic handbooks, fashion's arrival in the world of letters, and educated Germans' allegations that not all who imitated were poets.

The World of Letters and the Literary Field

In the afterglow of successive category crises, literature stands revealed as a modern invention. Today, its historical moment may or may not have passed. But in the seventeenth century, literature did not exist. Alvin Kernan has nicely explained its absence in his book on Samuel Johnson and eighteenth-century English print culture:

'Literature' is the correct historical term for the print-based romantic literary system centering on the individual creative self, that extended from the late eighteenth century to the present, passing through a succession of modes such as high romanticism, symbolism, modernism, and now, we are frequently told, a last 'deconstructive' phase that is said to mark the death of literature, though not, presumably, the end of some kind of social system of letters. (7)

Kernan captures here the historical specificity of literature, although we must be vigilant to avoid universalizing English history.⁹ To the conditions he lists as necessary for literature's invention at the dawn of the nineteenth century, we might add others: the journals, reference works, academic disciplines, various types of libraries, as well as other agents such as censorship and, later, copyright, all of which have come, in historical processes reaching across decades and centuries, to enshrine literature as a particular cultural institution.¹⁰

9. Literature as Kernan defines it arguably came into existence in France earlier than in England, and in Spain perhaps earlier still. German "literature" is typically viewed as developing still later than it did in England, despite the thorny issue that German Romanticism preceded English Romanticism. A transnational focus on translation, publishing, and reading, I argue, belies the purported "belatedness" of German literary culture, or for that matter, English.

10. Against this view of literature's invention at the turn of the eighteenth century described by Kernan and others, Reiss has interestingly argued that literature was already invented across European vernaculars some two centuries earlier. He explains: "What we have called 'literature' is part of an environment in which we are able so to name it. . . . That environment developed out of a moment of fairly abrupt discursive transformation occurring in Western Europe during some of the years traditionally known as the Renaissance, between roughly the mid-sixteenth century and the early seventeenth. The

To speak of literature of the German baroque, of *l'âge classique*, or of the Restoration is thus, it is now widely agreed, anachronistic. Retroactively applying the literary label to texts generated before literature also seriously misleads. Assigning early modern texts to literature misrepresents the specific textual economy in which they were embedded. They (and their constitutive intellectual, social, and financial capital) circulated over rather different routes than the newer paths worn by literature. Should we read Logau's epigram, for example, in an anthology of German baroque literature, we would fail to understand the dynamic field of forces in which it circulated. Exploring the establishment of another modern invention, art, Larry Shiner cautions: "Viewing Renaissance paintings in isolation, like reading Shakespeare's plays out of literary anthologies or listening to Bach passions in a symphony hall, reinforces the false impression that the people of the past shared our notion of art as a realm of autonomous works meant for aesthetic contemplation" (4). Like Bach's passions, early modern poetry was decidedly not meant to be contemplated in splendid isolation. Instead, it was put to work on any number of occasions: to celebrate a birth or a wedding, to dedicate a book, or to mourn a death, among many others.¹¹

But could we not simply substitute the term *poetry* for *literature*? Early modern poetry, after all, seems to encompass many of those same texts often considered literary. The answer, unsurprisingly, must be no, for poetry fails to encompass the larger system of letters of which it comprised only a part, albeit an important one.¹²

transformation was consolidated by the turn of the latter century, or at least by the end of the first two decades of the eighteenth. This is not to deny further development, but to claim that there were no more immediate fundamental changes of assumption. By and large the discursive class by then dominant (what I call the analytico-referential) stayed so at least to the end of the nineteenth century. Despite increasing unease, it may be thought largely to be so still" (3).

Literature, in Reiss's study, was born as a powerful antidote to the "cultural dismay" pervading the old continent in the sixteenth century. The dismay diagnosed by Reiss is in many ways akin to the culture of crisis at the end of the seventeenth century analyzed by Paul Hazard. Designed to counter a loss of faith in language's ability to signify, the entity that Reiss calls literature was born of a new "mode of conceptualization" (79), one confident of language's ability to order and express the world. It was an entity that, Reiss elaborates, bore all the hallmarks of power, often instrumental to the legitimation of political rule. Despite its considerable explanatory value, Reiss's "literature" is not the same modern institution we have in mind here.

11. See Stockinger's essay on "Kasualyrik" in *Hansers Sozialgeschichte*, vol. 2.

12. Simons observes: "You often read that before 1730 poetry was that which today is literature.... The completely different range of genres [should] scare us away from the apparently straightforward substitution of terms" ("Kulturelle Orientierung" 52). Early modernists and their medieval counterparts working in German have, like their colleagues working in English, widely recognized the anachronicity of the literary moniker. Jan-Dirk Müller, for example, has noted the amusement with which scholars active in historically distant fields have observed heated German discussions in the 1990s over whether "literary studies has misplaced its object of study," a debate that raged, for example, over several issues of the *Jahrbuch der Schillergesellschaft* that posed this very question. Krohn has also foregrounded the fact that literature's "alleged autonomy is a romantic fiction" (199). Nevertheless, both medievalists, Müller and Krohn, like many of their early modern counterparts, retain the term *literature* to discuss texts before literature's invention. Stöckmann, for example, writing the lead article for a special issue on the literary baroque of the semipopular journal *Text + Kritik*, rightly insists on the alterity of seventeenth-century texts, which is also the topic of his published dissertation *Vor der Literatur: Eine Evolutionstheorie*

Letters, then, is the term I employ to designate both *litterae* (letters) and *litteraturae* (writings) as well as the enormous changes wrought by their increasing popularity. Bailiwick of a small, learned world at the outset of the seventeenth century, letters were taken up by increasing numbers of social groups, especially those in urban centers. Most importantly, the system of letters by century's end also included literate women, particularly in their roles as recipients of occasional poetry, as consumers of new print genres such as the journal and the novel, and, in some cases, as arbiters of taste.¹³ Indeed, in the cultural rivalry that pitted one vernacular against the other in the world of letters, writerly women provided the jewel in the cultural crown.¹⁴

To conceptualize this transformation of the seventeenth-century world of letters, its textual economy, and the often hostile reactions these changes elicited, Bourdieu's model of the literary field proves helpful. It is a tool that also helps us understand why many of the texts considered in *Novel Translations* have been neglected by literary historians, deemed somehow "unliterary." When the early modern system of letters was finally supplanted by the modern literary system, texts such as the occasional poems, pamphlets, and single-page prints discussed in this chapter, as well as many of the novels in later chapters, grew increasingly obscure, their ephemeral nature standing in ever sharper contrast to the supposedly timeless qualities attributed to more "literary" counterparts. I thus deploy Bourdieu's vocabulary as a heuristic tool throughout, attracted by the concept's capaciousness: its ability to encompass historical nuance.¹⁵

der Poetik Alteuropas. Still, these radically other texts are subsumed under the category "literature." See Stöckmann ("Entäußerungen") for further references to the older literature on baroque literature and poetics. This consistent retention of the term would seem to void literature of the very historical specificity on which we must insist. For a treatment of literature as a suprahistorical idea, see Marino's *Biography of "The Idea of Literature."*

13. Schön writes: "This new public—which for belles lettres was overwhelmingly female—becomes visible in the demand for new literature. In the early eighteenth century this demand was initially met by literary production that could not fulfill it, neither intellectually nor materially" ("Lesesstoffe" 81). The importance of women's growing numbers in the marketplace for books is similarly stressed by Becker-Cantarino in, most recently, her introduction to *German Literature of the Eighteenth Century: The Enlightenment and Sensibility*, vol. 5 of the *Camden House History of German Literature*. Simons ("Kulturelle Orientierung") and Bogner similarly identify the decades at century's end as particularly important in the transformation of the world of letters.

14. See Goodman, Woods and Fürstenwald, and Gössmann.

15. Early modern German literary and intellectual historians have in the past decade recognized the utility of Bourdieu's concept of the literary field and of his notion of habitus despite their situation within Bourdieu's thought in relation to Flaubert and the latter half of the nineteenth century. See, for example, the essays gathered in Beetz and Jaumann, *Thomasius im literarischen Feld: Neue Beiträge zur Erforschung seines Werkes im historischen Kontext*. Jaumann's introductory essay there provides further references to the growing German literature on Bourdieu. The wide reception by early modern German historians of Bourdieu's habitus concept, as sketched in the chapter "Field of Power, Literary Field and Habitus" in his *Field of Cultural Production*, is clear from its inclusion on the excellent pedagogical Web site maintained by the Lehrstuhl for Early Modern History at the University of Münster and edited by Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger: <http://www.uni-muenster.de/FNZ-Online/Welcome.html> (9 March 2010).

Bourdieu defines the literary field as “a *field of forces*.” This force field “is also a *field of struggles* tending to transform or conserve this field of forces” (30). Its contours—its size and shape, its highs and lows—are determined by specific historical agents at different times. Changes in the field’s geography do not occur smoothly. Claims to the social prestige contained in the field are neither made nor maintained without recourse to struggles often violent, only sometimes symbolically. Bourdieu’s model of the literary field also illuminates how new forms of writing, what he calls “literary possibles,” result from “the change in the power relation which constitutes the space of positions” (32). New forms, in other words, are unthinkable without structural changes slicing across the whole of the field. At the end of the seventeenth century, in our example, the modern novel emerged from fissures in the field. It was a product of the seismic forces that had cracked hallowed ground. The appearance of this new genre, in other words, indicated changes elsewhere in the field. It allows us to view the genre as a nexus where newness and novelty, fashionability and foreignness, art and commerce, intersected. Indeed, the novel’s success at the end of the century is understandable only if we account for the changing power dynamics that allowed for its emergence.

Key to these changes in the early modern system of letters were the seventeenth century’s dirty fights over the status of poet, over who might legitimately don the literary mantle. The tug-of-war over authorial status is, Bourdieu reminds us, *the* central issue shaping the literary field: “What is at stake is the power to impose the dominant definition of the writer and therefore to delimit the population of those entitled to take part in the struggle to define the writer” (42). The epithet *Poet à la mode*, for example, was meant to consign would-be poets to the winds of whim and fancy. What its use reveals to us, however, is a caste of academicians whose dominance of the literary field was threatened by a “throng of books” penned by a faceless crowd of writers. As Bourdieu summarizes, “In short, the fundamental stake in literary struggles is the monopoly of literary legitimacy, i.e., *inter alia*, . . . the monopoly of the power to consecrate producers or products” (42). The novel’s long battle for literary legitimacy was, we shall see, preceded by a series of nasty skirmishes over the qualifications of a “true poet” and the status of printed news media, including the novel itself.

In choosing Bourdieu’s model of the literary field to articulate the changes in the *res publica litteraria*, I have purposely steered away from the Habermasian model of the structural transformation of the public sphere. This influential model, first articulated in Habermas’s 1962 *Habilitationsschrift*, famously describes how an older form of the public (*Öffentlichkeit*), a representative sphere defined by absolute authority, was displaced by a critical, reasoning, bourgeois public sphere.¹⁶ Whatever one’s quarrels with Habermas’s historical and geographic situation of

16. Habermas provides an interesting account of his book’s critical fortunes, especially its late but intense reception in the United States after its appearance in English translation in 1989, in his foreword to the new German edition of *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit*, published in 1990 (11–50).

the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere in eighteenth-century London, the model possesses enormous explanatory value.¹⁷ Many of the changes that I describe can in fact be related to an early stage in Habermas's model of structural transformation, the emergence of a literary public given to critical reasoning.

But to adapt the Habermasian model relegates the changes this book describes to the status of *Vorspiel*, precursor to the crucial event: the emergence of a bourgeois public sphere in the later eighteenth century. Yet the events I describe in this book are of great significance in their own right, not merely as forerunners. They deserve the sustained attention one reserves for the main act, not just the mild curiosity with which we greet the opener. Continued reliance on the Habermasian model, I believe, would continue to marginalize the decades around the turn of the seventeenth century, the least understood in German literary history. To continue our disregard is to remain ignorant of the significant shifts in the literary field that allowed for the emergence of a book market extending from London to Leipzig that made reading fashionable: entertainment not only for the erudite. Unlike the Habermasian model, Bourdieu's concept of the literary field is not narrowly bound to a single historical time and place. My job here is to make it work in a historically sensitive way.¹⁸

Fashion and Early Modern Commodity Culture

An illustrated broadsheet printed about 1630 depicts "*Allmodo*, vnnnd seiner Daemen Leich begengnuß mit beygefügetem Traurigem Grabgesange" (The funeral procession of *Allmodo* and his lady accompanied by a mournful dirge) (fig. 1). The dirge, written for three voices, forms a textual box around which the pictured mourners wind a processional path leading from the deceased's home toward a skeleton hung in effigy and bedecked with the departed's insignia. Instead of the heraldry normally held aloft in funereal processions, here fashionable items indicate who is being buried.¹⁹ At the engraving's lower left, we see the deceased, *Der Ala modo* (Mr. Fashion), his body carried by six pallbearers. Even in death, his wide-brimmed hat, its extravagantly fashionable feather, and his pointed beard are immediately visible. In front of the body, a mourner pipes the *Fama* already dissipating on the breeze.

17. In the context of the history of the novel, the most important revision of Habermas's location of the emergence of the public sphere remains DeJean's *Ancients against Moderns* and her research there into Donneau de Visé's *Mercurie galant* and its letters addressing Lafayette's *Princesse de Clèves* and the princess's controversial decision to tell her husband about her nonaffair.

18. Many of the issues I discuss in this chapter, particularly those relating to the rapid growth and proliferation of newspapers and journals, also bear directly on Engelsing's model of a "Leserevolution," mentioned above. Changing reading practices certainly play a role in the story this chapter tells of the transformation of the literary field. But whether they may be related to a "revolution" in reading practices or identified as part of a continuous process visible only in the *longue durée* is not my primary concern.

19. Lüttenberg and Priever comment on a similar French illustration's satirization of funereal practices of men of rank (62).

Others hoist fashionable items: a lace collar, long gloves, boots with elaborate cuffs, and a beard. A goat, labeled as the departed's favorite mount, also makes the round and "beweint sein. Herrn" (weeps for his master). Fifteen additional mourners labeled with their trades are included in the retinue. Depicted at the sheet's visual center, these men, dressed in the livery of Alamodo, immediately attract our attention. In their wake, female standard bearers hold various women's fashions aloft; Alamodo's wife, also deceased, follows, her body likewise trailed by servants and tradeswomen who exit through the doors of the couple's residence. Through the opening above the door, we see a small child lying comfortably in a cradle. *Sic transit gloria mundi*, the engraving prominently confirms; but, it also shows us, fashion lives on. Despite the untimely death of the parents, their *Junger Al modo* (Little Boy Fashion) "ist noch wohlauf in der Wiegen" (still fares well in his cradle).

This illustrated broadsheet was one drop in a flood of images and texts devoted to the vagaries of fashion that washed over textual consumers across Europe, both readers and viewers, in the 1630s.²⁰ This particular example sketches fashion's accoutrements in meticulous detail. Returning to the men at the broadsheet's center, we see a *Krämer* (chandler), an *Alamodo leib Schneider* (fashionable tailor), and a *Kauffman* (merchant). That such tradespeople comprise fashion's retinue comes as no surprise. But in the very next row step a *Maler* (painter) and a *Poet* (poet), while hard on their heels follow a *Buchtrucke*r (printer) and *Kupfferstecher* (engraver). Their presence at Mr. Fashion's burial is noted laconically in the verses

Kramer und Handwercks Leut/
Dieser plötzliche Fall/
Bringet euch thewre Zeit/
Drumb trawret allzumal.

You chandler and tradespeople
This sudden fall
Will cause you hard times
Thus mourn together all.

While the verses mention merely "tradespeople," the engraving documents fashionable trades in far greater detail, fixing the poet and his companions front and center. Constitutive to Mr. Alamodo's self-fashioning, in other words, were the poet and painter. Clothed in fashion's livery, they have hit upon a wealthy patron. Yet, while lucrative, this patron-client relationship is unstable. To remain new, fashion

20. Similar broadsheets depicting fashion's funeral procession were made for French- and English-speaking audiences. They are reproduced and discussed by Lüttenberg and Prierer. For further reproductions of illustrated broadsheets depicting fashion, see also the exhibition catalogue *Frau Hoeffart & Monsieur Alamode: Modekritik auf illustrierten Flugblättern des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*.

All modo, vnde seiner Daemen Reich begengnuß mit beggefügem Traurigen Erabgefing.

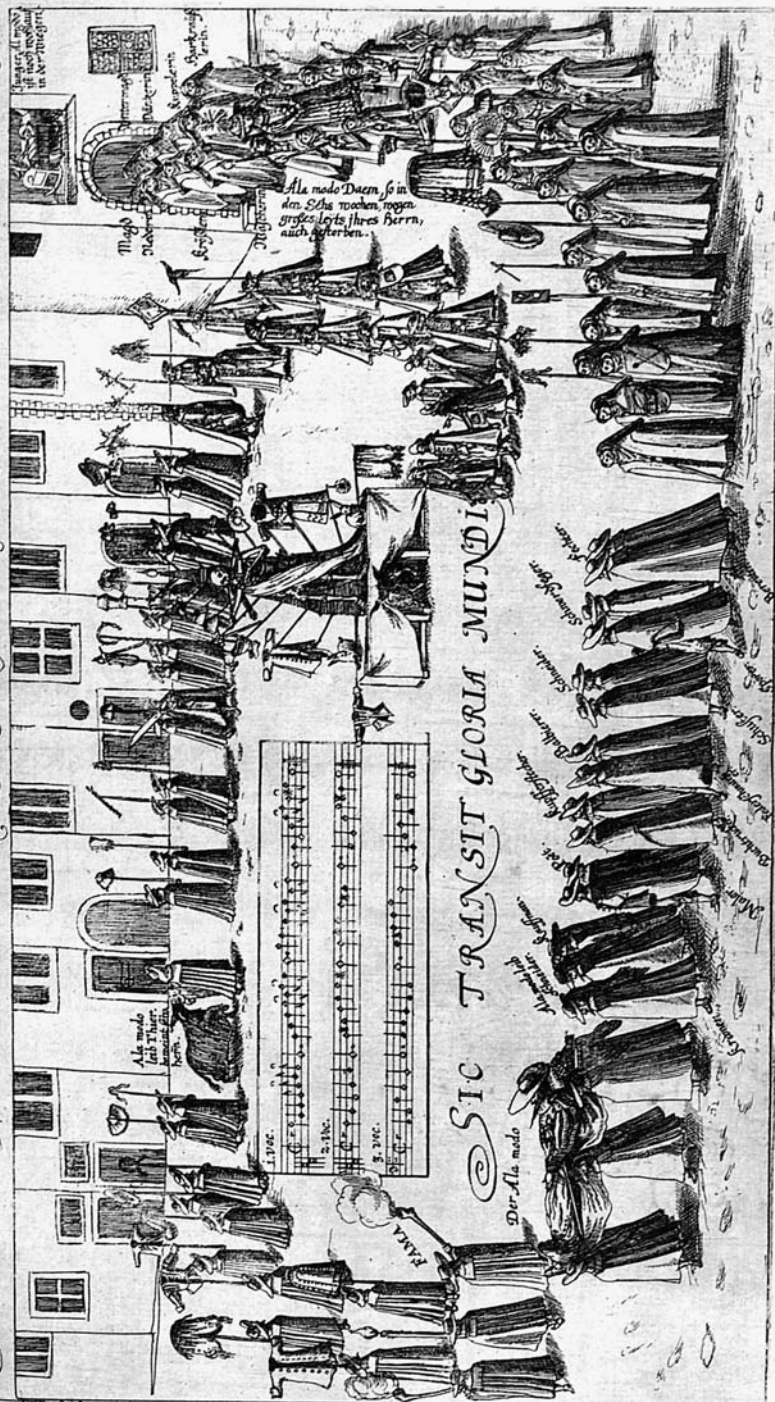




Figure 1. The Funeral Procession of *Allmodo* and His Lady Accompanied by a Mournful Dirge. Broadsheet (c. 1630). Fashion's death also heralds his successor's birth. Reproduced courtesy of the Herzog August Bibliothek.

reinvents itself ever anew. Thus the artist who remains faithful to an old master, the broadsheet's verses caution, will suffer "hard times."

The notion that poets were for hire, ready to sell their wares to the highest bidder was, of course, hardly new to the seventeenth century.²¹ New was the status of anonymous Fashion, not a noble prince, as a poet's patron. The fashionable poet marched to the orders of an impersonal master: the anonymous market force comprised by society's demand for fashion. Like the commodities born aloft by Mr. Fashion's mourners, the poet's verses were for sale to consumers ranging from the lord of the manor to his housemaid. Fashion was, however, no less a taskmaster then than now, and it drove a hard bargain: The work of the poet (and the painter) could not alone fulfill the dictates of fashion. Instead, as the broadsheet's engraving details, verses had to be reproduced en masse to meet fashion's demands. Thus the poet in thrall to fashion required the assistance of the printer, who, in our broadsheet, follows closely in his footsteps. Only the printer's reproductions allowed the poet's verses to be consumed beyond the closed circle of original production. Thus, while fashion elevated poetry, heightening its allure, it simultaneously paved the way for its popularization—and, we shall see, its possible degradation.

Fashion's significance in remaking the early modern system of letters has only occasionally been recognized. It remains a topic in urgent need of further exploration and theorization, particularly in early modern studies. In a brief albeit insightful essay, Wilhelm Kühlmann identified fashion and its critique as the engine that modernized an array of key critical discourses, including in his lengthy list linguistic, stylistic, moral, political, legal, theological, economic, cultural, and historical discourses. Fashion and its critique, in other words, provided the world of letters the stuff to hash out the experience of modernization. In the period's terminology, to be *à la mode* was to be *modern*. Stated another way, to be modern was to be new—and so necessarily different than before. As the very language—*Mr. Allmodo* and *à la mode*—indicates, it was also intrinsically foreign. This difference and change—"processes of disconcerting disorientation and uncertainty for many" (89)²²—was

21. Around 1470, for example, singer-poet Michel Beheim, active at courts throughout central Europe, famously recorded his willingness to sing for his supper:

Der furst mich hett in knechtes miet,
ich ass sin brot vnd sang sin liet.
ob ich zu einem andern kum,
ich ticht im auch, tet er mir drum,
ich sag lob sinem namen. (qtd. in Seibert, 13)

The prince employed me as his man
I ate his bread and sang his song
If I find another
I'll make verses for him too if he rewards me for them
I'll say praises in his name.

Seibert reads these verses in the context of an exploration of models of authorship on the eve of the German Reformation.

22. "Vorgänge einer für viele offenbar bestürzenden Desorientierung und Unsicherheit."

part and parcel of the cultural pluralization that is the hallmark of the early modern period as a whole.²³ Thus, to echo Kühlmann, I read the expansive discussions of fashion (and its nefarious effects) as “a cultural-anthropological discourse of brilliant explanatory power specific to the period” (82).²⁴ The “Alamode” discourse, I argue, provides a seismograph with which we can measure the tremendous upheavals and related anxieties that mark early modern culture as a whole and the world of letters in particular. In rich work on the history of early modern reading and the reading public, Erich Schön also touches on the seminal significance of fashion. Changes in reading preferences, he writes, forced a recognition “that literature should orient itself according to contemporary, relative taste instead of to classical, absolute standards” (“Lesestoffe” 97).²⁵ Throughout the early modern archive, *alamode* registers upheaval. In diverse traces, such as the poetry and handbooks I emphasize here, but also in pamphlets arguing confessional politics and in theories devoted to statecraft, *alamode* reverberates, echoing with uncertainty the awareness, painful at times, of change.

As the word *Mode* itself became fashionable, it was affixed to an increasing number of objects, habits, and uses of language as well as to music, politics, and values (including religious belief).²⁶ Johann Ludwig Hartmann (1640–1684), for example, in *Alamode-Teuffel* (The Fashionable Devil) of 1675 railed against fashionable clothing, to be certain, but he also made sure to extend his analysis of fashion’s dangers to encompass “Geschmeiden/ Gebäuen/ Gastereyen/ Tractamenten und dergleichen” (jewelry, buildings, parties, social gatherings, and the like) (1), further pointing out that fashion has built “herrlichen Häusern/ kostbaren Gärten und Gebäuen” (magnificent homes, expensive gardens, and buildings) and turned men into monkeys who ape others’ “Gebärden” (gestures) (18). A broadsheet warning against fashionable cakes took on the widely discussed topic of new kinds of food and beverages.²⁷ The use of tobacco provided another favorite venue to debate fashion.²⁸

23. Work on the process of early modern cultural “pluralization” has been led by historian Winfried Schulze. Despite the productivity of this concept, very little of Schulze’s work or the work of members of the research team affiliated with SFB 573 (Center for Excellence 573) is available in English.

24. “einen epochenspezifischen Diskurs der Kulturanthropologie von überragendem Indizwert”.

25. “daß sich Literatur statt an zeitlos-absoluten Vorbildern am zeitgenössisch-relativen Geschmack zu orientieren habe.” See also Schön’s essay on the reading public and the novel, “Publikum und Roman im 18. Jahrhundert,” for a treatment of the specifically German situation.

26. Long the turf of costume historians, clothing cultures and their study have been reinvigorated by more recent investigations, many inflected by the attention they bring to questions of gender, sex, and the body. Across national disciplines and time periods, Marjorie Garber’s work on clothing and transvestism has been pathbreaking. In German, much fine work on early modern clothing exists. See particularly Dinges, and Wolter. Roche’s magisterial reading of clothing in ancien régime France has had similarly rejuvenating effects. For a brilliant account of clothing and material texts in early modern England and Italy, see Jones and Stallybrass.

27. Unless otherwise noted, the broadsheets discussed here have all been reproduced in the collections edited by Harms et al.

28. See, for example, the broadsheet “Von deß Tabacs Nutzen und Schaden auff Alamodisch durch das A B C gezogen” (Tobacco’s Benefits and Harms Fashionably Treated in an A B C) from 1629.

Throughout the century, fashion also served as a code for talking politics. The presence of a fashionable tailor in a broadsheet published shortly after the defeat of imperial troops under Tilly at Magdeburg, a crucial battle of the Thirty Years' War, for example, sufficed to explain the outcome.²⁹ The text accompanying this engraving briefly explains that Tilly's much-anticipated wedding to his intended, the city of Magdeburg, will not take place. The general's circumstances have been so reduced that he is not even able to pay the tailor for the fashionable suits that had been rather prematurely ordered for the planned festivities; fashion had emasculated the general. Fashion also colonized the tongue. Poet and newsman Georg Grefflinger (c. 1620–1677) compiled *Etlicher Alamodischer Damen Sprichwörter* (Sayings of Various Fashionable Ladies) (Hamburg, 1647), which was appended to his *Complementier-Büchlein* (Handbooks of Compliments) and expanded for subsequent editions in 1658 and 1660. For his readers interested in such fashionable things, Grefflinger also added a list of *itzt üblichen Reyhme* (rhymes now accepted) to the later editions.³⁰

Given the wide swath that fashion cut through early modern life, we would do well to take its emergence onto the literary field seriously. We need to account for the havoc it wrought in the system of letters. Fashion's early modern contemporaries were well aware of the metamorphoses of which fashion was capable, and they spent considerable time and energy in documenting and understanding them. Across Europe, fashion acquired its modern meanings on the bridge from the late medieval to the early modern period. Robert's *Dictionnaire historique* cites an early use of *mode* in French (derived from the Latin *modus*, "manner") to designate something specifically *new* as early as 1482. The *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the earliest usage of the English word *fashion* to mean a *new* and changing style to 1568. Critiques of extravagant finery were, of course, millenia old, but the idea of fashion as something *new* is a relatively recent invention (Jones and Stallybrass 1). The term's earliest usage in German seems to date to the term's dissemination across Europe in the 1630s.

Across the early modern discourse on fashion, captured in word and image on any number of textual artifacts, fashion inevitably stimulated the body, tickling

29. The use of "fashionable" epithets to bank political capital extended across vernaculars. To cite a sole English example, see "The Character of a Modern Whig, or, An Alamode True Loyal Protestant" (1681), a single-page print that promises to reveal Presbyterians' anti-monarchical designs for whose accomplishment they have worked to further Jesuit plots.

30. In one of the earliest entries on fashion in a reference work, Zedler's *Universal-Lexicon*, the term "fashion" (*Mode*) is defined in this very broad manner. The lengthy entry, published in 1739, defines the term to include "Die gewöhnliche oder gebräuchliche Tracht und Manier in Kleidungen, Meublen, Kutschen und Zimmern, Gebäuden, Manufacturen, Schreib- und Red-Arten, Complimenten, Ceremonien, und andern Gepränge, Gastereyen, und übrigen Lebens=Arten" (vol. 21, col. 700). (The habitual or typical costume and manner in clothing, furniture, coaches and room interiors, buildings, manufactured goods, styles of writing and speaking, compliments, ceremonies, and other festivities, parties, and other styles of life.)

its desires for food, drink, rest, and sex beyond all seemly, “straight” proportion.³¹ Thus, in the broadsheet depicting Mr. Fashion’s funeral, not a horse but a goat trailed the body. The animal’s libidinal reputation made him Fashion’s “favorite mount.” Similarly, in the string of mourners following Lady Fashion, the ranks of a *Harkräußlerin* (hairdresser), a *Magd* (housemaid), and an *Untermagd* (assistant housemaid) were swollen with a *Kupplerin* (procuress). Lady Fashion’s sexual appetites exceeded a single partner; her husband did not suffice.

In an early investigation of fashion’s stimulations, the unusually good-humored Johann Ellinger (1594–1631) played up fashion’s sensual amplifications. His “fashionable devil” did not travel alone but came with a retinue of seven other devils, all relations to the seven cardinal or deadly sins (lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, pride). Ellinger’s devils were a nasty bunch: “der müßiggehende/ pflastertrettende Spatzierteuffel” (the walk-about devil who loiters on the street), “der leichtfertige/ uppige/ springende und hippende Tantzteuffel/ welcher deß Spatzierteuffels naher Syießgesell [*sic*] ist” (the frivolous, voluptuous, hopping, and skipping dance devil who is an intimate comrade of the walk-about devil), “der Hurenteuffel” (the whoring devil), “der unersättige Fraßteuffel und der Schlemmerige Sauff=Teuffel” (the insatiable gluttonous devil and the feasting boozing devil), as well as “der Rauberische Diebische Mordteuffel und der Mörderische Diebsteuffel” (the robbing, thieving murderous devil and the murderous thieving devil”) (23–26). Fine clothing’s long association with *vanitas*, already timeworn by the seventeenth century, yoked the fashionable devil to the proud peacock. But as fashion’s rule extended beyond the sartorial, so too were its sins more numerous. Fashion’s compatriots, embodied by Ellinger’s comically named devils, committed them all.³²

As Jessica Munns and Penny Richards note, clothes frequently wear their owners. The master is ruled by his clothes; fashion calls the tune. Before the birth of fashion, this fluid dynamic between clothes and the body had been perfectly, unproblematically conceptualized in the medieval German notion of *êre*. A Middle High German word related to one’s honor (*Ehre*), *êre* is most often translated as “appearance” (*Aussehen*). In the thirteenth-century world of Gottfried von Strass-

31. One popular satire, *Renovirte und mercklich vermehrte alamodische Hobel-Banck* (The Renovated and Notably Expanded Fashionable Planing Bench), published sometime after 1668, literally promised to flatten or “plane” the always aroused, fashionable body. This edition of the *Planing Bench* was based on at least two earlier texts, one printed by Andreas Aperger in Augsburg in 1630, *Allemodische Hobel-Banck* (The Fashionable Planing Bench), and another with the same title but printed anonymously “durch eine Liebhaber der freyen Künste” (by a lover of the liberal arts) in 1668.

32. The fashionable devil became a fixed element in reviews of devils. Johann Ludwig Hartmann’s *Fashionable Devil* from 1675, for example, was joined by his *Läster-Teuffel* (The Blasphemous Back-Biting Devil) and *Privat-Interesse Eigennutzigen Teuffels*, *Natur, Censur und Cur* (The Nature, Censure, and Cure of the Privately Interested Selfish Devil) in 1679, and the *Eheteuffel* (Marriage Devil) in 1680, among other *Devils* authored just by Hartmann. Brauner provides a helpful discussion of the genre of the devil reviews.

burg, for example, Tristan's noble birth was reflected in his fine clothing; his costly garments also helped establish his social rank. Both aspects of clothing's functions were encompassed by Tristan's *être*. But in a world of rapidly changing fashions, this seamless relationship—between interior (*Ehre*) and exterior (*Aussehen*), essence (*Sein*) and appearance (*Schein*)—has come unstitched. Sumptuary laws were, of course, supposed to guarantee that fashionable finery corresponded to wearers' quality—that is, their rank. But such laws were, naturally, notoriously difficult to enforce.³³ A handsome coat might now be donned by any one; any scribbling hack could be mistaken for a true poet. Accompanying fashion's arrival on the literary field were a number of sins, only some of them literary. Linked inextricably with the sexed body, fashion was yoked to the feminine. A fashionable man, such as the poet *alamode*, was therefore always an effeminate man; his bad poetry further emphasized his unmanly habitus. Unable to withstand its siren song, he had been un-manned by fashion.

Any precise answer to the question of *why* fashion was born across Europe around 1600 will remain elusive. Costume historians have posited the importance of French occupation during the Thirty Years' War for the new word's introduction into German. And while fashion and the *Sprachmengerei* (lumping together of various languages) so characteristic of *alamode* behavior were often associated with soldiers—famously in texts such as Gryphius's comedy *Horribilicribrifax teutsch* (1663), for example—fashion across times and places betrays affinities more generally with instability, rupture, and even crisis. Paraphrasing Georg Simmel's classic essay "Philosophy of Fashion," Silvia Bovenschen has observed: "In periods of rupture, of a loss of orientation, crises of perception, a vanishing faith in historical progress and in the future generally, fashion becomes fashionable. Fashion is a topic of crisis" (12–13).³⁴ The trauma and dislocation unleashed by the long war certainly offer part of the explanation for fashion's virulence. But to postulate a direct causal relationship between the war and the fashion for fashion clouds our recognition that the *alamode* discourse more generally marks the cultural and intellectual pluralization of the century, as well as the disorientation and perceptions of crisis it unleashed.

33. In a warning promulgated by the city council of Rothenburg ob der Taube, for example, and included as a preface to Hartmann's *Fashionable Devil*, council fathers lamented their inability to curb inhabitants' appetites for fancy dress. They thus directed judicial employees ("Statt- und Richters-knechten") to report any violations of the dress code spotted on the street to the imperial city's court offices ("Reichs-Richter=Ampt"). The council must have been at a loss, however, for they took this measure in 1675, they reported, already having issued laws and warnings against the fashionable devil in 1654, 1659, and 1670. For further examples of the difficulty with which sumptuary laws were enforced, see the still excellent study by Eisenbart.

34. "In Zeiten des Umbruchs, der Orientierungsverluste, der Sinnkrisen, des schwindenden vertrauens in den geschichtlichen Fortschritt und in die Zukunft generell kommt die Mode in Mode. Mode ist ein Krisenthema."

Nonetheless, I do not wish to understate the material cognate to this intellectual disorientation. Simmel nicely captured the ways in which the emergent money economy fueled fashion's spread from elite to popular status:

In many cases it is observable that as social groups grow increasingly proximate, those below pursue imitation as doggedly as those above pursue novelty; the permeation of the money economy materially accelerates this process and makes it visible because the objects of fashion—the exteriorities of life—are particularly accessible to pure financial capital. Equality with the upper social stratum is for this reason easier to produce with such objects than in all other areas that require a pardon not for purchase with money. (14)³⁵

Stated otherwise, fashion emerged hand in hand with the consumer society that dawned, historians now widely recognize, in the early modern period.³⁶ Jardine has located “the seeds of our own . . . bravura consumerism” in *cinquecento* Italy (34).³⁷ John Brewer, among those historians associated with the argument for late eighteenth-century England as the birthplace of a revolutionary consumerism, has more recently brilliantly analyzed the commodification of culture in the seventeenth century.³⁸ Chandra Mukerji's now classic study of print and the early modern commercial revolution moves the date of cultural commodification back

35. “Vielfach kann man gerade bemerken, daß, je näher die Kreise aneinandergerückt sind, desto toller die Jagd des Nachmachens von unten und die Flucht zum Neuen von oben ist; die durchdringende Geldwirtschaft muß diesen Prozeß erheblich beschleunigen und sichtbar machen, weil die Gegenstände der Mode, als die Aeufferlichkeiten des Lebens ganz besonders dem bloßen Geldbesitz zugänglich sind, und in ihnen deshalb die Gleichheit mit der oberen Schicht leichter herzustellen ist als auf allen Gebieten, die eine individuelle, nicht mit Geld abkaufbare Bewährung fordern.”

36. Sarti explains: “Although, some years ago, a few historians were arguing that the first ‘consumer revolution’ occurred in late eighteenth-century England, today most scholars are convinced that consumption and the availability of consumer goods grew in a gradual, albeit uneven, manner over a long period” (4).

37. The literature on early modern European consumer society and the commodification of culture is now enormous. See especially Schama's *Embarrassment of Riches* and Roche's magisterial *La culture des apparences*. The literature on German consumerism and consumption patterns remains somewhat thin. See, however, Schivelbusch, and North. For Germany in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Wurst's *Fabricating Pleasure*, and Erlin.

38. In a tour de force essay, Brewer illuminates both sides of the public sphere's Janus-face, emphasizing “the degree to which it was recognized that the formation of a public cultural sphere [in eighteenth-century England]—the emergence of reading, theatrical and musical publics—was heavily compromised by but dependent upon two forces that undercut its impartiality, namely pecuniary gain—acquisitiveness—and sexual passion” (345). Of course, both, that is libidinal and pecuniary desire, intersect in fashion. Brewer, however, discusses commodification without regard to the discourse on fashion. He notes: “In every field of cultural endeavour culture was for sale: paintings, books, and prints passed through the auction houses and into the hands of specialized dealers. . . . The marketing of culture became a trade separate from its production: theatrical and opera impresarios, picture-, print- and booksellers, became the new capitalists of cultural enterprise, peddling culture in almost every medium and art. . . . These impresarios were responsible for the dissemination of new literary and aesthetic forms that emerged in the eighteenth century: the novel, the periodical essay, the conversation piece, the ballad opera, comic history painting and a variety of pastiche” (346).

further still.³⁹ The emergence of the money economy, consumerism, the commercial revolution—without them fashion was unthinkable. Together they were responsible for “the dissemination of new literary and aesthetic forms” (Brewer 346), such as vernacular poetic handbooks and, a few decades later, the novel. Indeed, both genres owed their rise, invention, and birth to the mercurial predilections of fashion.

The Poet *Alamode*

Across German literary histories, Opitz marks the origin of poetry in the modern High German vernacular. His canonical position rests on an apparently unshakable paternity claim: Opitz fathered German poetry.⁴⁰ The 1624 publication of his handbook, *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey* (Book of German Poetry), is widely regarded as the spark that ignited a long overdue renaissance in German-language letters. Opitz’s immediate contemporaries likewise credited his slim volume with an enormous impact.⁴¹ German poetry, it often seems, sprang fully formed from this second Zeus’s head. Before Opitz, the logic of such rhetoric suggests, German poetry did not exist; it appears that the Silesian statesman created it *ex nihilo*. Yet the Father of German Poetry himself already emphasized poetry’s entanglement with fashion in his 1624 *Book*. To his consternation, Opitz was forced to note fashion’s infiltration of what he termed “verborgene Theologie” (hidden theology) (14).⁴² Fashion, at least according to Opitz, was present at the birth of modern German poetry. If Opitz was its father, should we consider fashion its mother?

Opitz bemoaned the fact that poetry was being dragged through the mud; at that moment so widely regarded as its origin, German poetry’s reputation was already in tatters. Vernacular verse was marked by the stain of illegitimacy, Opitz

39. Mukerji’s book, first published in 1983, remains an illuminating discussion of print cultures and commodification, particularly of engraved prints as commodities: “But print’s importance was not limited to its role as a carrier of intellectual ideas or cognitive styles; it was part of the new material culture, an element in the growth of manufacture and trade itself. Printed work spread through the trading system as commodities, bringing with it ideas and tastes that created bonds among Europeans from a variety of geographical regions and social strata. In this way, printing helped to fashion cultural ties that paralleled the new economic ones, making, for instance, the material culture throughout Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries more cosmopolitan at the same time that the economic system was becoming more international (and also linking this culture more closely to social class as the economy became more capitalistic). Printing, then, contributed in a unique way to, but did not in itself create, the communications revolution that the commercial revolution engendered” (12).

40. In his entry on Opitz in Harald Steinhagen and Benno von Wiese’s *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Klaus Garber, for example, comments: “Opitz has entered history as the ‘Father of German Poetry.’ No one would question this canonized view” (116).

41. It has been postulated that Opitz’s supposed irenicism, his religious toleration, generated the modest book’s mysterious success. For a recent discussion of Opitz’s complex religious allegiances, see Nicola Kaminski (69–80). Unlike Garber, a proponent of Opitz’s irenicism, Kaminski identifies the Opitzian project as “crypto-Calvinist” (78).

42. “Die Poeterey ist anfangs nichts anders gewesen als eine verborgene Theologie” (14).

claimed. It was a commercial enterprise, he lamented, and poets themselves had been willing collaborators in its commodification:

Es wird kein buch/ keine hochzeit/ kein begräbnüß ohn uns gemacht; und gleichsam als niemand könnte alleine sterben/ gehen unsere gedichte zugleich mit ihnen unter. Man wil uns auff allen Schüsseln und kannen haben/ wir stehen an wänden und steinen/ und wann einer ein Hauß ich weiß nicht wie an sich gebracht hat/ so sollen wir es mit unsern Versen wieder redlich machen. Dieser begehret ein Lied auff eines andern Weib/ jenem hat von des nachbaren Magdt getrewmet/ einen andern hat die vermeinte Bulschafft ein mal freundlich angelacht/ oder/ wie dieser Leute gebrauch ist/ viel mehr außgelacht; ja deß närrischen ansuchens ist kein ende. (18)

No book, no wedding, no funeral can go forward without us; and, as if no one could be left to die alone, our poems go under with them [the deceased]. We are wanted on all bowls and pitchers, we are found on walls and stones, and when someone has acquired a house in whatever dubious manner, we are supposed to legitimize it. This man desires a song to another's wife, that one dreams of the neighbor's maid, while still another believes he has been rewarded with a friendly laugh from his beloved, or, as is customary for such people, with her ridicule; indeed the foolish requests know no end.

Poetry, Opitz insisted, should not be composed in answer to "foolish requests" for lines to commemorate an endless list of morally questionable occasions. To produce a poem on the occasion of an erotic dream about the neighbor's maid, for example, clearly crossed the line and flirted dangerously with sacrilege. At its purported origin, modern German poetry already marched in step with Mr. Fashion's retinue. We would thus do well to recast the terms with which we frame our discussion of Opitz. His role was not to birth German poetry but to discipline it.⁴³ Imitation (*imitatio*, *Nachahmung*), of course, needed to play by the rules.

43. My questions regarding the construction of Opitz's status as the "Father of German Poetry" must remain merely suggestive. See, however, two provocative essays in Forster's *Kleine Schriften*. In "Das deutsche Sonett des Melissus," he points to Melissus's (Paul Schede [1539–1602]) facility with the sonnet and Alexandrine verse generally to conjecture that well before Opitz's handbook German-language poets were familiar with the very forms with whose introduction Opitz is credited (79). Still more pointedly, in the essay "German Alexandrines on Dutch Broadsheets before Opitz," Forster examines broadsheets replete with "pre-Opitzian Alexandrines." His remarks on producers of verse willing and able to churn out decent Alexandrines on demand for keen businessmen deserve more attention than they have received. These Dutch-German broadsheets stocked with ready-made German Alexandrines, Forster notes, "were produced by keen business men, who knew their market. If the new-fangled verses had an adverse effect on sales they would have been abandoned in short order. But they went on being used; so presumably the sales situation was good. We remember at this point that some of the broadsheets on the Battle of Breitenfeld in 1631 are in pre-Opitzian Alexandrines.... Here we have writers in Germany itself who appear not to have heard of Opitz, but who are prepared to turn out fifty or sixty Alexandrines to order at short notice. Perhaps the various forerunners of Opitz had

Beginning in the 1640s, the figure of the fashionable poet pops up time and again in the lines of more established poets, members of Germany's leading language and poetic societies. They would gladly have confined this jack-in-the-box to the margins of their own pages or, better, have erased him from the world of letters entirely. But the fashionable poet's prolific "poetizing" and "versifying" made it impossible to ignore him; his verses proliferated across too many printed pages.⁴⁴ He was everywhere, and the verses he produced on all sorts of occasions were too easily confused with their own celebratory or commemorative efforts.

"True" poets, as these men styled themselves, labored to fortify their poetic authority, deploying a two-pronged strategy. Because vernacular poetry, as Opitz had hinted, was the product of mixed parentage, an upstanding father (Opitz) and a slatternly mother (fashion), true poets emphasized their paternal heritage. They were, they tirelessly asserted, Opitz's true followers; they imitated him correctly. Their lyric efforts, we might say, knew no mother; they were Opitz's brainchildren. Other poets, however, were their mother's children, illegitimate offspring whose verses, labeled *alamode*, could thus be used to delegitimize authorial claims. The "true" poetic mantle, members of language societies never wearied of insisting, was decidedly *unfashionable*. Its cut and styling did not change anew according to the latest fashion; the poet's coat was made according to the timeless rules set forth by the good father, Opitz. More significant than some fashionable frippery, the battle over the status of poet is, as Bourdieu has reminded us, "the fundamental stake in literary struggles." This struggle for the title of "true poet" is among the first signals that the borders of the early modern literary field were increasingly being trespassed. It was hardly the last.

Before diving into the trenches, I briefly sketch the battlefield. Opitz presented poetry's defilement as a particularly German problem six years into the horrors of what became known as the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The French, he maintained, could claim Ronsard, the Dutch Heinsius, the Italians Petrarch, and the English Barclay.⁴⁵ How then, he asked, have "sonderlich wir Deutschen so lange gedult können tragen/ und das edele Papir mit ihren ungereimten reimen beflecken"? (18) (Why have we Germans in particular so long shown patience for those who sully noble paper with their unmeasured verses?) In the eyes of his contemporaries, Opitz was the German answer to Ronsard—and to French doubts about the German language's lyricism. He had taken the lead, guiding vernacular poetry back to its putative original purity. A mark of his disciplinary project's ultimate success, Opitz became the unsullied origin for which he longed.

a wider influence than we know of. Opitz at any rate did not stand alone, though he spoke the magic "Open Sesame" (140).

44. I am considering only poets who appeared in print, not those who either chose or were forced to leave their verse in manuscript.

45. Interestingly, Opitz makes no cultural comparison to the Spanish or to any single Spanish poet.

Even before Opitz's untimely demise of the plague in 1639 while on a diplomatic peace mission in Danzig, contemporaries flocked to his call to cultivate German poetry according to the rules for rhyme and meter that he had adapted for German.⁴⁶ Everyone with aspirations to the title of poet contributed verses to the patriotic poetic project, eager to catch up to the French, Italians, Dutch, and English. Volunteers to promote German glory within the European world of letters were not lacking. In a typically clever epigram, "About Opitz," Logau surveyed the scene roughly a decade after Opitz had passed: "Im Latein sind viel Poeten/ immer aber ein Virgil: [/] Deutsche haben einen Opitz/ Tichter sonst eben viel" (qtd. in Maché and Meid 146). (In Latin there are many poets, but always one Virgil: Germans have one Opitz, of other poets more than a handful.) Regardless of Logau's opinion of their abilities, many German poets shared the view that the vernacular had too long been left uncultivated. While Opitz might have become their Ronsard, he had arrived a century after the founding of the Pléiades, only then to be cut down in his prime by the pestilence spread by war.

Broad swaths of territory, including Opitz's own Silesia, had been devastated by marauding troops and the diseases that raged in their wake. In addition to the rivers choked with blood that Gryphius lamented in "Thränen des Vaterlands" (Tears of the Fatherland), many also deplored the war's linguistic scars: loanwords on the tips of Germans' tongues. *Alamodo* was hardly the least. German speakers, Gryphius's *Horribilicribrifax* joked in a lighter vein, found any non-German word preferable even when nonsensical. Characters such as the ridiculous Sempronius babbled an olla podrida of languages in order, perhaps, to seem more learned, but certainly also to seem more fashionable. Fashion, we have seen, was always foreign. The converse also usually held true: the foreign was also fashionable.

Three short years after Opitz's untimely demise, poet and publicist Johann Rist (1607–1667) offered a notable, and often-quoted, portrait of a *Poet alamode*. Rist—inducted in 1647 into the leading language society, the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft (Fruit-Bearing Society)—assessed the principal danger to "die edle teütsche Hauptsprache" (the noble German language) to be "alamodesirende Aufschneider" (alamodista braggarts).⁴⁷ They were painted with elaborate brushwork

46. As is well known, Opitz's rules for poetry were not "original"—nor were they meant to be. Opitz's project entailed inserting German into the living tradition of classical poetry. Invention was a result of correct imitation (*imitatio*), not originality. Far from desiring to create new rules for poetry, Opitz strove to adapt the existing rules as they had already been elaborated, borrowing liberally from, for example, Justus Scaliger. On Scaliger's neo-Latinate poetics, see Marsh.

47. Two years prior to Rist's acceptance into the Fruit-Bearing Society, he had been made a member of the Nuremberg language society founded in 1644 by Georg Philipp Harsdörffer (1607–1658) and Johann Klaj (1616–1656): the Order of Flowers on the Pegnitz (Pegnesischer Blumenorden). As a member of the Fruit-Bearing Society—the most prestigious and the most supranational of the German societies, founded in 1617 by Prince Ludwig of Anhalt-Köthen and long a bastion of noble princes—Rist was known as "The Hale or Hearty One" (Der Rüstige). In 1660, Rist founded a North German regional language society, the Order of the Elbian Swans (Elbschwanenorden), where his leading role was recognized in his societal name, Palatin.

in Rist's widely read *Rettung der edlen teütschen Hauptsprache, wider alle deroselben muhtwillige Verderber und alamodesirende Auffschneider* (Rescue of the Noble German Language from All of Those Capricious Spoilers and Alamodista Braggarts). These blowhards were, in Rist's self-assured opinion, all too eager to see their literary efforts in print. They possessed no knowledge of the German language or of letters more generally—in fact, they were barely able to copy. But their ignorance, just a hair shy of complete illiteracy, provided no brook against the pursuit of fashion. Printing one's poetry had become a credential necessary to any fashionable person, Rist ridiculed. It was a mandatory entry in the early modern fashionista's curriculum vitae:

Es ist ja leider mehr zu beklagen alß zu verbessern/ daß wir eine solche verdrießliche Zeit erlebt haben/ inn welcher fast ein jeglicher/ der nur die teutsche Buchstaben kan nachmahlen/ oder wie die kleine Schulknaben daher lesen/ mit einer so dick-geschwollenen Einbildung sich anfüllet/ daß er sich auch nit schewet allerrhand teutsche Bücher durch öffentlichen Druck in die Welt zu sprengen/ gerade als gehörte ein mehrers nicht dazu als nur die blossе Wissenschaft etlicher offtt halbteutscher Wörter und unverständlicher reden. (77)

Unfortunately, it is more to be complained than corrected that we have lived through such a terrible time in which anyone who can only just manage to copy a German letter or read like the little schoolboys is filled with conceit swollen so large that he does not shy away from launching into public print all manner of German books into the world exactly as if nothing more was called for than merely knowing a few half-German words and incomprehensible phrases.

Rist's on-again off-again protégé, Philip von Zesen (1619–1689), a particularly zealous language reformer, went so far as to dub Vulcan—not Apollo—god of German poetry.⁴⁸ The crippled, deformed god ruled over a post-Opitzian generation of poetasters and “verse smiths,” Zesen sneered. These poetasters bore no relation to Apollo, his father, Zeus, or the Olympian's German incarnation, Opitz. They hammered away at the conventions Opitz had set for German poetry, brutalizing the language with their indiscriminate use of foreign words. But, worst of all, their poetry, adorned with fashionably foreign phrasings, was often preferred by the book-buying public, “rabble” in Zesen's eyes: “Der Pöbel/ ja auch offtt gelehrte leute (wo sie dißfals gelehrt zu achten) Ihm andere Lotterbuben und unzeitige Wortverstimpler vorziehen/ derer Schutzherr vielmehr der hinckende/ lahme Vulcan/ als der Musen Vater Apollo seyn soll” (Philippi Caesii *Deutscher Helicon*, n.p.). (The

48. The lengths Zesen advocated to purify German of loanwords remained the subject of jest among many of his contemporaries, including apparently Rist. For Zesen's advocacy of, for example, *Tagesleuchter* instead of *Fenster* (window) and other Germanic neologisms see the collection edited by William Jervis Jones.

rabble and sometimes even learned people [at least those who regard themselves as learned] prefer these rogues and inopportune manglers of words whose guardian is properly the limping, lame Vulcan rather than Apollo, father of the muses.) In the two short decades since Opitz's *Book*, Zesen reported that vernacular verse had reached its glorious pinnacle. But the bloom was already off the rose; German poetry had gone into a steep decline.

Alsatian poet and satirist Johann Michael Moscherosch (1601–1669), member of the renowned Fruit-Bearing Society since 1645 as well as Strasbourg's Aufrichtige Tannengesellschaft (Society of Upstanding Fir Trees), also worried about the wild proliferation of unlearned rhymes. In a dedicatory poem composed for the elaborate paratext of Justus Georg Schottelius's (1612–1676) *Teutscher Vers= oder Reimkunst* (Art of German Verse or Rhyme) (1641), the satirist celebrated the arrival of Schottelius's learned prosody. It came, Moscherosch sighed his relief, just in time to prevent countless versifiers from establishing a new Babel founded on the shifting sands of fantastical rhymes:

Komm es ist die höchste Zeit/
 Mein Freund! Dan fast jeder schreibt
 Jetzund Reime lang und breit/
 Ungesuchet/ wie ihn treibet
 Der Sturmvolle Grillen Geist:
 Keiner wil sich weisen lassen
 Jeder wil sich das anmassen/
 Das Er weder kan noch weist.

Come, it's high time,
 my friend! Almost everyone now
 writes rhymes far and wide,
 at random, however
 the stormy fantast's spirit drives him:
 No one can be taught a thing.
 Everyone presumes that
 of which he neither is able nor knows how to do.

Critiques of *alamode* language and poetasters were also launched by lettered men beyond the influential circles of the German language and poetic societies.⁴⁹ High German was not the only language that Germans had available to them to mock the inroads made by fashion. Satirist Johann Lauremberg, for example, sketched

49. Jacob Balde, SJ (1604–1668) took aim at fashionable men in Latin in his ode "Exteri mores in Germanium illati, contra insulsum hominum genus, Al' Modo dictum" ("On Those Foreign Customs Imported into Germany, against That Kind of Stupid Man, called Al' Modo"). Kühlmann provides a brief discussion of Balde's ode.

the woes of a poet who refused to submit to fashion in the fourth of his *Veer olde beröhmmede Schertz-Gedichte* (Four Good Old [Low German] Satires): “Van Alamodischer Poësie, und Rimen” (On Alamode Poetry and Rhymes) (1652).

Johann Peter Titz (1619–1689)—“Tityrus” in the Königsberger Dichterkreis (Königsberg [Kaliningrad] Poets’ Circle)—added his voice to the mounting war cries against unlearned, braggart poets. In his *Zwey Bücher von der Kunst Hochdeutsche Verse und Lieder zu machen* (Two Books on the Art of High German Verse and Songs) (1642), Titz included an adaptation of an episode taken from Traiano Boccalini’s (1556–1613) *De’ ragguagli di Parnaso* (Relations from Parnassus) with the German title “Newe Zeitung aus dem Parnaß” (New News from Parnassus).⁵⁰ There, perched on Parnassus’s heights, a poet appeals to Apollo to shore up the literary field’s defenses against an onslaught of the unlettered:

Die/ welche für dein Volck gehalten werden wollen/
 Und die wir deine Freund’ und Söhne heissen sollen/
 Die die sinds/ derer schar die Musen itzt verdringt/
 Und deinem Helicon das grössest’ unheil bringt.
 Ich kan es nicht umbgehn die Warheit zu bekennen.
 Die meisten lassen sich viel lieber Weise nennen/
 Als daß sie Weise sind. Sie suchen blossen Schein/
 Und wollen für Gelehrt nur angesehen seyn.
 Dann kommt die böse Sucht/ daß dieses Volck durch Schrifftten
 Auch offtmals einen Ruhm und Nahmen ihm will stifften
 Und sich für seelig helt/ wenn es erlangen kann/
 Daß auch der Pöfel spricht/ Sieh/ sieh/ da geht der Mann/
 Der solche Weisheit hat/ und Bücher weiß zu machen.
 Ich muß der Thorheit nur in meinem Hertzen lachen.
 Wer Hände hat/ der schreibt/ und machet sich bekandt/
 Da Schweigen besser ist/ durch Eitelkeit und Tand. (n.p.)

Those who want to be regarded as your people
 And who we are supposed to call your friends and sons
 Are those whose gaggle now thrusts the Muses aside
 And brings the worst calamity to your Helicon.
 I cannot avoid confessing the truth.
 Most prefer to let themselves be called sages
 Instead of actually being sages. They seek merely the appearance

50. The German adaptation included by Titz may have been taken from a translation that seems first to have appeared in 1617 in Frankfurt under the title *Relation auss Parnasso, oder, Politische und moralische Discurs: wie dieselbe von allerley Welthändeln darinnen ergehen/ erstlich Italianisch beschrieben von Trajano Boccalini*. Boccalini’s *De’ ragguagli* was translated several times into English in the seventeenth century under different titles, first in 1626.

And want to be regarded as learned.
 Then follows the evil habit that this people often desires to establish
 With writings a reputation and a name
 And regards itself blessed when it can manage
 That even the rabble says, see, see, there goes the man
 Who possesses such wisdom and knows how to make books.
 I have to laugh in my heart at the idiocy.
 He who has hands, he writes and makes himself known
 By his vanity and baubles while silence is better.

Titz himself was a prolific occasional poet. Presumably it was his established position—first as *Konrektor* (deputy head of school) of Danzig's Marienschule and then, after completion of his doctorate in Leiden, as professor of ancient languages, poetry, and rhetoric in Danzig—which distinguished his poems from "Eitelkeit und Tand" (vanity and baubles). Poems by those who merely sought the "Schein" (appearance) of learning were geegaws, wares for sale by poetasters from whom riffraff bought their amusing things.

Leading members of Nuremberg's Order of Flowers on the Pegnitz composed one of the funniest sketches of a fashionable poet, often cited at length in subsequent prosodies. In the continuation of the *Pegnesisches Schäfergedicht* (Pegnitzian Pastoral) (1645), the character Hylas has abandoned city life for a pastoral existence, having exchanged his "townsman's coat" for a "shepherd's cloak." Hylas, alas, has been overwhelmed by the fashionable cloak he so recently donned. Literally every third word of his "German" love poem is foreign. In the love letters he hides in a tree and addresses to "Mademoiselle," Hylas mixes barbarisms—incorrect French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and even a little English for good measure. Another "shepherd" explains that Hylas's exceptionally bizarre behavior stems from his inability to distinguish poetic convention from real life. Insufficiently educated to be a poetizing shepherd, Hylas reads far too literally. And when he turns his hand to poetry, a pursuit necessary to woo a fashionable mistress, the results are predictably deplorable:

So hat sich dieser (der ein Schäfer ist) vor der Zeit in Städten verhalten/ ist aber gar
 neulich aus dem Burgerrock in die Hirtenjuppe gekrochen nur darum/ weil er unsren
 Stand von so vielen hochsinnigen Schriftsabfassern lobpreislichst beschreiben und
 herausstreichen hören/ sowol auch gelesen. Sonsten weil der abenteuerliche Mensch
 sich von Kindsbeinen auf in Liebs= und Poetischen Büchern mit überflüssigen Fleiß
 umgesehen/ und dabey seine eigenen Verstand und Vernunftmaß/ in Auslegung
 solcher Lehr= und Lustgedichte/ (welche alle sich doch gemeiniglich auf etwas an-
 ders gründen/ und oft wohl gar das Gegenspiel wollen verstanden haben) nachgan-
 gen/ als gläubet er von allen den Lügenfunden der alten Dichtere/ als wann sie den
 Wortverstand nach zu fassen/ ja die natürliche Warheit selbst wären. Gebrauchet
 sich derhalben so seltsamer und Rhodomontischer Redarten in Beschreibung seiner

Liebespossen und anderer Sachen/ daß einem die Ohren darüber schwitzen möchten/ und könne man mit seinen Schwänken zur Noht einer Kröten vergeben. (87)

Formerly, this one (who is a shepherd) [Hylas] passed his time in cities, but recently he has crawled out of the townsman's coat into the shepherd's cloak only because he has heard and read the praise heaped on our estate by many distinguished writers. Furthermore, because the foolhardy man has skimmed books of love poetry since he was a little boy with undue diligence, following all the while only his own understanding and standards of reasonableness to interpret these didactic and entertaining poems (which in fact all typically are based on something else and often seek to have exactly the opposite understood), he believes all the made-up inventions of the old poets as if, according to their literal meaning, they were natural reality itself. For this reason he uses such strange and Rodomontic phrases to describe his love affairs and other things enough to make one's ears sweat.

These and many other satirical weapons were launched in an effort to shore up the carefully circumscribed world of letters against barbarians who had left the gates long behind them. Hylas, like Quixote or Sorel's Extravagant Shepherd before him, provided grist for the satiric mill, one among the throng of the untutored in thrall to their books, their imitations all too literal. They were new players on the literary field, and they remained woefully ignorant of the rules of the game. Hylas, for example, was victim to the fashion for pastoral poetry. His poor education, marked by his bad French and Latin as well as his naïve readings of love poetry, had made him easy prey. This relative illiteracy was common to the many novices whom Rist called "alamodista braggarts" and Zesen "rabble." We will encounter them again in the next chapter. Fashion had drawn the mis-educated, such as Hylas, to poetry and led them into the world of letters. There, the poetic attempts necessary to establish their fashionability were read by more established poets as sad documentation of the dissolution that fashion had worked, encouraging improper *imitatio* (*Nachahmung*). Fashion was not merely a coat that Hylas could put on and take off at will. Instead, its influence was far more pervasive. Inspired by fashion, Hylas's poetic imagination was limited to the corporeal, particularly the erotic. He and many like him failed to transcend the level of the letter and remained confined to the material level of the text. Fashion drew them to poetry while arousing their sensual appetites. They composed verse as a means of sensual and sexual gratification.

As fashion got under their skin, it also rendered Hylas and his brethren un-German, bastard mongrels who babbled a barbaric mixture of languages. The *Sprachpflege* (language care) and *Spracharbeit* (language work) promoted by all seventeenth-century German-language societies were meant to form a bulwark against fashion's incursions into the nascent German world of letters. As Georg Philipp Harsdörffer (1607–1658), coauthor of the *Pegnitzian Pastoral* and

prominent member of the Fruit-Bearing Society, explained, “Diese Spracharbeit ist die schuldige Danknemung so wir unserem lieben Vatterland mit unsterblichem Nachruhm zu leisten verpflichtet sind/ damit es der täglich eingemischten fremden Wörter=Schande entnommen/ und daß das Teutsche in Teutschland vernemlich und verständlich erhalten werde” (“Erinnerung” [Reminder], *Frauenzimmer Gesprächspiele* [Ladies’ Conversational Games] 42). (This language work is a debt of gratitude that we are duty bound to pay our beloved homeland, winning eternal fame by erasing its daily disgrace from the foreign words that barge in and by preserving a clear and comprehensible German in Germany.)⁵¹ To the regret of Opitz and his self-styled followers, Germans had remained overly patient with bad verse. They had left the vernacular uncultivated too long, allowing it to be easily infiltrated by foreign words and expressions. In other words, fashion had marched in, meeting little resistance. Good patriots, members of the language societies, would not allow German’s abuse to continue. Opitz had labored to renovate poetry. *Sprachpatrioten* (language patriots) sought to reform the language as a whole.⁵² It was, they wrote, a minefield pitted with foreign influence, and it desperately needed a clean sweep.

Poetic Handbooks

Nowhere, it would seem at first glance, was the goal to cleanse the language and its poetry of fashion’s influence furthered more effectively than in Balthasar Kindermann’s *Der Deutsche Poët* (The German Poet) of 1664. It was one of many poetic guidebooks, a genre of how-to guides that only grew in popularity as the century progressed. Kindermann’s German poet, illustrated in the frontispiece, was an unyielding censor, scorching poets *à la mode* and burning their deplorable scribblings (fig. 2). In the center of the engraving, the German poet stands stern and tall. In the background, above his right shoulder, we see a female figure, possibly his muse or Poetry herself. Her hair stands on end, singed by the force of the divine inspiration falling from the thick clouds swirling above. At the German poet’s feet, reclining in the near foreground, a merry figure raises his can of drink and his tobacco pipes. His hair too has been singed; he too has apparently received poetic inspiration. Unlike the German poet (who does not deign even to glance at him), this louche fellow has used his inspiration for financial gain. Clearly visible in his right hand is a money pouch, still stuffed quite full considering his obvious affinity for cards and dice. Among the many gaming objects surrounding him lie printed sheets of poetry—“BühlerLieder” (courting songs) and “Schmähschriefften” (defamations)—for which he has received a handsome sum. The German poet, wearing the crown of laurel, holds his own pages in his hand, carefully labeled “Der Deutsche Poet

51. The “Erinnerung” prefaces the fourth part of the *Gesprächspiele* (1644).

52. William Jervis Jones has collected a wealth of materials about *Sprachpflege* (language care).



Figure 2. Frontispiece to Balthasar Kindermann's *The German Poet* (1664). The German poet will not be enflamed by "love songs." Reproduced courtesy of the Herzog August Bibliothek.

durch Kurandorn" (The German Poet by Kurandor). (Kurandor was Kindermann's pen name since his acceptance into Rist's Elbschwanenorden [Order of the Elbian Swans] in 1659.) An unusually aggressive participant in the Opitzian project to purify poetry, Kurandor torches his nemesis's pages. Inscriptions in the engraving justify this inquisitorial act: in the cloud, "Von oben her entzündet" (Lit from above); on the table at the left, "auff Sprach und Kunst gegründet" (based on language and art); and at the right, "solch Ehr und freyheit findet" (finds such honor and freedom).

Should any reader fail to understand this anonymous engraving, Kindermann also included his own "Explanation of the Frontispiece":

Erklärung des Kupffer=Blats.
 Der Mißbrauch/ der bißher im Schreiben eingerissen/
 Der Liegt itzund gar recht zu unser Dichter Füßen:
 Die Schrifft/ womit man das keusche Volck verführt/
 Und manchem einen Fleck verwegen angeschmirt;
 Die werden dem Vulcan zum Opffer übergeben.
 Warum? Es ziemt sich nicht/ daß so ein Verß sol leben/
 Der Gott und Tugend nicht zun [*sic*] Zweck und Grunde hat.
 Sol das ein Dichter seyn/ der darum nur sein Blat Mit Versen
 überdeckt/ damit Er Geld/ zu sauffen/
 Zu spielen/ oder ja im Land herum zu lauffen
 Dafür bekommen mög; O eben weit gefehlt!
 Ein solcher Lumpenhund/ der unsre Kunst so quält/
 Der wer' in wahrheit wehrt/ daß man bey seinem Leben/
 Ihm eitel Heu und Stroh zu fressen möchte geben/
 Wie? oder/ solt auch wol ein solch versoffnes Schwein
 Des Lorbeers/ und was sonst dem anhängt/ fähig seyn?
 Uns Edel/ Reich und Groß und zun Poeten machen
 Das sind solche Sachen/
 Die nicht ein ieder bald/ wan Er nur reimt/ geneust;
 Nein/ sondern nur ein Geist
 Von oben her entzündet/
 Auf Sprach und Kunst gegründet/
 Solch Ehr und Freiheit findet.

The abuse that formerly tore through writing
 Lies now appropriately at our poet's feet:
 Those writings that were used to seduce the chaste
 Or over-boldly to besmirch another
 Will be handed over in offering to Vulcan.
 Why? It is unseemly that such a verse should live

Whose purpose and reason is not God and virtue.
 Is he supposed to be a poet who covers his page with verse
 only for money to booze, to gamble,
 or even to run wild around the country?
 Oh, how far from the mark!
 The dirty dog who so tortures our art
 Deserves in truth to eat
 nothing but hay and straw his life long.
 What? Or should such a drunken sow
 Be capable of laurel and all that which accompanies it?
 What makes us noble, rich, and great and poets,
 Yes, these are such things
 Not enjoyed by everyone who rhymes;
 No! Only a spirit
 Inspired from above,
 Grounded in language and art,
 Finds such honor and freedom.

The verses insist that not “everyone who rhymes” enjoys those things that make “us noble, rich, and great and poets”—a sentiment emphasized in Kindermann/Kurandor’s entire first chapter, “In which it is taught that nature as well as practice and art make a good poet.” Here Kindermann, like other ardent language and poetic reformers, echoed Opitz’s *Book* and its insistence that a true poet must first be blessed by birth and then trained by study and practice. As Opitz had written, “Das ich es für eine verlorene arbeit halte/ im fall sich jemand an unsere deutsche Poeterey machen wolte/ der/ nebenst dem das er ein Poete von natur sein muß/ in den griechischen und Lateinischen büchern nicht wol durchtrieben ist/ und von ihnen den rechten grieff erlernet hat” (25). (I regard it as wasted labor if someone wanted to attempt our German poetry who, in addition to being a poet from nature, was not thoroughly familiar with the Greek and Latin books and knew from them the right approach.)

But in this handbook’s repeated insistence that not everyone could be a poet, that a true poet was born not made, lay an unresolved (and unresolvable) tension. It was truly an intractable problem, and the tension structured the field of letters into the eighteenth century. It was a fault line that had coursed through Opitz’s *Book* and had grown only more pressing in Kindermann’s *German Poet*, for Kindermann’s (and many others’) adamanace that a true poet was a singular creature ran head-on against his book’s explicit aim to teach its readers to compose verse—an aim advertised for all and sundry to read on the title page:

Der Deutsche Poët/ Darinnen gantz deutlich und ausführlich gelehret wird/ welcher gestalt ein zierliches Gedicht/ auf allerley Begebenheit/ auf Hochzeiten/ Kindtauffen/ Gebuhrts= und Nahmens=Tagen/ Begräbnisse/ Empfah= und Glückwünschungen/ u.s.f. So wohl hohen als niederen Standes=Personen/ in gar kurtzer Zeit/ kan

wol erfunden und ausgeputzet werden/ Mit sattsahmen/ und aus den vornehmsten Poeten hergenommenen Gedichten beleuchtet/ und also eingerichtet/ daß den Liebhaber der Göttlichen Poesie dieser an statt aller geschriebenen Prosodien und Poetischen Schrifften zur Nohtdurfft dienen kan.

The German Poet, in which it is very clearly and thoroughly taught how an elegant poem for any occasion can be invented and ornamented in no time at all, for weddings, christenings, birth- and name days, funerals, and in congratulations, etc., for people of high as well as low condition. Illuminated with many poems taken from the finest poets and accordingly arranged so that it may serve the lover of divine poetry as a handy replacement for all written prosodies and poetical writings.

The German poet might be accused of hypocrisy. Although he censored fashionably occasional verses with the torch, his book sought to capitalize on their popularity. Should any aspiring poet be short of cash, the title page proclaims, she or he might dispense with all other “written prosodies and poetical writings.” *The German Poet* was “a handy replacement” for an expensive library tricked out with the many handbooks and prosodies on the market. Kindermann’s book promised to provide all the materials anyone could possibly need to invent and ornament a poem “in no time at all.” *The German Poet* was in a double bind, one in which the entire genre was caught.

The pages of Andreas Tscherning’s *Unvorgreiffliches Bedencken über etliche Miszbräuche in der deutschen Schreib- und Sprach-Kunst* (Unanticipated Concern about Various Abuses in the Arts of German Writing and Language) (1659) were laced with the same problematic. Tscherning (1611–1659), professor of poetry at Rostock, had included a florilegium of the nicest bits “aus den fürtrefflichsten deutschen Poëten als Opitz und Flemmingen” (from the superior German poets such as Opitz and Flemming) (n.p.). But no doubt the abuse of his own collection, so conveniently alphabetized by topic, concerned the professor. Did it not make poetic composition a little too easy? In a short poem immediately preceding his helpful list, Tscherning exhorted readers that any “common man” may bind words with verse, but knowledge of classical antiquity alone makes the poet:

Hier liesest du Athen/ hier hastu Rom zu finden/
Nicht reime nur allein. Mit worten worte binden/
Kan auch ein schlechter Mann.
Wer nicht genau versteht/
Was Rom war und Athen/ heißt nicht ein Poet. (n.p.)

Here you read of Athens, here Rome may be found,
Not only rhymes. Words with words can be bound
By any common man.
He who does not really understand
What Rome was and Athens, is no poet.

While handbooks such as Kindermann's and Tscherning's sought to exterminate bad poetry and warned that "any common man" was "no poet," they simultaneously lowered the barriers of entry to the field of letters. Their handy little guides were, naturally, available to anyone who could purchase them.

Outfitted with handbooks, occasional poets sprang up like mushrooms on the literary field. Their verse has been preserved in thousands of examples, likely only the tip, changing metaphors, of what Gerhard Dünnhaupt called the "baroque iceberg." They were, as Opitz had alleged, undertaken on any number of occasions, and were part of an economy at cross-purposes to poetry's original function as hidden theology. All true poetry continued to flow from this divine source, but, as Opitz had indicated, its waters were polluted. Those who composed verses on demand took their inspiration from this muddled source, demeaning poetry and the poet, reducing one of the *artes liberales* to mechanical status.⁵³ In fact, as Opitz had made clear in a line quoted tirelessly by his acolytes, such men were not true poets at all: "Denn ein Poete kan nicht schreiben wenn er wil/ sondern wenn er kan/ und ihn die regung des Geistes welches Ovidius unnd andere vom Himmel her zue kommen vermeinen/ treibet" (19). (Because a poet cannot write when he chooses, but only when he is able, led by the spirit that Ovid and others believe to emanate from heaven.)

Those who turned to their handbooks were moved by a different "spirit" than the *furor poeticus*. Members of Mr. Fashion's retinue, such poets' inspiration did not "emanate from heaven" but was stirred by parts below. Fashion, as we have seen, never failed to arouse the body. And fashionable poets proved no exception. In their excessive lust, they had made poetry their whore. Poetry was supposed to be a virgin, but she was now a harlot. Harsdörffer coined a much-repeated opinion: "Gewießlich es ist zu betrauren/ daß die edle Poetery so verächtlich gehalten wird. Sie ist eine keusche Jungfrau/ welche alle Unreinigkeit hasset/ und Anfangs sonderlich zu dem Gottesdienst gewidmet gewesen/ auch von denen Völckeren/ welche sonsten aller andern Wissenschaften und Künste unwissend gewesen. Nun wird sie/ als eine gemeine Metze/ zur Wollust und Uppigkeit gezogen" (*Ladies' Conversational Games*, pt. 4, 55–56). (Certainly it is lamentable that noble poetry has been so abased. She is a chaste virgin who detests all impurity and initially was particularly devoted to holy worship even among those peoples who otherwise knew nothing of the sciences and arts. Now she is taught lust and luxury like a common strumpet.)⁵⁴ Harsdörffer diagnosed poetry as a fallen woman brought low

53. For an overview of the development of poetry as one of the liberal arts in Alteuropa, see Stöckmann, *Vor der Literatur* (41).

54. Harsdörffer's stylization of contemporary poetry as a fallen woman was quoted directly by Schottel, for example: "2. Nicht daß diese angedeutete Wissenschaft oder Anleitung/ an sich einen Poeten machen/ und demselben die Kunst eintröpfeln könne...Giebt demnach die Verskunst richtige Anweisung und Unterricht/ wie jedes Poetisches Gedicht recht und wol zu ordnen/ machet aber an sich keine Poeten/ eben wie die Baukunst an sich keinen Werckmeister machet/ sondern jedes Gebäw gleichrichtig/ wolfügend und festständig anzurichten/ anweisung thut. In dem CLI. Gesprächspiele Herrn Harsdorffers wird folgendes von wolerwehnten Autore vermeldet: Die Edle Poeterey/ spricht

by a confusion of the *furor poeticus* with a *furor sexualis*. His assessment drew on a long tradition of critiques of anacreontic poetry and its allegedly epicurean, even atheistic, practitioners. New was the charge that poetry was a thing of fashion, made a strumpet by a crowd of poor imitators.

Polemics against poetry's whorishness did nothing to curb its circulation, of course. Poetic handbooks abounded; poetry got around. Harsdörffer himself penned what is today the most famous example of the new genre, *Poetischer Trichter* (Poetic Funnel) (1647–1653). These guides appealed to a new market segment—one that included female readers, to whom the doors of higher education and its training in the conventions of classical rhetoric and poetry remained firmly closed. Nothing if not a savvy businessman, Harsdörffer wrote *the* book that at midcentury appealed most explicitly to this growing market segment: *Frauenzimmer Gesprächspiele* (Ladies' Conversational Games) (1641–1649), a work in eight installments, estimated by Petra Dollinger to have been one of the century's bestsellers.⁵⁵

A veritable cottage industry of poetic guidebooks sprang up in the vacuum after Opitz's early death. Claiming Opitz's legacy, as we have seen, provided legitimacy to a "true poet." It also sold books. Frankfurt publisher Christian Klein (1612–1661), for example, knew to profit from the demand for guides to vernacular poetry. He published Enoch Hanmann's continuation of Opitz's *Book* again and again: *Enoch Hanmanns Anmerckungen In die Teutsche Prosodie/ Darinnen daßjenige Was etwan Herr Opitz übergangen oder damals nicht erfunden gewesen/ kürztlich dargestellt wird* (Enoch Hanmann's Notes on German Prosody in Which That Is Briefly Shown Which Mr. Opitz Ignored or Which in His Time Had Not Been Invented). Hanmann's sequel to Opitz, 250 pages in octavo replete with Hanmann's own poetic efforts, must have been quite lucrative for Klein. By 1658, it went into what was at least the eighth printing of the second, expanded edition. Others followed. Hanmann claimed in the preface to this second edition: "Und ob es ferner zudrucken jemahls würdig gewesen/ habe ich allezeit mit Nein beantwortet; Der Herr Verleger aber hat solches zum andernmahl begehret" (106). (I always answered the question whether it [his sequel] was worthy ever to be reprinted with no; the gentleman

er/ ist eine keusche Jungfrau/ welche alle Unreinigkeit hasset/ und anfangs sonderlich zu dem Gottesdienste gewiedmet gewesen/ auch von denen Völkern/ welche sonst aller Wissenschaftt und Künsten unwissend gewesen. Nun wird zu zum öfftern/ als eine gemeine Metzge/ zur Wollust und uppigkeit gezogen" (3–4). (2. Not that this aforementioned science or introduction can make a poet per se and spoon-feed that art.... Thus the art of verse can provide correct advice and instruction in how every kind of poetical poem may be correctly and nicely ordered, but it cannot make poets, much like architecture cannot make master builders but instead provides instruction on how to make every kind of structure in a correct, pleasing, and stable manner. In Mr. Harsdörffer's *Conversational Game* CLI the aforementioned author pronounces: Noble Poetry, he says, is a chaste virgin who detests all impurity and initially was particularly devoted to holy worship even among those peoples who otherwise knew nothing of the sciences and arts. Now she is more often taught lust and luxury like a common strumpet.)

55. Harsdörffer is sometimes nominated for the title of first "modern German author," a writer who was able to earn his income from his pen.

publisher, however, wished to do it again.) Whether or not one believes Hanmann's modest protest, his continuation of Opitz's *Book* made money.

Hanmann's *Notes* was, as we have seen, hardly the only post-Opitzian guide to poetry; Rist's "fashionable braggart" could have stocked an entire bookshelf with do-it-yourself guides. Should he need a quick rhyme with the sound "affen," for example, he need merely consult the table included in Titz's *Two Books*, where a variety of solutions were offered: "schlaffen (*dormire*) straffen/ Schaffen/ die waffen (*arma*)" as well as "die Affen/ Pfaffen" and "gaffen/ schlaffen (*laxum esse*)" (n.p.). Or if a line was needed on a certain topic, Tscherning's index of topics with lines culled from "superior German poets" was just the thing. If the aspiring poet was short of funds to stock his shelves with all the available titles, Kindermann's *German Poet* promised everything in a single volume. Despite their ubiquity by the 1670s, the demand for reference guides only increased into the eighteenth century.

Gottfried Wilhelm Sacer (1635–1699), probably the author of the popular satire *Reime dich/ oder ich fresse dich* (Compose Yourself, or I'll Gobble You Up) (1673), advised his would-be poet, harlequin's German cousin Hans Wurst, that actual study of any of these prosodies was quite unnecessary.⁵⁶ Required of a "poet" was only the ability to pronounce his opinion:

Es stehet dir frey Hanß Wurst/ ob du dich ein klein wenig auch/ ehe du dich völlig zum Reimen und Schreiben rütest in einer *Prosodie* umbsehen wilt: kanst dir des *Cæsii Helicon*, oder **Schottels** Vers= und Reim=Kunst/ oder **Harsdorffers** Poetischen Trichter/ oder **Sacers** Erinnerungen wegen der Deutschen *Poëten* oder nim sonsten einen der hievon etwas in Druck gehen lassen. Du darffst dich nicht zu Tode darinnen *studiren*/ viel Nachsinnen und alles nach der Schnur beobachten/ hüpfet nur darüber hin wie der Hahn über die glüende Kohle. Ließ solche Bücher nicht gelehrter daraus zu werden und dich nach den vorgeschriebenen Regulen und Lehrsätzen zu richten: Nein/ sondern nur dein hochverständiges Urtheil davon zu fällen/ und daß du gleichwohl sagen kanst du habest *prosodien* gelesen und wütest wo sie hiezehlten/ damit man dich nicht vor einem unwissenden Tölpel ansehen möchte darum ist es nur zu thun. Diejenigen so da vermeinen daß ein *Poët* nothwendig müsse *Prosodien* verstehen/ irren sehr weit. (59–60)

It's up to you, Hans Wurst, if you too want to sneak a peek at a prosody before arming yourself to rhyme and write. You could glance at Zesen's *Helicon*, Schottel's *Verse- and*

56. Sacer is commonly identified as the author of the satire. Interestingly, Morhof, always exceedingly well informed, believed its author to be the same as the author of the *Lustige Rhetorica Oder Kurtzweiliger Redner* (Laughable Rhetoric or Amusing Speaker), another anonymously published work, usually attributed to Johannes Riemer (1648–1714). Morhof states: "Es ist ohne Zeiffel derselbe Autor, der den kurtzweiligen Redner neulich geschriebene/ worinnen viel aus diesem Buche wiederholet wird/ der sonst aus andern Schrifften wohl bekandt" (*Unterricht* 396–97). (Without a doubt, it is the same author who recently wrote the *Amusing Speaker*, in which many things are repeated from this book that are also well known from other sources.)

Rhyme-Art, or Harsdörffer's *Poetic Funnel*, or Sacer's *Notes on German Poets*, or just take anyone who has published on the topic. There's no need to plague yourself with long reflection or to observe every detail. Just skip right along like a rooster over hot coals. Don't read such books to become better educated or to orient yourself according to the accepted rule and maxims: No! Read them instead to pronounce your highly intelligent judgment and so that you too can say you have read prosodies and know their point so that you are not regarded as an ignorant baboon. Those who believe that a poet must necessarily understand prosodies are very wrong.

These handbooks were flush with examples of various genres. All stood ripe for the plucking. As *Compose Yourself* further advised the would-be poet,

Allezeit wenn du ein geschicktes und gespicktes *carmen elaboriren* wilt/ und andere Poeten abzustecken/ nim **Tschernings Poetisch Schatzkammer/ Harsdörffers Poetischen Trichter/ Treuers neulich heraus gegebenen Daedalum, Bergmanns Aerarium poëticum & c** zur Hand. Lege diese Bücher rings umb dich herüm/ nebenst den **Opitz/ den Flemming/ Risten/ Schirmern/ Albinen/ Neumarcken/ Homburgen/ Siebern/ Clajum/ Francken/ Helden & c**. Nim aus jeden was dir Wunders werth vorkömmt.

Whenever you want to make off with a delicate and elegant *carmen* and to rip off other poets, take Tscherning's *Poetic Treasury*, Harsdörffer's *Poetic Funnel*, Treuer's newly released *Daedalum*, Bergmann's *Poetic Aeries*, and the like to hand. Position these books in a circle around you, next to Opitz, Flemming, Rist, Schirmer, Albinen, Neumarck, Homburg, Siebern, Claj, Francke, Held, and so forth. Just pluck from each what seems admirable to you!

Because such famous poets would probably be recognized, Sacer recommended to Hans Wurst: "Du kanst auch wol Gelegenheit ersehen/ und eines bessern *Poëtens* denn du bist/ noch nicht heraus gegebene Arbeit heimlich entwenden/ oder aber ein ferne gedrucktes Gedicht/ und eines welches ohne *Autori* Nahmen ausgefertigt worden/ dir zueignen/ und fein ordentlich von Wort zu Wort in deinem Nahmen drucken lassen/ nur daß du vorn eine Zeile oder Blat änderst oder nach deiner Art hinzu fügest" (24). (You can easily spy out an opportunity to pocket the unpublished work of some better poet than yourself, or seize upon a poem published in some far-off place. Better still, claim something published anonymously as yours, and have it beautifully published verbatim, in your name; just attach a few lines or maybe a page preceding it.) Sacer did not fail to detail those fashionable poetic forms that Hans Wurst should be ready to claim as his own: "Alles was du rülpest/ muß eine Überschrift seyn/ alles was du reusperst/ muß ein Schulfüchsisches *Acrosticon* oder *Eteostichon* seyn/ alles was du auswirffst muß ein *Anagramma* seyn/ alles was du niesest/ muß ein *Cabalistisches Sonnet* seyn" (50). (Everything that you

burp must be a caption, you'll have to clear your throat with a pedantic acrosticon or eteostichon, you must toss off an anagram, and you may sneeze only a Caballistic sonnet.) Stolen, burped, and sneezed out, his poetry, of course, hardly merited the name.

As quickly as the *alamode* critique had swelled, by the 1660s it was on its way out. As it receded, a new fashionable vocabulary rolled in. While it might appear paradoxical, the ebb of the *alamode* discourse signaled fashion's victory on the literary battlefield, neither to be routed nor to be burned with the German poet's torch. True to the logic of fashion sketched in the broadsheet depicting the funeral procession of *Allmodo*, one fashion's death was now followed by another's birth. Nascent fashion always lay safe in its cradle. In other words, as the *alamode* discourse receded, a new literary fashion swept the field, one outfitted with a new vocabulary. Christian Weise (1642–1708) sent up the language purism promulgated by the language societies as a fad that had spread even to the feeble-minded, in his *Anhang eines neuen Lust=Spieles von einer zweyfachen Poeten=Zunft* (Appended Comedy about a Twofold Society of Poets) (1680). Yet Weise unwittingly unleashed the short-lived fashion for all things *politisch* with the success of titles such as *Der politische Redner* (The Political Speaker) (1677).⁵⁷

Beginning in the 1680s and then with gathering momentum in the 1690s, another new fashion swept through the world of letters: gallantry. The increasing fashionability of letters in German throughout the seventeenth century had attracted new players onto the literary field. The fashion for gallantry would attract still more. Imported from France and no less influential in England than in Germany, gallantry and its printed articulations created a reading public across Europe molded in various places in the same fashion.

Those who critiqued successive fashions—*alamode*, *politisch*, *galant*—repackaged wine in new casks, pouring and repouring their anxiety over the commodification of letters and the feminization of the literary field. Cries deploring fashion's rule hardly disappeared, of course. Yet, with increasing numbers by the 1690s, some *literati* seemed to have viewed fashion as inevitable, an ineluctable result of the increasing number of participants in the world of letters. Poet Christian Hoffmann von Hoffmannswaldau (1616–1679) merely noted “itziger Schreibsucht” (today's rage for writing) in the preface to his *Deutsche Uebersetzungen und Getichte* (German Translations and Poems) (2r). Daniel Georg Morhof (1639–1691), famed polyhistor and poetry professor in Rostock and then Kiel, simply stated in his important *Unterricht von der deutschen Sprache und Poesie* (Instruction in German Language and Poetry) (1682/1700): “Es fehlet wenig daß die Tichterey nicht gar den Handwerckern unter die Fäuste gerät” (396). (Poetizing has practically been taken over by manual laborers.)

57. Wicke has thoroughly examined the “political” discourse, exploring those titles that sought to capitalize on Weise's popularity.

The commodification of poetry remained, of course, a source of weak jokes like that Morhof makes about Marculus: “Der Tichter Huren-Sohn/ Mißt sein liederlich Getichte/ Nicht nach Würden und gewichte/ Sondern nach der Füße Zahl” (*Unterricht* 459). (Bastard son of poets/ measures his slatternly poems/ not according to their dignity and weight/ but to the number of their feet.) Similarly, Christian Hölmann (1677–1744), editor of the fourth and fifth parts of the *Neukirchische Sammlung* (Neukirch Collection), lightheartedly foresaw a literary field overrun: “Es wird die gantze Welt bald ein Parnassus seyn;/ Denn aller orten pflegt es verse her zu schnein” (302). (Soon the whole world will be a Parnassus/ Because verses blow like snow from every corner.) But Hölmann, like Morhof, is no longer really concerned.

A precise explanation for this audible shift in tone is no easier to come by than pinpointing an exact reason why the *alamode* discourse began precisely when it did. But certainly this more relaxed attitude about fashion and its novelties went hand in hand with the German reception of gallantry. It became a lifestyle for Germans, one we shall see them at pains to imitate “in the right way” (see chapter 2). Most importantly, gallantry required the participation of women and sought to introduce them to the world of letters. Thus, while fashion was always marked as feminine, the fashion for gallantry was feminine in quite another way. At midcentury, Harsdörffer had kept Angelica, Julia, and Cassandra in *Ladies’ Conversational Games* under the strict tutelage of their male interlocutors (Reymund, Vespasian, and Degenwert), who acted more often than not as their preceptors. Gallantry, on the other hand, offered women far more latitude.

By century’s end, fashion, gallantry, and women’s literary activities were inextricably bound together—to the alarm of some and the delight of others. Perhaps nowhere is the new attitude toward the participation of women in the world of letters more evident than in the work of Magnus Daniel Omeis (1646–1708). Omeis’s sanguine disposition is all the more striking on account of his position as a well-established poet and president (*Präses*) of Nuremberg’s Order of Flowers on the Pegnitz from 1697 until his death. Omeis, or Dafnis as he was known in the society, could have been a staunch defender of poetry’s “pure” Opitzian origins. His predecessor as president, Harsdörffer, had, we have seen, decried poetry’s prostitution. But Omeis saw things differently. In the foreword to his poetic handbook, *Gründliche Anleitung zur teutschen accuraten Reim- und Dicht-Kunst* (Fundamental Introduction to the German Correct Arts of Rhyme and Verse), of 1704, Omeis explained his project:

Habe mich derowegen/ aus einiger Patronen und geliebter Freunde Ansuchen/ mit Gott entschlossen/ eine gründliche Anleitung zur T. Poësie (wie sich diese ietziger Zeit im schönsten Flor befindet) ihren beiden Theilen/ als der Reim= und Dicht= Kunst/ nach/ in ein von bewährten Lehr-Sätzen und reinen kurzen Exempeln bestehendes *Systema* oder richtige Lehr-Ordnung zu bringen; worüber von mir ferner

hin/ so Gott will/ mehrere *Collegia Poëtica* können gehalten/ und dadurch zugleich so wol bei dem *galanten* Frauenzimmer/ deßen nicht geringer Theil heut zu Tage große Neigung zur Teutschen Poësie trägt/ als auch bei der Löbl. Pegnesischen Blumen-Gesellschaft einigen theils gegenwärtig= theils künftigen Mitgliedern/ wol-ersprißliches Nutzen und Ergetzen möge geschaffet werden. (4v-r)

At the request of several patrons and dear friends, I decided with God to compose a basic introduction to German poetry (which at present blooms most brilliant) according to both its parts, the arts of rhyme and verse, brought into an established *Systema* or a correct lesson plan composed of proven maxims and pure short examples. On this topic, God willing, I may in the future give several poetical courses and in this way provide salutary benefit and enjoyment to gallant ladies—who in no small number today bear great affection for German poetry—as well as to present and future members of the esteemed Pegnitzian Society of Flowers.

Professor and twice rector at the University of Altdorf, Omeis dangled a tantalizing vision in front of Nuremberg's women's eyes: the possibility of "several poetical courses" that they might attend. Unfortunately, I do not know whether Omeis made good on his promise; nor can I guess what precisely his courses might have entailed. But, he tells us, his prospective students might have been drawn from the ranks of the Pegnitzian Flowers.

Omeis authored a hefty history of German poetry and included it as the first part of the *Fundamental Introduction*. He followed the periodization of poetry used by Morhof and, influentially, Hoffmann von Hoffmannswaldau before him, dividing German poetry into three eras. Opitz, of course, provided the origin of the third age of German poetry, the period still current in 1704. Omeis stresses the work of the language societies, particularly his own Pegnitzians. The Nuremberg society, he explains, is the only one to admit women: "Sich auch nicht zuwider seyn laßen/ edle/ keusche und gelehrte *Dames* und Weibes-Personen einzunehmen: indeme ja die Natur dieses Geschlecht von der Tugend= und Kunst=Fähigkeit mit nichten ausschließet." (It has also not opposed admitting noble, chaste, and educated *Dames* and women because nature has certainly not excluded the sex from the capacity for virtue and for art in any way.) Why shouldn't it, he demands, when "Gott und die Ewigkeit [machen] zwischen ihnen und den Manns-Personen keinen Unterschied" (God and eternity do not differentiate between them and men)? He continues:

Zu geschweigen/ daß das kluge Alterthum der Pallas und den neun Musen/ als Schutz-Göttinnen/ die Poësie und andre freue Künste untergeben. Ich will/ von diesen unsren Ordens-Nymfen und Dichterinnen/ nur zweyer allhier in Ehren gedenken/ als der seel. Mornille/ d.i. Fr. D. Müllerin/ derer best-verdientes Lob bei Herrn Morhof im Unterricht p. 443.444. anzutreffen; wie auch der Ruhm-seel. Dafne/ von derer noch einige T. Gedichte vorhanden/ die warhafftige den besten Poëten in ungemeine Verwunderung zu setzen vermögen. (47–48)

Never mind that wise antiquity made Pallas and the nine Muses the patron goddesses of poetry and the other liberal arts. From the ranks of our Order's nymphs and female poets, I will mention only two here with honor: blessed Mornille, that is, Frau. D. Müller, whose well-earned praise may also be read in Herr Morhof's *Instruction*, pp. 443–44, as well as praise-blessed Dafne, from whom several mourning poems may still be found and which are truly able to provide the best poets a source of uncommon wonder.

Omeis's casual mention of Dafne's poems that "may still be found" leads one directly to ask how many were already lost. Such was the nature of occasional poetry. Much of it has not come down to us. How much occasional poetry was written by women we cannot know.⁵⁸ But at the turn of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, even well-established poets, such as Omeis, welcomed women and sought to assist them in gaining a foothold in the changing topography of the field of letters. Women poets offered, in fact, proof that the third age of literary history was the most excellent. We have traveled a long distance since Opitz and his acolytes in the 1640s decried the effeminization of the German language and poetry.

Omeis's gallantry is not announced anywhere in the text of his title page. Unlike so many books published around 1700, his book's allegiances were not prominently advertised with the inclusion of *galant* in the title. Nonetheless, Omeis's fashionable stance is given away by the frontispiece illustrating his *Fundamental Introduction* (fig. 3). Dressed in the shepherd's garb of the Nuremberg society, Damon stands at the engraving's lower left, resting at the foot of a path leading to more lofty heights. In the background, the nine Muses are perched on the hill. Damon's way to their lofty company passes directly by Poetry, the woman seated at the lower right. She takes her inspiration from the Muses and fixes her gaze on Parnassus, manuscript pages in her lap and quill in her extended right hand. Damon, dressed in the Pegnitzian shepherd's garb, has eyes only for Poetry.

But this depiction of Poetry is unusual: her breasts are bare. Pamphlets written at the beginning of the eighteenth century tirelessly criticized women who exposed their chests.⁵⁹ There, women's bare breasts drew all the conventional fashionable devils as to a peep show. Damon/Omeis, on the other hand, betrays no anxiety

58. For the best recent exploration of a group of women writing occasional poetry at the end of the seventeenth century in Altenburg, see the collection *Das "weiblich Werk"*, edited by Carrdus. In her introduction, Carrdus documents how the German reception of egalitarian ideas worked out in the long-running *querelle des femmes* was crucial in insuring that some of the Altenburg circle's poetic work got into print.

59. See, for example, the 1689 pamphlet by "Ernestus Gottlieb" (literally, "Ernest Loved-by-God"), *Der Gedoppelte Blas-Balg Der Uppigen Wollust: Nemlich Die Erhöhet Fontange Und Die Blosse Brust/ Mit welchen das Alamodische und die Eitelkeit liebende Frauenzimmer in ihren eigenen/ und vieler unvorsichtigen Manns-Persohnen sich darin vergaffenden Herten ein Feuer der verbotenen Liebes-Brunst anzündet* (The Twofold Bellows of Voluptuous Lust: That Is the Elevated Fontange and the Bared Breast with Which the Alamode Lady Devoted to Vanity Sets Forbidden Fire to Her Own Heart as well as to Those of the Many Foolhardy Men Who Gawke).



Figure 3. Frontispiece to Magnus Daniel Omeis's *Fundamental Introduction to the German Correct Art of Rhyme and Verse* (1704). The fashionable poet-shepherd consults with Poetry. Her exposed breasts fail to leave her fashionable advice to the imagination. Reproduced courtesy of the Forschungsbibliothek Gotha.

about poetry's fashionability. Baring Poetry's breast, Omeis's book reveals itself as a guide specifically to fashionable poetry. The title page spells out some of the genres to which Omeis devotes particular attention. Among the fashionable forms the title page promises to elucidate—"Symbolis Heroicis oder Devisen; Emblematis; Rebus de Picardie; Romanen, Schau-Spielen, der Bilder-Kunst/ Teutschen Stein=Schreib=Art u.a. curieusen Materien" (*Symbolis Heroicis* or *Devices; Emblematis; Rebus de Picardie; Romans*, plays, image poems, runes, and other kinds of *curieus* materials)—we find, of course, the signature of the gallant discourse, the novel (*Roman*).

* * *

Despite these vigorous debates about poetry's fashionability, verse composition certainly did not become an everyday practice for a broad segment of the German-speaking populace. Many remained illiterate into the nineteenth century, especially in more rural locales. But Opitzian labors to renew the vernacular as a poetic language spread the use of poetry well beyond the academic elite to mark countless occasions. In the opinion of some *literati*, poetry's fashionability and its mounting popularity caused extensive collateral damage. To be sure, members of language societies were confident that their patriotic efforts to till the vernacular and cultivate its use yielded sophisticated poetry on a par with other European poetic vernaculars. Simultaneously, their handbooks distilling the rules of *imitatio* rendered classical and neo-Latinate models accessible to the unlettered. Such poets were not capable of the felicitous *imitatio* for which Opitz had garnered such fame. Instead, they were judged incapable of correct imitation and purportedly mimicked the conventions taught by *Regelpoetik* (poetry by the rules), rhyming mechanically and aping (*nachaffen*) handbooks' models—or, as *The German Poet* alleged, they simply stole unpublished work of "better poets" and called it their own.⁶⁰

The authors of increasingly popular poetic handbooks were caught between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, they sought to burnish poetry's diminished aura and insisted on its hallowed status among the liberal arts. Perched on Helicon's peak, poetry was theoretically a pursuit inaccessible to "handworkers." Yet it was this "handworker" or "common man," not the born poet, who really needed the many rhyming dictionaries and florilegia. Thus we see the strange phenomenon of prefaces insulting their book's intended audience rather than wooing potential buyers. While handbook authors never tired of bemoaning poetry's commodification, they also well understood how to make money from it. Hanmann, we have seen, had modestly claimed that his publisher had pressed him for a second, expanded edition of his continuation of Opitz's *Book*. But his publisher could have brought out a second edition without him. Hanmann's "reluctant" capitulation,

60. For other examples of theft, fraud, and dishonesty in the world of letters, see the articles by Gierl, and Füssel.

stated in the preface he took care to pen for the new edition, made money. Fashion sold, and poetic handbooks were a fashionable genre.

Fashion popularized poetry in print to a previously unknown degree. It also demanded poetic innovation. The poetic forms that Hans Wurst was supposed to “burp and sneeze” to establish his credibility as an up-to-date poet, for example, did not remain forever fashionable. Forms came and went in a ceaseless round. Formerly up-to-date forms were swept away—as was the *alamode* discourse itself. The anxiety about illegitimate players on the literary field anything but disappeared. But the terms used to assess their presence changed and were themselves exchanged as new discourses gained currency. While poetasters and other unauthorized participants were vilified beginning in the 1630s as *alamode*, by the 1680s they would be decried as *politisch* and, soon thereafter, as *gallant*—that fashion identified across Europe with French influence.

When fashion invaded the early modern world of letters, it did not confine itself to infiltrating poetry, of course. If fashion was the illicit mother of poetry—or, as Hardsörffer alleged, fashion had “prostituted” a “noble virgin”—it also birthed other print forms. With its tireless demand for novelty, fashion hatched generic innovations, “novel genres.” This term points too to the beginnings of the modern novel; the novel genres spawned by fashion were many. They were all part of what Lennard Davis, writing about the origins of the English novel, so influentially called the “news-novel” discourse, “factual fictions.” Davis plainly asserted that in England “the novel and journalism are intricately interconnected, perhaps more interconnected than the novel and romance” (xii). This fact is equally true for the German-language novel, although it is less commonly recognized in the German scholarship than in the English.⁶¹

Omeis included the novel (*Roman*) among the poetic forms taught by his handbook from 1704, a guide so fashionable that it explicitly included women among its other, implied readers. By the 1680s, the novel began to be regularly included in German poetics. And while theorizations of the novel as a poetic genre were crucial, the new genre’s embeddedness in the news of the day was no less so. Indeed, generic differences between journals and *nouvelles* in the 1680s were systematically blurred. Novel genres and newsy forms were parts of a whole. All depended more or less on a writer’s inventive powers. The novelties unleashed by fashion were good for the book business, a fact that did not elude contemporaries. Many groused that news was often invented by publishers and printers to sell new titles. In his short poem “Auff die Zeitung-Schreiber/ die ihre Zeitungen mit den Luft-Gesichtern anfüllen” (On News Writers Who Fill Their Newspapers with Airy Visions), Morhof wryly noted:

Man holt die Zeitung über Meer/
Von allen Orten/ Ecken her.

61. Simons’s *Marteaus Europa* and Tatlock provide notable exceptions.

Man bringet alles an das Licht/
 Es decke noch so tieffe Grufft/
 Und hat mans von dem Lande nicht:
 So greiff mans endlich auß der Lufft. (Maché and Meid 261)

News is brought across the sea
 From every place and every corner.
 Everything is brought to light
 No matter how deep the vault in which it lies.
 And if you can't get it from the land
 Just pull it from the air.

German literary historians remain unaccustomed to thinking of the readership of newsy forms now assigned to journalism as overlapping with that for newsy forms now assigned to literature. It is perhaps for this reason that estimates of the reading public at the end of the seventeenth century vary so wildly.

As historians of the German press have demonstrated, German-language *Zeitung*en (newspapers), both occasional and periodical, were among the earliest, if not first, print texts in Europe devoted to the news *qua* news. Welke has described “a sizable turn” to newspapers occurring “particularly early in Germany,” a new form whose spread “continuously intensified” after 1600 and developed there “with greater diversity and more strongly than in other places on the continent” (“*Gemeinsame Lektüre*” 29).⁶² By 1620, regularly published newspapers appeared in Berlin, Danzig, Frankfurt (Main), Güstrow, Halberstadt, Hamburg, Hildesheim, Köln, Stuttgart, and Wolfenbüttel as well as in a number of other cities and towns. By 1650, the first daily began to appear in Leipzig (Weber, “*Deutsche Presse*” 141). News outlets were not the property of the *Gelehrtenrepublik*. They “enjoyed a wide readership which extended from the ‘literati’ (academically educated men trained in Latin) to the ‘common man’ all the way into the lower social strata” (139).

While we remain unaccustomed to connecting the audience for baroque poetry with that for news, we must bring them into closer proximity if we are to understand the phenomenon that the European novel became. Weber estimates that

62. This development, Welke explains, was fostered by trade. Located at the crossroads of ancient trade routes, merchants doing business in Germany needed news. Germans’ use of newspapers continued so steadily, Welke remarks, “that this event can hardly be called ‘revolutionary.’” He continues: “More helped than hindered by the political divisions and confessional divide, and promoted particularly by its geographical location at the crossroads of the arteries of European trade, the newspaper developed in its German country of origin after 1600 with greater variety and more strongly than in other parts of the continent” (“*Gemeinsame Lektüre*” 29).

The proliferation of German newsy forms has been painstakingly documented by Weber in particular, who has been remarkably successful in unearthing news pages more often read to shreds. In addition to single-page news sheets, broadsides, and political pamphlets, Weber documents late sixteenth-century periodical annuals (*Jahreschroniken*), media that flagged their newsy contents with titles such as *The Post Rider* (*Postreuter*). Market fair news began to appear regularly in German beginning in 1583, monthly political journals in 1597 (Weber, “*Deutsche Presse*” 139–40).

political newspapers (*politische Zeitungen*) reached up to 25 percent of those able to read, “a circle extending far beyond the *Gelehrtenrepublik* and the group of city councilors, civil servants, or military officers who engaged with the news professionally” (“Deutsche Presse” 142). Welke emphasizes that already by the end of the seventeenth century, all social strata and classes demanded newspapers, with the exception of those on the very bottom (“Gemeinsame Lektüre” 42). News periodicals played a crucial role in satisfying what Weber correctly assesses as a pent-up demand for all things new. This desire to “read something new from the great wide world” was intimately related to the rage for fashion (Weber, “Deutsche Presse” 142). The allure of the foreign, fashionable world could now be purchased and carried home.

The ways in which fashion, poetry, and the news intersected is nowhere more visible than in a 1704 publication, *Reales Staats- und Zeitungs-Lexicon* (Encyclopedia of Civil Affairs and the News), compiled by none other than Johann Hübner, author of a poetic handbook (1696) that lamented a new fashion for poetry without rhyme. Hübner knew his audience well, and he addressed them directly in the preface to his *Encyclopedia*, using the numbered sentences he so preferred:

Geneigter Leser. I. Was die Lesung der Zeitungen vor einen vielfältigen Nutzen hat, das wird unnöthig zu erinnern seyn, nachdem solches allbereit vor 28. Jahren der vortreffliche Hr. Christian Weise, mein treugewesener Lehrmeister, in einer curieusen Schrifft weitläufftig ausgeführet hat.

II. Es haben sich auch nach diesem die Liebhaber solcher Nouvelles dergestalt vermehret, daß auch die Einwohner auff dem Lande hin und wieder nicht ungeschickt sind, einen Staats-Discours nach ihrer Art, mit einander zu führen.

III. Nun trägt sichs gleichwohl gar offte zu, daß ein Gelehrter und gereister Mann, eine und die andre passage aus den Zeitungen nicht verstehet, und wenn das am grünen Holtze geschicht, was will am dürren werden? Ich will so viel sagen: Wenn die, so studiret, nicht allemahl wissen, was sie lesen, was vor Zweiffels-Knoten müssen denjenigen allererst vorkommen, die mit den Musen keine sonderliche Bekantschafft haben. (n.p.)

Gentle Reader. I. The fact that reading the newspaper has broad benefits will be unnecessary to demonstrate, since it has already been copiously explicated 28 years ago in a *curieus* text by my beloved former teacher Mr. Christian Weise.

II. Since then, readers devoted to such *nouvelles* have multiplied to such an extent that even those who live in the countryside are now and again in their own way able to conduct a conversation about affairs of state.

III. Now it nonetheless often happens that even an educated and well-traveled man cannot understand one or more passages from the newspapers, and when this occurs among new wood what will be the result with dry wood? By this I mean: When even those who have been at university do not always know what they are

reading, what kind of thorny tangles must this material present to those who lack any special acquaintance with the Muses?

Texts such as Hübner's *Encyclopedia* have in the past decade received considerable attention from historians of *Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (history of arts and sciences), who have read it and other reference works like it as signals of profound shifts in the world of letters. New intellectual histories written by Martin Mulso, Helmut Zedelmaier, and others have read these reference works as responses to the need, perceived as increasingly urgent by the end of the seventeenth century, to reorder knowledge. Current research explores how such tomes reflect the increased demand for specialization that the proliferation of the New Science required of intellectuals.⁶³ The importance of this work should truly be emphasized. Nonetheless, it has at times failed adequately to tackle the popular dimensions of changes in the world of letters that such reference works also mark.

Hübner, for example, foregrounded in his preface to this *Encyclopedia* that even those who "live in the countryside" were "in their own way" now able "to conduct a conversation about affairs of state." Indeed, his book, like the poetic handbook he had published eight years earlier, must have been especially helpful to those readers who lived outside town and who had correspondingly fewer opportunities to patronize academies of the "poor man's college," the coffeehouses that began popping up in cities and towns everywhere by the end of the century.⁶⁴ In urban settings, patrons might ask fellow coffee drinkers what a newspaper's word or phrase meant. Those in the country could turn to Hübner's *Encyclopedia*. The boundaries circumscribing the world of letters had indeed grown porous; lines meant to separate the educated and the semieducated were blurred.

Those who turned to Hübner's *Encyclopedia* were the same people he described in his handbook. In the preface to the *Encyclopedia* he calls them "dry wood." They are the same greenhorn poets he describes in the poetic handbook as having deserted rhyme—whether from a lack of formal training or from sheer laziness. Hübner's readers, regardless of their qualifications, nonetheless wanted to be able to compose a poem to commemorate the many occasions Opitz had already enumerated in 1624 in *The Book of German Poetry*. Poetry in the seventeenth century was definitely *in*. Like the news, it belonged to the novel genres born of fashion. Poetic handbooks, no less than Hübner's *Encyclopedia*, are visible signs of the reorganization of the world of letters. They reflect profound changes there, including, not least, fashion's commodification of the book.

63. Füßel provides full bibliographical details for this important, growing body of research.

64. See Albrecht; Wiggin, "Politics of Coffee Consumption."