

THE FIGURE OF LUTHER IN GERMAN DRAMAS AND NOVELS OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY

A thesis submitted to the Graduate School of
the University of Wisconsin in partial fulfill-
ment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy.

by

Rolf Egmont Percival King

Date.... August 8...., 19..33

To Professors:

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This thesis having been approved in respect to form and mechanical execution is referred to you for judgment upon its substantial merit.

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Approved as satisfying in substance the doctor thesis requirement of the University of Wisconsin.

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The Figure of Luther in German Dramas and Novels of the
Nineteenth Century.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

MADISON

April 17, 1934

DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN

Dean C. S. Slichter
Bascom Hall

Dear Dean Slichter:

Permit me to hand to you herewith 7 copies of the January 1934 issue of the Germanic Review published at Columbia University. On pages 18 - 25 it contains an article by Rolf King on "Luther in Kleist's 'Michael Kohlhaas'", which is a chapter of his doctoral thesis.

I beg to recommend that this publication be accepted in lieu of the publication of the entire thesis, so as to entitle Dr. King to a refund of his thesis deposit.

Sincerely yours,

A. R. Hohlfeld

A. R. Hohlfeld

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Dean

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Von der Parteien-Gunst und Hass verwirrt,
Schwankt sein Charakterbild in der Geschichte.

Schiller.

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Chapter I

Introduction

A. Luther in the Light of ~~the~~ Classicism and Romanticism

The attitude of the nineteenth century toward Luther is reflected in the century's own needs and nature; within the limits of Protestantism this epoch seized upon and emphasized what was akin to itself, what supported or upheld its own character. In consequence its picture of Luther was never complete, with one possible exception, but only showed him as mirrored by each individual observer.

Again and again Luther was made to serve contemporary intellectual forces, which however were usually subordinated to outward historical facts. Only those who went beyond mere outward circumstances in their study could have a real and, from the viewpoint of Classicism, historically significant insight into the man Luther. For Classicism the significance of a Luther portrayal does not lie in the careful account of historical facts, but, as Burckhardt beautifully puts it, in the "verehrende Kraft" of such a portrayal, and "in der Kraft etwas Ersehntes, Ideales, nämlich nicht die wirkliche Vergangenheit, sondern ihr verklärtes Gedächtnisbild herzustellen."²

This classic conception was of course quite different from the

² Rehm, W. Luther im Lichte der Klassik und Romantik: Zeitwende, Sept. 1927, 253

¹ A portion of the content of this introduction had been worked out by me when I came on Rehm's excellent article. I thereupon decided to make it the basis of my initial chapter, although I left out much of it and added considerable to it.

Romantic one; periods of time often express themselves in opposites, in pros and cons. Thus Classicism marks the close of a definite, specifically Protestant evaluation of Luther, whereas Romanticism favors renewal of the peculiarly Catholic viewpoint. But it is not for us, and here, to compare the similarity of Classicism and the dissimilarity of Romanticism with the Reformation. We wish rather to study the attitude of the nineteenth century toward Luther. To do this it seems necessary first to point out the post-Reformation attitude, and then to consider somewhat more carefully the viewpoint of Classicism and Romanticism; elements of both largely compose the picture of Luther during the nineteenth century,

Since the seventeenth century the Protestant-Lutheran parts of Germany had furnished most of its intellectual leaders; and it was the Protestant conception of Luther which was the first to crystallize. After several fluctuations of fortune this conception gradually grew away from Luther first by a process of rationalization, next by an emphasis on the aesthetic aspect of his character. It finally attained general European significance and recognition during the age of so-called Enlightenment. It was even accepted and imitated by the more enlightened parts of South Germany and Austria during the tolerant period of Joseph II (1741-1790), since this religiously broadminded age was naturally fitted to reconcile and alleviate. Thus the Catholic south of Germany was completely eliminated as a vital influence on the picture of Luther. Only with the dawn of Romanticism did opposition to Protestantism again appear, especially in the Catholic

²
Fried. Langenfass: Luther als Symbol. Zeitwende Feb. 1925: "der brave Semler stellte Erasmus über Luther"

conception of history. With the help of Romanticism, Catholicism was destined to wrest from Protestantism its sole hold on things of the mind.

The Classical conception of Luther is built up from the foundations of the "Enlightenment". To be sure, the ^{latter} borrowed its ideas of Luther from orthodox Lutheranism, yet, ^{at} the same time greatly modified them. No longer could the strength of Luther's presence exert an influence as it did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These two centuries had created a mighty picture of a nearly divine superman that suggested idolatry rather than living veneration. It was his teaching that was revered rather than the religion it represented. Such veneration was quite understandable in the time of the Thirty Years' War, for, ^{to} Luther this period owed its only definite good: faith and the certainty of salvation.

Later, in years of peace and self-assertion, a new feeling developed, Pietism. This made its way into the heart of the reformer, and divined the nature of his inner struggle and religious adventure. It was out of Pietism that young Herder sprang into life, and he alone in his time recognized Luther as a religious genius, a prophet, "einen den ganzen Wert Gottes fühlenden Mann" ³. In Pietism Luther became the symbol of an inner religious experience.

For Rationalists, on the other hand, such an experience was out of the question; they could not find their way to Luther from a religious or metaphysical standpoint. Only the purely objective, educational and historical elements of the Reformation which developed entirely ^{out of its own} from subjective

3

Rehm, W.: Luther im Lichte der Klassik und Romantik. Zeitwende, Sept. 1927

religious struggles could ^{be of} interest ^{to} it. Rationalism represented the Reformation as its own cradle, as the inception of a rationalistic cultural movement. For ^{it} Luther was purely a man of calculating will and reason. The sufficient root of his great deeds was the indulgences, the fight against church evils, and not the inner struggles of a soul in quest of peace. He was therefore the creator, the restorer of freedom of conscience and thought, the deliverer from hierarchical compulsion. Frederick the Great, Müser or Inselin could only see Luther from the standpoint of progress, and even Schiller could only understand him from this point of view, that is, only in an intellectual and not in a religious connection. In this way Schiller showed how ~~deeply~~ Classicism was rooted in Rationalism. He speaks of "Glaubensverbesserung", of the "siegende Gewalt der Wahrheit", or, as in his plan for the poem ~~on~~ "Deutsche Größe", of the "Freiheit der Vernunft" that showed itself in the Reformation. ⁴ In spite of all, however, Schiller lacked an inner relationship to Luther; he missed the philosophical element in him, and was repelled by the rapid decline of the Reformation into dogmatism. But Schiller had an insight into the sublime dignity of the man Luther, into his new intellectual and ethical attitude. The classical evaluation soon went beyond the "personal-einmalige, verflachende und verkleinernde Ansicht" ⁵ of the Enlightenment, which ~~like~~ ^{as in the case of} Boyle or Frederick the Great or Müser merely wished to interpret Luther's success in the light of the favorable conditions of the time. Now men began to penetrate into

⁴ Rehm, W.: Luther im Lichte der Klassik und Romantik. Zeitwende, Sept. 1927

⁵ ibid. : Sept. 1927

the unique aspects of the reformer's character; Herder was the first in 1774: "Was Luther sagte, hatte man schon lange gewusst; aber jetzt sagte es Luther!"⁶ This is indeed a new tone of an ethical, very German hero-worship in a time that sought for great prototypes and which found them in its own past.

This new tone was also struck by Thomas Abbt (1764)^{6a} and not much later (about 1774) Johannes v. Müller spoke of the new soul that Luther had given to half of Europe.^{6b} Müller, like Herder and many other Germans after him, praised Luther's "herrliche übersetzte Bibel"; its language was the most forceful ~~with~~ Klopstock sang Luther's praise in an ode in 1784.⁷

For the Storm and Stress Luther was a hero of determined, understood truths; it was this undaunted spirit and search for truth that drew Lessing to him. The new feeling for the great and heroic is revealed in Lessing, the man of the intellect, but at the same time one finds in him

6. Herders Sämtliche Werke, herausg. v. B. Suphan, vol. 5, p. 532

6a Abbt, T.: Briefe die Neueste Literatur betreffend. Berlin 1764, pt. 18 pp. 59-60 (April, 19, 1764)

6b Müller, J. v. : A Universal History of the World, from the creation to the year 1780. ~~Brought down to the year 1852 by W. R. Murry, Esq., Providence 1854.~~ "Dr. Martin Luther... by his heroism alone imparted to the half of Europe a new soul;...", Book 19, Sec. 1, p. 768. (This Universal History was written between 1772 and 1780 at Geneva).

7 Merker, P.: Probefahrten, Vol. 9, p. 147:

"Heiliger Luther, bitte für die Armen,
Denen Geistes Beruf nicht scholl, und die doch
Nachdolmetschen, dass sie zur Selbsterkenntnis
Endlich genesen."

the tragedy of an inwardly lonely man who believes he has found in Luther a hero who confirms^m his own striving against the dead letter, ~~the~~ ^{dogmatic principles} ~~faith in the orthodox~~, and the "kurzsichtigen Starrköpfe". For him Luther becomes a symbol in this struggle for truth; the spirit "des grossen verkannten Mannes"⁸ is again to be brought to life. "Was für eine Schande für unsere Zeit, dass der Geist dieses Mannes, der unsere Kirche begründet, so unter der Asche liegt"⁹, Hamann had said as early as 1759. The following words reveal the deep inner love and emotion that Luther was able to rouse in Lessing: "Luther steht bei mir in ^{einer} solchen Vergötterung, dass es mir recht lieb ist einige Mängel an ihm entdeckt zu haben, weil in der Tat die Gefahr sonst nahe war ihn zu vergöttern... Die Spuren der Menschheit, die ich an ihm fand, sind mir so kostbar als die blendensten seiner Vollkommenheiten."¹⁰

From out of the new desire to grasp the whole nature of a great man grew the classical conception of Luther, i.e., Goethe's conception. Goethe saw in the Reformation, as probably also Schiller and Herder and in fact the whole Enlightenment did, the awakening of the individual to Liberty. As Rehm says:¹¹ "Die Welt erlebt nicht leicht wieder eine solche Erscheinung."

⁸ Merker, Paul: Studien zur neuhochdeutschen Legendendichtung, in Prebafahrten, vol. 9, p. 146

⁹ ibid., vol. 9 p. 146, An G. E. Lindner: (Hamanns Schriften herausg. v. F. Roth I, 343)

¹⁰ Rehm, W.: Luther im Lichte der Klassik und Romantik. Zeitwende, Sept. 1927, p. 257

¹¹ ibid, ~~Zeitwende~~, Sept. 1927. Compare: Luther "ist und bleibt ... der er war, ausserordentlich für seine und für künftige Zeiten. Bei ihm kam es auf Tat an; er fühlte den Konflikt, in dem er sich befand, nur allzu lästig." Weimar Ausg. Pt. II, vol. 3 p. 160 (Zur Farbenlehre). Compare also Gespräche mit Eckermann, vol. II, p. 130

Since the Reformation we again have "den Mut, mit festen Füßen auf Gottes Erde zu stehen und uns in unserer gottbegabten Menschennatur zu fühlen". In these words and others we see expressed the happy feeling of the new dignity of Man which Goethe believed he found revealed in Luther's as well as in Lessing's time. Goethe saw in Luther for the first time since classical antiquity the symbol of a great, free humanity such as Johannes von Müller or a Lessing had already divined. This affected him inwardly like an affirmation of his own philosophy of life which encompassed things intellectual, social, political and religious, and strove to form a new humanity that sees the world naturally and feels itself as a personality. In keeping with this philosophy Goethe planned in the Reformation Kantata of 1817 that the anniversaries of the battle of Leipzig and the Reformation be celebrated together on the same day instead of separately on the 18th and 31st of October, respectively. If this were to be done he believed it would be a celebration of all Germans, all religious sects, that it would be the concern of all Christianity, a national festival, "ein Fest der reinsten Humanität".¹² The subject stressed most in the "Entwurf" of the never completed Kantata was freedom, this being most akin to Luther's ideas: "Entsprechend dem Gegensatz von Gesetz und Evangelium, Notwendigkeit und Freiheit, auf welchem das Luthertum in seiner Hauptbegriff beruhe, denkt er sich den Aufbau der Tondichtung zweiteilig. Mit dem Donner auf Sinai, mit dem Du sollst! sei zu beginnen, mit Christi Auferstehung aber und dem Du wirst! zu schliessen."^{13a} As far as Luther himself is concerned, it is his acts and his character that alone are worth while and significant; whereas all the quarrels and dogmatic disputes are of no account:¹⁴

¹² Gespräche mit Eckerman. March 11, 1832

¹³ Goethes Werke, Weimar Ausg. Part I, vol. 42² Zum Reformationsfest, pp. 32-4

^{13a} ibid. Part I, vol. 16 p. 570. Kantata zum Reformations-Jubiläum.

¹⁴ ibid. Part IV, vol. 28, p. 227, Aug. 22, 1827: "Alles übrige ist ein verworrener Quark".

Luther's heritage - freedom of the intellect - was to be kept uncontaminated, ^{from dogma}
 "Genau besehen haben wir uns noch alle Tage zu reformieren u. ^{protestieren,} gegen andere zu ¹⁵
 wenn auch nicht im religiösen Sinne." This ~~is~~ was ~~what~~ the Reformation
 meant to Goethe personally: "die Selbstbehauptung des freien Geistes in
¹⁶
 gottgegebener Kraft."

Goethe had recognized the specifically German element of the Reforma-
 tion: conscientious objection; it was rooted "im tiefsten Kern der eigenen
¹⁷
 Nation;" for Goethe this was the chief characteristic of the Reformation,
 and the Reformation was the symbol of it. During the trying times of the
 wars of Liberation Luther became perhaps for the first time a symbol to
 of his
 which patriotic Germans looked up. Fichte in ~~the~~ sixth [^] "Rede an die deutsche
 Nation" wants to conjure up the spirit of the past as a help for the present,
 so that the Germans would become aware of this mission by thinking about
 Luther and his work. To bring about a similar attitude the nationalist and
 Prote^stant Arndt worked with all the force of his oratorical ability.
 Arnim also did his part.

Goethe was unable to make use of the past in this manner. But perhaps
 these stormy years of the Napoleonic period gave him a better insight into
 the sixteenth century and taught him to understand ^{more} clearly not only the Re-
 formation's relation to the world, but also its more specifically German
 character. Goethe felt this German element more deeply than Arndt, Jahn and
 their like: they thought of Luther in the nationalistic and protestant sense.
 were the instrument of a higher
 What united Goethe and Luther was a similar deep-seated feeling that they [^]

¹⁵ Weimar Ausg. Pt. I, vol. 42² p. 192 (Maximen und Reflexionen über Literatur und Ethik).

¹⁶ Rehm, W.: Luther im Lichte der Klassik und Romantik. Zeitwende, Sept. 1927

¹⁷ ibid

thought and will, which gave ^{each} reverence for himself. In Arnim there is also a human and ethical element; but for him, the Romanticist, the higher thought and will is history.

Goethe created for himself a glorified Luther. He could only understand and appreciate him as existing in his sphere and therefore he overlooked (just as Rationalism had done) the real core of Luther's nature—its religious element. With Fichte this was not the case; his "Reden" were the first utterance since Herder that again recognized the religious element in Luther. For Goethe other sides of Luther's character were more significant. Indeed, that was based on broad principles and to him personally (Luther gave) a conception of a humanity of great forms such as he himself aspired to. Just what he meant by this he relates in a letter written in 1826: "... Ja gewiss, wenn wir trachten, dass Gesinnung, Wort, Gegenstand und Tat immer möglichst als Eins erhalten werde, so dürfen wir uns für echte Nachfolger Luthers ansehen, eines Mannes, der in diesem Sinne so Grosses wirkte und, auch irrend, noch immer ehrwürdig bleibt." 18

This was the new attitude that Classicism initiated: the desire to re-interpret in terms of present civilisation the great men of all time and all races. The Classical, the Goethean conception of Luther, rooted in Rationalism, but raised to a higher level and purified, unites all that which for a Classical humanity was alive and immediately accessible in the figure of Luther, viz. harmoniousness of character, freedom of will and deep love of truth; in short this Luther was a creative personality. Such is the conception of Luther formed by peoples and times for which the religious core of Luther's essential and basic strength

18 Goethes Werke,
Weimar Ausg. Pt. 1V, vol. 41, p. 56

remained hidden or unintelligible.

By considering the attitude of Adam Müller to Luther, we conveniently pass from the attitude of Classicism to that of Romanticism. In his "Vorlesungen über deutsche Wissenschaft und Literatur" Adam Müller tended to look upon Luther as "einen antiken Mann". He placed him first in the "Dynastie der Restauratoren des klassischen Geistes" and together with Melanchthon, Hutten, Erasmus, Opitz, Klopstock, Winckelmann, Herder, Voss, Johann von Müller, Friedrich Schlegel, Schleiermacher, Wolff, and Goethe. He saw in the Reformation the breaking forth of two primary world forces: liberty re-awakened in its ancient form, and law developed by Catholicism ^{to assume} ~~to assume~~ ^{the} modern Germanic type. Thus Adam Müller was one of the first to ^{for}see the close relationship between Protestantism and Classicism. Eichendorff followed his lead but passed negative judgment; he saw in Classicism, in Schiller's Aesthetics, the old original sin of the Reformation, the sanctification of man's subjective powers. Müller successfully united in himself an objective as well as a subjective conception of the world. But it is the subjective interpretation which is characteristic of the eternally striving, all-encompassing spirit of the Romanticist.

The question now arises, precisely what is the relation between Romanticism and Catholicism? Is the attitude of the later Romanticists toward Luther (the early Romanticists apart from Novalis hardly dealt with questions of church and piety), a Romantic one or simply a Catholic one? The later works of Friedrich Schlegel, replete with a characteristic

¹⁹ Rehm in
Zeitwende Sept. 1927
A

Romantic spirit, definitely indicate that Romanticism and Catholicism are not incompatible; this, however, does not mean they must be essentially alike. For Schlegel Dante was the expression of this intimate union. More generally the situation may be expressed as follows. To a basically Romantic spirit, a Catholic outlook had lent form, fixed ideas, and an unshakable foundation. In it was contained the new grand conception of the world which was to serve the later Romanticists in interpreting past and present. Most significantly it furnished the metaphysical standard with which the Romantic spirit still measures those world events to which it attributes real historical importance. Thus, due to this Catholic element, all the later Romanticists, except Arnim, adopted an evaluation of Luther which was purely negative. ²⁰ But real understanding of the dynamic element in history, an understanding which the Romanticists had inherited from their earlier period, forced them to elevate their outlook upon life; they looked for a deeper meaning in historical events, and ~~in~~ their specula-

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Most pronounced is Brentano's attack on Luther when he contrasts him with the Saint Vincent ^{de Paula (1578-1639)} (Gessam. Werke I, p.264)

Gepriesen sei der Glaubensheld,
Der ganz die Not im Weinberg kennt,
Und treu sein Tagewerk bestellt,
Kein Reblein doch vom Weinstock trennt.

Der nicht durchs Fleisch, nein, durch den Geist,
Den schlechten Priestern Zucht befiehlt,
Geweihete nicht zur Ehe Weist
Noch dieser Jesu Weihe stiehlt.

Der nicht zerbricht der Kloster Bann,
Nein, sie mit Jesu Geist erbaut,
Der nicht die Nonne führt zum Mann,
Nein zu dem Herrn die Gottesbraut.

Quoted by P. Merker, Probefahrten. No. 8, p. 147

tions led them to believe they saw God's hand at work. Protestantism was essential to the Catholic church, to strengthen it, to prove the glory of its victorious power, and bring about a new and higher unity. Then having fulfilled its mission it returned to the field of the Catholic church it had helped to purify. One clearly sees here the Romantic ideal of the union of all things into one organic whole. In the Romantic process of development the individual was seen but dimly behind the great central ideas of the time and its currents of thought; ~~thus~~ Classicism, in striking contrast, drew individual personality into the foreground. Thus in Romanticism Luther was obscured by the Reformation, his own accomplishment,

The new Catholic view, as initiated by Novalis, made the middle ages at their height the absolute ideal. But that which Wackenroder, Tieck, and Arnim loved to praise as the medieval age was the late medieval period; it was the sixteenth century Germany of the Meistersinger, of Hans Sachs and Dürer; it was the sixteenth century already Protestant, good, faithful, simple, not to be thought of without Luther, the Luther whose pious music-loving nature Wackenroder knew, whose spirit Arnim thought he recognized in the "Predigten des alten Magister Mathesius" (re-edited 1817), and which he depicted in his own "Kronenwächter"; it was the Luther whose clear German Bible translation, done "dem Papst und der Klerisei zum Trutz",²¹ A. W. Schlegel admired. This was not the European, knightly, medievalism that Novalis had envisioned.

The real Romantic conception of the Reformation grew out of such

²¹ Rehm in
Zeitwende, Sept. 1927

visions of the Middle Ages. Novalis was the only one of the early Romantists who spent time interpreting the Reformation, but in contrast to the later Romantists, he interpreted it more from a Romantic than from a Catholic point of view. In his "Christenheit oder Europa", he drew in broad outlines a conception of the Reformation which served later Romantists as a source-book of ideas.

In his eyes the truly Catholic, truly Christian Europe of the Middle Ages was concerned with only one faith. But slowly Christianity lost its purity, and decadence began. "Die eigentliche Herrschaft Roms hatte lange vor der gewaltsamen Insurrektion stillschweigend aufgehört." In spite of this statement he actually saw the Reformation purely as a reformation and nothing more. Even though he accepted it as a natural, understandable sign of the time, as a fight "gegen den despotischen Buchstaben der ehemaligen Verfassung", and even though he was willing to recognize its advantages, he could proceed no further. His great historical complaint was this: the Protestants "vergassen das Notwendige Resultat ihres Prozesses; trennten das Untrennbare, teilten die unteilbare Kirche und rissen sich frevelnd aus dem allgemeinen christlichen Verein, durch welchen und in welchem allein die echte, dauernde Wiedergeburt möglich war." "Mit der Reformation war es um die Christenheit getan." For Novalis the Reformation was justified by historical fate; it did have

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Novalis: Schriften, herausg. von P.Kluckhohn. vol. II, p.70

23

ibid. p. 71

24

ibid. p.71

25

ibid. p. 73

its inspired truth, but this grew into tragic guilt. All religious sense, all religious communion and form dissolved into anarchy and a still more destructive revolution. The world grew ~~sober~~ sober and inconsiderate during the Enlightenment and lost all its faith, ("Vertrocknung des heiligen Sinnes" ²⁶) in a narrow interpretation of the letter of the Bible from which Lessing already had desired freedom. Thus Novalis spoke first as a pietist and then as a historical thinker, who distinguished carefully between Protestantism and Luther^{an}ism. Lastly, however, it was Novalis, the Romanticist, who spoke. He was not so much concerned with the inner religious elements as e.g. Schlegel was later, ~~as~~ with the poetical and aesthetical ones; the "Insurrektion" had destroyed for him his ideal of medieval Christianity. In the Reformation Novalis already ~~saw~~ saw unpoetical rationalism which must be combatted; he saw in it the unromantic; he ^{saw} ~~knew~~ in it the enemy of art. Göttes and Eichendorff clearly followed Novalis' footsteps. Similarly we find Tieck in his "Sterbald" making the artist, Ludovico, speak against Luther. Ludovico says: "dass Luther, statt der Fülle einer göttlichen Religion eine ~~Murre~~, vernünftige Leerheit erzeugt, die alle Herzen schmachtend zurück ²⁷ lässt." At the close of his essay ~~Novalis~~ Novalis pictures the future: out of anarchy religion will again arise, Christianity will shine forth purified in all its beauty; it will be a

26

Novalis: Schriften, herausg. v. P. Kluckhohn. vol. II, p. 72

27

Deutsche National Literatur vol. 145, p. 346

new all-encompassing whole, founded on true liberty. This hope exemplified the romantic dream of oneness, of a single organic whole. It was a beautiful aesthetic dream without necessarily religious longing. In this dream of the future, Catholicism and Protestantism were only thesis and antithesis which join together in a synthesis.

The later Romanticists, excepting Arnim, were not to be satisfied with such a dream. For them a purified Catholicism to which Protestantism had been reunited must rule. In this way Novalis' conception was changed; Adam Müller made the start. From such a point of view he evaluated Luther's achievement: the Catholic Church was only to be thought of "als streitend und siegend zugleich" ²⁸. The Reformation and Protestantism had the historical and metaphysical meaning of bringing new life to the older body; in this way the church would be made strong and safe.

The change in the Romantic attitude, from one that had looked upon Luther's accomplishment as progressive to one that was really antagonistic to this view, found completion in F. Schlegel's Catholic-Romantic conception of history. In his view the Reformation was probably needed; he felt that Luther had been faced with a serious problem, but that he had not solved it, that he could not solve it, since Reformation and Protestantism had remained the work of man. Solemnly he wrote: "Die wahre Reformation hätte ²⁹ eine göttliche sein müssen" For Schlegel as well as for Novalis reforma-

28

Zeitwende, Sept. 1927

29

ibid

tion lay in the future. The great tragic guilt of the actual Reformation lay - one hears Novalis and GÖrres - in its complete separation from historical tradition, and the spirit of love. The Reformation was Luther's achievement, was religious anarchy; from it the old church was to arise successfully purified.

Schlegel's attitude had suffered a change. All the intrinsic and real characteristics which the Protestant and Classicist ~~had~~ had seen, had been brushed aside in such a conception of history. That which was especially German in Luther's character and deeds no longer played the part it had in Schlegel's youth. Eichendorff continued to emphasize, on the other hand, the national side of Luther's character.

In Schlegel's late-romantic ideology one sees a new "romantic" scholasticism which determined his historical philosophy. Because it was entirely bound up with religious concepts and because it was so one-sided and limited, it could not help but give rise to an unfruitful rejection of the Reformation among small and dependent minds, while for Schlegel as well as for Novalis, GÖrres, and Müller it could be ^{equivalent to} a gospel and revelation. But only a few years later the descent was made from such heights of historical reasoning. Thus Eichendorff narrowed Schlegel's conception, and said that the Reformation had made the revolutionary emancipation of the subjective, its principle and that it carried into all things intellectual and religious the fundamental differences between objective and subjective comprehension. In 1847, however, when GÖrres edited his "Athanasius", he pointed to an entirely new time, in which not only Catholicism but also wide circles of Protestantism stood ^pposed to Luther. Only young Ranke, under the influence of ^{the} Romantic conception of history, could in his Luther

fragment understand and interpret Luther's religious struggles; Heine could call him in great admiration and esteem in accordance with the classical tradition a man who was "komplett", "absolut". ³⁰ when so few could interpret Luther's religious struggles it was only now that Nietzsche's fight against the "Bauer" and his achievement could find willing ears.

In reviewing Romanticism's contribution to an attitude toward Luther one point deserves special mention. The Romantic showed ^{an} understanding, although negatively, of the essentially religious nature of Luther and his whole activity. The Classic lacked this feeling entirely. This negative evaluation of religious characteristics had, however, a fruitful influence upon Protestantism which in this way came into contact with new points of view and had to adjust itself accordingly.

Thus, on the side of Classicism, it was the new sense of personality, of the nature of the whole man, on the side of Romanticism, it was the sensitive feeling for general historical movements, which pointed to new paths of investigation in Luther and the Reformation.

~~B. A Brief Survey of the Nineteenth Century~~

~~During the nineteenth century Classicism and Romanticism continue to play a very important part, although only superficially experienced in the various degrees of their admixture. Moreover, it must be remembered that Classicism and Romanticism have certain characteristics somewhat in common, viz. idealism, the cult of personality, and idolization of art to the didactic use of which they are opposed; finally, both are opposed to~~

B. A Brief Survey of Nineteenth Century Thought.

Having obtained a good insight into the place Luther holds in the classical and romantic periods of German literature, let us turn to the figure of Luther in the drama and novel of the nineteenth century. This requires first a brief survey of nineteenth century thought.

The main elements of the nineteenth century are: Rationalism, Romanticism, "Historismus", and Realism. From ~~predominantly~~ ^o ~~from~~ ^e ~~Classic~~ and ~~Rationalistic~~ beginnings the century moved to a predominantly historical and realistic close with romantic elements present throughout; in the early part of the century these ran parallel, later they intermingled with other elements, but they ^e were continually decreasing in influence. Attention ^{should} ~~is~~ ^{be} called to the fact that Classicism and Romanticism have certain characteristics in common such as idealism, the cult of personality, and idolization of art, to the didactic use of which both are opposed; both also oppose revolution.

Romantic ideals, especially from 1800 to 1848, supported political reaction. Hegel's idea of the state as the highest embodiment of the absolute, whereby what the state did was ethically good and right, resembled Luther's idea of state authority. The ideals of the Young Germans, about 1830 to 1861, on the other hand, placed liberty before nationalism and accepted only the ethical core of Christianity. (Strauss). Continuing mostly in a classical vein the young Germans disdained the past and history, and harkened back to the rationalistic characteristic of the Enlightenment,

in which Classicism has its roots, just as Romanticism has its beginnings in Pietism and in the Storm and Stress. For the period of 1848 to 1885, however, a realistic philosophy predominated: Beliefs in metaphysical ideas, God and morality were forgotten or given up to a considerable extent. Love of life and activity, beauty and form, and the world with all its pleasures became the order of the day. A new enlightenment which stood for freedom of thought and national development appeared. C.F. Meyer exalted the Protestant spirit as that of freedom and progress; Freytag glorified the everyday world and sought realistic historical exactness; Raabe tried to unite a spirit of pessimism with a Goethean spirit.

The Classicism of the nineteenth century is expressed in humanitarianism and idealism, in a poor imitation of Goethe and Schiller; the romanticism, in realism, liberty, individualism, history and nationalism. Great effects were sought, the usual was forsaken for the unusual, genius and passion were to be supreme. To fulfill such an aim suitable periods and characters in history were chosen. The "kulturge-schichtstreue" Romane, e.g. ^{those of and} Hauff, Alexis, are early manifestations in this direction: they indicate concessions to realism, to historical specialization. Later in the century the corresponding classical contributions to these ideas were made, e.g. ^{by} Meyer and Schücking, who use Renaissance and Reformation for their subject matter. More and more the past came to be imitated just to satisfy an author's aims and needs. The result

was degeneration of historical color and spirit into mere outward dress; Kühne, the "Festspiele" and especially the "kirchengeschichtliche Lebensbilder" of the fifties are examples of this degeneration. Similarly the ~~real~~ true romantic spirit has been lost in Raabe's pessimism: only a "Kostümromantik" remains. With the appearance of Scheffel's "Ekkehard" in 1862 the historical novel definitely took the place of the "Zeitroman" which had predominated since 1848; even the Young Germans yielded. ³⁸

In conclusion, the century seems little unified in its attitude toward Luther. Here was praise, there criticism, here repression of Lutheran doctrine, there the overcoming of the medieval Luther. But appearances deceive: they reveal only the superficial elements of a misrepresented century that was moving more and more toward specialization: its relation toward Luther was historical. The time of an all influential "Religionsgeschichte" arose. Throughout the century there were always some groups that stood aside and denied Luther and struggled against him. Today however I am convinced men once more think of him as standing above history; he is no longer considered a great historical figure only, but a powerful present influence. Luther is again largely interpreted from the Classical standpoint.

Our study of Luther will begin with three authors who wrote early in the nineteenth century, all of whom give fine portrayals of Luther: Werner, Arnim, Kleist. We may call them the Romantic group. Then, touching rather briefly on minor writers, we shall discuss a group whose point of view is primarily historic: Raabe (Meyer, Fontane) and Freytag, then Gutzkow, Schücking and Kühne. Last come the writers of the "Festspiele" in and around the year 1883. The

"kirchengeschichtliche Lebensbilder" are passed over as unworthy of treatment.

31 Gutzkow: "Hohenschwangau" (1867); ^{Laube} "Der deutsche Krieg" (1863)

Chapter II^{31a}

The Nineteenth Century Romanticists (1800-17).

- A. Z. Werner: "Luther oder die Weihe der Kraft" (1807).
A biographical and mystical Luther.

In making a study of Luther in Werner's "Luther oder die Weihe der Kraft" we must carefully distinguish between two Luthers: one is the Luther of historical facts as presented in the first four acts of the drama; the other is the so-called "holy" or mystic Luther as presented in the prologue and the fifth act, in accordance with his mystical religious philosophy. Werner's aim was to create the figure of a Saint similar to that of Adalbert³² in the drama "Das Kreuz an der Ostsee", rather than an historical Luther; but he had difficulty in shaping the facts to his needs, for when Werner became steeped in the sources he was carried away by them: he found he had created a clear and plastic picture of the historical Luther, as well as, to a considerable degree, of the whole period of the Reformation most especially the years 1520-22.³³ Realizing this he attempted to lessen the clarity of outline by making Luther more saint-like; but only succeeded in doing this towards the end of the fourth act and in the fifth act. And so he wrote the prolog to define more clearly the aims of the play.

Of course Werner's attempt to adapt his Luther to his religious

^{31a} This chapter is largely based on Fränkel.

³²

Historischer Vorbericht zum "Kreuz an der Ostsee" (Theater Bd. III s.12)
Fränkel p. 73

³³

Fränkel says concerning this: Vielleicht am meisten verblüfft: die Sicherheit in der Wiedergabe in der Eigenart des Reformationszeitalters, das trefflich durchgeführte Kolorit der geschichtlichen Szenen, kurz... "das Klima" derselben - ..." p.54 "Ein Kulturgemälde im besten Sinne des Wortes!"
ibid p.90

philosophy of erotic mysticism did lessen the clarity of his character somewhat. But if we isolate Luther entirely from the mystical elements that surround him, we find they bear no weight, because these mystical elements are not blended into the character but added on, as it were. ³⁴

The Luther of the first four acts of the drama is essentially the Luther of history, in spite of the opposite viewpoint many histories of literature have taken. ³⁵ Let us then first consider the historical Luther.

In the first four acts we learn about the dramatically human side of Luther's character. The first act presents only a characterisation of Luther by word of mouth: we have the opinions of Hubert, Franz and Katherina.

The influence of Luther's personality and teaching upon common people - this is the general subject that Hubert makes us acquainted with in the first scene; and during the conversation we are informed on the one hand that Luther has been excommunicated ³⁶, and on the other ^{that} hand the order has been given by the Elector of Saxony for the dissolution of the convent at Wittenberg.

Hubert is the "Famulus" of Melanchthon and as such has learned much about Luther. He describes Luther, the man, "ein freigeborener deutscher Mann", who is filled with "heilige Sehnsucht"; he defends him

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"We Luther etwa zu weich und sentimental gehalten ist, da liegt es mehr an der lyrisch-mystischen Situation, in der er steht als an seinem Charakter."
(Stuckart p. 83)

35

See Fränkel p. 73

36

"Weihe der Kraft" p. 12

37

ibid p. 8

against the miners when some of them doubt his worth. He tells of a visit that Luther paid Melanchthon on the day before his departure for Augsburg to Cardinal Cajetan: in brief outline we are given an idea of Luther's frame of mind in one of the most decisive moments of his life; the absolute confidence, determination and vitality of Luther is contrasted with the fearfulness, gentleness and passivity of Melanchthon. Gladly would Luther risk his life to purify and strengthen the faith: "Gott mit uns! Gott zwingt den Teufel! Mit Menschen nehmen wir es auf." Christianity's need for a leader forces him to action. "Luther rieb ... die Stirne mit geballter Faust sich wund,..". "In dicken Tropfen rann ihm der Schweiss herunter." - "Luther... schrie - sein Blick und Ton, wie Blitz und Donner - ... zündend traf der Schlag! -"Ich will's!" "

38

39

Franz von Wildeneck describes Luther the reformer; enthusiastically he gives expression to the high esteem he holds for "den grossen Luther". There had been a time when Franz had fallen under the spell of Charles V; now he contrasts Luther with him, thus raising Luther's character into higher relief. Opposite Luther Charles V. represents the "Kraft ohne Weihe, die sich selbst Gott ist." He lacks the faith that inspires Luther. "Ein Gott an Kraft, ein Teufel an Begier," he would like to bring all

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38 "Weihe der Kraft"; compare p.70, 79, 127

39 ibid p. 10

40 ibid p. 35

41 Fränkel p.67

42 "Weihe der Kraft" p. 30 "Den Donnerton der Kraft vernimmt er nur,

43 Doch kann er nicht durch Liebe ihn vergöttern."

ibid p.30

Europe under his control from purely selfish motives. "Der Grosse, der
 44 Gewalt'ge." Luther, on the other hand is a harmonious nature: "in der Brust
 u 45 wohnt ihm ein stiller Friede," because his "Kraft" has been reconciled
 through love. Charles' greatness is only to be explained by "unsere Klein-
 heit" that of Luther by his power of inspiration. Franz is awakened to new
 46 life by him; Franz says of Luther:

"Hier über'm vaterländ'schen Eichenhein,
 Tief aus des Harzes tausendjäh'rigen Stämmen
 Steigt auf der Sonne neuverjüngter Schein,
 Ob sich Kolosse auch entgegendämmen; -
 In dunkle Schachte schimmert sie herein,
 Und nichts vermag den kühnen Strahl zu hemmen,
 Der von dem grossen Luther angezündet, 47
 Die Kette schmilzt, die alle Geister bindet."

Word of the monk's daring deeds even reach the Pyrenees: he will compel
 48 Rome to return to us "Des freien Geistes Recht, an sich zu glauben."
 Bossu, the Emperor's jester, warns his master of Luther's influence in
 49 Germany; he realizes the weakness of the Holy Roman Empire; that it cannot
 50 retain a healthy body and remain "holy" at the same time, for the Germans
 51 are beginning to understand things; at this very time, Bossu warns,

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"Weihe der Kraft" p. 35

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ibid p. 35

46

ibid p. 35

47

ibid p. 32-3

48

ibid p. 33

49

ibid p. 116

50

ibid p. 113: "Ihr (Karl V) wollt erschaffen und ein Doppelding
 Mit Flügeln und mit Klau'n - die Flügel zieh'n es
 Herauf, die Klauen reissen es herunter;

51

'S platzt von einander! -"
 ibid p.118: "Das Volk hat Augen auch."

Luther is leading them against the tyranny of the church:

"Ein Flügelpaar, das Euer Blick nicht sieht,
Wird ihr (der Jungfrau Deutschland) von Luthern eben angeklebet;
Vertrauen, Kraft in Gott! ..." ⁵²

In contrast to Franz's enthusiasm for Luther, Katherina gives expression to a Catholic and pedantic view of him: she sees in him only "Eintz⁵³ Apostat ... der eines Priesters hohe Würde schändet - " He will not reveal truth to mankind, but will rob it of the naive faith that alone can lead the way to a realization of the divine:

"Den Firnis wird er Euch vom schönen Bilde
Der himmlischen Natur herunter wischen,
Des nur die ersten kahlen Linien
Euch übrig bleiben ... ⁵⁴
Ersterben wird Euch jedes Hochgefühl; .."

Katherina points out the danger that Luther brings with him; she adds to the picture of Luther the shadow that the enthusiastic Franz has overlooked.

All we have thus far learned about Luther, we learn before he himself makes an appearance upon the stage. Now we turn to his self-characterization in the first scene of the second act.

First Werner shows ^{how} Luther's life and work are guided by one and the same principle. Having been locked in his room for three days, totally absorbed in his work of translation, he is forcibly interrupted by the arrival of his parents who have come to hear from his own lips the story

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"Weihe der Kraft" p. 124

53

ibid p. 35

54

ibid p. 46

of his new faith. He explains his new teachings to this simple and honest peasant people by concrete examples. He compares himself and his work to that of a miner who is clearing out an old shaft. This shaft, he says has fallen in because the miners have lacked ambition to keep it clear, because they have been persuaded by evil associates that the precious ore is only meant for the mountain spirit. But as the good miner works to clear his shafts, so he, Luther must work to clear theology from quack doctors and quack medicine. What are the cures Luther offers for such a state of affairs?

"Ein jeder soll sich frei bewegen können ... jeder s e h n,
 Die eignen Hände soll ein jeder rühren,
 Sein Stückchen A r b e i t soll ein jeder tun,
 Dech nicht stolzieren, ...
 Auch glauben nicht an eigne gute Werke; - 55
 Es gibt nur e i n gut Werk, des Herrgott's Uhrwerk, ..."

And he goes on,

".....jeder Mensch...kann und soll 56
 Zum Himmel kindlich kühn den Blick erheben, ..."

for,

57
 "Der reine Wille ... der wohnt in uns! "

Next ~~Werner~~ describes Luther's past life; we learn the following:

Luther's parents were somewhat severe in the upbringing of their son, for which, however, he does not reproach them; he loves his parents and

- 55 "Weihe der Kraft" p. 56-7
- 56 ibid p. 72
- 57 ibid p. 67

even feels that ^{this} ~~that~~ severity has done him good, for does God treat his children otherwise? ⁵⁸ At Eisenach the young student suffers privization, yet his ambition drives him to learn Latin at the cost of going without breakfast and dinner; He hates going from door to door singing "Currende", but it is on such a ^{singing} tour that his life takes a turn for the better:

Cotta's wife takes him under her wing and successfully guides him through ⁵⁹ periods of distress; for all this he is exceedingly thankful. In Erfurt he compels himself to study law because his parents wish it, for which reason he also believes it God's will; however, he sugars it with the study of philosophy. Finally we learn how he has become what he now is through the unexpected death by lightning of his friend Alexius. What he has become the first part of the scene makes clear.

Throughout all these phases of Luther's life one characteristic stands out: his intrepid will, which clears the way toward his goal, and which does away with all the obstacles that crop up again and again in his life and his work - even the fear of death. He, in the face of the pleading of all his friends - he alone, after praying to his God ⁶⁰ - has the strength and will to resist his enemies and not revoke what he honestly believes. ⁶¹

"Ich kämpfe ... für ... Gott und mein Vaterland"

.....

58

"Weihe der Kraft" p. 74-5 "Mit Ruten zieht er sie."

59

ibid p. 74 "O, dieses Weib! Nichts wäre ich ohne sie."

60

For a comparison of the historical and the Werner Luther prayer see Fränkel p. 60

61

"Weihe der Kraft" p. 140

"Ich widerrufe nicht! - der Papst kann irren -
Kenzilien auch - die Schrift allein ist wahr!
So lang Ihr mich aus ihr nicht Lügen zeiht,
So bleib' ich fest, brennt ihr mich auch zu Staub.
Nur dem Gewissen folg' ich - seht, hier steh' ich -
Gott helfe mir - ich kann nicht anders! Amen!"⁶²

Whatever task Luther undertakes, he carries it to the finish. Such is the nature of his "reiner Wille"; for him it is the only true authority ("wahrer Papst"); it is the God who lives within us all.⁶³

But Luther is not a man of serious thought only; he realizes full well the value of complete joy and rest. Everything in its time and place, appears to be his motto: "Heut gilt es Freude"; he finds joy in wine, woman and song,⁶⁴ and especially in the latter two:⁶⁵

"Ja sie machen
Das Leben uns zur schönen Melodei -
Und dieses (Frau Cotta) vollends - ha! das war ein Weib!"⁶⁶

"... Nach Gottes Wort
Ist nichts so künstlich als die Musika."⁶⁷

And in such a mood he even entreats Melanchthon not to be sad and downcast,⁶⁸ but to enjoy life more.

Having learned so thoroughly about Luther in the first act from

62

"Weihe der Kraft" p. 142 Compare 82-85

63

ibid p. 140

64

ibid p. 68 Compare p. 58 where he gives up his work on the translation of psalms to welcome his parents.

65

ibid p.70, 165

66

ibid p.76

67

ibid p.77

68

ibid p. 59, 70

Hubert Franz and Katherina, and in the second from the hero himself, we are not surprised when no actual new facts present themselves about the man in the remaining three acts of the drama; the material that is utilized is an enlargement or further development of the facts we have already been made acquainted with. I have therefore, as far as the last three acts are concerned, contented myself with several quotations and numerous page references. Werner obtained the facts for his historical Luther directly from the sources; it might be proved that he took most of Luther's utterances almost verbally from the work of Luther. ⁶⁹ Werner does, however, exaggerate somewhat, Luther's prophetic ability. The mistrust Luther shows of Katherina at the end has also been criticised. Fränkel justifies both; the first by reference to a popular woodcut of the period of the Reformation, which portrays Luther in a prophetic pose, the second by the fact that throughout his life Luther was constantly possessed with the fear of being influenced by devils. ⁷⁰

As we pass in review the historical figure of Luther as drawn by Werner, we are struck by the fact that he undergoes no character development; he is fully developed when we first meet him. But we do feel that this character is drawn very true to history; like the historical Luther Werner's Luther feels that he is merely an instrument of God in spite of the mighty will he possesses. Significantly enough then, this Luther is true to

69

Fränkel p.74, 60

70

ibid p.74

history in spite of Werner's desire to fuse him with his own mystic religious philosophy. This brings us then to a consideration of the so-called "holy" Luther of the prolog and the fifth act.

As we indicated at the beginning of the chapter, Werner wrote the prolog because he ^{had} failed to sufficiently fit his Luther to his religious philosophy. We find that the description of Luther in the prolog takes no account whatever of his dramatic human side; it simply presents the allegorical meaning Werner wished to give to Luther, which consisted in the poet's sacred trinity: "Kunst, Glauben, Reinheit"; we learn here about the divine mission that Luther's work is to attain through the mystical trinity of love; we learn that the Luther of the drama is to be considered an apostle of Werner's religion, and not an historically true figure:

"Sei in der Chronik nichts davon zu lesen, 71
Nicht ihr, dem Ruf des Innern muss ich dienen;"

Just what is this "Ruf des Innern", this religious philosophy of Werner?

For Werner Luther was one of those whom God chose to fight for Him. To develop his will God let him pass through many trials and tribulations ⁷² which are brought out in the drama. ^{That} Luther may be successful

71

"Weihe der Kraft" XI

"For Werner's relation to history see Fränkel, chapter IV; we may summarize the relation in a sentence or two from Fränkel: "Er nimmt die einzelnen historischen Tatsachen herüber, wobei er aber sein Augenmerk vorzüglich auf die dramatisch wirksamsten Ereignisse richtet und diese nun der Konzentration seines Werkes wegen so zusammendrängt, das die verschiedenen tatsächlichen Zwischenglieder fortfallen. Es ist, als würde er die höchsten Spitzen einer Alpenkette auf einen Punkt zusammenschieben und dabei die vielen Anhöhen und die zahlreichen Täler, die sich dazwischen schlängeln, überspringen. pp.59-60

72

"Weihe der Kraft" V, p.192

73

in his given tasks and not lose his way, God sent three angels to him, through the possession of which a man may rule the world. They were "Reinheit" (Elizabeth), "Kunst" (Theobald), and "Glauben" (Therese). First Elizabeth develops the divine spark in his soul, then Theobald continues to furnish inspiration for it, largely in the form of music, and lastly Therese "diese Gottesrose", by keeping alive in Katherina the flame of religious faith, "die heilige Minne"⁷⁴, as Werner calls it, Therese makes it possible "dass Luthers Kraft durch sie das Heil gewinne ..."⁷⁵. So all three angels have a part in shaping Luther's fate, the last one, Therese, to be sure in an indirect way. The angels are :

"Die feste Burg, der Luther sich vertrauet, 76
Die zu erklimmen herrlich ihm gelungen! - "

Through their guidance Luther is finally toughed by the strong hand of faith and sees God "im Flammenbusch der Liebe", viz. Katherina, who, uniting in herself all the attributes of the three angels that have gone before her, now becomes Luther's real inspiration: body and soul have been reconciled.⁷⁷

73

"Weihe der Kraft" VIII, "Dass sonder Weihe nicht die Kraft verblüthe."

74

ibid X

75

ibid X

76

ibid X

77

ib. p. 191 "Als Blüte (Therese), Spiegel (Elizabeth), Bild (Theobald)
des ewig Schönen
Sind wir gesendet: Blut (irdische) und Licht (himmlische) zu sühnen."

"Durch's Fleisch ist Liebe bei uns eingekehret;
Nur ihre Flamme kann den Helden stählen,
Ob sie der Mücke Flügel auch versehret. 78
Ein Sakrament muss Geist (Glaube) und Leib (Kunst) vermählen;

Only now Luther has attained a feeling for the eternal truth.

We have noticed the lack of character development in the historical Luther. In passing in review the "holy" Luther, we find that not quite the same thing may be said of him; during the fourth act a certain change does come over Luther; as a result of this change he gives his hand in marriage to Katherina. This change, however, is not convincing because it has not been made to appear gradual; we are unprepared for it. There is a sudden jump, so to speak between the presentation of the historical Luther and that of the "holy" Luther. This is due to the fact that Werner has failed to blend the historical theme with the mystical one.

What is the cause of the failure to produce a drama that is an harmonious whole? The answer is : Werner was not inwardly drawn to Luther; 79
It may rather be said that he was talked into writing about Luther. First Iffland, the actor, was anxious to play a Luther part, and second the general lack of public interest in a proposed national monument to the

78

"Weihe der Kraft" compare p.192

79 a letter to

Im Scheffer of May 23rd, 1806: (Fränkel p.134) ^{Werner} speaks of him (Luther) here as "einen wohlmeinenden reformatorischen Plumpsack".

reformer caused considerable surprise in the German press: so that the
80
subject of Luther was in the air. But there was a third and personal
reason why Werner was drawn to this subject: he thought it would be a
means of defending himself against the accusation that his "Kreuz an der
Ostsee", especially in respect to the character of Adalbert showed strong
leanings toward the Roman Catholic Church. At the same time he also
wanted to show that his Luther would not be entirely unlike his Adalbert,
for the divine element would have to be present in both. When the first
version of his "Luther" was finished in manuscript, however, the critics
began to search for Catholic elements and did not find it so difficult to
ferret some out. Werner defends himself by saying that "das unter dem Namen

81
Katholizismus bekannte Ungeheuer" was to him a detestable subject; that
his religion has nothing in common with it. We can understand that these
accusations angered him and caused him in revising the play to deliberately
obscure the mystic and catholic elements in it; on the other hand, ^{he} writes
to Scheffner, May 23, 1806, in respect to the character of his Luther:
"Da ich einmal im Geruche des Katholizismus bin, ... so dachte ich den
berlinischen Jesuitenriechern den "Luther" wie einem groben Aste einem
82
groben Keil entgensetzen zu können". These things help explain the

80

Fontane presents the attitude of the early nineteenth century to
Werner's Luther in his novel "Schach v. Wuthenow". He does so objectively
and realistically, but does not add his own reflections. He simply says:
"Alles, was romantisch mystisch war, war für, alles, was freisinnig,
war gegen das Stück". Gesamtausg. der erzählenden Schriften I, 3, p.223

81

Fränkel p.109

82

ibid p. 109

break in the drama.

But we must return to the statement that Werner was not inwardly attracted to Luther. His philosophy was an erotic, mystic one which could not very well harmonize with Luther's clear conception of faith. But this does not mean that Werner could not outwardly have the highest admiration for him; he did, and again and again made statements to that effect. In the drama the Kurfürst von Mainz gives expression to Werner's inward attitude toward Luther:

"Dem alten Glauben bin ich zugetan,
Dem altkathol'schen nämlich, der entstaltet
Burch Krankheit, die, was ja der heil'ge Vater
Selbst eingesteht, vom Haupt in alle Glieder
Gedrungen ist; d'rum tut uns Heilung not! -
Der Luther will die Heilung übernehmen;
Er will nichts weiter, als die alte Zucht,
Wie die Apostel sie geübt, erneuen,
Weil sie entartet ist zum Skandalum ...
... Luther... er ist rein, d'rum reinigt Euch!"⁸³

And concerning the Empire he says:

"Wir sind die freien Deutschen! - Freiheit ist
Des Rechtes Tochter - darum flieht das Unrecht! -
Nicht Scheiterhaufen, eine Sättele baut⁸⁴
Dem Luther, der Euch lehret Deutsche sein!"

Werner's deep interest in the historical facts of Luther's life absorbed him completely until he reached the point where his religious philosophy conflicted with that of Luther. Here the sudden break comes between the historical and the "holy" Luther. The point of contact and transition between the two comes at the close of the fourth act

83

"Weihe der Kraft" p. 152

84

ibid. p. 152

and is expressed in Luther's and Werner's (Theobald's and Thereses) conception of love. For Luther it is quite apart from the human: "Von Gott herab nimmt Liebe ihren Lauf;" ^{84b} he seeks something higher than human love. ⁸⁵ For Werner, as we have seen, the two kinds of love are intimately interwoven. For this reason Werner had probably no clear picture as to how he might end his drama realistically according to history. Instead he subordinates Luther and makes him the means to his end. He does not show the facts of Luther's success directly by means of the influence ~~of~~ his reformativ~~e~~ actions have, but indirectly according to the influence Katherina has upon him. Werner lacked the desire and the understanding to portray Luther's character objectively to the finish; and he completely failed to present the final inner truths of history because he was a subjective nature.

86

"Dem Ruf des (meines) Innern muss ich dienen."

To express these inner thoughts it was natural that Werner should be drawn to the more poetic forms of Catholicism rather than to the cold, strict, and ^areasoned atmosphere of Protestantism. So we are not surprised when he joins the Catholic church and repudiates "Die Weihe der Kraft" and now preaches "Die Weihe der Unkraft" i.e. "die Demut".

84b

"Weihe der Kraft" mp. 167

85

ibid p. 168 "Ich such' ein höher Licht."

86

ibid p.XI

Werner has set out to mold Luther to his own mystic philosophy. As we have seen he failed to do so throughout the play because the facts of Luther's life fascinated him so much that he was led to stray from his original intentions. This accounts for the twofold nature of the play. So we may say that Werner was carried away by Luther in the first part of the play and tried to "bend" him to his purpose in the second. The first part presents a very fine picture of the facts of Luther's life, the second preaches Werner's philosophy which is neither Protestant nor Catholic, but a romantic rationalization of a personal religion that unites through sexual love, body and soul.

B. Achim von Arnim: "Die Kronenwächter" (1817),
A Nationalistic Luther.

Arnim's novel "Die Kronenwächter" is "eine kulturhistorische Entwicklungsgeschichte" of the sixteenth century which grew out of the author's need for national expression. It marks a long step forward in the historical understanding: even though comparatively few historical events are mentioned it presents a fairly true picture of the time; but measured by modern standards of history, it has a serious defect. The characters may have the color of the Dürer woodcuts, but their speech and action fails to give an insight into the entirely different way of thinking and feeling the sixteenth century people had as compared to those of Arnim's time. This is due to two things. First: Arnim has the theory that the peculiar character of a certain group is the result of abnormal conditions. This theory is a step in the direction of a better understanding of history and finds its root in that general law of human development which teaches: the development of a people's way of thinking and feeling changes with the environment; thus, even within one and the same generation the different classes of people, under certain conditions, no longer understand each other. Arnim, however, failed to attain a complete understanding of this law; had he lived a few decades longer, he might have seen the difference in the way of thinking and feeling of, e.g. the middle class of 1817 and the middle class of 1517. Arnim places his sixteenth century people in situations in which they do not essentially differ in thought and action from those of the beginning of the nineteenth. Those who read carefully will notice that Arnim draws analogies and comparisons, but never contrasts underlying differences of the two centuries.

This brings us to our second point. It simply is not Arnim's purpose to estrange the souls of his characters from those of his own time by exact historical truth; he wants the air of the characters of his novel breathe as well as their whole manner of existence to be the same as that of the present. The result is that he creates eternal human types. The reason for this is that he is inspired by nationalistic motives. Chiefly by symbolical and allegorical means - he wishes to call the attention of readers to the grave difficulties they must still surmount; Arnim uses history as a mirror in which he hopes the people may see what sins they have inherited; in this way he hopes they may learn to profit. Thus Arnim's theory and his aims do not lead to actual distortion of historical facts, but they do create a kind of falsification, as all contrasts are withheld.

Arnim was unable to complete his novel because the historical events disappointed his patriotism. He was, however, the first poet to present an all inclusive picture of an important period in German history.

Just what is Arnim's conception of history? By the way in which he digests his historical material, it is clear that his conception of history has developed from the romantic appreciation of art. For Arnim "history" is little more than a faithful portrayal of chronological events; the great underlying ideas, on the other hand, which above all give the "Kronenwächter" its color, viz. the opinions of the age, especially the one concerning the might of tradition over men, the trend of the feeling of the time and its understanding of deeper relationships - all this was for the romanticist more particularly artistic appreciation, and did not develop - belong to the field of history. But it was just these great underlying ideas that formed

truth in the
the essential historical novel. The principle leading to such a deeper
understanding of history we owe to Romanticism.

For Arnim, then, and this new conception of history, the unhistorical
characters become the important part of the novel. It is not his aim simply
to allow the mighty current of historical events to flow past us; it is
rather his desire to make clear to us the real significance of the stream of
outward events in which Luther has an important part, by interpreting it for
us, by guiding us to an understanding of the inner cultural values and their
relation to the present. Therefore the historical essence of the novel is
placed in imaginary characters; they allow his imagination freedom to exer-
cise his historical intuition; through their destinies they unfold for us the
cultural values of his own period; they join together the comparatively few
historical facts. In this way Arnim shows us the heart and soul of his age.
He surveys a period of time as a whole, he places before us its basic tone
in a harmonious union of all historical events, thoughts and feelings, and
does it largely by symbolical and allegorical means.

Arnim presents man as the creature of history. He does not create any
one outstanding here, but makes the people the hero instead. The great men of
history disappear in minor action, or into the background; he subordinates
them to legendary and fictitious material; thus, e.g. the fictitious countess
Schwarzenburg is made to have considerable influence upon Luther's fate.
Only as a distant roar do the great world events reach our ear. The part the
historical characters take gives one the feeling that they are the source
of energy which however still lies largely dormant; throughout the novel
short statements and references are scattered ~~was~~ which suggest the

86α

"Kronenwächter" I, p. 245

influence ~~of the chain~~ of their activity. Thus historical life and action, historical mood and discord are not entirely lacking.

If Arnim's chief interest lay in the unhistorical figures he created, our interest in this study lies only in the character portrayal he gives to one historical personage - Luther. We have already seen that Arnim relegates historical facts to a secondary position in his novel, that the great men of history are pushed to the background, and that it is not Arnim's desire to exchange any of his characters from the general human types. What kind of a Luther may we expect under such circumstances?

Luther's influence can be felt directly and indirectly more or less throughout the novel. ⁸⁷ Luther is perhaps Arnim's chief source of inspiration; both Arnim and the youth of his time represented by the "Burschenschaften", with which Arnim had no direct sympathies, found inspiration in Luther in the hour of their country's need. Arnim really makes out of Luther a hero who, though behind the scenes, awakens in the people a thorough going national feeling. He makes Kunz say: "Die Stimme unseres Volks, die Stimme Gottes, L u t h e r ist hier, der Kardinal kann ihn nicht mit Worts^{tr}heit, nicht mit Drehungen dahin bringen, seine Sätze zurück zu nehmen...". ⁸⁸ This nationalism, however, was still expressed in the peoples uncertain political ideal for Germany: The old medieval idea of the Holy Roman Empire. The Emperor Maximilian, not Luther, is made the

87

"Kronenwächter II, p. 15 is an example of such an influence.

88

ibid I, p. 242

here who represents this ideal and the nationalistic endeavors of the Reformation period, for ~~such were the historically facts~~. These endeavors consisted in an attempt to do away with the feudalistic state, in order to make Germany strong nationally; in making the papacy hereditary and thus ending the old struggle between pope and emperor, and finally in putting an end to celibacy among the clergy.

Before taking up the character of Arnim's Luther let us first define Arnim's conception of the Reformation, because he subordinates Luther to it.

Arnim, greatly inspired by his visit to Wittenberg and Luther's room there, gives us more particularly a picture of Dürer's, Vischer's and Kraft's age, and compares it with his own. At that time people had a national art full of inner strength that reflected all life and united all classes in a common bond; besides art other uniting forces were the "Volksbücher", "Volkslieder", the wandering theater guilds and minstrels. The national art of the sixteenth century inspired men to deeds and action; in it is rooted the "volkstümliche Geschichtsschreibung", "die Kampfschrift", "die Satire", all of which mirror the consciousness of a historical past, and an awakening understanding of political and social questions. It is Luther's influence that creates action from out ^{of} this culture and art of the German people; it is his figure that unites in rare harmony all the varied popular elements of the period marking the close of the Middle Ages. In such a way

89

"Kronenwächter" I, 218

90

ibid p. 142

91

ibid p. 142

Arnim would explain Luther's success in carrying all classes of people with him when he posted his Ninety-five Theses.

But this unity could not be maintained. The terrible religious wars,⁹² and the different ideals that rose beside Luther's put an end to the fine cultured unity the sixteenth century had attained and the progress of Germany's development was retarded.⁹³ According to Arnim the only hope for improvement lay in a return to a time like Dürer's: only through the cultural influences that art brought with it, was unity attainable. "Ehe aber diese Zeit eintreten kann, muss Alltägliches und Sonntägliches, muss Haus und Kirche aus einem Stück gebildet sein, wie damals, als unser Dürer den heiligen Hieronymus mit seinem Löwen in sein eigenes Wohnzimmer setzte, als Kranach⁹⁴ den Melanchthon zur Taufe, den Luther zur Kreuzigung Christi führte."

Anton in the second part of the novel embodies such striving for toleration.

"Die Kronenwächter" is largely protestant in its atmosphere; the depraved condition of the clergy is especially brought out. Frau Zähringen says on the eve of the Reformation: "Ja, ... wenn ich so einen Bettelmönch aus dem Bistum sehe, wie er mir mein sauer verdientes Brot abtrotzt, um es nachher für Wein in der Schenke zu verhandeln, da möchte ich ihm mit meinem Bundschuh gern auf die Platte schlagen und mit den Bauern rufen: Was ist das

92

"Die Kronenwächter" II, p. 388: "Erstens falsches Prophetentum, zweitens Gleichheitslehre, drittens Altertümer und Gelehrsamkeit, viertens Dummheit, die Gleichnisse nicht mehr fassen zu können."

93

ibid. p. 187 "es war den Leuten über den vielen Religionsstreitereien etwas ganz Neues geworden, klar und lustig singen zu hören." ibid. p. 146 "es ist ein fürchterliches Morden und Brennen überall." ib. p. 398 "Die Religionsstreitereien mehren sich und überwuchern den ganzen Boden der Gelehrsamkeit." See also ib. p. 401ff

94

ibid. I, p. 142

95
 für ein Wesen? Vor München mag keiner genesen." And when the Reformation
 is well under ~~the~~ way Anton says: "das lange Beten unverständlicher lateini-
 scher Worte mag ich gar nicht mehr ertragen,... immerhin mag es gut sein,
 wenn Menschen mit Gewalt einem Glauben unterworfen sind, die nichts anerken-
 nen als die Gewalt, dass sie so einen Betlärmern beieinander machen, wie jede Art
 Vieh sich an solch. Geschrei und auch die erkennt, die sie füttern, die Men-
 schen aber, die in ihrer Erkenntnis aus dem Übrigen hervorgerissen sind,

96
 denen genügt kein solches auswendig gelerntes Plappern". Arnim's Anton turns
 protestant; no longer does he think well of the miraculous in faith; instead
 he looks to the human elements: "was kümmert mich jetzt die Gnadenreiche
 Mutter Maria,... die ist mir ehrwürdig, weil Millionen zu ihr anstreben und
 keiner sie erreicht."

97
 It is not Maria as such, but the influence she
 possesses that makes her "ehrwürdig". We see Arnim goes "weit über Luther". 98
 We are reminded of "Humanität" und Goethe. In short the clergy is denounced
 as superstitious, foolish, fanatical, hypocritical, proud, desirous of
 power, and lacking in understanding.

Still Arnim agrees with catholic Romanticism that the Reformation in
 doing away with many abuses also swept away, with little thought, many beautiful
 customs, such as the homage paid to the Madonna and child, and in their place
 left a cold and vague Rationalism. He was deeply affected by Catholicism
 because it united the mysterious forces of sacred things with the frank
 strength of beautiful ones. Arnim was convinced that his love for beautiful
 things, which the Reformation so violently resisted, was just that which had

95
 ibid I, p. 204

96
 ibid II, p. 238

97
 ibid p. 237

98
 ibid p. 238

furnished the unifying element to the Middle Ages; he was convinced that since the Reformation the aesthetic element had been largely lacking. The Reformation eliminated, all too systematically and thoroughly, many vital and justified elements from the life of the time; its zeal became dogmatic and fanatical. And so it happened that the national benefits of the Reformation were delayed for centuries. Because of its fanaticism it lost many friends. Anton resists the iconoclasts, even curses Luther for the moment, because this insanity of destruction had been excited by him. The radical extremes of the Reformation must be overcome; the iconoclasts must be destroyed, but not the pictures, for they brought love, comfort and prayer to many thousands.

All this, however, does not make Arnim a catholic Romanticist; he evinces patriotic joy in Luther's vigorous personality. All the glory and splendor, harmony and beauty of form that penetrates the church life of the catholics cannot blind him; the aesthetic splendor of the catholic church cannot atone for the harm it did with the indulgences. The evangelical church was not to be made catholic, but certain aesthetic phases of the catholic church were to be added to the evangelical. Such is Anton's, Arnim's conviction.

Much space has been devoted to Arnim's conception of history and the Reformation. Only now do we feel that sufficient background has been gained to speak about the little we hear directly about Luther himself.

Undoubtedly Arnim was influenced in his judgement of the clergy by

100

Goethe's Bruder Martin in "Götz von Berlichingen". For both, the outstanding characteristic is the human wordly element, to which Arnim adds an aesthetic one; but we shall see Arnim does not neglect the spiritual otherworld characteristic as Goethe does. It is especially Luther's high regard for women that reminds us of Bruder Martin: we see in this Luther's understanding of the human heart and soul. "Kein lieberes Ding auf Erden als Frauenliebe, wem sie zu Teil mag werden! ... Frühes Aufstehen und Freien soll Niemand gereuen... Der Mann arbeitet sich froh durch die Welt, wenn ein frommes Weib den Schweiss von seiner Stirne trocknet, er wirft seine Sorge auf Gott, tut Recht, scheuet Niemand, und freut sich an der Welt, wie auf den Himmel." Anna asks him pityingly: "Und ihr dürft nicht heiraten?... Und wisst doch den Ehestand zu rühmen." His reply shows absolute faith in the Bible: "Freilich; ... ist es gegen des Papstes Gebot, was die Heilige Schrift gebietet: Es soll ein Bischoff unsträflich sein, eines Weibes Mann! "

101

102

In his own way Arnim tells us about Luther's escape from Worms. Absolutely sure of himself Luther refuses to revoke his ninety-five Theses. ¹⁰³ Staupitz begs him to give in, but Luther answers: "er kenne

100 Goethes Werke,
Meyer Klassiker Ausgabe Bd. 7, S. 24

101 "Die Kronenwächter" I, p. 247 Compare "Hermann und Dorothea," Goethes Werke, Meyers Klassiker Ausgaben, Bd. 3, p. 375

102 ibid p. 248

103 ibid p. 248 (See page 40 of this paper).

sich und seine Schüler und sein Werk stehe nicht mehr in seiner Macht und
seinem Willen." ¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, Luther is willing to listen to the

advice of others in the matter of his escape: "Amen ... hier ist mein
letztes Wort an den Kardinal und nun stehe ich in Gottes Hand, bin fertig
und bereit, wohin ihr mich senden wollt." ¹⁰⁵ Clothed for his escape in the

cloak and cap of Kunz; the jester, he appears in them "allen bunten Lappen zum
trotz, gleich einem Herscher mit kühnem Blick;" ¹⁰⁶ he even goes without

shoes and stockings as his peasant parents did: clothes could not hide the
dignity of his bearing. As he leaves ~~Worms~~, alone, undaunted, his
simple courageous heart finds comfort in the little song Kunz sings. ¹⁰⁷

This was indeed a great man: er "vereinigte ... ein Entgegengesetztes,
was sonst nirgend gefunden wird: Demut und Stolz, Bewusstsein seiner Bahn
und Hingebung an anderer Rat, helle Verständigkeit und blinden Glauben, noch
war das Volk nicht reif, sich solch einem Manne nachzubilden, aber seine
Gegner lernten bald so viel von ihm, wie seine Anhänger." ¹⁰⁸ Many side with
Luther; how many secretly do so is brought out in the second part of the
novel.

I think we may say that Arnim summarizes his ideas of Luther in the

104

"Die Kronenwächter" I, p. 244

105

ibid p. 246

106

ibid p. 246

107

ibid p. 247

108

ibid p. 246

109

poem "Zum Leben Luthers" In it Luther solves the problem of the attitude to be taken toward this world and the next. Having high-handedly burned the papal bull, he fears the act might lead to extremes. The little children teach him that external worldly events are not, indeed cannot be, entirely objectionable, even though they be confused; we understand life and the world only as we develop our character, and "wie so viele Blinde sind grosse Kinder!" Nor are the joys of this world to be ignored:

"Auch die Ernstesten spielen nicht minder
Wenn ihre Stunde geschlagen hat
Dass sie vom Ernste sind steif und matt...
Wer würde die Hälfte des Lebens versäumen."

And so Luther takes on a more moderate attitude:

"Und seit dem Tage da hemmt er den Zorn
Gegen Auserlichkeit auch wenn sie verworh.
Nur falsche Lehre bedroht er mit Eifer" 110

And that has special reference to the indulgences; as far as images, pictures works of art are concerned, he is tolerant; Arnim believes that though Luther lived very simply and without display, he had more taste for the artistic than any of the clergy of his own time.

"Sie (die Bilder) sind die Freuden auf niedrer Erde
Die einst zu Sternen des Himmels noch werden
Und ruhig erduldet er allen Hohn, 111
Dass er der Auseren Pracht verschon."

109

"Die Kronenwächter II, p. 405

110

ibid p. 406-7 Compare Goethe's Gütz: Meyers Klassiker Ausgabe Bd. 7, 23
"Mir kommt nichts beschwerlicher vor, als nicht Mensch sein dürfen..."

111

ibid I, p. 143

112

ibid II, p. 407

He does not see his way to heaven in a complete denunciation of this world.

Clearly Arnim's Luther is strongly influenced by the Romanticist's love of Art. And to this love, as we have seen, Arnim joins closely the nationalistic motif. In short Arnim limits the portrayal of Luther in the same way that he limits the portrayal of the whole period: he brings out only those characteristics that are similar to the early nineteenth century humanistic ideals, and adds much to them that is not Lutheran.

C. H. von Kleist: "Michael Kohlhaas." (1810)
A progressive Luther.

Kleist uses History as a means to an end in his novel "Michael Kohlhaas". It is not his primary aim to give a picture of the early period of the Reformation, but to portray the struggle of an individual for his rights. He presents a conflict between natural feelings of justice and the teachings of Christ, ¹¹³ a struggle between Michael Kohlhaas, representing Kleist's nineteenth century ideas, and Martin Luther, representing sixteenth century Christian ideas awakened to new life. But even though his aim and the needs of his aim always receive first consideration, and actual historical events are rearranged or changed accordingly, we find that he portrays to a surprising degree the general spirit and atmosphere ¹¹⁴ of the sixteenth century; the outlines, it is true, are not very sharply drawn.

Among the historical changes are to be mentioned the inclusion of Kohlhaas' wife, the omission of Melanchthon, and the unhistorical episode of the "Kapsel" at the end, which, however, is entirely in keeping with

113

When Michael's Lutheran wife exhorts him on her death bed to forgive his enemies, he says, "So möge mir Gott nie vergeben, wie ich dem Junker vergebe!" Bong ^{III} 42

114

"die kulturgeschichtliche Umwelt seines Helden hat er vorzüglich getroffen und uns ein getreues, anschauliches bewegtes Bild der deutschen Zustände des 16. Jahrhunderts gegeben." Gude, Erläut. dt. Dichtungen Bd. X: Erzähl. Dicht. des 19. Jahrhunderts p. 91

sixteenth century superstition.

As far as the general atmosphere is concerned, we gain an insight into the time when superstition in high and low circles, a negligence in the administration of justice, brutality and violence still held sway; this is exemplified by Kohlhaas' followers and the Junker Tronka; the Elector of Saxony, unscrupulous, absolute, selfish, pictures the prince of the time.

Our special interest is to determine how Kleist portrays Luther, to discover just what changes he made in Luther's character, if any. First, however, I should like to say a word about the method that Kleist uses to tell his story. I should like to point out two things. First: When during the story moral judgments are made concerning persons or events, they are not always those of the nineteenth century poet, but may be those of the chronicler of the time of the Reformation. This chronicler of course did not possess the subtle moral feeling of the Kant-Goethean epoch; to his simpler understandings the egotistical-individualistic Kohlhaas actually was a robber and a murderer. Like public opinion his judgments are fickle, changing with the circumstances of the action. Only the finest characters of the story, Luther and Gensau, who at times stand above the struggle of party differences, speak with a respectful shaking of the head of the "seltsamer Mensch," the "sonderbaren und nicht verwerflichen Manne." They point the way to better times to come.

115

Kleist Werke Bong III, 56, 84

Secondly it is Kleist's first concern to present actions and problems as plainly and realistically as possible; and this is done by working from the outer actions to inner struggles of the soul. How does he handle Luther in this respect?

Perhaps we can best enter into our subject by first comparing Luther's actual letter to the Elector of Saxony with Kleist's version of it. In the historical letter Luther is conciliatory and kind: "Mein lieber Freund! ... wäre wohl zuerst besser gewesen, die Rache nicht furzunehmen, dieweil dieselbe ohne Beschwerung des Gewissens nicht furgenommen werden mag, weil sie ein selb eigen Rache ist, welche von Gott verboten ist, Dext 32, Röm. 12: ... Was ihr mit Recht ausführen möget, da tut ihr wohl; könnt ihr das Recht nicht erlangen, so ist kein ander Rat da, denn Unrecht leiden ... lasset euch euern Schaden von Gott zugefüget sein und verzeisset umb seinet willen: so werdet ihr sehen, er wird widerum euch segnen, und euer Arbeit reichlich belohnen..."¹¹⁶

Turning to Kleist's version of Luther's letter, we find quite a different attitude. He does not begin with "Mein guter Freund". Instead we read: "Kohlhaas, der du dich gesandt zu sein vorgibst, das Schwert der Gerechtigkeit zu handhaben, was unterfängst du dich, Vermessefner, im Wahnsinn stockblinder Leidenschaft, du, den Ungerechtigkeit selbst, vom Wirbel bis zur Sehle, erfüllt"¹¹⁷ He accuses him of a wanton breach of peace, declares him a rebel, a robber and a murderer: "dein Ziel auf

116

Herzog p.346(Dec.8.,1534) See also De Wette: M.Luthers Briefe IV, p.569

117

Kleists Werke, Bong III, 53

Erden ist Rad und Galgen, und jenseits die Verdammnis, die über die
118
Missetat und die Gottlosigkeit verhängt ist."

In the historical letter is mirrored a fine picture of the sixteenth century Luther and his fundamental ideas; while in Kleist's version of the letter only one side of Luther's character is brought out: the temperamental outbursts of anger he was prone to when ^{convinced} he was right. We can picture this letter as of the kind he might have hurled at the peasants, only this one is probably of considerably milder form.

We have in this letter of Kleist's a case of shifting or changing the exactness of an historical event. Why is such a change made here? Probably to make possible ^{for Kleist} an exposition that could develop to a climax, but historical truth is not necessarily decreased by such a procedure. Let us proceed with our study and see how Kleist continues to present his Luther.

How is Luther characterized in the great Luther-Kohlhaas scene? Kleist portrays Luther as being convinced by Kohlhaas of the justice of his demands; ¹¹⁹ a striking change comes over him. He is still violent but it is hardly a hostile violence; it is rather a violence with which he wishes to hide his growing realization of the elements of justice that lie in Kohlhaas' case. ¹²⁰ Kohlhaas does not appear before him as a dishonest

118 Kleist Werke, Bong III, p.54

119 "Luther sagte: "Schau' her, was du forderst wenn anders die Umstände so sind, wie die öffentliche Stimme hören lässt, ^{ist} gerecht." Bong III, p.57

120 *ibid* p.55 "Heillosen entsetzlicher Mann!" rief Luther, durch diese Worte verwirrt zugleich und beruhigt." *ib.* 55 "Luther, mit einem verdriesslichen Gesicht, warf die Papiere, die auf seinem Tisch lagen, übereinander und schwieg." Die trotzige Stellung, die dieser seltsame Mensch ihm Staat einnahm, verdross ihn."

disturber of peace, but rather as a promoter of justice to whom law-
 121
 ful protection has been denied. Luther somehow comes to see that
 Kohlhaas has not enjoyed the rights of citizenship, that he has in
 fact been banished from his own state, and that injustice has driven
 him to extreme measures, and may even have brought him to the verge of
 insanity. Thus Kleist's Luther actually waives his principle: authority
 122
 rules, right or wrong, and God punishes unjust authority, when he
 123
 writes to the elector demanding that an exception be made in this case.

What conclusions can be drawn from the historical letter of
 Luther to the elector, the corresponding letter of Kleist, and the Luther-
 Kohlhaas scene? It is clear that Kleist's Luther differs from the
 historical one. ^{Still} we find that his Luther despite alterations in details
 of the actual events, is based essentially spiritually upon the historical
 Luther and his strong intuitive faith in the principle of Christianity.
 In the Luther-Kohlhaas scene we note, e.g. basic points that have
 124
 strong similarity with Luther's historical letter to the elector.

121

Kleist Werke, Bong, III, p. 56 "Der Krieg, den ich mit der Gemeinheit der Men-
 schen führe, ist eine Missetat, sobald ich aus ihr nicht..verstossen war.

122

ibid p. 59 "dass derselbe (Kohlhaas) (Luther says) in der Tat durch das
 Verfahren, das man gegen ihn beobachtet, auf gewisse Weise ausser der
 Staatsverbindung gesetzt worden sei."

123

ibid p. 59 "kurz, dass man ihm, um aus dem Handel zu kommen, mehr als eine
 Fremde, in das Land gefallene Macht, wozu er sich auch, da er ein Ausländer
 sei, gewissermassen qualifiziere, als einen Rebellen, der sich gegen den
 Thron auflehne, betrachten müsse."

124

ibid p. 57 "Doch hättest du nicht, alles wohl erwogen, besser getan, du
 hättest, um deines Erlösers willen, dem Junker vergeben, die Rappen,
 dürre und abgehürmt, wie sie waren, bei der Hand genommen, dich aufgesetzt
 und zur Dickfütterung in deinen Stall nach Kohlhaasen brück heimgeritten!"
 Kohlhaas antwortete: "Kann sein!" Compare this with the first sentence
 we quote from the historical letter on p. 51-2

In both cases we have two of Luther's fundamental principles expressed.

First his conception of Justice: It is "ein Geschöpf weltlicher Gewalt, es ist eine Mäsure, eine sekundäre, eine Ordnung im Staate, um der Sünde willen, um der Schwachheit willen unseres Fleisches. In der Christenheit, im Corpus Christianum, das ist in der Kirche, regiert Freiheit und Liebe unter dem Weben des Geistes. Das Recht hat in der Kirche keine Stütze." ¹²⁵

Second his absolute demand for obedience to authority, right or wrong.

Kleist expresses this principle in the following words that he puts into Luther's mouth: "Wer anders als Gott darf ihn (den Kurfürsten von Sachsen) wegen der Wahl solcher Diener zur Rechenschaft ziehen?" ¹²⁶ But there is a

change from this historical conception in Kleist's Luther: We find a tendency to deeper insight. It is expressed in the difficulty Luther has in grasping the apparent contradictions of Kohlhaas' character. Especially incomprehensible to Luther is the disproportion between Kohlhaas' furious deeds of revenge and his rather unimportant grounds of complaint, viz. : ¹²⁷ "den Schaden, den ich wegen Nichtverkaufs der Rappen erlitten." It is necessary for Kohlhaas to point out two things to him, first, that he has been denied the protection of the law, and second that he is not concerned with winning earthly goods, but in securing the sanctity of

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Aeschley, Rudolf: Luther und das Recht. Zeitwende Jg. I, 9, 1925 S.288-99

126

Kleist Werke, Bong, III, p.56

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ibid III, p.57

128

justice. For like the chronicler, Luther is also not endowed with any
In contrast to Ashley quoted above, Bohnenblust goes to the extreme in characterizing Luther's relation to justice;
Kant-Goethean insight. "Von dem religiösen Drange, der edle Wiedertäufer

und späterhin viele Puritaner beseelte, deren Gewissen die Beseitigung
der wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Ungerechtigkeiten gebieterisch forderte,
spürte der Reformator nichts in sich. Das Evangelium beschränkte sich nach
seiner Auffassung auf das religiöse Innenleben des Menschen, er erlebte es
nie als auch allgemein sozial umgestaltendes Gebot." "Sein Erlebnis

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der Welt blieb mönchisch-asketisch arm, christlich kulturfeindlich. Sein
Geist fühlte sich dem eigenen Körper gegenüber dauernd entfremdet und
diese Gefühle der Isolation übertrug er auf die gesamte Welt." But Kleist's

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Luther is not as medieval as this; he realizes that a change has come
over him, a change sufficient to convince him that Kohlhaas' relation to
the state justified complaint on his part; but Luther does not comprehend
the depth and ~~entire~~ ^{psychological} significance of this change. ~~So Kleist's Luther, and we~~ ^{think the historical Luther as well}
does have some ~~vague~~ realization of the social inequalities that ^{are present and that} should

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I do not agree with Gundolf when he says: "In Luther tritt dem Schick-
salsmann gleichsam das verkörperte Gewissen, die Gottgegebene
Vernunft, das Menschliche Mass entgegen."...."Selbst Luther ist hier
nicht der Bruder Martin oder der grosse Reformator, sondern die Gottes-
stimme für den Frevler, die ihn umkehren heisst" p. 161 of his "Kleist".
I feel the tables are turned: Kohlhaas influences Luther more than
Luther Kohlhaas. Kohlhaas has an understanding of the social problems
of the nineteenth century.

129

Bohnenblust, E.: Luther und der Bauernkrieg, p.14

130

ibid p. 27

be removed. The one slowly, reluctantly realizes and admits that social problems really belong to the field of the church, are inevitably related to the spirit, while the other only subconsciously feels it, (according to Bohnenblust is unable to feel or realize it). Still, in making his final decisions, Kleist's Luther does not unite the social and spiritual elements, he considers first one, then the other. When it is a matter of Kohlhaas' relation to his Saviour, Kohlhaas is in the wrong, but- and this is significant as the progressive step in Kleist's Luther, growing modern- ~~he does it~~ not so much because of his deeds as because of his desire for revenge. Therefore Luther refuses him the communion.¹³¹ But when at the close of the story Luther sees Kohlhaas to be satisfied and peacefully resigned to death, sees him gladly lay down his life for the wrongs he has done, then Luther sends him a personal letter¹³² by the theologian Jakob Freising who administers the communion to him.

We conclude that Kleist's Luther is largely historically true, but that he also possesses a significant spiritual progressive tendency. Even this tendency is not entirely unhistorical, for we know Luther to have possessed several modern ideas though they were not specifically related to the spiritual, as e.g. his ideas on marriage. The problem of the just relation of the individual and the group to each other- a problem today more than ever before- was one that belonged to the nineteenth and not to the sixteenth century. Kleist therefore

131 According to history, communion was not refused Kohlhaas. In the presence of Melancthon and several other theologians he received the sacrament and promised to dissolve his band of rebels and do no more damage to Saxony. He kept his word. (Burckhardt p.58) (Wolff E. p.107). The whole historic scene between Luther and Kohlhaas is devoid of character and depth.

132 The letter is not historical.

makes Luther have some realization of the problem as brought to his attention by Kohlhaas, namely the problem of the psychic or spiritual element in justice, the problem of the relationship of justice to spirit, in short, the problem of a social religion that even today is little more than dawning. Yet the method in which Luther dealt with the problem was an entirely Christian one: forgive your enemies, do unto others as you would have ~~done~~.

done unto you. And therefore the most enlightened though minor character of the story, the chancellor Gensau, realizes that such a Christian stand as Luther took could not alone bring an advance of justice very quickly in this world of ours. Both being sixteenth century men, they cannot entirely comprehend the principle of maintaining the sanctity of justice that Kohlhaas, the nineteenth century man representing Kleist's own views, upholds. Luther would comfort chiefly with the words : they know not what they do; Kohlhaas insists that action be taken.

Luther's simple, forceful personality awakens in Kohlhaas the realization that he, himself rather uncertain of his real ideals, is being misunderstood; in veneration he ^{is} humbly drawn to Luther; yet he is determined to make clear to that great man the justice of his case. And when they meet, ^{two centuries meet,} the progressive sixteenth century and the progressive nineteenth century. Neither is defeated: both win victories because each understands the other and realizes the need for mankind of each other's ideals.

It is the idea of progress, progress more particularly in the relationship of natural ^{social} feelings of justice to the teachings of Christianity that Kleist thinks of when he says: "Wer steht uns dafür, dass nicht in

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The chancellor said he was only too willing to fulfill the wish of Kohlhaas to bring him justice, cost what it would, in so far as it could be done "ohne die Ruhe des Ganzen auf eine misslichere Art, als die Rücksicht auf einen Einzelnen erlaubt, aufs Spiel zu setzen."
Kleist's Werke, Bong III p.85

Kurzem ein zweiter L u t h e r unter uns aufsteht, und umwirft, was
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jener baute." For Kleist Kohlhaas is a kind of second Luther who tends
rather strongly to influence the historical Luther's ideals; that is the
significant point in Kleist's treatment of Luther: he allows nineteenth
century social problems to influence the historical character of Luther.
But that is as far as he goes: Kohlhaas dies a good Lutheran. The new
principle of maintaining the sanctity of justice is overshadowed by the
lutheran principle of salvation by faith. The attempt of Kleist's
135
Luther to blend the two principles fails. The time is not yet ripe.

134

Kleists Werke, E.Schmidt vol. 5 p.130

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Herzog, W. p.347 "dass auch Luthers Stimme ohnmächtig verklungen
müsste, dass sie des Schicksals Lauf nicht aufhalten konnte, das
entwickelt die Kunst Kleists mit harter Notwendigkeit."

D. Summary : Werner, Arnim, Kleist.

We now summarize our last three chapters. Among numerous other interests the Romantic group singles out especially the glories of German history and legend. Arnim is outstanding among these later Romanticists. Previous ~~idea~~ of the Romantic period history is looked upon as nothing more than chronological fact. This ~~is~~ ^{remained} Werner's ~~but not~~ Arnim's conception. In Werner's "Luther" we find nothing more than a chronological historical reproduction of the main facts of Luther's life and character which the author unsuccessfully attempts to fuse with his own erotic, mystic philosophy; it is Werner's aim to have Luther find eternal truth by means of his union with Katherina Bora. No account is taken of dramatic or human elements in Luther's character, nor is any psychological interest or character development expressed. There is no real attempt to interpret the significance of the past for the present or future although a nationalistic note may be detected; indeed the chief interest lies in making Luther a Werner.

With Arnim things are a little different, because as we have seen he did have a deeper understanding of history as we conceive it today. If Werner presents historical facts in his "Luther" and then attempts to tie them up with his own personal philosophy, Arnim employs sixteenth century history as a means to inspire nationalism, while Kleist uses it to inspire a feeling for justice. The outward interpretation of the events of the past is to unfold the inner cultural values of Luther and

the Reformation in the light of Arnim's own time. Just as art though seriously threatened had been the uniting national influence of the period of the Reformation, so a similar cultural influence must unite the present, and inspire to deed and action. We may say, however, that in the case of all three men history passed through their heart, was lived again.

Arnim, the Romanticist, subordinates Luther to the Reformation, but unlike the other later Romanticists, (Brentano, Görres, Eichendorff) he does not evaluate him in a purely negative way. He does not see the Reformation as an evil necessity for purifying the Catholic Church. Although Luther's personality is retired into the background behind the great ideas and currents of thought, in a typically Romantic manner we nevertheless are constantly kept aware that Luther is Arnim's chief inspiration. The and detirmined faith strength of Luther appears as a source of potential energy still awaiting development and application. For Arnim this refers especially to the national element. The passivity, inaction, and lack of organization that is characteristic of the "Kronenwächter" is precisely that mysterious something of which Arnim is but half aware, while realizing that it must be overcome by his own time. He himself, however, is still too much a Romanticist to carry out fully his own hopes. He is too passive; the fire and the dramatic strength necessary to arouse enthusiasm are absent in him. Unlike Kleist, Arnim does not present the contrasting and underlying

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Such a cultural unity really already existed in the literary center of Weimar.

conditions in which the two centuries differed. Instead he only draws analogies and comparisons; he represents the color but not the spirit of Luther's time. Thus there is, to be sure, no actual distortion of fact but a kind of falsification which is not adapted to inspire. He creates types, rather than individuals. We see expressed in him the aesthetic as well as the humanistic elements of Romanticism and the synthetic elements of Classicism.

~~Luther is essentially subordinated to the Reformation in the "Kronenwächter" but when he does appear Arnim shows his own patriotic joy in his picture of Luther's vigorous yet simple personality. He points out his absolute faith in God and the Bible, his willingness to listen to, advised; his stubbornness is not stressed. Classical Goethean influences are unmistakable; especially the high regard Luther shows for women reminds of "Bruder Martin" in "Götz", and his love of life, his tolerance of human weaknesses, and the appreciation of life's beauties especially in the field of art all show decided humanistic tendencies. Arnim stresses Luther's love of life; his Luther does not see his way to Heaven in complete denunciation of this world.~~

If Arnim tends to be passive, Kleist tends to be active; there is struggle and drama in his "Kohlhaas". He portrays the action Arnim wished for his time: demands for justice are made in the way Luther demanded religious freedom. Kleist's Luther shows character development in that he devines the justice of Kohlhaas' demands and in that he is willing to make an exception to his principle: Authority rules, right or wrong. Life

and progress are portrayed in this struggle between Luther and Kohlhaas: sixteenth century faith and the new nineteenth century ideals of social justice clash; each gives to the other, but the former yields to the latter because the time is not yet ripe for the new ideals. Kleist's Luther is one that is changing into a modern Luther: his character development is not kept within the limits of the historical facts of Luther's lifetime.

~~The Luther of Arnim springs from the artistic historical background of Romanticism, and is also considerably influenced by Classicism. From the Romantic develops a sense of nationalism, and the classical, one of justice and tolerance, From both, though chiefly from Classicism, the~~

Luther of Kleist develops a sense of Realism. ^{But Arnim has already portrayed this too:} "Er (Luther) vereinigte ein ¹³⁷ Entgegengesetztes, was sonst nirgend gefunden wird." ^{So Arnim, 1817}

and Kleist, like Adam Müller, joined subjective and objective elements in Luther, thus bringing about a synthesis of Classic and Romantic elements. ~~which clearly shows in his attitude toward Luther. Arnim saw the human elements of the Reformation and not its theology, as a means toward nationalism and political unity. His Luther has something of an eye for art and beautiful things.~~ ^{on the other hand} Werner, ^{his} facing toward the past, allows Luther to lose himself in an individualistic, mystic love union, while Kleist, ^{find the basis for} facing toward the future, lets his Luther ^{find} progress in the individual's determined sense of justice.

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"Die Kronenwächter" I, p.246.

Chapter III.

The first half of the nineteenth Century (1817-1858).
Hauff, Alexis, Bauernfeld, Wildenhahn, Bolanden.¹³⁸

Comparatively few authors of the nineteenth century deal with Luther. Aside from those of the early part of the century which have already been discussed there is only Hauff's "Lichtenstein" (1826)¹³⁹ before 1848. It is the first of the so-called "kulturhistorische Romane"¹⁴⁰ and is still very much under the influence of Romanticism. To be sure, Luther does not appear personally in the novel, but his influence is indirectly felt.

The middle of the century was marked by an increased interest in Luther, which may be ascribed to two things: first the three-hundredth anniversary of his death in 1846, and second a general reaction on the part of the orthodox church against D.F. Strauss and his ideas in his "Leben Jesu".⁽¹⁸³⁵⁾ But nothing significant was produced. The better minds dared not portray Luther. The best work is done by Alexis in his "Der Werwolf"¹⁴⁰ (1848) although here, also, Luther does not appear in person. It is ^{chiefly} from this novel and not from the much earlier "Kronenwächter" (1817) that the historical novel developed. It marks a very decided step forward from Hauff's "Lichtenstein" as well as from Arnim's "Kronenwächter". -

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For a few others see supplementary bibliography.

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Hauff, W.: Lichtenstein, Leipzig, 1899

140

Alexis, W. : Der Werwolf, Berlin, n.d.

"Der Werwolf" portrays the spirit of unrest that had developed in the Mark Brandenburg due to Luther's influence. The Elector Joachim insists on upholding the catholic religion in spite of the fact that Luther's teaching has gained many followers, because he feels Luther has out done him; his pride and his superstition delay the progress of Lutheranism in his lands. Yet its progress is considerable: the printing press and the educated middle class have a mighty influence, especially upon the common people. Wherever Luther spoke the church was crowded to capacity and the people were inspired by the simple sincerity of his words. "So hörte ich noch keinen Menschen predigen in deutscher Sprache," "eine kräftige, körnige, ja sogar ... eine wohlklingende Sprache."

In a very few pages of dialogue Alexis gives an excellent description of the human side of Luther's personality. His sincerity, simplicity, friendliness, humility and temperament are stressed. "er ist eine Natur, wo heraus muss, was drinnen lodert;" "ein körniger, gesunder Mensch, a man who has the absolute courage of his convictions. To see him once

141

"Der Werwolf" p.31, 47

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ib. p.30

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ib. p. 27

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ib. p. 27

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ib. p. 28

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ib. p. 29

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ib. p. 51

was enough to make an impression for a lifetime, and enough to strike fear into those with bad consciences. The author is, however, considerably influenced by the thought and psychology of the Young Germans.

Apparently the only drama which had Luther appear on the stage is Bauernfeld's "Sickingen"¹⁴⁸ (1848) It emphasizes some outward facts of Luther's life during the time of the peasant war. No deeper insight into Luther's religious character is revealed. Luther is portrayed as the decisive influence of the early sixteenth century, the value of whose support nobles, knights and peasants all alike realized. Sickingen says of him: "Er gilt¹⁴⁹ allein für ein Heer."

Of the characters Luther alone asserts firmness and independence; he cannot be influenced or persuaded by Hutten, Sickingen, or the Bishop of Trier. All around him Luther sees each class blindly looking out for its own interests. The princes,¹⁵⁰ the knights¹⁵¹ and the bourgeois;¹⁵² none think of the rights and needs of the peasant. Thus Sickingen is willing after some hesitation to help the knight, Hilchen, obtain justice from the Bishop of Trier; but he finds it difficult to solve his relation

148 Bauernfeld, Ed., "Franz von Sickingen". Wien, 1871

149 ib. 134

150 ib. p.140

151 ib, p. 141

152 ib. p. 156, 174

153 ib. p. 143

to the princes and peasants. When the peasants offer to join with the burghers in support of him against the princes, he refuses to accept their aid, unless they enlist as soldiers, for if he should accept their help outright, it would be equivalent to rebellion. Even so his vanity and ambition are aroused when the possibility of becoming Emperor is held out to him. He lacks a firm conviction as to what alone is right. This Luther has. When he sees the difficulty his friend Sickingen is in, he comes to his help, although he has refused it before to Hutten. But Hutten has desired his support in the actual use of force. Now he comes to mediate between the knights and the princes and the knights and the peasants before any actual hostilities have broken out. He reprimands both parties, telling them they must compromise. As man to man he speaks to them very tactfully on the question as to which class must rule. He decides this in favor of the princes; they must rule, the peasants are not fit for it at all, for which reason he is glad the "Bundschuh" is no more. But he also reprimands the princes for failing to realize the needs of the peasants; he tells them how Frederick the Wise handled them: "durch Weisheit, durch Mässigung, durch gerechte Duldsamkeit. Lasst euch mahnen, ihr Herrn, und thut alle des Gleichen -

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"Sickingen" p. 133 : "Ich mücht nicht dass man das Evangelium mit Gewalt und Blutvergiessen verfehcht."

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ib. p. 210

so mag's noch gut und lübblich enden.¹⁵⁶ And Sickingen he consoles by flattery telling him he knew from the start that Sickingen would only act nobly and worthily; ^{Sickingen} she then conveniently dies. In short Bauerfeldⁿ in stressing social conditions makes historical events fit his desired aim. Judiciously he pictures Luther, making him a very tactful, rational, peace-loving, untemperamental man.

Two other works on Luther that belong to this period may be mentioned. The first is Wildenhahn's "Luther";¹⁵⁷ the second the Catholic Bolanden's "Luther".¹⁵⁸ It seems hardly worth while to analyze them in detail. Suffice it to say that Wildenhahn's "Luther" is a rational, theological Luther of a fine type; however, he is only presented as a very wordy, uninspiring lifeless man who does not blend at all with the story that runs parallel to his discussions. As for Bolanden - the less said the better. So glaringly biased and unfair is his work that even the catholics found fault. As Ziegler says of his novels, they are "vielfach Zerrbilder."¹⁵⁹

In summarizing this period it must be said that aside from Hauff

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"Sickingen" p. 210

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Wildenhahn, A. : Martin Luther. Kirchengeschichtliches Lebensbild
Leipzig, 1853

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Bolanden, C. von : Luthers Brautfahrt. Regensburg, 1871

159

Ziegler, Theobald. : Die geistigen und sozialen Strömungen Deutschlands
im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Berlin, 1921 p.372

the predominant characteristic is a decidedly rational one in which Luther's social relations and influences are uppermost in the minds of the authors; this is especially evident in Bauernfeld. Alexis ~~also~~ stresses ^{also} his character and personality, neglected by Bauernfeld. The other outstanding element in these Luther portrayals is that of the theological discussion and controversy in which Wildenhahn's "Luther" excels.

Chapter IV.

The second half of the nineteenth century.
(1859-85)

A Classic-Romantic Period.

The reactionary period after the Revolution of 1848, in which the "Zeit-und Tendenzroman", especially the "kirchengeschichtlicher Roman," was so highly appreciated to the exclusion of many fine literary works that were also being written, ended about 1862, when the "historischer Roman" came into favor. It is into this period of years, 1859-85, that the majority of works that concern us fall; we shall call it Classic-Romantic rather than Realistic. We begin with a consideration of the fine works of Raabe and Freytag.

A. W. Raabe: "Der heilige Born" (1861).
"Unseres Herrgotts Kanzlei" (1862).
Luther a man of faith.

The sixteenth century seems to have been Raabe's ~~favorite~~ ^{period of history} ~~to~~ ^{for}

it he devoted more of his novels than to any other, five of the seventeen he wrote. Two of these deal with the period of the Reformation and Luther. ¹⁶⁰ In neither of them does Raabe have Luther appear in person, though he seriously thought of so doing. Nor does he slavishly follow the historical facts. Still he achieved what is perhaps more important: he reproduced the spirit of the time. His presentation of history shows that he understood the life of the people; one of conflict and confusion in which, however, character was ^{developed} ~~made~~. He portrays in these two novels the antagonism that arises between groups of religious people and whole races of people in a time of transition; the catholics are foreigners, the protestants Germans. He sets forth the struggle of the German reformers for religious mastery.

In "Der heilige Born" Raabe makes a distinction between the official representatives of religion and religion itself, bringing out especially the relation existing between Catholicism and Protestantism. In the background we can feel the influence of the leaders of the two parties: Philipp II and Pope Paul IV on the one hand, and Melancthon

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Raabe, W.: "Der heilige Born", "Unseres Herrgotts Kanzlei"

and especially Luther on the other.

For Raabe Luther and Melanchthon are the great men of the future; first and foremost they are represented as Germans, which is the justification of their reformative activity: they free the people from the ^{tradition} bonds of the Middle Ages. The Lutheran^a pastor Valentin Fichtner has been freed of such bonds; he is closely modeled on Luther himself:

"Schaut diesen grübelnden Streiter des neuen Glaubens! Wie vierschrötig, wie gediegen steht der Mann auf seinen Füßen! Es gehört ein tüchtiger Sturm dazu, diese knorrige Eiche umzuwerfen. Auf dem kurzen Halse über den breiten Schultern hebt sich ein Kopf, wie man ihn sich nicht charakteristischer vorstellen kann. Breite Stirn und breites Kinn, graue, kluge, leuchtende Augen, kurz geschnittenes, graues, sprödes Haar, und ein Bart von gleicher Art und Farbe - sind äussere Merkmale: wer kann das innerliche Feuer des wunderbaren Jahrhunderts, welches aus diesen Augen glüht, malen? Ist nicht dieser lutherische Pastor zu Holzwinden ein prächtiges Beispiel dieses Geschlechtes, welches so gewaltig war in seinen Siegen wie in seinem Unterliegen; in seinen Leiden wie in seinen Freuden; in seinem Hass wie in seiner Demut; in seinem Stolz wie in seiner Liebe?"¹⁶¹ The treasures of this pastor were a life size portrait "des grossen Doktors und teuren Mannes Gottes, Martin Luther,"¹⁶² the Bible, the sword of his only son who died a martyr for the faith, and his

161

W. Raabes Sämtliche Werke I, 3:5-6

162

ibid p. 6

daughter Monika. Thanks to Luther, Fichtner has a happy, contented family life, something the poor young catholic ^{priest} Festus, still held to medieval bonds, must deny himself. - After Luther's death, only Melanchthon can take his place.

162a

162b

In contrast to Luther, Philipp II is somber, lonely, pale; and Pope Paul IV is hotheaded, dissatisfied with the world and himself, and possessor of a bilious temperament.

Thus Raabe pictures the leaders in the great struggle of the German nation, a struggle which is fought to the detriment of German unity, but for the good of the world. Two parties stand opposed to each other in mad hate, fighting and quarreling over small things as well as great ones, but hardly realizing their significance. On both sides, there are individuals in whom there develops in these confusing uncertain times an undefined, subconscious struggle between light and darkness.

163

On the protestant side Christof von Wrisberg and Graf von Spiegelberg have no idea of the seriousness of the times, no sense of responsibility, whatsoever; in frivolous superficiality they betray their fatherland.

164

On the catholic side, on the other hand, we have the tragic fate of Festus. In all his inner needs for love and life he lives in the new

162a

W.Raabes Sämtliche Werke I, 3p. 170

162b

ibid p. 170

163

ibid p. 24

164

ibid pp. 39, 187-3, 196f.

times, but tradition demands that he cling to the ideals of the Middle Ages, especially that of celibacy for the clergy and so he, ¹⁶⁵ is forced to deny his love, ^{he} goes to a tragic death.

But this struggle between light and dark exists not only in the individual; in the whole nation there is turmoil and decay and new life: ¹⁶⁶ "Es war ein gläubiges, ungläubiges, abergläubiges Jahrhundert, dieses sechzehnte nach Christi Geburt! Selbst in den aufgeklärtesten, hellsten Köpfen schlangen sich List und Finsternis zu so seltsamem Knäuel zusammen, dass man nie wissen ¹⁶⁷ könnte, welche tollen, phantastischen, verückten, oder -erhabenen Gedanken, Meinungen, Taten im nächsten Augenblick daraus empor-schlagen würden ... Es war die Zeit der grossen Gärung, die Zeit des Zer-^estzungsprozesses, der später seine Krisis im Dreissigjährigen Kriege fand, ¹⁶⁸ in welchem der morsche Bau des Mittelalters krachend zusammen brach."

Raabe relives the Reformation; the way in which he carefully holds to its idea throughout leaves no doubt as to his personal attitude: Protestantism is the German religion. But his characters are not made a standard by which he measures good and evil; instead they represent his ideas and his goal, for he takes each man for what he is, no more and no less. Thus he ridicules the selfconscious, bloated representatives ¹⁶⁷ of both parties in a kindly and satirical way. Similarly he treats ¹⁶⁸ the insincere and small minds.

165

Raabes Sämtliche Werke I, 56-7, 311

166

ib. p. 119

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ib. p. 32, 64

168

ib. p. 127, 166

Pastor Fichtner and Chrysostomus are the representatives of the two religions who win Raabe's sympathy most, because they are entirely honest about their religion insofar as they understand it.

Fichtner is the ideal of the new faith, a kind of small Luther. He writes terrible books on devils; still he is most kind-hearted; he is only concerned about the idea of his religion, not about the individuals who may oppose it; this is proven by his whole relation to Chrysostomus and Festus. Because Fichtner is convinced by his own experience and conscience that celibacy is wrong and unnatural, he marries a nun. He is an idealist and with real enthusiasm he loves Luther. He gives his all for the unadulterated word of God.

Fichtner and Chrysostomus are friends; the time for hate has long since left the old Catholic's heart. A religious quarrel had separated them, and though only need brings them together, they are after all in their souls of one mind as far as pity, sympathy, and good will toward others are concerned. We see that Raabe is fair, tolerant, and objective.

We have seen how Raabe brings out in "Der heilige Born" what the

169 Raabe's Sämtliche Werke I, p. 53-55
170 ib. p. 53, 228
171 ib. p. 325
172 ib. p. 25
173 ib. p. 50

essence of religion is, and how he points out the relation of Catholicism and Protestantism to each other. In "Unseres Herrgotts Kanzlei", on the other hand, the significance of Protestantism alone is brought out, especially from the stand point of its inner worth. This inner worth is best expressed in Luther, who, to be sure, is not present himself; yet the leading characters of the story make us so constantly aware of his influence, that he might almost as well be. In both these early works the purely historical interest predominates: single typical events of the past are treated, and are not brought into connection or relation with other periods; he confines himself to one limited period and interests himself in it exclusively. In "Unseres Herrgotts Kanzlei" it is Magdeburg, where the complexities of the Schmalkaldian War, and the difficulties of this struggling city as the early defender of the Reformation are depicted.

Magdeburg stands practically alone in 1547, courageously defending German freedom of faith and conscience against the Emperor and Empire. It is indeed a city most faithful to Luther, unwilling to give in to the Augsburg Interim: In the Streets the people sing:

"Selig ist der Mann,
Der Gott vertrauen kann,
Und willigt nicht ins Interim."¹⁷⁴

174

W. Raabe: Sämtliche Werke I, 4; p. 29, also 36-7

Michael Lotther and 175
And its leaders are just as zealous, especially ^{his} printing press.

~~of Michael Lotther.~~ 175 Again and again Raabe lovingly refers to the city in words such as these: "Unseres Herrgotts Kanzlei ... dieser grossen, tapfern lutherischen Stadt Magdeburg, die so gut und gewaltig aushielt
176

im Kampfe für den freien Glauben." 176 Bravely the city's inhabitants fight
177 and make sacrifices for their faith. Through Luther they had learned

to see their deliverance in prayer. "Noch während des Anrückens des Herzogs tat das Heer der Stadt seinen Fussfall und sprach ein kurzes Gebet; 178,"

"im Aufleuchten der Geschütze, im wirbelnden Gestüß lagen auf den Knien ... viele, viele ... Bürger, Gott um Hilfe und Beistand und Gelingen anrufend." 179

"Ratmann Ludolf ... betete - für die Stadt - für alle ihre tapferen, treuen Verteitiger. Feierlich und freudig war seine Seele; er hatte ein solches Gefühl in seinem ganzen langen Leben nicht gespürt. Dann erhob er sich und trat fest auf seine Füße, reckte sich und fühlte nichts mehr von Schwäche." 180

The city of Magdeburg will be saved because a new age is dawning.

"Er (Gott) kann nimmer seines Evangeliums letzte Burg und Bollwerk in seiner Feinde Gewalt also fallen lassen." 181 The faith of Martin Luther

175 W.Reabes Sämtliche Werke I, 4; p. 21 f, 73.

176 ib. p. 316

177 ib. p. 29

178 ib. p. 133 also 197

179 ib. p. 229 also 266, 318

180 ib. p. 340

181 ib. p. 36

has become indeed an integral part of their being of these people :

"und wenn an Waffen, Munnern und gutem Mut dreideppelt so viel vorhanden wär', und wenn jeder Mauerstein in der Stadt sich in einen Kämpfer für sie verwandelte, sie würden das Unheil nicht von ihr abwehren, wenn es Gottes Wille nicht sein sollte... Spiess und Schwert, Wall und Schanz werden uns wenig schützen gegen den übermä^{ch}tigen Andrang. Der Geist wird's tun! Der Geist, welcher diese Mauern erfüllt seit dem sechsten Sonntag nach Trinitatis im gesegneten Jahr Eintausendfünfhundertundzwanzig, an welchem Tag der Mann Gottes, Martinus Luther ... allhier in der Johannis-kirche das lautere unverfälschte Evangelium predigte, Seit diesem Tage ist diese alte Stadt Magdeburg in Wahrheit des lieben Gottes Kanzlei auf Erden und seines Wortes starkes Bollwerk, seit diesem Tage ist sie ein Vorort der Freiheit, seit diesem Tage ist sie ein Schutz und Hort allen um Gottes heiligen Namen Verfolgten, allen widerrechtlichen Verbannten und Ausgestossenen." 182

Raabe agrees entirely with the people as to 183
these rights they are striving and praying for, as inspired by Martin Luther. That the Reformation will be victorious is symbolized by the fact that Raabe puts but one Catholic character (into the story) viz., Andreas Kritzmann, the protector of Regina Letther and the city of Magdeburg against the traitor Adam Schwartz, ~~to be sure only for personal reasons of revenge.~~ The dying man says : "Als ^{ein} katholisch Kind bin ich

182

W. Raabe : Sämtliche Werke I, 4, p. 37

183

ib. p. 39, 96

geboren werden und sterbe, ich weiss nicht, ob als ^{ein} katholischer oder
 184
 lutherischer Mann." The case of Kritzmann tends to show the greater
 spiritual strength of Luther's faith over that of the Catholics.

The contrariety of characters is the same in this novel as in
 the influence of
 "Der Heilige Bern". But simple souls such as [^]Luther made possible are
 much more expressly drawn here; examp^mles of this are [^]characters of
 Regina and the mother of Markus Horn: they feel how the times are antag-
 onistic to the needs of the heart. In Mether Horn we experience deeply
 the poetry of her faith: when Markus Horn awakens from his illness he
 sees at the foot of his bed his mother holding in her lap the open song
 185
 book of Martin Luther. With predilection Raabe portrays the contrasts
 of the time, the deep spiritual struggles on the one hand, the cruel,
 186 187
 barbarous activities on the other, and also the superstition.

"Der Martin Luther." How deeply these words were felt one can
 only appreciate after having read how Raabe describes the age of the
 Reformation. Luther is for him the epitome of the German heroic character.
 He almost brought him into his work in person, but decided rather to
 make him serve as background. "Der gewaltige Hintergrund, auf welchem die
 schwachen Schattenbilder unserer Geschichte vorüberziehen, wird immer

184

W., Raabe : Sämtliche Werke I, 4, p. 289

185

ib. p. 350

186

ib. p. 98, 142 e.g.

187

ib. p. 113-4

von neuem mehr oder weniger diese Schattenbilder überleuchten müssen."

None of the more important historical characters are brought much into the foreground.

Raabe makes Luther the ^{instrument} ~~tool~~, rather than the creator of history, of the Reformation: "Martin Luther hatte^{es} getan. Wieder einmal war eine Epoche der Weltgeschichte in die Spitze des Individuums ausgelaufen, wieder einmal war in einem Menschen der Kampf und die Arbeit von Jahrhunderten zusammengefasst^s werden, in einem Brennpunkt, welcher die Welt entzünden sollte;" ¹⁸⁹ Raabe believes that Luther marks the rebirth of the German people.

According to Raabe's view the German people were destined to be ¹⁹⁰ nailed to the cross for the salvation of mankind. They are the initiators in the development of the human spirit's march to higher levels, they are above all the creators of spiritual freedom as brought about by the Reformation and its fountainhead Luther. For this reason he does such great homage in two of his works to the Reformation. But this struggle for the good of mankind was destined not to remain spiritual alone; it became a physical struggle as well; this is seen especially during the Thirty Years War. Such are for Raabe the sember, dark periods of German history, and he never wearies of pointing them out. And so

188

W., Raabe : Sämtliche Werke I, 4, p. 30

189

ib. p. 96-7

190

ib. p. 97

we find him occupying himself in the novel "Nach dem grossen Krieg" with the time in which the German people again awake to self realization, the time after the Wars of Liberation. Like Arnim, he advises the nation: "blicke auf zur Wartburg, wo das alte Geistesrüstzeug, 'die gute Wehr und Waffen' unseres Volkes, neu geschmiedet wurde..." For Raabe patriotism meant service, a service expressed through appreciation and promotion of Germany's cultural goods. As Elster says: ^{character of the} the German in Raabe has a "universal-religiösen" ~~character~~; Raabe "sehe ^[dies] ganze der Menschheit in ~~einem~~ deutschen Herzen und das Nationale im Schein der universalen Religion." And for him Luther really was the symbol of the faithful conscientious German heart.

^{add here}
(We ~~supplement this chapter with a few remarks about Raabe's contemporaries, Meyer and Fontane.~~

Supplement.

C.F.Meyer: "Huttens letzte Tage." (1871)

Meyer, like Raabe, also grasps Luther's religious core. In his "Huttens letzte Tage" Hutten says of Luther:

Je schwerer sich ein Erdensehn befreit,
Je mächtiger rührt er unsre Menschlichkeit.

Der selber ich [Hutten] der Zelle früh entsprang,
Mir graut, wie lang der Luther drinnen rang!

191

W. Raabe I, 3, p. 497

192

ⁱⁿ
(Sieper, Clara: Der historische Roman und die historische Novelle bei Raabe und Fontane. Weimar, 1930 p.24

Er trug in seiner Brust den Kampf verhüllt,
Der jetzt der Erde halben Kreis erfüllt.

Er brach in Todesnet den Klosterbann -
Das Grösste tut nur, wer nicht anders kann !

Er fühlt der Zeiten ungeheuren Bruch
Und fest umklammert er sein Bibelbuch.

In seiner Seele klappt was wird und war,
Ein keuchend hart verschlungen Ringerpaar.

Sein Geist ist zweier Zeiten Schlachtgebiet
Mich wundert's nicht, dass er Dämonen sieht !"¹⁹³

In these few words Meyer has convinced us that he understands the mighty, forceful character of Luther as few others have; Luther is the Reformation. But like many others he does not emphasize Luther's limitations or religious narrowness. The less edifying elements in his character are only indirectly acknowledged, are looked upon as a necessary part of his time. Luther's firm faith in God is stressed: "unser Gott ist eine starke Wehr." His deep sincerity and linguistic talent are carefully pointed out; all like to hear his language for he gives life and strength to it so that,

" Der Rittersmann, der Knecht im Bauernkleid
Vernimmt von ihr den Weg zur Seligkeit. - " ¹⁹⁴

Meyer describes Luther as a Renaissance personality with a deep soul; therefore his spirit is "zweier Zeiten Schlachtgebiet". Unlike Erasmus he struggles courageously for a firm held in a sea of spiritual doubts;

193

Meyer, C.F. Werke II, p. 42

194

ib. p. 41

some of them prove too much for him, and he gradually falls back into medieval narrowness, but only after having done his utmost. Meyer points out that by struggling so courageously he did much to promote German nationalism, for which Hutten so passionately fought, and which now in 1870 found expression in the establishment of the German Empire.

Meyer's struggle to liberate his own spirit and his conflicting nationalistic feelings, led him to see the similarities between his own time and those of a somewhat idealized Reformation. He sees in both a struggle for individual freedom and national liberty, that is waged especially against the papacy; thus not Luther, but the more secularly nationalistic Hutten becomes his ideal.

T. Fontane: "Schach von Wuthenow" (1883).
"Gretche Minde" (1880):

We have seen how Raabe and to a lesser degree, Meyer felt the very soul of the times they portrayed. This is because Raabe felt deeply and developed his characters from within. With Fontane it is different; he holds to historical truth but remains on the surface of things because he refrains from metaphysical speculations; the secret of his faith is acceptance, not struggle; therefore he could not reach the depths Raabe or Meyer did. He ^oshows his characters as formed by their environment.

In presenting the attitude of the early ~~and~~ fifteenth century to Werner's "Luther oder die Weihe der Kraft" in his novel "Schach von Wuthenow", he presents the conditions objectively and realistically, but

does not add any of his own reflections. He simply says: "Alles was mystisch-romantisch war, war für, alles, was freisinnig, war gegen das Stück." ¹⁹⁵ None of the characters had an understanding of the play.

Nor does Fontane's "Grete Minde" give us a direct insight into his attitude toward Luther, for he portrays here the narrowness of the Lutheran clergy in the early seventeenth century and apparently prefers the calvinistic confession to which after all he had the closest relations due to his belief in predestination. His disdainful and critical attitude toward church narrow-mindedness shows us, however, that he had a sense of reality in matters of religion. What he wanted in religion was masculinity, and it is in this that he resembles Luther: more than that he gained strength for his Protestantism through Luther as the following verse proves:

"Tritt ein für deines Herzens Meinung
Und fürchte nicht der Feinde Spott,
Bekämpfe mutig die Verneinung
So du den Glauben hast an Gott.

Wie Luther einst, in festem Sinnen,
So sprich auch du zu Gottes Ehr',
"Ich geh nach Worms und ob da drinnen
Auch jeder Stein ein Teufel wär' !" ¹⁹⁶

195

Fontane, Theodor.: Gesamtausg. der erzählenden Schriften I, 3, p.223

196

Frommel, O. Neuere deutsche Dichter in ihrer religiösen Stellung, p.166
Compare: "Ja die bösen Gedanken. Wir können nicht hindern, dass die Vögel über uns fliegen. Aber wir können hindern dass sie auf unsern Köpfen Nester bauen." Das ist ein gutes Bild. Dafür ist es aber auch von Luther." An Georg Friedländer. 3. Okt. 1893. Briefe an seine Freunde, Bd. II.

B. G. Freytag: "Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit" (1859-62)
"Die Ahnen"; (1872-80): "Marcus König" (1876)

Luther, the whole man .

The sixteenth century represents a milestone of progress in world ~~of~~ history; as such Gustav Freytag pictures it in his "kulturhistorische" "Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit" and his charming novel from "Die Ahnen": "Marcus König". In Freytags presentation Luther is made the heroic figure of German history; he overshadows the century completely: what lies before his time leads up to him; what follows, grows and develops by the influence he leaves behind. In an earlier volume of the "Bilder" Freytag says: Rudolf of Habsburg "hatte...die Grundlagen eines neuen Reichslebens geschaffen, das, wie ungenügend immer, dem deutschen Volke, ^{die} Möglichkeit gab selbständig zu dauern, bis die Arbeit, ^{von} Millionen Kleiner sich in der Kraft eines Mannes zusammenschloss, welcher Reformator und Bildner des deutschen Lebens werden sollte ..." For three hundred years, since the death of Emperor Frederick Barbaressa the Germans had lacked a leader who wholeheartedly looked to their needs and desires. Then they were blessed with such a leader as Luther, of whom Freytag says: "auf jedem Gebiet irdischer Angelegenheiten wird er den Deutschen der grosse Umgestalter, seinen Gegnern, wie seinen Getreuen."
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Gesammelte Werke 18, p. 93

198
ib. p. 466-7

However, Freytag is careful to point out in his "Bilder" that the mighty changes which Luther initiates have their basis in the long outraged moral sense of the German people; most particularly they have been offended by the indulgences which overlooked ^{the} needs of the heart: "die grosse Arbeit der Reformatoren wird nur dann richtig verstanden, wenn man sie auffasst als eine Auflehnung des Herzens gegen Unwahrheit, Gemüthlosigkeit und Frevel am Heiligsten." ¹⁹⁹ And so Luther's words aided by the art of printing, fell like flashes of light upon a people that only had awaited a leader. Never, Freytag says, has the soul of a people been ^{and} more stirringly and magnificently laid bare than by Luther's words; these are the characteristics of that soul: "Begeisterung, Hingebung, ein tiefer sittlicher Zorn, inniges Suchen des Höchsten und ernstliche Freude an ²⁰⁰ systematischem Denken".

Freytag believes that all sects have reason to go back to Luther for what is deep, soulful, and blessed in their faiths today. "Der ~~letzte~~ Ketzer von Wittenberg ist Reformator der deutschen Katholiken so sehr wie ²⁰¹ der Protestant." For through him they overcame the old scholasticism and gained new weapons against ignorance such as a new moral stability, a new language and the cultural benefits that this latter brought with it. A new and more firmly organized church now had to be built because Luther had destroyed the already crumbling structure of the medieval church;

199

Gesamelte Werke 19, p.39, Compare 80; also "Marcus König" p. 148-9 and p.89 of this paper.

200

ib. 19, p.51 Compare Gesamelte Aufsätze II, p.476 (Theologisches Disputiren im Volke.)

201

ib. p. 68

and most impotent of all, he gave such mighty expression to "unserer tapfern, frommen, ehrlichen Innerlichkeit ... dass in Lehre und Sprache, in bürgerlicher Ordnung und Sittlichkeit, in den gemüthlichen Neigungen des Volkes, in Wissenschaft und Dichtkunst sehr viel von seinem Wesen übrig geblieben ist, woran wir alle noch jetzt Teil haben."

On the other hand Freytag, of course, admits that Luther failed to attain the real aim of his teaching in several important instances, and that he was haughty, stubborn, unjust, and even cruel against his opponents. In several respects he still clung to medieval ideas, and could not help himself under the circumstances, ... "aber dergleichen sell keinen Deutschen mehr irren, denn alle Beschränktheiten seiner Natur und Bildung verschwinden gegen die Fülle von Segen, welcher aus seinem grossen Herzen in das Leben seiner Nation eingeströmt ist."

Such is the picture Freytag draws of Luther in the "Bilder".
~~The Luther in "Marcus König" is in general the same, only that, this~~

202

Gesamelte Werke 19, p. 68-9 Compare ~~see~~ Quotation p.95-6 (Note Similarity to Goethe's utterance with regard to Luther.)

203

ib. p.109 e.g. His stubbornness and absolute conviction in the matter of the holy communion. (Compare "Aufsätze" p.476-7 : His stubbornness here is of exactly the same nature as ~~that of~~ the Protestants' and Catholics' ~~in regard to the~~ exact literal interpretation of their books ~~which they demanded~~)

204

ib. p.108. "Wenn er nicht gottlos oder wahnsinnig werden wollte, blieb ihm doch nichts weiter übrig, als die neue Lehre zu gründen auf Worte und Kulturzustände, welche fünfzehnhundert Jahre vor ihm lebendig gewesen waren." (Aufsätze" p.476) "Denn die selbständige Thätigkeit des Einzelnen konnte zunächst einen festen Halt, ein Müsserliches Gegebenes, woran sie sich klammerte, noch garnicht entbehren." (And the fact that Luther had such absolute faith in that the Bible is just that which makes him a true son of the people).

205

Gesamelte Werke 19, p.69, also p. 109

~~being an imaginative work the outlines are not so clearly drawn: In both Freytag recalls to mind, in vari-colored pictures, the life of the people; not only the outer routine of their life, but their thoughts and desires, and in the background Luther's influence is always more or less felt.~~ "Es gibt noch heute kein Werk," says Erich Brandenburg, the wellknown historian, in praising the "Bilder", "das uns in ähnlicher Weise durch das Deutschland der Reformation mit sicherer Hand hindurchführte ... man kann auch heute nichts besseres tun, als sich diesem Führer anvertrauen, der mit ebenso grosser Kenntnis der Quellen ausgerüstet ist, wie mit feinem Takt für das Wesentliche und das Charakteristische, und der das, was er selbst ^b im Geiste erschaut hat, mit feiner Künstlerhand zu gestalten uns lebendig zu machen weiss." Freytags

aim in the "Bilder" is not to write a scholarly work of Luther's personality, as a whole, as a type emphasizing those traits which he had in common with his time and those in which he differed from it. To quote Brandenburg again: "Freytags Lutherbild gehört noch immer zu den Schönsten, die unsere Literatur aufzuweisen hat; er hat ein ebenso kräftig mitfühlendes Verständnis für die Leidenschaftlichkeit und den Kämpfenzorn des grassen Glaubensstreiters wie für die liebenswürdigen und humervollen Züge des guten Hausvaters und treuen Freundes Luther. Und er weiss sie uns alle an eindrucksvollen Beispielen lebendig

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G. Freytag, : Bilder aus der Deutschen Vergangenheit Bd. III. Paul List Verlag, Leipzig, 1924 Einführung von E. Brandenburg.

zu machen."²⁰⁷ "Dass Gustav Freytag sich so ganz und völlig vor der Grösse Luthers neigt, verleitet seinem Werk den entscheidenden Zug."²⁰⁸

Turning now to a closer examination of "Marcus König", we cannot praise the Luther Freytag portrayed here as highly as we did his portrayal in the "Bilder". In general it is the same, only that, this being an imaginative work, the outlines are not so closely drawn. In both portrayals Freytag has recalled to mind in varicolored pictures the life of the people: not only the outer routine of their life, but their thoughts and desires, and in the background Luther's influence is always more or less felt. But the fine Luther atmosphere is not attained here; Luther does not live, leaves us quite uninspired, because Freytag is apparently unable to create the essentially characteristic traits of Luther when he leaves the historical field for the imaginative one.²⁰⁹ The conditions under which Luther appears seem forced and unnatural.

The circumstances which form the background of the story are the unsettled and troubled conditions of an age of transition - transition from medieval knighthood to the modern city. Such forces as the following oppose each other: the Lutheran and humanistic versus the Catholic, the German versus the Pole, the burgher and the peasant versus the noble and the church, and the father versus the son. Into all these antagonistic forces and combinations of them we find the characters of the story swept, most especially Georg König. But over all these forces the influential

²⁰⁷ op. cit. p. IX

²⁰⁸ Paul Lindau : Gustav Freytag p. 255 *the*

²⁰⁹ Probably Freytag realized his lack of powers of a real poet in this respect, for seldom do we find him bringing historical characters into the foreground in his imaginative writings. In the case of Luther, he apparently could not resist the temptation.

character of Luther holds sway; again and again we are reminded of his influence by references made to him until he himself appears at the end. Through his mediation and faith the main characters find a way out of their difficulties, attain peace and happiness.

Let us for a moment see how this growing influence of Luther is carefully portrayed by Freytag in his novel. - One of the ways in which the influence of Luther penetrated most effectively to the hearts of the people was through booksellers, such as Hannus. The books about Luther, Hannus shows only to those he knows he can trust, and among them is the Lutheran Magister Fabricius. "Sie sind ~~von~~ alle von demselben Manne von dem sie jetzt überall reden," ²¹⁰ he whispers. The Magister is surprised to find them now written in German; some of the titles he finds are: "Sermon vom Ablass und Gnade," "Ohne Ablass von ²¹¹ Rom kann man wohl selig werden". As the German books arrive in ever increasing numbers, Hannus' business grows more and more; the books treat of such subjects as papal tyranny and the courage of the few. "Noch nie war die deutsche Sprache durch den Druck so stark in die Seelen gedrungen, der Zorn und die Klage, welche hierin verkündet ²¹² wurden, lagen in Jedermanns Herzen".

As a result of such penetration we next learn how discontent grows among the people regarding the questions of church and faith;

210

"Marcus König" 4 Part: "Die Ahenen" p. 14 -15

211

ibid p. 14 -15

212

ibid p. 147. Compare p. 85 of this paper

how townsmen and peasant became friends and hostile to the nobles.
One of the townsmen, Hendrik der Schiffer, " raising his beer-mug
loudly cries: "dies bring ich einem guten Steuermann, der uns durch
die Brandung fährt." ²¹³ The magister is carried away with enthusiasm
by "die Macht des gewaltigen Geistes, welcher unablässig als Lehrer
der Deutschen verkündete und mahnte;" ²¹⁴ he loses ^{es} "seinen lateinischen
Stolz und trug ungelehrte deutsche Druckschriften in den Taschen
umher." ²¹⁵ Both the magister and his daughter Anna further Luther's
cause among the "Landsknechte" while they have to live among them:
it is at this time ~~also~~ that Luther, "der unser aller Hoffnung war,"
is held in the Wartburg. But there is no reason to give up hope;
Luther becomes mightier as time progresses. "Der Orden in Preussen
vergeht an seiner eigenen Schwäche, die starke Stimme von Wittenberg
hat dringend geraten, mit dem Zwitterwesen ein Ende zu machen, und
seit das Büchlein an die Herren ^e des deutschen Ordens im Druck ausgegan-
gen ist, verändern die Brüder in Preussen eigenmächtig ihren Stand und
schon mehr als einer hat sich ein Eheweib genommen." ²¹⁶ Thus spoke the
"Hochmeister " of his domains; and Marcus König realizes the probable
truth of his brother-in-law Hutfeld's words: "Du rangst gegen eine
Flut, welche uns alle übermächtig fort^treibt." ²¹⁷

213

"Markus König" 4 Part: "Die Ahnen" p. 146

214

ib. p. 152

215

ib. p. 153

216

ib. p. 385

217

ib. p. 403

Wherein lies this great influence of Luther? Aside from the favorable conditions of the time as pointed out at the beginning of the chapter, we interpret Freytag as attributing his success and influence to his character and personality.

Luther was "ein Mann von stattlicher Mittelgrösse, mit grossem Haupte, in welchem zwei tief liegende Augen wie dunkle Sterne blitzten." ²¹⁸
He lived in the most plain and humble surroundings. Within the walls of the monastery from which such a bright light shone out over all Germany, there stood one lone tree; in it and about it sang the good little friends of the music-lover Luther, the birds. ²¹⁹ Possessed of a firm and determined will, he was at the same time a man who inspired confidence and friendship; when with the stubborn Marcus he ^{fore} bears himself with firmness and dignity: Marcus' character demanded it: "Eure kalte Frömmigkeit ist eigennützig und gottlos, sie macht euren Sinn nicht demütig, sondern stolz und hart." ²²⁰ When with the "Landsknechte", on the other hand, he was kind in his gruff way and patient, for he demanded love and humility. To all alike, regardless of their station in life, he would be ^a "ein Ratgeber für angstvolle Gewissen." ²²¹
The outstanding characteristic of Luther was his implicit faith in

218

"Markus König" p.410

219

ib. p.411 "... in ihrem bunten Kleide sind ^{sie} die kleinen Nörren unseres Hergotts, und sie haben mich manchenmal getröstet."

220

ib. p. 423

221

ib. p. 393

God: "was dem Menschen unversöhnlich scheint, weiss Einer, der die
 222
 Herzen lenkt, in Liebe zu vergleichen über alles Hoffen;" always
 the divine aspect of things was uppermost in his mind. For him this
 world was relatively unimportant, when compared with the next: Luther
 "erfreute zumeist ihre (Annas und Georgs) gute Aussicht für jenes Leben,
 223
 sie aber fühlten stärker das Elend der irdischen Trennung." But
 Luther was no extreme idealist; he recognized that we must accept
 the world we live in, but also that we must strive for its improvement
 and prepare ourselves for a better one; and the way was by faith in
 God; this is expressed with sincerity, confidence and humility. All
 the problems of Luther's life were handled by an absolute trust in God.
 Let us see how Freytag presents Luther when solving such problems of
 life.

Christian marriage we are told is governed by divine as well
 224
 as human laws. But since Luther is not a temporal judge, he is above
 all interested in the question whether or not the marriage of Anna and
 Georg is a ~~true~~ ^{an acceptable} one before God. ^{For Luther} this is determined by a Christian
^{toward union} attitude ^{at the time of marriage} and is ^{verified} ~~upheld~~ by the determination
 of the couple to abide by an honest and pious love for the rest of
 of their life ... "eine rechte Ehe bewirkt, ... nicht des Priesters
 225
 Dienst, sondern fromme Liebe und christliche Gesinnung der Verlobten."

222
 "Marcus König" p. 424

223
 ib. p. 421

224
 Giuseppe "Bilder" vol. 19, p. 108: Luther "im Jahre 1522 unternahm, die
 Ehe aus der heiligen Schrift auf neue sittliche Grundlagen zu stellen."

225
 "Marcus König" p. 415