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THE BALLAD AS A LITERARY GENRE:
STUDIES TOWARD A REDEFINITION

by

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ABSTRACT

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Literary critics disagree over a satisfactory definition for the literary ballad and over the degree of its indebtedness to similar forms such as the Bänkelsang or bench ballad, the popular ballad and the chanson. The problem is compounded when discussion turns to contemporary ballads believed either to have developed from literary ballads or from the early twentieth-century chanson. This study attempts to clarify the issue by comparing the compositional principles in each of the forms in order to determine whether they constitute a single literary genre.

Because poets of the literary ballad were influenced by earlier models, representative bench and popular ballads were examined first. The chanson and the contemporary ballad, which are interpreted as reactions to more traditional forms, concluded the analysis of ballad types. The chronological sequence allows one to consider both the historical development of a genre and to compare the structures of the different forms. These forms are related to one another to the degree that they exhibit an antithetical structure characteristically present on two levels: 1) contextually, in the confrontation between the hero and a higher order; 2) formally, in the division between narrative stanza and refrain. The confrontation is usually resolved by the protagonist's
submission to a higher authority.

Thus, the plot of the bench ballad deals with an individual who inevitably submits to the moral code accepted by the majority. Although the hero of the popular ballad ultimately submits to a higher authority, greater prominence is given to the expression of personal emotions. In literary ballads, the antithetical structure usually presents an acute contrast between the individual and the macrocosm. In the chanson, the antithesis is between an unconventional subject and conventional middle-class values. Contemporary poets employ the antithetical ballad structure to question traditionally accepted faith in a higher order and to affirm the validity of existential uniqueness. Comparative analysis of structure in the bench ballad, popular ballad, literary ballad, chanson, and contemporary ballad suggests that a re-definition of the genre may be possible.
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THE BALLAD AS A LITERARY GENRE:
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The Problem of the Contemporary Ballad

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the compositional principles of the literary ballad, popular ballad, Bänkelsang, and chanson in order to determine whether these forms constitute a single literary genre. Building upon previous investigations, this study will focus on the problematic nature of a genre study and will suggest a tentative definition of the ballad in the light of its related forms.

That a number of critics have occupied themselves with problems of definition and classification is evident from even a cursory review of the principal secondary literature dealing with the ballad. Such a review also uncovers considerable difference of opinion over the nature of the ballad, its relationship and indebtedness to the Bänkelsang and chanson.

Writing in the third volume of *Das Bild in der Dichtung*, Hermann Pongs includes Paul Celan's "Todesfuge" among his interpretations of the German ballad.\(^1\) The categorization of this poem under this form

illustrates the continuing problem of determining what constitutes a literary genre and the necessity of further discussion regarding the classification of recent ballads. The "Todesfuge," according to Pongs, reverses the principles of strophic composition of Goethe's "Der Gott und die Bajadere" in which three dactylic lines follow a trochaic full-verse. In Celan's poem, dactylic beats precede the trochaic; this supposedly serves to emphasize the incontrovertible accusation against the German persecutors:

Schwarze Milch der Frühe wir trinken sie abends
wir trinken sie mittags und morgens wir trinken sie nachts
wir trinken und trinken. (1-3)

The comparison of verse structure in the two poems implies that Celan's work is a ballad because of the putatively intentional contrast to the poem by Goethe. In the case of the "Todesfuge," Celan did not specify the literary kind of which the poem was a member. On the other hand, Günter Grass has entitled at least two of his poems ballads, and critics have interpreted others as representatives of this genre. 2

Certainly, the traditional view of the ballad has been conditioned by such works as Goethe's "Der Erlkönig" or "Der Zauberlehrling," Schiller's "Der Handsschuh," "Der Taucher" or "Der Ring des Polykrates," Heine's "Belsazar," Fontane's "Archibald Douglas" or "Die Brück' am

The following definition given by Bürries von Münchhausen probably characterizes the ballad in the popular mind:

Die Ballade ist ein Gedicht, dessen Wesen in der bestimmten Behandlung einer Handlung liegt.
Die Sprachbehandlung der Ballade ist schmuckhaft und bewusst, die des lyrischen Gedichtes natürlich und ungesucht.
Die Handlung der besten Balladen zeigt zwei Vorgänge, von denen der Untere Vorgang immer sinnlich-wirklich, der Obere Vorgang (der sich bisweilen nur in der Seele des Lesers abspielt) derjenige Bestandteil ist, welcher der Ballade ihren seelischen Feingehalt gibt.

Oberer und Unterer Vorgang sind meist durch das Sinnlich wahrnehmbare Teilchen verknüpft, das dann häufig zum Titel der Ballade wird.

Not only has the traditional view hindered the understanding of more recent representatives of the genre, but many contemporary ballads also lack at least one of the qualities of epic, lyric or dramatic, all of which Goethe mentioned as characteristic in his often-cited statement about the ballad as the "Ur-Ei" of all poetics:

Hat man sich mit ihr vollkommen befreundet, wie es bei uns Deutschen wohl der Fall ist, so sind die Balladen aller Völker verständlich, weil die Geister in gewissen Zeitaltern, entweder kontemporan oder sukzessiv, bei gleichem Geschäft immer gleichartig verfahren. Übrigens liesse sich an einer Auswahl solcher Gedichte die ganze Poetik gar wohl vortragen, weil hier die Elemente noch nicht getrennt, sondern wie in einem lebendigen Ur-Ei zusammen sind, das nur bebrütet werden darf, um als herrlichstes Phänomen auf Goldflügeln in die Lüfte zu steigen.

Further justification for a re-examination of what constitutes

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a ballad is provided in the hermeneutic principle as it is applied to
the study of a literary genre. This principle was, perhaps, best
formulated by Wilhelm Dilthey who expressed the problematic nature
of such an analysis. "Aus den einzelnen Worten und deren Verbin-
dungen soll das Ganze eines Werkes verstanden werden, und doch
setzt das volle Verständnis des einzelnen schon das des Ganzen vor-
aus. Dieser Zirkel wiederholt sich in dem Verhältnis des einzelnen
Werkes zu der Geistesart und Entwicklung seines Urhebers, und er
kehrt ebenso zurück im Verhältnis dieses Einzelwerkes zu seiner
Literaturgattung."  

One cannot know whether a given work is a ballad unless he
knows what a ballad is. But conversely and paradoxically, he can¬
not understand the literary kind "ballad" unless he is acquainted
with its numerous individual occurrences. It follows that each new
example of a given literary kind forces a continual widening of the
hermeneutic circle to which Dilthey referred. Since the ballad has
many sub-varieties, the problem of definition is compounded and
merits further investigation.

Principal Studies

The standard work on the German ballad is Wolfgang Kayser's
Geschichte der deutschen Ballade.  

Following Viëtor's classification

6 Wilhelm Dilthey, "Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik," in
Gesammelte Schriften, Die geistige Welt: Einleitung in die Philo-

7 Geschichte der deutschen Ballade (Berlin: Jünkner und Dünnaupht
Verlag, 1936), pp. 295-300. What follows is a summary of Kayser's
conclusions from the pages cited.
of epic, lyric, and dramatic as "gestalterische Grundhaltungen."

Kayser views the ballad as a genre just as are the ode, the lied, the elegy, and the hymn. Although the various members of a genre must show something in common, he stresses that it is not possible to define a genre by describing the form and content of its individual manifestations; neither is the genre a normative model which the specific example must follow. It is rather a "gehalt-gestaltliche Struktur" which lies at the basis of every ballad, but which is simultaneously a structure flexible enough to be reshaped and reformed with each new production.

It follows then that a poet composes one of the subcategories of the ballad. This is, according to Kayser, the reason that most attempts to determine the nature of the ballad have really ended in definitions of the various subcategories. Trying to avoid the contextual fallacy, he formulates a definition intended to be specific yet general enough to be valid for all works of the genre:

Die Ballade gestaltet als Gedicht eine Begegnung des Menschen mit dem Draussen in der Art, dass die Begegnung in sich sinnvoll und geschlossen ist, die aufeinander prallenden Kräfte aber als dauernd gefühlt werden, so dass das Ganze die sinnbildliche Verdichtung menschlichen In-
der-Welt-Seins ist.

Ein Geschehen ist also notwendig, das sich freilich nicht als Handlung vor unseren Augen abzuwickeln braucht, sondern auch aus einer Situation heraus im Rück- oder Vorblick sichtbar wird. Damit ist zugleich gesagt, dass der Dichter nicht seine gefühlsmässige Einstellung zur Wirklichkeit ausdrückt oder ein einmaliges Erleben; selbst wo er hervortritt oder in der Ich-Form schreibt, muss er objektivieren. Da die Ballade den Zusammenprall darstellt, kommt in das Geschehen eine grosse Fallhöhe. Das Geschehen selber ist nicht nur in sich sinnvoll, es verlangt nach Ausweitung: die Ballade ist geschichtet. 8

Notwithstanding his own criticism that most attempts to determine

8 Kayser, Geschichte, pp. 297, 298.
the nature of the ballad have ended in definitions of various subcategories.\footnote{Paul Kämpchen, "Von den Typen der deutschen Ballade," \textit{Deutschunterricht}, 8 (Heft 4, 1956), 5-12, also categorizes literary ballads according to content. Kämpchen believes the four categories he establishes define what a ballad is, and he criticizes Kayser for failing to determine what actually constitutes a ballad. Friedrich Degener ("Formtypen der deutschen Ballade im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert," Diss. University of Göttingen, 1960, p. IV) criticizes Kämpchen's contextually based distinctions.} Kayser himself has organized his book along these very lines. Such chapter headings as "Die Geisterballade und ihre Abwandlungen," "Die deutsche Ritterballade," "Die naturmagische Ballade," "Die erotische Ballade" or "Die politische und soziale Ballade" all betray a classification according to content. Vißtor warns against confusing special types which appear during a particular time span with the character of a genre which develops diachronically and is not dependent upon the synchronic accumulation of types within a given period.\footnote{Karl Vißtor, "Die Geschichte der literarischen Gattungen," in \textit{Geist und Form: Aufsätze zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte} (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1952), pp. 303, 304.}

Perhaps next to Kayser, Rudolf Wildbolz's article is the most frequently cited summary of the literary ballad.\footnote{Rudolf Wildbolz, "Kunstballade," in \textit{Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte}, 2nd ed., ed. Werner Kohlschmidt and Wolfgang Mohr (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1958), I, 902-908. Henceforth cited as Wildbolz. The following is a summary of Wildbolz's article. Additional articles in \textit{Reallexikon} cited by author, title and volume number.} He briefly outlines the development of the literary ballad from Gleim's \textit{Romanzen} through the periods of Romanticism, Realism and Naturalism up to the works of Wedekind and Brecht. Thematic characteristics of the ballad include: 1) an emphasis on human fate, 2) a decided and
clearly marked turning point, and 3) directness and intimacy of representation. With respect to genre it is epic in its narration, dramatic in its conflict and tragic resolution, and lyric in its ability to plumb the depths of human motivation.

Wildbolz goes further than Kayser in dividing the literary ballad on the basis of content. The "mystery ballad" stresses the position of man with respect to irrational forces determining his fate; the "heroic ballad" illustrates a hero who, despite external or internal conflict, asserts himself in the face of almost insurmountable antagonism. This bi-partite division leads to further subcategories such as "social ballad," "magical ballad," "legendary ballad," "ghost ballad," "ballad of fate" and others. However, this categorization according to content does not really define a ballad, and Wildbolz himself admits that "Eine eigentliche überzeugende Systematik hat sich im übrigen bis jetzt nicht ergeben."\(^{13}\)

Walter Müller-Seidel's introduction in the second volume of *Wege zum Gedicht* is an attempt to provide a taxonomy for the more recent ballad from Goethe to Brecht.\(^{14}\) The introductory essay concentrates mainly on the development of the literary ballad, which is viewed as being no older than the modern German lyric since Goethe. The tradition of the literary ballad ends with the productions of Münchhausen,

\(^{12}\) See Degener, p. IV. Degener notes that contextually based definitions of the ballad fall short of characterizing its nature, and he specifically mentions Wildbolz in this regard. His statement is also a valid criticism of Kayser's *Geschichte*.

\(^{13}\) Wildbolz, p. 903.

\(^{14}\) Müller-Seidel, pp. 17-83.
and the ballads of Bertolt Brecht signal a new direction. "Im Falle Brechts erscheint uns die Ballade nicht im gleichen Masse veraltet. Er hat sie zu Ehren gebracht wie kein Dichter in unserem Jahrhundert. Nur dass es eine völlig andere Balladenform ist, der wir uns gegen-überstehen. Wenn die Ballade der Klassik anders ist als diejenige Bürgers... so geht es dabei noch immer um Wandlungen innerhalb desselben Traditionsraums, der mit Bürger eröffnet wird. In diesem Raum vollzieht sich zugleich die Entwicklung der deutschen Lyrik seit Goethe."¹⁵

With the end of the tradition of the literary ballad, all possibilities of genre research have ended; one can still consider Münchhausen's "Mauerballade" from the standpoint of this genre, but Brecht's "Legende von der Entstehung des Buches Taoteking auf dem Wege des Laotse in die Emigration" is, according to Müller-Seidel, neither a legend nor a ballad. Beginning with Brecht, one must find other criteria than those hitherto applied to the literary ballad, for the literary ballad had become a paradigm by which other types of ballads have been judged.¹⁶

Walter Hinck ventures to set forth just such other criteria. His criteria are supposed to be applicable not only to the contemporary ballad but also to the ballads of the past.¹⁷ His thesis is that the renaissance of interest in the popular ballad and the origin of the literary

¹⁵ Müller-Seidel, p. 83.
¹⁶ Ibid.
ballad are directly linked to the eighteenth-century discovery of and interest in old North-Germanic literature. This interest is attested literarily by the appearance of Goethe's "König in Thule," "Der untreue Knabe," "Erlkönig," and other poems.

In contrast to Müller-Seidel, Hinck's new orientation does not develop new criteria for the evaluation of the contemporary ballad but simply expands the concept of the literary ballad which allegedly has been restricted to too narrow a range. Brecht's "Legende von der Entstehung des Buches Taoteking" or "Kinderkreuzzug" should not be judged from the tradition of the Bänkelsang but from that of the literary ballad.

To accomplish the new orientation, he divides the literary ballad into two forms, the Nordic ballad and the legendary ballad. They constitute two basic models or ideal forms, neither of which is ever fully realized in the adoption and adaptation of any material into a completed work; yet the transformation of a given content into a ballad always approaches one or the other of the ideals.

The Nordic ballad developed simultaneously with the renewed interest in the Nordic world and is characterized by a predominance of the demonic elements of the pre-Christian Germanic world. Invariably, it stresses the "irreconcilable" conflict between man and fate or perhaps an "aggressive-pugilistic" attitude between warring forces; it developed principally from the heroic song and, in the course of its development, exhibited an inclination to draw material from stories of knighthood and nobility. The so-called naturmagische Ballade is included as a sub-type of this basic category.
The other basic form of the art ballad is the legendary ballad. It frequently draws its material from the myths, legends, and stories of Christianity as well as from Eastern cultures and religions. More important than the source is the fact that its fundamental perspective is similar to that found in legends. Rather than emphasizing the inevitable conflict and challenge to fate, the legendary ballad stresses self-abnegation, contemplation, resignation to fate, and deference to divine forces. Although it developed simultaneously with the Nordic ballad, the legendary ballad was initially by far the less prominent of the two varieties but gained in prominence beginning with the later works of Droste-Hülshoff. Examples of this form are Bürger's "Sankt Stephan" and August Wilhelm Schlegel's "Der heilige Lukas."

Among existing studies of the ballad, Hinck's most systematically accounts for changes within the tradition of ballad composition. Nevertheless, several problems remain. First, his division of the literary ballad into the categories Nordic and legendary is predominately normative. It is an ideal, and any given ballad must emulate its characteristics in order to qualify for membership in the category. Hinck admits this when he describes the two types as models which can never be fully realized. Second, the classification is contextual and a priori, based on particular elements which all ballads under discussion must contain. Third, the examination concludes with Brecht's ballads, which are allegedly more clearly illuminated from the tradition of the literary ballad than from that of the Bänkelsang and the Moritat. An examination of various problematic contemporary poets such as Günter Grass or even

18Hinck, p. 86.
Paul Celan would have put the classification to a more rigorous test.

Hinck's thesis is all the more interesting in the light of a book written three years earlier than his 1968 publication. Karl Riha postulates precisely the opposite of Hinck. But he offers an approach that is too narrow and one-sided. He states that contemporary ballads can be more readily understood from the tradition of the Moritat, Song and Bänkelsang than from that of the literary ballad.\(^{19}\)

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the modern ballad as a form of lyric poetry has undergone a transformation just as have the various forms of epic and dramatic literature. This metamorphosis began with Wedekind and has not ceased. Although the tradition initiated by the literary ballad of Goethe and Schiller continued into the twentieth century, it was gradually replaced in some circles by a renewed interest in the Moritat, Song and Bänkelsang; these forms gave new impetus to the continued development of the ballad. In Riha's opinion, both Wolfgang Kayser and Walter Müller-Seidel have failed to recognize the importance of the Bänkelsang for the continued development of the ballad because the eighteenth and nineteenth-century ballads have become the standard by which all ballads are judged.

Riha attempts to develop a ballad typology which can incorporate the contemporary ballad. Such a typology accounts for changes from "fate to fatality," "pathos to comic," and for the dominance of the "anti-hero," "triviality," and the "grotesque." This change at the turn of the century does not constitute a break with tradition. On the contrary, the

\(^{19}\)Riha, pp. 7-16.
literary ballads of Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Droste-Hülshoff and Fontane constitute a literary heritage which was revised and has led to the production of counter ballads, having the couplet, Moritat and Bänkelsang as their models. The ballads of Wedekind, Ringelnatz, Tucholsky, Küstner, Brecht, Reinig, Grass, Rühm and others are considered in this light.

Hermann Pongs considers all genres and their various sub-categories as basic, original, almost mythic ways of viewing man's place in the cosmos. Literary genre is the poetic equivalent to the concept which Nicolaus of Cusa expressed abstractly with the term coincidenta oppositorum or the co-occurrence of the paradoxical which illuminates the understanding.\(^{20}\) The ballad is that form which most clearly expresses what Pongs, using the terminology of Giovanni Vico, calls the "'elementare Weltbetroffenheit,' von der sich der Mensch befreit durch die Sprache als 'spontane Ausdrucksantwort auf den Andrang und Anspruch der numinosen Natur.'"\(^{21}\) Pongs creates the impression that the form in which primitive man gave literary expression to his thoughts was of necessity the ballad because it was the form which best expressed the basic rhythms of life, combining as it does elements of the epic, lyric, and dramatic.\(^{22}\) This hypothesis appears to overlook the fact that the basic mythic material of what C. G. Jung has called the collective unconscious can be formed into any one of the three basic genre forms. If the ballad really expresses that which was basic in the thinking of early man, one might

\(^{20}\) Pongs, pp. 20, 35, 36, 185-191.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., pp. 35, 36, 38.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., pp. 59, 60.
legitimately expect balladesque forms to turn up as the earliest literary documents in Greek and Latin, both of which had developed writing systems earlier than the other Continental languages.  

Friedrich Degener views the literary kind morphologically rather than mythologically. He stresses the discovery of "typische Zusammengehörigkeiten" which run "quer durch die Einzeldichtungen hindurch in allen Schichten des Rhythmus, des Stiles, des Aufbaus... Wo solche Übereinstimmungen in sämtlichen Schichten einer Reihe von Dichtungen zugleich gegeben sind, kann man mit Günter Müller von übergreifenden 'Gestalttypen' sprechen." In his theory, the abstract type differs from the class, which is simply the aggregate of individual members sharing certain specified characteristics. From the various classes of members, one abstracts first the type, and from the varieties of types, the genre. A type can only be postulated after an examination of individual members. One cannot abstract a form such as the literary or cabaret ballad and then study the individual specimens. The approach also requires that the field be limited to relatively narrow spans of time and to a relatively small number of classes in which morphological changes are observable. Individuals qualify as members of a group when they show agreement in the following areas: theme, subject matter, motif, objectivity, cosmic perspective, contents, treatment, language, line, narrative and intentionality. Degener faults a number of previous classifications of


\[\text{Degener, p. V.}\]
the ballad, including that of Rudolf Wildbolz, on the grounds that they are inadequate, based only on content; nevertheless, his catalog of items listed above also contains contextual items.

Another weakness of the typological approach is that the type is abstracted from a limited number of members. Hence, as the number of examples studied increases, the typology must become more flexible and, as a consequence, less accurate. This will, at least, be the result if one proceeds from the individual members to an abstract form. On the other hand, Degener himself warns against proceeding from an abstract idea to the individual members. It, therefore, appears that this method jumps the hermeneutic circle within which a genre study ought to remain.

Both the traditional and the cabaret ballad are types and may legitimately be contrasted. However, a type and a class making up a type should not be compared, which occurs in the summary of the first two chapters when a literary ballad with an historical theme is compared to the cabaret ballad in general.\(^\text{25}\) The cabaret ballad may, however, be divided into various classes.\(^\text{26}\) The study provides a number of insights into a type of the modern ballad and for that reason merits attention, but the morphological approach is, to a great degree, based upon content and content-related items.

The most recent study of the ballad by Maria Wagner,\(^\text{27}\) presents

\(^\text{25}\)Degener, p. 134.

\(^\text{26}\)See Wolfgang Ruttkowski, Das literarische Chanson in Deutschland (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1966), pp. 77-154. Ruttkowski lists four basic types of chansons. His chansons are what Degener calls the cabaret ballad.

\(^\text{27}\)"Die Kunstballade und die Logik der Dichtung," Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, 22 (Heft 1, 1972), 75-86.
yet another approach to the character and classification of this genre. Her discussion begins with Goethe's statement. She notes, however, that although Goethe was discussing the ballad, most commentators have failed to notice that the "combination" really refers to all poetic forms, not merely to the ballad.²⁸

Wagner points out that the Ballade is a fusion of the English "ballad" and the Romance "ballade." Accordingly, the German form may contain either the dialog, characteristic of the former, or the critical-satirical stance and paucity of dialog, characteristic of the latter. The question of dialog leads Wagner to a disagreement with Käte Hamburger's description of the ballad, with its "fictional" I, as a derivative of the Rollengedicht.

The determining factor in the characterization of a ballad is neither the presence or absence of a dialog nor of a plot; rather the decisive factor lies "in dem aus der Handlung reflektierten lyrischen Gehalt. . . . Denn Ziel und Inhalt balladischer Aussage ist nicht im Handlungsverlauf, sondern im Sinngehalt zu suchen, der die Dichtung baut."²⁹ Plot is only important in differentiating the ballad from other lyrical forms, not in differentiating the ballad per se.

According to this analysis, the reader should be able to identify with the lyrical I. "Solange sich der Leser mit dem lyrischen Ich in Gemeinschaft findet, ist das Gedicht Ballade. Je mehr sich die Beziehung zwischen Subjekt und Objektpol lockert, je mehr die Handlung sich verselbständigt, um so mehr verliert das Gedicht seinen Balladen

²⁸Wagner, p. 77.
²⁹Ibid., pp. 83, 84.
charakter.30 Because it stresses the intensity of subject-object relationship and the lyrical persona in confrontation with an opposite, Maria Wagner's analysis offers the greatest latitude for continued investigation of the ballad and related forms and has, therefore, influenced the conclusions presented in this study.

Both Kayser and Wildbolz classify the ballad contextually. Müller-Seidel's analysis limits exclusively to a consideration of the literary ballad from the mid-eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth. Hinck and Riha both expand the definition of the ballad, the former by establishing the normative sub-categories "Nordic" and "legendary," the latter by viewing contemporary forms from the tradition of the Moritat and the Bünkelsang and as a reaction to the literary ballad of the previous one hundred and fifty years. Pongs considers the ballad, the novel and the drama to be basic, mythic modes for giving artistic expression to the problems of human existence. Friedrich Degener classifies the ballad morphologically by establishing hierarchical orders of increasing abstraction: class, type and genre. Pongs limits further investigation by the vagueness of his approach, Degener by the degrees of greatest abstraction. Maria Wagner stresses the Sinngehalt and de-emphasizes the importance of plot, allowing for latitude in determining ballad classification and avoiding the extremes of the two previous approaches.

30 Wagner, p. 86.
The Poetics of the Ballad

Lyrical elements are of primary importance in determining the character of the ballad. Common to all ballads are several basic stanzaic forms, and it would seem that the more literary a given work, the more consciously the author appears to have been aware of the restraints imposed by the form and the more studied and adroit the variations within the form.

A relatively unknown popular ballad such as "Das Schloss in Osterreich" illustrates the fundamental ballad verse:

In Osterreich, da ligt ein Schloss,
das ist ganz wol gebauwet
Von Silber und von rotem Gold,
mit Marmelstein gemauret. (1-4)31

The rhyme scheme in this example is xxbx. The meter in the four-line stanza is an iambic tetrameter in the first and third verses which alternates with a metric scheme inherited from the Middle High German epic in the second and third lines.

Other popular ballads are rhythmically and metrically more sophisticated than the "Schloss in Osterreich." "Lilofee" illustrates a more refined development of the same basic stanza which has an abab rhyme scheme and iambic tetrameter:

Es freit ein wilder Wassermann
In der Burg wohl über dem See;
Des Königs Tochter muss er han,
Die schöne, junge Lilofee. (1-4)32


The second line, referring to the "Burg wohl über dem See" (2, 10, 14, 18) or to "Im tiefen, tiefen See" (6, 22), contains the basic tension of the ballad—the happy life of Lilofee in the "Burg wohl über dem See" and the call to the realm of death "im tiefen, tiefen See" where her parents and children already have gone.

The repetition of "die schöne, junge Lilofee" in the last line of each stanza also illustrates the use of the refrain, a feature common, although by no means unique to the ballad because such incremental repetition may be associated with various forms of folk poetry.

In the first two stanzas, "Die schöne, junge Lilofee," repeated without variation, stresses the youth and beauty of Lilofee. The third stanza represents Lilofee in harmony with the natural rhythms of life:

Und als sie vor dem Tore stand
Auf der Burg wohl über dem See,
Da neigt sich Laub und grünes Gras
Vor der schönen, jungen Lilofee. (9-12)

The last line of the stanza is only slightly altered from its occurrence in the first two stanzas, suggesting a spiritual tranquility; in this same variation, it appears in the fourth stanza. Now, however, Lilofee is not in harmony with nature but stands confronted by the Wassermann:

Und als sie aus der Kirche kam
In der Burg wohl über dem See,
Da stand der wilde Wassermann
Vor der schönen, jungen Lilofee. (13-16)

In the fifth stanza the Wassermann addresses Lilofee directly inviting her to join her parents and children beneath the water. The

is brought out principally by the meter and rhyme scheme of the poem.

First, the rhyme scheme of each four-line stanza consists of two couplets which allow for a rapid and pointed exchange between father and son or between Erlkönig and son, and result in a concise expression of antithetical views.

Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du nicht, 
Was Erlenkönig mir leise verspricht? --
Sei ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind!
In dürren Blättern säuselt der Wind. -- (13-16)

In this fourth stanza, the child's fear is immediately countered by the father's assurance in the following couplet.

Second, the metrics of the lines bring out a dramatic urgency. Although the basic meter is iambic, the pattern is altered where necessary to include dactylic feet. The iambic measure quite naturally suggests an ordered, self-assured tone. The dactylic feet, in contrast, may suggest the boy's harried concern.

The regular iambic pattern is most pronounced in the lines containing the father's reassurances.

Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif. -- (8) 
Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh' es genau;
Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau. -- (23, 24)

The three occurrences of dactylic feet in these lines contrast sharply with the more frequent appearance of dactylic feet in the son's dialog. If the dactylic measures suggest the galloping motion of a horse or anxiety, then their greater frequency in the son's dialog could suggest the greater urgency with which the boy views the situation.

35See Wolfgang Kayser, Kleine deutsche Versschule (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1946), p. 27.
fourth line of this stanza, taking on a sinister tone, is altered accordingly to reflect his imperious remarks:

„Du schöne, junge Lilofee.” (20)

The sixth and final repetition alters only two words. Lilofee decides to leave the world and to join her family:

Und eh ich die Kindlein weinen lass
Im tiefen, tiefen See,
Scheid ich von Laub und grünen Gras,
Ich arme, junge Lilofee. (21-24)

The repetition of "schöne, junge Lilofee" in the fourth line of each stanza would seem to stress the steady rhythm of an ordered and secure world. Yet, the almost imperceptible progression from "Die schöne, junge Lilofee" in the first stanza to "Ich arme, junge Lilofee" in the last reveal rather the tragedy of an irrevocable and unretractable choice, Lilofee's acquiescence to the forces of death through her suicide.

A literary ballad such as Goethe's "Erlkönig" exemplifies a similar but even more carefully wrought use of the lyrical elements. In this instance also, a four-line stanza of aabb rhyme scheme and iambic tetrameter is the unit of expression:

Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und Wind?
Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;
Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,
Er fasst ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm. -- (1-4)34

The first and last stanzas frame the dialog interchange in the intervening six. There is nothing which would qualify as a refrain and, as a result, whatever dramatic intensity the poem might possess

34Goethes Werke, I, 154, 155.
Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörst du nicht, Was Erlenkönig mit leise verspricht? -- (13, 14)

Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst du nicht dort Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern Ort? -- (21, 22)

In the last two stanzas of the poem, one finds the rhythmical distinctions between the words of father and son merging. This might suggest that the two experiences of nature represented by father and son--the former rational, the latter supernatural and irrational--merge when the father recognizes the Erlkönig.

The two views of nature, represented by the father's causal explanations and the son's irrational anxiety, define the antithesis with which the poem deals. In "Lilofee," the antithesis was brought out by the almost imperceptible variation of the fourth line in each stanza. In "Erlkönig," it is achieved structurally through the rhythmical contrast between the exchanges of father and son.

A poet is not limited to variation in refrain or meter; seemingly monotonous regularity can bring out an antithetical situation. The Bänkelsang "Lied vom Vatermord im Altenlande" illustrates this possibility:

Horch was weht der Wind so schaurig
Durch den vollen Apfelbaum,
Und was ruft so bang und traurig
Auf den blutbefleckten Raum?
Sind der Äpfel frische Wangen
Schön gefärbt von Sonnengluth,
Oder sollte d’ran wohl hangen
Des gemord’ten Vaters Blut? (1-8)

In contrast to the tension between rhythm and meter found in

many literary and popular ballads, the meter in the above example is characterized by an incessant trochaic beat. Continuing throughout each stanza, the beat conveys the impression of a strongly ordered and inviolable world order in which the patricide related in the poem becomes all the more heinous, for its perpetrator is viewed as a rebel against a definite, established order.

"Lilofee," "Erlkönig," and the "Lied vom Vatermord im Altenlande" illustrate the antithetical principle of balladic composition; the epic report of a conflict has its correlative in the lyrical structure. The antithesis may be illustrated in the almost imperceptible variation of a refrain, as in "Lilofee," in the adroit manipulation of meter and rhyme, as in "Erlkönig," in the slavish adherence to a regular meter, as in the "Lied vom Vatermord," or the antithesis may be achieved by a variation of these techniques.

Yet the antithetical nature of balladic forms goes beyond the manipulation of stanza, verse, and meter to support a contextual division into protagonist and antagonist. In addition, the relationship of lyric, epic, and dramatic elements themselves in this "Ur-Ei" of poetics is inherently antithetical.

In his Grundbegriffe der Poetik, Emil Staiger notes that the epic is always characterized by a temporal sequence. 37 In the ballad this temporal succession constructs a sequence of events and creates the illusion of an established order or macrocosm against which an incident is viewed. The dramatic element in this in Staiger's

view would probably be that the events are not only narrated against a background of established order but also that they are related with a specific idea about the order. This idea is then presented as the unquestioned and highest representation of established order.³⁸

By definition, the lyrical character of the ballad stands in conflict with its epic and dramatic qualities, while the lyrical elements often function to underscore the antithetical situation presented in the sequential epic narration and the background of established order, the lyrical character of the ballad stresses the personal element and creates a simultaneity of impression rather than a temporal sequence.³⁹ Thus, the contextual conflict, created in the narrative and dramatized against a background of macrocosmic order, has its analog in the personal and simultaneous nature of the lyrical character in the ballad.

This means that the epic and dramatic emphasis on sequence and established order inevitably conflict with the idea of the personal and the reduction to simultaneity inherent in the lyric character of a ballad. Similarly, the personal and simultaneous cannot be fully asserted as in other forms of the lyric; an antithetical situation may not, for example, be resolved within the individual as it is in an elegy because the epic and dramatic character compel a resolution or synthesis within the sphere of established order. How various poets have manipulated the tripartite lyric, epic and dramatic character of the ballad and the attendant problems in classifying the various ballad forms remain to be studied in the following selected examples.

³⁸ Staiger, pp. 158, 183-186.
³⁹ Ibid., pp. 36, 51, 60, 62.
The Structured Form of the Bänkelsang

The literary ballad is traditionally considered to be an outgrowth of the popular ballad. According to this view, Bürger, influenced by the popular song, Herder's essay on "Ossian und die Lieder der alten Völker," or Percy's Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, created the first literary ballad.

Usually multiple factors simultaneously influence a movement. Walter Falk argues convincingly for the Bänkelsang rather than the popular ballad or popular song as the most significant of these factors in the development of the literary ballad. The popular ballad is transmitted orally and is intended for an audience "educated" in the oral tradition, whereas the literary ballad has always had a fixed written form. In addition, the popular ballad often has many variants each of equal validity, while the literary ballad usually exists in a single published form.

In contrast to the popular ballad, the Bänkelsang has had a fixed written form from the beginning, as has the literary ballad. The first difference between the two forms involves audience reception. The Bänkelsang was written for an audience of minimal


41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., p. 675.
literacy; the literary ballad was intended for an audience which was more sophisticated and educated. The Bäckelsang also separated the epic and lyric forms, having a prose introduction and a rhyming song. The literary ballad united the two in one form, as did the popular ballad. With these distinctions, Falk formulated a definition of the literary ballad: "Nach diesen Überlegungen kann man die Kunstballade definieren als eine Ballade, welche erstens die epischen und lyrischen Züge in einem einzigen Text vereinigt, zweitens in einer festen, schriftlichen Gestalt überliefert wird und drittens für ein literarisch gebildetes Publikum bestimmt ist." 44

According to Falk, these three criteria were met first by Gleim, not by Bürger or Holty as has often been assumed; Gleim's first production was entitled "Der Neue Jonas" whose full title reveals its ancestry "Wundervolle/ doch/ Wahrhafte Abenteuer/ Herrn Schout by Nachts,/ Cornelius van der Tyt,/ vornehmen Bürgers und Gastwirts im Walfisch/ zu Hamburg/ wie er/ solche seinen Gästen selbst erzählt/ Aus seiner Holländischen Mundart/ in hochdeutsche Reime getreulich übersetzt." 45 Whether Gleim's composition of bench ballads was motivated by defiance of Gottsched's prohibitions against both rhyme and bench ballads 46 or whether he believed "in dem Komischen des Bänkelsanges das Wesen des eigentlich Volkstümlichen zu erkennen" 47 is not as important as the fact

43 Falk, p. 675.
44 Ibid.
46 Ibid., p. 679.
47 Fritz Brüggemann, ed., "Einführung," in Bänkelsang und Singspiel vor Goethe, Reihe Aufklärung, X, in Deutsche Literatur in
that he was clearly influenced by this form.

Although Gleim may have taken the bench ballad in the direction of what was to become the literary ballad, the popular bench ballad continued into the twentieth century. Precisely what Gleim took from the Bänkelsang and the direction in which he turned it may be observed in a comparison of his "Marianne" with the anonymously authored "Ballad of Ludwig Tschech" whose assassination attempt on the king ends with Tschech's decapitation. Preceding a relatively complete account of the criminal proceedings is the motto which may be considered the theme of the work:

Wer da steht, vernehmt es Alle,
Sehe zu, dass er nicht falle!

In this example there is very little that can be called dramatic. Perhaps the only features remotely dramatic are Ludwig Tschech's assassination attempt on the king and the initial warning, repeated again at the beginning of the poem:

Betrachtet dies Bild hier, Ihr Grossen und Kleinen,
Mag's jedem als warnendes Beispiel erscheinen;
O dämpfet den Zorn noch eh' es zu spät,
Damit es Euch nicht wie dem Armen ergeht: (I, 1-4)


48 Erich Seemann, "Bänkelsänger," in Reallexikon, I, 128, 129.

49 Because the appendix to Riedel's dissertation offers the most accessible collection of Bänkelsänge, Tschech's story is taken from it.

50 Riedel, p. 74.

51 See ibid., p. 34. "Die Ereignisse werden nicht spannend geschildert."

52 Ibid., pp. 76, 78.
and once again in the conclusion:

Betrachtet dies Bild drum, o sehet den Armen,
O mag der Allgüt'ge sich Jedes erbarmen!
Ermesst Eure Thaten, bedenket den Lohn,
Dann schützt Euch der Mächtige im Himmelsthron. (37-40)

The prose summary has already informed the audience of the denouement. The macrocosmic picture offered here is one in which evil is always punished and good always triumphant. There is never any question that Tschech will not be punished and that a last minute reprieve will be granted. The prose summary and the closed view of the macrocosm, then, account for the lack of dramatic build-up one finds in the bench ballad.

It is only necessary to think of the "Handschuh," the "Erlkönig" or the "Brück' am Tay" to realize the difference between a literary ballad and a bench ballad. In the literary ballad the reader may also be well-aware of the outcome, but the dramatic tension resides in the rapidly moving narrative and the challenge the protagonist presents to the established order. Tschech presents no real challenge to an established order; he only submits to what is a fait accompli. In short, the greater dramatic character of the literary ballad lies in its widening the radius of possible confrontation between protagonist and antagonist. By so doing, the literary ballad forces concentration on the events; on the other hand, the very rigid ethics implicit in the bench ballad limits the conflict to a narrow interpretation of the universe, stressing the

53 See Riedel, pp. 63, 67.
result of the conflict rather than its sequence. Failure to act according to pre-ordained rules is followed by swift retribution. The bench ballad, therefore, is the vehicle for illustrating an external idea; the literary ballad is the unfolding of an idea. 54

The lyrical features of the "Ballad of Ludwig Tschech" also contrast strongly with what is found in the literary ballad. The first foot of every line is usually trochaic; it is followed by two, or sometimes three, anapestic feet. The effect of the seven or eight unaccented and only four heavily-stressed syllables in each line is that the narration sounds more like a prose narrative, which would, of course, have only the stresses of normal speech:

O schaut ihn in Ketten mit endlosen Schmerzen
Mit thätzendem Auge, die Hand auf dem Herzen;
Leb' wohl denn, mein Alles, lieb Töchterlein,
Beweine den Vater am Rabenstein. (VI, 25-28)

This prose-like effect is reinforced by the lines themselves, which are usually end-stopped or in the normal syntactic order of prose. Riedel remarks that the hypotactic style of the bench ballad contrasts generally with the paratactic style of the Volkslied. 55

The most important feature of the bench ballad and the one which relates it to the literary and popular ballad is a structural characteristic noticeable in each stanza. Riedel refers to the "Präsenzpartizipien, Genetivverbindungen, Zusammensetzungen und Antithesen" that one encounters. 56 He does not, however, discuss the function of the latter,

54 Riedel (p. 31) notes that it is precisely because of the narrator's assumption of the role as fictitious speaker that the audience accepts his sidewalk preaching.

55 Ibid., p. 34.

56 Ibid.
illustrated in the following stanza:

Mit Schriften der Bitte. Magst, König, mir geben
Ein Aemtchen, zu fristen das spärliche Leben;
Schau Vater und Tochter mit bleichem Gesicht,
Hilf, König, versage die Bitte mir nicht!-- (III, 9-12)

The rhyme scheme of this work--aabb--allows a natural di-
vision between the two couplets. The contrast between the second
and first couplets reveals the antithetical structure of the bench bal-
lad. The first couplet relates Tschech's request, the second the
strong premonition that it will not be granted. The feminine rhyme
in the first couplet of each stanza carries the action over to the second,
which always concludes the thought with a masculine rhyme. Character-
istic of this poem is the unvaried regularity with which this technique
occurs. Additional popular Bänkelsänge could be cited which would re-
veal a certain uncreative uniformity in the use of the epic, dramatic,
and lyrical elements.

The bench ballad is characterized, indeed dominated, by the epic;
a story is told first in prose and then again in a verse form which can be
inordinately protracted. As a result the bench ballad is often merely a
rhymed story with the elements of the plot related almost monotonously
by the same verse form. Many of the stories from these ballads, in a
slightly more sophisticated form, would be very appropriate in contem-
porary movie or detective pulp magazines, which Riedel designates as
the modern successor to this form. 57 Nevertheless, as "ein ganz volk-

57 Riedel, p. 72. Seemann (p. 129) cites the cinema as the continua-

58 Riedel, p. 34.
The move of the bench ballad in the direction of the literary ballad is illustrated in the compositions of Gleim, whose "Marianne" of 1756 begins very much like a Bänkelsang. This poem of thirty-five stanzas begins with a caveat (typical of bench ballads) to parents against forcing a child into an unwilling marriage:

Die Eh' ist für uns arme Sünder
Ein Marterstand;
Drum, Eltern, zwingt doch keine Kinder
Ins Eheband.
Es hilft zum höchsten Glück der Liebe
Kein Rittergut;
Es helfen zarte, keusche Triebe
Und frisches Blut. (I, 1-8)

With this warning, Gleim continues the epic narrative of Marianne's forced marriage to Velten instead of to Leander, her true love. Marianne acquiesces and becomes the virtuous wife:

Jedoch, sie war am frühen Morgen
Nun eine Frau.
Sie teilte nun des Mannes Sorgen,
War nun genau.
Ihm seine Wirtschaft recht zu führen,
So Tag als Nacht.
Und keinen Heller zu verlieren,
War sie bedacht. (XV, 113-120)

To encourage her, her husband buys her adornment from a traveling jewel salesman who turns out to be none other than Leander, the youthful lover. He reveals himself to her after the husband leaves to hunt; upon his return, he finds them holding hands in a gesture of friendship, and in a jealous rage kills them both. However, Velten lives to regret his deed when the ghost of his dead wife appears nightly

59 See Kayser, Geschichte, p. 70 and Falk, pp. 677-678.
60 Brüggemann, pp. 25-34.
to show him the fatal dagger wound. The story closes with the moral:

Beim Hören dieser Mordgeschichte  
Sieht jeder Mann  
Mit lieberlich freundlichem Gesichte  
Sein Weibchen an  
Und denkt: Wenn ich es einst so fände,  
So dächt ich dies:  
Sie geben sich ja nur die Hände,  
Das ist gewiss! (XXXV, 477-484)

Both Kayser and Riedel point out that Gleim consciously imitated the style and manner of the Bänkelsang, but the main point is that Gleim's "Marianne" is a stylized, artistic version of the anonymously authored bench ballads. In these works the prose account and the lyrical elements are brought together in a single form just as we find in the literary ballad.

That the poem appeared in printed form indicates that it was not intended to be just another bench ballad. Riedel notes that the "literary" bench ballads "streben weniger zu einer Moral als zu einer Pointe." The stylized dramatic build-up runs counter to the predetermined denouement of the popular bench ballad. Stanzas I-XIV, for example, treat the crises of the forced marriage. Stanzas XV-XVIII reveal that Marianne still pines for Leander, who appears as the jewelry salesman in the eighteenth stanza. The salesman's identity is unfolded and the crisis dramatically revealed in stanzas XIX-XXVIII. In the twenty-ninth stanza Marianne resolves to remain faithful to her husband. Stanzas XXIX-XXXIV reveal the final tragedy of the double murder and the

61 See Kayser, Geschichte, p. 71 and Riedel, p. 20.
62 Falk, p. 675.
63 Riedel, p. 20.
husband's irrevocable guilt. The final stanza gives the warning to husbands to trust their virtuous wives and not to suspect them of inconstancy.

The "Song of Ludwig Tschech" is not so much concerned with a rapid rise to a climax as with the moral that the listener should take heed lest he fall as did Tschech. The ballad's ten stanzas are interrupted by three references to the terrible results of the crime in addition to the initial and concluding prohibitions against pride. In Gleim's "Marianne" the rapid sequence of events is never broken off by such moralizing. Gleim's bench ballad succeeds in shifting the reader's attention from the moral, which it ostensibly illustrates, to the dramatic sequence of events within the work; such a shift is a move toward the self-contained world view of the literary ballad.

The lyrical achievement of this work, noticeably the external form of the stanzas, goes beyond that found in many bench ballads. Most bench ballads consist simply of four-, five-, eight-, or ten-line stanzas with couplets or alternating rhyming lines. Gleim's verse form consists of a long line alternating with a short line in an eight-line stanza. The alternation of four and two foot lines allows a rapid movement and build-up in the first four lines and a rapid build-up of movement and reaction in the second half of the stanza. The tenth stanza illustrates such a two part structure present in many but not all of the thirty-five divisions. Marianne has just been deceived into believing that Leander has married another and reluctantly consents to marry Velten:

Schnell rollt in einem goldnen Wagen
Herr Velten her:
Auch kommt ein Mann mit weissen Kragen
Von ungefähr.
Gequält wird von Jung und Alten
Das arme Kind.
Und die Verlobnis wird gehalten,
Ach, wie geschwind. (X, 73-80)

The two quartets effectively contrast the externally imposed
will of the parents with Marianne's internal grief and conflict. The
short lines of two iambic feet break the continuous movement of the
preceding lines and add a sense of the irrevocable, thus intensifying
the antithetical tone of the work:

Leander? Kind? -- o nein! Herr Velten
Sei Schwiegerson! (IV, 31, 32)

Am Abend mehret sich ihr Jammer
Und ihre Pein;
Denn, ach! sie soll nun in die Kammer
Mit ihm hinein. (XIII, 97-100)

It is difficult to find an anonymously authored bench ballad with
such variation and manipulation of the lyrical elements.64 Cer¬
tainly it is not present in the "Ballad of Ludwig Tschech."

Although the bench ballad utilizes the antithetical structure
inherent in the ballad stanza, this ballad form does not possess a
fully developed lyric structure. The formal lyric elements remain
in the Bünkelsang merely "elements." The reason for this is that in
a genuinely lyric structure, be it ballad, elegy or ode, the point or
theme arises from the integration of the various elements within
the work. In the bench ballad, the theme is imposed from without
covertly by the values the work presupposes on the part of narrator
and audience and overtly by the prose introduction and the use of

64 See Riedel, pp. 74-113. Although some of the works collected
by Riedel show some variation in verse structure, they do not exhibit
the degree of sophistication illustrated in Gleim's verse.
visual aids. Another feature conspicuous by its absence from the
bench ballad is the use of poetic imagery; it appears to be almost
totally lacking from the anonymously authored forms.

Furthermore, the bench ballad presents an individual's at-
tempt to upset the established order and his final submission under
the eyes of divine Providence. That predetermined order contrasts
with the individual's conflict against less predictable macrocosmic
forces in the literary ballad. In the bench ballad the emphasis is,
therefore, upon the macrocosmos, whereas in the literary ballad the
emphasis is upon the individual microcosmic action. An examination
of selected popular ballads will illustrate a greater emphasis upon
the individual and a greater spontaneity and flexibility of expression
which may have influenced the lyrical character in many of the li-
terary ballads.
The Popular Ballad: The Primacy of the Individual

What we know as the popular ballad developed during the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Initially, the minstrels adopted and adapted material from heroic songs and from the epic poems; however, the revisions of the minstrels were not the sole influence. According to Kayser, the historical songs also contributed to the development of the popular ballad.

Historical songs themselves were of two kinds; those dealing with specific battles, treaties, and other events, and those dealing with the unjust fate of an individual at the hands of the authorities. The latter type often lost their spatial and temporal specificity, thus moving contextually in the direction of the popular ballad.

Two early popular ballads, illustrating the greater flexibility of this form, compared to the more rigid formulation of the bench ballad, are "Das Schloss in Osterreich" and "Grossmutter Schlangenköchin." The "Schloss in Osterreich" illustrates an older tradition and is much closer to the historical song, dating probably from the fifteenth century. It begins with the lines:


66 Kayser, Geschichte, p. 56.

67 Ibid., pp. 56, 57.

68 Entwistle, p. 71.
The "junger Knab" held prisoner by a tyrannical lord constitutes the basic dilemma, the gravity of which is strengthened by the arrival of the boy's father, who offers to ransom his son for three hundred guilders:

Sein Vater zu dem Heren ging:
"Gebet uns los den Gefangen!
Drei hundert Gulden woln wir euch gebn
wol fur des Knaben Leben."

Whether accidental or intentional, the rhyme of "geben" with "Leben" underscores the significance of the issue on which the first part of the conflict centers. It is immediately countered in the following verse by the lord's brusque answer which constitutes the second premise or thesis in the work: "Drei hundert Gulden helfen euch nicht, / der Knabe der muss sterben" (21, 22). The prerogative of the lord to mulct anyone who poses a threat to the structure and conventions of courtly society is supported when it is learned that the young knave wears the golden chain of a high-born lady and has been educated by her "zur Tugend" and in whose "Minnedienst" he now illicitly stands; the lord notes:

"Tregt er ein gulden Kete am Hals,
die hat er nicht gestolen,
die hat ihm ein hübsch Jungfräulein vorehrt,
dabei hat sie ihn erzogen." (25-28)

One may assume that a knight already stood in the "Minnedienst"

Nussbücher, pp. 31-33.
of this "Jungfräulein." Hence, the knave, who was merely on the way to becoming a knight, violated the rules of knightly conduct and the ordered steps of advancement by placing himself at the service of the lady. The basic elements of the conflict are related through the narrative framework and the dialog of the first seven stanzas (lines 1-28). From this point on, the ballad recounts additional pleas by the father, the lord's adamancy, the son's last words, and the denouement.

But what has been termed the "antithetical structure" of this poem goes deeper than the apparent conflict between the lord and the importunate father offering a ransom for the release of his son. The protocol of knightly conduct has been violated by the knave's headlong action of placing himself at the service of the lady, and the offender must suffer the penalty of that violation.

That the system of courtly propriety has been challenged is also emphasized by the remarks of the son, who does not plead for mercy but for Christ's help (29-33), and by his plea that the father not seek revenge for his death (49-52). The knave's final concern is for his mother at home, who "weinet also sere" (56). In view of the boy's acquiescence to the severe punishment, the outcome of the story is all the more surprising:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Es ward kaum auf den dritten Tag,} \\
\text{eine Engel kam von Himel:} \\
\text{man solt den Knabn vom Gricht nemen ab,} \\
\text{sus würd die Stat vorsinken.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Es warde kaum ein halbes Jahr,} \\
\text{seinen Tod den tet man rechen:} \\
\text{es wurden mehr als dreihundert Man} \\
\text{des Knaben willen erstochen. (57-64)}
\end{align*}
\]

Despite his challenge to the highly ordered structure of knightly society,
the young man is viewed as innocent in the eyes of heaven, and the obdurate lord pays for his inflexibility with the loss of three hundred men.

Why divine forces should be concerned with the young man's fate is not overtly mentioned in the ballad. The narrative suggests, however, that the love between "Knabe" and "Jungfräulein" is purer and more genuine than that represented in the courtly "Minne." This is quite likely if the poem really is from the fifteenth century; by this time the impeccable ideal had been irreparably tarnished. It, therefore, transcends the established but otiose and stilted conventions of society and has a validity of its own. This is the reason heaven is justified in avenging the execution by the slaughter of three hundred men. A confrontation between the thesis of proferred ransom and the lord's antithetical response results in the only possible synthesis: divine intervention against the stiffness of courtly tradition represented by the ruler of the castle.

The narrative aspect of the work serves both as a framework and as a transitional device; it relates the events, as in stanza eight or it provides additional background, as in stanza fifteen. The dramatic element in this poem is the interchange between father, son, and lord. The dialog further serves to stress the urgency of the situation, heightening whatever tension has already been created by the narrative. The introductory narrative, for example, acquaints the listener with the situation: the "Knabe" has been incarcerated by the lord. This information is followed by the father's attempt to effect his son's release (lines 18-20).
The disparate epic and dramatic elements are unified into discrete units of line and stanza by the lyrical elements in the poem. The author utilizes rhyme occasionally and employs a four-line verse form carried over from the Middle High German epic. The epic verse form conveys the tone and structured situation of medieval society implicit in the Middle High German epics. Thus, verse arrangement, rhyme, narrative framework, and dramatic dialog all constitute an external antithetical structure. Out of it the interior antithetical structure develops the theme, an anonymous author's indictment of an unjust society that in its devotion to form fails to recognize true values which have replaced its vitiated institutionalized conventions.

That the relationship among the three poetic elements is variable will be illustrated by a brief discussion of another popular ballad, "Grossmutter Schlangenköchin," a work which differs markedly in the formal arrangement of stanzas and dialog from the "Schloss in Osterreich." In this poem, there is no narrator to introduce the story or to provide the framework for an antithetical situation. The ballad begins directly with the dialog of a mother and her daughter, who has been to her grandmother's house, where she has partaken of a "gebackenes Fischlein" fished from the "Kräutgärtnlein" with "Stecken und Ruten" (lines 7-16). The episode is initiated with the mother's question and continues for fourteen stanzas, alternating regularly with the words of mother and daughter:

"Maria, wo bist du zur Stube gewesen?
Maria, mein einziges Kind!"

"Ich bin bei meiner Grossmutter gewesen,
ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!" (1-4)⁷₀

⁷₀Nussbächer, pp. 45, 46.
The mother's words in the first stanza, "Maria, mein einziges Kind," are repeated as a refrain in the second line of each of the seven stanzas in which the mother speaks. The initial utterance creates the parental foreboding; the following repetitions heighten the threat of an initially undefined danger, the malevolent character of which is progressively revealed. The mother's concern is countered by the daughter's repetition of "Ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!" in the second line of each stanza in which she speaks.

Parental love for an only child and the premonition of an imminent fate assimilate with Maria's expression of pain in the final two stanzas. The mother asks Maria what happened to the dog who ate the fish scraps, whereupon Maria answers the dog has become the victim of black magic:

"Wo ist dann das Übrige Fischlein gefangen? Maria, mein einziges Kind."

"Sie hat's ihrem schwarzbraunen Hündlein gegeben, ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!"

"Wo ist dann das schwarzbraune Hündlein hinkommen? Maria, mein einziges Kind!"

"Es ist in tausend Stücke zersprungen. Ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!" (17-24)

The ballad concludes with Maria's apperception of her fate and the request, in answer to her mother's final question, that she be put to rest in the cemetery:

"Maria, wo soll ich dein Bettlein hin machen? Maria, mein einziges Kind!"

"Du sollst mir's auf den Kirchhof machen. Ach weh! Frau Mutter, wie weh!" (25-28)

The concluding repetitions here differ from the other six in that,
at this point, both recognize the inevitability of death. The six previous occurrences reveal progressive stages of parental foreboding and a child's fear of suffering; the final refrains express not only the fear but also the recognition of the luminous.

Although a narrator's introductory framework is absent and the dramatic dialog between mother and daughter constitutes the whole poem, the narrative-epic function is present in the dialog. The poem is a good example of how finely epic, lyric, and dramatic elements may be interwoven. 71

"Grossmutter Schlangenköchin" illustrates, therefore, another arrangement of the antithetical structure in the ballad. Externally and contextually, the rapidly moving dialog between mother and daughter points up, on the one hand, the tension between parental love—premonition of an impending fate, the desire to circumvent it—and the child's awareness of the unavoidable confrontation with death for having partaken of Grossmutter Schlangenköchin's culinary offerings, on the other. On this level, a resolution results in the ultimate acceptance of the inevitable, a recognition of the elemental character of death.

In contrast to the "Schloss in Oesterreich," in which the dramatic, epic, and lyric aspects were clearly distinguishable and separable, they are in this poem superimposed on one another. A third and perhaps better known popular ballad taken from Des Knaben Wunderhorn represents yet another combination of lyric, epic, and dramatic elements:

71 See Hans Fromm, "Die Ballade als Art und die zeitgenössische Ballade," Deutschunterricht, 8 (Heft 4, 1956), 84-99. Fromm notes that Goethe's famous Ur-Ei statement must have been made out of "einer grossen Nähe zur Volksballade . . . und ihm die grundlegende Verschiedenheit von Volks- und Kunstballade noch nicht bewusst sein konnte."
- 42 -

Der Schweizer

Fliegenderes Blatt

Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz,
Da ging mein Trauern an,
Das Alphorn hört' ich drübenwohl anstimmen,
Ins Vaterland musst' ich hinüber schwimmen,
Das ging nicht an.

Ein' Stunde in der Nacht
Sie haben mich gebracht;
Sie führten mich gleich vor des Hauptmanns Haus,
Ach Gott, sie fischten mich im Strome auf,
Mit mir ist's aus.

Frühmorgens um zehn Uhr
Stellt man mich vor das Regiment;
Ich soll da bitten um Pardon
Und ich bekomm doch meinen Lohn,
Das weiss ich schon.

Ihr Brüder allzumal,
Heut seht ihr mich zum letztenmal;
Der Hirtenbub ist doch nur schuld daran,
Das Alphorn hat mir solches angetan,
Das klag ich an.

Ihr Brüder alle drei,
Was ich euch bitt, erschießt mich gleich;
Verschont mein junges Leben nicht,
Schießt zu, das das Blut rausspritzt,
Das bitt ich euch.

O Himmelskönig, Herr!
Nimm du mein arme Seele dahin,
Nimm sie zu dir in den Himmel ein,
Lass sie ewig bei dir sein
Und vergiss nicht mein!

The most obvious difference between "Der Schweizer," and the two ballads previously examined lies in the altered perspective. "Das Schloss in Osterreich" was related by a third person and thus the narrative or epic function of the work was apparent. "Grossmutter

Schlangenköchin" seemed, at first glance, to consist solely of a dramatic dialog between a mother and her daughter and lacked external commentary of any kind.

The third example appears to be narrated from the first person point of view. The story is that the narrator, a young soldier stationed in Strassburg, overcome by homesickness, attempts to swim back to his native Switzerland and is apprehended. Condemned to die, his only request is that he be summarily executed by his comrades who must serve in the firing squad. The young man's final request is that God accept his soul in heaven.

The pronounced narrative character of this ballad is enlivened by certain lyric and dramatic elements. The narrator, for example, relates some portions of the incident as it allegedly occurred. The final three stanzas are, in fact, the last words of the narrator, as spoken by the condemned to his former comrades and to God:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Ihr Brüder allzumal,} \\
&\text{Heut seht ihr mich zum letztenmal;} \\
&\text{Der Hirtenbub is doch nur schuld daran,} \\
&\text{Das Alphorn hat mir solches angetan} \\
&\text{Das klag' ich an. (19-23)}
\end{align*}
\]

In the third stanza, the last three lines form a rhyming triplet and express succinctly the threatening predicament in which the young man finds himself:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Frühmorgens um zehn Uhr} \\
&\text{Stellt man mich vor das Regiment;} \\
&\text{Ich soll da bitten um Pardon} \\
&\text{Und ich bekommm doch meinen Lohn,} \\
&\text{Das weiss ich Schon. (11-15)}
\end{align*}
\]

The last words in each line of the final rhyming triplet also suggest the futility of a request for pardon, a suggestion which is underscored by
the two heavy beats of the final line:

Das weiss ich schon. (18)

Two very strongly accented beats unrelieved by any unaccented syllables are characteristic of the final line in each of the six stanzas. These final lines with their heavy beats serve to move the narrator close to his imminent fate. They also take on the character of a refrain, juxtaposing the will of the individual to military law.

Das ging nicht an. (5)

Mit mir ist's aus. (10)

Das weiss ich schon. (15)

Das klag ich an. (20)

Das bitt ich euch. (25)

Nimm sie zu dier in den Himmel ein,
Lass sie ewig bei dir sein,
Und vergiss nicht mein! (28-30)

The poignant awareness increases from stanzas one through five:

Ihr Brüder alle drei,
Was ich euch bitt, er schiesst mich gleich;
Verschont mein junges Leben nicht,
Schiesst zu, dass das Blut rausspritzt,
Das bitt ich euch. (20-25)

This stanza disturbs the continuity and progression built up by the rhyming lines of the previous four stanzas, and reflects the young man's frustration. The frustration intensifies from a request to the firing squad in the fifth stanza and culminates in a command to God in the sixth:

O Himmelskönig, Herr!
Nimm du meine arme Seele dahin,
Nimm sie zu dir in den Himmel ein,
Lass sie ewig bei dir sein
Und vergiss nicht mein. (26-30)
It is the lyrical means of rhyme, rhythm, and meter and verse which not only tie narrative and dramatic elements together but also synthesize the work to make it more than a concise story in verse form. The conflict here is between the boy's love for his homeland and the artificial duty imposed upon him. There is also a second but ancillary antithesis between the boy's rational acceptance of his fate and the vitiating recognition that only a few minutes of life remain.

Thus, a popular ballad such as "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" is distinguished from the bench ballad by its comparative brevity and by its emphasis upon the internal and the personal. Although the individual may be compelled to yield to a monolithic force, as he must in a bench ballad, his emotions are generally the focus of the popular ballad. The prominence given to the inner nature of man may be one of the reasons the popular ballad attracted and influenced Romantic writers, most notably Goethe.

One of the clearest and best-known examples of the influence from the popular ballad is Goethe's "Heidenröslein." Simultaneously, this work illustrates a move toward the literary ballad. Trunz notes that "Volksmässig ist bei Goethe manches in der Sprache... Aber

Entwistle, p. 243, states that the "German ballad is stanzaic; it has a lyrical origin, and there are lyrical elements present at all times... In modern military ballads, such as Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz and Sedan there is little more narrative than is required to describe a pathetic situation; the rest of the ballad is an appeal to a commonly felt emotion. The German corpus is therefore both formally and intrinsically lyrical..." I believe Entwistle's statement is correct for the popular ballad, but it fails to consider the bench ballad and its influence upon the literary ballad.

Ibid., p. 254. Entwistle refers to a series of eighteenth-century ballads dealing with the theme of the soldier forced into military service for a foreign prince. Such ballads reflected the "enlistment" practices of the time.

The epic content in this work is minimal. Captivated by the beauty of a rose blooming in the heather, the boy plucks it. The seven lines of the second stanza relate the dramatic dialogue between the boy and the rose which warns that pain accompanies the enjoyment of beauty. This suggests the delicacy of love as well as its fragility. Although a relationship may feed the boy's sensuous enjoyment, the belated recognition of the neglected but concomitant responsibility brings pain.

The dramatic character of this work is as subdued as its epic qualities. The "action" does not occur within the framework of an omniscient and omnipotent macrocosm; the individual does not revolt against forces larger than himself. Rather the situation described is intimate and personal. The lyrical features of the poem detail the uniqueness of the personal encounter.

Most noticeable of the lyrical features is the employment of rhythm and meter. The third, fifth, and seventh lines of each stanza contain three iambic feet and thus break the rhythm initiated in the first line and taken up again in lines three, four, and six. Furthermore, even the regularity of metrical feet is broken in these lines by the fourth beat which

Goethes Werke, I, 449.
lacks an unaccented syllable corresponding to the previous three trochaic feet:

Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein stehn,
Röslein auf der Heiden,
War so jung und morgenschön
Lief er schnell, es nah zu seh'n,
Sah's mit vielen Freuden.
Röslein, Röslein, Röslein rot,
Röslein auf der Heiden. (1-7)  

In addition to preventing the monotony of a fixed and unvaried regular beat, such an imperfect foot results in extra emphasis for the final word "rot" which carries the force of a substantive in this position. The pattern is established in the first stanza and continues in the succeeding stanzas (line 6). Its importance is further underscored by the abaabxb rhyme scheme.

"Red" stresses here not only the beauty and intimacy of love but also its accompanying pain, sorrow or tragedy. This interpretation is suggested likewise by the use of the refrain in each stanza with a progressively richer connotative meaning. In the first stanza, it suggests perhaps the tender nature and beauty of the rose. Following the words: "Ich steche dich,/ Dass du ewig denkst an mich,/ Und ich will's nicht leiden" (lines 10, 11, 12), the refrain connotes the threatening aspects of love which are brought out especially by the one word, "rot." It is also evident, at this point, that the rose clearly stands for the tenuous nature of a love-relationship. Finally, the refrain in the final stanza, preceded by fait a complet of the unavoidable suffering, stresses love's latent capacity to cause emotional pain.

What one might call the lyrical use of language also becomes

76 Goethes Werke, I, 78, 79.
evident in an examination of the "Heidenrösslein." One notices, for example, the simple sentence structure and word order. It is because of this uncomplicated word order that the post-substantive position of "rot" stands apart. More importantly, however, the language and word-order help to convey a sense of the fragile yet inherently equivocal character of love. The economy and directness of the work are all the more evident when one compares Goethe's version to a popular version recorded by Herder:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Es sah ein Knab' ein Rösslein stehn,} \\
\text{Ein Rösslein auf der Heiden.} \\
\text{Er sah, es war so frisch und schön,} \\
\text{Und blieb stehn, es anzusehn,} \\
\text{Und stand in süßen Freuden.}
\end{align*}
\]

Compared with Goethe's version, the lines of this work sound almost prosaic. The simplicity of Goethe's revision is achieved by eliminating the impersonal "es," retaining the third person but gaining immediacy by the directness of the statement: "Sah ein Knab' ein Rösslein stehn" (line 1). Immediacy is also achieved in Goethe's version by changing the second line from: "Ein Rösslein auf der Heiden" to the direct address of "Rösslein auf der Heiden." The elimination of the indefinite article forces the reader to focus directly on the "Rösslein."

The revision of:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Er sah, es war so frisch und schön,} \\
\text{Und blieb stehn, es anzusehn,} \\
\text{Und stand in süßen Freuden. (lines 3-5)}
\end{align*}
\]

to:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{War so jung und morgenschön} \\
\text{Lief er schnell es nahzusehn,} \\
\text{Sah's mit vielen Freuden. (lines 3-5)}
\end{align*}
\]

\footnote{Goethes Werke, I, 449, 450. Trunz prints two versions which Goethe may have known.}
stresses even more the intimacy and immediacy of the encounter. First, the omission of "er" maintains the reader's focus on the "Röslein," The adjective "morgenschön" suggests the freshness of youth and the transitory nature of beauty. Goethe's "lief er schnell es nahzusehn" dramatically shifts the reader's attention from the "Röslein" to the boy and emphasizes his impetuosity. Herder's version suggests merely a distant and controlled admiration.

These features alter the tone from one of distant admiration to stress the excitement and enthusiasm of a first encounter and focus on the subjectivity of the romantic liaison. Conversely, Goethe's omission of the subject in lines nineteen and twenty stresses the consequences of the carpe diem attitude as well as the universality of the experience.

Goethe's "Der König in Thule" illustrates another treatment of the love theme in the popular ballad. This work illustrates, as "Heidenröselin," a predominance of the personal and subjective over an objective macrocosm. In terms of Staiger's poetic theory, one might say that it illustrates the predominance of the momentary over the principle of succession.

A king about to die receives a golden drinking cup from his lover; he wills his kingdom to his legal heirs but the drinking cup he keeps for

---

78 Helmut Prang, Formgeschichte der Dichtkunst (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1968), p. 174 writes: "Unter dem Einfluss der Volksballade stehen nun lyrische Balladen von volksmässiger und volkstümlich gewordener Art. Goethes 'König in Thule' ist wohl das bezeichnendste Beispiel dafür." Following his theory that the ballad is a genre distinct from the lyric, Kayser notes that in "König in Thule" the distinctions between ballad and lyrical poem merge or assimilate.
himself. From it he drinks his last draught, throws it into the sea, and expires. Both the epic and dramatic possibilities of the story appear, at first glance, to be limited. There is obviously no dramatic suspense or evidence of the supernatural found in some of the bench ballads or in such works as "Lenore," "Eduard" or even in Schiller's "Taucher." Yet the poem has a definite epic and dramatic character. The reader is curious about the king's attitude toward the golden "Becher" and he is moved along rapidly with the movement in the story.

It is, in fact, the lyrical elements which encompass and dominate the epic character of the story and which create the dramatic situation that so interest the reader. This is all the more noteworthy when one considers the apparent simplicity of the poem and contrasts it to the obvious epic content of the bench ballads. This poem has the four-line stanza or Volkslied stanza of abab rhyme scheme.

\[
\text{Es war ein König in Thule} \\
gar treu bis an das Grab, \\
dem sterbend seine Bühle \\
einen goldnen Becher gab.}
\]

\[
\text{Es ging ihm nichts darüber,} \\
er leert' ihn jeden Schmaus; \\
die Augen gingen ihm über, \\
sooft er trank daraus. (1-8)}
\]

By comparing these verses with those found in "Das Schloss in Oesterreich" or "Der Schweizer," one immediately notices two significant differences. First, the rhyme in these four-line stanzas is consistently applied and is, in almost every verse, well-matched. This could, of course, lead to the sing-song type of rhyme often found

\text{79Goethes Werke, I, 80, 81.}
in second-rate popular poetry. That it does not is due, in a large
measure, to a second important feature distinguishing this work from
the previously mentioned popular ballads. In the first and third lines
of each stanza, the iambic trimeter has an extra-metrical syllable
or feminine cadence. This results in the reader's being carried along
to the thought of the following second and fourth lines which always con¬
clude with a proper metrical foot. Another device helping to accomplish
the rapid movement and acceleration of the tempo are the enjambments,
which occur in the poem (cf. lines 1, 3, 13, 15, 19). The impression
of slow and steady movement results also from the strong contrast
between accented and unaccented words which, for the most part, are
not polysyllabic.

From the point of receiving the golden cup in the first stanza, the
narrative progresses steadily forward to the king's death in the last.
The king can will his realm to his posterity but not the cup given him
by his lover.

Und als er kam zu sterben,
Zählt' er seine Städ't im Reich,
Gönt' alles seinem Erben,
Den Becher nicht zugleich. (9-12)

The enjambment and the hesitation occasioned by the feminine rhyme
forcing the reader to pause briefly in line eleven makes the king's
refusal to part with the cup all the more emphatic in line twelve.

Having taken the last drop from the vessel, as described in
the fifth stanza, the king throws it into the ocean, and with the sink¬
ing of the cup into the sea come also the final moments of his life.

80 See Goethes Werke I, 452.
Er sah ihn stürzen, trinken
Und sinken tief uns Meer.
Die Augen täten ihm sinken--
Trank nie einen Tropfen mehr. (21-24)

The rhyme of "Meer" with "mehr" underscores the totality of the love enjoyed by the king and his lover.

The previous discussion suggests that lyrical means synthesize the epic-narrative and dramatic qualities of the poem. The first line, with almost fairy-tale-like beginning, makes the events about to be related seem perhaps totally irrelevant to anything in the real world. Yet, the unceasing movement of the work soon reveals the tragic feeling the poem conveys.

Finally, the stanzas themselves, as lyrical entities, may be divided into antithetical units. There is in the poem a positive or upward movement, illustrated by the value placed on the cup, in stanzas one and two, climaxed in the third by the king's refusal to bestow the cup on any of his heirs. In stanzas four through six, the movement is downward or negative, culminating in death. Bringing these two movements together into an attitude toward death and love is the function of the lyrical elements of the poem.

In the bench ballad, the individual almost always submits to a higher order and often pays for his transgression with his life. In the "König in Thule" the conflict between the royal order and the king's love for someone outside the regal society is resolved more personally and tragically. First, the king asserts his love for his beloved even in his dying moments; he indicates his contempt for tradition by flinging the cup into the sea. Nevertheless, he dies and his heirs become the rightful progenitors of his realm. Convention
is simultaneously flaunted and satisfied. Accordingly, the personal nature experiences both a triumph and a tragedy.

The stress on the personal and intimate discussed in Goethe's "König in Thule" is evident in many of Eichendorff's poems. This is particularly evident in a thematically similar work "Das zerbrochene Ringlein."\textsuperscript{81}

\begin{verbatim}
In einem kühlen Grunde
Da geht ein Mühlenrad,
Mein' Liebste ist verschwunden,
Die dort gewohnet hat.

Sie hat mir Treu versprochen,
Gab mir ein'n Ring dabei,
Sie hat die Treu gebrochen,
Mein Ringlein sprang entzwei.

Ich möcht als Spielmann reisen
Weit in die Welt hinaus
Und singen meine Weisen
Und gehn von Haus zu Haus.

Ich möcht als Reiter fliegen
Wohl in die blut'ge Schlacht,
Um stille Feuer liegen
Im Feld bei dunkler Nacht.

Hör' ich das Mühlrad gehen:
Ich weiss nicht, was ich will--
Ich möcht' am liebsten sterben,
Da wär's auf einmal still!'\textsuperscript{82}
\end{verbatim}

In this work the subject-object distinction, although present, is overshadowed by the predominance of the personal element. The broken ring in this poem represents the perfidy of a false lover. In

\textsuperscript{81}Wolfgang Kayser, Das sprachliche Kunstwerk (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1948), p. 354 has difficulty classifying such Eichendorff poems as "Waldgespräch" and "Der stille Grund" and considers them to be on the border between lyric and ballad.

contrast to Goethe's king, the anonymous narrator does not seek to maintain or to regain his lover but to dissolve his feelings as a minstrel (lines 9-12) or to forget the pain of the beloved's faithlessness by becoming a cavalry soldier (lines 13-16).

The most pronounced deviation from the ballads previously discussed is the persona's final wish in the last stanza. The wish for death would perhaps seem comparable to the death of the anonymous youth in "Das Schloss in Osterreich" or to the execution of the young soldier in "Der Schweizer." It is, however, vastly different. First, there is no antithetical structure in this poem such as we have discovered in previous examples. Second, in "Das zerbrochene Ringlein" the speaker imposes his own fate or, as the last two lines indicate, wishes that he could impose the ultimate solution to personal grief. But there is no external structure whose code has been violated, nor is there any suggestion of an ordered macrocosm which imposes a fate upon him.

Nevertheless, a discussion of this work forces us to focus on the personal element, the emphasis of subject over object, present in many of the popular ballads. A formal feature in "Grossmutter Schlangenköchin" but absent in Goethe's "König in Thule" and Eichendorff's "Das zerbrochene Ringlein" is the use of refrain or any type of repetition.

If a refrain or repetition is used to convey a strong sense of an external structure larger than the individual, then it is not difficult to understand its absence in the latter two poems by Goethe and Eichendorff. The bench ballad's emphasis on an absolute structure would also account for the high incidence of frequent repetitions, slightly varied lines, or
over-moralizing found there.

In any event, the examination of the popular ballad would suggest that the compression of personal feelings into the moment is a strong feature of the popular ballad and also of the versions revised by known authors. Falk considers the literary ballad a fusion of the lyrical qualities of the popular ballad and the pronounced epic qualities of the bench ballad.\(^{83}\) The previous discussion of the two forms has attempted to examine what elements distinguishes each; the following analysis of selected literary ballads will attempt to consider how the strongly personal and lyrical character of the popular ballad is fused with the emphasis on a highly structured and demanding order found in the bench ballad.

\(^{83}\)Falk, p. 675.
The Literary Ballad: An Assimilation of Two Traditions

Goethe's "Zauberlehrling" illustrates the antithesis of a highly structured order and the individual's attempt to assert himself. In this story of uncontrolled forces in the maladroit hands of the sorcerer's apprentice, epic and dramatic elements are also more clearly apparent than in either the "Heidenröselin" or the "König in Thule."

The epic character of the work is evident in the apprentice's narrative of his attempted imprecation. His excited account in thirteen of the poem's fourteen divisions conveys his frustration, tension, and panic at being incapable of directing the forces he has set in motion. The epic qualities are closely related to the dramatic intensity which mounts as the narrative in each of the seven eight-line stanzas progresses. The tension is finally released in the last stanza when the master sorcerer speaks and order is restored:

``In die Ecke,
Besen! Besen!
Seid's gewesen!
Denn als Geister
Ruft euch nur zu seinem Zwecke
Erst hervor der alte Meister. (93-98)''

Lilo Brügger implicitly recognizes the interrelatedness between the epic and dramatic features of this ballad when she notes that the first person narrative of this poem becomes a "monodrama." Nevertheless, lyrical means make the dramatic and epic qualities

\[84^\text{Goethes Werke, I, 276-279.}\]
\[85^\text{"Der Zauberlehrling und seine griechischen Quellen," Goethe Jahrbuch, neue Folge 13 (1951), 253.}\]
effective throughout the poem and synthesize their disparate character:

Hat der alte Hexenmeister
Sich doch einmal wegbegeben!
Und nun sollen seine Geister
Auch nach meinem Willen leben!
Seine Wort' und Werke
Merkt' ich und den Brauch,
Und mit Geistesstärke
Tu' ich Wunder Auch.

Walle! walle
Manche Strecke,
Dass zum Zwecke
Wasser fliesse,
Und mit reichem, vollem Schwalle
Zu dem Bade sich ergiesse! (1-12)86

The seven stanzas, formally identical to the first, consist of eight lines which, in turn, are two four-line stanzas of abab ccdc rhyme scheme. The first four lines have highly regular trochaic tetrameter, the following are of unvarying trochaic trimeter.

As an isolated phenomenon, the regular beat of the metrical feet would create only an impression of monotony. Coupled with them, however, are the enjambments at the end of many of the lines (e.g., 1, 3, 5, 7). Their occurrence in this position as well as the use of a caesura within the line retard the rapidity of movement and, with the regularity of the meter, create the rhythm of an incantation or imprecation. This impression is strengthened in the first refrain: "Walle! walle/ Manche Strecke" which, with their two heavy beats, utilizes the dipodic rhythm of the charm.

The six-line refrain with its controlled and confident chant-like sound is repeated unaltered as the second refrain but in the third, it suddenly changes to convey an expression of fear at the uncontrolled

86 Brügger, pp. 276-279.
forces set in motion, and the fright is indicated by the absence of dipodic rhythm.

Steh! stehe!
Denn wir haben
Deiner Gaben
Vollgemessen!—
Ach, ich merk'es! Wehe! wehe!
Hab' ich doch das Wort vergessen. (37-42)

The fear indicated in this refrain turns to complete frustration after the neophyte sorcerer has split the old broom and compounded his difficulties:

Wehe! Wehe!
Beide Teile
Stehn in Eile
Schon als Knechte
Völlig fertig in die Höhe!
Helft mir, ach! ihr hohen Mächte! (79-84)

The self-assurance of the incantation in the first two refrains has been exchanged for the horrible realization that the exorcism has been forgotten. Yet formally the lines appear to be the same: four lines of trochaic dimeter and two lines of trochaic tetrameter. The dark "a"-sounds of "walle," "manche," "dass," "Wasser"—sounds which in this context convey a tone of self-confidence—and replaced in the third refrain by the light "e"-sounds of "Stehe," "denn," "vollgemessen," "wehe," and the final "vergessen," which create a tone of frightened anticipation.

In addition, the trochaic meter serves a purpose other than that of creating an atmosphere of the mysterious and the clairvoyant. The iamb is smoother and more flowing than the trochaic beat which creates a more staccato effect and, with a fast tempo, reads rapidly. It is also

Brügger, p. 254.
suitable for creating an atmosphere of tension and emotional pressure,®® and is so used from the third stanza on.

The lyrical means of rhyme, rhythm, meter, caesura, enjambment, and stanza activate the dramatic character in this work. The arrangement of the stanzas and refrain skilfully contrasts the diastolic action of the brooms epically narrated in the eight-line verses with the frustrated systolic overreaching of the apprentice in the six-line refrains which suggest the dissembling of order. All these lyrical devices bring the epic and dramatic elements to a unified whole. Without them, the dramatic and epic qualities of the work would quite likely be absent; in fact, Brügger points out that Lucian's story, the source of the ballad, particularly lacks the dramatic features which Goethe added to the lyrical form.®® The lyrical means turn the sequential nature of the epic narrative into a compressed simultaneity which permits the dramatic intensity felt by the sorcerer.

Goethe's "Zauberlehrling" illustrates again a basic compositional principle of the ballad; there is a pronounced antithetical structure in the poem. The eight-line narrative stanzas describe the progression of events. The six-line stanzas, which function as a refrain, indicate first the total absence of order and then its restoration. In this manner the narrative is contrasted to the chaos in which it occurs. Within this framework, the apprentice is always subordinate to the structure—the sorcerer's mysterious knowledge—and therefore achieves a very low degree of individual concretization. Schiller's "Der Ring des Polykrates"

®®Brügger, pp. 244, 246.
illustrates yet another variation of this compositional principle.

Related to the strong epic movement in stanzas one, three, four, six, eight, thirteen, fourteen and fifteen, the dramatic character of this work reveals a carefully constructed exposition, epitasis, catas-
tasis, and implies a catastrophe. The exposition, comprising the first two stanzas (lines 1-12), discloses the self-satisfaction of the tyrant of Samos: "Gestehe, dass ich glücklich bin" as well as the caution of the Egyptian visitor that although the tyrant enjoys the favor of the gods, the enemy has not been fully conquered: "Dich kann mein Mind nicht glücklich sprechen, / Solang des Feindes Auge wacht" (lines 6, 11, 12). These twelve lines, then, introduce the tyrant's positive view of his status, his visitor's concurrence coupled with a warning that the enemy could yet destroy all this.

No sooner does the guest reluctantly confirm the king's fortune than the report comes back that the enemy has been destroyed (13-24). Stanzas three through nine reveal a series of successes countered by the increasingly strident warnings of the Egyptian king. The verses, relating the destruction of the enemy (stanzas II-V), the safe return of the navy (VI, VII), and the felicitous outcome against the navy of Crete (VIII-IX), constitute the epitasis—a series of events which successively places the tyrant on the highest pinnacle of success while simultaneously making his position with the gods more tenuous and the possibility of hybris all the greater.

The progressively increasing dramatic tension in these stanzas is revealed by the visitor after each of the three dispatches to the king:

1) At the report of the total victory over the enemy:
2) At the news of the safe return of the ships:

Der königliche Gast erstaunet:
"Dein Glück ist heute gut gelaunet,
Doch fürchte seinen Unbestand." (VII, 37-39)

3) And upon hearing of the destruction of the Cretian ships:

Das hört der Gastfreund mit Entsetzen:
"Führe wahr, ich muss dich glücklich schätzen,
Doch," spricht er, "zitter ich für dein Heil.
Mir grauet vor der Götter Neide:
Des Lebens ungemischte Freude
Ward keinem Irdischen zu teil." (IX, 49-54)

The "doch" in each of the verses cited unfolds with increasing amplification the actual direction of the sovereign's movement; what appears to be an ascent to the heights is actually a fall to the depths, as line fifty-one clearly expresses.

At this point, the epitasis is interrupted by three stanzas of choral-like commentary from the royal guest, who urges the king to recognize the danger before him: "Drum, willst du dich vor Leid bewahren, so flehe zu den Unsichtbaren" (61, 62). If the gods will not listen, he should take his fate into his own hands:

Und wenns die Götter nicht gewähren,
So acht auf eines Freundes Lehren
Und rufe selbst das Unglück her,
Und was von allen deinen Schätzen
Dein Herz am höchsten mag ergötzen,
das nimm und wirf in dieses Meer." (67-72)

The friend's advice forms the pivot on which the values in the poem are reversed. Hitherto positively viewed, the royal fortunes now

take on a negative value. Misfortune, previously considered a negative value, takes on a positive worth and is so strongly desired that the monarch will throw his most treasured ring into the ocean depths so that the gods will forgive his success (73-78).

Stanzas thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen which relate the attempt to gain favor with the gods by offering a most valued possession, constitute the peripety. The ring is found the following day in a fish the palace cook is preparing and is returned to the king (88-90). This is followed by the exodus of the guest and the implied catastrophe:

Hier wendet sich der Gast mit Grausen:
„So kann ich hier nicht ferner hausen,
Mein Freund kannst du nicht weiter sein.
Die Götter wollen dein Verderben—
Fort eil ich, nicht mit dir zu sterben."
Und sprachs und schiffte schnell sich ein. (91-96)

The dramatic organization of this ballad is, therefore, clearly marked. Exposition: stanzas I-II; epitasis: stanzas III-IX; choral interlude connecting epitasis to the conclusion: stanzas X-XII; peripety: stanzas XIII-XVI.

This dramatic structure, however, is only an external organizing principle for the epic content of the ballad. The structure common to this work is lyrical. This seemingly banal fact—quite obviously a ballad is divided into lines and stanzas—implies a great deal for the Schiller's "Ring" and for ballads in general.

Most evident is the division of the action and commentary into six-line iambic tetrameter of aabccb rhyme scheme. In the "Ring" a stanza of action is usually followed by a stanza of commentary from the Egyptian visitor. The effect is that a positive view of events is always countered
by a negative or antithetical interpretation of the same incident.

The juxtaposition of positive and negative interpretation of the same occurrence may, in fact, be one reason for the aabccb rhyme scheme in each sextet. The introductory couplet allows a succinct and picquant commentary on the preceding stanza which has just presented the opposite view.

Der Königliche Gast erstaunet:

"Der Kreter waffenkundge Scharen
Bedräumen dich mit Kriegsgefahren,
Schon nahe sind sie diesem Strand."

Und eh ihm noch das Wort entfallen,
da sieht mans von den Schiffen wallen.
Und tausend Stimmen rufen: "Sieg!
von Feindesnot sind wir befreiet,
Die Kreter hat der Sturm zerstreuet,
Vorbei, geendet ist der Krieg." (37-48)

The couplet entfallen/wallen forcefully presents the "good" news that the navy of Samos has been victorious, thus making the concerned visitor appear to be nothing more than a Cassandra. The rhyme scheme of the remaining four lines allows for a somewhat more detailed exposition of events. The bccb quatrain is, nevertheless, related to the introductory couplet in rhythm and syntax, if not in rhyme, for the first three lines and the last three always form separate syntactical units. Such an arrangement is especially suited for the presentation of an antithetical situation. Simultaneously, it interrelates all incidents to form a concatenation finally climaxing in the tyrant's downfall.

The importance of the metrical feet for the progress of events and for the transitional function of the couplets is evident in the scansion
of two such lines. The tyrant of Samos says of his ring:

Und jener spricht, von Furcht beweget:
Von allem, was die Insel heget,
Ist dieser Ring mein höchstes Gut." (73-75)

The introductory aa as well as the bb couplet in the quatrain are characterized by a dactyl in the final foot. The final unaccented syllable of the dactyl leaves the action in that line suspended, forcing the movement on to the next line where the progression is again taken up.

The iambic tetrameter synthesizes the epic narrative and the dramatic action of this work. First, its consistent application fuses the action of each stanza, and consequently, brings the positive exclamations of the tyrant and the persistent negativism of the Egyptian guest into a regular and recurring meter. The use of a single stanza creates, visually and structurally, the impression of order and uniformity.

A dramatic tension results from the metaphysical order superimposed on the apparent but superficial order of the king's small world. The individual stanzas are brought together and the concept of order is reinforced by the almost undeviating application of the trochaic tetrameter. It should be noted, however, that the rhythm of the trochee is not applied to the point of monotony but is varied by the use of the dactyl in the couplets and by an occasional iamb in other lines (cf. 49, 53, 61).

The regular beat of the iambic measure figures significantly in the dramatic tension that results from the tyrant's false confidence and

91 Kayser, Versschule, p. 27.
his true situation, his imminent fall. The measure remains the same as the tension mounts—no excited staccato lines repeat the danger in which he stands. The regular trochaic measure and dipodic rhythm create the speaker's credibility and give his final words a higher degree of certainty than they would perhaps have with a dactylic or iambic measure:

"Mein Freund kannst du nicht weiter sein. Die Götter wollen dein Verderben-- Fort eil ich, nicht mit dir zu sterben." Und sprachs und schiffte schnell sich ein. (87-90)

The final masculine ending of line ninety leaves the reader no doubt of the inescapable fate of the tyrant. The decision of the gods is irrevocable and unequivocal: he will be destroyed.

That all men must experience with fortune, misfortune; with joy, sorrow; and after unbroken triumph, undiluted defeat is illustrated not only by the series of events and their outer dramatic organization; but also verse structure is particularly suited for contrasting the king's view of his good fortune with the guest's pessimistic interpretation of the same events. It is by observing and following this antithetical lyrical structure that one arrives at a statement of the theme of this work.

It is, accordingly, the unique character of the lyrical structure and the bipartite or antithetical situation brought out by dramatic and epic qualities that characterize the ballad. In addition, a feature common to both Goethe's "Zauberlehrling" and Schiller's "Ring des Polya-krates" as well as to the other ballads of the Classical period is a very definite verse form usually in iambic or trochaic tetrameter. Frequently, of course, the iambic lines in a given stanza are varied, especially in
stanzas of six to eight lines, by the inclusion of one or two lines of tri-meter or pentameter. Nevertheless, whatever the stanzaic form, it is a consistently recurring element.

The consistent form of the literary ballad and recurrence of particular features in that form express the idea of an ordered macrocosm within which an imbalanced microcosm must regain its equilibrium. In the "Zauberlehrling" the tentative duality was formally represented by the division between the six-line refrain in which the increasingly disparate comments of the apprentice are juxtaposed to the rapid narrative of events in the eight-line stanza. A similar contrast is encountered within each stanza in Schiller's "Ring des Polykrates." The internal dichotomy may be the reason for the absence of a refrain in this work.

A result of the strong emphasis on the individual's place in the macrocosm is that very little individual concretization occurs. In both Goethe's "Zauberlehrling" and Schiller's "Ring des Polykrates" the material may not be suited to strong emotive personal expression of a protagonist as one finds in popular ballads such as "Das Schloss in Osterreich," "Lilofee," "Heidenröslein" or "Der König in Thule." The expression of individual emotion or pathos is limited by the omniscient and omnipotent force of a system far greater than the microcosmic world of the individual. The protagonist or antagonist is always subordinate

Kayser, Geschichte, p. 125. Kayser contrasts the ordered cosmos in the classical ballads of Goethe and Schiller with the earlier folksong. In Goethe and especially in Schiller there is "a pronounced macrocosmic order." It is evident even in the meter.
to the ideal of a higher order.\(^9^3\)

The particular form of highly structured verse, little changed from Bürger through the Classical ballads of Goethe and Schiller, underwent only minor variations in form through the time of Miegel and Münchhausen. Mörike, nevertheless, was a writer who occasionally varied the basic lyric form for dramatic effect, as "Der Feuerreiter" illustrates. If one considers dramatic dialog a necessary adjunct of the ballad, then this work does not qualify as a representative of the genre. Its epic character is, however, apparent in the narrative of the Feuerreiter's presumptuous and precipitous rush to the mill and of his demise in the flames. But, in Schiller's "Ring," the dramatic tension of the poem results from the lyrical features in the five stanzas of the work. The trochaic feet create the rapid, staccato line appropriate to the excitement of the fire:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Sehet ihr am Fensterlein} \\
\text{Dort die rote Mütze wieder?} \\
\text{Nicht geheuer muss es sein,} \\
\text{Denn er geht schon auf und nieder.} \\
\text{Und auf einmal, welch Gewühle} \\
\text{Bei der Brücke, nach dem Feld!} \\
\text{Horch! das Feuerglücklein gellt:} \\
\text{Hinterm Berg,} \\
\text{Hinterm Berg,} \\
\text{Brennt es in der Mühle!}\(^9^4\)
\end{align*}
\]

The first seven lines of each ten-line stanza always contain normal trochaic tetrameter. Lines eight and nine contain only three syllables, two of which are heavily stressed. The final line, with its trochaic trimeter, emphasizes the destructive presence of the fire. Mörike

\(^9^3\)Kayser, Geschichte, pp. 125, 126.

does separate refrain and stanza, but unifies them through the re-
curring trochees.

Traditionally, the refrain may suggest the structured macrocosm,
which imposes its will on the individual. Although that association is
present here, its incorporation in the narrative framework, which re-
lates the fight of the individual, draws the impersonal macrocosmic
will into the highly personal will of the individual.

The division of each stanza into seven- and three-line parts
creates an antithetical situation. The first part of every stanza con-
tains the epic narration. The reader is informed first of the fire
fighter's intrepidity. He rides "auf und nieder" (4); then, mounted
on the horse, he jumps into the intense heat of the burning mill (12);
next, the metaphysical connotation of the fire as "Höllenschein" is
presented (6); the mill collapses and the fireman is trapped inside (42);
and finally, his skeleton is found still erect on his horse (53).

In the first stanza, the epic presentation begins restrained with
a question, but in the second it becomes more dramatic through the use
of trochaic meter with polysyllabic words and the imperative form of
the verb. In stanzas one and two, the refrain appears to be merely an
anaphoric structure attached in order to complete the verse and to re-
lieve the monotony of the trochaic tetrameter in the previous lines.
However, with the third stanza Mörike alters the refrain from "Brennt
es in der Mühle" to "Rast es in der Mühle" (20, 30). This change com-
municates the idea of a fire completely out of control. It also appropri-
ately provides a parallel description for the "Feind in Höllenschein" in
the first seven lines (26). The narrative in the fourth verse continues
the description of the raging blaze, and corresponding to the total de-
struction of the mill, the last three lines are again changed to:

Hinterm Berg,
Hinterm Berg
Brennt's!--

The final "Brennt's!," with its single accent, contrasts with
the final trimeter of the other three stanzas and conveys the stark
and depressing emptiness of the site on which only the burned re-
 mains of the mill remind one of the former structure. The fifth
refrain describes the old mill as a grave site, thus focusing the
reader's attention on the fate of the fireman.

Ruhe wohl,
Ruhe wohl
Drunten in der Mühle!

The Feuerreiter has presumptuously used a splinter from the
cross to quell the flame: "Mit des heil'gen Kreuzes Span/ Frevent-
lich die Glut besprochen" (23, 24). In this act, he has "forced" God
not to burn the sacred splinter and thus to quench the fire. The struc-
ture and diction in each stanza suggest the deeper significance implicit in this sacrilegious act.

The variations in the refrain first lead the reader from the neu-
tral statement of "Hinterm Berg/ Brennt es in der Mühle" through the
roaring holocaust, which in the first two stanzas acquires connotations
of hell itself, to a consideration of the fireman's fate as revealed in the
final "Ruhe wohl/ Drunten in der Mühle!" This connection becomes
apparent as the reader glances down the five ten-line divisions of the
poem.

The diction in these five divisions also evokes associations on
several levels. At first glance the selection of "rippendürren Tier" strikes one merely as an effective description (13). The selection of "Qualm und Schwüle" appears to be equally realistic and suitable for depicting a fire (15). Similarly striking is the description of fire as the "Feind im Höllenschein" (26). On a less obvious level, the "rippendürren Tier" may be Death's horse. "Qualm und Schwüle" suggest the smoke of a burning hell.

In this stanza, a metaphysical factor enters the picture and with it a change in perspective. The persona-narrator who has hitherto been describing the fire fighter from a third-person point of view now suddenly turns and directly addresses the fire fighter, who so frequently had "den roten Hahn/ Meilenweit von ferngerochen,/ Mit des heil'gen Kreuzes Span/ Freventlich die Glut besprochen" (21-24). Now he must pay for his frivolous use of sacred relics:

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Weh! dir grinst von Dachgestühle
Dort der Feind im Höllenschein.
Gnade Gott der Seele dein! (25-27)
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The abrupt change from a third-person narrative to direct address signifies an important change in perspective, for the "Weh! dir..." adds a personal element directed not only at the "Feuerreiter" but perhaps at mankind as well.

In the third stanza, the narrative clearly moves from a significative to a metaphysical meaning, which is developed in the following two stanzas. The single "Brennt's!" in line fifty now conveys more than the suggestion of complete desolation of a site on which a mill once stood. It connotes the finality of death and surety of punishment for the fireman's sacrilege and corresponds to lines forty-three and
forty-four in the first part of the stanza: "Doch den kecken Reitersmann/Sah man von der Stunde nimmer." Again taken up in the refrain, this idea connotes the fireman's irrevocable punishment.

The irrevocable finality of death is also associated with the lines:

Volk und Wagen im Gewühle
Kehren heim von all dem Graus;
Auch das Glöcklein klinget aus: (35-37)

The separable verb "ausklingen" has here its primary meaning of "to ring out" or "to come to an end with the ringing" but it could very well also mean "to announce." The fire bell is thus simultaneously the funeral bell and a reminder of human weakness in the face of omnipotent forces.

The last ten lines reinforce such an interpretation. In the charred remains of the old building, a miller finds "ein Gerippe samt der Mützen" sitting "auf der beinern Mähre" which disintegrates to ashes (41-44).

The fire fighter on the "rippendürren Tier" of line thirteen has undergone an apocalyptic transformation. He has become a monument to an attempt to change the cosmic order and a reminder that remission of such blasphemy is granted only in death.

The fundamentally antithetical structure of the ballad is particularly suited to the confrontation of human with divine forces. The epic-narrative and the dramatic function of the refrain support the dichotomy between the two elemental forces; this contrast is accomplished by the use of lyrical means evident in the double structure of the stanzas. Paul Kämpchen has noted that the literary ballad of realism deals with an internal rather than an external conflict as do the numinous
ballads of Goethe and Schiller. The basic structure of the ballad has been fully exploited only from the period of realism to the present.

Droste-Hülshoff's "Der Knabe im Moor" illustrates the transition from an external to an internal conflict in the development of the ballad. As in Goethe's "Zauberlehrling" or Schiller's "Der Ring des Polykrates," Droste-Hülshoff concentrates on the individual and his significance in the macrocosm. However, the emphasis in the latter poem is different, the antithetical structure is used to shift the stress to the predominance of the microcosm.

At first glance, "Der Knabe im Moor" appears to have preserved the formal features of the genre. Six eight-line stanzas relate the experience and feelings of a young school boy crossing the swamp in the evening. For him the natural phenomena assume characteristics of figures from Germanic and medieval folk mythology. The wind rustling in the bushes is "der gespenstische Gräberknecht" (12, 13). The tall blades of swamp grass crackling in the night breeze become "die unselige gebannte Spinnerin" turning her thread in the loom (22-24). The soft, soggy peat-moss under his feet becomes "der Geigenmann ungetreu" (30). "Die verdammte Margret" calls from a gaping crevice (35). Home at last, the boy casts a last glance at the swamp and reflects on his experience "O schaurig wars in der Heide" (48).

The last line of stanza six reiterates in slightly altered form, the introduction to the problem introduced in the first stanza:

O schaurig ists übers Moor zu gehn,
Wenn es wimmelt vom Heiderauche,

95 Kämpchen, pp. 8-12.
96 Hinck, p. 70.
Repeated twice in the first stanza, these lines introduce the mysterious phenomena, all of which receive a natural explanation but which are simultaneously viewed by the boy as an expression of the demonic. To present the mysterious forces of the swamp naturally as well as supernaturally, Droste-Hülshoff utilizes a double point of view. The "O schaurig ists..." is, in this respect, equivocal; the reader cannot be certain initially if the expression refers to the boy's feelings or to the narrator's interpretation of the arcane enigmas of the peat bog in the evening. In either case, the first and seventh lines of this stanza dramatically enhance the suspense of the situation.

From the second through the fifth stanzas, the double point of view creates in the boy's mind a series of chilling encounters with folk demons: the "Gräberknecht," the "Spinnerin," the "Fiedler," and "Margret," simply the natural phenomena of the "Moor." This dual point of view is achieved by placing the natural explanation in every verse unit before the impression in the boy's mind, as in the second stanza:

Fest hält die Fibel das zitternde Kind
Und rennt, als ob man es jage;
Hohl über die Fläche sauset der Wind--
Was raschelt drüben am Hage?
Das ist der gespenstische Gräberknecht,
Der dem Meister die besten Torfe verzecht;
Hu, hu, es bricht wie ein irres Rind!
Hinducket das Knäblein zage. (9-16)

If the viewpoint throughout the stanza really were only that of the boy, one would expect to encounter first the boy's impressions and only later—if ever—their natural explanation. This in itself indicates that the perspective for the interpretation of the work is the narrator's.

That the point of view is actually that of the narrator is also revealed by the similes in several of the stanzas. "Der Knabe rennt, gespannt das Ohr,/ Durch Riesenhalme wie Speere" (20, 21). "Es pfeift ihm unter die Sohlen/ Wie eine gespenstige Melodei" (29, 30); the reader is also returned from the supernatural interpretation to reality by the comparisons describing the boy: "... wie ein irres Rind!/ Hinducket das Knäblein zage" (15, 16); "Der Knabe springt wie ein wundes Reh" (37). Although the "Knabe" takes on animal-like gestures, these very descriptions return the reader to the reality of a naturalistic interpretation.

Another device which stresses this viewpoint is the use of anaphoric structures. Poetically, the use of these parallel structures in explaining the nocturnal manifestations of the swamp results in a mocking tone: "Das ist die unselige Spinnerin,/ Das ist die gebannte Spinnlenor" (22, 23). "Das ist der Geigenmann ungetreu,/ Das ist der diebische Fiedler Knauf" (30, 31). It almost sounds as if the narrator is sardonically throwing these statements out to the boy. Furthermore, the ababcccab rhyme scheme of the stanzas serves to divide the suppositions of the boy from the perspective of the impersonal narrator. The first half or abab rhyme scheme almost always contains the objective rational explanation for the sights and sounds of the swamp. The second half of each stanza with its ccab rhyme scheme presents the subjective feelings
of the youthful subject.

The presentation of his feelings may be the reason for the noticeable deviation from the pattern of the first half of the stanza. The cc couplet affords the opposing supernatural and subjective view a pithy and short expression, while the ab rhyme of the last two lines connects by means of similar-sounding words the second half of the stanza with that of the first, returning the reader also through the rhyme to the narrator's point of view to which the final stanza fully returns.

The final stanza thus completes the perspective from which the reader is to view the situation just described. "Da mählich gründet der Boden sich," (41). The boy glances once more at the swamp:

Tief atmet er auf, zum Moor zurück
Noch immer wirft er den scheuen Blick:
Ja, im Gerühe wars furchterlich,
O schaurig wars in der Heide! (45-48)

The last line echoes lines one and seven in the first stanza, bringing together both the point of view of the boy and the actual perspective from which the events are related. The alteration from ists to wars reflects not only the logical situation of a past experience viewed quite naturally in the past tense, but it also conveys the impression that even in the boy's mind, the experience was a game, that the goblins and spirits were not really present but were simply manifestations of the mind.

The meter and rhythm also contrast the objective rationality of the narrator with the subjective animism of the boy. For example, although trochaic tetrameter predominates, it is sufficiently varied to indicate changes in tone and perspective, as an examination of the third stanza
will demonstrate:

Vom Ufer starret Gestumpf hervor,  
Unheimlich nicket die Föhre,  
Der Knabe rennt, gespannt das Ohr,  
Durch Riesenhalme wie Speere;  
Und wie es rieselt und knittert darin!

Das ist die unselige Spinnleinor',  
Die den Haspel dreht im Geröhre! (17-24)

In the first half of the third stanza, asyndetic sentence construction conveys the objective description of the low land, and the regular trochaic beat reinforces this tone. At the same time, the many caesuras somewhat retard the acceleration inherent in this construction. In the second half of the stanza, the use of polysyndetic construction moves the narrative rapidly along in order to express the rapidity and simultaneity of the boy's impressions.

Droste-Hülshoff thus utilizes lyrical means and the antithetical structure of the ballad to present the actual perspective from which one is to view the action. The boy's perspective merges with the narrator's objective psychological explanation for the phenomena encountered while crossing the marshes. In the preceding five stanzas the boy's impressions are contrasted with the narrator's view of rustic beauty in the swamp. With this technique, Droste-Hülshoff has departed from the attitude presented in a ballad such as "Erlkönig." There the demonic and irrational triumphed; here the numinous forces are simply products of the imagination and devices to suggest the natural wonders.

98 Hinck (p. 77), notes that "Beklemmender als in Goethes Ballade ist die Sprache der Elementargewalten, grösser die Einsamkeit das Kindes: Und dennoch entrinnt der Knabe hier der dämonischen Magie der Natur, die auch im Rückblick als Erfahrenes nicht aufgehoben wird. . . ."
of the heather.

The ballads of Theodor Fontane, considered by some to be the last representatives of the "numinous" or "symbolic cosmos" present in so many earlier works, will constitute the last discussion of the literary ballad in this study. Fontane takes the dichotomy between the malevolent and impersonal forces of nature one step further than Droste-Hülshoff, explaining them away as examples of human failure and weakness. The connection between macrocosm and microcosm is almost totally absent.

A slightly revised dialog of the three witches from Shakespeare's Macbeth begins and ends the work. The witches' lines introduce the problem with which the play deals: Macbeth, the usurper of regal power, upsets not only his own microcosm but also the macrocosm of Scotland as well. In the end, order is restored when Malcolm is established as the lawful regent. Fontane deliberately frames the destruction of the bridge and the ensuing train wreck within the conversation of the three weird sisters. The implication is that even marvels of engineering such as "die Brück' am Tay" are still imperfect, and over-confidence in them is unwarranted. Although fire and lightening destroy the bridge, they are not demonic forces, but rather simply natural causes. The use of the weird sisters in this context focuses attention on the frailty of

99 See Pongs, p. 134.
100 Ibid., pp. 135ff.
101 Hinck, p. 95. "So wird die schottische Eisenbahnkatastrophe zum Exempel dafür, dass die Technik den Menschen nicht zu sichern vermag, dass er von den elementaren Kräften der Natur unbedroht bleibt."
human contrivances.

Formally, the ordered rhythmic and metrical pattern of these five stanzas contrasts with the blank verse in the lines of the weird sisters:

"Wann treffen wir drei wieder zusamm'?
   "Um die siebente Stund, am Brückendamm."
   "Am Mittelpfeiler."
   "Ich lösche die Flamm."
"Ich mit."
"Ich komme von Norden her."
"Und ich vom Süden."
"Und ich vom Meer."
"Hei, das gibt einen Ringelreihn,
   Und die Brücke muss in den Grund hinein."
"Und der Zug, der in die Brücke tritt
   Um die siebente Stund?"
   "Ei, der muss mit."
"Muss mit."
"Tand, Tand
   Ist das Gebilde von Menschenhand." (1-16)\textsuperscript{102}

Most apparent is the optical impression the arrangement of the lines themselves creates, an oxymoric impression of order within disorder. The three shorter, indented lines stress the three factors which effect the human tragedy in the ballad: "Flamm," "Meer," and "Tand," the frailty of man's ordered technical development (4, 7, 14).\textsuperscript{103}

In addition, the arrangement of the witches' dialog into three groups, in which the four-beat iambic lines are finally resolved into lines of dipodic rhythm reminiscent of the \textit{Zauberspruch}, creates a forced or heavy rhythm appropriate to the esoteric-supernatural they


represent. The high number of stops (p, b, t, g, ck, or d), spirants (f, pf, or z), and sibilants (s, and sh) not only heightens the tone of the mysterious but also creates a staccato rhythm in the normally smoothly moving verse.

In contrast to the impression of the mysterious and chaotic evoked in the conversation of the witches, the tone of the five central stanzas is one of order and unity. The simple arrangement of four rhyming couplets contributes to a rapid but strongly guided movement in each eight-line division. Such a combination of structured lines is consistent with the bridge attendant's attitude toward the new span. In addition, the regular trochaic meter—especially in the first two stanzas—contributes to the general emphasis on movement, which is consistent with the faith-in-human-progress of the principals in the story.

Nevertheless, while suggesting confidence in order from the perspective of the bridge attendant and his family, the trochaic meter and previously gliding rhythm convey a tone of doubt and of minor distress when the perspective shifts to the train and bridge, as illustrated in the first eight-line stanza:

Auf der Norderseite das Brückenhaus—
Alle Fenster sehen nach Süden aus,
Und die Brücknerleut ohne Rast und Ruh
Und in Bangen sehen nach Süden zu,
Sehen und warten, ob nicht ein Licht
Übers Wasserhin, „Ich komme" spricht,
„Ich komme, trotz Nacht und Sturmesflug,
Ich, der Edinburger Zug." (17-24)

In the first three or four lines, the rhythm moves smoothly and rapidly. Beginning with the fourth line, it becomes more halting due to the caesuras,
to the enjambment in line twenty-one, and to the inversion of normal syntax for the sentence elements in lines twenty-one through twenty-four. In addition, the "ob" of line twenty-one logically implies an uncertainty, a question as to whether the train will come.

Johnie's monolog in the fourth stanza, in which he expresses his confidence in technical progress, with its flowing end-stopped lines, also contrasts with the lines previously cited:

Und Johnie spricht: „Die Brücke noch!
Aber was tut es, wir zwingen es doch.
Ein fester Kessel, ein doppelter Dampf,
Die bleiben Sieger in solchem Kampf.
Und wie's auch rast und ringt und rennt,
Wir kriegen es unter, das Element. (27-32)

These verses create a more self-assured tone than would be the case if each line were concluded with an enjambment. The retardation of the rhythm returns in the sixth stanza, which begins just as does the second. As a result, the last four lines contrast more forcefully with lines twenty-two through twenty-four in the second stanza:

Auf der Norderseite das Brückenhaus--
Alle Fenster sehen nach Süden aus,
Und die Brücknersleut' ohne Rast und Ruh'
Und in Bangen sehen nach Süden zu;
Denn wütender wurde der Winde Spiel
Und jetzt, als ob Feuer vom Himmel fiel',
Erglüht es in niederschiessender Pracht
Überm Wasser unten... Und wieder ist Nacht. (41-48)

The doubt evoked by the metrical and lyrical devices in the second half of the second stanza becomes reality here. The proud attitude suggested in the personification of the train in line twenty-four is shown to be an illusion in lines forty-one and two. The last four lines cited above capture, as Pongs says, "the optical impression" and "the apokalyptic
Moreover, the alliteration of "wütend-," "wurde" and "Winde" coupled with the use of light vowels "ü," "u" and "i" connote the rapid blows of a strong wind. Similarly, the alliteration of the fricative f-sounds in "Feuer," "vom" and "fiel" could imply the inevitability of the elements' revenge. Finally, the rhyme in the last couplet "Pracht/ Nacht," ending in the voiceless stop "t," and the long pause in the final line convey a note of finality to the picture. This last stanza stands in sharp contrast with the first stanza and provides a perspective from which the reader can view a rather naive confidence in technology.

In addition to the last two stanzas the final words of the three sisters clearly reveal that human knowledge is somehow insufficient to explain or to control human fate:

"Und ich die Namen."  "Ich nenn euch die Zahl."
"Und ich die Qual."  "Und ich die Zahl.
"Hei!
Wie Splitter brach das Gebälk entzwei.
"Tand, Tand
Ist das Gebilde von Menschenhand." (54-60)

The ballad's characteristic antithetical structure is evident in the two perspectives of the poem: the witches' dialog and the naive confidence of the railway workers.

The witches' dialog frames the action and provides the perspective from which the events are to be viewed. Hence, it is from the dialogs of the three witches that the diction and lyrical devices within the five highly formal stanzas are to be viewed and interpreted. The use of the various lyrical means within these five stanzas also support an interpretation.

Pongs, p. 137.
based on the broader perspective of the beginning and concluding dialogs.

The ballad implies that within the very system of order, in which man's relation to a divinely ordained system is uncertain and tenuous or even non-existent, lies the potential for, and certainty of, disorder or chaos. Fontane accomplishes this principally through lyrical means, structuring the epic and dramatic qualities of the work: the contrast of a relatively free verse form represented in the dialog of the witches, the use of the traditional eight-line stanza, the use of caesura, pithy couplets, alliterative effects, and the less traditionally structured lines of the witches. The latter forms become more and more characteristic of contemporary ballads and parallel what one might call a crisis of belief in an ordered, ultimately benevolent force in the universe. Such an attitude utilizes the antithetical structure of the ballad to contrast the traditional belief in a higher order with more existential interpretations of the universe.

The four or eight-line stanza of the literary ballad in the works discussed is actually an adaptation of the four-line stanza so common in the popular ballad. As a modification and expansion of lyrical elements, this stanza unites the epic content and the dramatic features of a ballad. Furthermore, the four-line stanza, with the addition of couplets, triplets or another quatrains, is the basic structural principle of the literary ballad, for the antithetical nature of the ballad is usually revealed by the division between the quatrains and the couplet or by the division of the two quatrains comprising the eight-line stanza. All of the ballads discussed exemplify this structural principle. The antithetical

105 Pongs, p. 135.
structure also provides a duality of perspective or at least a clue to the perspective from which a work is to be interpreted. This was especially evident in Goethe's "Zauberlehrling," Droste-Hülshoff's "Knabe im Moor" and Fontane's "Die Brück am Tay."

Modification of the four-line stanza is, of course, not the only means of indicating the antithetical nature of the ballad. The popular ballad "Grossmutter Schlangenköchin" utilizes fourteen rhyming couplets. The dialog-refrain interchange between mother and daughter indicates the perspective from which the work is to be viewed.

It seems that the more pronounced and obvious the refrain, the more steady and ordered the rhythm, the more apparent will be the structural antithesis. Similarly, the degree of individual concretization will be very restrained and the emphasis on a supra-personal order will be more pronounced. Hence, popular ballads with only limited use of a refrain or none at all exhibit the highest degree of personal expression and emotive content. On the other hand, the bench ballads allow almost no individual poetic achievement or successful confrontation with the forces of order. Their thematic development is also reflected in the minimal variation or deviation from a set meter, rhyme or form.

If the development of the literary ballad was strongly influenced by the bench ballad, as Falk has suggested,\(^{106}\) then one might expect a relatively limited degree of individual concretization, this is often the case. The individual is subject to the macrocosmic forces. In the literary ballad, however, the individual has not necessarily violated a political, social or moral code, as so frequently happens in the bench

\(^{106}\)Falk, pp. 670-686.
ballad; rather, in the literary ballad the individual is subject to inexplicably numinous forces or to a cosmic system over which he has no control. This illustrates the author's interpretation of the relationship and interrelatedness between the terrestrial and the cosmic. Goethe's "Erlkönig" and Schiller's "Der Ring des Polykrates" exemplify this, while Droste-Hülshoff's "Der Knabe im Moor" and Fontane's "Die Brück'am Tay" constitute departures from this tradition. The Droste-Hülshoff poem presents a psychological interpretation, whereas Fontane uses the enigmatic weird sisters artistically to represent the dubious quality of human technology; thus, both authors complete the secularization begun in the romantic idealism of "Erlkönig" or perhaps even earlier.

The chanson, a turn-of-the-century literary manifestation, frequently utilizes the simple four-line folk song stanza to relate a story. An analysis of selected nineteen and early twentieth-century representatives of this form will reveal yet another direction of balladic composition. Such a study will also discover a relationship between the structure of the literary, popular and bench ballads to the structure of contemporary balladic forms.
New Directions in the Chanson and the Contemporary Ballad

Karl Riha's study on the chanson views the ballads of Goethe, Schiller, Heine, Mörike and others as representatives of a tradition against which the chanson writers composed antimodels. Wolfgang Ruttkowski's study approaches the chanson from the environment in which it was recited, the literary models it followed, and the relationship between the interpreter-singer and his audience. His investigation also classifies the various chansons according to their theme and content. The following discussion will refer to these two important studies as a springboard for an analysis of the relationship between the chanson and the forms of the ballad previously discussed.

The turn-of-the-century chanson singers from the "Überbrettl" in Berlin considered themselves modern troubadours. They considered the lyric of the fifteenth-century French poet, Francois Villon, especially significant; his works attacked political corruption and social injustice but advocated a carpe diem policy toward the sensuous pleasures forbidden by a bourgeois society.

Important for an interpretation of the chanson is a consideration of its audience and environment. In Germany, chansons were originally sung in night clubs or cabarets for an audience of no more than two-hundred.

107 Riha, p. 15.
108 Ruttkowski, pp. 5, 7, 282.
This audience was usually comprised of "Bohemians," "decadents des fin de siecle," sophisticated city dwellers, and the curious of the middle-class. Under the conditions of audience and locality, the chanson singer attained an intimacy and directness that otherwise would not have been possible.\(^{110}\) The close conditions under which the chanson was presented offers the easiest means by which this form may be compared with the ballad. Bierbaum's "Mädchenlied" provides the first example:

\[
\begin{align*}
Auf einem jungen Rosenblatt \\
Mein liebster mir geblasen hat \\
Wohl eine Melodie. \\
Es gab mir viele Dinge Kund \\
Das Rosenblatt am roten Mund \\
Und war kein Wort dabei. \\

Und als das Blatt zerblasen war, \\
Da gab ich meinen Mund ihm dar \\
Und küsst an ihm mich satt. \\
Und viel mehr Dinge tat noch kund \\
Der rote Mund am roten Mund \\
Selbst als das Rosenblatt.\(^{111}\)
\end{align*}
\]

As in the examination of the Bänkelsang, a traditional approach to discover epic, lyric, and dramatic elements in the chanson will not lead far. Although presentation by a chanson singer would allow for dramatic effect, the work itself has no unique dramatic quality. If one applies the criterion of story-telling, as determining the chanson's relationship to a ballad, then this particular work does not offer a good example, for it is singularly lacking in any kind of a detailed story. Its only claim to epic character is the first-person narrative.

\(^{110}\) Ruttkowski, pp. 10, 11.

The first-person narrator is, in fact, a characteristic of many chansons and distinguishes them from the hitherto-discussed popular and literary ballads, most of which were characterized by a third-person narrator. It is true, however, that a third- or first-person narrator in a ballad was not as important as it would be in a novel or short story. More important in these forms is the perspective from which the reader or listener is to consider the events. The perspective in related forms we have noted is discernible in several ways: through the antithetical stanzaic structure, the diction, the presence or absence of a refrain, and through other lyrical means.

In the chanson, the point of view—whether first or third person—is directly related to the interpretation the singer will give a particular work and is consequently of greater importance. With a first-person narrative, the "Mädchenlied" gains directness and credibility and allows the singer to place herself directly in the role of the girl whose experience is ostensibly related. This is the perspective from which one is to consider the work. The relationship of words, lines and stanzas to one another must then be seen from this angle.

The reference to a "Rosenblatt" has a dual connotation (line 1). First, it recalls perhaps a remote association with "Röslein, Röslein rot/ Röslein auf der Heiden." Here, however, it is a "Rosenblatt" already plucked from its natural surroundings, Hence, no tension results from the rose's challenge to the young suitor as in the "Heidenröslein." Rather a relationship is already in progress. "Auf einem jungen Rosenblatt/ Mein, liebster mir geblasen hat" (1, 2). Second, the "Rosenblatt" connotes in the first stanza a relationship without word-communication.
"Und war kein Wort dabei" (6).

The second stanza suggests that the preliminary communication of the rose petal was destroyed or that there was no gradual development of intimacy: "und als das Blatt zerblasen war/ Da gab ich meinen Mund ihm dar" (7, 8). An advanced phase of the relationship is thus commenced. Implied at this point is an intimate communication of love which surpasses the previous experience with the rose petal:

Und küßt an ihm mich satt.
Und viel mehr Dinge tat noch kund
Der rote Mund am roten Mund,
Selbst als das Rosenblatt. (9-12)

In contrast to "Heidenröslein" the full expression of love is neither painful nor hesitantly approached. No doubt the implications of a "zerblasenes Rosenblatt" was offensive to the middle-class morality of the time; this must have been doubly so since the persona feels no sorrow, guilt or repentence for the sexual encounter. Yet the antithetical structure evident in so many ballads appears to be totally absent from this piece. The same is true for many chansons regardless of the subject they treat. The following work by Alfred Heymel treats one of the most mundane topics ever to be considered in a lyric, the hangover:

Kater

Rumplumplumplum,
Rumplumplumplum,
Mir plumpt ein Backstein im Kopf herum,
Rumplum!
Au au au au!
Verfluchtes Gehau,
Vertrakter Diskant
In der Schädelwand!
Es zieht und sägt,
Im Magen regt
Ein Kobold das Messer;  
Und wird's nicht besser,  
So schiess ich mich tot.  
Herr, sieh meine Not!  
Schrei Heringsssalat!  
Will früh auch und spät  
Dich loben alsdann  
Als gläubiger Mann.  
Rumplumplumplump---  
Auaauau---112  
Rumplum 20

Here again epic and dramatic elements within the chanson are minimal and it is the lyrical elements, which lead one to an understanding of the work. The onomatopoetic "Rumplumplumplum" mimes the sound and feeling of a throbbing headache. The long succession of two-beat lines beginning with line five, with their heavy but incessantly recurring stresses, reinforce the impression of a blue Monday: "Verfluchtes Gehau," "Vertrakter Diskant," "In der Schädelwand," "Es zieht und sägt."

Line fourteen "Herr, sieh meine Not" is reminiscent of several Psalms of David which begin with similar words imploring the Lord’s mercy after a violation of the Ten Commandments. The association is destroyed by the irreligious expression of the lines: "Schrei Heringssalat!/ Will früh auch und spät/ Dich loben alsdann/ Als gläubiger Mann./ Rumplumplumplump" (15-20). The following lines return to the original headache and associations of accompanying pleasures of the previous evening.

Neither in "Mädchenlied" nor in "Kater" is there any evidence of a fundamentally antithetical structure similar to that found in literary

112 Bierbaum, p. 112.
and popular ballads. To be sure, various antithetical elements occur, such as the implied contrast of "Rosenblatt" with Goethe's "Heidenröslein." Another example would be the line in "Kater" echoing a line from the Psalms. These occurrences are not structurally determinants in the chanson, nor do they suggest a relationship with the various forms of the ballad, for any poem (the sonnets of Gryphius, for example) can utilize antithetical elements or words with ambivalent connotations.

The feature relating the chanson to the literary and popular ballad is the point of view and the manner of its recitation to the audience in the given Lokal. As Ruttkowski remarks, a successful presentation requires not only a gifted interpreter but also an audience outside the bounds of middle-class morality in complete sympathy with the theme of the chanson, or an audience of conservative bent which would be shocked by the views presented.\footnote{Ruttkowski, p. 167.}

The antithetical structure of the literary ballad is therefore not mandatory in the chanson. The reason for this is that the lyrical perspective of the chanson presents a view of the world, an interpretation of the micro- or macrocosm radically different from what conventional social propriety and religious ethics would accept. The opposite view is either maintained by or familiar to the audience listening to the performance. Ruttkowski notes that "Die Vortragssituation des Chansonniers wird vor allem durch Distanz vom Vortragsstoff und Nähe zum Publikum bestimmt."\footnote{Ibid., pp. 43, 101, 167.} The chansonnier is not the prostitute or murderer of
whom she sings; at the same time, she must convince the public of the validity of the theme and for this an "intimacy" is the sine qua non of chanson presentation.

The previous example, however, appears banal when compared to Wedekind's "Tantenmörder." As Karl Riha states, "Wedekind gibt zu erkennen, dass der Mörder wie Opfer des Attentats gleichermaßen als Figuren eines kurios-komischen Weltlaufs, einer welthistorischen Groteske versteht."\textsuperscript{115}

\textbf{Tantenmörder}

\begin{verbatim}
Ich hab' meine Tante geschlachtet,  
Meine Tante war alt und schwach;  
Ich hatte bei ihr übernachtet  
Und grub in den Kisten-Kasten nach.

Da fand ich goldene Haufen,  
Fand auch an Papieren gar viel  
Und hörte die alte Tante schnaufen  
Ohn' Mitleid und Zartgefühl.

Was nutzt es, dass sie sich noch hörme--  
Nacht war es rings um mich her--  
Ich stiess ihr den Dolch in die Därme,  
Die Tante schnaufte nicht mehr.

Das Geld war schwer zu tragen,  
Viel schwerer die Tante noch.  
Ich fasste sie bebend am Kragen  
Und stiess sie ins tiefe Kellerloch.

Ich hab' meine Tante geschlachtet,  
Meine Tante war alt und schwach;  
Ihr aber, o Richter, ihr trachtet  
Meiner blühenden Jugen--Jugend nach.
\end{verbatim}

It is not necessary to discuss the epic and dramatic qualities in the work, for they are minimal. Analysis of the lyrical elements aids an interpretation.

\textsuperscript{115}Riha, p. 26.

\textsuperscript{116}Bierbaum, pp. 197, 198.
of the poem. A first reading conveys an ironic and irreverent tone rather than the guilt one would expect. This is evident from the first-person narrative. The murderer himself is relating the events. The language and the situation of the murderer are self-contradictory. One notices the use of the folksong stanza of abab rhyme scheme and trochaic tetrameter.

The diction also contributes to the generally irreverent tone. The cold objectivity of "geschlachtet" in the first line strikes one immediately. The verb "schlachten" connotes not only murder but also a thorough butchering. The description of the aunt's sleeping as "schnaufen" (line 7) is in the same vein. The alliteration of the voiced dental stops in line eleven--"Ich stiess ihr den Dolch in die Dürme"--builds the mounting irreverence. The paratactic ordering of successive lines sometimes allows a striking and shocking contrast:

\[
\text{Das Geld war schwer zu tragen,} \\
\text{Viel schwerer die Tante noch.} (13, 14)
\]

The ultimate disposition of the aunt and the matter-of-fact tone in which it is related is also an affrontery:

\[
\text{Ich fasste sie bebend am Kragen} \\
\text{Und stiess sie ins tiefe Kellerloch.} (15, 16)
\]

Such detached objectivity on the part of the criminal himself in the four stanzas cited culminates in the final verse-unit with the plea:

117 Hinck, p. 113.
118 See Kayser, Versschule, p. 40.
119 See Hinck, p. 113.
120 See Kayser, Versschule, p. 34; Riha, p. 34.
Meine Tante war alt und schwach
Ihr aber, o Richter, ihr trachtet
Meiner blühenden Jugend--Jugend nach. (18-20)

The juxtaposition of "alt" and "schwach" with "meine blühende Jugend"
also develops the unremorseful objectivity further. "Alt" und "schwach"
would normally awaken feelings of sympathy and pity. Instead of this,
the audience is confronted by an apparently brazen, insensitive and
tactless request for mercy and consideration of the murderer's youth.

The shock-effect is intensified by the omission of a moral, a
feature which invariably characterized the bench ballad.\textsuperscript{121} The total
effect of the work is not to make a general call for patricidal murder
and for "Straflosigkeit für Gewaltverbrecher;" nor is Wedekind, as
Kayser claims, expressing a totally antinomian attitude toward all au-
thority.\textsuperscript{122} The irreverent attitude of the poem, so skillfully built up
in each stanza to the culminating insult to traditional values, suggests
rather a tongue-in-cheek attitude. The lyrical perspective will simply
not admit one's taking the "Tantenmörder" seriously. It is possible
that the poignant reversal of values stresses rather certainly a form
of rebellion\textsuperscript{123}--the values of a youthful movement away from the
conventional and unquestioningly accepted, and it is in this sense the
"Tantenmörder" is to be understood.

Although contrasts in this work are logically antithetical, the
formal structure of the chanson is not so obviously antithetical as that

\textsuperscript{121}Riha, p. 34.

\textsuperscript{122}Ibid., pp. 33, 34. See also Kayser, Geschichte, p. 273.

\textsuperscript{123}Riha, p. 34. "Dennoch handelt es sich... um bewusst heraus-
fordernde, gezielt provozierende Verse, um Rebellion."
of the literary ballad. The antithetical structure of this example, as in all chansons, is between the theme of the work and the audience; in other words, the antithetical structure constituting the link between it and other forms of the ballad is external, whereas the antithetical structure of the literary and popular forms is always internal.

An internally antithetical structure is possible in the literary and popular types because implicit or sometimes explicit within them is an ordered macrocosm against which an individual or group fights. This is the "Überhöhung" to which Kayser referred in his well-known definition. Fontane signals a move away from the ordered cosmos by using the idea of an animistic macrocosm as mere artistry. The chanson takes this process one step further and treats subjects which are by definition offensive to conventional values or subjects which become by their treatment offensive. Thus, this form of the ballad must always assume a strongly entrenched opposite or anti-view for the background against which it develops its theme.

The critical position of the chanson was also taken up by the changing literary ballad; the first evidence of this may be seen in the works of Bertolt Brecht whose ballads represent the tradition of the old with an admixture from the chanson. The dual influence would explain the difficulty the critics have had in classifying his balladic productions. Whatever the case, the chanson must certainly have influenced the work of the young Brecht to some degree.

124 Kayser, Geschichte, p. 300.
125 For the contrast see Riha, pp. 91ff and Hinck, pp. 119-122.
126 Elisabeth Pable, ed., "Chanson and Kabarett," in Rote Laterne,
Although Brecht may have been influenced by the turn-of-the-century chansonniers, he nevertheless went beyond a merely superficial criticism of middle-class values. The chansonnier's critiques depended upon a background of well-established bourgeois values against which the chanson inveighed. Brecht, on the other hand, developed both protagonist and antagonist structurally and formally from the text of a ballad. In short, he returned to the antithetical structure of the literary ballad to convey his "messages" while retaining the provocative subject matter and themes of the chansons.

Most noticeable in many of Brecht's ballads is the return to a third-person narrator in contrast to the first-person narrator in a significant number of the chansons. This was a pragmatic as well as a poetic consideration. The chanson was intended for presentation in a night club to a relatively small audience, and a first-person narration offered immediacy. The effect of Brecht's ballads, in contrast, did not rely so much upon the shock effect of a fictional prostitute or murderer narrator as upon the internal conflict within the structure of the work itself. Such a composition would therefore allow a much wider audience than would a chanson. The "Ballade von den Geheimnissen jedweden Mannes" exemplifies the peculiarly Brechtian poetics of the ballad.

Compared with the titles of earlier works, the title of this ballad

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schwarzer Humor (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, n. d.), p. 18. Pable remarks that on the passing of Wedekind, Brecht sat all night in an Augsburg night club singing the "Lieder des grossen Ahnherrn." See also Riha, p. 93.

127Notable exceptions are, of course, such examples as "Ballade des armen B. B."

128Ruttkowski, pp. 10, 11.
reveals a new emphasis. Brecht is not writing about a particular historical hero, but simply about man. Externally, however, this work falls within the tradition of nineteenth-century ballad composition.

There are five eight-line stanzas. The first four lines carry on the narrative or open the question as to the value of man; the last four lines attempt to provoke an answer and, as we shall see, function also as a refrain:

Jeder weiss, was ein Mann ist. Er hat einen Namen.
Er geht auf der Strasse. Er sitzt in der Bar.
Sein Gesicht könnt ihr sehn, seine Stimme könnt ihr hören
Und ein Weib wusch sein Hemd und ein Weib kämmt sein Haar.
Aber schlug ihn tot, es ist nicht schad
Wenn er niemals mehr mit Haut und Haar
Als der Täter seiner Schandtat war
Und der Täter seiner guten Tat. (1-8)\textsuperscript{129}

At first glance, the epic character of this work appears to have been radically diluted, if not totally eliminated. There is no real plot but rather simply a monolog. Closer examination reveals, however, the broadest possible epic sweep, for the poem deals with an existential dilemma.

The first four lines in each of the first two stanzas discuss some fact of objectively observable human activity. In the first stanza, previously cited, a man walks the street; he has a name; he sits in a bar. The first four lines of the following division hint at the ambivalence in these superficial affairs:

Und der Fleck ohne Haut auf der Brust, oh, den kennen
Sie auch und die Bisse an seinem Hals:

Die weiss, die sie biss, und sie wird es dir sagen
Und dem Mann, der die Haut hat: für den Fleck hat sie
Salz! (9-12)

Thus, the initial four lines of the first two verse units divide human activity into the objectively observable and the subjectively intimate. The last half of these two stanzas contrasts with the first half, giving them greater depth by focussing on death, the common denominator of all human experience.

The refrain-like final four lines of each stanza define man as the sum of his good and bad traits (lines 5, 9). The speaker rhetorically suggests that death is more efficiently administered when the victim remains anonymous and that the living prefer it this way: ". . .werft ihn auf den Mist/ Vor er euch schnell noch sagt, wer er ist" (14, 15).

The third stanza becomes the structural center of the ballad, contesting the previous assertion that man is merely the sum of his deeds and of the good will or malevolence of his contemporaries:

Und doch hat er was auf dem Grund seines Herzens
Und das weiss kein Freund und nicht einmal sein Feind
Und sein Engel nicht und er selbst nicht, und einstmals
Wenn ihr weint, wenn er stirbt: das ist's nicht, dass ihr weint.
Und vergesst ihr ihn, es ist nicht schad
Denn ihr seid betrogen ganz und gar
Weil er niemals, den ihr kanntet, war
Und der Täter nicht nur seiner Tat. (17-24)

The imperatives in refrains four and five are opposite those in the first two refrains--"schlagt ihn tot," "salzt ihr ein," "werft ihn auf den Mist" (lines 5, 12, 15). They call for empathy rather than for destruction or general malignity. "Aber lacht mit ihm und seid ihm gut" (line 29).

This call for empathy is reinforced by the diction and phrasing
in the first four lines of the third and fourth stanzas. Man who eats his bread with "erdigen Händen" is more than "ihr wisst:" "In dem Sock schwimmt mehr. . . zu den Fischen/ Und im Boden fault mehr, als ihr eingescharrt habt" (lines 25, 35, 36). The speaker also asserts the indomitable and indefinable nature of man in the words of the final refrain. Go ahead! Dig the grave, but this is not really the end.

Denn das Gras, das er nicht einmal sah
Als er es zerrat, war für den Stier nicht da.
Und der Täter lebt nicht für die Tat. (38-40)

These lines suggest that the dichotomy presented in the first, second, and fourth stanzas is invalid. Man's two most apparent antithetical faculties--his sensuality and his rationality--combine to form something immaterial which is more than the sum of its parts.

Contextually, the fourth and fifth stanzas contrast with the first and second which view man materially--"Haut und Haar"--and objectively as the perpetrator of good and bad. The material and transcendental views of man are reinforced structurally by the grammatical parallelism in the refrains, thus making the antithesis all the more pointed.

The co-ordinating conjunction "aber" and the plural familiar imperative form of a transitive verb introduce the refrain in every stanza except the third. The "aber schlagt ihn tot," and "aber salzt ihm ein" in the first two stanzas contrast, with the "aber lacht mit ihm und seid ihm gut" in the fourth stanza. The third refrain, however, deviates from this pattern with its "Und vergesst ihr ihn." Because of the repetition of "aber" with an imperative, the conjunction "und" here carries an almost threatening or at least an admonishing
tone. "Und vergesst ihr ihn es ist nicht schad/ Denn ihr seid betrogen ganz und gar" (lines 21, 22). The connective "und" can function in this way here because the conditional "wenn" is understood. The idea is that you are deceived if you forget.

The "aber" in the fifth refrain only appears to return to the attitude toward death as it was expressed in the first stanza: "Aber grabt nur ein. . . ." The resumption of this concept is now on a different level. The parallel syntax in the refrains has conveyed two antithetical views of death and, implicitly, of life. These are directly confronted in the third poetic division. Here the first four lines discuss the nature of man beyond his corporeal presence, and the refrain warns against adopting the materialistic view of humanity. The implication is that man is far more than the good and bad religion has seen in him. The antimaterialistic view is culminated in the final stanza in which the sensual and rational faculties combine to raise man beyond the mere objective cataloging of his parts. The significance of man transcends both life and death and neutralizes traditional religious views of man's good and evil nature.

It is, in fact, possible to follow a gradual secularization of the metaphysical world from the bench ballad through the literary ballads of Goethe and Schiller down to the totally secular view of man in the works of Günter Grass. Grass has maintained the conventional form for what would traditionally be considered an unballadic content. The

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130 See Hinck, pp. 138, 139. Hinck discusses this in his analysis of "Evlyn Roe" in which God's refusal to admit Evlyn Roe to heaven causes the Devil to lose interest in her as well.
poem "Inventar oder die Ballade von der zerbrochenen Vase," illustrates this point.

The external lyric features of the nine stanzas appear to have much in common with the nineteenth century ballad:

Wir wollen uns wieder vertragen, das Bett zum Abschied zerschlagen; du hast zwar die Vase zerbrochen, doch ich hab zuerst dran gerochen-- so kommt unser Glück in die Wochen.

Vom Fenstersims rollen die Augen, ein Buch zerfällt im Spagat; von Seite zu Seite böser verlangen die Brillengläser Andacht und stündige Leser.

Der Schrank springt auf und erbricht die Hüte, erwürgt Kravatten, die Hemden, wechselnde Haut, auch Hosen mit brauchbarem Schlitz; ein Bein ist des anderen Witz.

Das Bild will zurück in die Heide, die Ansichtspostkarte nach Rom, der Kokos möchte schwarz sein nicht rot; im Ofenrohr krümmt sich der Tod, weil ihm der Erstickungstod droht.

Wer Zähne putzt, kann nicht beichten, wer beichtet, riecht aus dem Mund und hält die Hand vor, spricht leise: Das Streichholz war meine Idee, auch nehme ich Zucker zum Tee.

Der Tisch, nun zur Ruhe gekommen, vier Stühle treten sich tot, die Flasche schnappt nach dem Korken, der Korken hält dicht und hält still; ein Korken macht was er will.

Der Montag kommt wie die Regel: des Sonntags peinlicher Rest in alte Zeitung gewickelt; wir trugen das Päckchen nach Hause, ein jeder des anderen Pause.
101

Jetzt wollen wir alles verkaufen, 
das Haus mit Inventar, 
den Schall der süßen Nachtigall 
aus gelben Tapeten befreien, 
dem Schrank seinen Inhalt verzeihen. 40

Wir haben uns wieder vertragen, 
das Bett zum Abschied zerschlagen; 
du hast zwar die Vase zerbrochen, 
doeh ich hab zuerst dran gerochen-- 
so kam unser Glück in die Wochen.131 45

But never do more than four lines of a single stanza rhyme. In the following eight stanzas, only the two final lines rhyme invariably. The purpose of this may be historical, to create the illusion of a connection with tradition and the appearance of order; and pragmatic, to create the formal illusion of harmony in contrast to its absence in the content. At the same time the absence of a regular rhyme scheme in the stanzas may suggest the absence of an ordered universe hinted at by the stanzaic form of most nineteenth-century literary ballads.

The narrative describes a middle-class couple who are dissolving their former relationship, for a traditional ballad—which formally "Inventar" appears to be—an unconventional subject. A nineteenth-century popular or literary ballad could treat the story of a peasant girl and a knight, but to deal with bourgeois domestic problems on this level would not have been the proper subject for the genre.

As noticeable as the conventional form is the first-person point of view evident in the pronoun "wir." This appears to have come into general practice with the chanson and is illustrated in the discussion of Wedekind's "Tante Mörder" and other examples. The first person

131 Günter Grass, Gleisdreieck, pp. 28, 29.
narration creates an immediacy and subjectivity not generally present in a third-person narration. Yet, as in "Tantenmöder," the narrator relates his plight with shocking detachment and a most unlyrical vocabulary.

The title "Inventar" suggests a business-like matter-of-factness incongruous with a separation of former lovers. "Vase" might normally carry romantic connotations, but they are destroyed by the association with "zerbrochen." The tone of the poem reveals, in fact, a singular lack of feeling in this separation. From their "unromantic" bed, the couple view the room:

Der Schrank springt auf und erbricht
die Hüte, erwürgte Kravatten,
die Hemden, wechselnde Haut,
auch Hosen mit brauchbarem Schlitz'
ein Bein ist des anderen Witz. (11-15)

The closet opens and "vomits" its contents: hats and strangled neckties, shirts which are represented as changeable skins. All these overly-used items inform the reader that the relationship is totally deromanticized. The phrase "Hosen mit brauchbarem Schlitz" emphatically and unequivocally underscores the detachment with which even the intimacies of the relationship have been viewed (14). The ironic reference to "Schlitz," however, implies that it is still durable for future use.

The sixth stanza reveals the further trivialization of marriage. Brushing one's teeth--an important but minor social necessity--obviates the need for "Beichten" (lines 21, 22). This suggests that the function of and attention to religion has been largely taken over by attendance to social propriety. Further mundane conversation concludes
the stanza: "Das Streichholz war meine Idee, / auch nehme ich Zucker zum Tee" (24, 25). The relationship is thus reduced to utter banality. The seventh stanza continues with the image of Monday, the painful remains of Sunday, wrapped in old newspapers just as one wraps inedible fish entrails (31-35).

With continued detachment, the eighth stanza reports that everything goes: "Jetzt wollen wir alles verkaufen, / das Haus mit Inventar" (36, 37). The final stanza is the same as the first. In this position, however, it takes on the tone of complete objective detachment only suggested in the first stanza. This business-like matter-of-factness is also evident in the change of tense from "so kommt unser Glück in die Woche" (5) to "so kam unser Glück in die Woche" (45). The temporal change indicates the intervening seven stanzas have not been speculation of what could happen but the very process of dissolution. The impact of this though is all the greater when one realizes that the union has been dissolved by the unsentimental marketing of mutually-held objects.

In this ballad there is no real tension between the speaker's world and an ordered macrocosm. Instead Grass has used the conventional form and greater-world view associated with the literary ballad to indicate that an idea of such a macrocosm no longer exists. This reversal of time-honored balladic content draws the poem within the generic circle of the category "ballad." Not only is a suggestion of the macrocosm non-existent, the customary resolution between protagonist and antagonist is also missing. The anonymous couple stands under no moral retribution for their decision as they perhaps would in a bench ballad. Neither do they grapple with a force larger than themselves as would
the hero of a conventional literary ballad. The poem indicates that the business "ethic" suggested in the title, "Inventory," if it is an ethic at all, pre-empts any consideration of a moral accounting and has complete hegemony even over personal relationships. Thus, personal relationships are reduced to the trivia imposed by social convention and contemporary business amorality.
Conclusion

This study has investigated popular ballads, bench ballads, literary ballads, the turn-of-the-century chanson, and a selected number of contemporary ballads. These apparently so disparate forms have two features in common. The first is an antithetical structure. The term "structure" refers to two fundamental characteristics of the genre "ballad." It refers to the diction, the associations it may connote, and to the way the lines and stanzas are arranged. It is also used in the sense defined by Hugo Friedrich, who states that structure is "die Gesamtgestalt einer Gruppe zahlreicher lyrischer Dichtungen, die einander keineswegs beeinflusst zu haben brauchen und deren einzelne Eigentümlichkeiten dennoch zusammenstimmen und zueinander erklärt werden können. . . ."

The second feature all ballad forms share is an overwhelming impression of an established order greater than the individual. This is formally indicated in the stanzaic form and the refrain which further reinforce the idea of a structured macrocosm. All ballad forms also show a predilection for resolving conflict within the sphere of the established order rather than within the sphere of the individual. These two elements—an antithetical structure and resolution of conflict within the macrocosm—are significant features of literary and popular ballads and relate them to such genre forms as the bench ballad and the chanson.

However, Paul Celan's "Todesfuge" illustrates that antithetical elements alone do not justify classifying a work as a ballad. Apparent contrasts, such as "schwarze Milch," the names "Sulamith" and "Margarete," "goldenes Haar" and "aschenes Haar," "wir" and "der Mann aus Deutschland," stress the differences between the we-group and the persecutors represented by the man from Germany:

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Schwarze Milch der Frühe wir trinken sie abends
wir trinken sie mittags und morgens wir trinken sie nachts
wir trinken und trinken
wir schaufeln ein Grab in den Lüften da liegt man nicht eng
Ein Mann wohnt im Haus der spielt mit den Schlangen der
schreibt
der schreibt wenn es dunkelt nach Deutschland dein gol-
denes Haar Margarete
er schreibt es und tritt vor das Haus und es blitzen die
Sterne er pfeift seine Rüden herbei
er pfeift seine Juden hervor lässt schaufeln ein Grab in der
Erde (1-8)
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der schreibt wenn es dunkelt nach Deutschland dein gol-
denes Haar Margarete
Dein aschenes Haar Sulamith wir schaufeln ein Grab in den
Lüften da liegt man nicht eng (14, 15)
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The man from Germany exacts the ultimate labor from his "Juden" who "schaufeln ein Grab in den Lüften" (4, 15). As the antitheses are repeated in the poem, they gradually change from the simple contrast between the we-group and the man from Germany to the contrast between his seeming immortality and the grisly fate of the we-group (19-26). This contrast is most evident in the final division of the poem:

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Schwarze Milch der Frühe wir trinken dich nachts
wir trinken dich mittags der Tod ist ein Meister aus
Deutschland
wir trinken dich abends und morgens wir trinken und
trinken
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der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland sein Auge ist blau
er trifft dich mit bleierner Kugel er trifft dich genau
ein Mann wohnt im Haus dein goldenes Haar Margarete
er hetzt seine Rüden auf uns er schenkt uns ein Grab in
der Luft
er spielt mit den Schlangen und träumet der Tod ist ein
Meister aus Deutschland
dein goldenes Haar Margarete
dein aschernes Haar Sulamith (27-36)

At this point the we-group no longer discusses the man from
Germany in the third-person but addresses him directly with the
second-person familiar personal pronoun. The we-group perceives
the man from Germany as its equal. He shares its mortality. This
entitles it to say "der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland sein Auge
ist blau/er trifft dich mit bleierner Kugel er trifft dich genau" (30-31).

In addition, the anaphoric arrangement of the last two lines suggests
that blond-haired Margarete and ashen-haired Sulamith are fundamen-
tally alike; they, too, share a common fate in their mortality. There-
fore, the apparent balladic conflict between the two realms of we and
the man is resolved on the personal level of the we-group in its recog-
nition of the man's mortality. As a consequence, the fate of the we-group
looses its uniqueness.

To be a ballad a work must not only exhibit an antithetical structure,
but it must also resolve the conflict implicit in such a structure within
the sphere of greater forces which the individual challenges. Resolution
of conflict within the sphere of established order and an antithetical struc-
ture are shared characteristics of bench ballads, literary ballads, popu-
lar ballads, and chansons. From the bench ballad to the contemporary
ballads these features are evident in varying degrees.

The bench ballad stresses the rigidity of external order to the almost
total preclusion of individualization. The higher moral system the individual has violated is represented in the poem's almost slavish adherence to an unvaried meter, rhythm and rhyme; the fate of the individual does not develop organically from within, but is clearly predetermined and imposed from without. This external imposition of a conflict and solution distinguishes the bench ballad from the related popular and literary forms.

The analysis of early popular ballads revealed a preoccupation with antithetical themes and content and stressed the significance of the individual. "Das Schloss in Osterreich" illustrates the issues which concerned the writers of these early forms. Frequently, they dealt with the unjust treatment the higher social order accorded a member of the lower. The popular ballad "Grossmutter Schlangenkochin" illustrates a greater integration of antithetical elements into a more lyrical structure. In the poem "Der Schweizer," antithetical structure is evident in the use of rhyme, meter and the relation of verse units to one another. These elements also suggest the inflexibility of the military order which the young, homesick soldier has violated. The strong emphasis on personal emotions in Goethe's "Der König in Thule" illustrates the influence of the popular ballad on a literary creation.

The literary ballad appears to combine the emphasis on external order from the bench ballad with the greater pre-eminence of the individual, stressed in the popular ballads. As a result of the two forces coming together, the literary ballad sharpens the conflict, making its resolution more poignant. Early and mid-nineteenth-century literary
ballads suggest empathy for the ballad hero but give his ultimate submission to external forces greater prominence. This dual purpose is often accomplished by contrasting the opposing forces respectively in the stanza and the refrain.

In the "Zauberlehrling," for example, the apprentice's efforts to invoke the mysterious forces described in the eight-line narrative are effectively countered by his frustration suggested in the refrains. The initial use of dipodic rhythms, their absence in subsequent refrains, and their resumption in the last six lines suggest the power of the forces the apprentice tries to invoke and is then unable to master. Schiller's "Der Ring des Polykrates" also utilizes a regular rhythmic pattern to suggest, on the one hand, the tyrant's seemingly indestructible kingdom and, on the other, the presence of a higher order. In this way the tyrant's government appears to be almost monolithic and strongly offensive to the gods who must combine human existence with both victory and defeat. Mörike's "Feuerreiter" combines stanza and refrain to contrast the fireman's sacrilegious action with his fate in the flames. The gradually altered refrain emphasizes his fate as the only possible resolution for presumptuously using the sacred splinter for personal ends.

Droste-Hülshoff and Fontane represent changes in the literary ballad. For Droste-Hülshoff the caprice of an external macrocosm in earlier literary ballads is shifted to a psychological conflict illustrated in "Der Knabe im Moor." She adapts the antithetical structure of the ballad to juxtapose the perspective of both the narrator and the boy
crossing the heather at night. In this poem the first four lines of each stanza contrast with the final four lines which present the boy's view of the situation. In the last stanza the subjective interpretation merges with the narrator's objective explanation of the events. Thus, the antithesis is resolved in the narrator's overriding naturalistic explanation and the boy's recognition that his fears were only imagined.

Theodore Fontane uses the ballad to explain away the impersonal forces of nature as the consequence of human frailty. His "Die Brück' am Tay" illustrates how the typical ballad structure is varied to present an altered view of man's relation to the elemental forces of nature. The narrative is framed by the blank verse of the witches. The use of four rhyming couplets in each of the five narrative stanzas allows for short, pointed statements and pauses at the end of each couplet. The result is that even while expressing confidence in the bridge, a reservation is present even in the speaker's mind. The expression, "Tand, Tand, / Ist das Gebilde vom Menschenhand," becomes a metaphor for the overpowering natural elements.

The early twentieth-century chanson does not use the ballad structure to juxtapose micro- and macrocosm; rather it challenges the very idea of any overriding Providence. In this respect, it is precisely the antithesis of the bench ballad, for it draws no moral and is intended to challenge, not to reinforce, conventional morality. It may attack political corruption or it may pillory hypocrisy. The majority of chansons have thus an exterior antithetical structure in the relationship between their themes and the more conservative values of the general public.
Brecht's ballads retain the acerbity of the chanson but return to the structure of conventional ballads to convey their themes. They are also characterized, in most cases, by third-person narrators, whereas many of the chansons rely on a first-person narrator, and by an antithetical structure which develops from within the poem as it does in the more conventional nineteenth-century ballad.

Günter Grass represents still another direction of the contemporary ballad. He adheres relatively close to the form of the traditional ballad, but his content is "unballadic." He does not present a struggle between Good and Evil or between the microcosm and the macrocosm, and he does not appear to judge. His "Inventar" demonstrates the complete detachment with which a traditional value such as marriage is considered. Hence, if "Inventar" is any indication, Grass has negated the conventional idea of what the ballad is supposed to be and has replaced it with a simple antithesis between a conventional form, the ballad, and an unconventional content, the dissolution of a supposedly inviolate human relationship, with no possibility of ultimate resolution. In this way, the use of the ballad structure itself suggests either that an ultimate validity is beyond the individual view of himself or that the only possible validity resides in one's actions.

An antithetical structure has been evident as a compositional principle of the ballad from the early popular works to the contemporary forms of Brecht and Grass. To discover the antithesis and its unique presentation in a given ballad and thus to determine the balladic view of the individual and the degree of subjection to forces beyond himself was the purpose of this thesis.
Whether the compositional principle of antithesis unequivocally justifies classifying individual bench ballads, popular ballads, literary ballads, and chansons as members of a single literary genre remains unanswered; whether a satisfactory definition of all these forms is possible also requires further investigation. The thesis has tried to demonstrate that antithesis, usually evident contextually in the confrontation between existential uniqueness and a higher and more universal will, is structurally determinant in the various manifestations of the ballad. Thus, the investigation suggests that a redefinition of the ballad, in the light of its related forms, is both possible and necessary.
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