J. M. R. Lenz's Observations on the Theater

by

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

Houston, Texas
May, 1956
CHAPTER I

A Biographical Sketch of J. M. R. Lenz

Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz was born on January 12, 1751, in the town of Sesswegen in the province of Livonia, which at that time was part of the Russian Empire. His family moved to Dorpat in 1759, where his father had a position as pastor. His father had studied at the University of Halle, the stronghold of pietism, and the boy's childhood was dominated by the atmosphere of this introspective, often mystical religion. This early orientation is an important factor in his later development. In fact, the Storm and Stress movement as a whole has its very roots in pietism. The men who revolted against the dogma of literature were also those who revolted against the dogma of the church and, although they did not bind themselves within the narrowness of pietism, the influence of its subjective approach gave impulse to their revolt. Dr. Heinz Kindermann claims a yet more influential role for pietism: "The Storm and Stress movement and, beyond it, the development of Classicism and Romanticism, indeed, a large portion of German literature of the nineteenth century up to Stirner, Feuerbach, and Nietzsche are, in certain respects, not conceivable without the subjectivising preparation of pietism."

Since the church hymn played such an important part in his
family life and, indeed, was the only art form recognized by his father, it was only natural that Lenz's first creative activity should take this form. The earliest such poem that has come down to us is "Das Vertrauen in Gott" (1764-65). A favorite work with the pietists was Klopstock's Messias, and some of Lenz's early writings can be traced to this source for inspiration, e.g., "Der Versöhnungstod Jesu Christi", written in 1766.

Lenz's first dramatic attempt came in 1766, when he was asked to write a play in honor of the wedding of his godfather's son dramatizing a sensational murder attempt on the prospective bridegroom by his valet. The plot of Der verwundete Bräutigam is a rather slim one, but is handled quite competently in the tradition of the comédie larmoyante. All ends happily, the wound is not fatal, the lovers are reunited amid tears and rejoicing. At the end of the play, it is resolved to have a party so that the bridegroom can tell his story, and each in turn can explain what sort of an impression the event made on him, an indication of the psychological bent characteristic of Storm and Stress drama in general.

In 1768, Lenz went to the University of Königsberg to study theology, but was more interested in pursuing philosophy and literature. During his three years here he heard lectures by Kant, who at that time was under the influence of Shaftesbury and Rousseau; read Hamann's principal works championing intuition; read Herder's Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Literatur; was led by
these to read Pope, Edward Young, and Ossian. He translated Pope's *Essay on Criticism* and also some of Shakespeare's plays, including probably *Love's Labour's Lost*, which was not published until 1774 together with the Anmerkungen übers Theater under the title *Amor vincit omnia*. His translations of the *Essay on Criticism* and of the other dramas by Shakespeare are now lost.

In 1771, he left the University as companion and interpreter for two brothers, named von Kleist, who were planning to join the French army. They arrived in Strassburg at the end of April. Lenz became acquainted with Salzmann and his Tischgesellschaft, a group of young men, including Jung Stilling, Lese, Föderer, Ott, and Haffner, who ate their noon-day meal at the home of the sisters Anna Maria and Susanna Margareta Lauth. Herder had left Strassburg at the beginning of April to accept a position at the court of the Count of Schaumburg-Lippe in Buckeburg, but his influence there was still felt. Lenz did arrive in time to meet Goethe before the latter returned to Frankfurt, but it was later, through the exchange of letters, that their friendship grew. Their early association is described by Goethe in the eleventh book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*:

If any one would learn at first hand what was thought, talked about, and discussed in this animated society, let him read Herder's essay on Shakespeare, in the volume on German character and art (*Von Deutscher Art und Kunst*), and also Lenz's remarks on the theatre (*Anmerkungen übers Theater*), to which was appended a translation of *Love's Labour's Lost*. Herder penetrates into the depths of Shakespeare's nature, and renders it in noble characters; Lenz acts more as an iconoclast against the traditions of the stage, and demands that every
subject should in every case be treated in Shakespeare's manner. Since I have here had occasion to mention this clever and eccentric individual, it is perhaps a fitting opportunity to attempt some account of him. I did not become acquainted with him till towards the end of my residence in Strasburg. We seldom saw each other; his friends were not mine, but we sought opportunities of meeting, and were fond of talking together, because, as was natural in youths of the same age, we entertained very similar views. He had a short, neat figure, a delightful head, small and well-shaped, and correspondingly delicate, though rather flattened features; blue eyes, fair hair, in short, a youth such as one meets occasionally in the north; a soft, almost cautious step, a pleasant but hesitating flow of speech, and a manner which, fluctuating between reserve and shyness, well became his years. He had a talent for reading short poems, especially his own, aloud, and wrote a good hand. The cast of his mind is best described by the English word "whimsical," which, as the dictionary shows, comprises very many peculiarities in one word. No one, perhaps, was better fitted than he to feel and imitate the extravagance and exuberance of Shakespeare's genius. To this the above-mentioned translation bears witness. He treated his author with great freedom, was far from literal or faithful, but yet knew so well how to put on the armour, or rather the motley jerkin, of his predecessor, how to adapt himself so humorously to his gestures, that he could not fail to win the applause of all those to whom such things appeal.

In the summer of 1772, Lenz accompanied one of the Kleist brothers to Fort Louis. From there he visited Sesenheim, where he met the family Brion and fell in love with Friederike, who at that time was probably still suffering from a broken heart left by Goethe. In a letter to Salzmann from Fort Louis dated June 10, 1772, Lenz wrote: "It has happened to me as to Pygmalion. I had created for a certain purpose in my fantasy a girl — I looked around and benevolent Nature had placed my ideal living at my side. It was for both of us as for Caesar: veni, vidi, vici. By imperceptible degrees our intimacy grew and now it is sworn and indissoluble." Evidently the love was not as mutual as he seemed to think. At any rate, by the end of 1772, there is no more mention
of the Brion family in his letters to Salzmann. The next year, in Strassburg, he was again suffering from love, this time for Friederike's friend, Cleophe Fibich, who was engaged to the elder Kleist brother. Unfortunately, the latter never fulfilled his promise to marry her. This unhappy affair is recorded in Lenz's Tagebuch, which was first written in a foreign language, probably Italian, and then translated into German for Goethe. During his stay in Fort Louis and Landau, in spite of his many duties and his tormented state of mind, caused by his love for Friederike, Lenz managed to write several poems, translate some plays by Plautus, and work on one of his best dramas, Der Hofmeister, published in 1774.

Der Hofmeister, oder Vorteile der Privaterziehung is a combination of Lenz's ability to create flesh-and-blood characters, portraying dramatically their interaction, and his desire to use the stage as means for improving society. Der Hofmeister presents the sorry lot of the private tutor, an experience which many literary men of his day, including Herder, underwent. He is treated as a servant, can have no life of his own, is underpaid, and is completely dependent on the whims of his master. The sketch of a letter from Lenz's father, while Lenz was at the University of Königsberg, includes a warning against this occupation in which you are no more than "an eternal, free subject of his [the master's] house, who can never carry on his own affairs, never marry, never have a household of his own, who must always stick his feet under a stranger's table. If you are not suitable and must leave him,
then he chases you away without recommendations. — If you are suitable and he likes you, then he will want to keep you forever in his house for his own use...5 The plot in the drama is very similar to the situation his father describes. The brother of the tutor's employer sees the evils inherent in a private education. He finally wins his brother's concurrence on the advantages of public education, but not until the latter's daughter has barely escaped a tragic end.

Lenz's talent as a dramatist lies in his ability to portray ordinary people in various situations, comic and serious; in his ability to catch moments from life, in which real people take part, speaking real words to each other. On the other hand, there is little development of character, and the action is scattered and often extravagant. This was also characteristic of the Storm and Stress drama in general. In revolting against the prevailing French drama, which had become too formalized, too removed from actual experience to have any meaning for them, they went to the opposite extreme.

In 1773, Lenz returned to Strassburg and remained in the service of the Kleist brothers until the autumn of 1774. During this time, he was again closely associated with Salzmann's group and reworked his essays on the theater which he had previously read to the society in part. These were published in 1774 under the title Anmerkungen über das Theater nebst angehängten Übersetzten Stück Shakespeare's. After he resigned from his post as companion to the

...
Kleist brothers, he enrolled in the university and made a meager living as tutor of English. Two more dramas appeared: Der neue Henose, based on the Danish novel Henose by Erich Pontoppidan, and Die Soldaten, the story of an innocent girl's unhappy experience with an irresponsible soldier, which was based on the Cleophe Fibich episode.

In 1775, Lenz helped to reorganize the Société de Belles Lettres into a more nationalistic society called the Deutsche Gesellschaft, which met in Salzmann's home and for which Lenz was secretary and intellectual leader. He was in contact personally or through letters with the most important authors of that time: Herder, Lavater, Zimmermann, the Counts Stolberg, Schlosser, Norck, Sophie von La Roche, and many others.

Wieland, who from 1773-1795 edited the journal Teutsche Merkur, was under rather heavy attack at times by the Stürmer und Drängerei. In the farce, Götter, Helden und Wieland, 1774, Coethe made fun of Wieland's religious views. Lenz considered him an actual danger, "because he considered Wieland's character un-German, even French; because Wieland's hidden eroticism seemed to him to cause more harm than blunt extremes of sensuality; because the Philistinism of Wieland seemed to him a factor injurious to middle class morality." Lenz parodied Wieland's pseudoclassicism in Monalk und Mopsus, eine Ekloge nach der fünften Ekloge Virgils, which appeared in 1775. In Die Volkten, Wieland is represented as Sokrates, the leader of the Sophists. It must have been extremely biting
in its satire, for all his friends who read the manuscript advised him against its publication. Either because Lenz had a change of heart or because he wanted to go to Weimar and thought it unwise to make such a powerful enemy, he ordered the manuscript to be destroyed and now only a fragment remains. In its place he published a *Vertheidigung des Herrn Wieland gegen die Wolken von dem Verfasser der Wolken*, which was milder in tone.

The dramatical satire, *Pandaemonium Germanicum*, written in 1775, but not published until 1819, describes the literary situation in Germany and points out the danger of the Philistines, imitators, and journalists, who endanger the development of original art. In it, Wieland is represented as the defender of anacreontic literature. Goethe is the leader of those who are striving for an original German literature based on genuine experience. Lenz's opinion of Wieland was to change after he came to know him in Weimar. In a letter to Count F. L. Stolberg, he records his new impression of him: "I have finally met the man, who, in his writings as well as in his actions, can be to all young people a true touchstone of health for their power of judgment.... For, how often does fog change to sunshine, hostility to mutual agreement, hate to love?"

In spite of his literary activity and growing fame, Lenz seemed unable to make any order out of his personal life. Tormented more and more by anxiety and insecurity, he threw himself
first in one direction and then in another. For a time he held a deep affection for Goethe's sister, Cornelia. Soon afterward, he fell madly in love with a noble woman, Henriette von Waldner, who was scarcely aware of his existence and did not even mention him in her Mémoires (Paris, 1853). The incomplete epistolary novel, Der Waldbruder, written in the summer of 1776, is a result of this infatuation and is designated by both Lenz and Schiller as a pendant to Goethe's Werther. It was first published in Schiller's Horen in 1797, five years after Lenz's death. Another work connected with this unhappy experience is the dramatrical phantasia, Der Engländer, written in 1775-76 and published in 1777. It is very short, almost a sketch of a drama. Perhaps the unbalanced nature of the leading character is an indication of Lenz's own approaching insanity.

Lenz turned to Goethe for help in securing a position at Karl August's court, presumably to reorganize the military. He went to Weimar in April, 1776, by way of Mannheim, where he saw, among others, Maler Miller; Darmstadt, where he was received very cordially by Merck; and Frankfurt. On his arrival in Frankfurt, he was greeted by Klinger and Schleiermacher, who were dressed in the famous Werther costume, blue frock-coat and buff waistcoat. He arrived in Weimar in deep despair over the news of Henriette's marriage to Baron Siefried von Oberkirch. At first he was pleasantly occupied with the literary activities of the court, but in
the latter part of June, Lenz learned the complete story of the marriage of Henriette and he was again thrown into a state of depression. Goethe sent him to Berka in the hope that rest and quiet would effect a cure. He spent some time in Kochberg as a favorite of Frau von Stein. When she returned to Goethe in Weimar, Lenz returned to Berka disconsolate. The friendship between Goethe and Lenz had begun to cool, probably because Goethe was jealous of Frau von Stein giving her attention to anyone else.10

By the time Herder arrived in October, Lenz was in disgrace with Goethe and Karl August, because of some unknown Eselei11 he had committed. In November, he was requested by the Duke to leave. For a while he found refuge in the home of Goethe's sister and her husband in Emmendingen. The insanity now broke into the open and by November, 1777, he had become completely insane. He stayed first with one friend and then another, but they were unable to help him. Klinger effected a temporary cure by ducking him in the river, but unfortunately it lasted only a month.

In June, 1779, his brother finally took him home. Although he had moments of clarity, his literary production during these last years is worthless. He spent his last miserable years in Moscow, where he died May 23, 1792, "mourned by few, missed by none."12
CHAPTER II

Theater and Theory prior to the Storm and Stress

Germany was one of the last European countries to develop a national dramatic tradition worthy of the name. The Elizabethan drama in England and the neo-classic drama in seventeenth century France had no counterpart in Germany until the end of the eighteenth century, when Goethe and Schiller joined forces to produce what is now the classical repertoire of the German stage. The sound criticism of Lessing in the fifties and sixties and the liberalizing force of the Storm and Stress movement in the seventies helped to pave the way.

Prior to the second half of the eighteenth century, German drama had little to recommend it. In the sixteenth century it consisted chiefly of Latin school dramas and the shrove-tide plays of Hans Sachs. In the last years of the century, troupes of English actors traveled around Germany playing in a rather debased form the most sensational of the Elizabethan dramas. To make it as easy as possible for the audience to understand them, the English had to be simplified and the emphasis put on action. The Thirty Years War, which devastated Germany in the first half of the seventeenth century, interrupted any progress the theater might have made under the influence of the English troupes.
There was little improvement in the condition of the theater in the second half of the century, although there were poets, such as Andreas Gryphius (1616-1664), whose comedies Herr Peter Souentz (1650) and especially Horribilicribifax (ca. 1650) are still occasionally produced.

The German actors travelled from town to town, performing by permission of the village authorities in whatever place was available, for there were no permanent theaters. The plays they produced were Haupt- und Staatsaktionen, Cotta's term for the episodic drama of history and political life, which he deplored for its lack of unity, and vulgar farces centering around a comic character such as Hans Wurst or Pickelhärting. The scripts for the latter were rarely written, the success of the play depending upon the ability of the leading actor to extemporize. Actors ranked very low on the social scale and more often than not deserved their bad reputations. The one notable exception is the actor Johann Velthen (1640-92), who played Molière, Corneille, and Gherardi, but the adaptations he used to fit his audience bear little resemblance to the originals.

Toward the end of the century, the drama was eclipsed by the opera and the drama sank to a new low. The Italian players introduced the character of the harlequin, which was assimilated into the German stage tradition, and took its place beside the other clown figures, Hans Wurst and Pickelhärting.
Caroline Neuber (1697-1760) brings the first ray of light into the bleak history of the theater. She received her training in the wandering troupes of the day and later formed one of her own. In 1727, when she was playing at the Leipzig Easter Fair, Gottsched asked her to join forces with him in an effort to improve the German stage. For the next ten years she used Leipzig as her headquarters, and together they tried to bring about a reformation of the stage such as had taken place in France and Italy in the previous century. Gottsched's tragedy, *Der sterbende Cato*, based on Addison's *Cato* and Deschamps' *Caton d'Utique*, was to set the example. For other material they used translations from the French.

The German audience did not take to tragedy very readily. It still preferred the farces and the Haunt- und Staatsaktionen. Therefore, Gottsched turned to comedy. Although he admired French literature, he was very nationalistic and deplored the imitation of French manners and modes among the upper-class Germans. Comedy would serve both a nationalistic and educational purpose. Its themes were to be drawn from contemporary German life and it was to teach a moral lesson.

One of the main tasks of Gottsched's struggle was to rid the stage of the harlequin and all the vulgarity and coarseness that went with him. In the year 1737, he was symbolically banished from the stage in a performance by Frau Neuber in Leipzig. As a result, her audience deserted her. Nevertheless, both continued...
their struggle until they had a falling out, and she was replaced by Johann Friedrich Schönemann, formerly an actor in her company. His troupe included Sophie Schröder, Ackermann, and Ekhof. Ackermann and Sophie Schröder left his troupe in 1741 to form their own. In 1755, they starred in the first performance of Lessing's Miss Sara Sampson at Frankfurt an der Oder. The National Theater, which was formed in Hamburg in 1767, was a continuation of Ackermann's own theater, which he had established there in 1764.

Gottsched was a product of the rationalistic doctrines of the Enlightenment. He was well grounded in the philosophy of Christian Wolff and worked actively through books and lectures to spread his doctrines. "Not merely to be enlightened, but to spread Enlightenment became for him a moral command." In 1727, he formed the Deutsche Gesellschaft for the purpose of developing a classical German language and literature. His Critische Dichtkunst (1730) was based principally on the theoretical works of the French classicists, Dacier, D'Aubignac, Le Bossu, Bouhours, and St. Evremond. He became familiar with Aristotle's Poetics through Madame Dacier's translation. Although he intended to make a German translation, it was never completed.

In discussing the nature of a poet, he admits that a poet is born, not made. But his innate ability is only the beginning. He must be well-educated on all subjects and must know the technical and theoretical basis for his art. Gottsched's approach is definitely moral. A poet must judge actions as good or bad. Therefore,
he must have a solid foundation in morality. In his discussion of
tragedy, he follows the rules of the French Aristotelians. The
following is the procedure a poet must follow in writing a good
tragedy:

The poet chooses a moral precept, which he wants to impress
on his audience in a perceptible way. For this, he devises
a general plot which will illuminate the truth of his pre-
cept. Next, he searches in history for famous people to
whom something similar has happened, and from these he bor-
rrows the names for the characters of his plot to give it
consequence. Next, he thinks out all the particulars which
will give the main plot probability, and these are called
the episodes. Then he divides it into five parts which are
approximately equal in length and arranges it so that the
latter flows naturally from the former, but does no concern
himself further as to whether everything happens just as it
did in history, or whether all the lesser characters are
really just as they were.2

The three unities are absolutely necessary. A tragedy must have
only one action. The length of time which it takes to present
the play should correspond exactly to the time span within the
play. If it should require a greater time span, this should never
exceed ten hours. Furthermore, these hours should be during the
day, because night is meant for sleeping. As for unity of place,
the audience remains sitting in one place, therefore, the actors
must remain in one place. To have one scene in the forest and the
next scene in the city would be contrary to verisimilitude, which
was to be attained at all costs.

Such a treatise would lead one to suspect that its author had
not the slightest bit of poetical imagination and, indeed, it was
not long before critics rose up against him for this very reason.
Ten years after Gottsched published his *Critische Dichtkunst*, the Swiss critic Johann Jakob Breitinger brought forth a new and different *Kritische Dichtkunst*, in which he emphasizes the inspiration and imagination of the poet.

His [the poet's] entire ability consists in the dexterous blending of the marvellous with the probable; the latter makes his tale believable, and the former gives it the power to hold the attention of the reader and to produce a pleasant astonishment.

This was cause enough for Gottsched to declare war on Breitinger as well as on the latter's friend and compatriot, Bodmer. It began with Gottsched's *Deutscher Dichterkrieg* in 1741 and continued until the tide turned against him in 1745, when his younger followers went over to the Swiss camp.

One of the principal differences between the two camps was their point of orientation. Gottsched, in spite of his expressed love for things German, was oriented to French literature; Bodmer and Breitinger to English and German literature. The difference is expressed in their respective attitudes to Klopstock. Gottsched was unable to understand this young rhapsodic poet or why he could create such excitement among the younger generation. The Swiss, along with the younger generation in Germany, were his greater admirers. Also Rousseau, Shakespeare, and Homer were held by them in high regard. As a preview of things to come, Borck's translation of *Julius Caesar*, the first German translation of Shakespeare, appeared in 1741. In 1759, when Lessing published his seventeenth *Literaturbrief*, Gottsched's days of influence were
There were several literary figures who aligned themselves with neither side in the struggle between Gottsched and his opponents. Such a one was Johann Elias Schlegel (1719-1749), who had begun his career in close association with Gottsched, but had gradually drawn away from him as his poetic ability and insight matured. His *Kömödie in Versen* (1740) defended the use of verse in comedies and also included a discussion of the nature of imitation, which was more fully developed in the *Abhandlung von der Nachahmung* (1742). He states that the final purpose of literature is simply and solely to give pleasure to the reader. This is a departure from the Wolffian school's principle that literature should serve a useful purpose. Furthermore, the imitation of a subject should not be a mere copy. The artist should strive, rather, to present an ideal.

In 1741, following the publication of Borck's translation of *Julius Caesar*, Schlegel wrote a *Vergleichung Shakespeares und Andreas Gryphs*. Although his knowledge of Shakespeare was limited, he was able to grasp something of the poet's greatness. He praised the magnificence of his characterizations and sought to justify the freedom of a poet in dealing with historical persons. The *Gedanken zur Aufnahme des dänischen Theaters* (1747) advocated the use of national material for tragedy as well as for comedy.

In 1746, Batteux's *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe*
appeared, which was translated into German by Adolf Schlegel, brother to Johann Elias, in 1751. He also discusses the nature of imitation, but from a more external point of view. His was one of the voices in eighteenth century France that cried out against the shackles of the ancients. Their dramas were good models, but they must first be understood in relation to their own customs and conditions, an idea later expressed and developed by Herder.

Christoph Friedrich Nicolai (1733-1811), one of Lessing's associates in the journal, Briefe, die neueste Litteratur betreffend, and also a proponent of rationalism in literature, struggled in vain against the growing emphasis on the emotional element. He waged war with the Stürmer und Dränger and with the Romantic movement that followed, but he was unable to turn the tide. In discussing the tragedy (Abhandlung vom Trauerspiel, 1757), he places himself between Corneille and Aristotle. For Corneille, the purpose of tragedy was the pleasant agitation of pity and fear. For Aristotle, it was a catharsis caused by the agitation of these emotions. Nicolai's position is thus:

Tragedy is the imitation of a single, serious, important and entire action by means of the dramatical presentation of it; in order thereby to arouse in us violent emotions. Thus Corneille's pleasant agitation was not worthy enough, but Aristotle's catharsis placed the purpose of tragedy within the realm of morality. Nicolai was pleased if a tragedy should be
morally beneficial, but this, in his opinion, should not be its ultimate purpose. With regard to the unities, he is more conservative than Lessing, although not so conservative as Gottsched.

The only duty of the poet is, therefore, to approach the unity of time and place as closely as possible, and if he must depart from it for the sake of greater beauties, he should adjust it so that the departure is not very noticeable to the spectator.5

Following the Seven Years War, there was a new element in the German drama, an emphasis on external action, contrasts, oppositions. This Drama des Gegeneinanders formed a bridge between the passive drama of the fifties and the drama of the Storm and Stress. The most notable dramatist of this period was Christian Felix Weisse (1726-1804). His early tragedies are written in the French tradition of rhyming alexandrines, but he later changed to blank verse. His Die Befreiung von Theben (1764) was the first German tragedy written in iambic pentameter to be published, and his Atreus und Thyest (1766), the first iambic pentameter tragedy to be produced (Leipzig, 1769).

The influence of Shakespeare on Weisse was part of the general increase of interest in the British poet during the decades prior to the Storm and Stress. As has been mentioned, the German's first acquaintance with Shakespeare was through Borck's translation of Julius Caesar in 1741. Johann Elias Schlegel had referred to him favorably in his critical works. Lessing, in his seventeenth Litteraturbrief of 1759, had pointed to Shakespeare, rather
than the French, as a model to be followed by German dramatists.

He [Gottsched] could have perceived from our old dramatical pieces, which he banished, that we are more in agreement with the taste of the English than that of the French; that we want to see and think more in our tragedies than the timorous French tragedies give us to see and to think about; that the greatness, the terrible, the melancholy affect us more than the pleasant, the tender, the amorous. Therefore, he should have remained on this track, and it would have led him straightway to the English theater. If the masterpieces of Shakespeare had been translated for our Germans with a few slight changes, I know for a fact that it would have had better results than making them so acquainted with Corneille and Racine. Even in deciding the case according to the example of the ancients, Shakespeare is a far greater tragic poet than Corneille, although the latter was well acquainted with the ancients, and the former almost not at all.

From 1762 to 1766 Wieland translated twenty-two plays by Shakespeare into prose. These translations left much to be desired. In the first place, they were designed for the reading public, rather than to be produced on the stage. In the second place, Wieland had no real understanding of the essential nature of Shakespeare's dramas. His shortcomings were attacked by Gerstenberg in the fourteenth letter of his Briefe Uber Merkwürdigkeiten der Literatur (1766-1767).

For what purpose did he translate? — For the use of the connoisseurs? — To awaken budding geniuses? — Impossible! He couldn't, partly because of alleged deficiencies; partly, in this case, because a mere and thereby very mutilated translation is not enough. For the pleasure of sympathetic or unsympathetic feminine readers? But in that case his thick volumes must be read, and which of them has the iron courage to read so many thick volumes, the greater part of which Herr Wieland himself pronounces to be absurdity, which, through the awkwardness of their style, through the lack of wisdom and mishandling of the translator, through the transformation of their grace into a clumsy oysterman, have become full worthy of this and a yet worse characterization.
Nevertheless, it was in this form that the younger generation of the sixties and seventies came to know Shakespeare. Subsequently, there were many adaptations of Wieland's translations for the stage, most of which dressed Shakespeare in the garb of the Enlightenment.

The younger generation was dissatisfied with this form of Shakespeare. In the dramas of the Stürmer und Dränger can be seen an effort to express something of the true spirit which they found in his plays. They were not as concerned with the technical abilities of Shakespeare as a dramatist as much as they were enthralled with the idea that his plays contained a whole world. "What's that? To dispute Shakespeare's ability to arouse the emotions, the first and most important attribute of a writer for the theater? What remains for him?" — Man! The world! Everything!"8 "If the gentlemen care to limit themselves to one house and one day, for heaven's sake, keep your heirlooms, your miniatures, and leave us our world."9 Not until A. W. Schlegel's blank verse translations, most of which appeared between 1797 and 1801, was Shakespeare given an unadulterated treatment on the German stage.

Other influences from England were making themselves felt in Germany. The novelists, Fielding, Richardson, Sterne, and Goldsmith were translated and widely read. In criticism, Edward Young was one of the most influential forces. His Night Thoughts (1742-1745) had been translated into German by Ebert in 1751 and was well-received, even by Gottsched. The Conjectures on Original
Composition (1759), translated by Teubern in 1760 and followed by various other translations, was more controversial. In discussing the relation of modern poets to the ancients, he differentiates between imitation of form and content and imitation of the spirit of the author. The latter is the type of imitation with which the poet should concern himself, that is, if he is not an Original.

But why are Originals so few? not because the writer’s harvest is over, the great reapers of antiquity having left nothing to be gleaned after them; nor because the mind’s teeming time is past, or because it is incapable of putting forth unprecedented births; but because illustrious examples engross, prejudice, and intimidate.

The genius must have freedom to follow his own innate inspiration, or his genius will wither and die. Although mere learning is not as great as the wisdom of genius, it is not to be ignored.

Johann Georg Hamann (1730-1788) was the most enthusiastic disciple of Young in Germany. He had lived in London for a little over a year and had become very interested in English writers. He was in complete sympathy with Young’s ideas on genius and originality, and his own style is a result of his endeavor to put them into practice. Through Hamann’s early association with Herder, these ideas were transmitted to one of the most fertile minds of the Storm and Stress. The influence of Herder on the young geniuses was decisive. In the eleventh book of Dichtung und Wahrheit, Goethe says of him:

He had torn down the curtain which concealed from me the poverty of German literature; he had cruelly destroyed many of my prejudices; there were but few stars of importance
left in the sky of our fatherland, when he had ruthlessly dismissed the rest as so many transient meteors; nay, he had so blighted my own hopes and fancies respecting myself, that I began to doubt my own powers. Yet at the same time he dragged me after him on the broad and noble road which he himself loved to tread, drew my attention to his favourite authors, with Swift and Hamann at their head, shaking me to my feet even more forcibly than he had cast me down.

The desire for a national drama, the admiration of Shakespeare, Homer, and folk-poetry, the necessity of the break with French neo-classicism, a more intelligent evaluation of Aristotle and the ancient dramatists, to all of these ideas he gave expression and direction. The young geniuses were now armed for battle.
CHAPTER III

Introduction to the Observations on the Theater

The beginnings of Lenz's development into a follower of the Storm and Stress movement can be traced back to his Königsburg days, during which he was exposed to many new and stimulating ideas. It was in this region that Hamann, Herder, and Gerstenberg, the pioneers of the Storm and Stress movement, were active. That he did not fully understand the significance of these new ideas and assimilate them into his own thinking until his association with the Salzmann group in Strassburg, is indicated by his occupation with a translation into alexandrines of Pope's Essay on Criticism, which he showed to Nicolai on his trip with the Kleist brothers to Strassburg. Also, his literary output during his student years was little influenced by the modern theories.

Herder left Riga in 1769, and traveled through France, spending most of his time in Nantes and Paris. During his stay he studied the French language and culture and came to the conclusion that their literature, especially the drama, was in a state of decadence, dominated by the preceding century. To relieve his financial condition, he accepted a position as tutor for the son of the Prince-Bishop of Lübeck. He traveled with his charge toward Strassburg. When they reached Strassburg, Herder resigned his post in
order to have an operation on his eye performed by a famous surgeon at the University. Although Herder was gone by the time Lenz reached Strassburg, his ideas had been transmitted by Goethe to the Salzmann group. It was through Herder that Goethe was led to a deeper understanding of Shakespeare and Homer. Through Herder, he became interested in folk-songs, the Bible, and English literature. That this interest was transmitted to Lenz is evidenced by Lenz's letters to Salzmann during the summer of 1772, while he was in Fort Louis and Landau attending one of the Kleist brothers.

"I have made an excellent find of old songs, which I will give you as soon as I come to Strassburg."¹ "But what would you say, if I don't return your Tom Jones yet."² "My reading is now limited to three books: A large Nürnberg Bible...a thick Plautus...and my most faithful Homer."³

Lessing had led the attack on French literature and the Gottsched school. But this was not sufficient for the Stürmer und Dränger. It is true that Lessing had pointed to Shakespeare as being more in keeping with the German spirit and had worked diligently to establish a drama that was suitable for the German stage. His Minna von Barnhelm, produced in 1767, was the first German national drama to be set in contemporary Germany. Heretofore, the respectable stage had been dominated by imitations and translations. Minna was a worthy beginning, but Lessing was, nevertheless, a spokesman of the Enlightenment. He had carefully studied
Aristotle's *Poetics* and much of his criticism of the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* was an examination of the plays produced at the National Theater in the light of the *Poetics*. For him, Aristotle was still the supreme authority. The Stürmer und Dränger were more radical in their aspirations. They were seeking a new orientation. They turned to Nature as their source of inspiration and made a cult of the genius who followed no laws but those of Nature. They were seeking to express in their literature their own cultural heritage, their own experiences and emotions, their own problems and situations. In a certain sense, they were demanding a type of realism, the type of realism which they found in Shakespeare, a literature true to nature, but tempered with a generous portion of imagination and, above all, freedom.

In his essay on Shakespeare, Herder explains the Greek drama from the point of view of its origin and development in a specific cultural environment. He points out that the "rules" which the French found in Aristotle's *Poetics* were not something imposed on the Greek dramatists. "That simplicity of the Greek plot, that sobriety of Greek manners, that continuously sustained cothurnus-quality of expression, music, stage, unity of place and time—all of this lay without artifice and magic so naturally and essentially in the origin of Greek tragedy, that it was not possible without the cultivation of all these things. All of this was like a husk in which the fruit grew."
In the same manner, Shakespeare's dramas were conditioned by his environment, by the age in which he lived, by his cultural heritage; so that it would be foolish to judge the dramas of Shakespeare by the rules of Aristotle. Aristotle's \textit{Poetics} is valid only for the drama it describes. But if Aristotle were to appear today, "how you would homerize the new Sophocles! how you would write a special theory about him such as his countrymen, Home and Hurd, Pope and Johnson have not yet written!" Here Herder departs from Gerstenberg, who defended Shakespeare by trying to prove that he did follow the Aristotelian "rules". Herder denies these "rules" any validity for Shakespeare, thus freeing Shakespeare from the burden of proof. This historical approach was something new in aesthetics in Germany and points to his essay, \textit{Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte}, which appeared the following year.

Herder, as did Lessing before him, points out that Aristotle's only "rule" was that of unity of action. The other two, unity of time and place, were inventions of the French. If a classical drama did fall within the limits of one day and one setting, it did so naturally and not because the author forced it, so as not to be criticized for breaking the "rules".

In his prefacing remarks to the \textit{Observations}, Lenz claims to have read them aloud to a group of good friends two years before the appearance of \textit{Von deutscher Art und Kunst} and \textit{Götz von Ber-
lichingen, both of which appeared in 1773. This places them in
the year 1771, shortly after his arrival in Strassburg in April.
He once refers to himself as a "stranger", which would indicate
that at least part of it must have been presented at one of the
first meetings he attended of the Société de Philosophie et de
Belles-Lettres, as the Salzmann group called itself. He usually
addresses his audience with "meine Herren", but at one point ad-
dresses his Christian readers, as if at least part of it had been
composed directly for publication and not to be read aloud to a
group. There are other internal evidences which point to a re-
working of his original conception, such as his rather ambiguous
attitude toward Aristotle, whom he alternately condemns and justi-}
ifies. Theodor Friedrich has made a thorough study of the Obser-
vations and was able to separate the various parts as to the time
of their composition.

Part of the confusion connected with the date of their com-
position arises from two conflicting passages in Goethe's Dichtung
und Wahrheit. The first (quoted above, Ch.I, pp.3-4) in the
eleventh book, states clearly that at least the origins of the
Observations go back to the summer of 1771, before Goethe left
Strassburg. The second passage, from the fourteenth book, denies
any knowledge of the work at that time: "In my perusal of his
laconic preface to this translation, I was struck by his speaking
in such a way as to convey the idea that this essay, containing a
vehement attack upon the regular stage, had been read many years
before to a gathering of literary men, and, consequently, at a
time when Götz was not yet written. That there should have been
among Lenz’s acquaintances at Strasburg a literary circle of which
I was ignorant seemed somewhat doubtful.‘"5

According to Theodor Friedrich, the lack of consistency in the
development of some of the ideas is due to the fact that part of it
was written before the appearance of the volume Von deutscher Art
und Kunst. After Lenz read this, he was reminded of his own essays
and moved to revise and enlarge them, with their publication in
mind. The second revision came shortly before their publication,
after Lenz had sent the Observations to Goethe for his approval and
comments. Friedrich hypothesizes that Goethe advised Lenz to
soften his most bitter remarks against Aristotle, so as not to
anger Lessing, for whom Goethe had the highest regard, although
he did not always agree with him. Lenz followed his advice, find¬
ing most of the ideas for Aristotle’s defense in Herder’s essay on
Shakespeare. "He [Lenz] wrote thereby so much under the impress
of his greater model, that he took over, along with the basic
thoughts, its entire construction, even stylistic particulars, so
that we could designate this observation [the final observation on
the difference between classical and modern drama] as a reduced,
at times expanded imitation of Herder’s essay."6

Lenz begins his discussion by reviewing briefly the theater
in ancient and modern times. He imagines a gigantic theater divid-
ed into five sections containing ancient Greek and Roman, Italian, French, and German drama, respectively. The theater of the ancients with all its peculiarities of technique, the masks, the delivery, the chorus, etc., was nevertheless based on its own cultural tradition. He dismisses the Italian theater with a remark on its effeminacy. In looking at the French theater, Lenz finds a pathetic combination of ancient heroes and eighteenth century French elegance. The English theater of Elizabethan times was not afraid to portray Nature as it really was. But the dramatists of the eighteenth century tried to repress the "barbarism" of the Elizabethan era. Garrick attempted to restore more of the original flavor of Shakespeare, but even this great actor had to compromise with the ideas of "decency, taste and morality, the three Graces of social life". The present state of the German theater is described by Lenz as a confusion of all these, but not the least bit German.

Next, Lenz discusses the essence of the drama and poetical genius. For him, the essence of poetry is imitation. Imitation is fundamental to man's nature. Man sees himself as a dependent, finite creature in a world created by "an infinitely independent Being". Although it is impossible for man to be God, he does gain satisfaction by "creating His creations in miniature". Thus, imitation is the first source of poetry. The second source of poetry is observation, "the eternal striving to separate and pene-
trate all of our accumulated ideas, to make them perceptual and present!". This function is performed by the senses. Poetry alone of all the arts and sciences combines these two, imitation and observation. The difference between the poetic genius and other geniuses is his ability to recreate, "to mirror the object". Imitation, for Lenz, is not something mechanical. The poet does not merely reflect. Something happens within the poet after the perceptions and before the reproduction. This something is an assimilation of the perceptions, an interpretation, a rearranging according to a point of view, which gives unity and meaning to his creation. A poet creates his world and in this respect is a god in miniature.

Lenz now examines the problem of plot vs. character in the drama. Lenz cannot forgive Aristotle for placing action above character in importance, even though Aristotle clearly states that the action is determined by the character of the personal agents. Lenz places portrayal of character as the main task of drama. To be sure, a man can be known only through his actions, but the portrayal of actions is merely a means to the end—the presentation of a man. He considers the ancients inferior in that their actions were determined by "an iron fate". "What is really the main object of imitation in the drama: man? or the fate of man?" The idea of fate or anything else governing a hero's actions is very distasteful to Lenz. He is concerned with "characters who shape their
own events, who independent and unchangeable turn the whole huge apparatus themselves, without needing the godheads in the clouds except as spectators.

He then attacks the "terrible, deplorably famous bull of the three unities". According to Friedrich, this section was written first and comprised the greater part of the first paper he read to the Société de Philosophie et de Belles-Lettres. In the forty-sixth essay of the Hamburgische Dramaturgie, Lessing explains how the unities of time and place were natural results of the unity of plot, and were necessary on the Greek stage due to its use of the chorus. But the French, who did not use the chorus and, therefore, had no need for the same limitations, either slavishly abided by the three unities or distorted them so that they had no meaning.

Goethe, in his essay Zum Schakespeare Tag, tells how Shakespeare opened up a new world for him. "I realized, I felt most vividly my existence expanded by an infinity, everything was new, unknown to me, and the unaccustomed light made my eyes hurt." To him the unities seemed like shackles on the poet's power of imagination. Shakespeare gave him the courage and the inspiration to discard them. "I leaped into the open air and felt for the first time that I had hands and feet." He praises the Greek drama and disparages the French imitations, but does not attempt a critical analysis of either.
Thus, Lessing wanted to retain only one unity, unity of action. Herder's approach was historical. To him, the unities seemed as natural for the Greek drama as they were unnatural for Shakespeare. Herder wanted a drama which was an expression of its particular age and culture, which developed naturally and of necessity as did the drama of the ancients and also the drama of Shakespeare. Goethe wanted to be free of all unities. Lenz insisted that all unities are ultimately reducible to one, and that one is the unity of the poet's insight, "the viewpoint from which we can embrace and survey the entirety". This unity is dependent on the poet's ability to create a world in miniature. "God is but one in all his works and so must the poet be no matter how great or small his sphere of activity may be."

From Lessing he probably got his idea of unity of place being unity of chorus, but he does not go on to explain that unity of place is a derivative of the unity of plot, the only unity which Aristotle demanded. His attitude toward Aristotle would indicate, as he himself admits, an incomplete understanding of the *Poetics*. At one point he quotes Aristotle thus: "Tragedy is the imitation of an action; and an action implies personal agents, who necessarily possess certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought; for it is by these that we qualify actions themselves, and these—thought and character—are the two natural causes from which actions spring..." Later, in discussing unity of action, Lenz claims that Aristotle "always separates the action from the
principal character, who *bongre malgre* must fit into a given plot as a rope through the eye of a needle!". That Aristotle said no such thing is obvious from the first quotation. Lessing, Herder, and Goethe all had great respect for Greek drama, and were careful to distinguish between the Greek and French stage, aiming their attack only at the latter. Lenz, in his enthusiasm, confused the two, misguided his attack, and betrayed his ignorance of the drama of the ancients.

His substitute for the authority of Aristotle is that of Nature. "If, therefore, the French dramas for the most part are cut out according to the rules of Aristotle—and his expounders—if we previously found dissatisfaction with the theory and here with its execution—what remains for us? What else but to let Nature be the architect..." The French drama is mechanical, mere handicraft, in which Nature could not possibly be contained, for handicraft is simple, but Nature is manifold. The plots are slim and worn out by repeated usage. Shakespeare turned to Nature itself; his genius penetrated it in its entirety and presented its endless variety on the stage. The French characters, on the other hand, are mere caricatures with no counterpart in Nature, usually a mere reflection of the poet's own personality. "Thus Voltaire's heroes are almost always tolerant free-thinkers, Corneille's always Senecas. The whole world takes on the tone of their wishes." The French dramatists try to attain variety by means of external ornaments, "the diction, the symmetry and harmony of the verse, the rhyme it-
self". But what remains for the spectator when he leaves the theater? "Smoke which disappears as soon as it touches the air."

To illustrate the difference between the French and the English stage, Lenz compares Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, which contains real people in all their diversity, with Voltaire's *La mort de César*, which contains nothing but caricatures of men.

In his final observation on the difference between ancient and modern drama, he takes a more tolerant view of Aristotle and the ancients. Since their drama was originally a religious service, it was only natural that its purpose was to arouse in the spectator "blind and servile fear of the gods". Since a man's religious beliefs shape his whole outlook, his way of acting and feeling, a poet must understand this element or he will miss the character completely. In this respect, the Greek tragedians were great poets. They understood the importance of fate and the gods in determining a person's character. But the characters in French drama should not have been motivated by the same forces which motivated the Greeks. The French poets were being false to their own people by assuming the religious views of the ancients. The Oedipus of Sophocles' drama had cause for his misery. He had offended the gods. But what could this mean to a Frenchman. The Oedipus of Voltaire's drama "should have deserved his unhappiness, or off the stage with him!". Another difference between ancient and modern drama is that the ancients used drama to preserve note-
worthy events for posterity. This service is now performed by chronicles, romances, and festivals. Modern drama is concerned with preserving noteworthy characters for posterity.

In a short paragraph on the difference between tragedy and comedy, Lenz states his belief that in comedy the action is paramount, "the characters are there for the actions". The reverse is true of tragedy. Here, "the actions are there for the sake of the person". It is interesting to compare this view with the one expressed by Lessing in the fifty-first essay of the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*:

...in comedy, the characters [are] the principal thing, the situations only the means...of allowing them to express themselves.... It is the reverse in tragedy, where the characters are less essential, and fear and pity arise principally from the situations.

It is not surprising that the *Observations* were attributed to Goethe when they first appeared, for they can be considered the theoretical counterpart of Goethe's drama *Götz von Berlichingen*, the first "Shakespearean" drama of the "age of genius". The *Wandsbecker Bote* of October 29, 1774, designated Goethe as the author, as did the *Almanach der deutschen Musen* for the year 1775, which characterized the *Observations* thus:

Rhapsodic observations on the highest purpose of the drama, on the perception of characters, insofar as it is preferred to a unified sequence of events, on the French and the British, written in a broken and humorous style. Shakespeare's play *Love's Labour's Lost*, one of the plays not included in the Wieland translation, takes up most of the pages. Herr Göthe fulfills here all of the high expectations which the public had of him as a translator of Shakespeare....
The review in the *Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen* of November 29, 1774, is extremely rhapsodic in its praise. This review has been attributed to H. L. Wagner, but whoever wrote it was in complete sympathy with the new movement:

An extremely important contribution to dramaturgy!—carefully thought out insights into art! genuine, warm feeling for the beautiful! visually presented! the hand of a genius recognizable in every trace!...here they stand, the French and Frenchified *beaux esprits*, the highly esteemed spearman of the sententious Corneille, of the sweet-sounding Racine, etc.... They would gladly conceal their spears, if they were not so poor and ragged, and if their respective gentlemen didn't need their coats to cover their own nakedness so badly.... Whoever has read the description of a genius and still believes himself deserving of this title of honor must either really be one, or else he is the most conceited fool that ever stared at heaven on two feet....

The *Teutsche Merkur* of November, 1774, also attributes the Observations to Goethe. This error is corrected in the issue of January, 1775:

Not Herr Göthe himself, as the previous volume of the *Merkur* said, but Herr Lenz is the author of these observations for which it is much to be desired that they be taken to heart by our dramatic poets, even if the author is not the very first to impress these ideas on them. If they were only to provoke a beginning dramatist to take up the study of man more earnestly than has been done heretofore, then they would have been useful enough, even if they do not have the merit of originality (not counting the innovation in the style). Since Lessing's dramaturgy dealt the first blow to the veneration of the French theater, many iconoclasts have risen who with the greatest zeal have attacked the same. Such a one is the author.... For the greater usefulness of these observations, it would have been desirable that the author had not been burdened with the mania, which is gradually getting the upper hand, of affecting a style which compares so unfavorably with the style of the best authors of all times and peoples, and is either completely unintelligible to most readers, whom one would like to instruct, or only confused, wavering, and squinting ideas of which they can make no sense....

His attack on Lenz's style indicates the general usage among the *Stürmer und Drängler* of this manner of expression. Herder, in his
essay on Shakespeare, refers to himself as a rhapsodist. Goethe's language is certainly guilty of the same tendencies, perhaps to an even more pronounced degree. They endeavored to express by means of language the immediacy of their feelings. A formal, polished style was a symbol to them of the very artificiality they were revolting against.

In the same issue of the Teutsche Merkur, Wieland adds his own judgment of the Observations:

The author of the Observations on the Theater may be called whatever he wants, indeed the fellow is a genius, and has written only for geniuses such as he, even though geniuses have no need for such. But shouldn't this have been allowed him? Must he then write what no one, not even himself, could understand? Who could prevent him? To be sure, it was not meant for the general public. For what should it make of it? How is it to guess the genius' riddle? or complete what the mysterious man only half says? or pursue him in his genius-leaps from cliff to cliff?—His tone is such a strange tone, his speech such a marvellous gibberish, that the people stand there with their mouths wide open, and strain their ears, and do not know whether to regard it with a sweet or sour mien;—therefore, out of politeness and in order to be on the safe side, they regard it with a sweet mien, like most journalists and critics.—His tone is not the tone of the world; nor is it the tone of investigation; nor is it a school tone; connoisseurs have never spoken in such a way. What is it then? It is the tone of a seer who sees faces and now and then the tone of a Quombeacherapistulplenum, who opens his mouth in order to say something wonderful, sparkingly new, something not yet said by any mother's son, and then, however, (like Horace in his drunkenness) says precisely nothing worth the trouble of opening the mouth so wide for. It may be that such an inspired seer or genius sees all kinds of things which we others, who are in control of our senses, do not see—probably even two suns, two Thebes for one—but the unfortunate thing is that the reader can seldom be certain what the man has seen and if he has seen rightly. To make such a little book, no matter how small it is, intelligible to the readers who are no geniuses, to test, to separate the grain from the chaff,
and to show what is sound criticism and what is idle, stale
persiflage, what is really original and what has acquired
through the mere affectation of strange phrases, word-figures
and violation of the language the appearance of an unheard-
of discovery, even though others have said the same thing
long before more briefly, more clearly and more correctly,—
to do all of this, one would have to write a book in folio;
and who is to write it? or, if it were written, who is to
read it?
Moreover, if our readers want to convince themselves
with their own eyes that even in 1773, at least a year be¬
fore the author of the Observations of the world let his
little light shine, there were people who knew what the
greatness of Shakespeare was: let us request them to read
pages 184 and 185 in the 3rd volume of the T. Merkur, and
then—close the book again.

Wieland overlooks the fact that Lenz claims to have written his
Observations in 1771, and the pages to which he refers in the
Teutsche Merkur do not discuss all of the ideas which are con¬
tained in the Observations. Lenz, now numbered among Wieland’s
enemies, felt it necessary to reply to this attack, and did so
in the Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen of July 11, 1775:

Herr Wieland is mistaken if he believes that I could appear
in no other mask than that of the Bürgermeister of Naumburg
[Zierau, a character in his drama Der neue Menoza] in order
to make our present day theatrical art look ridiculous. He
is also mistaken if he considers gibberish my mother tongue.
And I hope, if he were to take the trouble of reading this
gibberish (I refer to the Observations) from beginning to end,
he would find that he was also mistaken about my copying him.
That is not at all the mistake that I would be accused of,
least, my conscience says nothing to me about it.

Herder’s essay on Shakespeare, Goethe’s Zum Schakespeare Tag, and
Lenz’s Observations on the Theater together formed the dramaturgy
of the Storm and Stress movement. The opposition among members of
the old guard was, of course, to be expected. Lessing is said to
have disapproved of Goethe's and Lenz's dramatical theories, especially of the Observations, although he never made an open attack. But, despite such disapproval, the tide had turned in favor of the young geniuses. Although their day of glory was to be short-lived, and indeed was over for the main part by 1776, the French yoke had been broken and the way was clear to establish a national drama.
CHAPTER IV

A Translation of Lenz's Observations on the Theater

This paper was read to a company of good friends two years before the appearance of *Von Deutscher Art und Kunst* and *Götz von Berlichingen*. Since there might be something in it for contemporary literature which those two works have not made entirely superfluous, we will impart it—even if in no other manner than as the first unchecked reasoning of an impartial dilettante—rhapsodically to our readers.

Gentlemen:

Nec minimum meruere decus, vestigia graeca
Ause deserere—

Horace

The subject of some observations which I have on my mind is to be the theater. The worth of the drama in our times is so well established that I need not precede with *cæptationem Benevolentiae* on account of this choice, but because of the nature of my discourse I must, to be sure, apologize to you since my present state and other incidental reasons do not allow me to treat my subject as extensively or as thoroughly as I would like. I am building in my imagination a colossal stage on which the most famous actors of ancient and recent times shall now pass before our eyes. There
you will see the great masterpieces of Greece presented in action by equally great masters, if we would believe Aulus Gellius and others. You will see, if you please, in the second section the tragedies of Ovid and Seneca, the comedies of Plautus and Terence, and the great comedian Roscius, whom the famous Cicero himself mentioned with great respect. You will see the three actors who share one role; the masks which Mr. Du Bos so competently describes for us, the entire frightful apparatus. And yet you must be fair to the ancient Romans, for the essential arrangement of their stage and their pit, which please God, consisted of nothing less than the nation, made these apparent exaggerations of nature necessary. That, however, the ancients chanted rather than recited their plays, seems to me, as stated in Du Bos, very probable, since it can be explained so naturally from the origin of the drama, the beginning of which appears to have been nothing more than a song of praise to father Bacchus sung simultaneously by various people. Moreover, the restless spectators of such a monstrous pit would have found little edification if the actors whispered and sobbed tender things to their princesses, which they themselves scarcely heard under the masks (as, indeed, it is done even today) let alone [the audience]. But let us leave the Latin section; you will [see] in the Italian one heroes without manliness and the like; since, however, Orpheus by the sound of his lyre brought the three-headed Cerberus himself to the point
that he dared not utter a peep, would not a singer do the same to the severest critic. Therefore, I open the fourth section and there appears—oh beautiful plays!—there appear the most frightful heroes of antiquity, the raging Oedipus, in each hand an eye, and a great train of Greek emperors, Roman mayors, kings and emperors, neatly groomed in hair bags and silk stockings conversing with their madonnas (whose crinolines and white handkerchiefs must break the heart of any Christian), in the most gallant expressions of the violence of their passions, that they will die, they will find it absolutely and inevitably necessary to give up the ghost, in case they don't. I cannot stop here to ponder at length what masters have worked for this stage, what great actors appeared on the same. It would be more difficult for me to produce the list of both for you than it may have been for good father Homer to recite the Greek and Trojan officers. One need only look at the many journals, periodicals, aesthetics larded with samples—and as far as the actors are concerned, good taste has already become second nature to them, above and below which they would have to suffocate as if in a different climate. In this section Amor is dictator. Everything breathes, sighs, cries, bleeds; with the exception of him and the light-snuffer, no actor has ever exited into the wings without having fallen in love on the stage. Now let us look at the fifth chamber, which was the reverse side of the latter, although the enlightened times have
succeeded in penetrating as far as this and putting a stop to the abominable barbarity which the poets before and during Queen Elizabeth's reign had spread there. These gentlemen had dared to undress Nature completely and present her to the shy and modest public as God had created her. Even the hateful Garrick is gradually desisting from declaring war with his idol Shakespeare against decency, taste and morality, the three Graces of social life. And now, without further ado, I shall lift the curtain and show you—yes, what? a wonderful mixture of everything which we have seen and considered up to now, carried to a point of perfection which the naked eye can no longer distinguish. German Sophocles', German Plautus', German Shakespeare's, German Frenchmen, German Metastasio's, in short, everything you desire, seen through critical glasses and often united in one person! How confused everything is, Cluver's orbis antiquus with the new heraldry, and the tone on the whole so little German, so critically tremulous, done so beautifully—if any man have ears to hear, let him applaud, the public is cursed.

Now that I am finished and have very hastily nailed together for you as well as I could the stage of all ages and nations, allow me, gentlemen, to pull you by the arm and, while the rest of the pit with open mouths and glassy eyes stare up at the loges like cats at a dovecote, fill up an idle hour for you with observations on theater, on actors, and drama. You will not take it
amiss, if I, as a stranger, speak with a certain freedom of these matters and—

With your permission, then, I will go back rather far, because for my ultimate purpose—my ultimate purpose? What do you suppose it is? There are people who are just as inclined to say something new and to defend with all the powers of body and soul what has once been said, as the greater part of the public, which is created to be always an audience, is inclined to hear something new. But since I [have] no such audience here—I shall not be so bold as to announce to you the ultimate purpose of these observations, the goal of my partisans. Perhaps when you have ridden along with me, you will come upon it yourselves, and then—

We are all friends of poetry, and the human race in all the inhabited spots of this planet appears to have a certain innate inclination for this language of the gods. What makes it so charming, that at all times—seems in my opinion to be nothing other than the imitation of nature, that is, of all the things which we see, hear, etc., around us which press in through the five doors of our soul and according to the amount of space place a stronger or weaker garrison of ideas, which then begin to live and move in this city, associating with each other, falling under certain fundamental ideas, or else swarming about for a lifetime without a leader, command, or order, as Bunyan in his Holy War described so beautifully. As drunken soldiers often fall asleep
at their post, wake up again at the wrong time, etc., of which one meets examples in all four corners of the world. Yet I am about to do the same thing myself—now I remember where I was: I made the observation that the essence of poetry was imitation and what charm this has for us. —We are, gentlemen, or at least want to be, the first rung on the ladder of independent, self-sufficient creatures, and since we see a world all around us which is proof of an infinitely independent Being, therefore, the first impulse which we feel in our soul is the desire to imitate Him. Since, however, the world has no bridges and we must be satisfied with the things which are here, we feel at least an increase in our existence and happiness in imitating Him, in creating His creations in miniature. Although it is not necessary for me to refer to an authority in regard to this fundamental drive, yet I wish, in the established fashion, to lean on the words of a great critic with a beard, a critic who will take up his arms several times in my observations. Aristotle in the fourth book of his poetics:

"Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures." Luckily he said "most," for otherwise what would become of the apes!

I have a high regard for Aristotle, although not for his
beard, which at any rate, like Peter Ramus, whose mischief, however, did him no good. However, since he is speaking here of two sources from which all-prevailing poetry has taken its origin and nevertheless points to only the one with his little crooked finger, while he holds the other under his beard (although I do not guarantee that, since to speak truthfully I have not yet read him through completely), so a thought has arisen in me which asks for permission to come out into the light of day, for to keep a thought to oneself and a glowing coal in one's hand—

First, however, another authority. The famed world-famous Mr. Sterne, who probably considers himself anything but an imitator, and because he forgot to put that in his seventh petition appears to have been especially punished by Heaven, says in the fortieth chapter of his Life and Opinions: "The gift of ratiocination and making syllogisms—I mean in man—for in superior classes of beings, such as angels and spirits—'tis all done, may it please your worships, as they tell me, by Intuition...."  

The difference is only that this second authority precedes what I want to say and, therefore, after due gratitude to the peacock's tail from which I stole this quill, I shall set out and begin.

Our soul is a thing whose effects like those of the body are successive, one after the other. Where it comes from, that is—so much is certain, that our soul desires with all its heart
neither to know nor to desire successively. We should like to penetrate at a glance the innermost nature of all creatures, with one feeling absorb and unite with ourselves all the rapture which is in nature. Ask yourselves, gentlemen, if you do not want to believe me. Whence [comes] the unrest when here and there you have grasped one page of knowledge; [whence] the trembling desire to comprehend the entirety with your understanding; [whence] the paralyzing fear that if you turn to the second page you will forget the first? So it is with each enjoyment. Whence this storm to grasp the universe, the annoyance if no new object seems to remain for your panting desire—the world for you becomes poor and you search for bridges. Your voracious appetite would like to pursue the most trembling ray as far as the Milky Way, and if angry fate should blind you, then like Milton, you would imagine in chaos and night worlds whose entrance in the realm of reality is closed to you.

Lock up your breast when more than one Adam's rib becomes rebellious and come again with me into the bright regions of the understanding. We all gladly try to reduce our complex ideas to simple ones, and why so? because then it [the understanding] can grasp them more quickly and more simultaneously. But we would be disconsolate if we should thereby lose the perception and the presence of this knowledge; and the eternal striving to separate and penetrate all of our accumulated ideas, to make
them perceptual and present, I take as the second source of poetry.

The creator has hung a lead ball on our soul which, like the weights on a clock, through its downward force maintains it in continuous motion. Therefore, instead of scolding this faithful friend as the hypochondriacs do (amicus certus in re incerta, for what kind of a weathervane is our soul?), it is, I hope, a work of art of the creator to preserve all our knowledge until it has become perceptual.

The senses, yes the senses—it depends, to be sure, on the specific polishing of the lenses and the specific size of the projection screen; with all that, however, if the camera obscura has cracks—So far, so good. However, knowledge can be completely present and perceptual—and yet not poetical. But this is not the right point on which I must seize, in order to—

We call those minds geniuses which penetrate immediately everything which is presented to them, see completely through it so that their perception has the same worth, extent, clarity, as if it had been acquired by means of observation or by all seven senses. If you present to such a person a language, a mathematical demonstration, a distorted character, whatever you wish, before you have finished speaking, the picture is in his soul, with all its relations, light, shadow, coloring.

These minds, of course, can become excellent philosophers,
for all I know, analysts, critics—anything at all—even excellent readers of poetry, only something must be added before they themselves make, understand me well, not imitate, something. The foil, Christian reader! the foil which Horace calls vivida

vis ingenii and we call inspiration, power of creation, poetic ability, or preferably no name at all. To mirror the object: that is the difficulty, the nota diacritica of the poetical genius, of which there are said to have been since the beginning of the world more than six thousand, who, however, on Belshazzar's scales come perhaps to six, or, as you wish—

Because—and for this "because" you are perhaps already impatient—the [poet's] ability to imitate is not that which is found latent in all animals—not mechanics—not echo—not, to save breath, what belongs to our poets. The true poet does not combine in his imagination as it pleases him what the gentlemen like to call beautiful nature, which, however, with their permission, is nothing but mistaken nature. He takes a point of view—and then he must unify the subject accordingly. One could confuse his painting with the object, and the creator looks down upon him, as upon the small gods who sit on the thrones of the earth with His spark in their breasts and according to His example maintain a small world. [I] wanted to say—now what did I want to say?—

Here let us make a small pause until the next hour, during which I will climb up the mast with Columbus' crew and see where
we are headed. I myself do not yet know, but I do smell land already, inhabited or uninhabited, [it] is all the same. Parnassus still has many undiscovered lands, and I bid you welcome, shipman, you who also might perish in the search! Sacrifice for the happiness of man! Martyr! Saint!

In the first section of my essay, gentlemen, I have [given] you my humble opinion—give me a ready tongue, [make] my thoughts swift and yet precise—For I am very much afraid that the fire of youth might lick away the little portion of patience which I find in my temperament and which, however, for a prose writer, and especially for a critic—Indeed, since the critic is more occupied with the understanding than with the power of imagination, he requires a large measure of phlegm—

Thus I have found on phlegmatic consideration of these two sources that the latter, imitation, [is] common to all the fine arts, just as Batt—22 the first, however, observation, is said to be common to all sciences without distinction to a certain degree.

Poetry seems to be differentiated from all arts and sciences in that it has united both of these sources, has considered everything carefully, has thoroughly investigated and penetrated it—and then in faithful imitation reproduced it. The latter [imitation] yields poetry of substance; the former [observation], of style. Or vice-versa, if you wish. The dilettante can know the
thing completely, but he cannot reproduce it so faithfully. All the strokes of his wit cannot do it. Therefore, he always remains just a dilettante, and in the marble hands, Longinus, Home (whoever wants to may write his name down), will never outweigh the poet. But these are only thoughts beside the skull of the philosopher's bureau—let us return to our theater.

And [let us] try to develop the nature of the drama, derive from this examination a few corollaries, support [them] with good reasons, and in the third part defend [them] against the attacks of our opponents, that is, of all the more refined public, to see if we perhaps can cause them to transform the siege into a blockade, because then—

That the drama demands an imitation and consequently a poet, will probably not be contested. Even in ordinary life (let us ask the common people, whose wit is not yet so vicious as to recoin words) an able imitator is called a good actor, and if the drama were something other than imitation, it would soon lose its audience. I venture to maintain that, excepting the satisfaction of animal desires, there is no single pleasure for human nature in which imitation is not one of the bases—imitation of the deity included, etc.

Aristotle himself says—

Now the question is, what is really the main object of imitation in the drama: man? or the fate of man? Herein lies the
knot from which two such different threads have taken their origin as the drama of the French (would we say of the Greeks?) and of the older English, or rather of all the older northern nations who were not under the Greek yoke.

Listen, therefore, to Aristotle's definition of the tragedy, but let us afterwards have the boldness to give ours. A great undertaking, but who can compel us to use glasses which are not ground for our eyes?

He says in the sixth chapter of his poetical horsemanship:

"Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative."23

He enlarges further on this definition, "Again, Tragedy is the imitation of an action; and an action implies personal agents, who necessarily possess certain distinctive qualities both of character and thought; for it is by these that we qualify actions themselves, and these—thought and character—are the two natural causes from which actions spring, and on actions again all success or failure depends."24 He then explains these expressions so that he will avoid all misunderstanding. "By Character I mean that in virtue of which we ascribe certain qualities to the agents. Thought is required wherever a statement is proved,
or, it may be, a general truth enunciated. You see from this explanation that we, according to our modern dramaturgical language, can combine and translate both words by one. Character, the distinguishable sketch of a man on the stage. Thus, he demands that we adapt the plot of the drama to fit the characters of the personal agents, as he more clearly explains in the ninth chapter: "It is, moreover, evident from what has been said, that it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen—what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity.

Now that he himself has maintained that the character of the personal agents contains the basis for their actions and therefore also for the plot of the drama, it should rather surprise us that he continues in this same chapter: "But most important of all is the structure of the incidents. For Tragedy is an imitation, not of men, but of an action and of life, and life consists in action, and its end is a mode of action, not a quality." As if the quality of a man could be presented at all without placing him in action. He is this and that, how do I know, dear friend, how do you know, have you seen him in action? Granted that drama necessarily includes action in order to make a quality perceptual: is therefore action the ultimate purpose, the principle? He continues: "Now character determines men's qualities, but it is by their actions that they are happy or the reverse. Dramatic
action, therefore, is not with a view to the representation of character: character comes in as subsidiary to the actions."^28 (Aristotle could not teach otherwise with the models which he had before him and whose origin in the religious beliefs I will later make clear. Right here is the invisible point on which he rests all the magnificent structures of the Greek theater: on which we, however, cannot possibly continue to build.) "Hence the incidents and the plot are the end of tragedy; and the end is the chief thing of all. Again, without action there cannot be tragedy; there may be without character." We cannot possibly say that he is correct in this, no matter how correct he may have been in his time. Experience is the eternal atmosphere of the strict philosopher; his reasoning cannot and must not depart from it a whit, no more than a projectile can fly out of its calculated path. Since an iron fate determined and governed the actions of the ancients, they could be of interest as such without seeking the basis for them in the human soul and making it visible. We, however, hate such actions for which we cannot comprehend the cause, and have no interest in them. Hence the present-day Aristotelians, who paint merely emotions without characters (and whose other possible merits I will not discuss), feel compelled to assume one particular psychology for all their personal agents, from which they can derive all the phenomena of their actions so dexterously and naturally, and which basically, with these gentlemen's
permission, is nothing other than their own psychology. But where then is the poet, Christian reader! where is the foil? These gentlemen may well be great philosophers, [have] great general knowledge of human nature, knowledge of the laws of the human soul, but what has happened to individual [knowledge]? To unmeticulous [knowledge], to that which always shines uniformly, to that which reflects; whether it be searching in the grave-digger's breast or under the queen's crinoline? What is Grandison, the abstract dream, in comparison to a Partridge who stands there? For the average public, Rousseau (the divine Rousseau himself—) will have infinitely more charm if he exposes the finest veins of the passions of his breast and makes his readers familiar with things perceptually, which they previously had already felt dimly without being able to give an account of them. But the genius will appreciate him for saving characters from the snares and web-of-graces of the more fashionable society; even so, they, like Samson, to be sure, often leave their strength in a woman's lap. Let us listen further to our Aristotle: "The tragedies of most of our modern poets fail in the rendering of character; and of poets in general this is often true." (Certainly not in our day, plots and fates are exhausted, the conventional characters, the conventional psychologies; we stand there and must continually warm up leftovers; I don't care for such poets, thank you.) He uses the examples of two painters, Zeuxis and
Polygnotus. I will pass over this section and not [spread] my paradoxes to all the fine arts—but just one side glance: according to my feelings, I value the characteristic painter or even the caricature painter ten times higher than the idealistic one, hyperbolically speaking, for it takes ten times more skill to represent a figure with just the exactness and truth with which the genius knows it than to work tediously for ten years on an ideal of beauty which in the last analysis is such an ideal only in the brain of the artist who produced it. In the morning of the world it was different; Zeuxis worked in order to cultivate taste and critics for us, Apelles' coal, taken from a divine fire, created like God for its own sake. It is necessary for the idea of beauty to have penetrated our poets' entire being—for, away with the raw imitator, who has never warmed himself at this light, to Thespis' cart—but it must never lead or restrain their hand, or the poet will become—whatever he wants, would-be wit, quack, bed-warmer, sugar-teat-maker, only not dramatist, poet, creator—

Aristotle: "A further proof is that novices in the art attain to finish of diction and precision of portraiture before they can construct the plot. It is the same with almost all the early poets." This is not saying anything. *Dictione et moribus* should not be put in the same class. I am not referring to the blurred characters of which all our bearded and unbearded school exercises
are so full; in which a fuzzy approximate similarity leaves most of
the work to the spectator's phantasy — nor to the famam sequere sibi
convenientia finge of Horace, nor to his servetur ad imm, which the
Journal Encyclopédique calls soutenir les caractères. I am referring
to characters who shape their own events, who, independent and unchange-
able, turn the whole huge apparatus themselves, without needing the
godheads in the clouds except as spectators, [I am referring] not to
pictures or puppets — to men. Hal for this, though, point of view
is necessary, view of the godhead in the world, which the ancients
could not have, and which we to our shame do not want. He continues,
for he could not do otherwise: "The Plot, then, is the first principle,
and, as it were, the soul of a tragedy: Character holds the second
place. A similar fact is seen in painting. The most beautiful
colours, laid on confusedly, will not give so much pleasure as the
chalk outline of a portrait. Thus Tragedy is the imitation of an
action, and of the agents, mainly with a view to the action."

Vice versa —

What he [thought] of the sentiments, the diction, the Melopée, the
scenery — we cannot possibly take up here if we do not want to
expand to a treatise. We have dealt with his dramatical principles,
with the basis of his critical structure, because we must surely
indicate the reasons why we are so obstinate as not to continue to
build on the same. Let us go over to the foundation of the
structure of Shakespeare, our countryman, and see whether the miracles
which he performs on every sound head and uncorrupted heart really are attributable to a je ne sais quoi of the most enlightened critics, to chance, perhaps to a planet, perhaps even to a comet, because he [is supposed] to have known nothing of Aristotle — And what the devil — did Nature ask Aristotle for advice when she [decided to make] a genius?

I must still refer to one of his fundamental laws that has made so much commotion merely because it is so small and that is the so terrible, deplorably famous bull of the three unities. And just what do three unities mean, my friends? Is it not the one which we seek in all objects of knowledge, the one which gives us the viewpoint from which we can embrace and survey the entirety? What more do we want, or what less do we want? If the gentlemen care to limit themselves to one house and one day, for heaven's sake, keep your heirlooms, your miniatures, and leave us our world. If you are so concerned about having a place from which you might not move in order to follow the poet, how then is it that you do not choose Archimedes' point of rest: da mihi figere pedem et terram movebo? Is it not a greater and more divine pleasure, the movement of a world, then of a house? And what a favor of the genius to lead you to the heights where you can view a battle with all its tumult, lamenting, and horror, without involving your own life, peace of mind, and comfort, without being an actor on this cruel stage! Dear gentlemen! What more can we do to make you happy? How can
you be made more comfortable? Only watch, rest and watch, we demand no more. Why, then, do you not remain on this star and look down at the world, from childish fear of breaking your neck?

What is meant by the three unities? I can suggest to you a hundred unities, all of which, however, always remain one. Unity of language, unit of religion, unity of customs — and what does it all come to? Always the same, always and eternally the same. The poet and the audience must feel, but not classify the one unity. God is but one in all his works and so also must the poet be, no matter how great or small his sphere of activity may be. But away with the schoolmaster who with his ruler raps a god on the fingers.

Aristotle. The unity of action. Fabula autem est una, non ut aliqui putant, si circa unum sit. He always separates the action from the principal character, who non malgré must fit into the given plot as a rope through the eye of a needle. I will discuss that later. For the ancient Greeks it was the action which the people gathered to see. With us it is the series of actions which must follow each other like claps of thunder, one supporting the other, flowing together into one great whole which constitutes nothing more nor less than the principal character standing out from the entire group of his fellow characters. Therefore, with us fabula est una si circa unum sit. How can we help it if we no longer find pleasure in disconnected events, but have become old enough to wish for a whole? If we want to see the man where they saw only unchangeable fate and its secret influences. Or are you afraid, gentlemen, to see a man?
Unity of place — or rather, unity of chorus, for what else was it? The people come forth on the Greek stage as if they were called and bidden and no man is offended by that. For we are happy merely because they are there — for the chorus is there because they are supposed to come and a friend quickly thinks up what the causa prima and remotion for the arrival of his friend probably was as he is embracing him.

Unity of time — wherein Aristotle sees the essential difference between tragedy and epic poetry. At the end of the fifth chapter: "Epic poetry agrees with Tragedy in so far as it is an imitation in verse of characters of a higher type. They differ, in that Epic poetry admits but one kind of meter and is narrative in form. They differ again in their length: for Tragedy endeavors, as far as possible, to confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit; whereas the Epic action has no limits of time." Are, however, ten years, which the Trojan War lasted, not just as definite a time as unus solis ambitus? What, dear critic, is the idea of this differentia specifica? It is indeed evident that in epic poetry the poet himself appears; in the drama, however, his heroes. Why, then, do we separate the word represent, the only predicate to this subject, from the tragedy, the tragedy represents, the epic relates: but, to be sure, in our present-day tragedies nothing is represented anymore.

If we consider the fate of the genius (I am speaking of writers),
among all sons of the earth theirs is the most frightful, the saddest.

I am speaking frankly, of the greatest products of ancient and recent
times. Who reads them? Who enjoys them? — Who digests them?
Feels what they felt? Follows the invisible chain which ties together
their huge whole machine without losing it [the chain] even once?

What genius reads the other in this way? In the middle of the brightest
aspect of the magic powers of the other and their effects and impacts
on his heart, press millions of unbidden thoughts — your page of
criticism — your incomplete novel — your letter — even your laundry —
gone are the sweet illusions, he writhe on the sand again, who a
moment before was swimming in a sea of bliss. And if the genius reads
in such a way, o poe, then how does the philistine read? Where is
living representation of the thousand great details, of their
connections, of their entire divine impression? What can the epic do
to hold fast our attention, to chain it to his galley and then travel
away with it? Spill a supply of wit, which exhausts itself a thousand
times (see Fielding and others), or, like Homer, blindly despise the
public and sing for oneself? The playwright has it better, if fate
would grant his wishes. Worse if it only grants half. If I am read
and the head is so sick or so small that all my brush strokes swim
past unnoticed, let alone flow together into one painting — comfort!
I would not want to be read. Looked at. However, if I am produced
and mistaken — then I would like to hurl palette and colors into the
fire, more deeply affected than if a ladies’ prayer society should
accuse me wrongfully of being a scoundrel. Am I then a scoundrel?
And am I then — and clap your hands — what you want to make of me?

But how I could profit (says the artist); oh, what more glorious thanks? what more blissful a reward for all the toil, fear, and suffering, than to see my ideas come alive, realized — in comparison to which monuments and pensions, to which the artist never wished to know the way, are nothing at all. To see the entirety and its effect as I imagined it — oh ye patrons of the arts! oh ye Maecenas! ye Augustus! non saginandi only room to produce our drama and you to be spectators. Your entire people. Since you must play your roles before your entire people on the stage of the world, and you cannot bribe your posthumous fame — where would you perpetuate yourselves but here? Horace proposed the carmen lyricum, but lo, I say unto you, your fame dies with its sound, is itself only sound, never transformed into contemplation, into movements of the heart. Caesar was never mourned in Rome as he was at the hands of Shakespeare.

We see, therefore, the advantage the dramatic poet has over the epic, how much shorter the way to the goal of making his great picture live, if he only has a sure hand, beats with the pulse of nature, is led by divine genius. Judge of the quick and the dead. He does not need to fetter the senses with wit and tinsel, the scene-painter does that for him, free from all artifices, already tinted by the magical light on which the former squanders so much wealth, he leads us where he wanted to, without making other expenditures than that
which he so gladly spends, his genius. A hundred things he takes for granted which I need not name here — and how much higher he must fly! Oh me, that I must betray the secrets of our art, pull away the veil which concealed its charm so prettily and modestly in its folds, and yet perhaps I have betrayed too little. Nowadays, when one wants to eat without opening one's mouth, Venus Urania herself must become a coquette. — away! Revenge!

Since we have broken the foundation of the Aristotelian drama a little and must rightly be apprehensive — let us try the other end, let us climb on the roof of the French edifice and question our sound reason and feeling.

What have the senior students of the Jesuit college furnished us? Masters? We shall see. The Italians had a Dante, the English, Shakespeare, the Germans, Klopstock, who already regarded the theater from their own point of view, not through Aristotle's prism. No sneering because Dante's epic appears here. I see drama everywhere in it, movement, heaven and hell, analogous to the monastic era. Since there are no limitations of place and time, and, to be sure, if we are not granted a place on earth, then we have to play in hell. What Shakespeare and Klopstock in his Bardlet did, we all know. The French, however, are alarmed by all such nonsense, as Voltaire in reply to La Motte, who half drunk stammers out something of which he himself does not know how to give an account: "Les Français sont les premiers qui ont fait revivre ces sages règles de Théâtre, les autres peuples — Mais comme ce
It does not take long to prove that the French dramas correspond to the rules of Aristotle. They have exaggerated them to a point which produces deep anxiety in every man of sound feeling. Nowhere in the world are there such pondering observers of the three unities: the arbitrary knot of the action has been worked to such perfection by the French yarn-weavers that one must indeed be amazed at their cleverness, that they know how to confuse the simplest and most natural events in such strange ways. And so, never has a good comedy been written abroad which has not been produced again and again in altered form by fifty of their best minds. They see, like Aristotle, the entire difference of the drama in that it lasts for twenty-four hours and *suavi sermone*, see his definition. The narration in the drama and in the epic is all the same to them, and, like Aristotle, they make the characters not only matters of secondary importance, but they, as Madame Dacier has quite nicely explained, do not even want to tolerate them at all in tragedy. A misfortune that the good woman always thought of characters as masks and caricatures, but who can help that?

If, therefore, the French dramas for the most part are cut out according to the rules of Aristotle—and his expounders—if we previously found dissatisfaction with the theory and here with its execution—what remains for us? What else but to let nature
be the architect, as Virgil describes Dido:

Talis Dido erat, thela se laeta ferebat
Per medios, instans operi regnisque futuris.
Tum foribus divae media testudine templo
Septa armis, solioque alte subnixa resedit
Jura dabat, legesque viris, operumque laborem
Partibus aequabat iustis—52

Is it not this, that you perceive in all French drama (as in the novels) a certain similarity of plot, which, if one has read or seen many, becomes indescribably loathsome? An obvious proof of handicraft. For nature in all her effects is manifold, but handicraft is simple, and it is the breath of nature and spark of genius which sometimes to our satisfaction compensates us through a small change. Fear not, dear public, no matter how wide you open the dams or how broad you place the boundaries, that you will be flooded by would-be poets. They do not love the open field, they feel better behind the outworks of handicraft. It is not a little thing to cast our snares for the hearts, to charm the thousand minds and make them willing to follow us. The French intrigues, of which they have whole shops full, which they alter, enrich, patch together like the fashions, do they not become more uninteresting, more tasteless from day to day? Their playwrights are like the joyful masters of ceremonies, who in the first half hour are bearable, in the second repeat themselves, in the third are no longer heard by anyone but themselves. I have just lately seen a long comedy which revolved about a mere pun. If such "trifles light as air" are handled by a Shakespeare!
if the intrigue constitutes the essence of the play, and the entanglement consists in one word, then the entire play is worth as much—as a pun. Whence, however, this glimmering poverty? The wit of a Shakespeare is never exhausted, no matter how many dramas he might have written. It [the poverty] comes—allow me to say it, you Aristotelian gentlemen!—it comes from the similarity of the personal agents, partium agentium. The variety of the characters and psychologies is the gold mine of nature. To this alone the divining rod of the genius points. And it alone determines the endless variety of the actions and events of the world. Only one Alexander and after him no more, and all the fury of parallel minds and parallel biographies will not produce a completely faithful copy of him. The parallel mania itself betrays these people and constitutes a special determining factor of their individuality.

It is no calumny (whether or not in the societies I leave undecided) that the French have no characters on the stage. Their heroes, heroines, burghers, burgheresses, all one face, one way of thinking; therefore a great uniformity of plots. Single caricature traits in comedies do not give clear outlines of characters; personified platitudes about avarice, no persons; a ticklish maiden and a boy, who for all purposes could interchange their roles, no lovers. I sought comfort in the so-called character plays, only I found as much similarity with nature (and even less) than the character masks at a ball have.
Their only remaining merit would be, therefore, the construction of the plot, the arbitrary placing-together of events, to which painting the poet lays down his own frame of mind as the basis. Therefore, his entire drama (I am speaking here of masterpieces) becomes a painting, not of nature, but of his own soul. And here we often cannot hope for the best view. If there is some vitality in him, in every puppet that he has leap about and nod we find his wit, his allusions, his emotions and his glance, composed merely into an arbitrary dance, which they all, one after the other, dance and then obediently take their leave. Which dance, like the quadrilles, is so repeatedly entangled, entwined, dispersed anew, that finally dancers and spectators lose patience.

Or if the mind of the poet is already dried up, then he compiles school scraps from Lucan and Seneca, or borrows from Euripides and Plautus, who at least have scholarly merit, and reworks it into beautiful, flowing verses, suavi sermone Or if he lacks everything, then he takes recourse to the—French character, which is only one—and is really the summun or maximum of all human characters. [He] makes his hero extremely in love, extremely generous, extremely angry, all together and all at the same time. All their poets and playwrights study this character incessantly and paint it like rouge on all faces without respect of persons.

I say, the poet paints the entire play from his own character (for the case just discussed really happens only with those
who themselves have no depth, no character). Thus Voltaire's heroes are almost always tolerant free-thinkers, Corneille's always Senecas. The whole world takes on the tone of their wishes. Even Rousseau in his Héloïse, the best book which has ever been printed in French, is no exception. No matter how much he alters, no matter how skillful he is in concealing himself behind the persons whom he lets appear, yet part of his wig, I cannot deny it, always peeks out, and I wish it were gone in order to lose myself completely in his world, to sip nectar in the palace of Armida. But that is only in passing; back to the theater. Voltaire himself perceived that an arbitrarily assembled plot which has its basis only in the wishes of the poet (often in his labor pains and author's sickness), not in the characters, lacks the charm and attraction which, even after our curiosity is satisfied, can entertain and nourish us at the second glance. He tries to attain this like a skillful coquette by means of external ornaments. The diction, the symmetry and harmony of the verse, the rhyme itself, for which he almost becomes a martyr. Pradon and Racine wrote a Phaedra. "La conduite de ces deux ouvrages," he says, "est à-peu-près la même. Il y a plus: les personnages des deux pièces se trouvant dans les mêmes situations, disent presque les mêmes choses; mais c'est là qu'on distingue le grand homme et le mauvais poète, c'est lorsque Racine et Pradon pensent de même, qu'ils sont les plus différents." Mark well, "Racine et Pradon." Here only Racine is on the stage, and there only Pradon. But have
we then called forth the two gentlemen? They could have waited until the piece was finished.

Granted that with a moderate portion of general knowledge of the human heart this group might know how to arouse something more than curiosity, even emotions, yet usually the spectator's warm power of imagination must do most of the work with the nicely ornamented words as with the ornaments of a whore—examine yourselves, gentlemen! When you leave the theater what is the residuum in your breast? Smoke which disappears as soon as it touches the air. You observed the poet's artistry, you watched it very closely, yet it is only a play, you say, and who was that in the second loge? I'll wager you are scratching your head if you paid careful attention, and I tell you in confidence that such a play in complete earnestness strains the mind of the spectator more than that of the actor and poet put together. For he must fill in the details, that—

Now, if after each play the author appeared in person, gave an examination, made remarks, pleaded the probability of his inventions and dreams, and made you thus per syllogismum confess that his play was nice. The way it is, however, one remains in doubt and that is the worst that one can carry home from a play.

In order to spice this dry piece of reasoning with a clove, I will—

Voltaire and Shakespeare once contended with one another on the death of Caesar. The whole city knows about it. I would like to say,
a little bird once concealed himself beneath the wings of an eagle, afterward he jumped on his back and then: "Quo me Bache rapis tui plenum?" After this (the story is jolly) a famous art critic clapped his hands: "il nostro poeta ha fatto quel uso di Shakespeare che Virgilio faceva di Ennio." One should just consider with how much caution—and that he brought only the seriousness of the Englishmen to his national stage, but not their wildness. I would have nothing against that if I were allowed to translate caution as weakness, the harsh expression ferocità as genius and write the moral beneath it:

If the fox cannot reach the grapes—

Let someone else take up a detailed parallel of *Julius Caesar* and *La mort de César*—not the two-fold construction of the plot, grouping of characters, preparation and development of the situations—saying nothing of Portia, whom V[oltaire] did not find worthy—nothing of the close blood-friendship between Caesar and Brutus, which he [describes] as a blue patch on a green dress—[but] merely comparing both poets where they allow one and the same person to speak in one and the same situation, in order to show "lorsque Racine et Pradon pensent de même qu'ils sont les plus différents."

For instance, the monologue of Brutus when the great deed was still an embryo in his brain, was ripened by fate, then broke through all hindrances and was born like Minerva in full armor. V[oltaire] perhaps did not see this course of a great decision in the soul. First to Shakespeare, gentlemen! His Brutus walks in a night when
heaven and earth are about to perish in the storm, calmly in his
garden. Tells from the course of the stars how near the day is.
Can not wait for it, orders his boy to light a candle. "It must
be by his death: and, for my part, I know no personal cause to
spurn at him, but for the general."—Still philosophizes, still de-
liberates, calmly and coldly, while all of nature preludes the ap-
proaching symphony of his emotions. Lucius brings him notes, which
he found on his window. He deciphers them in the flashes of light-
ning. "Speak, strike, redress!—Brutus, thou sleepest"—ha, it is
ripening, the decision is ripening—"O Rome, I make thee promise."
Lucius tells him that tomorrow is the 15th of March, Caesar's coro-
nation day. Brutus sends him out. Now the agonized cry of birth
in short, terrifying words: "Between the acting of a dreadful thing
and the first motion, all the interim is like a phantasma or a hide-
ous dream: the Genius and the mortal instruments are then in council;
and the state of man, like to a little kingdom, suffers then the na-
ture of an insurrection." Lucius announces the conspirators—now it
is there—the entire way—let them come—the reception is short, be-
fitting heroes, who are in tune, who understand each other at a
glance. Cassius wants them to swear (the impetuous cholera). Bru-
tus: "No oath! If fate of the human race, deep feeling of dying
freedom are too weak motives, then each go back to bed"—Why should
I copy it here, you may read it yourself. It cannot be cut into
pieces. "Boy! Lucius!—Fast asleep?" Who does not perceive here
Addison's seraph on wings of the storm wind executing divine commands
—in whose breast does not the dignity of human nature swell up at
this and let him feel the full extent of the word: "man"—

Let us visit the French Brutus!

Already in the first act he has disclosed to Caesar his complete,
heart-felt opinion, tells him to his face that he is a greater ene-
my of Rome than the Parthians, that he abhors his tenderness. In
the second act he immediately begins to inveigh against Anthony, who
demanded nothing more from him than an interview with Caesar and
Anthony, or rather—inveigs against Roman virtue: "Tu veux
être un héros, mais tu n'est qu'un barbare," then goes away
very angrily and now — notice how the champagne bottle bubbles
over when the cork is out: "Quelle bassesse (Brutus) O ciel!
et quelle ignominie, Voilà donc tes soutiens (until the last
drops), Voilà vos successeurs Horace, Decius" (in short, he
calls on all the heroes of ancient Rome in chronological order
for support, and Pompey gives him a favorable hearing in loco).
"Que vois-je grand Pompée — Tu dors Brutus — Rome mes yeux
sur toi seront toujours ouverts (a pun) Mais quel autre billet" (heavens! all at once and on the spot. It occurred to us all to
adorn Pompey's statue with it — and predicted that he would
find it there. In this way one must beautify history. The window
— how common! but Pompey's statue — I wonder why they didn't
go ahead and put it in his mouth, as the old painters did their
notes?)

Now the conspirators come to him. Cimber sets the epic trumpet to his mouth. Whoever wishes may compare his declamation with the narration of Casca in Shakespeare. Now, what does Cassius do next? He preaches, and Brutus makes a fine critical-philosophical comment on the life-history of old Cato from Utica. "Sa morte fut inutile—et c'est la seule faute de tombe ce grand homme." Now the preaching continues for two pages, each says with other words what the other said before him. Suddenly Brutus becomes excited, because the act is about to end: "Jurez donc," he says, "avec moi, jurez," he says, "surt cette épée, par le sang de Caton (although he made a blunder then) par celui de Pompée," and Cassius swears with him and Brutus, steps to the statue of Pompey and swears again and—have you had enough, gentlemen?—allons, préparons nous, c'est trop nous arrêter.—

What can I do about it?—Shall I compare the funeral orations for you?—I think I have already said too much, and, if I am allowed this chemical metaphor, one need put only a few drops of each of two acids in a solution to see which is the stronger and chases the other out into a receiver. Yet, since there are creatures and readers of all kinds, even authors must—but Signor Conte, that you as such an enlightened critic [wrote]: "il nostro Poeta ha fatto quel uso di Shakespeare che Virgilio faceva di Ennio quo nunc se proripit ille?"

A few more words about Aristotle. The fact that precisely in the tragedy, where everything is determined by the personal agents
and which could be called a dramatized epic, he gives the character so little, surprises me. It would not make sense to me if I did not find the reason for it deeper, in nothing less than the *ethos* of the dramas.

The dramas of the ancients were all very religious, and was this any wonder, since their origin was public worship? Since for them *fatum* was everything, they believed they had committed a sin if they let events be determined by the characters. They recoiled from the thought. It was a divine service to recognize the terrible power of fate, to tremble before its blind despotism. Therefore, Oedipus was a very suitable subject for the theater. They did not like to present a Diomedes. The main emotion to be aroused was not respect for the hero, but blind and servile fear of the gods. Therefore, how could Aristotle [*maintain*] anything else: "secundum autem sunt mores." I say blind and servile fear when I speak as a theologian. As an aestheteician, this fear was the only thing which gave the tragedy of the ancients the *haut gout*, the bitter charm that alone was able to arouse their emotions. From the beginning of time and in every age the feelings, emotions and passions of men have been crammed into their religious beliefs. A man without religion has no feeling at all (woe be to him!), a man with false religion false feelings, and a poet who has not fathomed the religion of his people is less than a carnival musician.

What happens now to the Oedipus of Mr. Voltaire, of his "impitoy-
53. Shakespeare, Othello III, iii, noted by Loewenthal, op. cit.

54. Character in Tasso's Jerusalem Delivered.

55. Voltaire, Précé de la première édition de Marianne, 1724. Noted by Loewenthal, op. cit. "Add to this also, that the principal personages in both pieces, as they are in the same circumstances, say almost the same things; but this is the very place which distinguishes the great man from the bad poet; when Racine and Pradon have the same sentiments, they differ most from each other..." transl. W. F. Fleming (New York, 1901) p. 236.


57. Lettera del Signor Conte Algarotti al Signor Abate Franchini, quoted in Voltaire's Oeuvres Complètes, III, 347. "...our poet has made that use of Shakespeare that Virgil made of Ennius." The original Italian differs from Lenz's version: "...il nostro poeta ha tolto di Shakespeare quello che di Ennio toglieva Virgilio."

58. Julius Caesar, I, ii.

59. Anthony: "But thou wouldst be a hero, yet are naught but a barbarian..."

60. II, ii, Brutus: "What baseness, heaven! what ignominious slaves! Behold, my wretched country, your support, Horatius, Decius..."

61. Ibid., "What do I see, Great Pompey...Brutus thou sleepest...My eyes are ever open still for thee...Another paper!"

62. II, iv, "...but little did his death avail mankind...there only erred the greatest of mankind."

63. Ibid., "Swear then with me upon this sword; all swear by Cato's blood, by Pompey's..."

64. Virgil, Bucolics, III, 19, "Where is that fellow rushing off to?" Transl. Bryce (London, 1902) p. 15.

65. Poetics, VI, 14, "Character holds the second place." Transl. S. H. Butcher, op. cit.

66. Oedipe, V, iv, "Unmerciful gods, my crimes are yours."
ables dieux, mes crimes sont les vôtres." "May God forgive me, but as often as I have heard this, I have taken my hat reverently between both hands and implored the grace of heaven for the poor actor who had to speak blasphemies because he had learned them. And that which in the Greek's play caused me to sob out my complete sympathy, in the Frenchman's turns my heart to stone with disgust. Who? What? Oedipus? Did that happen? If it did happen, why do you bring it on the stage as it happened, why not rather, as Aristotle himself desired, as it should have happened. With the Greek, Oedipus had to become a monster of unhappiness because Jocasta had offended Apollo through her inquisitiveness and made light of her respect for him. But with the Frenchman, he should have deserved his unhappiness, or off the stage with him. At least you must throw me a plank, poet, to which I can hold if you lead me to this height. I am calling you to account. I'll not let you put someone on the torture rack without saying why.

In order to mark off the limits of our tragedy, analogous to our religious beliefs and entire way of thinking and acting, more correctly than has been done up to the present time, we must proceed from a point different from that of Aristotle. In order to find our own, we must consult the popular taste of ages past and of our fatherland, which still today is, and will remain, popular taste. And there I find that in tragedy or Staatsaktion, it is all the same, it always breaks forth (whether or not the aestheticians
want to hear it), "that's a fine fellow! those are fine fellows!"
However, in comedy it is different. At the most insignificant,
funny, farcical, unexpected event in common life, the barkers cry
with their heads turned sideways: "comedy!" "That is a comedy!"
groan the old women. The principal perception in comedy is always
the event. The principal perception in tragedy is the person who is
creator of his events.

Thus, entirely contrary to Madame Dacier in her foreword to
Terence, whose hands I kiss most courteously at this opportunity.

Tragedy with us, therefore, was never, as with the Greeks, the
means of preserving noteworthy events for posterity, but rather note¬
worthy characters. For the former we had chronicles, romances, festa¬
vales; for the latter, presentation, drama. The character with all
his secondary characters, interests, passions, actions. And when he
was dead, the play ended, unless his death caused effects which
threw an even brighter light on the person. Therefore, our oldest
playwrights without hesitation often lead us in one act through a
number of years. They want to show us the complete character in all
his relations. Indeed, Han Sachs has no scruples against letting
his long-suffering Griselda in one scene be wooed, marry, become
pregnant and bear a child. Rather, in the prologue he warns his
audience of the all too strong illusion and assures them on his word
of honor that everything is so arranged that no one will be harmed.

Why the confidence in his public's power of imagination? Because
he was certain that they had assembled with the same intention with which he had appeared; namely, to show them a man, not a quarter of an hour.

Thus it is with the historical plays of Shakespeare; here I would like to say character plays, if the term were not so misused. The mummy of the old hero which the biographer anoints and embalms, into which the poet breathes his spirit. Then he rises again, the noble dead man. In glorified beauty he comes forth from the history books and lives with us for the second time. O where can I find words to indicate this affectionate feeling for the resurrected dead—and shouldn't we follow them with joy to Alexandria, to Rome, in all the happenings of their life and retain this for ourselves: blessed are the eyes which have seen you? Don't you wish you could see them, gentlemen? In each of their smallest actions, changes of fortune, and blows of life? In their ever intense reaction and greatness of spirit? Would you rather pause at the moor-pond than at the green sea in inextinguishable movement and with the bright rock in the midst? Yes, gentlemen! if you do not consider the hero worth the trouble of asking about his fortunes, then his fortune will not seem to you worth the trouble of your looking around for the hero. For the hero alone is the key to his fortunes.

It is an entirely different matter with comedy. In my opinion the central theme of a comedy is always a situation; of a tragedy, a person. A misalliance, a foundling, any whim whatsoever of a strange
mind (the person need be known to us only insofar as his character can have occasioned this whim, this opinion, even this system; here we do not demand to know the entire person). So, gentlemen, that is my opinion of Shakespeare's comedies—and all comedies which have been written and can be written. The characters are there for the actions—for the pleasing results, effects, counter-effects; group them about a central idea—and it is a comedy. Yes, of course, for what else in the world is a comedy supposed to be? Ask yourself and others! In tragedy, however, the actions are there for the sake of the person—therefore, they are not within my power; whether my name be Pradon or Racine, but rather they rest with the person whom I present. In the comedy, however, I will proceed from the actions and let whatever characters I wish take part in them. A comedy without characters is of no interest; a tragedy without characters is a contradiction in terms, an absurdity, an oratorical figure, a soap bubble over the mouth of Voltaire or Corneille without existence and reality—a wave of the hand makes it burst.

Well, that's it, gentlemen! I am too tired to say more. But because everyone must make smoke who would start a fire. I am certain that it was not long enough to excite attention—nonetheless, my conscience rebukes me for saying too much already. For it is such a disagreeable matter to chatter about things which can only be seen and felt, about which nothing can be said—\textit{qui hedera non ager}. If I had only accomplished with these observations what Petronius in
his *Banquet of Trimalchio* that the Romans between the monstrous meals of the Saturnalia were served an emetic, also probably fast acting purgatives, in order to renew their appetites.

Whoever still has the appetite for it, I can serve him a popular play—a comedy by Shakespeare—which up to now has not been translated. His language is the language of the boldest genius, who stirs up earth and heaven in order to find expression for the thoughts streaming toward him. A man in every situation equally skilled, equally strong, he built a theater for the entire human race, where each could stand, be astonished, rejoice, find himself again, from the highest to the lowest. His kings and queens are as little ashamed as the lowliest rabble to feel warm blood in their beating hearts or to give vent to humorous gall in roguish jest, for they are people, even underneath the crinoline. They know no vapors, do not die before our eyes in idle formulas, are not acquainted with fatal decency. Therefore, you will not see here a play which only interests such a one who looks through glasses focused first this way and then another. But whoever desires and chooses, everyone, if he just brings eyes and a sound stomach with him, who is capable of good spasmodic laughter—but I am forgetting that I am not announcing the original, but rather *eheu discrimina rerum* my translation—may it come forward anyway, my Hercules, even if it should be in the chemise of Dejanira—
NOTES TO CHAPTER I

2. Goethes Werke (Weimar, 1890) XXVIII, 75-77.
5. Briefe, p. 15
8. Briefe, p. 237
10. Froitzheim, op. cit., p. 47.
12. Sauer, Deutsche National Literatur, V, 80, xii.
NOTES TO CHAPTER II


2. Ibid., p. 41.

3. Ibid., pp. 57-58.


5. Ibid., p. 340.


NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. *Briefe*, p. 28.


NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. Bode, ed. (Hamburg, 1773), containing the following: Herder, Auszug aus einem Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder der alten Völker, and Shakespeare; Goethe, Von deutscher Baukunst; Frisi, Versuch über die gotische Baukunst; Löser, Deutsche Geschichte.

2. Published at Goethe's own cost, (Darmstadt, 1773).

3. Ars poetica, 11.286-7. "Nor is it least to their credit that they have been courageous enough to leave the footsteps of the Greeks," transl. Walter Jackson Bate, Criticism: The Major Texts, ed. W.J. Bate (New York, 1952) pp. 55-56.

4. "plea for good will"

5. Noctium Atticarum, VI, 5.


7. I have been unable to find a reference to three actors who share one role, although having two actors share one role, one to gesticulate, the other to declame, was common practice on the Roman stage.


9. The parentheses are Lenz's; the brackets are mine.

10. i.e., French

11. i.e., British

12. Philipp Cluver (Klüber, Cluverius) (1580-1623) historian and geographer.

13. i.e., the five senses, see: Bunyan, Holy War (Cambridge, 1905) p. 190.

14. i.e., into the next world.

16. Ramus (1515-1572), refuted Aristotle's logic and set up his own system. He became a Protestant and was killed in the St. Bartholomew's Massacre.


19. i.e., all one's wits.


23. Butcher, p. 22.

24. Ibid., p. 23.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., pl 25.

27. Ibid., p. 23.

28. Ibid.

29. Title character of Richardson's novel, Sir Charles Grandison (1754).


32. Famous Greek painters, 5th century B.C.

33. Butcher, p. 23.

34. "speech and manners"

35. Ars poetica, l. 119, "Aut famam sequere aut sibi convenientia finge." "Either follow tradition or else make what you invent be consistent," transl. Bate.
36. *Ars poetica*, ll. 125-127, "Siquid inexactum scena committis et andes/ Personam formare novam, servetur ad inum/ Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet," "If you try something not yet attempted in the theater, and boldly create a new character, have him remain to the close the sort of person he was when he first appeared, and keep him consistent," transl. Bate.

37. *i.e.*, Encyclopaedia, noted by Loewenthal, op. cit.

38. "to sustain the characters"

39. "musical composition"

40. "Give me something on which I can firmly plant my feet and I will move the earth." Noted by Loewenthal, op. cit.

41. *Poetics*, VIII, 1, "Unity of plot does not, as some persons think, consist in the unity of the hero." Transl. Butcher, op. cit.

42. "Unity of plot does consist in the unity of the hero."

43. "first cause" and "secondary causes"

44. Butcher, op. cit., p. 22.

45. "for shame"

46. "not to fatten us"

47. Odes III, 30 and IV, 3, noted by Loewenthal, op. cit.


49. "The French are the first who have revived these wise rules of the theater, the other people—But how just this yoke was, and how reason finally triumphs over everything."

50. "with sweet talk"


52. *Aeneid*, I, 11. 503-538, "Such was Dido, so moved she joyously through their midst, pressing on the work of her rising kingdom. Then at the door of the goddess, beneath the temples central dome, girt with arms and high enthroned, she took her seat. Laws and ordinances she gave to her people; their tasks she adjusted in equal share," transl. H. Rushton Fairclough (London, 1916) p. 277.
53. Shakespeare, *Othello* III, iii, noted by Loewenthal, op. cit.

54. Character in Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*.

   Noted by Loewenthal, op. cit. "Add to this also, that the principal personages in both pieces, as they are in the same circumstances, say almost the same things; but this is the very place which distinguishes the great man from the bad poet; when Racine and Pradon have the same sentiments, they differ most from each other...," transl. W. F. Fleming (New York, 1901) p. 236.


57. *Lettera del Signor Conte Algarotti al Signor Abate Franchini*, quoted in Voltaire's *Oeuvres Complètes*, III, 347. "...our poet has made that use of Shakespeare that Virgil made of Ennius." The original Italian differs from Lenz's version: "...il nostro poeta ha tolto di Shakespeare quello che di Ennio toglieva Virgilio."

58. *Julius Caesar*, I, ii.

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60. II, ii, Brutus: "What baseness, heaven! what ignominious slaves! Behold, my wretched country, your support, Horatius, Decius..."

61. Ibid., "What do I see, Great Pompey...Brutus thou sleepest...My eyes are ever open still for thee...Another paper!"

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63. Ibid., "Swear then with me upon this sword; all swear by Cato's blood, by Pompey's..."


66. *Oedipe*, V, iv, "Unmerciful gods, my crimes are yours."
67. Political drama, popular during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

68. Character in play by Hans Sachs, Comedi Griselda, 1546.

69. "who are not without laurels"

70. The longest portion of the book Satira.

71. "alas, the differences in things"
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