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Selling Fiction: the German Colportage Novel 1871-1914

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Selling Fiction: the German Colportage Novel 1871-1914

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Dedication

For my parents.

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Selling Fiction: the German Colportage Novel 1871-1914

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My dissertation project investigates the late nineteenth-century German *Kolportageroman* (colportage novel). Colportage novels, serial novels sold by door-to-door book salesman, constituted an important nexus of influence in nineteenth-century popular print culture. Their connection to other media and genres such as the periodical press and classical drama has, however, not been recognized. My dissertation remedies this by exploring the broader cultural significance of these novels as key in the development of early mass media and culture in Germany.

My approach to the colportage novel draws on theoretical notions from media studies and literary scholarship to broaden a literary understanding of the narrative qualities and cultural importance of "cheap literature" and the strategies of modern serialization. The colportage novels' serialization and their interconnection with the larger media and literary landscape offers a perspective on this literature that contrasts with traditional literary scholarship, which has been largely unable to divorce itself from the idea that inexpensive, mass-produced popular literature is simplistic, detrimental to its readers, and symptomatic of social inequality.

In my work, I discovered that the novels had a close, competitive and symbiotic relationship with news, adapting current events into novelizations almost as soon as they occurred. I was also surprised to discover that the novels sometimes adapted canonical works of German literature. Reflection on the contradictory convergences between the news and fiction, high and low, whole and fragment in many of these novels sheds light on this neglected literary form as a kind of literature that was exciting, current and provided readers with much more than merely romance or excitement.

An overarching theme in my findings is what I call an "aesthetic of authentication" that seems to be a unifying trait in colportage novels that also links them to observations other scholars have made about nineteenth century popular culture. Authentication strategies were built into the production, marketing and texts of colportage novels, offering readers the pleasure of meditating on details, examining disparate accounts of events, and sifting through "evidence," which was sometimes supplied in the form of illustrations or other graphic supplements.

In the first instance, I examine the fictionalization of current events as an example of the intersection between reportage and colportage. Colportage novels almost kept pace with newspapers, presenting fictional accounts of events like the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) already in 1870. One nineteenth-century publisher suggested that many people subscribed to colportage novels as an alternative to weekly newspapers. Examining colportage novels within the context of the larger media landscape shows how popular fiction and news reporting spurred each other on in terms of setting the public agenda and in creating an appetite for periodicals and serial fiction.

In the context of the second topic, I study the unexpected overlap between the traditional canon and colportage novels and the way in which colportage authors engaged with their sources. Rather than slavishly imitating them or simplifying them, the two adaptations I examine show that the novels were active and explicit in dismantling and analyzing their sources, dramatizing literary critique and rendering the source material in an expansive and multivocal way. The novels also expand on these stories with subplots and new characters. Adaptations of canonical literature are evidence that this popular print form employed notions of canon and quality in its narrative and publication strategies, even while it openly flouted inherited notions of authorship and writing.

Serial literature, including colportage novels, was a worldwide sensation in the late nineteenth century, but has now largely been forgotten. Book covers with prices in four or more currencies, and illustrations with trilingual captions are evidence of a vast global network of popular literature that was experiencing incredible growth at the turn of the twentieth century. Some colportage novels met with international success, but there were also national niche bestsellers. My project situates colportage novels within a single national print culture, but contributes to a transnational discussion already underway among historians and literary scholars working on other types of serial fiction.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Colportage novels constituted a distinctive popular print form that flourished in Germany in the latter half of the nineteenth century and just after the turn of the twentieth. Although they were quintessentially ephemeral commercial products, they represent an important nexus of influence in popular print culture. Their close connection to other media and genres such as the periodical press, daily papers, and canonical literature has been misunderstood and underappreciated. In this dissertation, I contend that these novels had a broader cultural significance as vehicles of both information and sensation.

Colportage's historical connection with the transmission of information has been crystalized in the modern German usage of the word *Kolportage* and *kolportieren*. Today, rather than indicating a type of book-selling, these words have narrowed in meaning to apply almost exclusively to tabloid or otherwise suspect news reporting, and to the activity of rumor-mongering or retailing sensational tales. However, this modern reduction of the term captures what was most exciting about colportage novels – their function as wells of information and sensation. This kind of circulation of information provided people with news and political ideas admixed with fantasy and the grotesque. Far from being backwards, regurgitating clichés or fairy tales, "cheap" fiction like colportage novels exerted influence on public discourse and their authors marshaled a variety of innovative strategies to achieve this. By examining them more closely, we can see the larger literary landscape of the time reflected in these texts. Lack of research, lack of visibility and lack of understanding have plagued this marginal literary form – thus

with the next few pages I hope to shed some light on what colportage novels are and present just some of the potential research questions they can help answer.

DEFINING THE COLPORTAGE NOVEL

For readers today, the word "novel" suggests a longer prose work bound in a single volume. In the nineteenth century, the novel appeared in an evolving variety of forms. These forms varied from country to country, and the colportage novel itself seems to be a uniquely German invention, although its creation was sparked by foreign influences. The next chapter will trace connections among British and French publishing innovations, Germany's publishing status quo at the time and the advent of the colportage novel, in order to position these novels, and the special culture of practices surrounding them, in a broader tradition of popular publishing. In this introduction, however, I want to limit myself to a pared down definition of these novels and primarily discuss problems with defining colportage novels that have plagued literary historians before me and that shape my project.

To begin, I want to briefly examine the vagaries of translation, the coinage and my use of the term "colportage novel." "Colportage" and "colporteur" are words that may be familiar to scholars of nineteenth century religious print in the Anglo-American context. The Oxford English Dictionary defines colportage as "The work of a colporteur; spec. the distribution of religious books and tracts by colporteurs" (*"Colportage"*). The headword colporteur yields the following definition "A hawker of books, newspapers, etc. esp. (in English use) one employed by a society to travel about and sell or distribute Bibles and religious writings" (*"Colporteur"*). Although there is some use in German of the cognate *Colportage/Kolportage* for referring to sales of religious tracts during the

nineteenth century, the word in German refers much more broadly to itinerant book selling and was in use from the earliest days of printing. It comes from French and was likely coined as a description of the wooden *Bauchläden* or hawker's trays used by sellers and carried around the neck (French *col* for "neck" and *porter* for "carry") (*"Colporteur"*). In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the word *Kolportage/Colportage* began to apply more narrowly to cheap and disreputable literature sold door-to-door. This type of literature garnered many less neutral epithets as well, among them *Hintertreppenromane* and *Dienstmädchenliteratur*. Throughout this dissertation, I will use the English "colportage" and "colporteur" as equivalents of the German meaning for the sake of simplicity and to avoid distracting italicization and capitalization in the English text.[1]

First and foremost, what I am referring to as colportage novels were a motley and varying body of publications. They were novels published in part-issues (*Heftchen*) that were most often sold by itinerant salesmen directly to customers for cash (*Kolporteure*, *Hausierer*). As a general rule, these novels were written and printed specifically for this type of distribution and generally were not available at established bookshops, unless the bookshop had a sideline in colportage. Once these novels had attained a relatively standard form, the colporteur typically delivered them to customers once or twice a week.[2] Although the colportage novels have a fairly long pre-history, by the 1870s they had taken on a fairly standard appearance. Door-to-door salesmen, or colporteurs, sold

[1] In his English-language work on the novels, Ronald Fullerton has chosen to refer to them as "colporteur novels."

[2] My description here primarily applies to colportage novels from about 1870 and especially those after 1883, when legal rules led to a change in sales practices and also resulted in a streamlining of the form. In the very early years of colportage novel production, from 1840-1860, which are outside of the scope of this dissertation, a great variety in forms could be observed.

the novels as subscriptions. Subscribers would then receive 32-page *Heftchen* (parts), one or more times weekly over the course of one to two years. The full length of a novel could be up to 2,000 pages in 100 to 150 parts, each containing a few chapters of a narrative. The sensational stories they recounted, populated with disappointed lovers, heroic soldiers, terrible villains, exotic foreigners, and fair maidens, revolving around crime, passion, and current events, were written to appeal to a relatively new readership, the lower middle and working classes. The parts were sold in wrappers, usually cheap colored paper printed with an illustrated front cover bearing the title, price and installment number and a back cover with advertising. Each part also usually contained a color or black-and-white illustration, often depicting an exciting scene, and two to three chapters of the novel itself. If a reader subscribed to the whole run and kept all of the parts, rather than passing them on to other readers or using them to light the oven, at the end of the novel she could have them bound into a large volume of narrative profusion that was by turns sordid, sentimental, entertaining and informative, but also programmatic, didactic and politically oriented.

Selling subscriptions entailed obtaining readers' interest and fostering habitual reading practices. To do so, parts one through five of a novel were brought by the salesman and given "on loan" to interested readers, to back up the salesman's own persuasive powers and selling pitch. When the salesman came with the sixth part of the novel it was time to commit – to either buy one through five plus the sixth part, or to return them all. Publishers printed parts one through six in great quantities; from this point forward, however, the number of parts printed was gradually decreased. The publishers did not expect their customer base to be constant, and customers did not

consider their subscriptions to be binding. Publishers, booksellers and their agents had to plan, canvas for and cope with a discriminating readership that would not continue a novel if it failed to meet their expectations.

What I have described above represents the ideal colportage novel. In the library and in antiquarian bookshops today, one is confronted with a very different reality. Most of the colportage novels that survive are bound together in heavy volumes. Some are bound in one giant volume, others in two or three, some in volumes lopsided in length (one volume very thick, one much thinner). Their illustrations, which are a characteristic part of the form, are only sometimes included. I construct this definition of the "ideal" colportage novel from nineteenth-century trade magazines and records about the business of colportage as well as volumes that include wrappers and illustrations.[3] But most of all, the lifetime of collecting of one man, Günter Kosch (1925-2006), has provided librarians and literary historians like myself with the means to examine these novels as a unique body of works.

Why, then, did this task fall to a private collector? Colportage novels have not been well preserved over the approximately 145 years since their advent on the German book market. There are many reasons for this. They were books that were, more than any other kind before, literally consumed – they were read to the point of disintegration (*zerlesen*), they were not objects of social prestige and were often simply passed on or repurposed (for kindling, e.g.) once read. Materially, the cheap paper they were printed on has not fared well; every example I have seen during my research has been crumbling

[3] For examples, see the Berlin *Deutscher Colportage-Kalender* (1904-1911) and the *Fachzeitung für den Colportage-Buchhandel und verwandte Geschäftszweige* (1885-1910), as well as other publications of the Berlin Central-Verein Deutscher Buch- und Zeitschriftenhändler, which are available in the Berlin Staatsbiblitohek.

to a greater or lesser degree. The work of the cultural anthropologists Kaspar Maase and Sophie Müller on library collections of serial novels since 1913 finds that acquisition policies did not rule out such literature; they write, "[p]opuläre Serienliteratur war aus Sicht der Deutschen Bücherei grundsätzlich sammelwürdig und wurde somit zum Teil eines Archivs, das auch als nationales literarisches Erbe gedacht war" (328). This was especially true for banned or censored literature, which many colportage novels published in the early 1900s were. The *Deutsche Bücherei* was the core of what would become the *Deutsche Nationalbibliothek*. Established in 1913, it was the library in Germany dedicated to collecting copies of every book printed in the country. However, it is clear that the full coverage project of this national library failed to net many colportage novels. First, because the mandate to collect copies of every German book published did not reach backward in time – especially for cheap serial novels. Second, as Maase and Müller note, the material itself was difficult to deal with – in ethnographic interviews with library employees and their work with library records, they found that collecting, cataloging and indexing serial novels was most affected by material issues (329-32). Third, although the consensus reached on collection practices was effectively based on criteria outside of debates about *Schmutz- und Schundliteratur*, important figures in the founding of the library strongly opposed the inclusion of colportage based on the triviality of their content, not its amorality; essentially, colportage novels (and cookbooks as well) were deemed so like one another, so repetitious, that libraries should not devote shelf space to them. Finally, during their peak production period, colportage publishers and salesmen actively sought to prevent the novels from being acquired by commercial lending libraries because this could impact sales. Publishers' profit models were also

based on large numbers of subscriptions – none could be spared for libraries. These efforts to keep the novels out of lending libraries may have actively deterred early public libraries from acquiring them as well.

Kosch, the private collector, began buying the novels initially out of enjoyment – he claimed to have read most of the thousand-page-long books he painstakingly gathered. However, as he became aware of the value and rarity of the book collection he was amassing, he undertook to create a German colportage novel bibliography with the assistance of the media and culture scholar Manfred Nagl, who has worked on science fiction and other popular genres. The Kosch bibliography, published in 1993, has been instrumental in creating a bibliographic profile of this group of printed works that had previously been nearly invisible in historical book catalogs and bibliographies. The bibliography registers 1,550 colportage novel titles, some not included in Kosch's physical collection. Eventually, the 2,505 colportage volumes and 12,775 *Heftchen* Kosch collected were acquired by the *Deutsches Literatur Archiv* (DLA) in 1995. After Kosch's death, the archive received an additional tranche of books and parts in 2009 – these were additional books Kosch had continued to acquire after the main body of his collection had gone into the archive's holdings. The extent and intactness of the DLA's collection is thus unrivaled anywhere in Germany. Although bound volumes of some novels are to be found occasionally in the catalogs of older libraries in Europe and the United States, it is only by browsing through the Kosch collection that one can comprehend the diverse surviving material forms of the colportage novels, the varying trends in illustration and advertising, as well as the physical evidence of their circulation such as sales stamps, subscription information and order cards. The DLA recognizes the

value of this collection and has been prompted by recent research to apply for funding to index the collection fully.

In taking the Kosch collection as a corpus for my work with these novels, I discovered that colportage novels are in fact best viewed as a heterogeneous group of books, defined most prominently by a cluster of overlapping practices that govern their production and circulation. They are also most strongly united by a clear social network of innovators, upstart publishers from Saxony, who pioneered new marketing techniques aimed at expanding readership and capturing markets that traditional booksellers neglected (Graf 37ff.).[4] The importance of this network is shown by a series of intermarriages between these publishing house families, but also by the way trends in colportage publishing and selling practices emanated from German urban centers in the central eastern part of the country, primarily Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin, quickly taken up by imitators elsewhere. The strong influence of this network, as well as the proliferation of a variety of new media (radio, film) after the turn of the century, may also partially explain why colportage novels had such a relatively short period of efflorescence, enjoying the greatest prominence in the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s.[5]

[4] There were, of course, earlier innovators who paved the way for and perhaps influenced these publishers in other branches of publishing, for example Josef Meyer (1796-1856) and his *Bibliographisches Institut* house in Hildburghausen, who harnessed itinerant sales methods for a variety of publications, prominent among them encyclopedias. Another pioneer was Johann Jacob Weber (1803-1880), who was responsible for great marketing innovations in the newspaper branch. August Scherl (1849-1921) dabbled in colportage sales in North Rhine-Westphalia before moving to Berlin and becoming a major competitor in daily periodicals.

[5] I share Gabriele Scheidt's view that the decline of colportage novels had to do with the infrastructural improvements "die der wachsenden Mobilität der Bevölkerung um die Jahrhundertwende Rechnung trug [...]. Die mobile, pendelnde Käuferschaft wurde nicht mehr, wie beim Kolportagevertrieb üblich, zu Hause aufgesucht, sondern über ein möglichst weitverzweigtes Distributionsnetz erreicht." (126-127) She also suggests that the shift towards *Serienhefte*, serial works that offered a complete story in each part, at the turn of the twentieth century may be attributable to generational transition as well.

The heyday I attribute to colportage novels in these decades is based on bibliographical records and, to a degree, on Gabriele Scheidt's exhaustive account of trade organizations and system analysis of the novels. There is also a qualitative difference between colportage novels published between 1871 and 1914 and novels that were issued before and after these dates. The form was at its most standardized and successful during this time. Despite the information that is now available about colportage novels, it is still difficult to recreate an accurate quantitative picture of their scale or their numerical importance in book selling at the time. Here, we have to piece together clues and sources that are quite impressionistic in their description of the sales and other business aspects relating to colportage novels.

First, the readership for these novels is, generally speaking, a larger one than for other works sold by colporteurs, which could include much more expensive magazines and encyclopedias. In 1899, Karl Henrici, a contemporary, wrote an article called "Die Verhältnisse im deutschen Buchhandel," which gives us some idea of the novels' relative sales volume. In 1899, colportage novels made up about 20 percent of a salesman's sales (Henrici 217). This puts them second in prominence only to family journals, magazines and *Unterhaltungsblätter*, which constituted 60 percent of total sales and were sold at a variety of price points. While there was some overlap between the customers who bought colportage novels and the ones who subscribed to family journals, it is likely that they were usually separate readerships. [6] Friedrich Streissler's 1887 handbook *Der*

[6] Jutta Bendt's work on the private library of a rural nobleman, Count Leutrum, shows that his catalog contained several novels by Eugen Hermann von Dedenroth (1829-1887), who wrote colportage novels under the pseudonym Ernst Pitawall (28). However, I do think that Pitawall's historical novels were closer akin to, for example, the very popular Clara Mundt (1814-1873), who wrote under the name Louise Mühlbach. Not only were both of these writers active at the very beginning of colportage novel production, both moved in wider literary circles and published a great deal beyond colportage novels. The Kosch bibliography only includes three works of Mundt's that were reprinted as colportage novels in Prague. As I

Kolportagehandel: Praktische Winke für die Einrichtung und den Betrieb der Kolportage in Sortimentsgeschäften devotes some time to discussing the best ways for salesmen to approach different middle class readerships and offer them works that match their political orientation or religious confession. To follow up, however, he notes that selling ten-penny novels, or colportage novels, is somewhat different. He hastens to explain that he does not want to explicitly recommend "eine Verbreitung der niedersten Schundlitteratur [...]" but that he wants to show that "Jeder kann, ohne seinem Stande etwas zu vergeben, diese Zehnpfennig-Litteratur absetzen wo sich *Gelegenheit* zum Absatz bietet" (Streissler 7).[7] He goes into great detail on how the bookseller can be affected by sales in colportage novels:

> Je mehr sich das Geschäft [mit Kolportageromanen] ausdehnt, um so lästiger wird dem Prinzipale der direkte, mit fortwährenden Unannehmlichkeiten verbundene Verkehr mit dem Publikum. Man muss bedenken, dass man zum grossen Teile mit der breiten, leicht erregbaren Masse des Volkes zu thun hat, welche sehr oft an dem Buchhändler ihren Zorn darüber auslässt, dass im sechzigsten Hefte des Romans die süsse unschuldige Wanda noch immer in den Ketten des scheusslichen wollüstigen Grafen Kuno von Reckenfels schmachtet. Was soll der Buchhändler thun, wenn sich eines Morgens ein Arbeiter einstellt und Kent's Schimpfwörter-Lexikon vom Stapel lässt, einzig und allein, weil es unmöglich sei, dass der Räuber Rosza Sandor im Gefängnis mit einer unter der Zunge versteckten haarfeinen Feile seine aus fingerdicken Gliedern bestehende Kette in zehn Minuten durchfeilt habe. "Das muss ich als Schlosser gewiss verstehen," schliesst der gute Mann seine Epistel. (16)

Thus, dealing in colportage novels brought the bookseller into direct contact with the "broad, excitable masses" among the population, illustrated by an anecdote about readers taking out their emotions and expectations about the course of the novels on the seller.

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mentioned above, what is included in the definition of the colportage novel is actually a broad spectrum of varying publications, unified by a special kind of distribution and other practices. Therefore I am tempted to view authors like Mundt and Dedenroth as "crossover" authors who were not strictly producing colportage novels.

[7] In this quotation, the emphasis on *Gelegenheit* is in the original. Throughout this dissertation, where I quote sources, I have chosen to keep the spelling as in the original rather than updating to the latest German spelling reform. Spellings from the late nineteenth century are not difficult for the modern reader to decipher. I have done my best to indicate where there is an actual misprinting or spelling mistake.

The pricing and sales methods were also geared towards a readership with less disposable income; the parts were sold against cash payments, and salesmen kept records of the parts a reader purchased – Streissler notes that this was done in order to allow some flexibility for the subscriber to the colportage novel; he could take parts as he could pay for them.

With regard to the actual size of this special population of readers, I have had to rely on figures related to hypothetical sales and contemporary impressions of the sales of individual titles because records of sales are, at this point, not available. Kosch and Nagl note that, during peak production between 1871 and 1880, almost 400 new colportage titles were produced (25). This seems like a small number, but the print runs for colportage novels were quite large for the time. Tony Kellen's 1899 article in the *Preussisches Jahrbuch*, "Der Massenvertrieb der Volksliteratur," complains that higher quality books, which he refers to directly as expensive, garner only 1,000 to 2,000 subscribers, whereas "[...] in der Kolportage-Literatur wird die schlechteste Waare in einer Anzahl von 50,000 bis 100,000, ja 200,000 und mehr aufgelegt" (79). Kellen goes on to add the caveat that, though these numbers seem large, they pale in comparison to the huge printing volume and wide distribution of Bibles, reading primers, and cookbooks, perennial bestsellers (80). Kellen also cites numbers from colportage publisher advertisements, thus figures that are likely to be exaggerated in order to entice independent sales agents. For example, he notes that the works *Der Scharfrichter von Berlin* and *Die Todtenfelder in Sibirien* had sales volumes of 250,000 and 150,000 copies, respectively (85). As with the identity of the readership, these accounts can only provide us with an impression of the size of the colportage novel's distribution. However,

I think these numbers justify the conclusion drawn by Reinhard Wittmann, an important historian of the German book trade, that

> [...] die Kolportageromane [haben] die Kaufkraft wichtiger lesefähiger und lektürehungriger Schichten bis hin zum unteren Mittelstand weitgehend absorbiert, haben ihnen den Weg zum Angebot des herkömmlichen Buchhandels erschwert – aber sie haben als elementare Lebenshilfe zugleich die Gewohnheit des Lesens als tägliche lustvolle und tröstende Praxis für Hunderttausende, wenn nicht Millionen begründet und bewahrt. (275)

I agree with Wittmann's remarks about the large sales volume, reach and market coverage obtained by the novels. However, the idea that colportage sales in particular hindered their public's access to traditional bookstores seems far-fetched, as customers of the "lower middle classes and below" who were initiated into habitual reading practices by these serial novels were likely not very interested in entering bookstores to begin with; Graf also points out that these classes could afford novels only because they were offered as cheap weekly commodities – books in bookstores were still out of reach (35-36).

In short, colportage novels were widely read among a relatively new readership with growing purchasing power and increasing leisure time. Next, however, I want to turn to the traces these novels have left thus far in scholarship on German literature. Here, once again, these traces are somewhat vague, often subject to broad generalization and pat explanations. There is also evidence in this history of the material problems noted by Maase and Müller above that so affected libraries' holdings of colportage novels.

COLPORTAGE NOVELS IN SCHOLARSHIP

Existing scholarship on colportage novels falls into three broad categories: first, criticism and descriptions of the industry dating from the period during which they were produced; second, scholarship dating from before World War II; third and finally, scholarly work dating from around the 1960s to present day. As will become clear, the

breadth of scholarship has always been constrained by the accessibility of primary sources, but also by theoretical prejudices and preferences connected to the popular status of this literature.

Criticism roughly contemporary to the appearance of the novels, i.e. 1850-1914, is difficult to amass and sift through because most of the contemporary criticism to be found is in literary journals, trade magazines or handbooks devoted to the book trade, many of which are poorly indexed. However, there are several important contributions here that have had lasting influence on later scholarship. I have also been able to include some less well-known examples in this summary that show there was a class of people, typically entrepreneurs, who took a serious interest in the changes colportage publishers and their wares were making to the book trade. Many of these sources also make clear contemporary anxiety surrounding the role of colportage novels in commerce and in society – for example, condemning the novels for purveying unreliable information and immoral stories, or suggesting that the sales strategies used to distribute them were calculated to dupe ignorant and low-earning city-dwellers out of their money.

Among the most relevant contemporary accounts on the place of colportage novels in German literature is Otto Glagau's 1870 article in the journal *Der Salon für Literatur, Kunst und Gesellschaft*.[8] The article opens by taking a position against Robert Prutz's important theoretical essay on German *Unterhaltungsliteratur* from nearly three decades previous.[9] Already in the mid-nineteenth century, scholars, readers, and critics

[8] Glagau (1834-1892) was a journalist who started his career at a liberal paper, the *Berliner Nationalzeitung*, but turned away from liberalism following the financial crisis of 1873. Today he is primarily known as an outspoken anti-Semite. His magazine *Der Kulturkämpfer* (1880-1888) was a primary platform for this.

[9] Prutz (1817-1872) wrote prose and poetry and worked as a publicist and editor. He was affiliated with the liberal Vormärz literary movement. He also wrote on literary history and criticism. The essay I refer to

were well aware of the divide between high and low in literature, between the canonical and the popular, and what that difference meant. Prutz's 1847 essay acknowledges the universal need for reading material, regardless of educational level, and criticizes the gap between what sold well and widely, *Unterhaltungsliteratur*, and what was high quality. Essentially, Glagau's article attempts to measure the distance between Prutz's perspective of 1847, and the state of reading culture in 1870, lamenting the advent of colportage novels as evidence of a grave regression: "Wir sprechen heute nicht mehr von einer 'Literatur zweiten Ranges', sondern von der Colportage-Literatur; wir sagen nicht 'Lectürbuch', sondern Colportage-Roman" (662). This concern with "worthless" or "degenerate" popular literature is a central issue in the study of colportage novels, and it will come up again and again.

Glagau's article provides colorful descriptions of sales techniques and some information about the production and distribution of the novels, but his main focus is on colportage novels' popularity as a sign and exacerbation of social problems and on its negative impact on traditional book sales. At the time, he cites over 20 publishers in Berlin alone who are focused on colportage novel production and collectively responsible for around 100 new titles annually (51). Looking beyond Berlin, Glagau notes that over 500 colportage novels are produced per year in Germany, not to mention Austria, "wo die Colportage neuerdings einen besonders reichen Flor treibt" and this at the beginning of these novels' peak production period (51). Beyond expressing the general fear that colportage novels affect writers, booksellers and readers negatively, however, Glagau also notes that the publishers were successful in creating their own readership by

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here, "Ueber die Unterhaltungsliteratur, insbesondere der Deutschen," stands firmly in the tradition of separating literature into "U-Literatur", literature for entertainment (*Unterhaltungsliteratur*), and "E-Literatur", or beneficial, edifying literature (*Erbauungsliteratur*).

producing cheaply and in huge quantities, "[...] sie [die Colportage-Literatur] hat stets die große, ungeschiedene Masse im Auge: Mann und Weib, Alt und Jung, und sie speculirt auch auf den Aermsten; daher produzirt sie, massenhaft und anscheinend – spottbillig" (51). Further, he also notes with suspicion that colportage readers in fact look to the novels for more than entertainment:

> [Der Leser] greift nach den Colportage-Romanen in der festen Erwartung und Voraussetzung, dort auch einen Schatz allgemeinen Wissens zu finden; und selbstverständlich wird dieser Glaube von Seiten der Verleger eifrig genährt. Sie verfehlen nie, ihre Waare als "historische Erzählung", oder doch wenigstens als "historisch-romantische Geschichte", als "Zeitbild", oder "Sittenschilderung" zu bezeichnen; und sie betonen in den Prospecten stets mit fetter Schrift, daß der Roman auf "wahren Thatsachen" und "authentischen Quellen" beruhe; ja sie versichern nicht selten, daß dem Verfasser ganz besondere Quellen zu Gebote standen, und daß er tiefe Geheimnisse aufdecken werde. (56)

Despite Glagau's overall negative picture of colportage literature, this particular facet of the novels that he discusses is one that disappears from later critical assessments of the form. It is one that I deal with intensively in my own investigation into colportage novels because I believe his notion that readers expected verifiable information from colportage novels and that producers worked to fulfill this expectation is, in fact, an important reason for why colportage novels were so popular and so appealing.

Texts from this period outside of the realm of literary criticism also provide us with further background on the contemporary discourse about the colportage trade. Implicit critiques appear in articles describing the legal ordinances pertaining to door-to-door sales of printed material.[10] Karl Henrici's early contribution on the social and economic history of the colportage trade, already cited above, is an important landmark. By the time Henrici wrote his essay, colportage bookselling had established itself as a

[10] For example, see Otto Maier's report in *Die Nation* on a *Gesetzvorlage* from 1893 and an anonymous essay on amendments to the *Gewerbe-Novelle* from 1883 "Der Kolportage-Buchhandel und die Gewerbe-Novelle vom 1. Juli 1883."

full-fledged business with professional organizations and trade magazines advertising a spectrum of wares sold by colporteurs. Thus, unlike Glagau, Henrici is better able to survey the business world of colportage booksellers, describing the many different ways in which publishers and booksellers organized themselves and providing information about the working conditions and backgrounds of salesmen. His account is also one of the few that largely avoids the question of the quality of the literature, rather describing a highly specialized industry and its adaptations to changing legal conditions.[11]

Finally, texts about the "battle" against bad literature, such as Ernst Heilborn's article in *Die Nation* dated 1890, provide further evidence of the social and literary problems and opportunities presented by colportage novels during the era of their popularity. Heilborn's article, in particular, does not defend the niveau or content of colportage novels, but instead points out that the successful recipe of the colportage publishers should be imitated by societies interested in promoting "better" literature. He goes so far as to suggest that such advocates must actually read the literature they want to do away with in order to reach their goals. Kellen's 1899 article in the *Preußische Jahrbücher* also draws a similar conclusion. Not only does Kellen's article bring together some of the only statistics on publishing, already cited above, but it also makes a lengthy case for adopting some of the aggressive, competitive marketing strategies of the colportage industry in the attempt to disseminate higher quality literature (Kellen 79-80). As this makes clear, contemporaries who write about colportage novels reacted vehemently to the success of the format. Nearly all suggest that the consumerism and the broad appeal of the colportage novel must somehow be harnessed for the dissemination

[11] Adaptation to legal conditions brought about a significant shift in colportage format and marketing – this will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

of "better" writing. However, they also attribute the popular reception of the novels to the authors' use of clichés and manipulation of readers through suspense, a suspense that is also instrumental in the initial sale of the novel, as Glagau describes:

> Schon der Prospect, die bloße Geschichtserzählung muß sich wie der Roman selber anhören, den Leser in die größte Spannung versetzen, also daß er nicht widerstehen kann, auch wenn er von vorn herein nicht die geringste Neigung in sich verspürt, daß er flugs Feder oder Bleistift ergreift und auf das "einzig dastehende Werk" subscribirt. (53)

To conclude, I want to point out that neither Glagau nor any of the other contemporaries cited here admits to having read a colportage novel. Their judgments are based on sales prospectuses and titles alone. This does not mean that they should not be taken seriously – Glagau in particular makes some valid points about colportage novels and their content thanks to an extensive survey of prospectuses. However, from the beginning of a professional reception history, critics and historians have failed to account for the appeal of colportage novels by seriously looking into their content, and this is already the case for contemporaries.

Prior to World War II, scholars had access to a set of sources on these novels that are now lost or fragmented following the extensive bombing of the former German centers of colportage publishing in Leipzig, Dresden, and Berlin in the later years of World War II. It is for this reason, for example, that many twentieth-century accounts rely exclusively on statistics available in Kellen and Henrici. Of note in the pre-war period is Adolf Vogel's 1906 dissertation, a historical-critical analysis of the legal limitations placed on *Wanderbuchhandel*, and Franz Jahn's 1928 dissertation on *Kolportagebuchhandel*. Both of these volumes focus on creating a unified historiography of colportage, but in doing so, they lump the phenomenon of the late nineteenth century together with much earlier practices of itinerant book sales, thus minimizing the role of

the later novels in trade and failing to account for the major changes in practices and readerships over the centuries. Despite the clear link between older traditions of travelling book sales and colportage book selling, the drastic transformation in the scale and qualities of the practice justifies classifying colportage sales of the late nineteenth century as a "new" descendant form of the age-old *reisender Buchhandel*. The urban focus and rapidly developing marketing strategies alone differentiate nineteenth-century colportage sales from earlier forms.

The work of the several decades following World War II is varied in its scope and approach. First I will discuss historiographic contributions to the field. Next I will move on to work that analyzes colportage novels as a genre. Third, I will summarize a small part of the literature on Karl May (1842-1912) and Robert Kraft (1869-1916), the most well known authors of colportage novels, and certainly the only two on whom an abundance of primary source material exists. Finally, I discuss in greater detail the few literary interpretations of German colportage novels in the scholarship. Once again, scholars have been greatly limited by their access to the actual novels, and perhaps for this reason have focused solely on one or two titles rather than examining the larger breadth of the format.

German social historians were the first to delve into the topic of everyday literature or the "reading material of the masses," likely influenced by the French Annales School. Rudolf Schenda's history, *Volk ohne Buch* (1970), and Rolf Engelsing's treatment of reading habits, *Analphabetentum und Lektüre* (1973), consolidated the position of German popular literature as a problem to be considered by scholars in the 1970s, as did literary compilations of "trivial" literature like Walther Killy's, first

published in 1968. Schenda, in particular, addresses colportage novels in his work *Volk ohne Buch* as a distinct type of literature, although his brief account of its social significance and appeal only includes close reading of one partial copy of a novel. Perhaps in response to Schenda's inclusion of neglected print forms such as broadsheets (*Einblattdrücke*) and colportage novels, comprehensive histories of the German book trade began to give a more prominent place to accounts of colportage production (cf. Wittmann; Widmann).

Schenda, for his part, tries to strip away the negative qualitative judgments associated with the "popular" and to create space for understanding cheap print products as a social phenomenon. His definition of *populäre Lesestoffe* encompasses "the formal and economic radius of the literature" as well as its "sociological relevance"; this frame obviates the actual texts of the novels, but it is a significant change from other examples of *Trivialliteraturforschung* (Schenda *Lesestoffe* 25). Schenda's strong focus on theories of historical reception shines through in his careful reconstruction of the definition of popular literature, as does his overarching interest. He seeks to shed light on the social effects of intellectual deprivation on the lower classes that he views as rising from the dichotomization of literary production into high and low; he also posits that tolerated popular literature functioned as both a collectivizing force and a force for control or dominance (32, 9). His definition makes an important point clear: in the late nineteenth century an overwhelming portion of the population was grouped together and addressed as one reading audience by a huge variety of literature that does not frequently register on the map of literary studies even today (*Volk ohne* 35). Popular literature, according to Schenda, can be viewed as a collectivizing social force, broadly democratic in its

accessibility but exerting itself in the direction of conformity and simplicity. In the chapters to come, I have found, by examining textual strategies and content in colportage novels, that the narratives do work on behalf of conformity and simplicity, but also that they do a great deal of work for fantasies of complexity and disruption. Thus I seek to expand and complicate Schenda's argument based on close reading of colportage novels.

Other notable accounts of the history of the colportage trade include the compiled documentary material in Freidrich Elsner's 1971 two-volume history of book and periodical sales, Sarkowski's investigation of colportage as a sales method, and Ronald Fullerton's English-language dissertation and business history articles on the German book market. In particular, Fullerton's assertion that the production of colportage novels revolutionized the German book market has been important in my own thinking about the significance of this publishing format both as a product and as a form of literature.

Another interdisciplinary study that deserves mention here is Herbert Meinke's 1979 master's thesis, *Produktion, Distribution und Rezeption des deutschen Lieferungsromans*, which attempts to bridge the gap between historical and literary scholarship. He provides an excellent annotated bibliography and a good summary of the development of colportage novels, as well as a somewhat spotty and eclectic account of the social circumstances of its authors. Meinke makes a unique contribution to the history by suggesting a connection between legal constraints placed on colportage trade and the introduction of *Sozialistengesetze* in the late nineteenth century. Within the scope of his thesis, however, he is unable to read or discuss in depth the colportage novels that were closely implicated in this legal issue, namely novels that thematized the social question in a politically charged way. Some examples include the 1880 novel *Arbeit und Kapital*

oder Der Kampf ums Dasein[12] or the 1892 novel *Ferdinand Lasalle der Held des Volkes oder um Liebe getötet*,[13] or the 1910 novel *Else das schöne Fabrikmädchen oder Aus der Fabrik ins Fürstenschloss*, which was banned in 1916. This shortcoming must be attributed to the scope of his project as well as the status of primary sources at the time of his research. My dissertation does not delve into this area, but it is one where further scholarship could be very fruitful.

Since the 1960s, scholarship on genre fiction has also flourished, for example work on detective novels (*Kriminalromane*), adventure novels (*Abenteuerromane*), historical novels, and popular genre writers such as Karl May. Generally, colportage novels do not find a central place in these genre accounts; this is because they were long enough that they had to mix genres, freely including mystery, adventure, romance and other recognizable genre modes – not to mention their explicit aim to entertain every reader in a household. Nonetheless, there is some valuable work here. Notable among genre studies for its relevance to colportage novels is Volker Neuhaus's genre account of the "Sensationsroman" (sensation novel), focusing on the work of "Sir John Retcliffe," the pseudonym of Hermann Goedsche, an early and successful author of conservative historical colportage novels (cf. Kosch and Nagl 265).[14] Neuhaus explores the contributions of this single author and his imitators to what he views as a fairly clear genre of novel. However, his focus on Retcliffe closes out a diversity of other colportage novels that dealt with sensation. An exhibition catalog entitled *Abenteuerliteratur des 19.*

[12] This novel is attributed to the author George William MacArthur Reynolds (1814-1879), a British author who wrote *The Mysteries of London* and several other city mystery novels, but it is unclear which of his works was translated and published under this title.

[13] Interestingly, although the title touts only Lasalle, both Otto von Bismarck and Heinrich Heine also make appearances in this novel.

[14] Like Luise Mühlbach and Ernst Pitawall mentioned above, John Retcliffe enjoyed more middle class acclaim than did most colportage authors.

Jahrhunderts in Deutschland by Bernd Steinbrink, similarly groups an occasional colortage novels; the catalog provides insight into the materiality and image-text relationship of a cross-section of colportage novels within the framework of an "adventure" genre. Neither of these genre treatments, however, can account for the broad catalog of colportage novels, which range from romance to history to crime and everything in between.

Scholarship on colportage novels written by Karl May and Robert Kraft, the two "big names" to survive a stint in writing colportage novels, has flourished partially due to the accessibility of material and records about these authors, but also because they provided a steady and enduring supply of entertaining reading for multiple generations of young German readers. The influence of a population of dedicated fan-collectors and an audience for reissued copies of the novels cannot be underestimated in accounting for the coverage of the colportage works of these authors. In recent years the currency of the colportage novel among May scholars has been on the rise; a spate of *Sonderhefte* published by the *Karl May Gesellschaft* on May's colportage novels shows this.[15] These special publications deal overwhelmingly with biographical and social or gender-related motifs in the colportage novels May wrote. Often, these author-focused approaches use Ernst Bloch's notion of the colportage novel as a "daydream of revolution" as a theoretical opening for psychological and psycho-biographical treatment of the novels (168). Such work usually considers the psychological needs the stories served for readers, but in the case of Karl May, the most studied colportage author, there has also been an interest in tracing autobiographical strands in his colportage novels and linking them to

[15] See in the bibliography, for example, Ronald Funk, Ulrike Müller-Haarmann, Wilhelm Brauneder, and by Klaus Ludwig.

the writer's inner life. Evers article from the 1980s, which treats May's colportage novel *Der verlorene Sohn oder Der Fürst des Elends: Roman aus der Criminal-Geschichte* as a psychological processing of May's writing career, as well as Graf's 1994 article on May's colportage novels exemplify this trend.[16]

Alternatives to the Bloch interpretation in literary scholarship tend to hinge on other major ideas of neo-Marxist cultural critique, such as Haverkamp and Haverkamp in 1974, who bring together a fairly conventional history of colportage production with a brief interpretation of Karl May's colportage novel *Waldröschen*. Their brief interpretation of the novel's content deals with an understanding of the novel as schematic literature with a "systemerhaltend" function promoting black-and-white thinking among an uneducated audience (Haverkamp and Haverkamp 33-34). Despite the brevity of the literary treatment, this analysis is fairly characteristic for the late 1970s, and has its roots in Adorno and Horkheimer's critique of the "culture industry" (141).[17] Most recent work on colportage novels has been in this vein. What is most notable is a tension between critical-pessimistic (Adorno and Horkheimer) and apologetic-optimistic views (Bloch). In contrast, my work looks closely at several novels in order to examine what material in the novels might be "systemerhaltend" and how this material functions to structure information and experience. My findings do suggest that the novels cannot be viewed wholly as either revolutionary daydreams or system-reifying narratives – rather, they tend to pivot between these two poles, which might be part of their appeal.

[16] Also of note here is Gert Ueding's monograph on popular literature *Glanzvolles Elend: Versuch über Kitsch und Kolportage*, which also draws on Bloch.

[17] See also Ingrid Schuster's work which is admirable for its serious approach to a colportage novel as a literary text, but which is also exemplary of this theoretical approach.

There have been several scholarly works related to May that are dedicated to collecting and analyzing materials on the historical side of the colportage trade and the material production of these books. Ralf Harder's 1996 volume *Karl May und seine Münchmeyer Romane* provides excellent resources for background on authorship and the dates of May's novels. Although what I have learned shows that May's experience in the colportage industry can only be viewed as typical with caution, Harder's detailed compilation of the resources available in the Karl May archive is invaluable to our understanding of the industry and the conditions of production it entailed.[18] More information about authorship conditions will be provided in the next chapter.

As this brief survey demonstrates, colportage novels still lack a thorough integration into our understanding of German literature of the nineteenth century. Although there are several good accounts of their historical development, these novels are still imperfectly understood. Literary scholars have perhaps compensated for the heterogeneity and lack of definition given to these novels by placing them in a tight genre or motif frame, or by focusing on individual authors. This narrow view, however, necessarily excludes the wealth of materials, strategies and narrative modes colportage authors used to write their novels and keep readers hooked. In my work, I examine a much broader sample of these novels in order to tease out a new understanding of how and why they were composed and what their appeal was beyond the typical tropes of popular literature.

[18] May's publisher, Münchmeyer, was renowned for hiring ex-convicts and autodidacts like May. Although similar practices were likely employed by other publishers, there are many examples of prolific colportage authors who had solidly middle-class or even noble backgrounds, as for example Eugen von Dedenroth, who wrote under the pen names Ernst Pitawall or Eugen Hermann. He was a military officer before writing colportage novels (cf. Kosch 263). The most typical trait among colportage novelists was a deep engagement in journalism, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

In this dissertation, I use the breadth and accessibility of the Kosch collection to investigate the late nineteenth-century German colportage novel in richer detail. In this introduction, I have highlighted the heterogeneity of colportage novels as a group. However, by examining them and their content over the course of three years of research, I have found unifying traits that are unique to the format and that deserve closer attention, namely practices of authentication, their surprising political relevance and their use of adaptation and intertextuality. These unique traits make the broader cultural significance of these novels clear and suggest that the development of early mass media and culture in Germany hinged on sensation, politics and wide-spread cultural interest in currency, news and newspapers, and key symbols of national identity such as the literary canon.

My approach to the colportage novel draws on theoretical notions from media studies and literary scholarship to broaden a literary understanding of the narrative qualities and cultural importance of "cheap literature" and to improve our understanding of the strategies used in the early stages of modern serialization and mass publication. The colportage novels' serialization and their interconnection with the larger media and literary landscape offers a perspective on this literature that contrasts with that provided by traditional literary scholarship, which has been largely unable to divorce itself from the idea that inexpensive, mass-produced popular literature is simplistic, detrimental to its readers, and symptomatic of social inequality. Although my research has not led me to a point where I can champion these novels as empowering for readers, there is more here than meets the eye, and there are surprising dimensions to these texts that link sensation with eclectic, far-ranging topics of politics, current events and national identity.

In the second chapter that follows this introduction, I summarize the literary history of the colportage novel to highlight their key role in the German transition from printed material as a petty commodity to an industrial one. I also highlight the shrewd way colportage publishers sought out new readerships and new channels for sales and distribution that more conventional booksellers did not need or were unable to use. Colportage novels did not appear out of the blue – transnational networks in publication and shifts in regulation of printing and book selling influenced their genesis. Unlike earlier literary and publishing historiography that positions colportage novels in the context of centuries of tradition going back to the fifteenth century, I focus on the rapid changes and proliferation of print forms unique to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This is appropriate to the form because of the novels' short period of efflorescence but also because the media landscape and the social configurations of the late nineteenth century are quite unlike those in earlier periods.

In the third chapter, I examine the close relationship between colportage novels and contemporary events and news reports. Rather than being retrograde in their concerns, as scholars have typically argued, these novels often thematized the latest news and events. Colportage novels almost kept pace with newspapers, presenting fictional accounts of events like the Franco-Prussian war (1870-71) already in 1870. At least one nineteenth-century publisher suggested that many people subscribed to colportage novels as an alternative to weekly newspapers. The authors did not novelize current events in a vague or diffuse way, but rather systematically and strategically, infusing their narratives with a surfeit of detail and texts borrowed from authoritative sources. I call these "authentication strategies" and contend that they were an important part of the appeal of

colportage novels. These strategies were not confined to the text of the novels, but rather permeated the novels' paratextual and illustration material as well, which suggests authentication was a driving force in their production and in their broad appeal. These novels were successful in providing a unique *Weltanschauung*, and this perhaps can explain their success in the marketplace. Examining colportage novels within the context of the larger media landscape can show us how popular fiction and news reporting spurred each other on in terms of setting the public agenda and creating an appetite for periodicals and serial fiction.

In the fourth chapter, I turn from strategies of authentication to focus on the "affordances" of fiction in colportage novels and their techniques for narrating political conflict and issues in the context of several novels written about the Dreyfus affair. The authors' ability to marshal facts was always combined with fictional embellishment. Important figures and events became points of departure for the imagination and the centerpiece of patterns of affect and sentiment used to communicate current and political ideas. Essentially, this chapter acknowledges that the authors brought in the expected stock characters and clichés, but shows how these familiar tropes were used to underscore and sensationalize the political ideas that were at stake in real events.

In the fifth chapter, I examine the unexpected connection between colportage novels and the establishment of the German literary canon. Colportage authors engaged with canon-building in adapting famous classical dramas by Goethe and Schiller. These are especially interesting because, rather than "dumbing down" these works for uneducated readers, or making them sensational for readers addicted to thrills, they expand the stories with subplots and new characters, as well as with accounts of how the

famous work (i.e. Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*) diverges from historical record and folk legend. The authors engage with contemporary literary criticism in their narratives, thereby building up their own authority and lending it to the reader as well. These novels pick apart the values of the canon (originality, universality and authorial genius), even as they acknowledge their cultural supremacy. A better understanding of colportage appropriation of the canon gives us insight into how its producers balanced entertainment against notions of social prestige associated with reading "the classics" and shows how these novels addressed readers' cultural aspirations by thematizing the canon.

Serial literature, including colportage novels, was a worldwide sensation in the late nineteenth century, but has now largely been forgotten. Book covers with prices in four or more currencies, and illustrations with trilingual captions in some colportage novels are evidence of a vast global network of popular literature that was experiencing incredible growth just before the turn of the twentieth century. Some serial novels met with international success, but there were also national niche blockbusters. Reflection on the contradictory convergences between the news and fiction, high and low, whole and fragment in many of these novels will shed light on their importance as an effective force at work in the formation of public opinion. I also want to highlight the uniqueness of the German colportage novel in order to encourage further study of its significance and role in the late nineteenth century.

Chapter 2: Harnessing the market

In this chapter, I examine the transnational environment of market proliferation and experimentation in which the urban colportage novel had its roots. This environment of increasing commodification destabilized the relationship between literature's traditional status, as an achievement aligned with spiritual inspiration and paid in *Ehrensold* (Steiner 38), and the commercial delivery of fiction. From about 1850 onward, German print culture transformed to the point that even the literary establishment questioned whether content or publication format was essential in selling a novel. This environment, one in which market pressures and segmentation conditioned textual strategies, nurtured print formats like the urban colportage novel as a *Vorreiter* of modern mass media.

I first introduce two foreign models of fiction distribution that were turning points for their respective literary markets and were simultaneously appropriated, tested and adapted in German markets. In examining these models, the writings and career of German novelist Karl Gutzkow (1811-1878) serve as a point of refraction for understanding the reception of these models in Germany among the media-savvy and literary. Gutzkow's hopes for and pursuit of his own financial success as a professional writer contradict his polemic against the transformation of the literary market. This personal conflict shows the strain associated with media change and the advent of mass serial storytelling aimed at profit. He was not alone: writers, critics and publishers saw new distribution models as threatening to tradition, but also more and more as viable ways for expanding readership, securing the book trade, and achieving aesthetic renewal. The colportage novel, a format best defined by its circulation, was born under the sign of

this tension between tradition and innovation and came to embody this polarizing conflict for contemporaries.

The fundamental changes that prepared the way for colportage novels were sparked in Germany by outside impulses. The first change was the practice of "bundling" serial stand-alone fiction with illustrations, a craze that arguably was launched by the success of *The Pickwick Papers* by Charles Dickens (1812-1870), first serialized from April 1836 to November 1837. Second, the development of feuilleton novels and popularization of serial fiction in newspapers also played a role; my discussion of this trend will focus on the French writer Eugène Sue (1804-1857) and his bestseller *Les Mystères de Paris*, serialized from 1842 to 1843. The final part of the chapter examines the unique marketing strategies and format of the colportage novel and how they imitated these models. This section also seeks to disambiguate the colportage novel's relationship to other European formats directed at popular readerships that tend to be more well-known (e.g. the penny dreadful).

More broadly, this chapter seeks to portray some of the fears and desires bound up with broadening the circulation of literature in the German context. It also serves to highlight the questionable status of texts in mass (and transnational) circulation and to touch on the contemporary question of whether narrative strategies perceived as the result of market pressure (e.g. cliffhangers) could be justified from an aesthetic standpoint. There was an inherent tension and paradox in the literary field at time: one could position oneself as a literary "purist," a man of letters interested only in truth and beauty in literature, or a "profiteer," an opportunist focused on earnings (McDonald). However, during this period of rapid transition from petty-commodity book production to the

production of commodity texts, this opposition became strained as readership expanded and opportunities increased (Feltes).

KARL GUTZKOW: BETWEEN COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND LITERARY CONSTRAINTS

Before I launch into discussion of the two models mentioned above, I want to briefly introduce Karl Gutzkow, whose writings I have explored in order to understand the German reception of transnational innovations. Gutzkow is an ideal commentator on this topic because he was both a literary critic and theoretician and a professional writer whose work was subject to "der Zwang seiner wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse" (Friesen "Gutzkow und der Buchhandel" 1493).[19] He lived well from his writing, for the most part, but his interest in maintaining an upper middle-class lifestyle often required him to work on publisher's advances, what he referred to as working "for bread that's already been eaten" (Friesen "Verleger" 11).[20] In mid-nineteenth-century Germany, achieving a lifestyle that did not depend on advances meant publishing a work that would secure not only Gutzkow's literary reputation, which was disputed from the time of his controversial debut novel, but that would also sell to a broad public. Over the course of his career, Gutzkow maintained his income by working in a variety of media. He held editorial positions, and developed a keen interest in the brass tacks of bookselling. His understanding of the literary market was deep, and his perspective as a writer and an

[19] This was a major factor that differentiated Gutzkow from writers of his own generation, for example Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) or Friedrich Freiligrath (1810-1876).

[20] Friesen describes Gutzkow's financial dependence, which began around 1850 and intensified from that point onward, as "peinlich." His situation was straitened enough that he requested advance payment for *Die Ritter vom Geiste* (1850-51), *Der Zauberer von Rom* (1858-61), and *Hohenschwangau* (1867-68) before they were complete. (Friesen "Verleger" 10).

advocate of the writer's rights in the marketplace are therefore representative and insightful.[21]

By the time new publishing formats were beginning to proliferate and succeed with large readerships in Germany, Gutzkow already had an established reputation as a writer of periodical articles and books, and was thus attuned to how different types of production and distribution affected his pay and his work as a creative process. For Gutzkow, "money-making" work came primarily in the form of newspaper and magazine editorships, which his excellent connections among publishers opened up for him time and again even during the period of scandal following the publication of his first novel *Wally die Zweiflerin* (1835).[22] It is perhaps because of his parallel activity in the fields of journalism, play- and book-writing that Gutzkow's critiques of the book market in mid-century focused on how distribution patterns and conditions hindered predictable, continuous earning from book publications.[23]

Another important characteristic that makes Gutzkow an excellent point of reference for this chapter is his ambivalence towards the changes taking place in the market. He criticized the influx of foreign literature and the greed of publishers and booksellers, and yet he was inspired by the potential that market innovations had for his own work. The paradoxical relationship between Gutzkow's published criticism and his

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[21] His involvement in early writer's welfare collectives, which intended to provide for writers' widows and familes, make even more concrete his personal investment in legitimizing writing socially and economically as a profession (Friesen "Zählen" 83).

[22] *Wally* was perceived as anti-religious, and was quickly banned and confiscated in several German states. *Wally* earned Gutzkow a public trial and short jail stint in Mannheim, as well as a general *Schreibverbot* in December 1835. The novel itself was a success in bookshops, despite a small press run and high price. During this period, Gutzkow relied on the publishing houses of Campe and Cotta to assist him in continuing to earn a living. He produced at least eight books during the years 1836-1838, despite ongoing government mistrust of his work. His involvement with the Young Germans and the notoriety of this first novel also earned him lifelong surveillance on behalf of Metternich's secret agents (Friesen "Gutzkow und der Buchhandel" 1512).

[23] See Gutzkow's essay "Über die Preisherabsetzung."

endeavor to write his own feuilleton novel show how Gutzkow, perhaps like many other German writers, struggled to reconcile the values of literary purism with a desire for sales. As I will show later, Gutzkow believed that the channel of distribution (in this case the serial rhythm of a book's publication in a newspaper) could have enormous influence on the sales and readership of a novel, and that this influence could be more powerful than any type of content or literary style, a belief that was at odds with many other positions he held. In the next sections, I will include Gutzkow's perspective as I examine the German reception of two different transnational models that spurred innovation in the German publishing establishment.

PUBLISHING "IM BUND MIT DEM STAHLSTICH": DICKENS AND ILLUSTRATED FICTION[24]

Thanks to its centralization and much earlier industrialization, British publishing was at the forefront of aggressive market expansion efforts characterized by new distribution models in the first third of the nineteenth century (Fullerton 57). The publication of Dickens's first literary efforts in this environment led to unprecedented popularity evidenced by myriad reprints and imitations. Yet, the distribution and structural mechanisms that promoted the success of his work were also influential for German writers and publishers, and became a model that also influenced the publishers of colportage novels.

Serial distribution of fiction was not new in Britain when Dickens began his career. Serial reprinting of fiction there dates from the beginning of the eighteenth century, and the earliest novel initially published in installments appeared from 1760 to

[24] "Im Bund mit dem Stahlstich" comes from a Gutzkow epigram entitled "Der deutsche Buchhandel," published in a collection of "Epigramme und Xenien" in the *Fränkisches Unterhaltungsblatt*, a weekly supplement to the *Fränkischer Merkur*. The full text reads "Nicht mit dem Genius im Bund, nein, nur im Bund mit dem Stahlstich / Beut' ich Länder und Meer, Himmel und Taschen noch aus."

1761 in *The British Magazine* (Carter and Barker 200). What was in fact pioneering about *The Pickwick Papers* (1833-1836) was that it was serial fiction sold as a monthly "standalone" product. I place standalone in quotation marks because even in this seminal case, there was a symbiotic and interdependent relationship between Dickens's fiction and the illustrations that accompanied it.[25] This successful model for selling fiction was not wholly innovative, but was becoming important on a new, much larger scale. Popular prints such as song texts and broadsheets had included illustrations regularly for years – but in the case of Dickens's novels, the formula of serial fiction plus illustrations was the thing to emulate. Selling illustrations with fiction was the key to the success of *The Pickwick Papers* (1836-37).[26]

Dickens's works took bourgeois readerships in the English-speaking world by storm. His bestsellers, however, also reached the literate lower classes, mostly by way of spin-offs, pastiches and plagiarisms. Illustrations were also critical to the success of these opportunistic publishing ventures. Louis James writes about the innovation of woodcuts in cheap newspapers: "[...] These illustrations 'sold' the issue to the uncritical reader, much as the cover sells the modern paperback. It also bridged the gap between the broadsheet and the novel for the lower-class reader" (8). In his influential account of the working class plagiarisms of *The Pickwick Papers*, James points out that the illustrations or approximations of the images were never left out. Illustrations had a special appeal and they became available more and more cheaply during the course of the nineteenth

[25] The competing primacy of illustrator and author as creative partners is evident in the title of a relatively early collection of magazine contributions written by Dickens, *Sketches by Boz and Cuts by Cruikshank* (1836). The relationship between illustrator and writer in Dickens's early works is a complicated issue still under discussion today. Cf. Patten and Stein.

[26] Feltes provides a more nuanced account of Dickens's struggle to exert control over the production process – writing in a footnote "In any form of serial publication an author 'ran the risk of subservience to editorial policy'" (13).

century. They were important for the middle class reception of this literature, and they were equally effective in reaching new, lower class readerships.

Pairing texts and illustration also amounted to a modular structuring of the fictional work. Both text and illustration could be read separately or together. A contemporary German journalist and literary historian, Julian Schmidt (1818-1886), in reflecting on Dickens's humor, sees the juxtaposition between the illustration and text sequence as the genius of *The Pickwick Papers*, interpreting the caricaturist as the butt of an elaborate joke by Dickens:

> Am grellsten wird der Contrast zwischen dem, was sie ursprünglich waren (fratzenhafte Chargen), und dem, als was sie sich zuletzt herausstellen (die vortrefflichsten Leute von der Welt), wenn man die Illustrationen von Robert Seymour und Phiz ins Auge faßt, welche die Veränderungen des Buchs nicht mitmachen: im Anfang stimmen diese Affengesichter vortrefflich zu dem, was man liest, am Schluß aber glaubt man, der Zeichner sei nicht recht klug. (130)

For Schmidt, the text's gradual and episodic transformation of caricatures ("fratzenhafte Chargen") into "the best people in the world" is Dickens's highest achievement – the humor begins with grotesque caricature, the product of the illustrator, but culminates as Dickens renders these figures worthy, human and relatable. This modular structure, the gap between installments and the sequential relationships between text and illustration, were essential to the narrative; later, this would be key to the success of colportage novels as well.

It has been suggested that not only illustration, but also this modular structure and part-issue method opened up Dickens's work to popular appropriation in Britain. James describes how modular narratives, with discrete objects presented for reflection, appealed to readers of popular literature: "The popular imagination [...] is interested in character conceived on a simple, well-defined plane, which exists independent of a complex

literary form" (47). This simple, well-defined plane is not only a staple structural element in popular consumption; it is also well suited to serial narrative. The London of *The Pickwick Papers* is roughly congruent with the reader's London and thus allows the reader to engage with a hyperdiegetic narrative world and characters that provide a continuity extending between and beyond serial installments. This very trait also offers a continuous flow of inspiration and information to be elaborated upon by plagiarists and piratical writers. According to James, the "independence" of the characters and their world made Dickens into a catalyst and market test case for cheap literature (71). The *Penny Pickwicks*, the spin-offs and continuations in Britain were ways for writers and publishers to test whether the working man would buy fiction and what types would sell.

In Germany, Dickens's reception was swift and welcoming. Johann Jacob Weber, a major importer of British publishing know-how in the first third of the nineteenth century mentioned briefly in the last chapter, was the first to publish *The Pickwick Papers* in German in five volumes that appeared 1837-1838 (Gummer 7).[27] By 1843, Dickens's publishers in London rushed early corrected proofs of the author's work to colleagues in Leipzig to allow for simultaneous German and English publication (9). Dickens was popular among middle-class and cultivated readers in Germany, and his works received regular reprints and excited response from German literary critics, such as Julian Schmidt above.

[27] Johann Jacob Weber's resumé exemplifies transnational cultural and industrial contact. Having learned his trade in publishing houses in Switzerland, France and Germany, Weber became the director of the Leipzig branch of a Parisisian publishing firm *Bossange père* in 1830. In 1833, he founded the illustrated weekly *Pfennig-Magazin* (May 1833-1855), inspired by and modeled on the London *Penny Magazine* (1832-1845) – and possibly on the French precursor *Le Magasin pittoresque* (January 1833-1938). Gutzkow identifies Weber as the man responsible for setting off a "spekulative Fieberhitze" among German booksellers, which, in Gutzkow's view, was the starting point for the grave endangerment of the German literary enterprise as a matter of "national honor" (Gutzkow "Übersetzungsfabriken" 14). Weber's recommendation that publishing industry rookies complete their business education in London also earned scorn from Gutzkow (14).

And yet, Gutzkow saw Dickens's work as ugly, superficial and symptomatic of German publishers' *Übersetzungswahn*, which he hyperbolized as threatening the very foundations of German national literature. His position on the transnational reception of popular novels, both French and English, was that it was hurt literature, readers and society. In particular, he was concerned that the use of translators and foreign translations would undermine the position of professional writers in the German marketplace. Thus, his main whipping boys in this critique are the publishers importing foreign narratives. The underpaid translators who "für ein Dürftiges jene Sündfluth fremder Belletristik Tag und Nacht übersetzen" are not at fault (Gutzkow "Übersetzungsfabriken" 12). Rather, it is the publishers "vom Spekulationsteufel besessen" who "[verschwenden] ihr eigenes Kapital, das Lesebedürfniß der Masse und die Interessen der Literatur in den unnützesten Übersetzungen aus dem Französischen und Englischen […]" (12). [28] Gutzkow found Dickens's popularity among German publishers particularly unbelievable: "[...] ja von dem prosaischen, häßlichen Boz überbieten sich die Buchhändler sogar schon seine in Londoner *Zeitschriften* zerstreuten eckelhaften und frazzigen Sittengemälde zu übersetzen" (13). He perhaps rightly attributes Dickens's reception in Germany to the business acumen and profit-hunger of German publishers, but his extremely pessimistic outlook should be attributed to deep-seated literary nationalism. He believed that publishers should support the project of cultivating a German national literature by seeking new successors to the cultural reputation established by Goethe and Schiller.

[28] Wittmann's history of the book trade suggests that, in fact, mass translation was initially a strategy of strong Leipzig publishing houses that transitioned to *Nettohandel* (cash transactions) as early as the 1760s – a way to acquire new titles quickly, print them up in small runs, and sell them to an interested audience. It was a strong-arm tactic that marginalized smaller publishing house, who responded by seeking out new customer bases in rural areas (139).

Nonetheless, *The Pickwick Papers* and Dickens's oeuvre entrenched themselves quickly in Germany. Both *The Pickwick Papers* and *Sketches by Boz* became fodder for multiple German-language spin-offs. As mentioned above, pirating and imitating Dickens served as a pilot program for English popular literature as an industry and as a content-carrier; to an extent, it played this role in Germany as well. Plagiarisms and imitations were attempted and served as a crucial experience for popular authors and their publishers in Germany.[29] Dickens's close association with journalism also contributed to his success, to a degree. However, the more immediate model for fiction feeding on news (and news feeding on fiction) was represented by the French feuilleton novel, which will be discussed in the next section. By embedding fiction within the newspaper, an effective and new distribution strategy was born, and it set off a spate of experimentation in periodical publishing.

PUBLISHING IN LEAGUE WITH THE NEWSPAPER: SUE AND THE FEUILLETON NOVEL

In the case of feuilleton novels, the seminal example that had worldwide influence was Eugène Sue (1804-1857), and his novel, *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-43). The affinity successful feuilleton novels created between periodicals, periodical marketing and fiction laid the foundation for the kind of distribution, marketing and textual strategies that colportage novels took advantage of in Germany. Sue began his career writing novels about seafarers. His landmark work *Les Mystères de Paris*, however, forged a new literary orientation for readers of all classes and a profitable relationship between fiction and newsprint that would point the way for newspapers, publishing houses, authors, and booksellers in the decades to come. Although not the first French

[29] Ellis Gummer's *Dickens' Work in Germany,* published in 1940, is still the best reference for a history of these plagiarisms and imitations, however he does express a wholly negative view of the imitators and plagiarists and their works.

feuilleton novel, *Les Mystères* was the first to demonstrate the power of an exciting novel to make a weekly journal lucrative for its publishers at a lower subscription price, serving both as a means of expanding the number of subscribers, but also of increasing advertising revenue.[30] Sue's *roman feuilleton* not only revolutionized distribution of fiction, it also established a thematic and stylistic starting point in its interpretation of urbanization that resonated around the world and would influence colportage novels deeply. This successful novel recounts the exciting adventures of an undercover German prince in the Paris underworld. The slang, the bloody deeds, and the prince's efforts to seek justice for the urban poor resonated with a reading public becoming more and more aware of the social demands and precariousness of urban life. Replicating similar accounts for other urban centers seemed like a recipe for continued success, and this was a trend taken up by authors around Western Europe and in North America.[31] Thus, Sue's novel was not only trendsetting in terms of how its popularity buoyed newspaper sales; it also launched the development of the "city mystery" genre, characterized by complicated plots unfolding in an urban setting and aimed at revealing social ills and secrets of the city.

Feuilleton novels offered newspaper publishers a model for linking fiction and news in order to secure greater distribution. The inclusion of fiction in newspapers was also timely media strategy for French periodicals of the era: in the politically repressive

[30] *La Vielle Fille*, written by Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850) and published in *La Presse* in 1836, is generally acknowledged as first feuilleton novel. Lerner has pointed out that serial translations of older fiction in the French popular press acted as a parallel trend which influenced and conformed to conditions of publication and readership in a similar way (Lerner 10).

[31] City mystery novels were written for Paris, London, Philadelphia and New York. Emile Zola wrote one for the city of Marseilles and Dumas's *The Count of Monte Christo* has been attributed to pressure from publishers to produce a work along the lines of Sue's. German language versions were written set in Berlin, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and New Orleans. One of the last of the major "fad" period was written in Melbourne in 1873. See Knight for a comprehensive overview of the city mystery genre and its connection to the modern crime novel.

period of the 1840s and the decades that followed, political content came under changing and sometimes heavy censorship measures that often meant it had to be written in euphemistic language, meaning such work required a readership able to decipher these codes (Prendergast 11). Fiction, on the other hand, was more widely accessible, and had the ability to address political issues in a more open but less censurable way. Like Dickens's work, the feuilleton novel, although printed in a newspaper, was not initially readily available to working-class Frenchmen. The subscription price of *Journal de débats* was 80 francs per year, an insupportable amount at the time for the urban poor who subsisted on average on between 2 to 4 francs per day (76).

However, much as in the case of Dickens, Sue's work was quickly parceled out into popular editions and reached a broader audience through channels other than direct subscription. *Livraisons,* or part reprints sold at 50 centimes an installment, were the format that reached readers of more modest means (78). The prolific publication history of Sue's novel in bound volumes and *livraisons,* which even began to be sold before the novel's run in the newspaper was complete, shows the development of a successive sale strategy that was to become the norm in the market: make a newspaper or magazine debut, then maximize the volume of buyers by producing multiple printings in different formats. Later on in the century, as market segmentation became more clear cut, no newspaper debut was necessary for works like colportage novels; these went straight to the price and marketing channels that were directed towards lower-class buyers, where their main competitors were handbooks, cookbooks, penny papers and novel magazines.

The popularity of feuilleton novels and their mode of circulation played a major role in creating a market for fiction-on-demand, as well as a broader market base for

periodicals. With the run-away success of *Les Mystères de Paris*, "serialization [...] became the centrepiece of a brilliant financial speculation, whose effect on the subsequent development of newspaper publishing (and, by extension the whole commercial-democratic public sphere) is probably incalculable" (77). A newspaper's profit margin began to depend on the novel it carried. The novel and its author, in turn, profited by introduction to new audiences achieved through distribution in a medium that was less risky for the publisher, and provided a revenue stream parallel and in addition to book publishing.

The international success of Sue's work was supported by the tense relationship of alliance and competition between the book and periodical press. It also heralded the development of similar patterns of distribution and reprinting in countries like Germany. The broader German reception of Sue's novel was multifaceted and immediate. German translations and imitations of Sue appeared in part form before the French novel had even been concluded.[32] There were even early German-language parodies, for example, *Die Geheimnisse von Königsberg*, published in 1844, which features a provincial bourgeois protagonist who reads *Les Mystères de Paris* and uses it as a handbook for uncovering mysteries in his own city. Herr Müller, hero of the parody, seeks to emulate Rodolphe, German prince and hero of *Les Mystères de Paris*, who negotiates foreign cultures and multiple social registers with ease. However Müller is so insulated from the urban environment that, in his attempts to uncover mysteries, he is duped into unwitting participation in aristocratic intrigues, the activities of a criminal band, and sexual corruption, instead of being able to recognize and render economic and moral justice to

[32] Established publishing house Brockhaus brought out multiple translations of Sue's works, an example being *Der ewige Jude* in 11 volumes printed 1844-45. This does not even manage to encompass the titles in the "city mystery" genre it inspired, which has been referred to as "the genre of 1848" by Michael Denning.

the deserving poor à la Rodolphe (Gladman 36-37). This reception points to the resonance of the work for the reading public.

In fact, Kosch's bibliography alone cites four different German editions of *Les Mystères de Paris* in different formats circulating as parts in 1842-1844. These translated print runs of Sue and of the earliest German-language imitations thus represent the earliest stage of colportage novel development in Germany in the 1840s and 1850s. Sue's work and the city mystery genre continued to be a resource for colportage authors throughout the period in which the novels were written and sold. In Germany, the myriad translations and imitations of Sue in circulation met with the general distaste of critics who nonetheless had to admit the unusual degree of reader interest aroused by the work ("Ein deutsches Wort" 372). One contemporary critic identified the appeal of Sue's novel in the following features:

> Zugegeben, daß die Mystères de Paris die *geschickteste staunenswertheste Mosaikarbeit* sind, die in neuester Zeit auf den litterarischen Markt gebracht wurde: Stein an Stein, von der Straße aufgelesen, im Salon gesammelt, im Kerker, im Lupanar, und mit tausend, mit hunderttausend Stiftchen meisterhaft zusammengesetzt. Zugegeben, daß die *materielle Poesie*, die dem Leben selbst zugewandte, niemals ein Genrestück in größerm Style lieferte, auch durch Boz nicht. Zugegeben, endlich daß die *spannende Kraft der Darstellung*, die bis zur Verwirrung gesteigerte Verwickelung aller einzelnen Fäden des riesenhaften Gobelin wohl alle Kunstweberei der neuesten Zeit hinter sich läßt. Ist das alles was deutsche Gründlichkeit und Erhabenheit, was deutscher Idealismus von einem Dichter fordert, fordern kann, fordern muß? Ist das seine erste Aufgabe und sein letztes Verdienst? ("Ein deutsches Wort" 375)

This *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* review then leads into a tirade on the degeneration of readers' ability to distinguish and appreciate true art when they give in to the "mosaic work," the "material poesie," the "suspenseful power" of Sue's novel, that weaves together so many narrative threads that it cannot but cause confusion.

Although Germany was not as centralized or urbanized as England or France in the mid-nineteenth century, city mysteries found traction there nonetheless. In some ways they were addressed to readers without experiences of urban life: they rendered every connection or coincidence meaningful and legible, turning sensational events in the city into tangled personal relationships that were intelligible to any village gossip. Novels like Sue's also purported to fulfill an informational purpose: discussing criminal and social reform, explaining how crime networks in the city function, and making urban slang or thieves' cant understandable to the layman. This kind of communication with readers had a tremendous influence on colportage novels, and will be explored in the three chapters to come.

In spite of his fire-and-brimstone condemnation of the enthusiastic German reception of translated novels, including Sue's, Gutzkow was inspired by the model Sue provided for literary success. Feuilleton publication offered the seductive possibility of gaining earning power and worldwide fame in one stroke. Though he publicly criticized the publishing practices responsible for the reprinting and translation of Sue's work, Gutzkow clearly saw and was attracted to the opportunity heralded by the unprecedented popularity of *Les Mystères*. The paradoxical relationship between Gutzkow's published literary opinions and his attempt to replicate Sue's success for himself shows the tricky negotiation he conducted between literary ideals and book sales.

Gutzkow was among the first German authors to attempt to write an original feuilleton novel comparable in scope and appeal to that of Sue. In private letters to Levin Schücking (1814-1883) and professional correspondence exchanged with publisher Heinrich Brockhaus (1804-1874), it becomes clear that Gutzkow was fascinated with and

inspired by what Sue (and shortly thereafter Dumas) had achieved, in terms of sheer productivity and in terms of the attention afforded to understanding the workings of social classes (Bachleitner *Sozialroman des 19. Jahrhunderts* 439). He was attracted by the earning potential of the feuilleton format, as well as its promise of a wide bourgeois reading public. Thus it was that Gutzkow proposed the idea of the feuilleton publication of a new novel, *Die Ritter vom Geiste* (1850-51), in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (1861-1918) as a commercial venture to Brockhaus (Bachleitner *Kleine Geschichte* 54).[33]

After Gutzkow's proposal was taken up, correspondence between the author and Gutzkow is marked by an interesting conflict that shows Gutzkow's idealism with regard to the power of certain modes of serialization. Gutzkow writes his publisher to lobby for a high-frequency serialization of shorter pieces of the text. Brockhaus responds that he will be the one to decide on the publishing format, and that ultimately, it is the "innere[r] Werth" of the text that determines its success. Gutzkow writes a new letter, insisting that such "inner value" is only half of the success – the other half is "die Methode der Veröffentlichung" (54). He protests that the infrequently timed and short installments that Brockhaus is planning will amount to:

> [...] die langweiligste Trödelei von der Welt! [...] Wo soll bei solcher homöopathischen Mitteilung ein Ruhepunkt kommen? Was hat da der Leser? Keine Spannung, sondern eine perennierende Nichtbefriedigung. Täglich ein solcher Viertelbogen – das könnte das Glück des Romans machen, aber in dieser Verteilung ist es – nichts. (Gutzkow, Letter to Brockhaus, 26 June 1850 in Friesen "Verleger" 48)

[33] It is interesting that Gutzkow urged many fairly new-fangled ideas for periodicals on Brockhaus. Another example is the Gutzkow-edited weekly *Unterhaltungen am hauslichen Herd*, which was conceptualized after Dickens's *Household Words*. Despite skepticism on Brockhaus's part, Gutzkow implemented a policy of unsigned and anonymous contributions, so that his name was the only one associated with the periodical. This was good for Gutzkow, but also made the weekly a home for work by authors' who were suffering due to poor political reputations, as Gutzkow had in the '30s and '40s (cf. Friesen "Zählen" 81).

Brockhaus seems to be representing the literary purist view here that a text's artistic merit forms its success, whereas Gutzkow, strongly impressed by Sue's success with the public, believes that market channels and material presentation of the work as a serial play the decisive role. Gutzkow claims that his work will not interest readers unless it appears daily, as Sue's did.

In the same letter to Brockhaus, Gutzkow praises the objectivity and narrative steadiness of his work in progress, but writes that the readers will need "starke Portionen" at the beginning in order to induct them into the habit of reading the novel (Gutzkow Letter to Brockhaus 26 June 1850 in Friesen "Verleger" 48). Gutzkow emphasizes the importance of dissemination over content, writing:

> Ich bitte Sie, gäben Sie eine Kriminalgeschichte in dieser Dehnung, sie wäre verloren. Was half denn den großen Romanen von Sue anfangs so nach? Daß man wußte, jeden Morgen rückt man durch die Geschichte um 9 Feuilletonspalten weiter. (48)

It is also clear from the correspondence negotiating the publication of *Die Ritter* that both Brockhaus and Gutzkow had an understanding that serial reading, and the reading of fiction in newspapers was fundamentally different from reading a bound volume. Increasing awareness of this difference perhaps led to the development of new markets and new formats that prepared the ground for the success of the colportage novel.

When Brockhaus wrote back, he told Gutzkow to focus on writing and leave the publishing decisions to him. And in November 1845, the novel came out in the "homeopathic" format that Gutzkow had railed against, in a weekly supplement. The novel ultimately did not have the desired effect of boosting the newspaper's circulation. Once it was published in book form, however, it did find some favor with the reading

public, receiving three print runs in its first five years.[34] After the second volume of the novel had been published in the paper, Brockhaus ended the novel's feuilleton incarnation, diplomatically citing readers' need for "quicker resolution," when the hoped for increase in sales of the periodical did not materialize (Bachleitner *Kleine Geschichte* 56).[35]

Gutzkow's initial hopes for the possibilities of the form resulted in an overly optimistic contract that promised him royalties if the print runs of the newspaper or book were above 3,000. In the end, Gutzkow, as well as his literary confidant Levin Schücking, fell back on the idea that the dissemination method that Gutzkow had built up so crucially in his negotiations with Brockhaus was damaging to literary greatness, that the fragmentation of reading necessitated by feuilleton distribution was at odds with the kind of literary content Gutzkow produced. Schücking writes to Gutzkow:

> Sie haben wohl gethan, Ihren Roman nicht mehr in Bruchstücken zu geben; es ist unmöglich ein solches Werk in Fragmenten zu lesen, die man nur dreimal in der Woche bekommt; ich wenigstens verlor die Geduld und bin nur bis zu den ersten Kapiteln des zweiten Buchs zu folgen im Stande gewesen. Bei dem außerordentlichen Interesse, welches mir Ihr Buch einflößte hielt ich's nicht länger aus. Nun warte ich aber auch mit Schmerzen auf die Ausgabe von Band II! Ich glaube, daß das Werk als eine Gränzsäule in unsrer Literatur aufgerichtet dastehn wird. (Schücking Letter to Gutzkow 8 December 1850 in Rasch 93)

Schücking loyally makes a virtue out of a vice for Gutzkow and his novel – the keywords he uses to describe the book and his feelings as a reader "Geduld verlieren," "außerordentliche Interesse," "Schmerzen" are hallmarks of the serial reading experience,

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[34] However, when one compares that with Freytag's *Soll und Haben*, first published in 1855, which went through thirteen editions in 12 years, we can see that the measure of success was growing rapidly in scale at mid-century.

[35] Brockhaus's "quicker resolution" complaint is at least valid on the surface. The first two books of the novel cover about one week of narrative time. No big secrets are revealed, and none of the really "juicy" plot lines are in play (for example, there is a love affair in which a mother and daughter both fall for the painter Siegbert Wildungen, a scandalous side plot that begins somewhere in the fourth volume and continues on through the remaining volumes).

which contradict the view in which the work represents a "Grenzsaüle" that is impossible to read in "Bruchstücken." What Schücking and Gutzkow are realizing is that the format is not merely a vessel into which a novel can be poured – successful feuilleton novels require narrative strategies that are different from works produced in volumes.

The manner in which Gutzkow's work came out also excited intense critique from younger writers associated with the periodical *Der Grenzbote*. With regard to format, their objections related to the rudimentary marketing campaign connected to the book. For them, the old-boys'-club connections behind its launch, its successive publishing by Brockhaus in feuilleton and then in volumes was an evil in the book market because it represented the unfair advantage of the literary establishment over the "new" generation. Gutzkow was well networked, and friends, including Levin Schücking, wrote favorable reviews of *Die Ritter vom Geiste* for other periodicals. Before its publication in volumes, the novel was announced with fanfare in Brockhaus's paper, was printed in feuilleton in the same over a period of five months, and finally came out as a book. The network in which the feuilleton novel emerged therefore was pinpointed as suspect by Julius Schmidt in passages like the following:

> Seitdem Sie die *Ritter vom Geist* [sic] verlegt haben, ist der ganze abgeschmackte Apparat der journalistischen Claque in Ihren Blättern zu finden: kleine, wie gelegentlich hingeworfene Notizen über die Vortrefflichkeit seiner [Gutzkows] Bücher, lange enthusiastische Beurteilungen, wohlwollende Correspondenzen, und wie die schlechten Mittel weiter heißen, durch welche industriöse Eitelkeit sich vor dem Publikum herauszuputzen sucht. (Friesen "Karl Gutzkow" 1545)

The intermedial production context of the book, its undeniable connections to the newspaper world, and the transparent campaign to sell it ("industriöse Eitelkeit") are all reasons that it is unworthy, according to Schmidt. Gutzkow's own struggles and problems adapting to changes in the market are reflected back by his critics. Gutzkow's alternation

between harsh criticism of new publishing models and his appropriation of them for the benefit of his own career serve as a baseline example of the hopes and fears awakened by transition in the literary market. In colportage novels we see a unique hybrid of multiple marketing techniques and literary strategies that is no longer recognizable to twenty-first-century readers. In the next section, I examine what colportage novels took from the transnational models explored here, but also show how they were uniquely adapted to the German market, pointing out some of the domestic influences that played a role as well.

COLPORTAGE NOVELS AND THE GERMAN BOOK MARKET

The early nineteenth century was a relatively slow period in the book trade in the states that would become unified Germany in 1871. Trade-external forces such as political censorship and saturation of the existing market contributed to the slump. Governments policed content, and lending libraries and the upper classes were the only reliable customers for traditional booksellers. Distribution techniques that were holdovers from guild-organized trade did not keep pace with increasing literacy among the population. Prominent among these holdovers was the specifically German practice of conditional sales. Thus, widespread serial distribution of literature, especially in periodicals, offered commercial, professional and aesthetic solutions because it created predictable revenue streams for publishers.

Books, especially belletristic fiction as a category, were in the midst of a sales crisis (*Absatzkrise*) in the 1830s and 1840s.[36] This is likely also related to general economic crisis that affected markets and banks throughout Europe and the United States.

[36] Book sales were stagnant in both France and Germany. For France, see Prendergast's account of French book production between 1815 and 1848, p. 76. For Germany, see Wittmann *Buchmarkt* p. 116-118. It is also important to remember that fiction titles made up a relatively small proportion of the books being sold, and that novel production decreased as a percentage of the total book production even as the absolute number of titles produced increased. For statistics, see Wittmann, p. 202.

Growth in titles printed per year did not keep pace with the technological advances in printing, nor did it approach growth rates achieved in the late eighteenth century. This problem was not confined to German-speaking countries, but was exacerbated there to an extent by the problem of *Kleinstaaterei* and the barriers it placed on trade, an issue that did not exist for France and Britain. The book trade was inherently uncertain, and it was not where a working author made money at the time.

Furthermore, traditional booksellers in Germany continued to rely on conditional sales, which stymied profit and slackened readers' motivation to purchase books. Essentially, conditional sales meant that customers could accept a copy of a book and then return it to a bookseller without paying.[37] Similarly, publishers sent new books to booksellers, often unsolicited; until around 1880, booksellers had the option to return the books to the publisher if they were unable to sell them (Wittmann *Buchmarkt* 119). Conditional sales also meant that the circulation of books and subscriptions to periodicals were not predicated on exchange of cash, and in fact operated primarily on annual cycles of credit, which made it difficult for new booksellers and publishers to break into the market. [38] Conditional sales, in particular, relied on dense networks of personal relationships and patronage (customer regularly buys from bookstore, therefore bookstore sends her titles to view), rather than models of industrial capitalism. It was also tied to the late introduction of official free enterprise in most of the German states. Free enterprise

[37] We can perhaps liken the problem with *à condition* sales to the music industry's problems with file-sharing in the 1990s. The argument of file-sharers goes something like this: listeners think they should be able to download and hear music files prior to purchase of a song or an album, and achieve this via file-sharing. However, such a pattern of distribution reduces the exclusive control of music companies over the work they produce, and is not conducive to profit generation.

[38] This selling practice and its extension into the mid-nineteenth century seems to be unique to Germany (cf. Friesen "Karl Gutzkow" 1518). Later in the century, British booksellers perceived vestiges of this practice and discounting practices as publisher and bookseller cooperation in continental Europe, which, if emulated, might improve book sales in their own country (cf. Heinemann).

(*Gewerbefreiheit*) was extended to the North German Confederation in 1869 and to the whole of Imperial Germany as of 1871, which gave ordinary German citizens the freedom to found businesses.[39] Although reception of books like those of Dickens and Sue made a splash in the German market, it was structural changes like the expansion free enterprise and unified postal tariffs that sparked the period of invention and mass production that would also bring about the colportage novel.

In considering this environment for book sales, it also becomes obvious that colportage as a type of distribution practice benefited from and was dependent on technological innovation. However, some colportage-related practices have a history of their own dating back to the earliest days of book production – for example, the circulation of books door to door. Scholars have tended to devote little attention to changes in these practices, but they too developed as surely as did production, and underwent similar processes of rationalization and automatization. Since there is no current print analog for the colportage novel, a historical account of the genre requires piecing together a media format and distribution network contingent on social, historical, and economic conditions that no longer exist.

Colportage novels represent one possible solution to sales problems facing German publishers in the mid-nineteenth century, a solution with a transnational context. Contemporary critics thinking about the commercial conditions of the German book trade refer to the success of Sue and Dickens in translation, and compare the publishing and distribution strategies for those books with the lagging publishing strategy for German

[39] The citizenry took advantage of this new freedom, and industrial dynasties of lasting importance—Siemens and Krupp, for example—were founded during this industrial transformation in Germany. Growth was devastated by the market crash of 1873, but the founding era continued, although some narrow historical definitions of the *Gründerzeit* limit it to the years 1870-73.

belletristic ("Ueber die commerciellen Verhältnisse" 388). The reception of Sue and Dickens in Germany represents a starting point for the development of colportage. Franco Moretti refers to the influence of British and French fiction in around 1850 as "hegemonic," noting their hold over European "narrative markets" at the time in quantitative figures (187). Ultimately, models taken from these cultures influenced both the outward appearance of colportage novels (their use of illustration) and their content (often modeled on novels from Britain or France). However, the major solutions that colportage novels publishers innovated for themselves in the context of the mid-nineteenth-century German market consisted in identifying and cultivating a new market for fiction and other cheap reading material. They did this by focusing on cash sales and developing aggressive marketing strategies that evolved quickly to fit market conditions.

As mentioned briefly already, colportage novels were primarily sold to a readership that did not frequent bookshops. To address this market, colporteurs had to take the books to them. There was an earlier existing model for this in *Reisebuchhandel* or the traveling book trade. Traveling book businesses often focused their efforts on large, valuable books and sent out their agents on long supraregional tours to collect subscriptions and orders from a chosen and well-researched circle of educated and otherwise subject-interested individuals (Henrici 186).[40] These sales agents frequently extended credit to customers, accepting monthly payments, which required disposable income that the market segment for colportage novels did not have. The agents of colportage book businesses, whose sample stock was usually about 20% colportage novels, typically sold whatever kind of work to whatever kind of buyer could be found to purchase it, and usually worked only in the home region of the business (within a city and

[40] This was beginning to change with sales of encyclopedias.

neighboring countryside). A further difference was in payment. Colportage book businesses delivered regularly against cash payment and developed systems for keeping track of the parts of a work a customer had purchased, so that in the case a part could not be sold on delivery, the same part could be brought again on the colporteur's next visit to the neighborhood. In addition, the markets of colportage book businesses were often much more geographically bounded.[41] These are the basics of how colportage sales were conducted, but over the course of the life of the format, two major marketing and sales techniques were used that showed how quickly the publishers and booksellers of the novels adapted to changing circumstances. These will be examined in the next section, along with colportage novels' use of illustrations.

COLPORTAGE NOVELS, ILLUSTRATIONS AND PREMIUMS

Coupling standalone serial literature with illustrations was an important innovation, and the illustrations included with each part is a recognizable format that colportage novels took for themselves. The reproduction of illustrations, in general, was growing cheaper thanks to new technologies, and it was increasingly coming into vogue as a way to sell all kinds of texts, especially to sell them to buyers outside of the clientele of the traditional bookseller. The combination of illustrations and short texts were especially important for the reception of the stories among less educated and lower class readers.

[41] A counterexample to this idea is presented by the career of Carl Joseph Meyer. Starting in the late 1820s challenges, he had not only sales across the German states, but also abroad. He has been considered the "founding father" of the nineteenth-century German colportage book trade, which included the circulation of reprints of German literature (not only bibles, geographical works, and encyclopedia).

The bundling of a commodity (illustration) and fiction that I have highlighted in Dickens's case was also taken to even further extreme in the first decades of German colportage novel production, as subscriptions to the novels were sold with premiums as well as illustrations. The colportage novel "Prämienwesen" was a sales gambit that involved selling subscriptions by promising the buyer a premium after the purchase of a certain number of novel installments. During the premium-selling era, which lasted until about 1880, the price of subscription for the novels was slightly higher, but subscribing was attached to commodities that were sometimes related to the content of the book (usually framed lithographs depicting important persons or scenes). Premiums could also be completely unrelated items such as silverware, rudimentary insurance policies or lottery tickets. Premiums were a major selling point for the agents who sold colportage novels; anecdotal accounts suggest that some agents promised absurdly desirable premiums such as a horse and cart, and even land in order to boost their sales. This practice flourished from about 1870 until 1888, after which it was banned by law. The abolishment of premiums caused colportage agents and publishers to make radical changes to their distribution pattern – this legal change touched off an era of astronomically large initial runs of parts, which salesmen papered the cities with in an effort to find readers. This strategy likely came from strategies used to sell *Generalanzeiger*, and will be examined in depth below.

Until about 1880, colportage novels were slightly more expensive, 40 or 50 Pfennig per part, but salesmen offered the promise of premiums, an extra commodity on top of the illustration and entertainment already included in the novel. Glagau describes the premium in his 1870 article:

> Als letztes Lockmittel bringt der Prospect stets noch die Ankündigung einer "Prämie." Der Abonnent soll dafür, daß er abonnirt, noch außerordentlich belohnt werden; es wird ihm eine Prämie zugesichert, die mindestens so viel werth ist, als der ganze Roman kostet, so daß er diesen eigentlich gratis erhält. – "Außer diesem fesselnden Werke," heißt es gewöhnlich, "erhalten die geehrten Abonnenten noch als Prämie zwei mit höchster Meisterschaft ausgeführte große prachtvolle, einen wunderschönen Zimmerschmuck bildende Kunstblätter, zum zehnten Heft: "Galilei, die Drehung der Erde erklärend" und zum Schlußheft: "Columbus verweigert die Abnahme seiner Ketten"; jedes Blatt gegen die äußerst geringe Nachzahlung von nur 7 ½ Silbergroschen. Welchen Gewinnst der Abonnent an dieser Prämie hat, darüber belehrt ihn eine Bemerkung, wie "Im Kunsthandel kostet jedes Blatt zwei Thaler"; oder gar: "Für nichtabonnenten ist der Preis der beiden Kunstblätter pro Stück drei Thaler."

These premiums were a powerful inducement, and anecdotes abound of salesmen who lied about extremely attractive premiums in order to sell subscriptions and then were taken to court. The abuse of premiums led to their legal prohibition in Germany in 1883 (Kosch and Nagl 37). The next move of the publishers, however, will be examined in the section below, which examines strategies colportage producers borrowed from newspapers.

COLPORTAGE NOVELS AND NEWSPAPERS

As outlined above, Sue's novel and its success as a feuilleton serial set a precedent both for the content of colportage novels, but also for the relationship between selling fiction writing and selling periodicals. The news environment in Germany during the era of the colportage novel was, much like the literary environment, characterized by a proliferation of forms and genres, to the point of total market saturation in 1900. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, Germans were able to subscribe to liberal, conservative, Catholic, social democratic, communist, and *völkisch* newspapers, as well as publications representing more marginal political and social niches. In classifying and

describing the press of this era, one is forced to paint with a broad brush – the only other alternative is to restrict oneself to microscopic detail.

Koszyk's standard history of the German press sketches the rise and fall in popularity of the various party-affiliated papers thus: "[...] the decade 1850-1860 stood in the sign of the conservative press, the decade 1860-1870 in the sign of the liberal press, and the decade 1870-1880 under the sign of the Catholic press [Zentrumspresse]" (130). The 1880s saw not only growth in the socialist press, but also the establishment of the powerhouse newspaper institutions of Ullstein, Mosse and Scherl (later Hugenberg), based on a new kind of newspaper the *Generalanzeiger*, which departed from the earlier model of close affiliation to a certain political agenda and focused instead on short, succinct news and on local issues.

These papers, like colportage novels, were characterized by innovations in sales and distribution and new methods of building relationships with readers. These papers innovated an unprecedented expansion of advertising business that allowed them to drop prices (cf. Stöber 258). Much like colportage publishers, the men at the helm of these newspapers were not focused on direct competition with the traditional party press, but rather on opening up new markets. They reformatted their news articles to be shorter, but also to make the number of individual topics touched upon larger (259). The development of free distribution of *Generalanzeiger* in their initial runs likely was inspiration for the colportage novel's change to distributing free samples after the ban of premiums in 1883; the *Generalanzeiger* pioneered free distribution and the sellers of colportage novels took this model and ran with it.[42]

[42] The connection here is likely founded on personal relationships. The major founders of the *Generalanzeiger* press movement were, like many colportage publishers, career changers from related

From the premium ban going forward, publishers began producing enormous print runs of the first six parts of the novels, which colporteurs distributed heavily to gain interest in the titles, spending less time on individual sales efforts. The publishers would then ratchet down the size of the print run as the serial novel continued, to adapt to customers losing interest or lacking the ability to continue buying the novel. One publisher in Berlin, producing a colportage novel with a total of 150 planned parts, printed 2,500,000 copies of the first part, 215,000 of the second, decreasing to 175,000 for the fifth parts. The number of copies from part six to eight was between 75,000 and 70,000, and from there the number of copies printed was decreased further every ten parts or so (28).[43] The blossoming of this model also led to a new kind of market manipulation – and new restrictions. During this period, the colportage novel series was gradually getting longer: novels in 100 parts, novels in 150 parts, novels in 200 parts. Some were concerned that this extension in length meant buyers of the novels had little concept of how much they would pay for the entire novel. From 1896, the planned number of parts and full price of the entire run had to be printed on every individual part. The success of cheap daily press in Germany was intricately interrelated with the flourishing of colportage novels – and yet, they were media in a relationship that was simultaneously competitive but also symbiotic.

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branches. In fact, August Scherl, later publisher of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, began his career as a *Verlagsbuchhändler* and publisher of early colportage novels in Cologne at the house Duster & Co (Stöber 256; Menges 698-9; de Mendellsohn 82-3). It is quite likely that it is via Scherl's network of business partners that the house-papering strategy of colportage distribution came into being – the *Berlin Lokal-Anzeiger*'s free edition was much larger than its subscriber editions in the year of its establishment, 1883, the same year in which selling colportage novels via premiums was outlawed.

[43] Kosch and Nagl suggest that the 2,500,000 print run for the first pamphlet is exaggerated, estimating actual print runs to have been between 500,000 and 1,000,000 (30). Numbers published by colportage publishers are unreliable because claiming that a novel was being taken by a large number of subscribers was a very good way to sell to more colportage booksellers.

Another major link between the two areas to consider is the overlap in employment between hack literary writers and journalists. Colportage authors come from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, and biographical details are lacking for many of them. However, what information exists, mostly compiled by Kosch, shows one thread of commonality among the authors: most of them were part-time writers of novels, and many combined this work with a career in journalism. Both types of writing were done for pay, were not considered an art, and were structured around expedience rather than around creativity or inspiration. As we shall see in the next chapter, some of the expedients and conventions commonly used in composing newspapers found their way into colportage novels and made up a major part of their appeal.

The second link between Scherl's "new" daily press and colportage novels was their focus on currency – delivering news about current events, from all points of the compass, and in a format that was entertaining. Where the *Generalanzeiger* press moved quickly from event to event and built on larger news stories incrementally in each issue, the colportage novel writer had the opportunity to lavish pages upon and develop major current events into various extremes of emotional fantasy and adventure, which will be examined more closely in chapter four.

CONCLUSION

When we look to media history milestones (technological and economic) that made the colportage novel possible, they also had important influences on other print media. The 1843 invention of the rotary press in the United States influenced the printing of every kind of format, from colportage part to newspaper. Developments in color printing and stereotyping did not just enable colportage novels, but made the toolkit of

printers of every type richer. The colportage novel has a marginal and shadowy place in the overall history of print production in Germany, but the format benefited from the same innovations that revolutionized other branches as well. The colportage novel, in a way, is a format that resists classification; it unites traits, sales strategies and market forces from disparate corners of print culture, and the resulting product does not fit neatly into any of the recognized categories we tend to take for granted.[44]

The colportage trade and its novels are symptomatic of a vast shift in media, culture, and society coinciding with Germany's *Gründerzeit*, a period marked by rapid industrialization and urbanization. In terms of the popular press, this was a foundational period in which newspapers and periodicals proliferated, publishers professionalized, rationalized book production, and uncovered new audiences and niches to address with their products. Much of the churning competition within and outcry over the colportage industry was related to the fact that that selling colportage novel or magazine subscription was an ideal starter business or seasonal job for people with little capital to invest up front. For most small-scale booksellers just starting out, specialization in selling the colportage novel was the best option for actually earning a living in the book trade.[45] This increase in competition for settled booksellers provoked calls for legal intervention to check the aggressively expansive sales practices of this developing industry.

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[44] Media history is one of several areas where the colportage novel is in a gray zone, between classifications. Another example is the legal status of the trade and its products. This was under dispute from the period in which press law was subsumed into business law in 1870 (tantamount to freeing the press in the North German Confederation), up until and beyond the trade law amendment of 1883, which attempted to reclassify urban colportage distribution as "Gewerbebetrieb im Umherziehen" although it was generally regarded as a "stehendes Gewerbe" because of the separation of subscription sales and delivery of goods. Cf. Scheidt 234-5.

[45] A contemporary author writes, in 1892, "Der Colporteur kann ohne 10 Pfennig-Heft nicht sein, und ein 10 Pfennig-Heft bringt nicht den Inhalt von Freytag, Lindau, Marlitt, Heyse u.s.w. Will der Colporteur auch bessere Sachen verbreiten, so muß er unbedingt 10 Pfennig-Hefte haben" ("Schrullen"). In a separate article, Heinrich Kolck calculates that a bookseller with about 10 deliveries earned 15 Kreuzer per month, whereas the sale of two "Klassiker-Bändchen" brought in less than half that at 6 Kreuzer per month.

Innovations in these practices, spurred and accompanied by growth in newspaper circulation, led to expansion in a number of popular print formats that are best defined by how they circulated, among them colportage novels.[46] Among these print forms, colportage novels thrived on contradictions in the market. In his recent, comprehensive account of the book trade during the *Kaiserreich*, Georg Jäger notes the conflict between capitalist innovation and tradition, between market response and entrenched guild-like structures of cooperation as a defining trait of the German book trade. Colportage flourished by trading on both sides of the conflict: though made possible by the dissolution and modernization of the book market, its success also hinged on age-old person-to-person strategies of traveling sales. Colportage sales, however, began more and more to exploit material, cultural and social trends that were in the process of decoupling supply and demand from dense networks of social relationships (creating a mass market). Essentially, colportage was a mechanism by which publishers attempted to capture the chaos of a market in transition and harness it to profit.

[46] How books circulate or are produced has often defined them. From "manuscripts" to the nineteenth-century "triple decker novels," "penny dreadfuls," "feuilleton novels" and up into the twentieth century with "dime novels," even the much more recent "e-books" – these are just some of the common terms for fiction that highlight its conditions of circulation, referring to specific material and market practices. Especially on the cheaper end of the spectrum, these terms can sometimes be umbrella terms for a varied group of publishing formats and genres. Periodical media also often takes its name from its circulation pattern, and terms for various media like "journal," "*Tagesblatt*," "weekly," among others, explicitly refer to the periodicity of a format's circulation.

Chapter 3: Currency, authority and authenticity: the colportage novel aesthetic

Rudolf Schenda's landmark social history of popular literature, *Volk ohne Buch*, is one of the first to grant extensive space and thought to colporteurs and the reading material they sold. Schenda recognizes these traveling salesmen and their wares correctly as the most powerful disseminators of literature of their time (267). Although Schenda largely rejects discourses that the literature of the colporteur "poisoned" the masses in any way, he still perceives them as dangerous. He describes them as isolated from "tasks of the present" and as promoting "politisches Interesselosigkeit," linking this problem to the susceptibility of Germany's population to fascism at the beginning of the twentieth century (494). I contend that colportage novels concerned themselves clearly with tasks of the present, and often provided a great deal of political content to an interested (but usually not politically active) readership. How they did this relies on two pillars of strategy: (1) an aesthetic of authentication that simulated currency and authority, and (2) a narrative that grafted current information and political content onto popular story-telling conventions and clichés.

This is the first of two chapters that shine a light on colportage novels as a transmedial fictional hybrid of factual, current information and timeworn story-telling conventions. The term transmedial storytelling, coined by media studies scholar Henry Jenkins, is taken from contemporary study of consumer culture and media change. Transmedial storytelling emerges from media convergence, "integrating multiple texts to create a narrative so large that it cannot be contained within a single medium" (Jenkins 95). A transmedial narrative "unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new

text making a distinctive and valuable contribution" (95-96). While this term seems best suited for today's cultural media franchises (juggernauts of storytelling in multiple media such as *Game of Thrones*), Werner Faulstich's history of media in Germany proposes the term transmedial to describe the storytelling linked to premiums and marketing associated with the colportage novel. While the notions of media convergence and transmedial storytelling do have some resonance with the narrative strategies and media presence of colportage novels, they are anachronistic to the period. Throughout this chapter I use the term transmedial to talk about the ways in which colportage novels sought to create extensive narrative worlds, anchored in both visual and textual material.

This chapter is primarily focused on the aesthetic of authentication in colportage novels, which plays a role in creating a capacious narrative reality that assimilates, disassembles and reassembles genres, modes of narrative and texts of various provenances. I focus on the novels' largely overlooked preoccupation with current, factual information, anchored in a variety of textual and paratextual practices. Beyond merely referring to current events, colportage novels operated within a framework of authentication[47] — inviting readers to examine a wealth of details and information embedded in a media form that is unique, despite its nominal "novel" status and a strong affinity to newspapers and periodicals. Markers touting authenticity and authoritative information were used to sell colportage novels to buyers, to re-spark interest again and again in lengthy narratives, and to give an almost three-dimensional and innovative

[47] Here I understand authenticity as synonymous with "factuality" or "substantive truth." This definition of authenticity is more closely defined by Phillip Vannini in the *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture*: "[...] when a fact, a claim or an event is believed to be authentic, there ought to exist convincing evidence that this is the case" (74). This definition of authenticity of course also has implications for questions of realism, concepts of the self, and truth, which are outside the scope of the current line of argumentation.

structure to what would otherwise be patchworks of genre conventions. These markers make up what I call the colportage novel aesthetic.

Strategies of authentication went hand in hand with familiar and timeworn conventions of popular storytelling; this was partly because this had ready appeal for readers, but also because it facilitated the unusual length of these serial narratives. Popular literature generally and colportage novels in particular have been sharply criticized because of their reliance on the repetition of clichés. I do not deny that clichés, conventions and stereotypes play a major role in colportage novels; however, I contend that previous criticism has misunderstood the way in which they are employed. The contemporary handbook writer, Friedrich Streissler writes, for example:

> Diese Schundlitteratur birgt aber noch einen andern Vorteil in sich. Die Romane gleichen sich alle wie ein Ei dem andern; Cyankali, Dolch und Revolver lösen sich in jedem Kapitel ab, irgend ein Deus ex machina errettet stets die verfolgte Unschuld aus Todesnöten und führt auch die Lösung des Knotens herbei. Wer dieser Lektüre einige Jahre gehuldigt hat, wird endlich einen tiefen Ekel davor empfinden, aber an Lektüre gewöhnt, wird er sich nun ein besseres Journal halten. [...] (7)

In her 1970 interpretation of a single novel, Schuster and her collaborators suggest that what happens in the colportage novel *Das Forsthaus am Rhein* is more complicated and not as predictable as it seems.

> Erst am Ende kann man von einer klaren Polarisierung [of good and bad characters] sprechen, wobei allerdings rückblickend klar wird, daß die Handlung von Anfang an darauf ausgerichtet war. Insofern weicht das *Forsthaus* von dem einfachen und üblichen Scheme der kürzeren Groschenromane erheblich ab. (74)

I contend that the tools represented by familiar tropes are used to undergird narratives about current events, unexpected political narratives, and capacious serial world-building. My goal in this chapter is to bring into focus the innovative ways in which colportage novels were constructed to appeal to the reader as current, authoritative and authentic. In

the chapter that follows, I will examine the interplay between these strategies and familiar storytelling conventions. The way in which colportage novels were "marked" as current, authoritative, and authentic is so important because these aesthetic features, which prompted readers to luxuriate in absorbing and thinking about detailed information, crop up persistently, no matter what the actual content of an individual novel or the objective factual status of that content. The aesthetic of authentication is perhaps the main feature unifying colportage novels, and one that makes them a timely publishing form in step with their era.

The "packaging" of the novels already marks them as offering readers special insight and information. I include advertisements and cover art, illustrations, conventions in titles and authors pseudonyms as part of this external presentation. These played an important role in selling the novel to the reader, and they will be the focus of the first part of the chapter. In the second part, I will pay attention to textual strategies inside the novel, starting with the idiosyncratic convention of footnote use and moving on to intertextual practices. In this case, intertextual practices are essentially ways in which colportage novel texts linked themselves to other texts and the way their authors appropriated texts from other formats, both fictional and non-fictional. Texts, both "inside" and "outside" the text, helped colportage novels present themselves to readers as the whole story – a multimedia tell-all with illustrations, current information, and, of course, juicy plotlines. What is surprising is that a closer look at these novels reveals that the juicy plotline is not the driving force of the form; rather, it thrives in a symbiotic relationship with detailed and seemingly verifiable information about the modern world, European history, and other extra-literary topics.

COLPORTAGE PARATEXTS

My decision to start with texts "outside" the text is motivated by an interest in highlighting the special characteristics of the colportage novel form, which were intertwined with how it was sold and how it addressed its readers. These kinds of texts "outside" the text have a formal name and a place in scholarship. The narrative theorist Gérard Genette coined the term paratext in 1987 to describe the texts accompanying a "book" or "work" that make it accessible to the reader (Gorman 419). A typology of paratexts is not possible, because types of paratexts vary greatly depending on the text they accompany. For a typical one-volume novel, paratexts might include the preface, afterword, title and subtitles (of volumes, sections and chapters), copyright pages and text on the book jacket or wrapper. In this study, I use the word paratext to describe many of the ways in which colportage novels were outwardly packaged to show that they provided readers with authoritative and verifiable information. I begin this chapter by examining the advertising that accompanied individual installments of colportage novels and showing their role in authentication.

Advertising

Advertising for colportage novels developed almost as quickly as the myriad strategies for selling them did, although the earliest examples of the form came in colored wrappers without advertising on the back. By the 1880s, nearly every colportage novel part appeared with changing advertisements on the back of their wrappers. This advertising was often closely linked to the text itself and how far it had "progressed" in its series. In colportage novels sold with six free-to-read sample parts, the advertising on the first six numbers sought to convince the reader that the rest of the novel held fascinating, new and secret information. It also often served to remind the reader how to

subscribe to the novel (usually by sending postage stamps to the publishing house), if he or she did not already have a relationship with a colporteur. Later in the series, the publishing house's other works might be advertised, or the act of buying and reading serial novels might be hyped (an example of the latter is examined this section). Depending on the popularity of a novel, the back of the final installment might promote a sequel.[48] Advertisements were usually a mix of graphic and text, and the images usually were produced using money-saving wood engravings. These ads were often quite prescriptive about how to read and purchase colportage novel, emphasizing the inquiring community of colportage novel readers and the current information that the novel's content promised. In what follows, I examine two advertisements, one typical of those on the back cover of the first few parts of a novel's run (Illustration 3.1) and one a standard mid-series advertisement (Illustration 3.2).

The advertisements for initial parts of colportage novels mixed visual cues and exciting language to highlight the appeal of the novel visually. Alternating between fonts played a role in this. Illustration 3.1 below depicts the back wrapper from one of the initial numbers of the novel *Die Inselkönigin oder der Kampf um Cuba: Historischer Roman* published in Dresden by Adolph Wolf in 1898-99, thematizing the culmination of the Cuban War of Independence 1895-1898. The layout is typical of back-cover advertising, which included an image as well as copy in a riot of fonts. The typography here lets keywords catch the reader's eye: the title of the novel is set in double-height font, "Cuba", "Die Kampf um Cuba", and "Die Inselkönigen". The names of key

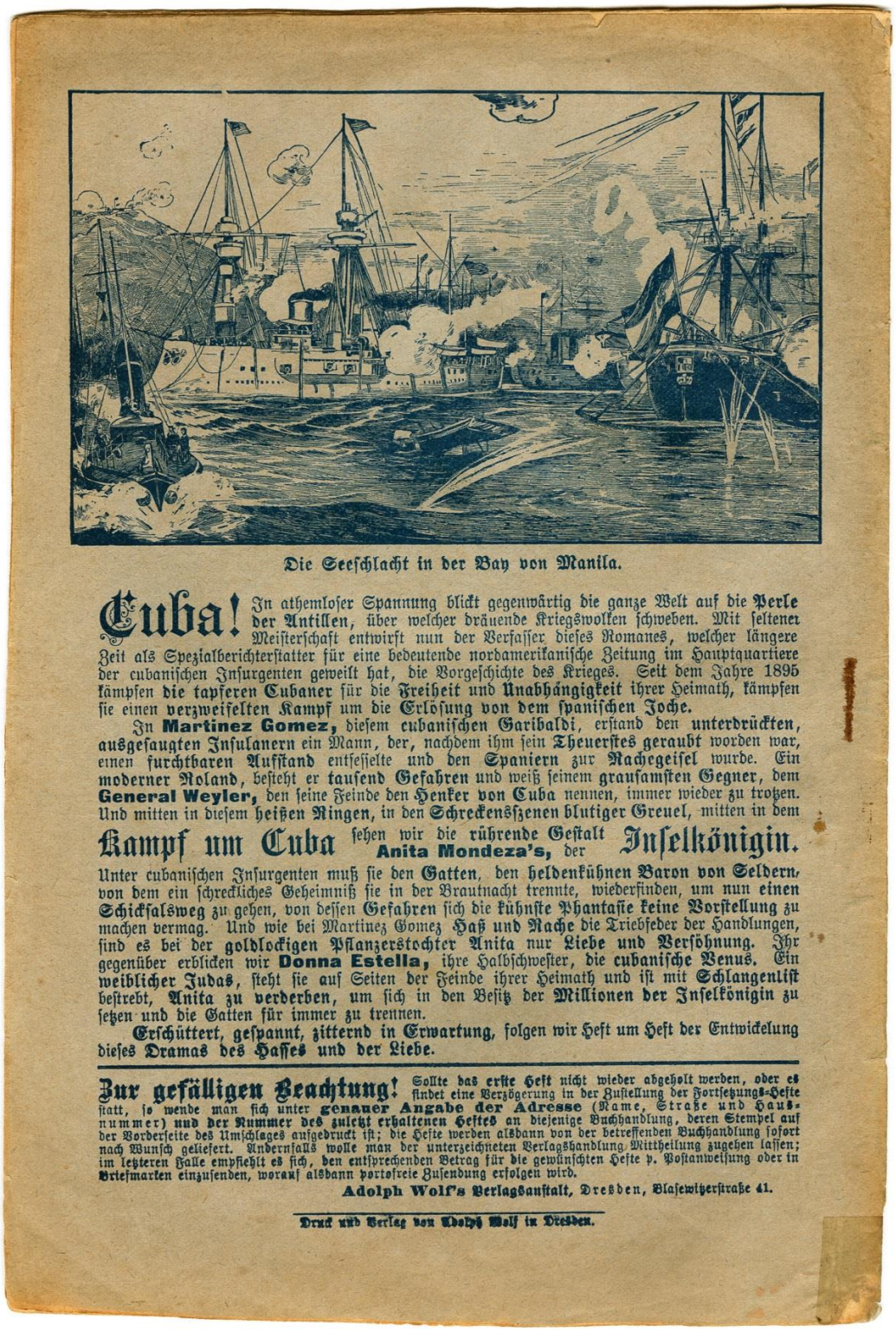
[48] The readership of many colportage novels dwindled as the series went on, so it is clear that the "user's directions" for the form supplied by advertising were not taken as gospel by the readers. See chapter two for an account of how publishers reduced print volume over the course of a typical colportage novel's print run.

characters are picked out in a modern grotesque typeface: "Martinez Gomez", "Anita Mondez", "Donna Estella" and "General Weyler". Within the text, a bold blackletter font is used to highlight epithets like "cubanische Venus" and "goldlockig[e] Pflanzerstochter Anita" and "grausamst[er] Gegner".[49] These fonts were meant to be eye-catching, to awaken the reader's interest at a glance.

The advertising copy itself places an intense and immediate focus on the currency of the story. The opening emphasizes the narrative as one that is captivating the world with excitement – it is current and important. The exclamation "Cuba!" is followed by the introductory phrase pointing to the international attention the country is receiving "In athemloser Spannung blickt gegenwärtig die ganze Welt auf die **Perle der Antillen**, über welcher bräuende Kriegswolken schweben." The very next sentence asserts that this novel and its author are providing a knowledgable and special perspective on the matter: "Mit seltener Meisterschaft entwirft nun der Verfasser dieses Romans, welcher längere Zeit als Spezialberichterstatter für eine bedeutende nordamerikanische Zeitung im Hauptquartiere der cubanische Insurgenten geweilt hat, die Vorgeschichte des Krieges." This promises that the narrative offers first-hand knowledge and experiences from a journalist – a purveyor of facts. A summary explanation of the Cuban fight for independence follows, before the rest of the text is given over to a listing of the exciting and titillating characters, conflicts and emotions to be found in the novel.

[49] General Weyler and, possibly, Gomez are historical figures. During his tenure as the governor of Cuba from 1896-1897, Valeriano Weyler (1838-1930) became a well-known figure in the yellow press because of his brutal campaign of terror against Cuban rebels. With Gomez, the author took so many liberties that one would need to study the novel carefully to decide whether "Martinez Gomez" is meant to be a fictional avatar of Máximo Gómez (1836-1905), the real "Cuban Garibaldi". The heroine Anita and her archnemesis Donna Estella seem to be wholly fictional.

Illustration 3.1: *Die Inselkönigin oder der Kampf um Cuba*, 1898-99



Die Seeschlacht in der Bay von Manila.

Cuba! In athemloser Spannung blickt gegenwärtig die ganze Welt auf die **Perle der Antillen**, über welcher dräuende Kriegswolken schweben. Mit seltener Meisterschaft entwirft nun der Verfasser dieses Romanes, welcher längere Zeit als Spezialberichterstatter für eine bedeutende nordamerikanische Zeitung im Hauptquartiere der cubanischen Insurgenten geweilt hat, die Vorgeschichte des Krieges. Seit dem Jahre 1895 kämpfen **die tapferen Cubaner** für die **Freiheit** und **Unabhängigkeit** ihrer Heimath, kämpfen sie einen **verzweifelten Kampf** um die **Erlösung von dem spanischen Joche.**

In **Martinez Gomez,** diesem **cubanischen Garibaldi**, erstand den **unterdrückten, ausgesaugten Insulanern** ein Mann, der, nachdem ihm sein **Theuerstes geraubt** worden war, einen **furchtbaren Aufstand** entfesselte und den **Spaniern** zur **Rachegeisel** wurde. Ein **moderner Roland**, besteht er **tausend Gefahren** und weiß seinem **grausamsten Gegner**, dem **General Weyler,** den seine Feinde den **Henker von Cuba** nennen, immer wieder zu trotzen. Und mitten in diesem **heißen Ringen**, in den **Schreckensszenen blutiger Greuel**, mitten in dem

Kampf um Cuba sehen wir die **rührende Gestalt Anita Mondeza's,** der **Inselkönigin.**

Unter cubanischen Insurgenten muß sie den **Gatten**, den **heldenkühnen Baron von Seldern**, von dem ein schreckliches Geheimniß sie in der Brautnacht trennte, wiederfinden, um nun **einen Schicksalsweg** zu gehen, von dessen **Gefahren** sich die **kühnste Phantasie keine Vorstellung** zu machen vermag. Und wie bei Martinez Gomez **Haß und Rache** die Triebfeder der Handlungen, sind es bei der **goldlockigen Pflanzerstochter Anita** nur **Liebe und Versöhnung.** Ihr gegenüber erblicken wir **Donna Estella,** ihre Halbschwester, **die cubanische Venus.** Ein **weiblicher Judas**, steht sie auf Seiten der Feinde ihrer Heimath und ist mit **Schlangenlist** bestrebt, **Anita zu verderben**, um sich in den Besitz der **Millionen der Inselkönigin** zu setzen und die Gatten für immer zu trennen.

Erschüttert, gespannt, zitternd in Erwartung, folgen wir Heft um Heft der Entwickelung dieses **Dramas des Hasses und der Liebe.**

Zur gefälligen Beachtung! Sollte das **erste Heft** nicht wieder abgeholt werden, oder es findet eine Verzögerung in der Zustellung der Fortsetzungs-Hefte statt, so wende man sich unter **genauer Angabe der Adresse** (Name, Straße und Hausnummer) **und der Nummer des zuletzt erhaltenen Heftes** an diejenige Buchhandlung, deren Stempel auf der Vorderseite des Umschlages aufgedruckt ist; die Hefte werden alsdann von der betreffenden Buchhandlung sofort nach Wunsch geliefert. Andernfalls wolle man der unterzeichneten Verlagshandlung Mittheilung zugehen lassen; im letzteren Falle empfiehlt es sich, den entsprechenden Betrag für die gewünschten Hefte p. Postanweisung oder in Briefmarken einzusenden, worauf alsdann portofreie Zusendung erfolgen wird.

Adolph Wolf's Verlagsanstalt, Dresden, Blasewitzerstraße 41.

Druck und Verlag von Adolph Wolf in Dresden.

As such, the advertisement starts out with its promise of current information, and backs it up with a laundry list of the familiar tropes of sensational story-telling into which the current information will be embedded.

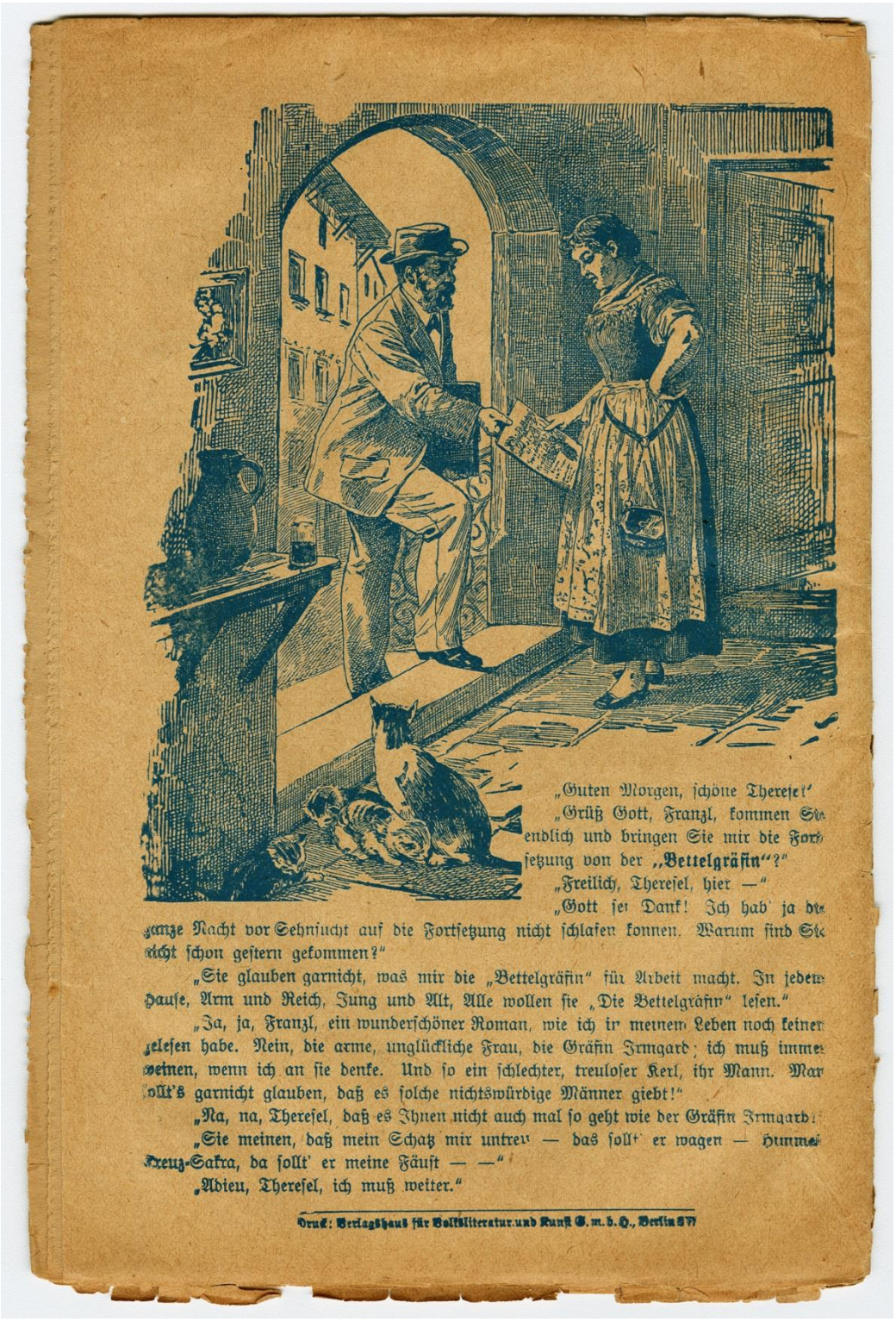
Finally, the reader is asked to join the community of subscribers, "**Erschüttert, gespannt, zitternd in Erwartung**, folgen wir Heft um Heft dieses **Dramas des Hasses und der Liebe.**" Below this, text in a smaller font explains how to subscribe to the novel in the case that a colporteur does not pick up the free issues of the novel or if there is some hiccough in delivery. Advertising for new novels on the wrappers of the first six installments generally appeals to readers on two points: (1) the special information the novel promises and the audience of readers who are enjoying this exclusive narrative, (2) the exciting and melodramatic content that can be expected – protagonists, villains, and the general framework of the story. We can see these two points exemplified in Illustration 3.1.

In comparison, mid-series novels used different advertisements. These tended to focus more on the expectations and suspense associated with serial delivery of the text and also on how the narrative parallels real life or seems to be taking place in a real temporal dimension. Illustration 3.2 shows a typical mid-series advertisement that prescriptively depicts how one is meant to buy and read a colportage novel.[50] One major trope in advertising for colportage novels (in general) focused on describing how the novel promises desirable, revealing information to an interested readership. The advertising almost always implies a community of readers actively engaged with its quasi-fictional world.

[50] This particular wood engraving of the colporteur at the door is used and reused many times for different advertising texts and different novels.

The advertising program taps into and amplifies the notion of the reading community and the immediacy of the reading experience. A typical example presents an image of the colporteur visiting a customer with the newest part of a running subscription (see Illustration 3.2 below). Here the illustration takes center stage, and the font is kept uniform. The colporteur, "Franzl," has the latest installment of the novel *Die Bettelgräfin*, and his customer, "Theresel," immediately reacts with "Gott sei dank!" The suspense of waiting for the new installment has been disturbing Theresel's sleep. Franzl explains that he has so much work due to the popularity of the novel that he couldn't deliver to Theresel any earlier. Every household, poor or rich, young or old, is taking the novel – Theresel and Franzl are part of a community structured around reading the novel. Their conversation then turns to the heroine of the novel, Countess Irmgard, who Theresel sympathizes with as if she were a neighbor, saying, "[...] ich muss immer weinen, wenn ich an sie denke." She then turns to the villain of the story, Irmgard's husband, saying "Man sollt's gar nicht glauben, daß es solche nichtswürdige Männer giebt!" The subtext here shows that the novel's sensational plots serve Theresel as a point of comparison in real life. Franzl proceeds to suggest that Theresel should not disbelieve too much, implying that she could experience the same woes in life as the Countess. Theresel, flustered at the idea, utters a threat against her own potentially misbehaving husband, upon which Franzl makes his exit. In short, this kind of advertising explained to the reader how she was to engage with the novel, as a part of a group of active readers and as if it were part of a real but parallel world to her own.

Illustration 3.2: Selling the format



„Guten Morgen, schöne Theresel!"

„Grüß Gott, Franzl, kommen Sie endlich und bringen Sie mir die Fortsetzung von der **„Bettelgräfin"**?"

„Freilich, Theresel, hier —"

„Gott sei Dank! Ich hab' ja die ganze Nacht vor Sehnsucht auf die Fortsetzung nicht schlafen können. Warum sind Sie nicht schon gestern gekommen?"

„Sie glauben garnicht, was mir die „Bettelgräfin" für Arbeit macht. In jedem Hause, Arm und Reich, Jung und Alt, Alle wollen sie „Die Bettelgräfin" lesen."

„Ja, ja, Franzl, ein wunderschöner Roman, wie ich ir meinem Leben noch keinen gelesen habe. Nein, die arme, unglückliche Frau, die Gräfin Irmgard; ich muß immer weinen, wenn ich an sie denke. Und so ein schlechter, treuloser Kerl, ihr Mann. Man sollt's garnicht glauben, daß es solche nichtswürdige Männer giebt!"

„Na, na, Theresel, daß es Ihnen nicht auch mal so geht wie der Gräfin Irmgard!"

„Sie meinen, daß mein Schatz mir untreu — das sollt' er wagen — Hunnerkreuz-Sakra, da sollt' er meine Fäust — —"

„Adieu, Theresel, ich muß weiter."

Druck: Verlagshaus für Volksliteratur und Kunst G. m. b. H., Berlin SW

Since its development, colportage novel advertisement has focused on selling the series, the subscription, and a certain kind of leisure-time reading. The advertising uses rhetoric and formal cues that place an emphasis on the thrill of knowing, the excitement of revelation, the anticipation of hidden truth being disclosed to a community of readers. This kind of packaging construes pleasure as something to be gleaned from sifting through details, watching a narrative emerge over a period of time – an activity, of course, supported by a host of familiar fictional archetypes and popular conventions.

Illustrations and Graphic Supplements

Colportage novels, even those without a topical relationship to actual current events, incorporated a wealth of graphic and textual supplementary materials beyond advertising in order to package the colportage novel as an attractive vehicle of information. Some were there primarily to entertain, some served to strengthen the novel's evidential basis or its commitment to providing readers with at least the outward appearance of a factual basis.[51] Such materials included illustrations, maps, portraits, song texts, or facsimiles of newspapers, documents or handwritten letters. These supplements could be entertaining, salacious, or tangential. A surprising number, however, served to expand and create a layered fictional world from which evidence could be gleaned or which reduced the distance between the fictional world and the real.

Graphic supplements proliferated in all print forms towards the end of the nineteenth century, as printing and typesetting technologies became faster and cheaper. However, the technologies used for colportage novels were not always the most cutting

[51] Illustrated news was a relatively new development in the later half of the nineteenth century and, combined with various marketing innovations, broadened the market for newspapers (Koszyk 258). Colportage novels put the illustration to work as a way to sell novels and to cash in on the general interest in reading paired with pictures.

edge. Although colportage novels that came out in the 1870s made extensive use of color printing for their illustrations, in the 1880s there was a shift back towards black and white; from the 1890s, one-color illustration was the norm again, even as other print forms became more colorful. Kosch and Nagl attribute a general decline in illustration quality from 1880 to the increasing legal regulations placed on the industry and pressure from "Schundbekämpfer" (31-32). However, in actuality there was another factor that their account leaves out. This was the use of half-tone reproduction of photographs, which made illustrators and wood engravers unnecessary. This process can be found in colportage novels from as early as the 1870s. The immediacy of photographic prints served to up their value as current, factual and authoritative.

Regardless of the quality of the illustrations or technology employed, graphic supplements played a central and underestimated role in the colportage novel's construction of journalistic truth and authenticity, as well as its popular appeal. German media historians have just begun to recognize the linkage between colportage texts and their supplementary materials as an unprecedented transmedial development in nineteenth-century print culture. Werner Faulstich, for example, recasts the nineteenth-century book market as a "pamphlet" market, and sees the colportage novel in particular as an innovative transmedial expansion of the book because of its combination of print and image and its special form of circulation (195-215). As can be seen in the examples that follow, visual and other documentary supplements added more dimensions to the narrative world. They offered novel ways to repeat or introduce exposition. Finally, they imitated the fashions in daily and weekly illustrated papers, family magazines and other

illustration-rich publications, projecting a similar aura of currency by containing similar illustrations.

One novel way to expand the narrative world was to give it its own newspaper headlines. Illustration 3.3 shows an illustrated supplement depicting a facsimile of a *Generalanzeiger* front page bearing news stories that relate to the events of the novel *Die Inselkönigin oder der Kampf um Cuba: Historischer Roman*, from the same pamphlet as the image shown in Illustration 3.1. The novel was written concurrently to the conclusion of the Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898). The detail in this facsimile is ingenious and intricate — the day of the week is correct for the date, the price for subscription and advertisement is listed in an information-filled masthead, along with the address and telephone number for a fictional newspaper office. The front page reiterates plot points and character information. The typesetting in columns and mix of Latin and blackletter typefaces is also an accurate simulation of newspaper convention. This kind of supplement is not only expeditious in that it offers a recap of story events from the last number, it contributes to the transmedial, fictional "reality" that serial narratives develop over time, in interaction with a community of readers. Although it does not engage with real external sources (i.e. actual newspapers), instead it simulates them in a striking way that contributes to a multi-layered and transmedial serial reading experience. It presents this particular installment of the novel as part of a narrative world that also involves deciphering information in multiple media forms.

Many colportage novels were written that commemorated the deeds of criminals or bad men, and this topic area yields interesting graphic supplements that were perhaps borrowed from newspaper coverage of crime. By the 1890s, newspapers in urban centers

such as Berlin addressed a mass public and reported on stories by underscoring reader proximity to the actual deeds in their crime reporting (Müller 56). In *Auf der Suche nach dem Täter,* Philip Müller analyzes reportage about manhunts in Wilhelminian Berlin and shows them to be one means for publicly dramatizing crime. He notes, for example, the *Berlin Lokal-Anzeiger*'s practices of printing handwriting samples of criminals at large and images of weapons used in crimes to demonstrate this tendency (113, 120). At the time, daily papers were beginning to be instrumentalized as "pressepolitische Maßnahmen der Polizei bei 'Mordalarm'" (111). Day by day, local newspapers printed pathology reports, information about victims of crimes, crime scenes, and police sketches of suspects. Such information was presented in a way that invited readers to imagine themselves in the scene, to recall information, and to contribute.[52] In the example of the search for the murderer Georg Wetzel in 1891, newspapers print handwriting samples multiple times while he is at large. Müller correctly points out that the publication of the handwriting samples was not just a tool for making the public aware of evidence that could lead to the apprehension of the criminal: "Die Vorliebe des Kaufmanns Wetzel, seine Identität mit Pseudonymen zu kaschieren, die mit einem verschnörkelten W begannen, bot jedem Leser die Möglichkeit, selbst den Täter zu identifizieren" (114). The graphic evidence asks the reader to consider the possibility that he or she perhaps waited on the fugitive at a shop or boarding house, creating the potential for intersection between the reader's life and the story. This imaginative intersection was exactly what colportage novels tried to create with their strategies of authentication.

[52] Müller points out that these appeals were often targeted to particular groups (e.g. barbers, people at a certain location on a certain date) in order to recruit witnesses (115-117).

Illustration 3.3: *Generalanzeiger* inside the novel

Auflage 70,000 — Fernsprech-Anschluß Nr. 361. — Nr. 353.

General-Anzeiger.

Bezugspreis: 3 Mark pro Vierteljahr, mit Postaufschlag Mk. 3.75. Erscheint täglich, mit Ausnahme des Montags.

Unparteiische Zeitung. 31. Jahrgang.

Anzeigen-Gebühr: 15 Pf. pro sechsgespaltene Petitzeile. Reklamen 30 Pf. pro dreigespaltene Petitzeile. Bestellungen durch die Post nur gegen Vorausbezahlung.

Redaktion und Expedition: Ritterstraße. — Mittwoch, 21. Dezember.

Bekanntmachung.

10 000 Mark Belohnung!

sichere ich demjenigen zu, der mir angiebt, wer die als meine Frau Anita von Seldern geb. Mondeza auftretende Bettlerin ist, woher sie stammt und wie ihr eigentlicher Name lautet, da meine Gattin, wie bekannt, seit fast sechs Wochen todt ist.

Meine Mitbürger werden sich entsinnen, daß meine theure unvergeßliche Gattin Anita, die einzige Tochter des in Havanna verstorbenen Millionärs und Plantagenbesitzers auf Kuba, Florestan Mondeza, in unserer Hochzeitsnacht auf räthselhaft geheimnißvolle Weise aus meinem Hause verschwand und daß dann am Ufer der Spree bei Treptow ihr Spitzentuch und Mantel gefunden wurden. Verzweifelt und rathlos, setzte ich damals auf das Auffinden der Leiche der Unglücklichen eine Belohnung von tausend Mark aus, worauf die theure Todte gefunden und beerdigt wurde. Bald darauf trat hier eine Fremde, welche der Verstorbenen ähnelte, auf und behauptet, Anita, meine Gattin, zu sein. Ich sehe mich nun dazu gezwungen, wieder eine Belohnung auszusetzen und zwar

10 000 Mark

welche derjenige erhält, der mir nachweist, wer diese Fremde ist und welche Zwecke dieselbe bei ihrer Angabe, die todte Anita von Seldern zu sein, verfolgt, da diese Behauptung, so abenteuerlich und wahnwitzig sie auch ist, wie ich höre, vielfach Glauben gefunden hat. Ich kann nur annehmen, daß sie eine Irrsinnige ist oder daß sie von dem Reichthume meiner verstorbenen Gattin gehört hat und nun den Versuch macht, für die Todte zu gelten.

Baron Ernst von Seldern.

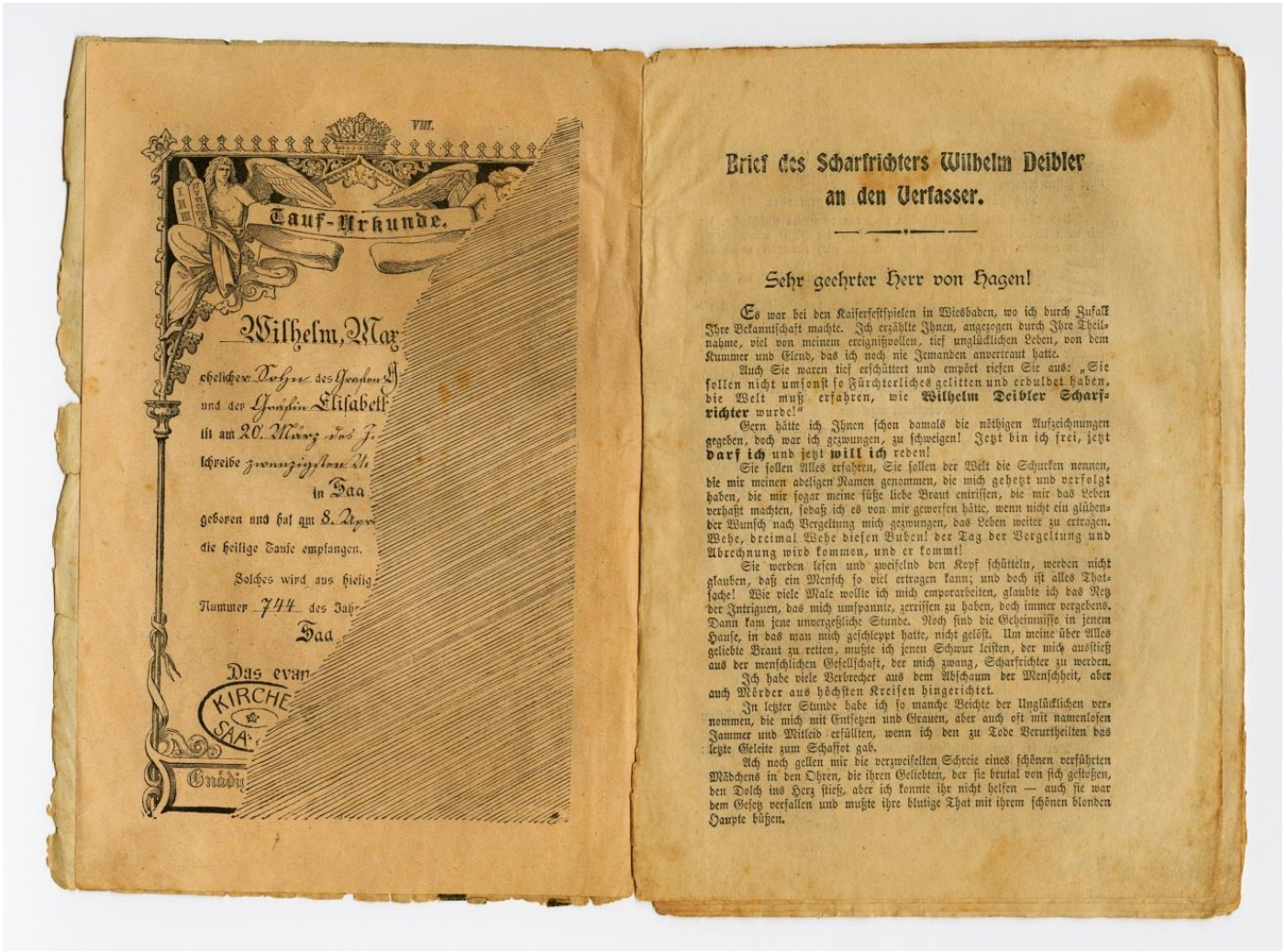
Oertliches.

— Großes Aufsehen erregt in weitesten Kreisen ein Vorgang, welcher eine hochangesehene hiesige Familie der höchsten Kreise betrifft, nachdem dieselbe schon vor einiger Zeit durch ein trauriges Ereigniß die allgemeine Theilnahme erweckt hat. Damals war es der plötzliche Tod der Dame dieses Hauses, welcher das Tagesgespräch bildete. Man wird sich noch entsinnen, daß eines Tages draußen vor den Thoren unserer Stadt am Ufer des Stromes ein Spitzentuch und ein Mantel aufgefunden wurden und zwar unter Umständen, welche darauf schließen ließen, daß die Eigenthümerin dieser Gegenstände den Tod in den Fluten gesucht und gefunden hatte. Man zerbrach sich damals den Kopf darüber, was die hier in den glänzendsten Verhältnissen lebende Dame, in welcher die Eigenthümerin der Gegenstände ermittelt wurde, zu dem unseligen Schritte getrieben haben könnte, da dieselbe die einzige Tochter eines vielfachen Millionärs war, und nahm an, daß die That nur in einer augenblicklichen Umnachtung des Geistes ausgeführt sein konnte. Der Gatte der Dame war außer sich und setzte eine hohe Belohnung auf die Auffindung der Leiche der Unglücklichen aus. Schon damals erregten diese Vorgänge ein ungewöhnliches Aufsehen, und die hohe Belohnung veranlaßte zahlreiche Personen, sich um die Auffindung der Ertrunkenen zu bemühen. Das gelang denn schließlich auch. So weit hätte die ganze traurige Angelegenheit mit der feierlichen Beisetzung der Todten ihr Ende erreicht. Nun aber werden Einzelheiten bekannt, welche diese Affaire in hochromantischem Lichte erscheinen lassen. Unser Lokalberichterstatter meldet, daß neben der Ertrunkenen noch eine zweite Tochter des verstorbenen Nobobs am Leben sei deren Wohnung in Havanna sein und die ob ihrer Schönheit den Namen die „Kubanische Venus" führen soll. Diese Tochter nun, nicht vollbürtig, sondern eine Mestize und außerehelich geboren, habe zu Baron S., bevor dieser seine spätere Gattin, die Halbschwester der Mestize also, kennen und lieben lernte, in einem zärtlichen Verhältnisse gestanden, das in nichts weniger als gütlicher Weise gelöst worden sein soll. Dieses Geheimniß nun habe die ertrunkene Baronin in der Brautnacht erfahren und sei darum und weil sie sich nun um ihres Reichthums willen gefreit wähnte, geflohen. Selbstverständlich geben wir diese Gerüchte mit aller gebotenen Reserve wieder. Gleichsam nur als Kuriosum sei noch verzeichnet, daß nun zwischen der Mestize und Baron S. ein Erbschaftsstreit in Vorbereitung sein soll, dessen Verlauf und Ausfall bei dem seltsamen Umstande, daß eine Person auftauchte, die sich für die Ertrunkene ausgiebt, gar nicht abzusehen ist. Damit sind wir bei der Gegenwart angelangt und können unser Staunen über den Umstand nicht unterdrücken, daß diese Person schon mehrere Wochen hindurch unbehindert ihr Unwesen treiben konnte. Da die Polizeibehörde benachrichtigt worden ist und die Verhaftung der Fremden angeordnet haben soll, könnte wohl bald das erwünschte Licht in diese ebenso erregenden wie für die Angehörigen furchtbaren Vorgänge kommen. Die an der Spitze unserer heutigen Nummer befindliche Bekanntmachung wird nicht ermangeln, das große Aufsehen, welches die Angelegenheit macht, noch zu erhöhen.

The evidentiary and expansive role of the newspaper facsimile in Illustration 3.3 is thus trumped by the supplements on display in Illustrations 3.4 and 3.5. They depict fabricated documentation from a *Scharfrichter* novel entitled *Mein Leben, mein Lieben, mein Leiden und meine unglücklichen Schicksale, Wilhelm Deibler, Scharfrichter: Sensationsroman* issued by the Dresdener Romanverlag in 1903.[53] The non-fictional Louis Deibler, a French executioner who lived 1823-1904, is the subject of the novel. The supplements depicted come from the initial number of the novel; in them, the reader is presented with a fragment of a baptismal certificate (Illustration 3.4, left), a letter testifying to the veracity of the novel to come (Illustration 3.4, right and Illustration 3.5, left), allegedly written by Deibler and addressed to the author, who here has become a "Verfasser," suggesting that he plays the role of a compiler. The letter is translated, the faithfulness of the translation is attested to in handwriting and in official stamps on its verso page. Beyond this, readers are invited to view the original letter in the publisher's office, should they doubt its veracity. These facsimiles of official documents, here complete with seals and signatures, are submitted for the reader's perusal, and are clearly intended to authenticate and authorize the colportage novel's story, even as the title marks the work a "Sensationsroman." This clear disruption of the boundaries between fact and fiction, reality and fantasy, are at the core of the colportage aesthetic of authentication, closing the gap between the reader and the serial world.

[53] Executioner novels were a special and very popular colportage novel genre.

Illustration 3.4: *Wilhelm Deibler*



VIII.

Tauf-Urkunde.

Wilhelm, Max

ehelicher Sohn des Grafen H

und der Gräfin Elisabeth

ist am 20. März des J.

schreibe zwanzigsten M

in Saa

geboren und hat am 8. Apr

die heilige Taufe empfangen.

Solches wird aus hielig

Nummer 744 des Jahr

Saa

Das evan

KIRCHE

SAA

Gnädig

Brief des Scharfrichters Wilhelm Deibler an den Verfasser.

Sehr geehrter Herr von Hagen!

Es war bei den Kaiserfestspielen in Wiesbaden, wo ich durch Zufall Ihre Bekanntschaft machte. Ich erzählte Ihnen, angezogen durch Ihre Theilnahme, viel von meinem ereignißvollen, tief unglücklichen Leben, von dem Kummer und Elend, das ich noch nie Jemanden anvertraut hatte.

Auch Sie waren tief erschüttert und empört riefen Sie aus: „Sie sollen nicht umsonst so Fürchterliches gelitten und erduldet haben, die Welt muß erfahren, wie **Wilhelm Deibler Scharfrichter** wurde!"

Gern hätte ich Ihnen schon damals die nöthigen Aufzeichnungen gegeben, doch war ich gezwungen, zu schweigen! Jetzt bin ich frei, jetzt **darf ich** und jetzt **will ich** reden!

Sie sollen Alles erfahren, Sie sollen der Welt die Schurken nennen, die mir meinen adeligen Namen genommen, die mich gehetzt und verfolgt haben, die mir sogar meine süße liebe Braut entrissen, die mir das Leben verhaßt machten, sodaß ich es von mir geworfen hätte, wenn nicht ein glühender Wunsch nach Vergeltung mich gezwungen, das Leben weiter zu ertragen. Wehe, dreimal Wehe diesen Buben! der Tag der Vergeltung und Abrechnung wird kommen, und er kommt!

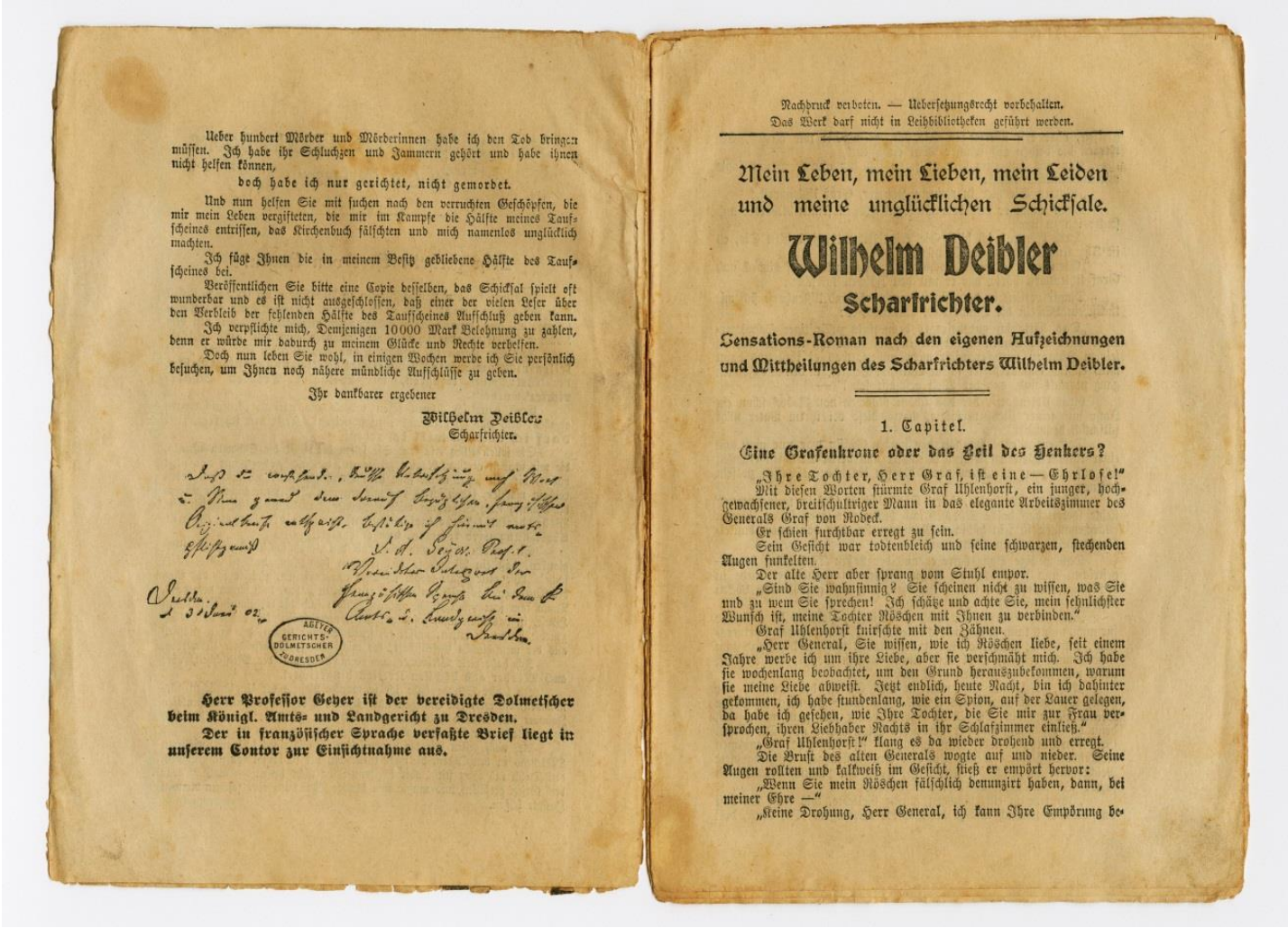
Sie werden lesen und zweifelnd den Kopf schütteln, werden nicht glauben, daß ein Mensch so viel ertragen kann; und doch ist alles Thatsache! Wie viele Male wollte ich mich emporarbeiten, glaubte ich das Netz der Intriguen, das mich umspannte, zerrissen zu haben, doch immer vergebens. Dann kam jene unvergeßliche Stunde. Noch sind die Geheimnisse in jenem Hause, in das man mich geschleppt hatte, nicht gelöst. Um meine über Alles geliebte Braut zu retten, mußte ich jenen Schwur leisten, der mich ausstieß aus der menschlichen Gesellschaft, der mich zwang, Scharfrichter zu werden.

Ich habe viele Verbrecher aus dem Abschaum der Menschheit, aber auch Mörder aus höchsten Kreisen hingerichtet.

In letzter Stunde habe ich so manche Beichte der Unglücklichen vernommen, die mich mit Entsetzen und Grauen, aber auch oft mit namenlosen Jammer und Mitleid erfüllten, wenn ich den zu Tode Verurtheilten das letzte Geleite zum Schaffot gab.

Ach noch gellen mir die verzweifelten Schreie eines schönen verführten Mädchens in den Ohren, die ihren Geliebten, der sie brutal von sich gestoßen, den Dolch ins Herz stieß, aber ich konnte ihr nicht helfen — auch sie war dem Gesetz verfallen und mußte ihre blutige That mit ihrem schönen blonden Haupte büßen.

Illustration 3.5: *Wilhelm Deibler*, handwriting



Ueber hundert Mörder und Mörderinnen habe ich den Tod bringen müssen. Ich habe ihr Schluchzen und Jammern gehört und habe ihnen nicht helfen können,

doch habe ich nur gerichtet, nicht gemordet.

Und nun helfen Sie mit suchen nach den verruchten Geschöpfen, die mir mein Leben vergifteten, die mir im Kampfe die Hälfte meines Taufscheines entrissen, das Kirchenbuch fälschten und mich namenlos unglücklich machten.

Ich füge Ihnen die in meinem Besitz gebliebene Hälfte des Taufscheines bei.

Veröffentlichen Sie bitte eine Copie desselben, das Schicksal spielt oft wunderbar und es ist nicht ausgeschlossen, daß einer der vielen Leser über den Verbleib der fehlenden Hälfte des Taufscheines Aufschluß geben kann.

Ich verpflichte mich, Demjenigen 10000 Mark Belohnung zu zahlen, denn er würde mir dadurch zu meinem Glücke und Rechte verhelfen.

Doch nun leben Sie wohl, in einigen Wochen werde ich Sie persönlich besuchen, um Ihnen noch nähere mündliche Aufschlüsse zu geben.

Ihr dankbarer ergebener

Wilhelm Deibler
Scharfrichter.

ADLER GERICHTS-DOLMETSCHER DRESDEN

Herr Professor Geyer ist der vereidigte Dolmetscher beim Königl. Amts- und Landgericht zu Dresden.
Der in französischer Sprache verfaßte Brief liegt in unserem Contor zur Einsichtnahme aus.

Nachdruck verboten. — Uebersetzungsrecht vorbehalten.
Das Werk darf nicht in Leihbibliotheken geführt werden.

Mein Leben, mein Lieben, mein Leiden und meine unglücklichen Schicksale.

Wilhelm Deibler

Scharfrichter.

Sensations-Roman nach den eigenen Aufzeichnungen und Mittheilungen des Scharfrichters Wilhelm Deibler.

1. Capitel.

Eine Grafenkrone oder das Beil des Henkers?

„Ihre Tochter, Herr Graf, ist eine — Ehrlose!"

Mit diesen Worten stürmte Graf Uhlenhorst, ein junger, hochgewachsener, breitschultriger Mann in das elegante Arbeitszimmer des Generals Graf von Rodeck.

Er schien furchtbar erregt zu sein.

Sein Gesicht war todtenbleich und seine schwarzen, stechenden Augen funkelten.

Der alte Herr aber sprang vom Stuhl empor.

„Sind Sie wahnsinnig? Sie scheinen nicht zu wissen, was Sie und zu wem Sie sprechen! Ich schätze und achte Sie, mein sehnlichster Wunsch ist, meine Tochter Röschen mit Ihnen zu verbinden."

Graf Uhlenhorst knirschte mit den Zähnen.

„Herr General, Sie wissen, wie ich Röschen liebe, seit einem Jahre werbe ich um ihre Liebe, aber sie verschmäht mich. Ich habe sie wochenlang beobachtet, um den Grund herauszubekommen, warum sie meine Liebe abweist. Jetzt endlich, heute Nacht, bin ich dahinter gekommen, ich habe stundenlang, wie ein Spion, auf der Lauer gelegen, da habe ich gesehen, wie Ihre Tochter, die Sie mir zur Frau versprochen, ihren Liebhaber Nachts in ihr Schlafzimmer einließ."

„Graf Uhlenhorst!" klang es da wieder drohend und erregt.

Die Brust des alten Generals wogte auf und nieder. Seine Augen rollten und kalkweiß im Gesicht, stieß er empört hervor:

„Wenn Sie mein Röschen fälschlich denunzirt haben, dann, bei meiner Ehre —"

„Keine Drohung, Herr General, ich kann Ihre Empörung be-

As technologies for printing illustrations developed, the types of graphic supplements in colportage novels also evolved.

The next illustrations are examples of photography reproduction in colportage novels using the half-tone process. Illustration 3.6 shows Boer soldiers manning a canon, a photograph that is included in the 32nd installment of *Rosa Burger, das kühne Burenmädchen oder Die Goldgräber von Transvaal*, published by the Richard Hermann Dietrich Verlag in Dresden in 1900/01. The publication of the novel coincided closely with actual dates of the Second Boer War, an example of a current event being handled by a novelist even prior to its conclusion on the world stage. Photographs and at least one reproduction of a steel-engraving make an appearance from time to time in the parts of *Rosa Burger*, coming in striking contrast to the majority of the illustrations in this novel, which are somewhat smudgy half-tone illustrations rendered with heavy black outlines and little variety in shading. This photograph of a heavy artillery crew is the type of image that would be associated with illustrated papers, and its reproduction in the context of an ongoing novel underscores the currency and news-orientation of the novel's narrative.[54] Photography's promise of immediacy opened a literal window for the reader onto South Africa, depicting a part of the story world and demonstrating the story world's continuity and authenticity.

[54] In this particular case, the photograph in *Rosa Burger* seem to have done double-duty for the Dietrich Verlag, appearing in their illustrated weekly *Der Geschichtsfreund* (15 pfennig per issue) as well as in *Rosa Burger*.

Illustration 3.6: Boer artillery crew from *Rosa Burger*

While graphic supplements seem to extend the narrative world into the real world or on a parallel trajectory to the real world, they were also clearly embedded in works that carried markers of non-fiction, highlighting the paradoxical nature of serial narratives as both "fictions and realities," (Hayward 66). They functioned as links between reality and fiction, but also between the reader and the narrative world of the serial text. It is easy to discount the transmedial potential of printed literature, because it seems mono-medial. But, in the examples examined above, we can see that producers of literary serials (for the most part pre-radio and definitely pre-television) were actively engaged in

acknowledging the continuity and reality to be found in serial fantasies, experimenting with those boundaries. This becomes especially clear in their creation and inclusion of supplementary materials that suggested a coherent narrative world[55] with its own rules of continuity and constellation of social configurations. Here I have only presented a small selection of the visual material that accompanied colportage novel numbers and shown how they suggested to readers that the serial narrative extended beyond the regularly delivered pamphlet, that it was real, tangible and being recorded faithfully in the novel.[56] The various uses of illustration in this section show that colportage novels purported to be and intended to provide their readers with both a window to far-off parts of the real world and immediate access to the quasi-fictional realm of the narrative.

Titling

Titles are key paratextual elements for readers and, in the case of colportage novels, the titles often provide the first indication that the novel is not only an exciting fantasy – but also as a timely and authoritative source of information.[57] Furthermore, titles are addressed to a public that is larger than the people who purchase and read the novels – titles are the component that non-readers (in this case, colporteurs, publishers,

[55] The term "hyperdiegesis" has been coined in recent years to refer to this ongoing, coherent narrative world, used most often in scholarship on television serials. See Hills.

[56] Not all illustrated plates served this function. Another convention frequently seen in colportage novels' handling of illustration is the "Siehe Abbildung" illustration. Within the narrative, the installment's illustration would be faithfully described and referred to with the note "Siehe Abbildung." This explicitly delineated the illustration-text relationship so that the function of the supplement was descriptive rather than evocative of a more-than-textual world. However, the relationship between image and text in "Siehe Abbildung" nonetheless suggests a reader who will read the text, examine the illustration, and reflect on both.

[57] Not to mention that they provide researchers with a starting point for orientation within the extensive body of novels themselves.

critics) receive, transmit and circulate (Genette 75). Rather than appearing on a title page, the colportage novel's title usually appeared in graphic rendering in display fonts on the front of each installment of the novel and in advertisements. Some publishers provided a title page (and occasionally pages to divide "volumes" of the novel) along with the very last installment of the novel, in order to facilitate the binding of all of the parts into one (or several) large volumes.

Colportage novels typically had multi-part titles that can be easily broken down into three parts, a "title," "subtitle," and "genre indication" (56). Often, there are four parts to the title – the three already mentioned, taken from Genette, and then a fourth which I call "source," a part of the title that indicates the relationship of the colportage novel to an outside source – whether it be letters, interviews, records, or histories. Some examples are provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Examples of titles with source markers

Kosch No	Title	Publication Info	Author
213	Die drei rothen Brüder. Ein Lebensbild aus der ersten Hälfte dieses Jahrhunderts. Nach dem Original bearbeitet	Berlin: F.W. Nietack, ca. 1870.	o.A.
811	Margarete Kamprat, die deutsche Gouvernante oder Das Königsdrama in Serbien. Nach dem Tagebuch eines deutschen Mädchens geschildert	Ca. 1904.	Förster, Rosetta.

Table 3.1: continued

1380	Vierzigfach verheiratet oder Die Opfer des berüchtigsten Frauenjägers von New York. Sensations-Roman nach Enthüllungen aus dem New Yorker Liebes- und Verbrecherleben. Nach Geständnissen, Aufzeichnungen, privaten Mitteilungen und Zeitungs-Nachrichten eines zum Tode verurteilten	Berlin: A. Weichert, 1906.	Stein, Walter von
1425	Was ein Mutterherz vermag oder Vom Grafenschloß in's Räuberlager. Einzig wahre Schilderung der Erlebnisse der letzten Grafen von Rosenau, nach Tagebüchern, Akten und mündlichen Berichten verfaßt von einem Geheimpolizisten a.D	Neusalza: Hermann Oeser, 1899/1900.	Davis, A.C. (pseudonym of Paul Walter)
1457	Wilhelm Reindel der Scharfrichter von Magdeburg und die Opfer des Schaffots. Zeitroman nach Aufzeichnungen und Mitteilungen des Scharfrichters Wilhelm Reindel	Berlin: A. Weichert, 1903/1904.	Falk, Viktor von (pseudonym of Heinrich Sochazewsky)

As these examples show, titles often served to indicate that the stories were not original products of their authors' fantasy, but rather the product of research, published in order to reveal social problems, the true details of historical events, or the "secret" internal workings of urban life. These titles style the author as a compiler of information, and present the colportage novel as having a close link to a verifiable source – so close that the relationship, as a part of the title, is an identifying feature of the novel itself. These titles indicate that part of the novels' appeal lay in the promise of a detailed account that was analogous to or perhaps even more complete than anything provided by a newspaper.

In some cases, these title formats had an anachronistic appeal, harkening back to the "long synopsis-titles characteristic of the classical period and perhaps especially of

the eighteenth century" (Genette 71). Some examples below in Table 3.2 show how these titles amount to a resumé of what to expect in the narrative.

Table 3.2: Examples of long-synopsis titles

Kosch No	Title	Publication Info	Author
213	Graf Anulf, der gefürchtete Bandit der Steppe, genannt: Der schwarze Wilm. Sein vielbewegtes Leben, seine Raub- und Rachezüge an der Spitze einer Horde Gauner und Spitzbuben, sowie sein furchtbares aber wohlverdientes Ende oder: Die Blutrache des Bastarden. Historischer Roman	Dresden: C.G. Lohse, 1877/78.	Sternberg, Hugo
648	Johannes Bückler genannt Schinderhannes der größte Räuberhauptmann des 18. Jahrhunderts, sein und seiner Gefährten Leben, Treiben und schreckliches Ende. Nach Acten, Traditionen und neuen Quellen dem Deutschen Volke erzählt	Berlin: Hans Götze, ca. 1885.	Breughel, H.L.
1269	Thomas Waldauf's des Dresdner Schornsteinfegers Lebensereignisse zu Wasser und zu Lande in drei Weltteilen von ihm selbsterzählt und als wahrhaftes Familienbuch für Jung und Alt in allen Ständen des Volkes herausgegeben	Löbau: J.G. Walde, 1858.	Walde, J.G.

This convention is less prevalent than the convention of adding a "source" to novel titles. In the case of *Johannes Bückler*, the employment of a long synopsis title may be intended to match the subject matter, which is a biography of a notorious eighteenth-century bandit. In any case, these titles succinctly present multiple tantalizing facets of the story

to be told, and give the novels a patina of tradition – a complete novel, once bound, might appear on the shelf very much like a "respectable" work of the eighteenth century.

An aggregate assessment of titles can suggest how prevalent these conventions were. I used a random sample of 100 titles from the Kosch bibliography to give scale to my claim that current events and titling pointing to use of sources are a noticeable trend in the form. Because of the heterogeneity of the novels, their relatively low rate of survival, and limitations imposed by archival conditions, my own methods and resources, my ability to accurately describe the numerical prevalence of any given feature for these novels as a whole is necessarily quite constrained. Of the 100 titles in the sample, fewer than half (43) are actually extant in the Kosch collection.[58] Approximately 16 percent of the sample contains explicit references to sources and authenticity in their titles; an additional six percent show a clear relationship to current events that is obvious at the title level. Further examination (including title, date of publication, and cursory reading) of the 43 novels in the Kosch collection and available at the DLA revealed that 19 percent make claims to authenticity based on primary sources, and seven percent have a relationship to current events. Because colportage novels are so lengthy and because their writers poached material liberally, and because of my limitations as a sole researcher confronted with a large collection, these numbers are by no means exhaustive or meant to be taken as representative. Rather, they are meant to show that colportage novel's

[58] Those that not extant in the Kosch collection were included in the bibliogaphy because of mentions in colportage-novel-contemporary bibliographies, trade magazines, and catalogs; some of the titles included in the bibliography are only evidenced in advertisements.

predilection to flag real sources is prevalent enough to identify as a unifying feature of the form.

Although colportage titles were an evocative part of the text's packaging, the length of the novels and their serial format made them capacious as a form; thus, the title never encompasses the whole topical content of the novel. Which sources were woven into a novel are not necessarily obvious from the title. For example, a novel about the Franco-Prussian War by Chrysander Krause, *Der deutsche Siegeszug durch Frankreich 1870 und 1871 oder Die schöne Krankenpflegerin: Historische Erzählung*, published ca. 1871 in Berlin, includes copious details about the early history and operations of German Red Cross organizations during the war, a strand of historical fact and correspondence to reality which is not immediately evident in the title or in the first few numbers of the novel.[59] Further research is required to better assess the extent of factual and current event information in colportage novels. Nonetheless, I contend that this heterogeneous, genre-hybrid format had a distinct inclination towards currency and authenticity evident in its titling practices, in its other paratextual features, and in the texts themselves.

Author names

Another important paratextual marker, perhaps equal to the title, is the author's name. Although today we take it for granted that an author's name is publicized in tandem with his or her work, this is a relatively modern practice. Furthermore, it is a

[59] The information the novel provides is indeed copious, but in this particular case, humanitarian activity is also presented as a one-sided, German-only virtue. In the novel, the German Red Cross volunteers are praised highly. However, the French side is characterized as having no awareness of the values of the 1864 Geneva Convention (although France was one of the 12 original adopters of the treaty) and is criticized again and again for leaving wounded behind.

convention that has never applied in the same way to cheap literature. Colportage novels were primarily published either anonymously or pseudonymously. Despite this, the author names in colportage novels prompted an "imagining of the author" as Genette terms it, and the names frequently had attributes targeted to give the reader an impression of authority, authenticity, and proximity to important world events (47).

To make their pseudonyms more intriguing, authors often added titles or chose "noble" surnames or foreign names. For example, Hermann Baeblich (b. 1832), for example, used the American-sounding pseudonym "James Wood" for an 1866 novel about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, but used variations of the pseudonym "Dr. H. Liebbach" for the rest of his considerable oeuvre of colportage novels. Karl May authored most of his colportage novels anonymously, but also used the pseudonyms "Capitain Ramon Diaz de la Esoscura" and "Fritz Perner".[60] Imagining the author as foreigner, an insider, a veteran or a learned researcher fit the form: it offered the reader a seemingly highly authoritative interlocutor, their own personal news correspondent. An interesting author name promised interesting and relevant content. Authorship did not have much lasting value in the lifecycle of the colportage novel as a commodity – rather it was used as an extra space for marking the newest subscription novel as special, one-of-a-kind and exclusive. The author's name, where it was included, added extra appeal to the outward "packaging" of the colportage novel.

[60]May also tended to inflate his qualifications when using his "real" name, as well – thus, for example, he appears as a "Dr. phil." in *Kürschners Deutscher Literaturkalender* in 1904.

Footnotes

This section brings us much closer to the actual texts themselves; a surprising convention in colportage novels is their frequent inclusion of footnotes to explain evidence or special terms, to corroborate statements, and to authenticate the narrative, regardless of its actual relationship to a real or historical event. The use of notes as paratexts dates back to the Middle Ages, but perhaps the most relevant model for colportage novel footnotes was Walter Scott (1771-1832) and the notes in his popular historical novels (e.g. *Ivanhoe*, *Lammermoor* and the Waverly novels).[61] According to Genette, the use of notes in the context of fictional texts is unusual and appears most often "with texts whose fictionality is very 'impure,' very conspicuous for its historical reflections" where they tend to play a "corroborative role, adducing both testimony and supporting documents" (332-33). This describes the function of footnotes in colportage novels succinctly: they were included to continually mediate the presentation of the narrative as verified, real and to emphasize the informational quality of the surfeit of detail that readers encountered in the novels. In these notes, the author paid attention to the reader's needs: gaps in his or her knowledge that might need supplementation. But it also makes visible the process of fictionalization taking place, by delineating facts or quotations that stem from other sources. Occasionally notes in colportage novels bring to attention the fact that multiple "versions" of a narrative exist, and justify the author's choice of presenting one, usually the one he or she deems most likely to be true – this particular strategy will be examined in depth in chapter five.

[61] Cf. Genette 332ff.

This kind of referencing contributed to construction of an authentic, journalistic appeal in the novels, marking the points at which the narrative coincided with "true events." Footnotes are paratextual markers that create a special, narrative-parallel dialogue between the "author" and the reader. This dialogue occurs in a liminal place that is outside of the narrative and the text, but yet closely related to it. Footnotes in colportage novels served to amp up the authority of the text, but simultaneously represent service to the reader. Finally, footnotes indicated and made legible connections to other texts and other bodies of knowledge. Colportage novels were highly referential, and footnotes were just one way that they indicated their position within a "society" of texts. Extensive examples of footnote practices in colportage novels will be discussed in the next two chapters.

APPROPRIATION OF OTHER TEXTS

Notes and the systems of reference that they underscored for readers represent just one way of making the intertextuality of colportage novels visible. The authors of these novels also marbled their prose with borrowed texts and references that were not marked with footnotes. In the process, the novels became replete with filtered and edited snippets of recent works from newspapers, magazines, and other novels. The spectrum of ways in which colportage authors made use of other texts ranged from open and acknowledged citation (usually to enhance authority, often references to newspaper articles, "great" literature, or family magazines) to usage that deliberately obfuscated the original source. Sometimes, they make their borrowing from other texts obvious to readers by introducing them with a kind of casual in-text citation – an example of this will be examined in detail

below. In other cases, the authors mixed in their plunder without any mention of a source. The latter end of this spectrum is where we find colportage appropriations of other popular fictional works. Authors cherry-picked plot elements, characters, and situations from existing novels. The patchwork way in which these novels filtered, selected and repackaged material from other publications for their readers was part of their appeal. At the same time, text appropriation was yet another way to mark the text as informational and verifiable.

Appropriation of other texts is by no means an unusual strategy in literature, nor has it always been strictly condemned as plagiarism. Authors and publishers of colportage novels had no qualms about appropriating and reprinting texts from other periodicals, a practice which was common at the time in newspapers and family magazines as well (Schenda *Volk ohne Buch* 329). Nor did they generally need to fear legal difficulties arising from this practice because of the spotty enforcement and weakness of copyright law at the time. However, the citation, borrowing and intertextual practices of colportage novels were extreme in their frequency and unique in their deployment. Colportage authors frequently excerpted German and foreign periodicals, both with and without attribution, along with a variety of other texts. They used excerpts from other books, sometimes multiple excerpts of different versions of the same story. This practice extends to translating without attribution. I will consider two specific examples below, but will also explore this strategy further in the chapters to come because it is so central to the colportage novel as a form.

Embellishing non-fiction sources

In this section, I explore some examples of how colportage novels appropriated and elaborated on non-fiction sources in order to give readers multi-perspectival accounts of the events they described. The first example comes from the Franco-Prussian War novel *Der Franzosenkrieg im Jahre 1870 oder Deutschland's Feuerprobe* by Ferdinand Becker, who quilts his narrative with statistical accounting of casualties, lists of important men present at certain significant events, and anecdotes dedicated to interesting personalities.[62] These are interspersed into his main fictional plot strands, which revolve around an ensemble cast of pan-German soldiers and officers, a mysterious woman volunteering as a nurse, and, of course, a birth secret and a number of villains. In an early installment of the second half of the serial novel, Becker cites and claims to paraphrase an article from the periodical *Daheim*, but in fact uses the article's text nearly verbatim, merely grafting on some of his fictional heroes. At least twelve pages of the installment are composed of paragraphs taken from the original essay by Georg Hiltl[63] and adapted for the Becker's purposes. The following excerpts, displayed side-by-side in the table below, show how Becker worked with his source text. Not only did he insert his own fictional world into the article, he changed the tense, and adapted his own style to match the evocative style of the article text. He introduces his borrowing casually, clearly

[62] For example, in the second volume of the novel, the reader encounters Agnes Salm-Salm (1844-1921), come to fetch the body of her husband Felix Salm-Salm (1828-1870), who died at the Battle of Gravelotte in 1870. They were famous for their involvement in the last days of Maximilian's reign in Mexico. Agnes Salm-Salm, who had been engaged in nursing and relief services at various battles beginning with the Civil War, is a nice touchstone for Becker's story, as she is an early actor in efforts like the Red Cross's to care for soldiers (242-46).

[63] Georg Hiltl (1826-1878) was a theater actor, director and writer. He authored historical novels, translated French dramas, and published in *Die Gartenlaube*, *Daheim* and other family magazines.

indicating with "etwa" an intention to paraphrase or author a *rifacimento*[64]: "Am schönsten schildert diese Helden [deutsche Ulanen] das 'Daheim' in etwa folgender Weise [...]" (Becker Vol. 2, 15). Comparing the original article to this appropriation shows that Becker interrupts the original flow of the text and freely reorganized bits and pieces as it suited him. Some of original passages he adds closely resemble the style of the Hiltl article, for example, the flourish "horch – das Horn erschallt" in Becker's text shows him taking on style elements of Hiltl's sketches that are not otherwise present Becker's novel. Addressing the reader with imperatives and evoking the five senses, for example, is a convention that Hiltl uses in his introduction, asking the reader repeatedly to pause and look for the fast-moving soldiers. He also uses dashes as punctuation, intended to mimic the speed and unpredictability of Uhlans as military units. This, for example, is how Hiltl narrates a Uhlan meeting an enemy: "Jetzt erfolgt der Zusammenprall; mit lautem 'Hurrah' lenkt der Ulan die Spitze auf den Feind – ein kraftvoller Stoß – der Gegner sinkt aus dem Sattel [...]" (6). The succession of short sentences, the dashes, the sound imagery is typical for Hiltl's essay.

[64] A *rifacimento* is a "new version or remodeling of a literary or artistic work; a reworking." ("Rifacimento, n." OED). This term was also used among British translators in the nineteenth century for "free translation."

Table 3.3: Comparing Hiltl and Becker

Daheim, “Das Charakterbild des Ulanen: Militärische Skizze”	Becker
Hohe Czapkas bilden ihre Kopfbedeckungen, ein knapp anliegender Waffenrock umschließt den kräftigen Körper; es sind die gefürchteten *Ulanen* – die Lanzenreiter der preußischen Armee. Diese Überalls und Nirgends bilden gewissermaßen die Sturmvögel, welche dem “furchtbaren Gewitter, der heranziehenden Armee” vorauseilen. Wenn man so die Nachrichten vom Kriegsschauplatze, die Depeschen, verfolgt, dann wird man häufig genug finden: “Ulanen sind gestern da und dort als Plänkler eingerückt” – “Gestern ließen sich preußische Ulanen sehen” – “Ulanen haben die Eisenbahn bei X gesprengt”. Letztere Nachricht ist in dem jetzigen Kriege einige Male gebracht worden. [...]	Hohe Czapkas bildeten die Kopfbedeckungen dieser Leute, ein knapp anliegender Waffenrock umschloß die kräftigen Körper, wahrhaftig, das waren die gefürchteten Ulanen, die Lanzenreiter der preußischen Armee, **bei deren Näherkommen Einer der Jäger in den Jubelruf ausbrach:** **— Herr Gott im Himmel das sind ja Ulanen und noch dazu ostpreußische, bei denen ein guter Freund von mir dienen soll!** **Max Kranz war es, welcher, seit mehreren Tagen wieder mit seinem Bataillon vereinigt, diesen Ausruf that,** als er immer deutlicher diese Ueberalls und Nirgends erkannte, welche gewissermaßen die dem furchtbaren Gewitter der heranziehenden Armee vorauseilenden Sturmvögel bilden.[65] **Dort vorn ist ein Kreuzweg, wo von der linken Seite her die Ulanen den Jägern in den Weg geritten kommen müssen und Kranz hat nur noch Zeit, rasch vorzuspringen, um so viel als möglich jedes der bärtigen Gesichter zu mustern, ob er den guten Freund aus dem Boulogner Wäldchen nicht dabei finde.** **Plötzlich, ein heller Ruf der Freude — der Gesuchte**

[65] This portion was edited by Becker. He takes the metaphor of the “heraneilende Armee” as a “furchtbares Gewitter” from the original article and transposes it into the context of his own narration.

Table 3.3: continued

Daheim, “Das Charakterbild des Ulanen: Militärische Skizze”	Becker
	reitet stolz auf dem rechten Flügel und reicht den ebenfalls von ihn erkannten Baiern aus dem Sattel die Hand, um einige Worte der Freude und der reitermännisch heiteren Begrüßung mit ihm zu wechseln. Mehr kann’s nicht werden — der Baier wie der Ostpreuße sind beide im Dienst — — und horch — das Horn erschallt — die Rossen kennen den Ruf desselben und Trab-Trab — einige Augenblicke schon im Galopp huscht die Schaar mit den Fähnlein vorüber und hüllte sich in eine dichte Staubwolke, so daß selbst das letzte grüßende Nicken verloren ging. **Sie sind eben gar zu unbeständig — Fritz Wagner sagte einmal mit einem schlesischen Sprichwort: wie Wiesenwasser das bald hin bald zurück fließt und** wenn man so während des Krieges in **der friedlich gebliebenen Heimath** die Nachricht vom Kriegsschauplatze, die Depeschen, verfolgte, so konnte man in denselben häufig genug Sätze finden wie: “Ulanen sind gestern da oder dort als Plänkler eingerückt,” oder — “gestern ließen sich preußische Ulanen sehen,” — oder “Ulanen haben die Eisenbahn bei X. gesprengt,” und besonders die letztere Nachricht kehrte öfter wieder. [...]eingerückt,” oder — “gestern ließen sich preußische Ulanen sehen,” — oder “Ulanen haben die Eisenbahn bei X. gesprengt,” und besonders die letztere Nachricht kehrte öfter wieder. [...]

Although Becker takes on some of Hiltl's style, he also wedges in an unexpected meeting between two of his characters, Fritz Wagner and Max Kranz, an East Prussian and a Bavarian respectively, whose brotherly relationship to each other and to a broad palette of other military and aristocratic characters drawn from each of the major regions of Germany provide for recurring adventure, chance meetings and heroism in the novel. In this way, Becker provides his readers with "the best" description of the German Uhlans, light cavalry fighters, and connects it to his own narrative.[66] He has filtered and selected the text for his reader, offering up its style and provenience as a "spice" to season his own authorial voice.

Borrowing well known characters and plots

Colportage novelists did not restrict this kind of appropriation to non-fictional texts. They also often reworked recognizable and well-known plot lines and scenes from other novels. Particularly frequent among the novels I examined was the introduction of scenes from Eugene Sue or from older (often also foreign and translated) Gothic novels. In *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte*, a 100-installment fictionalization of the Dreyfus Affair from 1898 written by W. von Norden, a constellation of characters from Eugene Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* is added as a plot layer that interpenetrates reporting of the Dreyfus affair's milestones. On the one hand, the fictional characters of the Sue pastiche sometimes appear as a subordinated subplot, but at other times their fictional world becomes an explanation for or cause of the events of the Dreyfus affair. Beginning on

[66] Becker, as a writer, is also relieved of some of work, leaning on the Hiltl text as bridging and padding for his own story.

page 93, near the end of the novel's fourth part, the author interweaves the suspenseful and exciting opening scene of *Les Mystères de Paris*. In the colportage novel, a young man who is a "geübter Boxer," beats up a renowned criminal called "Kaltmacher," preventing him from stealing money from a prostitute in a rough neighborhood. The scene is instantly recognizable to anyone who has read Sue's novel. Furthermore, the characters that Norden introduces are clear analogs to Sue's characters, transposed into German. Compare for example, Sue's *Le Chorineur* (the Stabber) and Norden's *Der Kaltmacher* (the Killer), as well as Sue's pathetic prostitute *La Goulaleuse* (sweet-voiced one) and Norden's *Die Lerche* (the lark). In the following excerpt, *Die Lerche* follows up a fight between an unknown man and the *Kaltmacher* with this exclamation:

> "Weil es in diesem ganzen Viertel keinen Mann giebt, der es mit Jenem aufnehmen könnte! Selbst der Schulmeister, der doch gewiß stark ist, hat es einmal versucht, mit Kaltmacher anzubinden, aber der hat ihn beinahe todtgeschlagen! Gewiß, wenn Sie in unserem Viertel wohnen, so sind Sie der stärkste Mann, und wenn ich erzähle, was ich heute gesehen habe, so wird es niemand wagen, Ihnen entgegenzutreten." (Norden 93)

And now *La Goulaleuse* in an English-translation of Sue:

> "But who are you, then? Except the Schoolmaster and Skeleton, there is no one, from the Ruc Saint Eloi to Notre Dame, who can stand against the Chourineur. I thank you, very, very much, sir, for, indeed, I fear that without your aid he would have beaten me." (4)

The text, is of course, somewhat changed, but the characters are clearly recognizable. And, as it turns out in Norden's pastiche, the Schoolmaster has provided forgeries that are key to Dreyfus's unfair imprisonment. "Emil" the disguised German prince in *Les Mystères*, who is also introduced in the colportage novel, turns out to be a disguised

Mathieu Dreyfus, who appears as a powerful agent among the fictional characters borrowed from Sue.[67] Pastiche was certainly expedient for the authors, but it also provided a richly layered narrative world for their readers. If the readers were unfamiliar with the source text, they could of course enjoy what was borrowed from Sue for its rough-and-tumble narrative of a secret underworld. In the event that readers had already encountered Sue's text in some form, the author incorporated it so that it took on a new twist and surprising dimension, by connecting it to real events and people or another web of plots.[68] As we can see, the borrowing of source materials was not just an expedient for the colportage author under pressure; it also expanded the serial narrative's world and facilitated the incorporation of tropes, plots and characters that were already familiar.

Appropriations of other texts held value for the readers, but they also gave a richer dimension to the "world" of a popular serial narrative. Unlike other forms of fiction, one trait of colportage novels that served them well was that they could flexibly incorporate good or interesting ideas as they arose, creating convergences between the two texts. In the example above, *Les Mystères de Paris* is set in Paris, the Dreyfus affair is set in Paris – this is all the author needs to bring the two together. Because he had to continue the story over a long period and maintain excitement, he could alternate between storylines and different characters. He could count on the next part of the novel to write his way out of tight corners, and his readers were not put off by implausible turns of

[67] Another feature borrowed from Sue is footnoted and in-text explanations of streetwise slang and criminal jargon, at once a marker of authenticity but definitively marking the readership as outside of the milieu.

[68] Although many scholars assume *Les Mystères de Paris* had readers of all classes, its readership was primarily restricted to the bourgeoisie in Germany. However, it was very popular. See Rudolf Schenda's work on its reception in Germany ("Leserbriefe" 102-03).

events or serendipitous coincidences. Jennifer Hayward, a scholar who has written extensively on the pleasures associated with serial narratives points out correctly with regard to the expedience of borrowing other texts,

> [...] this method [does not] preclude the inspiration of creative genius. Instead, both market forces and artistic gifts can work together to produce texts crafted by an individual or creative team but flexible enough to respond to good and relevant ideas from outside, whether in the form of audience response, news events, or other sources (62)

In the case of colportage novels, text appropriation was a kind of transmedial process whereby other texts (newspapers, family magazines, novels) that were out of the financial reach or perhaps the social comfort-zone of readers were filtered into a publication that was bought for cash and delivered to the door. It was not uncommon to see pastiches of both newspaper reportage and novels in the same novel. These textual sources were not incompatible for colportage authors — they could be joined in ways that were innovative and supported readers in forming judgments about the likely path of the narrative, or in ways that renewed older material through repeating it and refitting into a new plot.

By embedding other publications into its numbers, the colportage novel afforded its readers a novel that seemed to hold within it a microcosm of the broader media world. This process was linked to authentication; by showing the novel world as being in dialogue with other (perhaps more reliable sources), the colportage novel insisted on its linkage to reality and current happenings.

Borrowing from newspapers and criticizing reporting

In part, authenticity as a mode of appeal in colportage novels should be attributed to the fact that many colportage authors also worked for newspapers or illustrated

journals. Of the seventy authors that Kosch and Nagl have compiled bibliographical information on, about thirty-eight of the bibliographies indicate that the author worked as an editor, correspondent, or writer for publications of various kinds – just over half. Some began with colportage and moved on to newspapers, as for example Paul Staberow (1855-1926), who became the editor of the "Neuen Saarbrücker Zeitung" for a time period, and later was the publisher of an illustrated weekly attached to a colportage publishing house in Dresden, "Die praktische Hausfrau" (Kosch and Nagl 272).[69] Prior to this portion of his career, he wrote lengthy colportage novels for Münchmeyer (1897), the Deutscher Volksschriftenverlag (1895/96), Lohse (1881/82), and two for Hermann Oeser (1880, 1883/84). Others worked simultaneously in the field of journalism and colportage writing, for example Jean Dufresne (1829-1893) who was an editor in a string of different trade journals and magazines; during his career, he also produced at least one colportage novel for Sacco Nachfolger in 1865.

I contend that authenticity, as a mode of aesthetic appeal, was something these authors were used to exercising in news articles; it also led to the frequent incorporation of newspaper content in the novels' texts. By incorporating news, colportage novels placed themselves in conversation and on par with newspapers. The reception of periodical news culture in the novels included what I call "reporting on reporting," a common feature of contemporary newspaper reportage used to express differences of political stance or to provide background for updates on an ongoing issue. The novels

[69] Kosch and Nagl do not mention the tie in to a colportage publisher, but advertisements for "Die Praktische Hausfrau" appear on many Adolf Wolf colportage novels that are in the Kosch collection. (I found my example in part 91 of *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte Kapitän Dreyfus oder Lebendig begraben auf der Teufelsinsel*.)

reproduced this kind of reporting with their own emphasis and purposes. The narratives frequently recount newspaper coverage, summarizing divergent views in different papers and narrating the trajectory of public debates. As with texts lifted from family magazines, citation was spotty, but there are frequent examples where original dates and articles can be identified and compared with their representation in the novels.

For example, colportage novels that fictionalized the Franco-Prussian war extensively narrated news coverage of the conflict in France and on the home front, actively evaluating and ranking different types of coverage and even turning the reception of news into a plot factor in some cases. Again, Becker's text offers some evidence of this. Throughout the novel, Becker engages in frequent critique of what he perceives to be almost propagandistic French reporting. In one example, his narrative interprets sensational French newspaper coverage as responsible for the massive displacement of residents of Alsace, rather than the actual battle of Weissenburg[70]:

> Daß sich die [französischen] Bewohner der umliegenden elsässischen Dörfer Hals über Kopf der tollen Flucht anschlossen kann nicht Wunder nehmen. Hatten ihnen doch die französischen Zeitungen genug von der grausigen Barbarei der deutschen Heerschaaren vorgelogen, und daß jenseits des Rheins Mannszucht und Ordnung unter dem Militär herrsche, das glaubten sie durchaus nicht. (250)

In Becker's telling of it, the inhabitants of the Alsatian villages have been driven to flight by the "lies" of the French newspapers; this contrasts with the "order" and good behavior characterizing the opposite side of the Rhine, where the Germans are encamped. The untrustworthiness of the French newspapers and deliberate misinformation disseminated

[70] Also known as the Battle of Wissembourg in English, the conflict took place on 4 August 1870 and was the first battle of the Franco-Prussian War. Three German army corps surprised the small French garrison at Weissenburg; its fall enabled the German invasion of France.

on the part of the government play a significant role in Becker's accounts of French civilian experience of the war. In this instance, Becker cites French newspapers, making insistent and repetitive references to the role of newspapers in French public opinion. He then contrasts these with German newspaper reportage. His systematic engagement with news forms an ongoing dialogue within the novel.

For example, in the space of a few pages, Becker canvasses the French newspaper landscape and presents the French press as unreliable, spreading untruths, setting up a direct contrast between his own account and that of the French press:

> Noch am Abend des ersten September vermochte die 'Patrie', eine Pariser Zeitung, den Parisern vorzuschwindeln, daß Marschall Mac Mahon, indem er seinen herrlichen Plan zur Ausführung bringe, mit dem Feinde zahlreiche und immer für die französischen Waffen glorreiche Engagements gehabt habe. [...] Die nach einem sehr lebhaftem Gefecht geschlagenen Deutschen, fuhr die 'Patrie' fort, hätten sich auf luxemburgisches Gebiet geflüchtet, wo sie entwaffnet und internirt worden seien und man könne aus diesen Nachrichten sowie auch aus der Lage der Stadt Longwy ersehen, daß der erhabene Plan des großen Marschalls Mac Mahon in der denkbar vollständigsten Weise geglückt sei. (188)

Here, the French newspaper's report of a victory for France does not match Becker's narrative, which describes the weakness of the French military position in great detail. He states explicitly that the newspaper's intent is to deceive Parisians. Becker moves on to reports in another newspaper:

> Eine andere Pariser Zeitung, der 'Constitutionell', beschäftigte sich mit der Vertheidigungsfähigkeit von Paris und gaukelte den Parisern folgendes Bild in dem Berichte eines höheren Marine-Offiziers vor, welcher in einem der Forts vor Paris kommandierte:
>
> – Ich habe hier sechsundachtzig Geschütze schweren Kalibers, von denen der größte Theil leicht Wurfgeschosse von achtundzwanzig Kilos – sechsundfünfzig Zollpfund – in eine Entfernung von vier Kilometer – etwas über eine halbe Meile – schleudert. Diese Geschütze sind von sechzehnhundert Artilleristen bedient,

> deren Geschicklichkeit ich hinreichend kenn[e], um versichern zu können, daß auf zehn Kugeln von achtundzwanzig Kilos sie mit Sicherheit nicht mitten in einen Hut schleudern. (188ff.)

Here, the *Constitutionell* is "making believe" for the Parisians, presenting their defenses as very strong. On the one hand, the passage presents the German reader with factual information about the military might their countrymen face – but at the same time, it promises the reader that this is a French delusion, a defense made up of nothing but newsprint. This entire chapter offers the reader to dwell pleasurably on German superiority – or, perhaps, to feel pity for the French everyman, served by such unreliable reportage. Finally, Becker translates an excerpt of a French article on the war entitled "Der heilige Zorn" written by "der kaiserliche Leibschriftsteller Edmond About" (1828-1885) (190). A representative sentence from the excerpt follows:

> König Wilhelm's Kumpane, die hier eingedrungen sind, werden nicht wieder hinauskommen. Wenn sie, wie sie prahlten, ihre ganze männliche Bevölkerung über unser Land verbreitet haben, so ist das um so besser für uns. Dann werden wir nach Berlin gehen, um das Barbarenthum in seinem Neste zu zertreten. Alle Wege werden uns offen stehen. (191)

Essentially, he is creating a dialogue between his narrative of the "German trial by fire" of the war and the French narrative of their own strength. The reader is in the pleasurable position of already knowing the outcome of the war, and Becker allows the French narrative to unfold so that the reader can savor the national victory over an opponent who underestimated German strength. Becker's account of the Parisian media landscape serves several purposes. First, he is firing the indignation of the reader by focusing on newspapers that are denying the German successes in the war and that are lying to the French people in order to create a sense of security. The idea that a newspaper's

exaggerations or misinformation misleads the ordinary French people is a theme for Becker's novel that he returns to again and again, and he canvasses French newspapers to support this notion with real quotations. Reporting on reporting allowed Becker to set up a dialogue of national critique that seems to have multiple dimensions, although in fact this dialogue revolves around German victory and the notion of German superiority.

When drawing on outside information sources, colportage novelists often positioned the sources in such a way that the narrative could then build on, embellish and breathe life into them. In his narrative, Becker reports statistics about wounded and dead for both sides in the battle that were surely gleaned from newspapers or official reports. However, following up on this, he then takes the opportunity to have a character make an assessment that is subjective and first-hand.

> Da machte er [Max Kranz] eine eigenthümliche Bemerkung. Je weiter er hinauf, je näher er der Spitze kam, desto weniger Deutsche waren unter den rings umher liegenden Gefallenen während der Zahl der Franzosen mit jedem Schritte wuchs, so daß zuletzt, ganz oben auf dem Kamme, die grüne, grasbewachsene Trist ganz roth schimmerte von Blut und von den rothen Hosen der Leichen. (254)

Becker's embellishments do not end here. In fact he purports with some of them to unveil newspaper inaccuracies or sentimentality, authorizing his version of events as most true. He contrasts the first-hand observations of Max Kranz with a sobering critique of sentimental pictures of a battlefield:

> Es ist nicht wahr, daß über den Leichen in der hohen Baumkrone ein Turteltaubenpaar girrte, daß die Alte ihre Jungen fütterte, wie einige Zeitungsschreiber berichtet haben. Wohl war ein Vogelnest dort oben — aber die Vögelein, die es gebaut und bewohnt hatten, die waren mehrere Tage nach dem Kampfe noch nicht zurückgekehrt, weil die friedlichen Thierchen allzusehr erschreckt worden waren durch den Donner der Geschütze, das Knattern des Kleingewehrfeuers, die wilden Rufe der Kämpfenden. Und wer weiß ob die

> Thierchen überhaupt noch lebten. – Lagen doch mehrere todte Vögelein neben den todten Menschenkindern unter den Weinreben des Geisberges. (254-255)

Becker's various strategies of presenting "news" and his own account of events show how ably colportage authors manipulated the affordances of fiction, as well as those of an expanding and comprehensive selection of newspaper coverage. Their perspective on current events was always a blended one, part detailed and verifiable narrative, part imaginative. Although many more mainstream novels at the time also included references to real events, the colportage novel's insistence on verifiability was different and more emphatic. The novels were open to outside impulses and texts and they amassed them in a way that seems uncontrolled, eclectic. They offer readers the opportunity to luxuriate in narratives constructed of many different layers, which also formed a part of their aesthetic of authenticity. Thematizing foreign news and reports from afar was but one way to package *Der Franzosenkrieg* as a multi-dimensional work synthesizing a variety of types and modes of information for its reader.

Colportage novels actively weigh the value of different news sources in setting the public agenda. In doing so, they acknowledge and enter into a competitive relationship with news media, reviewing news sources in order to consolidate and authorize their own participation in the formation of public discourse. Furthermore, they often, at least in their rhetorical and fictional flourishes, trumped newspapers by claiming special knowledge, providing (often fabricated) intimate details of actual or historical events, as well as detailed descriptions and supplementary materials, examples of which have been presented in this chapter. All of these strategies were aimed to appeal to

readers' intelligence or common sense, or to invite the reader to sift fact from fiction, to enjoy observing as the colportage novel pulled together a multitude of sources and narratives into one.

NEWS AND NOVEL FOR ONE LOW PRICE

Like other types of textual borrowing that these authors engaged in, repurposing and appropriating other texts was necessary for achieving the high productivity level required by colportage novel publication. However, what might be seen as plagiarism or, in a softer light, as pastiche, in fact formed an acknowledged selling point for the novels. Blumenthal's handbook for salesman, a contemporary publication, emphasizes that, as a readership, lower class women preferred colportage novels over any newspaper purchase. Blumenthal suggests to the reader that the buyers' demand for colportage novels was not motivated by or inclination. He describes the decision to purchase reading material in the family of "der 'kleine Mann', welcher den Sinn für Literatur noch nicht verloren" as a joint decision taken to secure reading pleasure for the whole family – husband, wife, children. In this context, Blumenthal portrays the purchase of a colportage novel as an attempt on the part of the "kleine Mann" to appease his wife's interest in the exciting and dramatic, since he is unable to afford year-long subscriptions to magazines or editions of authors works. Blumenthal points out that the colportage novel contained current information as well as being a "nice novel"; this stood in direct comparison to buying a *Tagesblatt* in which there was, at any rate, "nothing sensible" to be read (29). The complementarity and competition between newspapers and colportage novels was, thus, a

point that at least one stakeholder in the colportage business thought about seriously.[71] In fact, the close narrative relationship to contemporary newspapers that colportage novels built up is not that surprising, considering that colportage novels were packaging themselves as authentic providers of information. Achieving this required intensive engagement with newspapers as vehicles of information, but also likely influenced the colportage novel's development of transmedial formats and use of illustration.

The institutional acknowledgement of the relationship between colportage novel and daily newspaper, though limited here to an anecdotal account from a colportage publisher, suggests a symbiotic coupling of the two forms during this brief era: in distribution (by subscriptions for cash), in wide readership, in seriality, in early marketing schemes, and in their ephemeral lifecycle. Once a newspaper or a colportage novel was read, it was used to light stoves, clean windows, or passed on to a neighbor; these publications were "consumable," cheap enough and interesting enough that they were read with interest, then thrown out. Both were preoccupied with currency, authority and reaching large numbers of new readers. The colportage novel was the seedy shadow of the cheap illustrated daily, which in turn played the bogeyman to more expensive and better-produced periodicals. Colportage novels and their authors were highly aware of newspapers as their counterparts, and successfully turned the mandate of the newspaper to inform citizens into a fictional strategy, co-opting journalistic style, claiming a basis in authorized sources, and interrogating the ability of the burgeoning cut-throat competition

[71] The account of a colportage bookseller in summarizing the opinions and feelings of his customers must be taken with a grain of salt. Sellers of colportage novels often sold a variety of material to a number of clienteles, and in trade literature for salesman one frequently encounters rhetoric about meeting customer demand that usually also implies buyers' lack of taste and education.

for newsworthiness to provide readers with the "real truth." This became a practice central to the content and aesthetic appeal of the novels.

INFORMATION AS ENTERTAINMENT – A TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY TREND

As we have seen, colportage novels deployed a wide variety of medial, textual, paratextual and intertextual strategies in order to engage an audience that wanted entertainment packaged as information, or vice versa, or preferred the boundaries between the two to be blurred. These strategies aimed not only to establish narrative authenticity and insist upon a factual basis, but also to combine both of these modes of appeal with conventions of popular storytelling, especially the free-wheeling appropriation and deployment of familiar genre tropes running the gamut from romance to Gothic novel to *Räuber- und Ritterromane*. The colportage novel was styled as a purveyor of exclusive information and addressed to a public that was relatively deprived of such. The form promised to expose secrets, to reveal juicy details and privileged knowledge. This information was typically delivered in melodramatic, emotionalized narrative form. What colportage novels promised their readers was a kind of aesthetic experience that dominated in all kinds of print formats in the nineteenth century. In their emphasis on presenting detailed information, colportage novels were part of a broader aesthetic trend.

Information and observing process have always had a component of pleasure, but in the nineteenth century there was an unprecedented proliferation of entertainments that involved these. In colportage novels, what I call an aesthetic of authentication, promoted by the strategies I have surveyed in this chapter, was not always present and not present

for every author. I contend, however, that it is a hallmark of the form as a whole. As colportage novels became more standardized in their appearance and content throughout the 1870s, they consolidated a number of common textual practices revolving around processes of authentication that unify them despite their heterogeneity in terms of content and use of genre conventions.[72] The aesthetic of authentication was not restricted to novels that thematized true events and recent history. Rather it was a central part of a transmedial appropriation of journalistic style for many novels. It was perhaps also a response to a culture whose interests were more and more captivated by exhibits, museums and libraries and understanding the world through facts. As we have seen above, the aesthetic of authenticity was not constructed with regard to content alone, but was also a key aspect of illustrative supplements, advertising, conventions of authorship and in the serial rhythm of distribution. Colportage novels' appeal lay in the way they negotiated a tension between fantasy and fact with an emphasis on currency, authority and authentication. This convergence between entertainment, pleasure and information has prompted the coinage of several terms for similar aesthetic and narrative practices in other areas of study, which form the context for my proposing an aesthetic of authentication for the colportage novel.

One such term is Patrick Galke's "investigatives Erzählen" to describe fictional approaches to coming to terms with new and/or modern technological and economic advances, which were popular in family magazines, realist novels, and colportage

[72] As mentioned in the introduction, the 1870s were a key decade for colportage novels – German unification, the Gründerzeit, and a growing number of readers with money to spend on parts of novels.

novels.[73] Investigative narratives essentially tell the story of an uninitiated person coming to understand a complicated process or situation – in the specific case of Galke's work, coming to understand the stock market and its magical-seeming potential for enrichment as well as ruination. In an investigative narrative, the reader shadows the uninitiated character as he begins the project of coming to terms with the new, whether it be an economic system, machinery, or a new social milieu. As the brand new initiate learns, so does the reader. And at the end, the reader judges what the outcome of the investigation has been – whether the new/unknown should be considered beneficial or condemnable.

As mentioned in the introduction of the dissertation, the demands of long serial forms necessitate the employment of multiple narrative modes; investigative narrative finds a happy home in the colportage novel in its eclectic amalgamation of genres, fact and fiction, citation and invention. "Pure" investigative narrative is often precluded by the form, which often requires the deployment of characters that are preternaturally "knowing" (so that they can retrace and reiterate the path of complicated plots, act as *dei ex machina*, explain significance, or foreshadow secrets yet to be revealed). However, the balance between these characters and "unknowing" ones (who provide the impetus for reiterations and provide the reader with the gratification of being in a position of greater knowledge), as well as the frequent incorporation of detective genre conventions, suggest that an investigative component played a key role in the pleasure of reading colportage

[73] Galke works on literary accounts of financial crisis across multiple periods, and uses this term in his study of literary reception of the 1873 market crash in nineteenth-century literature. He has not yet published on the topic, so I take his term from a seminar held at the DLA.

novels, as well as in the nineteenth-century family magazine fictions, for which Galke developed the term.

What Galke noticed in fiction, Neil Harris also identified as a general and ubiquitous aesthetic preference of the era. He sees a popular interest in observing process and verifying reality as key in the appeal of the complex narrative structures found in early American crime fiction and in the extremely detailed whaling novels of Herman Melville. However, his work primarily focuses on the huge success of P.T. Barnum's curiosity exhibitions in the US and Europe. In his study of P.T. Barnum's publicized hoaxes in the United States, Harris coins the term "operational aesthetic," to refer to the elements of the Barnum multimedia repertoire that elicited "delight in observing process and examining for literal truth" (79). Harris's operational aesthetic, I believe, can also be extended to serial forms generally and colportage novels in particular. Following lengthy narratives in serial installments is an activity structured around the pleasure of "observing process," and serial novels are a form of publication that affords the reader a great deal of freedom to speculate, consider, and form his or her own ideas about a plot in between installments (enforced waiting). The surfeit of detail that is a hallmark of colportage novels also indicates that the authors were writing for readers that loved information, much like readers of Melville and, perhaps, of British naval adventure novels. As I have shown, colportage novels made extensive use of the transmedial and multimedia properties of their form to package themselves as serial accounts of a parallel world (not quite reportage, but rather colportage) and position their readers as sharing in exclusive

and verifiable truths, appealing to their powers of discernment and fascination with hierarchies of information.

Harris's work on Barnum highlights the way he called on audiences to "judge for themselves" and purported to provide them with all the evidence necessary to do so. Similarly, colportage novels asked readers to consider a variety of sources in the context of a narrative flow that zigzagged between multiple genres, moods, settings and characters. They also provided the reader with myriad details to support their claims to authenticity. Galke's investigative narrative, similarly, is only one of the narrative modes employed in colportage novels to mediate the introduction of new and complex ideas. However, as we have seen in this chapter, authors had many other tricks and practices that contributed to the overall aesthetic of authentication that characterizes colportage novels. The aesthetic of authentication presumes a pleasure in the process of sifting and dismantling texts, but also of seeing information amalgamatd and assimilated; I suggest this is a part of the "sensation" that such novels offered readers.

CONCLUSION

Galke's "investigative narrative", Harris's "operational aesthetic" and my "aesthetic of authentication" all highlight a special relationship between the nineteenth-century preoccupation with the creation and structuring of information and the staples of popular entertainment in the nineteenth century; in this era, popular literature took a turn towards the current, the authoritative, the newsworthy and systematically incorporated paratextual and textual strategies to underscore this aspect. Acknowledging this turn places popular entertainments, family magazines and cheap literature in dialogue with

elite literary movements and with the larger constellation of scholarship that studies the proximity between fiction and the "real world" (e.g. current events, regimes of realism and naturalism) in late nineteenth-century literary works. The emergence of news and newspapers as a predominant mass media form contributed to the general preoccupation with information and veracity. We know that colportage writers developed their practices in response to market and composition pressures, but their methods of working with sources and ways of packaging their narratives as authentic also aimed to appeal aesthetically to readers.

The aesthetic of authentication applies to texts that offered readers the opportunity to read, interpret and deliberate over authenticity or to treat reading as a process of weighing evidence and surveying collected information. The aesthetic of authenticity also added dimensions to the pleasure of fiction, bringing the serial narrative's world into a close and transmedial proximity to the reader's own world, especially through mimicking and insisting on factuality, verifiability, and a relationship between fictional and real events. The narrative constructed a kind of authority that became the reader's authority, and this was a distinct pleasure that colportage novels afforded their readers. It may be a stretch to reconcile the notion of readers enjoying a colportage-constructed authority with some of the unsophisticated content colportage novels are known for. I am not pleading for the novels as authoritative sources of information; I am rather seeking to highlight their preoccupation with appearing to consider sources, authority, and veracity as part of an ongoing aesthetic practice. Varied strategies of authentication within the texts invited readers to judge narratives as representations of events with complex chains of

consequences in the semi-fictional and three-dimensional narrative world of the series. Some of these practices were inspired by journalistic conventions, but others belong purely to the realm of the novelist and his or her license to supplement the facts with imagination and melodrama, thus making colportage novels a print form that filled a special niche in the media environment, somewhere between news and melodrama. This chapter has presented, in a general way, a survey of the strategies used in colportage novels to create an aesthetic of authentication. In the next, I will examine a specific case and show how these practices were used to fictionalize and to inform readers about a major current event of global import, the Dreyfus affair.

The obsession of colportage novels with current events is a surprising facet of the form to which few scholars have granted extensive attention. A quick survey of Kosch's bibliography shows that topical currency was an important characteristic in this heterogeneous body of works because major world events in the latter half of the nineteenth century were adapted shortly after they happened. Often, the novelization of the event was published and sold in the same year of the event's occurrence. This trend began early pseudo-colportage novelizations of the revolutions of 1848 and continued with novelizations connected to a wide range of world events – Serbian throne politics, Abraham Lincoln's assassination (1865) and the American Civil War (1861-65), eruptions of Vesuvius (1861, 1868, 1872, 1906), the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, the Herzegovina Uprising and the Great Eastern Crisis in the Balkans (1875-78), as well as various revolutions in Spain and other countries, the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900-01), among many others. Uprisings, war and disasters proved to be fruitful settings for

colportage novel narratives. This perhaps suggests that the entertainment value of the novels lay partially in voyeurism from afar, in the ability to reflect on disasters with immediacy but without the risks to life and limb. These kinds of events also lent themselves to the aesthetic of authentication – authors had many sources to mine details from and to show mastery of in their narratives, and the real event as a setting, populated with complicated and melodramatic stories both historical and fictional, drew in readers. In the next chapter, we will explore the appeal of colportage accounts of current events, and how they layered stereotypical clichés with political and social meaning.

Chapter 4: Politics, sentiment and sensation: novelizations of the Dreyfus affair

The last chapter established strategies of authentication as a hallmark of colportage novels. These authentication strategies were also crucial for the handling of politics and real issues. In some ways, the colportage novels had the advantage over non-fiction in their incorporation of politics because of their ability to explain what was at stake in a holistic way. By surrounding the bare facts with narrative, the novels could render the events in a continuous landscape of sentiment and melodrama. Even though the novels were dedicated to sensation, their engagement with political issues produced a unique populist political worldview, which I will demonstrate in the context of novels that adapted a single, significant political event. In essence, the colportage novel form allowed its writers to explore the sentiments and affective backgrounds of public opinions and political ideas in a way that was vastly appealing to readers.

In this chapter, I examine a concrete example of the quality and type of media alternative that colportage novels provided, focusing in on a small group of novels that fictionalized the Dreyfus affair for a German readership in 1898-1899. My interest here is to show the political dimensions of the Dreyfus affair and, specifically, how they are expressed in colportage novels. Many colportage novels, like the city mystery novels that preceded them in the popular limelight, specialized in stirring up emotional and dogmatic perspectives on current political and social issues. They created engaging sociopolitical worldviews through simultaneous deployment of the authentication aesthetic, examined in the last chapter, and popular clichés. The aesthetic of authentication revolves around

the production of surprisingly large amounts of detail and information, both real and fictional. However, a large portion of each novel is also devoted to well-worn tropes of popular-storytelling, fantastic and sensational borrowings from every kind of genre, and appeals to emotion. Together, the fine-grained detail of authentication and the reproduction of clichés explain and dramatize real events, political ideas, and social issues in a compelling way.

Although the political content in these novels was not necessarily liberal-minded or forward-looking, acknowledging the wealth of political and informational material in these books demands a relocation of the position of colportage novels in the everyday media ecology of the era.[74] These novels represent a unique mix of news and fantasy: the affordances of the form (its seriality, its fictional license to fabricate, and the markers of authentication folded into its paratextual presentation) were combined with discourse markers of authority and news.[75] Such affordances are hallmarks of a media type, not merely those of a genre or niche of literature – these affordances extended through and determined the entire production and presentation of the novel to its readers. The last chapter explored in detail some of the special affordances of colportage novels, textual and paratextual strategies aimed at establishing them as providers of knowledge service,

[74] Media ecology is a term coined by Neil Postman in 1968, and has developed into a major interdisciplinary field in communications. It understands media as a part of the human environment. It emphasizes medium as having a strong influence on content, use and human perception, and tends to view production, dissemination and reception inclusively as parts of the ecology (Newton 2857-8).

[75] The term "affordance" comes from the field of psychology. James Gibson coined the terms "affordances and constraints" for describing the interaction between an animal and its environment. Since then, the term has been drafted into the vocabulary of media and communications studies. "Just as particular environment[sic] is conducive to certain kinds of life, so a particular medium is conducive to certain kinds of communication (due to its technical properties and the uses to which it is put): for example, the telephone affords simultaneous interpersonal communication, but constrains that communication to voice only" (Chandler and Munday).

including the practice of creating authoritative author pseudonyms or advertising that touted first-hand information, among many others. In this chapter, I will illustrate how the handful of novels based on the Dreyfus affair balanced the priorities of authenticity with conventions of popular literature, combining information-rich pastiche and fantasy to generate a unique political perspective, to entertain, and to inform.

THE DREYFUS AFFAIR: MADE FOR COLPORTAGE

As shown in the last chapter, colportage authors frequently novelized major, international current events. Among these, the novelizations of the Dreyfus affair are ideal for exploration because multiple novels were composed about the affair at the same time. This chapter first examines the events of the affair, its media resonance, and its specific reception in Germany in order to lay a foundation for in-depth analysis. The affair was a French scandal that pitted the reputation and tradition of the French military against politically committed intellectual democrats. The conflict centered on the imprisonment of a Jewish military officer who was accused of being a German spy; the individual fate of this officer swiftly became a symbol of a much larger tension between nationalism and democratic human rights. This loaded debate ensured that the French scandal had wide-reaching resonance in the fin-de-siècle world, grabbing newspaper headlines around the globe (Cornick 499). At the same time, the affair's twists and turns were intriguing, rich with conspiracy, and perfect fodder for the yellow press and popular novels. The cast of "characters" involved in the real-life affair was also suited to popular interest, including martyr-figures, a devoted wife, powerful villains, regretful bad men

and do-gooders determined to set things right. Media coverage that was unprecedented in scope and a volatile atmosphere of public debate and reaction surrounded these figures. The whole story was primed for discourse that stoked fears that the "modern" age was not modern at all because the fairness and opportunities, supposed to be guaranteed capitalism and democracy, were vulnerable to state security, racism, and manipulation of power.

The events of the affair in the courtroom and the arena of public opinion were politically and socially momentous, but its details and deeds were also sordid and intriguing. The issues – spying, stealing, conspiracy, and betrayal – opened juicy opportunities for imaginative writers. The affair began in September 1894, when a Parisian cleaning lady stole a shredded document from the wastebasket of the German military attaché, Maximilian von Schwartzkoppen (1850-1917), and sold it to French military officials. Once pieced together, the document, known as the *bordereau*, was revealed to be a list of secret documents that had been offered to Schwartzkoppen by a member of the French General Staff. This discovery occurred during a period in which rumors and paranoia concerning possible German spies among the French military were rampant. The aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war and the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine played a role in this, as did the relatively new French practice of including officers in the General Staff who gained their experience in training schools rather than in military service.

On 15 October 1894, the French officer Alfred Dreyfus (1859-1935) was arrested as the alleged author of the *bordereau*. His military trial involved "secret evidence"

which his defense attorney was unable to view. Despite his innocence in the affair and his attorney's attempts to demonstrate reasonable doubt of guilt, Dreyfus was convicted of high treason. He was sentenced to lifelong imprisonment at the penal colony Cayenne (Devil's Island) off the coast of French Guyana. On 5 January 1895, Dreyfus was publicly stripped of the marks of his office, and his sabre was broken in two. He was transported to Cayenne in April 1895, where he was isolated in a poorly constructed hut and under constant guard. His correspondence with his family was heavily censored. The extremity of Dreyfus's circumstances as an exile, the anguish of his family as they tried to piece together a defense for him, already showed promise for melodramatic treatment in fiction. It would not be until a few years later that the affair would begin to shine like a beacon for journalists as well as colportage authors.

By 1896, evidence surfaced showing that another member of the French General Staff, Ferdinand Walsin-Esterhazy (1847-1923), was responsible for the *bordereau*. However, high military officials blocked the reopening of the Dreyfus case. In 1898, the entire evidential basis for Dreyfus's supposed guilt collapsed with the exposure of a forgery among the evidence used to convict him, and the trial became the focus of intense political and public debate. Admission of a mishandled trial would hurt the reputation of the military and expose high-ranking officers to ethical scrutiny. It was at this point that Émile Zola (1840-1902), a famous novelist and public intellectual, joined the fray on the side of Dreyfus's family and friends, and helped to recast Dreyfus's plight as a miscarriage of justice that undermined the foundations of democracy.

Although the affair began in 1894 with the arrest of Alfred Dreyfus, its importance came to an initial peak in 1898-1899, triggered by Zola's entrance into the debate and unrelenting and widespread press coverage. These are also the years in which the first German-language colportage novelizations of the affair appeared. Zola's inflammatory open letter "J'accuse...!", published on 13 January 1898 in the newspaper *L'Aurore*, was his opening shot in the crossfire that would ensue.[76] The letter would later see Zola embroiled in a subsequent series of civil trials, the outcomes of which forced him into exile in England.[77] In "J'accuse…!" Zola excoriated the French president for blatant anti-Semitism and pointed out the serious lack of proof and mishandling of evidence that had characterized Dreyfus's arrest and subsequent conviction. The publication of Zola's letter was a landmark in the affair that precipitated the consolidation of a camp of intellectuals in French politics. It remains the primary touchstone for remembering the affair in France today (Balakirsky-Katz 111). Zola's letter also grabbed the attention of a world readership, possibly for the first time in history – at the time, its notoriety and importance was almost on par with the "shot heard round the world" of the American Revolution more than a century earlier.

In 1899, Dreyfus was brought back to France after almost five years in the penal colony, and a revision of his trial was conducted in Rennes. The judges in the case,

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[76] The popularity of the letter itself is legendary and transnational. In English, *J'accuse* has entered dictionaries as synonymous with "a public denunciation."

[77] I relied heavily on Ruth Harris's 2010 history, *Dreyfus: Politics, Emotion, and the Scandal of the Century*, which approaches the affair from the perspective of emotions, for my summary of the events of the affair. Other standard accounts of the affair include Begley's *Why the Dreyfus Affair Matters*, Johnson's *The Dreyfus Affair: Honour and Politics in the Belle-Époque* and Blum's *Beschwörung der Schatten: Die Affäre Dreyfus*.

military officers subject to continual pressure from superiors, convicted Dreyfus again, but shortened his sentence to ten years. Amid political turmoil and popular unrest surrounding the affair, the French president Émile Loubet (1838-1929) was persuaded to sign a pardon for Dreyfus on humanitarian grounds because of his fragile health following his return from Guyana. It was not until 1906 that the French government rehabilitated Dreyfus's status in the army. Nonetheless, the constellation of political factions that formed around the Dreyfus affair just before the turn of the century has had great influence on French modernity. Its political significance notwithstanding, the story of the Affair is also one of unsurpassed human drama.

In the wake of the media sensation generated by "J'accuse...!", three German colportage novels published between 1898 and 1900 took up the events of the Dreyfus affair. One of these grew into a two-part avalanche of novel installments that reached almost 4,000 pages. In the analysis to follow, I touch again on how colportage novels appropriated authority, but also explore how they elaborated and embellished upon facts and events to communicate political ideas, in the process developing a unique product with a special appeal to readers. As the media historian Werner Faulstich has posited, this product indeed represented a medium in its own right that was different from the book or the serial novels that appeared in magazines or newspapers (195). It is important to keep this in mind because, as a different medium, the colportage novel had a unique set of affordances and constraints within the media environment – some of which have been touched on in the chapter preceding. The case study that follows gives more insight into

these dimensions of the colportage novel as a medium. Before that, however, I provide a short account of the affair's reception in Germany.

RECEPTION IN GERMANY

The Dreyfus affair was not just meaningful for France. It had a wide relevance for many European countries because of the questions at stake (national security versus individual rights guaranteed by democracy). The burgeoning popularity of news was also a contributing factor, and the interpenetration news had achieved at all levels of society shows in the fact that the affair made a splash not just in major papers, but also in popular forms (songs, theater, penny papers, colportage novels). The reception of the affair in Germany was not insignificant by any means. Indeed, in Germany, the affair's reception has been seen by scholars as an index of the "Funktionswandel" of German nationalism after 1873, a progressive turning towards the right and anti-internationalism (Bianchi 43). Furthermore, the affair implicated German officials (Schwartzkoppen in particular) as central players in the crime at its heart – if Dreyfus was guilty, Germany was also guilty of dealing in espionage. However, the French military court disregarded assurances from the German side made by no one less than the Kaiser himself that Dreyfus was not in contact with the German attaché.[78] Schwartzkoppen was transferred away from Paris in 1899, following Dreyfus's resentencing.

[78] The fact that the French refused to accept German assurances was often replayed in newspaper articles that touted German superiority. An excellent early example of this can be found on the front pages of *Das Berliner Tageblatt* evening edition, numbers 16 and 17, vol. 24, from 7 and 8 January 1895.

In German-language newspaper coverage of the affair, Dreyfus's individual fate tends to fade into the background of larger issues: anti-Semitism, anti-French feeling, and questions of justice. These themes are also illustrated in colportage novels, but they were mixed with heavily personalized and action-filled plots. Colportage authors selected affective sources of authority, connected the overt political issues of the affair to social questions and by turns downplayed and exaggerated politically sensitive themes. These narratives of the affair run parallel to the mainstream media's accounts, but, as we will see, dealt with political implications in a much different way and tend to use the openness and breadth of the form to compound the basic issues with various other social problems and political goals.

To achieve this, the novelists took advantage of the sweeping narrative worlds they created, introducing the individual fates of the figures of the affair as well as a large cast of additional fictional characters. This brief summary of the affair and the framework of its reception show already the potential it had as a political narrative and as grist for emotional melodrama. The affair was a saga of the troubled relationships between individuals and the state, anti-Semitism in assimilated European countries, conflict between Germany and France. As we will see, colportage novels added the dimension of the social question and class stratification to these issues as well. Reading these colportage accounts of the Dreyfus affair, one begins to wonder whether the Dreyfus affair was perfect for colportage because of its characters and events (forgery, conspiracy, injustice) or whether colportage was perfect for the Dreyfus affair because of its freedom to admix the scandal's political themes and facts with narrative.

To date, the majority of scholarship that has been done on the German reception of the affair has focused on newspapers, although it also inspired popular songs, broadsheets, and caricatures as well.[79] James Brennan's comprehensive project on the Dreyfus affair in European press focuses on the most influential papers of the time in France, Germany, Russia and Italy. However, in the German-language case, Brennan restricts his analysis to three liberal, supra-regional papers, *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and *Vorwärts*, excluding a diverse array of German-language public discourse. A differentiated party press and more general newspapers (*Generalanzeiger*) were also flourishing at the time.

In contrast, Sarah Bianchi's more recent study focuses exclusively on Germany's reception, and provides a comprehensive account of the affair in conservative, Catholic and Jewish papers as well as liberal publications. Bianchi uses the kaleidoscope metaphor that was coined in French studies of the newspaper reception; she asserts that German papers provided readers with "verzerrte Abbilder, je nachdem aus welcher politischen Perspektive die Affäre betrachtet wurde" (18).[80] Although largely evaluative in scope, Bianchi's monograph provides an excellent overview of the party-press media coverage

[79] Claire Vlach-Magnard has published on the Dreyfus affair and music, and Jacqueline Magnou has provided a thorough examination of the reception of the affair in the Viennese press. Evelyn Gould has also already completed work on the affair and its reception in French literature.

[80] Popular literature is known for producing distorted pictures of reality. The kaleidoscope metaphor, emerging from scholarly accounts without an explicit focus on popular literature, underscores the affinity between newspapers and popular literature in this era. The major difference is that we acknowledge the press as a media with a mandate to inform; the press's multifarious projections of the affair then, stem from different interpretations of information, whereas we tend to imagine popular literature's function in relating current or historical events as warping them to fit an archetypal template of clichés. While this perhaps takes place to an extent, I think it is important to acknowledge that colportage novels and other types of popular literature were also vehicles of information, and that popular clichés served as lenses for interpretation, not as textual straitjackets.

in Germany, and serves as a baseline for assessing the "political work" of the Dreyfus affair colportage novels. Her work focuses on newspaper rhetoric surrounding four major issues: German nationalism, anti-Semitism, German-French relations, the recent history of Germany and France and the general assessment of the impact of the affair (11-13). This chapter uses her findings as a point of comparison for examining the colportage novels' rhetoric around these issues. Thus, beyond showcasing the sophisticated way in which colportage authors worked with fact, fiction, politics and sentiment, this chapter expands our understanding of the political reception of the affair in German popular literature.

As we saw in the last chapter, colportage novelists engaged in a surprisingly integrative way with other media, especially news media. The Dreyfus affair, a newspaper-fuelled scandal, was not an exception; newspapers provided inspiration for colportage novelists, even as they also provided a foil to work against, to assert authority over, and to question. The four novelizations of the Dreyfus Affair I examine started appearing between 1898 and 1899, clearly riding the wave of Zola's "J'accuse...!" and the subsequent "explosion" of the Affair in the public imagination. The publication details of the four novels this study focuses on are named below in Table 3.1. The two novels written by Falk are companion novels, published by Weichert in Berlin; *Zola und Picquart* is a sequel to *Auf ewig getrennt*. The anonymous colportage account *Dreyfus und Zola* was published by the Hermann Oeser in Neusalza, and Norden's *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte* was published by Adolph Wolf in Dresden. The tight chronological clustering of the novels and their nearly simultaneous appearance in all

three of the major centers of colportage novel publication shows the publishers' quick recognition of the potential for public interest in the material offered by the story of the affair, as well as their assessment of their market, which they clearly believed could handle multiple accounts of the same event without being saturated.[81] Because all of the novels were completed well before the final resolution of the actual affair, each envisions its own fictional outcome. [82]

Table 4.1: Colportage fictionalizations of the Dreyfus Affair

	Title	Date	Author
1	Auf ewig getrennt? oder Kapitän Dreyfuss und seiner Gattin ergreifende Erlebnisse Schicksale und fürchterliche Verbannung. Sensations-Roman.	1898-1899	Victor von Falk
2	Zola und Picquart die Kämpfer für Wahrheit und Recht und Das Geheimnis der verschleierten Dame oder das Ende des entsetzlichen Schicksals des Kapitän Dreifuss.	1899-1900	Victor von Falk
3	Dreyfus und Zola, die lebenslängliche Verbannung des Kapitän Dreyfus, die ergreifenden Schicksale seiner Gattin und die todesmutige Verteidigung desselben durch Emile Zola. Zeitgeschichtlicher Sensations-Roman.	1899	Anonymous
4	Der unschuldig Verurtheilte, Kapitän Dreyfus oder Lebendig begraben auf der Teufelsinsel	1898	W. von Norden

The three authors who novelized the Dreyfus Affair for colportage publishers wove newspapers and other contemporary sources into their narratives, taking on the

[81] The sequel format of Falk's novel is particularly unusual – as mentioned previously, publishers reckoned with a falling off of interest as novels went on. Falk was a "star" writer for Weichert, penning 22 novels for the publishing house between 1890 and 1911. Most were 2,400 pages in length, spread over 100 *Heftchen*. The shortest work he wrote for Weichert seems to have been a condensed version of his first novel for the publisher, and only ran in 40 installments in 1891. The lopsided length of the Dreyfus sequel produced by Falk suggests that decreased sales led to a premature end to *Zola und Picquart*, which concluded at 75 installments, compared to *Auf ewig getrennt*'s standard 100 *Heftchen*.

[82] A fifth German colportage novel, *Unschuldig getrennt: Dreyfus des unschuldig Verbannten und seiner Gattin ergreifendes Schicksal*, written by Eugen Tegen and published in 1931 by the Dresden Mignon-Verlag also exists in the Kosch collection. This version stays much closer to the facts of the affair. Due to its late publication date, it is outside of the scope of this study, but does show the continuing resonance of the affair for popular literature after the turn of the century.

general political concerns of the story in their own way. In doing so, they actively questioned the authority of newspapers, dramatizing the way news harnessed and steered public opinion. However, extensive citation of news media was, as explored in the last chapter, a way for these narratives to claim authority and authenticity. The paradoxical tension between citation and criticism is part and parcel of how these novels effectively sensationalized not only current events but the information society they were built on. Furthermore, the novels went beyond the political themes directly connected to the affair and expanded them to include a populist and skeptical view of democratic values in class-stratified societies. They make Dreyfus and his family into archetypes of popular storytelling, and they transpose some of the issues brought up by the Dreyfus affair into rhetoric about the working poor. Before exploring this relationship of the novels to press reports, I examine how colportage novels dealt with two of the larger political discourses related to the affair: anti-French sentiment and anti-Semitism.

THE DREYFUS AFFAIR AS A SYMBOL OF FRENCH FAILURE

The history of German-French relations, in which France often plays the role of Germany's "Erbfeind," influenced the German reception of the affair and often served as an opening for the expression of German nationalism and anti-French sentiment. It also provided space for comparing the two countries' different political systems: France's long and troubled history of republicanism and Germany's legacy of absolutism that had yet to be erased. This contradiction was sometimes expressed in the form of unequivocal assertions of German superiority coupled with anti-French sentiment. Conservative

nationalist newspapers saw the affair as the latest in a string of scandals demonstrating France's wrong-headedness and descent into failure, as in the conservative Prussian *Kreuzzeitung* in September 1899:

> Im politischen Leben Frankreichs löst man überhaupt keine Fragen, man lässt sie versumpfen und ersetzt sie durch neue. Wir haben das beim Wilson-Skandal, beim Panama-Skandal, bei der Boulange, [...] zur Genüge gesehen und sehen es jetzt auch bei der Dreyfus-Affäre [...] und das wird so weitergehen wie es eben geht, bis endlich das Sprichwort von dem zu Wasser gehenden Kruge auch hier sich bewährt. (Bianchi 45-46)

Bianchi demonstrates that many liberal nationalist papers took up a similar position (75-80). However, they chose to express their anti-French sentiment as concern over the possible political unraveling of France; a favorite trope here was the idea that France was somehow diseased. Bianchi contends that the left-wing liberal weekly *Die Nation* "beschrieb Dreyfus als 'Thermometer' am 'sozialen Körper', das in Frankreich 'ein verheerendes Fieber' diagnostizierte" (79). Liberal papers tended to agonize more over the crisis the affair was causing the French Republic and to recognize that military tradition and power was at the heart of the problem. Colportage novels take these concerns and make them concrete, showing the reader France as a lost country, so riddled with corruption that its people have no access to truth.

The rhetoric of German superiority in connection with the affair was also compounded by the relatively fresh legacy of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871, which resulted in the fall of the Second French Empire under Napoleon III (1808-1873) and Germany's annexation of much of Alsace-Lorraine. German contemporaries of the Affair were one generation removed from this important military victory and newly united

under a Prussian monarch, while France had transformed itself once again from an empire into a republic. Thus, the controversy over the Dreyfus Affair, which implied misconduct at high levels of the military and government, became a prominent example for the failure of democratic principles in France (11-13).

Colportage novels narrated press debate in order to both incorporate the novel into the novel as well as to dominate it within the novel. *Dreyfus und Zola*, in particular, employs this strategy to thematize anti-French sentiment. The novel's engagement with news is similar in breadth and sentiment to Becker's account of the Franco-Prussian war coverage in the last chapter.[83] This anonymously written account published by the Oeser Verlag[84] is extremely thorough in its inclusion of news in its narratives, although all of the novels engage in this to varying extents. *Dreyfus und Zola* cherry-picks excerpts from the French press debate that followed Dreyfus's degradation and combines them with narrative commentary to show how the French leadership and press mislead their citizens. In the passages examined below, the press debate is also a narrative counterpoint to a dramatic description of Dreyfus's degradation ceremony itself, in which the French captain's sword is broken, his uniform torn, and, as a fictional flourish, the villain Esterhazy takes the opportunity to gloat over the humbled man.

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[83] And similar in its anti-French quality, too, suggesting that the French are too easily led by the media, that their institutions (media and otherwise) are unscrupulous and that the French people themselves are not to blame for their ignorance.

[84] Oeser is among the few prolific publishers of colportage novels outside of Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin. The Oeser Verlag was located in Neusalza, on the Saxon border with the Czech Republic. The house specialized in popular literature distributed by itinerant sales people; it also made the most of its location, printing work in German as well as Czech and Polish. Aside from colportage novels, the publishing house was also well known for its production of *Moritaten* broadsheets, a genre also associated with sensation and violence.

By accounting for and implicitly dismissing newspaper discourse, the colportage author engages in the authorization of his own account of the affair. He also positions his work as informative, exclusive and exciting. In this example, newspaper articles also form a basis for the author to deploy anti-French rhetoric that suggests suppression of information and betrayal of the French people by their public institutions. The chapter begins by dwelling on the degradation ceremony's atmosphere of mob emotion. At first, the crowd is silent, "Während dieser ganzen fürchterlichen Prozedur herrschte Totenstille auf dem Platze, nur der Unglückliche rief ununterbrochen mit lauter Stimme: 'Ich bin unschuldig! Man begeht einen Justizmord! Es lebe Frankreich!'" (11). The crowd responds as one to Dreyfus:

> Die fanatisierte Menge aber brüllte als Antwort auf die Beteuerungen des Unglücklichen: "Nieder mit dem Juden! Nieder mit dem Verräter Dreyfus! Nieder mit dem Freund der Prussiens[sic], der Frankreichs Festungen an den Feind verkauft hat!" (12)

Disrupting the moment with the narrative voice, the narrator then explains the great error the masses are laboring under, which functions as a transition into an examination of the newspapers' responsibility for the people's ignorance:

> Die Ärmsten! Hätten sie geahnt, wie die ganze civilisierte Welt diesen ihren vermeintlichen Sieg beurteilte.
>
> Man kann sagen, daß außerhalb Frankreichs so ziemlich alle Welt in der Meinung einig war, daß die Franzosen durch die Verurteilung eines ihrer Offiziere, dessen Schuld durch nichts erwiesen worden war, sich wiederum als eine Nation bezeigt hatten, die bei einer völligen inneren Zerfahrenheit und moralischer Schwäche durch allerlei sensationelle Spektakelstücke die innere Hohlheit und Leere ihres ganzen Staatswesens zu verdecken trachtet. (12)

Although Dreyfus's 1894 degradation made global headlines, the international media resonance of the scandal was much greater at the time the author wrote this passage, in 1898. In 1898, also, international sympathy for Dreyfus's plight was growing rapidly as more information that threw his conviction into doubt came to light. Thus, in a way, the French mob's lack of knowledge, emblematic for the French nation's "Zerfahrenheit" and moral weakness, portrayed in the passage above in contrast with the unanimous opinion of the "civilized world" is an anachronism, based on the 1898 assessment of the situation rather than the 1894 reality. This narrative intervention, however, does not merely pander to anti-French feeling among the German readership; it also implicates the press along with the military. The "sensationelle Spektakelstücke" published in the newspapers are, indeed, meant to cloak the hollowness of the entire state apparatus.

This scene is then followed by detailed analysis of the French media's role in the moment and how key actors in the affair used the media to tell their side of the story. *Dreyfus und Zola*'s narrator describes what it calls the French "Preßfehde," naming the specific papers, such as *L'Aurore*, and showing the relationship between events in Dreyfus's case and reporting activity:

> Bereits am Tage nach seiner fruchtlosen Unterredung mit dem Kriegsminister ließ Advokat Demange in 'der Aurore' eine Erklärung veröffentlichen, darin er die Behauptung aufstellte, daß Kapitän Dreyfus nicht allein schuldlos, sondern auch ungesetzmäßig verurteilt worden sei.
>
> […]
>
> Diese mit dem Namen des Anwalts bezeichnete Erklärung fiel wie eine Bombe in die Öffentlichkeit, alle Gemüter auf das heftigste ergreifend. (12-13)

Here, the narrator concretely ties the actions of Demange, Dreyfus's defense attorney, to reporting and to the effects such reporting has on public opinion. The passage then continues to trace the issue of the newspaper coverage of the Affair and its inflammatory impact on the public sphere.

The author summarizes the "camps" of the French press, corresponding roughly to the categories of the "media kaleidoscope" modern scholars have used to understand the public reception of the affair. However, the description simplifies the divide to only two camps: the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards (here explicitly referring to them as anti-Semites). *Dreyfus und Zola* is unique among the colportage novels about the affair because it notes anti-Semitism as a key feature of the newspapers carrying anti-Dreyfusard content.

> Die der Dreyfussache günstig gestimmten Pariser Blätter brachten spaltenlange Erklärungen und Aufsätze, in welchen das Kriegsgericht, der Generalstab und das Kriegsministerium heftig angegriffen wurden.
>
> Die judenfeindlichen Zeitungen, besonders jene, welche der Regierung nahe standen, blieben die Antwort nicht schuldig. (13)

This passage's clear distinctions between the press camps of the "juden-feindlichen" and the papers on Dreyfus's side demonstrates the author's knowledge and make it the reader's knowledge as well. Although the paragraph cited above is by no means a fine-grained analysis, it notes other factors affecting the newspapers' allegiances, pointing out that the dimension of closeness to the government also influenced the papers.

Following this, the novel then delves into an examination of the French government's press response. First, the novel reproduces in its entirety a defensive

account of the government's position and of a fateful line in Schwartzkoppen's correspondence said to be a reference to Dreyfus "Die Canaille, der D. fängt an, recht anmaßend zu werden" (13). The narrator intervenes afterward to note: "Diese spaltenlange Erklärung in einem regierungs-freundlichen Blatte schleuderte einen neuen Zündstoff in die ohnehin aufgeregten Gemüter" (13). Here the different facets of the affair, as they are presented in the press, cause confusion and upset among the readership. Public opinion is, for this author, a fire fed by "Zündstoffe" and "Bomben". Public opinion is housed in individual and/or collective "Gemüter," in sentiment. While highlighting the contradictions of newspaper coverage and underscoring the turmoil that it can cause, the author also presents a detailed and factual account of events and their echoes in the press.

For this particular author, press coverage amplifies the complexities of the Dreyfus scandal, but it is also an integral part of the story – and it implies that, in contrast to the French public, the reader of the colportage novel is being addressed and positioned as a rational judge of the events. More than once, this author alludes to a cover-up, and suggests that newspaper discourse achieves little beyond creating chaos. The colportage novel account congratulates the reader on his or her discernment. At the same time, its fictional narrative presents itself as more reliable than newspaper coverage, which we have also seen in the last chapter. Here, however, I want to underscore the fact that it is precisely the affordances of fictional narrative that allow this kind of self-representation. The colportage novel's capacious inventions and embellishments, its openness to

processes of amalgamation, allow for a surfeit of detail that, though excessive, manages to make events coherent, events that are, in their facts and histories, wildly incoherent.

ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE COLPORTAGE NOVELS

As mentioned above, Dreyfus was the only Jew among the French General Staff. His family's first path of recourse following Dreyfus's arrest was to draw on the Parisian Jewish community for support. The affair's reception unfolded along a major axis of anti-Semitism. At the level of the government and diplomacy, this was couched in terms of official segregation. Here, outright anti-Semitism was often masked in comparisons between national military personnel policies; in Wilhelminian Germany, Jews were banned from military service. According to commentators, this prevented events similar to the Dreyfus Affair from occurring in the German capital. In the mainstream German press, anti-Semitism found ambivalent and usually fairly restrained expression in the major conservative papers, such as the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and the *Kreuzzeitung,* in both of which Bianchi notes general acceptance of anti-Semitic violence and demonstrations in France in the context of the affair (46-47). The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* expresses its position in praise for the French anti-Semite commentator Maurice Barrès (47). Among the conservative papers there was, however, a spectrum – the *Staatsbürger-Zeitung*'s reportage on the case interpreted Zola's letter as a masterful public relations campaign for the "international[es] Judentum". The *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* was at the most extreme end of the spectrum, suggesting that the efforts of the Dreyfusard camp amounted to an unleashing of the power of the

international Jewry, marshaling resources that "niemals ein Christ [...] erfahren würde" (52). On the other side of the coin, papers associated with nationalist liberalism also tended to dismiss anti-Semitic demonstrations and agitation as "Unfug" rather than assessing their danger (81). Left-wing liberal reporting also avoided anti-Semitism as an object of discussion, instead focusing on tying its outbreak to social movements and conditions in France (82). More or less, the German coverage of the Dreyfus affair in mainstream newspapers downplayed anti-Semitism in the affair or expressed it in oblique analysis. Similarly, colportage novels tend to bury or omit Dreyfus's Jewishness and leave out its significance in their narrative of the affair. Nonetheless, anti-Semitism was inseparable from the affair and reared its head in the colportage novelizations in other ways as well.

The exception to the rule, however, can be found in the colportage novel *Dreyfus und Zola*, which is most direct in criticizing anti-Semitism and calling it out as a contributing factor in the entire convoluted scandal. The anonymous author condemns the anti-Semitic characteristics of mob sentiment during Dreyfus's initial trial, as we saw in passages describing Dreyfus's degradation above. Following the degradation scene, during which the crowd cries "Nieder mit dem Juden!" the author transitions away with the remark: "Augenzeugen dieses Schauspiels, denen noch nicht jedes menschliche Empfinden abhanden gekommen, erklären, daß der Eindruck, den die Scene hervorgerufen, ein unheimlicher und unauslöschlicher gewesen" (106). This narrative intervention interprets the anti-Semitism of the mob as well as the great misunderstanding of Dreyfus's persecution as a failure of humanity and a failure of perception. Throughout

the novel, the narrator pinpoints systematic anti-Semitism as a cause for the unjust persecution of Dreyfus.

First and foremost, the author raises the specter of the international Jewish "syndicate" again and again, only to refute it, using it to demonstrate the sad ignorance of the characters involved in Dreyfus's ordeal. The following conversation, for example, takes place between the ship captain who transports Dreyfus to exile and his steersman:

> "Das ist die Teufelsinsel!" sagte der Schiffskapitän zu dem ersten Steuermann, der an seiner Seite stand.
>
> "Bin schon einmal dort gewesen," nickte der andere, "und beneide den armen Schelm nicht, der dort sein Leben lang wird zubringen müssen."
>
> "Hat's aber verdient," meinte der Kapitän. "Ein Vaterlandsverräter ist noch schlimmer als ein Mörder, und für ihn kann daher keine Strafe hart genug sein."
>
> "Ich hörte aber in Toulon Leute sprechen, die seine Schuld bezweifelten."
>
> "Das mochten Juden gewesen sein."
>
> "Oh nein, es waren eben solche gute Christenmenschen, wie wir beide es sind, Herr Kapitän." (247)

The reader's sympathies, by this point, are firmly with the steersman, because the narrative maintains Dreyfus's innocence from the beginning. The idea that "good Christians" could believe in the Dreyfus's innocence is, of course, dismissed by the captain. Dreyfus's introduction to and conversation with the governor of the penal colony takes a somewhat similar turn:

> "Du wirst bald selbst erkennen, daß Dir hier alle Mittel und Wege, aus der Strafhaft zu entweichen, völlig entzogen sind. Nun ist aber die Möglichkeit nicht ausgeschlossen, daß Deine einflußreichen Anhänger sich Mühe geben werden, Dir Rettung von außen zu bringen."

> Dreyfus zuckte die Achseln, während ein bitteres Lächeln um seinen Mund flog.
>
> "Das hätte vielleicht in Paris geschehen können," mürmelte er.
>
> Der Gouverneur schien ihn verstanden zu haben, und er fiel rasch ein:
>
> "O, die reiche Judenschaft wird es auch jetzt an Anstrengungen nicht mangeln lassen, um vielleicht zu Deinen Gunsten ein Filibustierschiff hierher zu entsenden. Es wäre nicht das erste Mal, daß ein schwerer Staatsverbrecher mit bewaffneter Hand der Gefangenschaft entrissen wird."
>
> Dreyfus zuckte abermals verächtlich die Achseln.
>
> "Nicht auf eine bewaffnete Macht, sondern auf die Gerechtigkeit Gottes setze ich mein Vertrauen, der zweifellos eines Tages meine Unschuld vor der Welt offenbaren und meine Feinde zu schanden machen wird." (263)

The idea that only other members of the Jewish community would believe in Dreyfus's innocence or that they would mobilize secret or conspiratorial power to help him escape is presented here as the great fear of the French officials involved in carrying out his punishment. Once again, the generalizations of the ship's captain and the governor about Dreyfus being championed by other Jews are presented as evidence of ignorance and inability to recognize the truth, though it is plain to see – even the steersman has heard it, from "good Christians" in Toulon. In this particular novel, Dreyfus's faith in truth, justice and God mark him as a hero.

Unfortunately *Dreyfus und Zola* is only partially extant – the copy in the Kosch collection was bound in three volumes, but only the last two of the three volumes are extant. Therefore Dreyfus's introduction in this novel as both a Jewish man and as a figure to be sympathized with cannot be analyzed at this point. A passage in the second volume, which describes Dreyfus reflecting on his life before his ordeal, suggests that the

introduction might not be too revolutionary or surprising, despite this novel's unique treatment of anti-Semitism.

> Oft faßte er [Dreyfus] sich an die Stirn, als wolle er seiner Phantasie Einhalt gebieten, ihm die lieblichen Bilder von jenseits dieses Höllengebiets vorzuzaubern.
>
> Das vermochte er nicht.
>
> Wieder und immer wieder trat wie ein herrliches Panorama das ganze Lebensbild seiner Vergangenheit ihm vor die Seele, um ihm den Jammer seiner jetzigen Lage zum schrecklichsten Bewußtsein zu erheben.
>
> Von Kindesbeinen an im Reichtum, ja im Überfluß erzogen, hatte er das Dasein nur von seinen schönsten, lichtvollsten Seiten kennen gelernt. Im Elternhause, in der Schule, auf der Militärakademie, im Offizierstande, immer und überall hatte er, der mit Glücksgütern reich Gesegnete, sozusagen im Sonnenlichte dieser Zeitlichkeit gewandelt, in keiner Lebensphase war Not oder Sorge irgend welcher Art an ihn herangetreten. (313)

This passage makes his past seem halcyon, perhaps undeservedly so – he was richly blessed with luck. This reflection seems to place his experience into the pattern of the biblical story of Job, rendering Dreyfus more as an everyman than a specifically Jewish hero. Thus, for this novel, it appears that the anti-Semitism swirling around the case are more an emblem and symptom of the willful ignorance of the French rather than a force fueling the scandal.

In the other novelizations, the narratives never dwell on the anti-Semitic dimension of the trial explicitly. Despite the official details the narrators marshal, none of them mentions the status of Jewish officers in the French army. In essence, these novels "whitewash" Dreyfus, side-stepping the intrinsic anti-Semitism of the affair. Instead, both Falk and Norden placed a distinct emphasis on Dreyfus's identity as an Alsatian (and thus

near-German). While in reality, the Dreyfus family's decision to uproot themselves rather than remain in a German-controlled Alsace could be viewed as a demonstration of their heartfelt loyalty to France. Still, the family's maintenance of property in the region and connections to other Alsatians made them even more suspect for the French. The German colportage novelists, however, seize on this connection in order to render Dreyfus relatively "German." Victor von Falk, for example, introduces Dreyfus thus:

> Der junge Kapitän besaß ein ebenso schönes, wie sympathisches und einnehmendes Gesicht. Seine vollen blonden Haare, der seidenweiche Schnurrbart von gleicher Farbe, und die großen hellblauen Augen verriethen überdies, daß dieser Mann kein Vollblut-Franzose, sondern ein Kind des sonnigen Elsaß sei, welches einst durch schnöde Gewaltthat Deutschland entrissen und erst durch den unvergeßlichen Siegeszug von 1870 unserm Vaterlande zurückgegeben worden ist. (2)

Dreyfus's identity as an Alsatian, and the Alsace's status as hard-won German land, is instrumentalized so that Dreyfus is, as in the passage above, certainly not "full-blooded French" and in fact "near-German." The emphasis placed on this is perhaps intended to help German readers sympathize with Dreyfus. Further, this passage's "unvergeßlichen Siegeszug" and its use of the first-person plural pronoun in evoking "our fatherland" binds the reader and the narrator together as German nationalists. The Alsatian identity strengthens the novels' anti-French and German nationalist interpretation of the affair by casting Dreyfus as a pseudo-German everyman being prosecuted arbitrarily by the corrupt French state. The framing of Dreyfus as "pseudo-German" is unprecedented in the broader German media reception of the affair, and is evidence that anti-Semitism and anti-internationalism also had a vital place in colportage novels. This transformation of Dreyfus into a persecuted Alsatian allowed the novels to sweep the issue of his loyalty to

France and his identity as a Jew under the rug, and instead focus on a critique of France. The politics of colportage novels were extremely ambivalent, and rooted in emotional polemic—it was a politics of outrage and contradiction, something that authors whipped up, but was always subject to the cycles of suspense and resolution of the serial form.

The subtle reframing of Dreyfus, however, was only one way in which colportage novels reproduced discourses of anti-Semitism. In the case of Victor von Falk's novels, for example, the facts of the affair are purged of any mention of Dreyfus's Jewishness; Dreyfus is described as praying and awaiting Christmas in his cell. And yet, the author brings in other characters specifically intended to appeal to an anti-Semitic readership's expectations, with a caricature so overdrawn it borders on the absurd.[85] Falk indulges his readers' desire for the taboo as well as their anti-Semitism in describing a grotesque crime committed by a Jewish villain. This fictional character has a convoluted and tangential relationship to the story's main characters, but he plays a major role in important side plots. The character's name is Salomon Benas, and he is a fictional Parisian pawnshop owner and moneylender who is connected to affair via loans to Esterhazy and payments to Claudine Loretto, another relatively important fictional figure in the story, who is described in more detail later in this chapter. Falk describes Benas thus:

> Ein kleiner, gebückt gehender Mann, dessen scharf gebogene Hakennase den Juden verriet [...] Um die hagere Gestalt des kleinen Alten, schlotterten die ihm viel zu weiten Kleider, welche aus einem ehemals schwarzen, jetzt aber silbergrau

[85] Falk was a prolific writer of colportage novels, and he seems to use the inhuman Jewish villain as a stock character in several of his works. Falk was the pseudonym of editor and journalist Heinrich Sochaczewsky, who was himself a Jew. His extreme reproduction of Jewish stereotypes in his work might provide a remarkable case study for problems of German-Jewish identity in Wilhelminian Germany.

> glänzenden Gehrock, einer gelben Sammetweste und großkarrierten Hosen bestand, ein grauweißer Ziegenbart sprang spitz und scharf aus dem runzligen Gesicht hervor, in welchem zwei kleine, bewegliche, dunkle Augen sich wie Tintenflecke auf einem gelben uralten Pergament ausnahmen. Ganz vorn auf der Nasenspitze schwankte ein Pince-nez in schwarzer Horneinfassung." (163-4)

This description and general characterization of Benas is informed by anti-Semitic stereotypes. Salomon is introduced when Mathieu Dreyfus visits him in an attempt to find out more about Claudine Loretto, the vengeful woman involved in framing Alfred Dreyfus in this particular novel. Loretto has been given a bank note in return for her role in Dreyfus's downfall. The note is connected to Benas's small-time banking business, which is painted as an unsavory place on the "verrufene Rue Madonne" (163). Benas attempts to convince Mathieu Dreyfus to cash in the bank note for himself, and Falk writes his dialogue in fluent but ungrammatical German, to highlight his status as a "foreign" element:

> "Wenn der gnädige Herr mir's nicht wollen deuten übel, möcht ich ihm geben einen guten Rat. Hunderttausend Francs ist ein Vermögen. Bei Abraham, Isaak und Jakob, man hat nicht alle Tage Gelegenheit zu machen hunderttausend Francs. Der Wechsel ist in Ihrer Hand, die Englische Bank in London bezahlt demjenigen das Geld aus, der die Anweisung vorzeigen kann. Nu zeigen Sie sie vor, gnädiger Herr, kassieren Sie sich ein die hunderttausend Francs und wenn Sie Ihrem unterthänigen Diener Salomon Benas, in die Hand drücken werden zehn -- äh fünfzehn -- was rede ich da -- zwanzigtausend Francs, wird er schweigen wie ein Karpfen, den man gekocht hat mit Knoblauchsauce und kleinen Klößchen am Schabbes." (165)

This speech also makes clear the connections to anti-Semitic stereotypes that Falk is dredging up: his suggestions of "ten, fifteen, no twenty thousand francs" to demonstrate greed, his reference to Jewish sabbath meals. Up until this point in his introduction, Benas's characterization does not extend much beyond the well-worn anti-Semitic

stereotypes that "reflect and reinforce" prejudice to be found in many of the most critically acclaimed novels in the nineteenth century, such as Gustav Freytag's (1816-1895) *Soll und Haben* (1855) (Sagarra and Sagarra 160-76). However, later in the novel, Benas turns out to be part of a criminal network that is involved in many of the narrative's events, and here his characterization takes a turn towards the macabre.

But Benas is not just an unsavory moneylender. In fact, Falk gives him a particularly lurid love of grave robbing, which raises specters of medieval tales of blood libel. Benas's non-Jewish criminal associates are not squeamish about plundering graves either, but Salomon in particular has an unsavory fetish for jewels acquired this way:

> Seine hagere Gestalt reckte sich empor, seine dunkeln Augen wurden unnatürlich erweitert, die Hände krümmten sich, als wären sie Krallen eines Raubtieres und im Begriff ihre Beute zu erfassen, aus seinen zahnlosen, weitgeöffneten Mund floß gelblicher Speichel in den Bart hinab.
>
> Leichenraub!
>
> Dieses Wort erfüllte den alten Juden mit tierischer Lust, es goß ihm eine Erregung, ein Fieber ins Blut, deren er nicht Herr zu werden vermochte. (170-71)

This description turns the man into a monster, a grave-treasure werewolf. Benas is by no means the most disgusting of the villains in Falk's novel, although he is at the extreme end of the spectrum. The list of outlandish crimes in the novel would be a long one – Esterhazy sexually assaults multiple women, a Polish emigré chops his business associate into pieces and hides them in a suitcase.[86] Nonetheless, Benas is the only criminal in this

[86] It is important to note that anti-Semitic stereotypes were not the only racist stereotypes that could be found in colportage novels. Franco-Prussian war novels seized on French "Zouaven", North African military units, as an opening for deployment of exoticizing and xenophobic depictions of blacks and Arabs. Chinese, Native Americans, Mexicans – non-Europeans make appearances in nearly every colportage novel, often as racist caricatures, but occasionally as heroes and freedom fighters.

particular novel whose identity rests on a lurid invocation of both evil deeds and anti-Semitic stereotypes. The description of every kind of crime, from sexual assault to desecration of graves in the novels is extreme, almost fantastically macabre. In spite of *Dreyfus und Zola*'s attempt at using anti-Semitic ideas about the affair as a foil to demonstrate ignorance, the readership of colportage novels liked the sensation, the fear and the outrage provoked by extreme realizations of stereotypes like Benas. As we have seen above, the common nineteenth-century archetype of the "bad Jew" functioned merely as a point of departure for the colportage novelist and a familiar schema for the reader (Mosse 220). From this point, the author's dark imagination took over.

SENSATIONALISM AND THE MAIN FIGURES OF THE AFFAIR

In colportage retellings of the Dreyfus affair, narrative modes of melodrama, sentimentalism, Gothic horror, and sensationalism go hand in hand with extensive politicization of real events, creating a version of the affair that resonated much differently than it did in mainstream media. Unlike journalists, novelists could fortify their understanding of events with fantasy. And although these novels in particular used real individuals for their main characters, they used artistic license in such a way that these people become imaginative starting points rather than factual constraints on the novels' possibilities. There are too many historical actors in the affair who appear in the novels to focus on the transformations of each one. In this section, I want to briefly survey how colportage novelists found and plumbed the fictional possibilities of Alfred Dreyfus, his wife and his brother.

These colportage novel adaptations brought readers into an intimate fictional world surrounding Dreyfus and his family, portraying domestic scenes and familial happiness. An early example from *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte* takes the reader into the Dreyfus family's nursery:

> [...] Ihr [Die Lampe] mildes Licht ergoß sich auf ein liebreizendes, junges Weib, das zwei bildhübschen Kindern gegenüber, die auf kleinen Fußbänkchen saßen, auf dem Teppich kniete. Es waren ein Knabe und ein Mädchen, die drei bis vier Jahre alt sein mochten und, die großen, blauen Augen in kindlichem Staunen weit geöffnet, dem deutschen Märchen, das die Mama erzählte, mit solchem Eifer lauschten, daß sie zunächst nicht gewahrten, wie sich die Thür des Zimmers geräuschlos öffnete. (18)

Note once again, that Dreyfus's wife is reading her children a German fairy tale, a detail that links the family scene to specifically German domesticity. The opening of the door foreshadows Dreyfus's entrance into this scene. However, the domestic idyll is soon thereafter put in peril when Dreyfus is arrested that night. Each novel follows a similar pattern, quickly revealing that outside and conspiratorial forces have infiltrated the family circle.

In describing Dreyfus's family life, the authors generally play fast and loose with details. Although *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte* and *Dreyfus und Zola* both have the basic outline of Dreyfus's family factually correct (wife named Lucie, two children), in Falk's *Auf ewig getrennt*, Dreyfus's wife is renamed (Lucie becomes a rich heiress named Hermance) and Falk gives the couple only one child, a son named Andreé. In this novel, the reader discovers early on that Andreé's German nursemaid, Eva Ritter, is a spy in league with Esterhazy. A dance party hosted at the Dreyfus's home becomes the stage for his arrest in this novel – his brother Mathieu sneaks into the party disguised as a monk to

warn Alfred about French police surrounding the house (Falk 19-20). To open their tales, these novels focus on Dreyfus's happy life, the good fortune of his family, and then show the fragility and insecurity of this happiness as outsiders and false friends dismantle it. Also, as the disagreement over the number of Dreyfus's children shows, accuracy in facts was not as important as providing the semblance of intimate detail.

Although the reader is aware of the danger to the family at the outset, the Dreyfus family does not seem awake to their peril, although the novels add hints and foreshadowing to whet the reader's appetite for the moment things begin to fall apart. In Falk's novel, the spy-cum-nursemaid Eva Ritter breaks a bowl that Esterhazy gave to the family. Dreyfus is chagrinned and explains: "[...] er brachte sie mir vor zwei Jahren aus Venedig mit und fügte seinem Geschenk lächelnd hinzu, daß es ewig halten möge, wie unsere Freundschaft" (12). For the reader, this is a clear sign that betrayal is on its way. Similarly, in *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte*, Lucie Dreyfus seems aware of the precariousness of stability and happiness where her husband is not. When Esterhazy, also here in the guise of a family friend, compliments her on her family, she quickly exclaims, "Gott möge unser Glück erhalten!" The narrative voice notes: "Es hatte wie ein Gebet geklungen" (19). The poignant introduction of the family is matched by its members' outspoken grief and emotion when Dreyfus is arrested and his ordeals begin.

The family's reaction to the arrest in the novels is far removed from the actual public presence and behavior of Dreyfus and his family during the case. In reality, the family maintained Alfred Dreyfus's innocence, but were very private about their trouble and showed a stoic face to the public. During his trials, Dreyfus was faulted for his

stoicism – authors like Ruth Harris have suggested he wished to show loyalty and respect for the French Republic by avoiding ad hominem attacks in trials or by showing emotion, even after he returned to France with ruined health (Harris 310). The Dreyfus of the colportage novel, however, is cognizant of the injustice he is about to suffer from the moment of his arrest, and decries it continually, as in this example from *Auf ewig getrennt?*, which is footnoted as a "wahrer Ausruf des Kapitän Dreyfus" to his loved ones:

> "Bitte nicht um Gnade für mich!" rief der Kapitän und richtete sich stolz empor, "und Du, geliebtes Weib, weine nicht mehr, denn dieser Vorgang ist Deiner Thränen nicht wert. Ich bin unschuldig, und einst wird der Tag kommen, an welchem mir die französische Nation zur Entschädigung für diese Stunde das Kreuz der Ehrenlegion an die Brust heften wird! " (53)

Here, Dreyfus is an outspoken advocate for himself and a critic of the system that has seized him. He tells his family not to weep for him and implicitly suggests that the only thing here to be pitied and wept over in this situation is the French nation.

In all of the novels, Dreyfus's wife Lucie is painted as a virtuous woman whose loyalty to her husband is unshakeable, and Dreyfus's child or children are the center of his life. Mainstream media accounts also made much of Lucie Dreyfus's loyalty and strength. In the colportage novels, however, her much-lauded character is put to the test by the narratives—she hears reports that her husband had cheated on her, that he had had a child out of wedlock, and so on. The men responsible for her husband's imprisonment are blackmailing her. Rather than being a passive object of newspaper attacks, in the novels she is also actively threatened by actors in the affair. For example, in *Auf ewig*

getrennt, Esterhazy assaults Hermance when she attempts to visit Alfred in military prison.

> "Küsse mich, Weib!" rief [Esterhazy] "ich will Dir die Seele aus dem Leibe küssen!"
>
> Ein wildes Ringen entstand.
>
> Seine Lippen suchten lechzend die ihrigen, und wie die Riesenschlange ihr Opfer in unauflöslichem Knäuel umschlingt, so wanden sich seine Arme fester und immer fester um ihren Leib.
>
> [...] Sie kämpfte wie eine Verzweifelte um ihre Ehre.
>
> [...] Mit einem erlösenden Aufschrei stürzte sie in eine Ecke und riß den Degen des Majors empor, der dort auf seinem Mantel gelegen hatte.
>
> Im nächsten Moment schwang sie die blitzende Klinge in ihrer Hand. (77)

In the novels, the actual struggles of Lucie Dreyfus (maintaining belief in her husband's innocence, remaining faithful to him, and dealing with being an object of morbid interest to the public) become more immediate and more violent in her incarnation as "Hermance." Her husband's persecutors benefit from her position – separated from her husband but nonetheless associated with his betrayal. However, she is resourceful and brave in the face of these travails.

Although she is no helpless damsel in distress, she is eclipsed by another female character in Falk's novelization, Alice Terry, an incredibly savvy American "weiblicher Detektiv" who defends Hermance in multiple conflicts, outfoxes Esterhazy, and later volunteers for an ill-fated mission to rescue Dreyfus from Devil's Island. Hermance serves instead as a hub for feelings of pity, outrage, and sympathy. When she pulls Esterhazy's knife, he responds, "Das ist kein Spielzeug für Dich, meine schöne

Hermance […], obwohl ich Dir gestehen muß, daß der kriegerische Mut, der jetzt aus Deinen Augen blitzt, Dich noch verschönt und meinen Wunsch, Dich zu besitzen, noch steigert. – Gieb mir den Degen." In contrast, the many times Alice Terry draws a weapon, often a pistol, her agency as a gun-wielder is recognized. Returning to Hermance's scene of distress, Esterhazy eventually wrestles her onto a bed. Luckily, the war minister, Mercier, enters the room unexpectedly. While Hermance thanks God for her deliverance, Esterhazy quickly claims that she was attempting to seduce him in order to win his help in an escape attempt for Alfred Dreyfus. Hermance does not speak up because she is concerned the truth might cause trouble for Forzinetti, whom she respects, and his (fictional) daughter Marion (78-80).[87] Although she suffers, she does her best to limit the suffering to herself, not wishing to visit it on her friends.

Her ordeals are colored with dangerous fantasies in which she is an object of unrelenting desire, in which her best traits (her loyalty to her husband) threaten her life. Similarly, in *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte*, she is accused of using her virtue and lovability to attract men to Dreyfus's cause (245). Her situation is linked to but insulated from the political strands of the affair, rather she is the domestic heroine of the novel, suffering, overcoming trouble on her way to a happy ending that will restore the equilibrium. Racy near-rape scenes are common in colportage novels and seem to function to heighten suspense and grab reader attention. In the novels surveyed for this dissertation, such scenes are often employed in the first five installments (the loaners

[87] Marion, a teenage girl, is introduced to the reader as suffering from a mental disorder. In a separate storyline later in the novel, Hermance discovers that Esterhazy is in fact hypnotizing Marion for the purpose of sexual abuse. Hermance is able to help her escape.

brought by the salesman), which are essentially filled to the brim with turmoil and tumult to entice readers.

Whereas Dreyfus's wife is victim to assaults on her dignity and maintenance of her loyalty is her major struggle, Dreyfus's brother, Mathieu, is transformed into an everyman hero who is forced by the crisis to test and exceed his limits in order to fight on behalf of his brother's innocence. The actual Mathieu Dreyfus was a conservative businessman who did indeed go to great lengths to help his brother's cause, but none quite as exciting as the lengths his fictional avatar goes to. The historical Mathieu Dreyfus was deeply affected by the affair, but he mostly worked behind the scenes, lobbying support from others. His growing dependence on mediums for advice over the course of the affair suggests the deeply unsettling effect the ordeal had on him (Harris 157). In contrast, in the novels he becomes a man of swift action. He travels to investigate (mostly added and fictional) aspects of the novel's version of the affair, he hires private detectives, he rescues mysterious women from drowning, only to later stumble across these ladies' connections to his brother and his brother's enemies.

In Falk's *Auf ewig getrennt?,* an illustration depicting Mathieu jumping from a ship to rescue a woman while on a sea-voyage to Britain shows him in his "super hero" capacity. The action and excitement taps into the popular culture stereotype of an everyday man rising to meet unusual challenges in a way that reaffirms his righteousness and reveals his surprisingly superior abilities, which would never have been uncovered had he not been forced into extremity. In this same novelization, Mathieu falls in love with the canny, pistol-wielding American detective Alice Terry. Together, they rescue a

noblewoman who has been buried alive from grave robbers, use pistols to fend off a mob that threatens Hermance, and later travel to visit the inventor Thomas Edison in the United States, who promises them an invention that will help them rescue Alfred from Devil's Island. This globe-trotting duo transcends the political dimensions of Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards; the novel rather endorses Dreyfus's innocence on the grounds of Mathieu's righteous quest.

In real life, Dreyfus and his closest supporters, his family, refused to make emotion or sentiment part of their public reaction to the affair. Dreyfus and his family studiously avoided the public eye and were scrupulously private in spite of the extensive coverage of the case. The family's public stoicism was an overall strategy that was perceived as ineffective by contemporaries, and which was unusual especially in its relationship with the emotionally-charged political camps that grew up around the Affair that did not shy away from personal attacks (Harris 320). In the novels, the transformation of the Dreyfus family into emotional caricatures and, in the case of Mathieu Dreyfus, into a justice-seeking action hero, made the Dreyfus Affair into a morality play about good people seeking redemption in a bad world. Government becomes a bureaucratic system that is fallible, irrational, corrupt and inescapable for the individual. Information is hidden in conspiratorial networks, love and marriage are undertaken with hidden motives, and institutions are prey to deception. Through the addition of a web of characters from various countries and walks of life, the Dreyfus family's suffering was also tacitly linked to the injustice of poverty and to the difficult

situation of working class men and women in social roles that provided them little political oversight or self-determination.

PITTING INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE AGAINST POLITICAL POWER

In keeping with the overall positioning of the novels as alternatives to newspaper reporting, the Dreyfus affair novels established their authority through practices of citation. In the previous chapter, I examined several ways in which colportage novels incorporated other texts. Here, however, I want to focus specifically on the filtering of texts to highlight affective and sentimental aspects of real events. In particular, this filtering served to highlight emotional, individual experiences within a political landscape. The novels assert the power and importance of such experiences and critique their dismissal. In essence, the novels prime readers to feel outrage over the way individuals are rebuffed by political systems.

These trivial versions of the Dreyfus Affair paid great attention to Ferdinand Forzinetti[88] (1839-1909) because his account of the arrest and initial imprisonment of Dreyfus gave them material that was perfect for building authority and stirring emotions. His position also suited him uniquely to the political worldview of the colportage novel, which pitted heroic figures against corrupt and failed institutions. All of the novels I examined, for example, borrow descriptions and quotations from translations of

[88] Forzinetti sympathized with Dreyfus's plight from the beginning. He was dismissed from his post as Governor of the Cherche-Midi military prison in 1897 for supporting Bernard Lazare's 1896 Dreyfusard pamphlet. Lawsuits related to the affair ensued. Prince Albert of Monaco later provided a post for the widower. Forzinetti was involved in the affair for its duration, and exchanged letters with the Dreyfus family, many of which can be viewed in the Forzinetti archive, held at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, TX.

Forzinetti's account of Dreyfus's imprisonment. Forzinetti was not the most important player in the affair, although he became a staunch Dreyfusard and friend of the family. Forzinetti was the head of the Cherche-Midi military prison, and was in charge of holding Dreyfus in custody prior to his trial (15 October 1894-17 January 1895). As early as 27 October 1894, Forzinetti voiced concerns about the interrogation methods used in interviewing Dreyfus, and warned the minister of war that there was a risk Dreyfus might take his own life (Harris 32).

Forzinetti's original letter was published in *Le Figaro* on 21 November 1897, framed within correspondence between the commandant and his lawyer. By 1897, the affair was in full swing and German newspapers were publishing articles related to it nearly every day, sometimes multiple times a day. Front page reports about the developments of the affair and Forzinetti's description appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on the morning of Monday, 22 November. A full German translation was provided in the *Tageblatt*'s evening edition the same day. By 1898, when no less than three colportage novels devoted to the event were being written, there was already a great deal of material available for the authors to sift through and use in their novelizations. Nonetheless, all three authors singled out Forzinetti's text for inclusion.

Although not nearly as inflammatory or popular as Zola's "J'accuse…!" letter, Forzinetti's impressions were quickly circulated in newspapers around the world. In his letter, Forzinetti describes the conditions of Dreyfus's initial imprisonment as well as Dreyfus's mental state in the early days of his ordeal. Most importantly, he relates his conviction of Dreyfus's innocence, which Forzinetti claims was plain to see from their

first encounter. The power dynamic inherent in Forzinetti's relationship to Dreyfus, as well as his sympathy for Dreyfus's emotional turmoil and apparent innocence, made the letter a touchstone for colportage novels about the affair.

Turning to the letter's reception in German-language daily papers, we can see that these elements of the letter's appeal were not wasted on newspaper editors. The translation of the letter in the *Berliner Tageblatt* freely italicizes portions that highlight Dreyfus's suffering and the points at which Dreyfus's imprisonment was judged to be irregular or improper.

> Der Kommandant Forzinetti, welcher bekanntlich von dem Posten als Kommandant des Militärgefängnisses entsetzt ist, publizirt im 'Figaro' eine Erzählung über die Einlieferung und den Aufenthalt des Kapitän Dreyfus im Gefängniß. Dreyfus wurde direkt *eingemauert*, kein lebendes Wesen dürfte ihn sehen, die Einkerkerung geschah ohne Wissen des Gouvernours von Paris General Saussier. Neun Tage lang geberdete Dreyfus sich wie *wahnsinnig* und weigerte sich, feste Nahrung zu sich zu nehmen. Er schlug gegen die Mauern und brachte sich mehrere Wunden bei. ("Kapitän Dreyfus")

Remarkably, each colportage author chooses similar language from translations of Forzinetti's letter to describe Dreyfus's situation. The novels keenly evoke the loneliness of his solitary confinement and wild emotions at being betrayed and abandoned by a military structure and nation to which he had chosen to dedicate his career. In the following tables, I compare passages of the *Tageblatt*'s translation of the Forzinetti letter, and the rendering of similar passages in the narrative of the colportage novels.[89]

[89] Both tables omit *Dreyfus und Zola* because its first half is not present in the Kosch collection and may not be extant in any publicly accessible collection. Both tables also omit *Zola und Picquart* because, as a sequel, it covers events occurring much later in the affair.

Table 4.2: Dreyfus's imprisonment as being "buried alive"

Text	Author	Passage
Forzinetti in *Berliner Tageblatt Abendausgabe*	Ferdinand Forzinetti (in translation)	[...] Der Hauptaufseher des Gefängnisses, der meine Instruktionen erhalten und auf dem Haftregister einfach den Namen „Dreyfus" ohne irgend eine Hinzufügung eingetragen hatte, führte den Hauptmann in das angewiesene Gelaß. *Von diesem Augenblicke an war Dreyfus lebend in seiner Zelle eingemauert* [...]
Auf ewig getrennt	Victor von Falk	*Von dem Moment, da Dreyfus das Gefängnis in Paris betrat, war er wie lebendig begraben!* (30) [...] Still war es in der 'Leichenzelle,' nur die Ratten trieben ihr lichtscheues Wesen. Sie kletterten, da sie in dieser, von Menschen sonst nie betretenen Behausung die Furcht völlig verloren, an der herunterhängenden Decke empor, sie huschten über die Arme, über die Brust, über das Gesicht des Schlafenden hinweg und ihre kleinen roten Zungen schlürften gierig den roten Lebenssaft des Unglücklichen, der auf Stirn und Wangen schon eine Kruste zu bilden begann [...] (36)
Der unschuldig Verurtheilte	W. von Norden	O, diese Zelle war furchtbar, wie ein Grab! Major Forcinetti hatte nicht zu viel gesagt, als er nach drei Jahren im November 1897 in einem Briefe, den er an den 'Figaro', eine Pariser Zeitung richtete, erklärte, *daß Alfred Dreyfus von jenem Augenblicke an in seiner Zelle lebend eingemauert war*. Es herrschte beinahe völlige Nacht in diesem engen Raume, der fast gar kein Licht durch ein kleines Luftloch erhielt. Spinnen, Asseln und anderes ekles Gewürm krochen, durch das plötzliche Geräusch aufgescheucht, schnellfüßig über die feuchten Wände dahin, und einige Ratten fuhren pfeifend in die Mauerspalten. (40)

Examining these passages makes it clear that the phrase "eingemauert" was figurative in Forzinetti's text – Dreyfus was barred from seeing visitors from the outside and treated as a serious security risk because he was an accused spy. In both *Auf ewig getrennt* and *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte*, this metaphor becomes literal. The cell Dreyfus is held in is referred to in *Auf ewig getrennt* as the "Leichenzelle" and in *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte* as the "Todtenzelle", and in both tales, the cell is described as being reachable only via a trapdoor set into the floor. This literal turn also serves the purpose in both novels of making Dreyfus's cell accessible to crypts or tunnels beneath the prison, which allow him to interact with prisoners and others who know about these subterranean secrets. Falk and Norden also translate the inhumane and improper treatment of Dreyfus into a physical property of the prison itself, spending paragraphs describing the dreary, close confines, the wind blowing through the chinks in the wall, the vermin infesting the cell. Their elaboration here makes Dreyfus's plight into a hair-raising and chilling tableau for the reader.

The fact that these colportage novels used the same sources makes one wonder if they did not, in fact, all rely on newspaper sources, but rather stole and embellished passages from one another. The two novels in the table above both began publication in 1898, although since Norden's *Der unschuldig Verurtheilte* completed its run in 1898, it perhaps began publication earlier in the year than Falk's *Auf ewig getrennt*. If this is the case, it could be that Falk's inspiration came directly from Norden's novelization. Norden, as is clear in the table above and the table that follows, cites his sources more thoroughly. There is little direct evidence to work with here, however. I cannot exclude

the possibility that colportage novelists plagiarized each other's work. Given their prolific appropriation of other texts, it seems quite possible. However, the focus here is on the fact that, whatever the source, both writers seize precisely on Forzinetti's account.

Table 4.3 examines Forzinetti-related passages about Dreyfus's mental health shortly after his imprisonment.

Table 4.3: Dreyfus's mental state after his initial imprisonment

Text	Author	Passage
Forzinetti in *Berliner Tageblatt Abendausgabe*	Forzinetti	Wenige Augenblicke darauf begab ich mich zu dem Hauptmann Dreyfus. Er befand sich in einem *Zustande unbeschreiblicher Aufregung;* ich hatte einen wahren Tollen vor mir mit blutunterlaufenen Augen, *der alles in seinem Gelasse herumgeworfen hatte*. Es gelang mir mit vieler Mühe, ihn zu beruhigen. Ich hatte das *innere Gefühl*, daß dieser Offizier *unschuldig* war.
Auf ewig getrennt	Falk	"Ist es ein Wahnsinniger, der dort, tief unter der Erde, seine Zwangsjacke abstreifen will, ist es ein blutgieriges Raubtier, welches sich bemüht die Gitterstäbe seines Käfigs zu zerbrechen, um ins Freie zu gelangen? – nein, nein, das kann kein Mensch sein, das sind nicht menschliche Laute! – das ist ein Aechzen, ein Stöhnen, ein gurgelndes Hülferufen, das sind Töne, wie sie sich so grauenvoll, so erschütternd, so herzzerreißend einer Menschenbrust nicht entringen können! Dreyfus ist von Sinnen! Dem ersten Entsetzen, welches ihn fast gelähmt, das seine Kraft zum Teil gebrochen hat, ist jetzt die wildeste Verzweifelung gefolgt. Der Unglückliche wirft sich mit vernichtender Gewalt gegen die Mauern seines Gefängnisses, seine Nägel kratzen den Kalk von den Steinen ab, seine Füße versuchen den Boden zu zerstampfen über den er dahinrast. Schreiend, lachend, weinend, blutigen Schaum vor dem Munde springt er die Leiter empor. Sein Kopf stößt krachend gegen die eiserne Fallthür, seine Hände versuchen, die gewaltige Platte aus ihren Angeln zu heben, er zerschlägt die Finger, die Knochen des Armes an dem Verschluß seines Grabgewölbes." (35)

Table 4.3: continued

Der unschuldig Verurtheilte	W. von Norden	"Dann aber -- *wir folgen auch hierin der Schilderung des greisen Anstaltsdirektors* -- verfiel er in einen Zustand wilder Raserei! Der Gedanke, daß er nun vollig in der Gewalt seiner elenden Widersacher, daß er völlig wehrlos war, mochte ihm die Besonnenheit rauben. Er sprang vom Boden auf, trommelte mit den Fäusten gegen die Thür, *warf Alles in dem Gelasse umher* und verlangte in wilden, röchelnden Schreien Gerechtigkeit. Dann sprach er wieder in leisen, abgerissenen Sätzen vor sich hin, von seinem Weibe, seinen Kindern, um im nächsten Augenblicke wieder umherzurasen, ohne der blutenden Verletzungen zu achten, die er sich dabei am Kopfe, an den Armen und den Händen zuzog." (40)

In this instance, again, both novels take a relatively unembellished passage about Dreyfus's distress and heighten it dramatically. In the novels he does not merely scatter the objects in his cell, but beats his arms against the door, scratches at the walls. His madness is expressed in laughter, weeping, screams and groans that, in *Auf ewig getrennt*, are almost not the expressions of a human. Forzinetti's conclusion, that Dreyfus was not guilty, is taken up somewhat later in the colportage novels. The moment of individual, affective distress that Forzinetti describes is a moment that the novels latch on to and inflate, to show the injustice of Dreyfus's imprisonment in terms of mental anguish that robs him of his humanity. This makes the more abstract inhumaneness of Dreyfus's secret trial and railroading in the course of the affair into concrete, narrative inhumanity. Here the colportage novels and the affordances of fiction communicate the predicament in a way that journalism could not.

The novels also place special importance on Forzinetti's belief that Dreyfus is innocent. In Norden's novelization, the war minister, Auguste Mercier (1833-1921), a

staunch anti-Dreyfusard all his life, asks the commandant what his thoughts are about Dreyfus. Forzinetti asks if he can give his honest opinion, which the minister encourages him to do. He replies:

> "Nun denn, Herr Minister, so hören Sie meine Meinung: man ist auf falschem Wege, dieser Offizier ist nicht schuldig!"
>
> Diese Worte, welche der Major auch noch einmal, und zwar in jenem bereits früher erwähnten Schreiben an den 'Figaro' wörtlich wiederholt hat, machten auf den Minister ersichtlich Eindruck. Er ließ das Zeitungsblatt, in dem er bei dem Eintritte des Majors gelesen hatte und das er noch in den Händen hielt, jäh sinken und blickte den Major betroffen an. (Norden 66)

The minister clearly finds Forzinetti's opinion significant and reliable. Why, then, does he never credit it? Forzinetti was perfect for the colportage novel's critique of the fallibility of justice: when the head of the jail is not convinced of a man's guilt, how can the courts and high officials arrive at a different verdict? Here, the colportage novels pit the subjective, emotional and individual judgment of a man who has long and legitimate personal experience with military protocol and its transgressors against the government-sanctioned and authoritative judgment of the courts. Forzinetti's doubts and sympathies confirm the "upside down" political world that the colportage novels portry, their populistic indictment of inequality. These novels suggest that when the system fails to take into account the expertise and experiences of a person it has granted authority, the system has begun to function unfairly and in error. In addition, the commandant is also a figure for reader identification – his account has personal appeal precisely because it asks the reader to imagine Dreyfus's individual anguish. The novels suggest that political power and systematic political structures encourage blindness and ignorance; at the same

time, they promulgate a worldview in which individual experiences and judgments should be valued by institutions. This political strand of discourse is strengthened by the intertextual incorporation of Forzinetti's views.

By using sources that had affective power, the colportage authors underscored a world structured in a way that made miscarriages of justice possible. This setting also functioned as a foil to the heroine and hero figures in the novels, whose emotionally charged struggles, by logic of the "trivial" happy end that was expected, would be vindicated in the end. In the colportage novel's summation of the scandal, the breakdown of justice in the Dreyfus affair is no anomaly; it is a logical outcome of the corrupt networks of power the novel sets out to expose. This differed from the media reception of the case, which fairly quickly divorced itself from the personalities at the heart of the trial to focus on its political significance and to paint it as an exception, or as a matter of French domestic politics, not of relevance to the German citizen. The lack of acknowledgment of Dreyfus's human suffering in German news coverage was also part of a latently anti-Semitic and conservative discourse; more liberal papers did discuss the affair in terms of human rights, however these papers, such as the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, and the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, typically foregrounded other political concerns, seeing the affair as an opportunity to exercise nationalist critique of France and as a microcosm for viewing a larger political struggle between the French army (associated with Catholicism) and democratic, republican and socialist camps (Bianchi 89). When colportage authors ran out of real sources of emotional identification, they had

the license and the ingenuity to make up their own. Fictional added characters were often used to give the affair extra personal dimensions. The next section will focus on this.

THE ROLE OF STOCK CHARACTERS: WOMEN AND WORKERS

Most authors of colportage novels coped with the length of their form by adding fictional characters; the fates of these figures could then be spun off into side-plots and connected in circuitous ways to the major plot arcs. The storyworld of the colportage novel is rife with villains, damsels in distress, blackmailers, religious hypocrites and fearless ingénues or upright young men. The diversity and detail of these characters carry the reader into the fantasy. In the case of the Dreyfus affair novels, as in many others, these interesting and often quite important "extras" in novelizations of real events opened the narrative to the consideration of additional political questions and ideas. Here I want to focus on two prominent categories and their political significance: women and worker characters.[90] The stereotypical characters conjured up by the authors acted as a lens for political issues and for political outrage. At the same time, they were sometimes employed to blunt political frameworks or to give political issues personal roots, to blur ideology with rivalry between individuals.

Falk, for example, was deeply interested in communist syndicalism, or the idea that workers around the world should unite to reform working and living conditions. In *Auf ewig getrennt?* and *Zola und Picquart*, he introduces a supporting protagonist who is involved in a worker conspiracy, Kurt Wallberg, a German goldsmith living in Paris.

[90] Unfortunately, this means excluding some of the other possibilities (Napoleon's hidden heir and other nobility, prominent Americans and Brits, criminals and doctors, among others) that are also of political and social import.

Kurt is a worker's syndicate agent who is being watched by the Parisian police, and his concern for other workers, the integrity of families, and his tender devotion to his landlady's daughter are all used to mark him as a "good guy". Although he is first introduced as a humble worker in love with a young girl, he reveals his political career to detective Alice Terry (who is incognito at a boarder at the house Wallberg lives in) when he asks her to hide him:

> Ich werde verfolgt—die Polizei dringt in das Haus und will mich verhaften—ich bin der Agent eines politischen Geheimbunds, welcher die Arbeiter aller Länder vereinigen will, um ihr trauriges Los zu verbessern, um sie vor dem Kapital zu schützen. Ich schwöre Ihnen bei meiner Mannesehre, daß wenn Sie sich meiner annehmen, Sie Ihre Hülfe keinem Verbrecher oder keinem Unwürdigen zu teil werden lassen. Aber wenn ich jetzt von der Polizei ergriffen werde, so bin nicht nur ich verloren, sondern durch diese Papiere und Briefe, die dann in die Hände unserer Feinde fallen, würden zahllose Familienväter brodlos werden, und brave Männer müßten für ihr menschenfreundliches Wollen ins Gefängnis wandern. (127)

Alice, who specializes in unveiling villains and who has been invited to Paris by the Dreyfus family to assist in clearing Alfred Dreyfus's name, is moved by Kurt's plight and his noble thoughts about the danger his capture might put his fellows in. She protects him from the police and hides him in her wardrobe.

Later, we begin to learn more about Wallberg's political activities. Falk enhances the excitement of these activities by making them part of a cloak-and-dagger secret society. Wallberg disguises himself as a war veteran in order to visit the "Kettenbruder" stronghold in Paris, where he introduces himself as a representative of the German branch of the society (196). He explains recent events in his boarding house, including potential

danger to Dolores Legouvé, his sweetheart, who also helped protect him from the police search. The panel he reports to responds by pledging to protect her:

> "Dolores Legouvé," rief der mittelste Meister, "dieser Name möge in das Buch der Schützlinge aufgenommen werden, sie hat einem Kettenbruder Gutes erwiesen und wo sie sich auch befinden wird, werden die Kettenbrüder ihr Hülfe und Schutz leisten." (197)

As the next order of business, the panel gives him his instructions:

> "[...] Du hast Dich morgen früh nach London zu begeben, dort steht ein Streik der Dockarbeiter bevor. Du wirst Dich an demselben beteiligen, indem Du diejenigen Arbeiter, welche deutscher Abstammung sind, leitest und führst. Morgen reisest Du mit der Bahn bis Havre, wozu Du irgend eine geeignete Verkleidung wählen magst, dort liegt im Hafen ein Kohlenschiff, dessen Kapitän Dich sicher nach London bringen wird, sobald Du Dich ihm als Kettenbruder zu erkennen giebst. -- Bist Du noch mit Geld versehen?" (197)

Labor reform in Falk's imaginary world consists in a hidden international network of men who costume themselves and strive to support "unsrer großen Bewegung und unsrer erhabenen Arbeit, zur Befreiung der Geknechteten [...]" (199). Wallberg assumes a new identity and travels to Great Britain with his sweetheart to organize dockworkers, but not before his co-conspirators find a traitor in their midst—a recently-recruited French officer who, unsurprisingly, turns out to be Esterhazy, the omnipresent villain of the novel. Esterhazy is not only an opponent of Dreyfus in this novel, but is also manipulating and polluting the noble fraternity of workers to which Wallberg belongs. The narrative paints Wallberg as a hero and model for the reader, and his opposition to Esterhazy brings the corrupt society that Esterhazy is an emblem of into conflict with the interests of the worker. Although mystery and elaborate secrecy surrounds Wallberg's political activities throughout the novel, it also offers readers a compelling fantasy: suggesting that work

should not only be economically beneficial to them, but also a space for exercising rights and negotiating conditions. It suggests that a world without Esterhazys, a world in which courts are fair would also be a world in which workers receive fair wages and good conditions.

In contrast to Falk's noble worker, female protagonists and antagonists in the novels are often employed to defang the political, to make the events at the heart of the affair a matter of love or revenge. Two of the stories introduce a fictional woman whose quest for vengeance against Dreyfus gives the reader an individual to associate with the cause of the tragedy. By adding this flourish, the authors suggest that, on some level, Dreyfus does indeed deserve some kind of punishment for his personal weaknesses. In the second place, these characters provided readers with storylines about sensational, interesting and bold women. These take surprisingly different forms. In *Auf ewig getrennt?*, this role is played by Claudine Loretto, a former circus trick-rider and Dreyfus's ex-lover. Loretto and Dreyfus have a child, but he abandoned her to marry his rich wife, Hermance. This abandonment indirectly caused the death of the child. Claudine blames Dreyfus. In her grief-maddened state, she waits for a rendezvous with Dreyfus at the opening of the novel, prepared to throw acid in his face.

When he fails to make the appointment because he is too absorbed in his domestic life, Claudine sells a letter that is meant to bring about Dreyfus's ruin. The way she curses him on their child's deathbed, like so many of the early details in the novel, foreshadows his fate:

> "Dein Urteil ist gesprochen, Kapitän Dreyfus, die Verzweiflung, die Du über mich heraufbeschworen, sie wird tausendfach über Dich und Dein Weib, über Dein Kind und Deine ganze Familie kommen. – Verachtet und verpönt wird der Name Dreyfus in ganz Europa sein, in Trümmer wird Dein Glück und Dein Reichtum sinken, und in Ketten wirst Du Dein Dasein ächzend schleppen. – Ich schwöre es in die kalte Hand dieser kleinen Leiche hinein – ich drücke die starren Augen Deines Kindes zu und meine andere Hand hebt sich empor zu dem fürchterlichen Eid: Elend und Verderben über Dich und Dein ganzes Haus!" (6)

Later on in the novel, after enduring many trials including a shipwreck and a surprise inheritance, Claudine emerges as a regretful and repentant *deus ex machinae*, fighting for clemency for Dreyfus. Her strength, her anger, her grief and eventually her change of heart are all gripping and extreme. Although the narrative casts Claudine and her betrayal as the catalyst at the heart of the affair, her hard feelings set institutions (the courts, the public) into motion. Once this machinery is underway, it becomes almost impossible for her, as an individual, to have any influence over the outcome.

Der unschuldig Verurtheilte takes a slightly different tack, making Dreyfus an unimpeachable but too-German hero; his goodness, his nobility, makes him a target for jealousy. The novel opens with a dramatic scene in which Claire de Boulancy, a French noblewoman, intervenes in Esterhazy's attempt to commit suicide due to gambling debt. She convinces him to help her frame Dreyfus instead of taking his own life. She reveals that she is already aware of the fact that Esterhazy has betrayed the General Staff, and suggests that they can pin the deed on Dreyfus. In conversation, Claire reveals that she believes her former fiancé committed suicide in reaction to unfair punishment given out by Dreyfus, based on a letter she received from him.

> "[…]In diesem Briefe theilte er mir mit der Bitte um Verzeihung für den Gram, den er mir bereiten müsse, mit, wie er den strengen Verweis des Hauptmannes in

> Gegenwart seiner Untergebenen nicht hatte ertragen können. Er hätte widersprochen und, als der Hauptmann in Zorn gerathen, ihn beschimpft, ihn einen Prussien (Preußen) genannt, denn jener Hauptmann stammte aus dem uns entrissenen Elsaß. Der Hauptmann, der todtenbleich geworden wäre, hätte darauf befohlen, ihn abzuführen. Doch das gelang erst, nachdem man ihm den Degen gewaltsam entwunden hatte, den er gegen den Hauptmann gezückt."
> Sie athmete tief auf.
>
> "Dieser Hauptmann hieß – Dreyfus." (4)

In both cases, these women's fury sets the ball of the affair rolling. This takes some of the emphasis away from the novel's general indictment of society, and is clearly oriented towards titillation. However, it also creates individual actors whose emotional excesses drive them to action that is paralleled by the unjust excesses of the society and political systems depicted in the novels. By alternating the narrative focus between villainous stock characters seeking to do harm and the empowerment of these characters by social and political structures, the colportage novels attach social and political critique to familiar clichés.

The novels also introduce female characters who enter the events as sovereign and masterful agents – some on Dreyfus's side, some against him. These women are also objects of identification and of fantasy, whose entanglement in the tale draws the attention of the reader away from the political. These emotionally dangerous women are swept up in the sentiments swirling around the affair. One example appears in *Dreyfus und Zola:* Countess Constanze de Brune, a former lover of Esterhazy. Her introduction is clearly calculated to give the story more steam as it approaches its midway point. De Brune's history with Esterhazy is an unhappy one, yet one more proof of his villainy: he leaves her for dead in quicksand in a bog and subsequently inherits her villa in Paris (18).

She reappears to him in the opening number of the novel, "like a ghost." He faints from the shock, which allows her to steal important Dreyfus-related documents from him, swearing that she will undo his evil plans. His reaction to her is only the first demonstration of the general effect she has on the men in the story – once a victim of Esterhazy's chicanery and cruelty, she has now become a knowing and overwhelmingly powerful opponent. The second time she encounters Esterhazy, at the end of the first part and beginning of the second part of the novel, de Brune is dressed as a man. He fails to recognize her in her disguise, and she paralyzes him with a drugged cigarette (25). Although Esterhazy also uses disguise and hidden weapons in the anonymously-written novel, he stands no chance against de Brune – she outfoxes him at every turn. The drugged cigarette paralyzes Esterhazy so that he seems "thatsächlich zu einer Marmorfigure erstarrt, denn nur die weitgeöffneten, wildrollenden Augen verrieten, daß er ein lebendes Wesen und nicht ein Automat sei" (25). The cigarette itself, of course, is as exotic and strange as the cross-dressing de Brune:

> Diese Cigarette, etwa von der Stärke eines Bleistiftes, war aus feinstem türkischen Tabak und aus jenen giftigen Stoffen, welche nur den Orientalen bekannt sind, hergestellt.
>
> Wir hörten bereits, daß diese Cigarette dem Raucher einen wahren Hochgenuß bereitete, die dem wohltuenden Gefühl, das anfangs durch den ganzen Körper sich verbreitete, nachfolgende Wirkung war aber eine geradezu entsetzliche. (26)

Once Esterhazy is incapacitated, she has him nailed into a coffin and hauled away to an underground hideout (27) – she has laid elaborate plans for the man. Furthermore, the narrative makes it clear that she is pursuing her own goals without the direction of anyone else. As she watches the men haul away the coffin, the narrator remarks:

> Als letzterer davonrollte (geschlossener Wagen with Sarg), stand Constantin da, blickte dem Gefährt nach und rieb sich vor Vergnügen die Hände.
>
> "Das Stücklein war gut, die neue Maskerade wohlgelungen, und jetzt fort zur Erledigung der letzten, großen Aufgabe."(28)

This last, great task, however, is a matter of the heart. When her purpose is revealed, it quickly flips her narrative role.

De Brune's desire for vengeance against Esterhazy is only exceeded by her desire to possess Alfred Dreyfus's love – she has made a plan to rescue him and place the blame (correctly) on Esterhazy. But she will only spring her plan into action if Dreyfus agrees to love her (34-36). In Dreyfus's eyes, her desires mark her as a "demon", almost as bad as Esterhazy himself. When she proposes to help him escape and restore his reputation, "Dreyfus wußte nicht, was er ihr entgegnen sollte, verwirrt durch den Glutblick, den das dämonische Weib auf ihn heftete, senkte er das Auge zu boden" (34). He refuses her, protesting his loyalty to Lucie, and de Brune swears she will always love him and always be near.[91] Her position is now ambivalent, it is clear she is an extraordinary woman, moved to extremes by sentiment. She is worldly, knowledgeable and knows how to exert her power – but the intriguing thing about her in the story is that it is entirely unclear whether she will hurt or help Dreyfus and his family. Above all, she is a threatening presence in the narrative, poised to complicate the already ongoing saga. She appears in the first part of the novel's second volume, clearly introduced to add a new strand to the web of the novel's many plots. Constanze's involvement provides an exciting change

[91] The cross-dressing woman in aggressive and unwanted pursuit of a good-guy lover is a device that also appears in Eugène Sue's novel *The Mysteries of Paris.*

from the novel's analysis of press coverage and trials. The importance of the letter she steals from Esterhazy underscores the problem of evidence in the whole affair, which resurfaces again and again in the actual Dreyfus trial. Her agenda and her demonstrated self-possession make her a threat to all the actors – she clearly has the ability to crush Esterhazy or redeem Dreyfus, but her success would mean Dreyfus would have to trade freedom and honor for her controlling desire. De Brune and other characters like her in colportage novels provide are in sharp relief against the backdrop of news coverage and accounts of real events – they heighten the tension between information and fantasy that these narratives continually negotiate.

In some ways, characters like de Brune and a counterpart in Falk's *Auf ewig getrennt*, Alice Terry, American detective, seem to threaten to upend the strategies for authorization and authentication that are so prevalent in the novels. Their inclusion, however, is part of the eclecticism and vibrancy that make these serial novels appealing, despite their daunting length. Often, these dynamic, larger-than-life characters serve both to add extra sensation and to bring in extra dimensions of the real world, tangential but romantic and exciting things such as exotic technologies and foreign. With Alice Terry, for example, Falk offers his readers a heroine who is above reproach and fighting for Dreyfus with no personal motive. She also serves as a lynchpin between various subplots. She is a "weibliches Detektiv" who spies on conspirators using her status as a woman and a foreigner to deflect suspicion. She professes her loyalty to the Dreyfus family, holds her own in gunfights and willingly risks her life to rescue Alfred from Devil's Island. Mathieu Dreyfus hires Alice when he travels to London, but she quickly becomes

indispensible to him and to his family. When she meets Dreyfus's wife, Hermance in this novelization, she explains her presence:

> "Erzeigen Sie mir die Ehre, Frau Dreyfus!" sagte sie, "mich als Ihre Freundin zu betrachten. Glauben Sie mir, ich übernehme nur solche Fälle, in denen ich selbst von der Unschuld dessen, für den ich wirken und schaffen soll, vollkommen überzeugt bin, goldener Lohn vermag mich nicht zu reizen. Hier aber fühle ich, daß Gott mich berufen hat, einen unseligen Irrtum aufzuklären und einen Unschuldigen aus Kerkersnacht zum Licht empor zu führen.
>
> "Diese Gewißheit wird mir Kraft und Mut geben und sie muß auch Ihrem Herzen Ruhe und Hoffnung einflößen. Weinen Sie nicht mehr meine Freundin!" (117)

She is an unconventional heroine. She is not mercenary, but rather intelligent and principled. Beyond that, she is a globe-trotting, sharp-shooting single woman making her way on her own and satisfying her own curiosity with work as a detective. At one point, she fearlessly confronts a murderer in the boarding house she is staying at about his crimes, but is open-minded enough that she requests he tell her his life story. She tells him she believes that he is no ordinary murderer and extreme circumstances forced him to crime (294-298). She is compassionate and intrigued by the story the murderer has to tell about his family history, fraught with trials related to the movement of Polish nationalism. As an advocate for justice, she is fair, flexible and sensitive to individual experiences. Her virtues later bring her into a love affair with Mathieu Dreyfus. Like Constanze de Brune in *Dreyfus und Zola*, Alice Terry is depicted as a powerful agent with an agenda of her own. Both of these women, however, stand outside of the more explicit factual and authentic framework of the novel.

Embellishment and diegetic expansion, including these "extra" characters, served to magnify or minimize political issues by identifying them with sympathetic characters

whose archetypal role in the stories was familiar to readers. These conventions serve an important role in managing the tension between political provocation embedded in the subject matter and the demands of the serial form, which require repetition and that deferred resolutions over long stretches of narrative.

CONCLUSION

Rather than confining themselves to fictional romance, mystery and intrigue, colportage novels frequently appropriate current events, describe them in great detail, and populate them with fictional incidents and characters that sometimes muddle and sometimes sharpen their sentimental and political significance. These narrative accounts are exciting, complicated and stimulating. They have some things in common with journalistic accounts, but the affordances of fiction allow them to portray the major issues in terms of concrete, individual suffering. Their fictional license also allows them to practice self-authorization by choosing a single side of the story and consolidating a narrative account of the "facts," filling in all the gaps and inconsistencies with fictional villains, vengeful ex-lovers or conspiratorial groups. They are free to link the injustice of the Dreyfus affair to other injustices: working conditions, women's vulnerability to men, the invisibility and inadequacy of individuals in the face of governmental institutions. Here we can begin to gain a better understanding of their appeal to readers and how the textual strategies of currency, authority and authentication worked together with familiar tropes of popular-storytelling. We can also perhaps better understand why these texts were so marginal in German literary history: these novels gallop through both the

political, through the facts, molding them to be as sensational as their fictional flourishes. Glagau, in his 1870 critique of colportage literature mentioned in the introduction writes:

> Spuk und Zauber, Mord und Todtschlag dürfen in keiner Geschichte fehlen, denn das Volk hat einen Heißhunger nach allem Wunderbaren und Abenteuerlichen. Es verlangt vor Allem baare Thatsachen, wirkliche compacte Ereignisse, eine ununterbrochene rastlose Handlung, eine Fülle immer neuer Gestalten und Situationen, je toller und je unmöglicher, desto besser. Es will gar nicht zu Athem, zur Besinnung kommen, sondern fortwährend überrascht und geblendet, durch ein Labyrinth von Verwicklungen geschleppt und durch ein Feuerwerk von Knalleffecten erschreckt und betäubt werden. (55)

What Glagau misses, however, is the fact that the week-long pause between one installment of the novel and the next necessarily left time for reflection and for "coming down" from the heady reading experience. And though he notes colportage novels interest in current events, he fails to note that these current events were often as wild and improbable as fiction – where Glagau places the blame on the authors, in fact they found themselves well provided with fact stranger than fiction. What is perhaps surprising is the fact that the dazzlement and explosive, unexpected swerves were crafted from reality, that they paralleled and outdid news in their cataloging and embellishment of important world events. Colportage novels aimed for high impact and action in every page, and this is how they made the world intelligible to their readers.

In spite of their strong appeals for reform and focus on revealing the perversion of republican structures, the colportage stories remained rife with latent and active anti-Semitic and anti-French sentiment, much like contemporary German news coverage. As shown in the last chapter and in the examples above, the novels actively engaged in politicizing issues and informing their readers, developing a political platform and basis

for authority among lower-class readers, organizing a diverse readership via a heady mix of political rhetoric and sensational melodrama. Though they paralleled coverage that news also offered, they offered more, tracing a web of real and fictional characters that gave readers exciting insight into a wider world. It is unlikely that readers took everything they read as fact, but the process of weighing fact against fiction, sources against sensation, and political ideas against individual heroes and villains threw the events into a light both lurid and illuminating.

Dreyfus and his supporters appear as martyrs in the colportage narratives, and in some ways, their goodness is founded on the fact that they are naive enough to believe in the ideal of democracy. The wise reader, the novels imply, shares the basic fears and powerlessness experienced by the heroes. All the more, then, does the reader look forward and ahead to an eventual resolution of the conflicts. In mixing the fictional, sensational and emotional with the political, contemporary and world-changing, the novels ask the reader to identify with the stark contrasts of the modern world. Authors supplemented the facts coupled with racy, interesting, and intriguing turns of fate to throw the problems at the heart into starker relief. Filling the gaps with heartbroken women, downtrodden girls, unflappable heroines and mission-focused men of action allowed the author to turn abstract ideals into identifiable tropes. These novels spelled out a politics of emotion that invited outrage and indignation. Their employment of stereotypes, their detours into crime, extraneous events and exotic foreign lands were all a part of this.

Many of the individuals involved in the events of the affair chose to compare its twists and turns to those of a dime novel or a *Hintertreppenroman.* Emile Zola's open letter about the affair calls one of its main actors: "[...] the shadiest and most complex of creatures, spinning outlandish intrigues, stooping to the deceits of dime novels, complete with stolen documents, anonymous letters, meetings in deserted spots, mysterious women scurrying around at night, peddling damning evidence." Zola was a novelist, so perhaps his account might be particularly imaginative, but Germans involved in the affair made the connection too. In a statement from the State Secretary of foreign affairs, Bernhard von Bülow (1849-1929), read aloud in the Prussian Reichstag, German connection with the affair is dismissed as a French fantasy: "Die Geschichte von dem angeblich in einem Papierkorb gefundenen Brief eines mysteriösen Agenten würde sich vielleicht in einem Hintertreppenroman gut ausmachen, existiert aber natürlich nur in der Phantasie und hat in Wirklichkeit nicht stattgefunden" (Reichstagsprotokolle "Protokoll - 38th Meeting" 964). These remarks make a point that helps us understand colportage novels better – what von Bülow claims has not occurred in reality in fact did, and sensational novelizations in fact are the best milieu for rendering these events coherently.

Taking a closer look at colportage novelizations of the affair reveals that it is not merely the details (hidden spies, secret messages, forgery and betrayal) that make it an ideal subject for novelization. The larger political and moral questions the events raised are equally part of the sensation and excitement. The political background here, which saw French civil society laboring under the burdens of corruption, anti-Semitism and militarism, could be more forcefully and directly portrayed through melodramatic

elements. Doing so is the genius of colportage novels. They dwelt upon the exploitation and suffering of workers, the miseries of poverty, the dangerous dependence of rule-of-law on individuals with emotional fervor, and linked them to multiple issues: the miscarriage of justice in the Dreyfus affair, the terrible vengeance of wronged women, the unscrupulousness of wicked men. Real injustice is placed on the same level as the tumultuous misdeeds of genre stock characters – but the real injustice does not suffer for it, rather it becomes starkly intelligible and coherent to the understanding, easy to digest and discuss. The novels also traced and invented hidden webs of cause and effect, indicting the arbitrary and unfair distribution of power in the modern world. As fiction, they were far from apolitical and they were attuned with current events in a way that newspaper coverage could not approximate, examining everything through the lens of sensation. This multi-register account of events depended on the aesthetic of authentication, but also on the tried and true tropes we still encounter today in Hollywood movies and soap operas – the womanizing traitor, the abandoned lover, the corrupt official.

Chapter 5: Sensationalizing canon building: colportage adaptations of *Wilhelm Tell* and *Faust*

In the last chapter, I discussed how political complexity and the amalgamation of fact and fiction made colportage novels appealing for a broad readership. Some of these features made the novels more "mainstream" and accessible as narratives, but also allowed them to handle political issues in a unique way. In this chapter, I focus on the colportage novel's relationship to the literary mainstream: the canon. Although they flourished on the margins of literary production, colportage novels nonetheless construct, disseminate and negotiate notions of literary value. To examine how this functions, I turn to colportage novel adaptations of canonical works. Despite their "untouchable" status for nineteenth-century literary critics, colportage novelists and their texts engage with the then quite contemporary project of German literary canon building. On the one hand, colportage producers believed in reading, writing, and selling books as a force for social good. They also acknowledged and exploited the market opportunity and prestige inherent in the idea of canonical works. On the other hand, their methods of citation, derivation, and deviation trouble the fundamental concepts on which canon is based – originality, universality, and authorship, as well as fundamental principles of adaptation, such as fidelity.

The production of colportage "classics" coincides not only with the market crucible that came coupled with a rapidly changing culture of education and reading, but also with a foundation-laying, influential period in the formation of the German literary

canon. The time period this dissertation focuses on, 1871-1914, saw not only the political and economic consolidation of Germany as a nation-state, but was also a major era of cultural consolidation, a time for forging a national identity. During the high period of the colportage novel, literature as an institution was at the point of having been constructed – in school curricula, in literary histories, and in critique. Peter Uwe Hohendahl's landmark work examines this process in detail. It illuminates the consolidation and advent of the German literary canon, and discusses the role of class in canon building. It also provides me with my understanding of the canon as an institution. However, Hohendahl's focus on studying literature through criticism, literary history, and educational reform, conceptualizing each of these using Althusser's notion of ideological state apparatuses, deliberately turns away from popular literature. Hohendahl acknowledges this as an intended limit on the scope of his book, suggesting fruitful possible lines of research for researchers who want to delve into popular literature and culture:

> The concept of popular reading formation is nevertheless too unspecific for concrete historical analysis, for it describes at least two different situations: on the one hand an older folk culture, on the other hand a "mass culture" conditioned by capitalism for which Horkheimer and Adorno introduced the concept of the culture industry. Although we are relatively well informed about the older popular reading formation, we have only the basic outlines of the reading formation of the culture industry. We need to investigate in detail how they reacted to each other when they came into contact during the nineteenth century (43).

Hohendahl proposes new research based on studying the reaction between older folk culture and "mass culture." I believe, in examining the colportage novel adaptation of German works that are institutionalized in the canon, we can get a good look at attempts on the side of the very early culture industry to coopt and simulate institutions of

literature for the purpose of profit. In short, I suggest that publishers and authors at the end of the nineteenth century saw opportunity in the formation of a canon of German literature, although its basic ideals were quite alien to their product?

As we saw in last chapter's exploration of fictionalizations, novels about current events allowed readers to take in news coverage, illustrations and multi-faceted accounts of events. Similarly, in the adaptations this chapter explores, colportage authors contour and shape other works, enabling the reader to take on the position of a by-proxy critic and expert. As was the case for current event and authentication practices examined in the previous chapter, adaptation (closely linked, perhaps, to outright plagiarism) is a strategy that was widespread in the production of colportage novels.

Adaptation was not restricted to canonical works of the *Weimarer Klassik* – in fact, the two works I examine closely in this chapter, colportage versions of *Wilhelm Tell* and *Faust*, are perhaps exceptional. What becomes apparent from a quick glance at the register of Kosch's bibliography is that many of the novels were adapted from well-known historical legends such as the story of Cleopatra, Charles Perrault's (1628-1703) fairytale Bluebeard, the myth of the Flying Dutchman, Arminius (*Hermann der Cherusker*). Besides the plays of Goethe and Schiller, Kleist's *Das Käthchen von Heilbronn* was adapted by authors for two different colportage versions in 1896 and 1895 (Kosch and Nagl 161-62). *Michael Kohlhaas* was also adapted by an author for the Weichert house in 1900-01 (181). The Central European figure Rübezahl also inspired a colportage novel in 1877-78 (207), as did Wagner's 1845 opera *Tannhäuser* in 1885-86 (227). A hidden area of adaptation is content stolen from writers like Dickens, Sue and

Dumas; plotlines taken almost verbatim from these writers are to be met with in a large number of colportage novels. These works were already available in translation in German, but Instances of adaptation or appropriation can likely be found if one reads any colportage novel carefully enough. However, in the case of the two classic plays, it seems that the topics were chosen because of their status as works of art – their topic matter and its openness to sensation seem to take second place to their canonicity, based on how the colportage authors handled these prestigious sources.

Canonical works and profit were never really at odds. Formation of a canon and a selection of classics was not merely a matter of scholarship, politics, curriculum and criticism. It also was of serious importance for booksellers and publishers. The production of a canon made certain novels essential for something more and more people were beginning to have – home libraries. Thus it was that publishers celebrated "Klassikerjahr" in 1867, the year in which copyright protection ran out for authors who died before 1837 (Wittmann *Geschichte* 268). Cotta, who had enjoyed a monopoly on the works of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing and Wieland, among others, was joined by a variety of competitors, by issuing a myriad of these works for a variety of price ranges and targeted to reach many market segments. Towards the end of the efflorescence of the colportage novel, publishers like Suhrkamp and Insel, so-called *Kulturverlage* began to make their bread-and-butter by curating new entries into the canon and bringing them out in affordable paperback lines. Canon-formation, thus, has never really been at odds with profit making, despite the perceived non-monetary value of literature that is canonized. And it is interesting that the colportage novel as a phenomenon is "bookended"

chronologically by *Klassikertag* and the production of the *Kulturverlage* – although colportage novels flourished in a period when publishing houses were reaping the rewards of the established German literary canon and although colportage publishers were especially talented at innovative marketing and taking advantage of popular material, they only rarely reworked canonical works for profit.

I accept the general assumption that colportage publishers focused on quantity, not quality in their style of production – but they also needed content that would hold a reader's attention over a year's worth of installments. The canonical works I examine here, Friedrich Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* (1804) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* (1808), contained familiar and well-loved tropes (Schiller's revolutionary firebrand, Goethe's demon, callous scholar, and seduced girl). However, much like current events, these works are also very open to the patchwork and embroidery that colportage novelists practiced – and this openness came from the institutionalization of these works through literary critique and analysis. As newspapers sought to make coherent world events, the burgeoning literary institution sought to solidify, uplift and illuminate these canonical works in a number of ways. This made them fertile ground for colportage authors' work of adding details, citing sources, and developing the narratives so that they teemed with characters and action. In doing so, they produced novels that were elaborate, authenticated and multivocal in presentation. They blended tradition, criticism, encyclopedias and the author's own special conceits and interests. In a sense, they were in the business of sensationalizing canon-building, rendering it as an active or visible process for the reader.

REMAKING WILHELM TELL

The first colportage adaptation I examine in this chapter is *Wilhelm Tell: Historisch-romantische Geschichte* by Ernst Pitawall. Pitawall is one of the pseudonyms of Eugen Hermann von Dedenroth (1829-1887), an officer whose literary moonlighting brought him to the attention of military censors and prompted his departure from the service in 1858. He was a theatre critic for the Berlin daily paper *Die* Tribüne, which was in print from 1862 to 1884, and also wrote over 30 colportage novels (Kosch and Nagl 263). Published by the Berlin house of Werner Grosse in 1869 (quite early for a colportage novel), Pitawall's *Wilhelm Tell* spans 30 parts and 1,440 pages. The copy in Kosch's collection is bound in five volumes, without illustrations, in a linen binding pressed and lacquered to resemble leather. As I mentioned briefly in the introduction, I would class Pitawall among a small group of colportage writers who had "crossover" success – his novels could be found in gentlemen's libraries as well as in colporteur's sales materials. It could be this crossover cachet, or perhaps his good relationship with his publisher that allowed him to sell a unique literary adaptation.

Grosse in Berlin was Pitawall's primary publisher, although he had contacts with small publishing houses in Frankfurt, Cologne and Straussborg as well. His years of peak novel production were in between 1868 and 1875, when 25 of his 30 known colportage novels were published, six of them in 1870 alone. The majority was for Grosse's publishing house. During this time, the house favored a slightly shorter format than became standard for its colportage novels later. In Pitawall's most productive years with

the publishing house, the standard format he produced was novels in 30 parts of 1,440 pages, as with the Tell adaptation. From about 1870, many of his works for Grosse remained the same length, but were issued in 60 shorter parts.[92] Looking through the titles Pitawall produced, he clearly favored historical topics. But his works cover a broad spectrum of topics, ranging from fairly contemporary accounts of German war history and Louis Napoleon to novels about the court of Henry VIII. However, Pitawall did venture into areas that were clearly sensational and contemporary, as with the short novel *Verloren und verkauft oder Der Frauenhandel in Wiskonsin. Kriminal-Roman der Gegenwart*, published in 1873 by August Scherl in Cologne (Kosch and Nagl 238). Pitawall wrote a successful colportage novel about Mary Stuart for Grosse, which was published first in 1868, and twice in 1870, with one of these editions containing an alternate ending. One might infer that he had a special affinity for Schiller from the choice of topic, Pitawall does not touch on Schiller's 1800 tragedy about Mary Stuart at all, whereas he actively engages with Schiller in his adaptation of Wilhelm Tell. What is most evident from the catalog of Pitawall's work is the fact that he mastered the ins and outs of colportage strategies.

Pitawall was a master at self-authorization and historicization of sensational moments. In his *Maria Stuart: Historich-romantische Geschichte der Zeit und des Lebens der Königin von Schottland, Maria Stuart, dem Volke erzählt*, for example, he opens the tale powerfully with the shocking description of Margaret Roper (née More, 1505-1544)

[92] By 1890, Grosse was producing colportage novels of around 2,400 pages in length, numbering 75 parts with illustrations (Kosch 246, 117). This publishing house ramped up the length of its novels much more slowly than some of its competitors – I suspect perhaps they had a more difficult time adjusting to the new rules on colportage production that banned selling subscriptions with premiums.

kneeling before her the head of her father, Thomas More (1478-1535), which she has taken from the London Bridge following his execution:

> Margarethe kniete nieder; dies Haupt, welches sie mit Gefahr ihres Lebens bei Nacht von dem Schandpfahl auf der Londoner Brücke geraubt und mit eigener Hand einbalsamirt und mit Thränen genetzt – war das Haupt ihres Vaters, das Haupt des Kanzlers Thomas Morus, das unter dem Beile des Henkers gefallen.*) (12)

Pitawall's footnote here reads "Es ist historisch belegt, daß Margaretha Morus das Haupt ihres Vaters von der Londoner Brücke stahl und aufbewahrte" (12). Asserting the historicity of a scene like this heightens the sensation all the more by juxtaposing the impersonal and factual with the description of a woman's deeply private and rather morbid grief. This example is characteristic of some of the strategies that we will see Pitawall employ in his adaptation of Tell. As an author, he specializes in alternating between fact and drama, between narrative and metanarrative digression. In the analysis to follow, the focus will be on how Pitawall achieves an elaborate multivocal adaptation of Wilhelm Tell's story that sensationalizes Schiller and his work. Unexpectedly, it also dramatizes the act of adaptation and literary critique as well as the basic elements of the tale.

SCHILLER'S VERSE AND LITERARY ANALYSIS AS NARRATIVE DEVICE

First, Pitawall's uses Schiller's verse liberally as a means to fill pages. However, he also explicitly asks readers to measure Schiller's play against Pitawall's own narrative and against the accounts of historians and critics. Interestingly, the first 300 pages of the novel, in this case, the entire initial six parts that were meant to hook the reader, include nothing of the familiar Tell tale, but rather set up a Pitawall-originating plotline that will

be examined in detail somewhat later. Of course, Tell is present, but the first segment that prepares the reader for the beginning of the legendary story of Tell and the birth of Switzerland's democracy, occurs in a chapter in the seventh part of the novel, "Das Leben des Tell".

> Wir haben den Vorhang des großen Schweizer Drama's aufgezogen, und können die ersten Jahre, in denen die Entwickelung zur Reife gedieh, überspringen, da wir, indem wir den Leser plötzlich in die Handlung selbst hineinversetzen, leicht nachholen können, was zur Erklärung etwa nothwendig sein dürfte, und wir führen ihn in das Haus des Mannes, der der eigentliche Held unseres Drama's ist.
>
> Wir haben oben erwähnt, daß Wilhelm Tell seine Betli heimgeführt, daß nach einem Jahre glücklicher Ehe sie ihm einen Sprößling der Liebe in die Arme gelegt. Der Tell war kein Held eines Romans, kein Schwärmer, kein Abenteurer, kein Phantast, in schlichter Einfachheit floß sein Leben ruhig dahin, wie die silberklare Welle über die blumige Aue. Gesund, wie seine Natur, rein, durchsichtig und klar, wie sein Denken, war auch seine Liebe, da gab es keine sentimentalen, gekünstelten Regungen, die Betli plagte ihn nicht mit Eifersucht oder Launen, es gab keine verliebten Zänkereien, die Romandichter so gern ausbeuten, sein Leben war der ernsten Arbeit und der ruhigen Erholung geweiht [...] (Pitawall 315)

This quote in particular is interesting for how it sets up Tell paradoxically as both the actual hero of the tale, and as "kein Held eines Romans" – his life is too simple, his thinking too clear, his marriage untroubled and lacking in "sentimentale, gekünstelte Regungen" that are the greatest boon to exploitative "Romandichter". In the narrative address, this passage asserts that Pitawall is no typical novel writer, and that his story is not a novel, but rather a retelling of a true drama. Up until this point, Pitawall has spent ample time setting up a background story that is entangled with the Tell story, but separate. Now that it is time for him to begin dealing with Tell, he begins citing other texts and historians. In this particular chapter, Pitawall quotes long passages from an

essay on the Swiss *Föhn*, a notorious wind pattern in mountainous regions that makes mountaineering and travel in the Alps dangerous and which can cause wildfires to spread and snowmelt to occur very quickly. The narrative voice intervenes to underscore the essay's main point, "Großartig wild ist die Welt des Gebirges, wenn der Hauch des Frühlings über die Alpen stürmt" (319). Pitawall rounds out this patchwork chapter by describing Tell walking with his son and telling him a local legend about a dragon – this is taken from the Swiss author Jeremias Gotthelf's (1797-1854) 1846 children's novella "Der Knabe des Tell." This re-opening of the story and preparation of the reader for the Tell-heavy middle of the narrative already shows the way that Pitawall will work with Schiller: by surrounding his text with a web of citations that supplements it and positions it as a textual hub. In the later part of this chapter, I will discuss the more traditional "novel" part of the text – this is a very unique volume in how it combines a great deal of analysis and citation of a central classical text with flights of fancy that are wholly the author's own.

Schiller's verse drama is the centerpiece of the novel, in terms of its position in the lengthy text as well as in the way it is handled. The play text is liberally interspersed throughout the middle four hundred pages of the novel. The table below shows the acts and scenes printed in play format, a short synopsis of the scene, and their location in Pitawall's novel. The table shows that Pitawall changes the scene order slightly; for example, he moves a lightly abridged Act I Scene 2 ahead of Act I Scene 1. He omits just two scenes from the play, Act I Scene 3, in which the hat representing the Habsburg overlord is hung in Altdorf and many of the townspeople talk about the notion of paying

respects to the hat and complain about the imposition of feudal duties, and Act IV Scene 2, at Attinghausen's deathbed. Printing Schiller's verse takes up space. However, this is not Pitawall's only goal: in every instance, Schiller's text serves as a foil. Pitawall corrects details, narrates the action and weaves in Schiller as a recapitulation of his own narrative. He differentiates his own story frequently from the classic, but also quotes it, saying it would be remiss of him not to let Schiller's voice stand beside his own. Pitawall emphasizes the gaps between fact, fiction and legend that make up this important story; the constant questioning and simultaneous repetition of Schiller's verse makes meta-literary analysis a part of the inherent drama of the narrative.

Table 5.1: Scenes from Schiller included verbatim in Pitawall's novel

Act, Scene	Basic occurrence	Location in Pitawall
Act 1, Scene 1	Baumgartner has killed Wolfenschießen, the *Burgvogt* of Unterwalden, for violating his wife; despite föhn winds, Tell steers him on a boat to safety across the lake	393-394
Act 1, Scene 2	Gertrud Stauffacher convinces her husband to act against Habsburg tyranny	375-378
Act 1, Scene 3	Construction of the *Zwingburg* (coercion castle), Gessler's hat arrives in Altdorf, Stauffacher attempts to convince Tell to join cause against the Habsburgs	
Act 1, Scene 4	Stauffacher, Melchtal (whose father was blinded on Gessler's command) and Fürst discuss preparing an uprising	399-405
Act 2, Scene 1	Noblemen Attinghausen expresses his sympathy for the Swiss people, his nephew Rudenz is a Habsburg sympathizer	437-443
Act 2, Scene 2	Representatives meet at the moonlit Rütli meadow and found a confederacy, planning to drive out the Habsburgs (Tell does not participate)	486-504
Act 3, Scene 2	Berta von Bruneck convinces Rudenz to join the confederacy	467-472
Act 3, Scene 1	Tell at home with his family; he plans to go into Altdorf and take his son, and departs despite his wife's fears	481-482
Act 3, Scene 1		544-548
Act 3, Scene 3	Tell refuses to bow to Gessler's hat, Gessler requires him to shoot an apple from his son's head, Tell's arrest follows when he tells Gessler that his second arrow was meant for the Vogt if he hit his son	550-566

Table 5.1: continued

Act, Scene	Basic occurrence	Location in Pitawall
Act 4, Scene 1	Tell escapes during transport across the lake, meets a fisher and his son and asks for directs to a secret path	589-597
Act 4, Scene 2	Attinghausen's deathbed - his last words are "Seid einig"; Rudenz publicly joins confederacy	
Act 4, Scene 3	Tell shoots Gessler with his crossbow on the road to Kuessnacht	601-612
Act 5, Scene 1	Town gets news that Johannes Parricida has murdered his uncle, Habsburg king Albrecht; Tell urges him to go to Rome and confess his crime to the Pope	748-752
Act 5, Scenes 1, 2 and last	Rudenz frees his serfs, gets engaged to Berta von Bruneck	802-816

When introducing quotes from the play, Pitawall is by turns reverent and skeptical. Most often, the narrative voice briefly summarizes the scene, and then brings in Schiller's text – these summaries serve to pre-digest the verse of the coming scene for the reader. For example, when Pitawall introduces Act III Scene 2, he teases the reader with a short summary before citing Schiller:

> [Rudenz] nahte [Berta] und wieder sind es Schiller's Worte, die wir hersetzen, die nun folgende Scene zu schildern, in der Rudenz, begeistert von glühender Liebe und seligem Hoffen, sein Herz ausschüttete und endlich erfahren sollte, wie sehr er sich getäuscht, wenn er geglaubt, daß dieses edle Wesen die Knechtschaft des armen Hirtenvolkes billige. Die Scene der Dichtung lautet: [...] (467)

As above, Pitawall's summaries do characterization work for the play text, preparing the reader to anticipate the "glühende Liebe" in Rudenz's lines as well as Berta's "edle" spirit in her rejection of the feudal duties being imposed on the population. This functions as a kind of preparatory literary analysis, using narrative to prime the reader to look for certain traits, conflicts and values in the Schiller text. In a way, the text is teaching the

reader about the classics, with the added bonus of narration, small excerpts of verse, and all of the sources pulled into one book.

In other places where Pitawall quotes Schiller, he frames it in historical corrections, underlining the distance between literary art and history – acknowledging the tension between them, but also setting them side-by-side for evaluation. In some cases, Pitawall merely corrects a detail of the play, for example, after printing part of Act I Scene 2, in which Stauffacher's wife urges him to take action against the Habsburg overlords, Pitawall breaks in with the following intervention: "Wir bemerken hier, daß Schiller die Frau Stauffacher's Gertrud nennt, während der Historiker Johannes von Müller sie Margareth Herlobig nennt, und daß wir natürlich dem Geschichtsforscher folgen" (378). This comes after Pitawall has replaced the character name "Gertrud" with "Margareth" in the reprinting of Schiller's verse.[93] Pitawall's note that he "naturally" follows the historian's facts is one that he asserts again and again.[94]

In other moments when Pitawall weighs historical fact against Schiller's drama, it becomes clearer that the legacy of the canon is a compelling reason to include the original verse. His introduction to the reprint of Act II Scene 1 explains the strategy he is following most clearly:

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[93] Pitawall frequently explains his corrections after he has deployed them in the text. For example, it is not until much later in the story that he explains that Schiller flipped the names of Tell's two sons and renamed his wife Betli as Hedwig. In a footnote, he explains: "Wir bemerken hier, daß Schiller den ältesten Sohn Tell's der in unserer Erzählung Wilhelm genannt wird, Walter, und umgekehrt den jüngeren Wilhelm nennt. Wir sind darin mehreren Historikern gefolgt, die auch das Weib Tell's Elisabeth (Betli) und nicht, wie Schiller es thut, Hedwig nennen" (548). The haphazard and after-the-fact corrections suggest that Pitawall expected readers not to be familiar with Schiller's original – at this point in the novel, Betli has appeared in the narrative multiple times, and Pitawall has also introduced a separate character named Hedwig.

[94] Although Schiller was, by profession, a historian, Pitawall never mentions this as he alternates between history and literature.

> Unsere Erzählung schildert eine historische Periode getreu nach den Ueberlieferungen der Historiker und steht daher nicht überall im Einklang mit der Dichtung Schiller's, die aus dieser Periode ihren Stoff gegriffen, denn Schiller hat eben ein Drama gestaltet, in dem nur die Personen seiner Dichtung auftreten; wo jedoch unsere Erzählung Scenen zu schildern hat, die von dem Dichter bearbeitet sind, würden wir uns scheuen, dieselben anders als mit den eigenen Worten des unsterblichen Dichters wiederzugeben. Wir lassen daher hier die Scene aus Schiller's Tell folgen, in welcher Rudenz von Freiherrn von Attinghausen Abschied nimmt. Sie lautet: [...] (437)

In the opening sentence of the paragraph, Pitawall claims that his main intent to describe a historical period faithfully according to historians, which is why his tale sometimes deviates from Schiller's story. Here Pitawall points out specifically that Schiller's artistic work – mining material of the period for the drama – has a limited number of roles. Pitawall is invoking historical fact as something on par with literary narrative, but having a much wider angle focus, bringing more people and issues into its frame than Schiller can in his play. However, where there is overlap between what Pitawall narrates with his broad frame and Schiller with his narrow one, Pitawall cannot do otherwise than present the words of Schiller, "der unsterbliche Dichter." Pitawall asserts both the primacy of historical fact and the importance of great literature – thanks to the capaciousness of the colportage novel format, he is able to split his devotion between the two. Pointing out the doubled significance of the multiple ways to look at Tell, Pitawall invites his readers to understand the story as multi-faceted and the canonical work of Schiller as a valuable but a closely cut and finely developed sliver of the larger context.

Pitawall's solution to his struggle to respect both history and literary greatness is often to repeat parts the story multiple times and then synthesize them with a final verdict, enacting a kind of literary analysis and a weighing of versions as a drama for the

reader. This is particularly the case for the high points of the story, namely the "Apfelschuß" and Gessler's death on the road to Kussnacht. However, at other points in the story he makes it clear that he is dealing with multiple instantiations of Tell, differentiating "der Tell in der Dichtung Schiller's" from the Tell of history and the Tell of legend (481). It seems that one reason Pitawall's narrative presents Tell from so many different angles is to keep Tell a mystery at the heart of the story and maintain a distance that allow space for the narrative's forays into analysis and synthesis. The famous high point of the tale, during which Tell shoots an apple from his own son's head with a crossbow. He prepares a second bolt before he takes the shot; when Gessler asks him about the second bolt, Tell admits that he planned to aim it at Gessler if the perilous shot had happened to go awry. As Pitawall introduces the scene in which Tell shoots an apple from his son's head, he alternates between simple description of action and an imaginative guess at Tell's state of mind as he and his child pass by the Habsburg hat without paying respects:

> [...] Tell aber sah, daß die Gefahr ihm vor Allen drohe er hatte den Blick tödtlichen Hasses verstanden, er fühlte, daß Geßler ihn suche, um ihn zu demüthigen. Er stand auf und verließ mit seinem Knaben die Kirche, er konnte in dem Gotteshause ja doch nicht mehr beten.
>
> Er trat auf die Straße. Wohl mochte es in seiner Brust stürmen und toben, er mochte sorgen für Haus und Hof, Weib und Kind, denn was war sein Arm gegen des Voigtes Macht, und in diesen Gedanken versunken, sah er nicht den aufgepflanzten Hut, sonst hätte er ihn vermieden, wie er dem Voigt aus dem Wege gegangen. Er wollte keine Schuld daran tragen, wenn es auf's Aeußerste kommen sollte, nur die Nothwehr allein kann die That des verzweifelten Mannes entschuldigen und auf seinem Gewissen darf kein Vorwurf lasten, daß er Anlaß zur Strenge gegeben. Darum nehmen wir an, daß er in der Zerstreuung, in Gedanken voller Sorge versunken, den Weg vorüber genommen beim Markt, wo

> der Habsburgische Hut aufgerichtet war, doch setzen wir die schöne Schilderung Schiller's hieher, der Leser mag alsdann selber urtheilen. Sie lautet: [...] (550)

In the first paragraph Pitawall simply describes Tell's actions and feelings. However, in the next, it is all speculation, signaled by markers like "wohl" and "mochte." The narration anticipates the "Notwehr" and "That" that are to come in the Schiller scene. The introduction ends with an assumption, and invites the reader to reach her own verdict based on reading Schiller.

However, in the very next chapter, Pitawall presents several analyses and recountings of the fateful shot, perhaps to demonstrate or even coopt the process of verdict making. First, Pitawall introduces Ludwig Börne (1786-1837) and his critique of Schiller's Tell for the first time, with the following words:

> Wenn wir den Charakter Tell's anders auffassen, als Schiller dies gethan und hiermit aussprechen, daß wir dem Dichter nicht ganz folgen konnten, so mag das Urtheil des schärfsten Kritikers, den Deutschland gehabt, uns rechtfertigem vor Jedem, der uns deshalb tadeln will. Ludwig Börne schreibt über den Charakter des Schiller'schen "Wilhelm Tell" folgendes strenge Urtheil [...] (567)

In this short passage, the author and his readers are in collusion with one another, creating a different version of Tell, and Börne, the sharpest German critic, is on their side. Schiller's Tell, according to Börne, is problematic because he actually takes the potentially fatal shot at his own child; Börne writes, and Pitawall quotes him,

> War Geßlers Gebot so ungeheuer, daß es einen Vater ganz aus der Natur werfen konnte, und er nicht mehr bedachte, was er that: so hätte auch Tell, ohne Bedacht, dem Befehle nicht gehorchen, oder den Tyrannen erlegen sollen. Aber er war doch besonnen genug, wie ein Weib zu bitten, und sein *lieber Herr, lieber Herr* zu sagen, wofür der bange Mann Ohrfeigen verdient hätte. (Börne 303)

Börne questions Tell's heroism for bowing to Gessler's unreasonable punishment, and Pitawall subsequently endorses this issue, writing "So weit Börne. Wir glauben, ihm

Recht geben zu müssen und den Schiller'schen Tell, so wie der Dichter ihn gezeichnet, nicht für den Mann zu halten, der wirklich gelebt" (570). He then supports this conclusion by citing the historical account of Johannes von Müller, the legend as initially recorded in a manuscript: "Auch die Sage weiß nicht viel von der Demuth des Tell, sie berichtet nach der Chronik des Weißen Buches des Archivs von Obwalden wörtlich [...]" (571).[95] Finally, he quotes a song: "Ein altes Lied aus dem Jahre 1545 schildert die Scene wie folgt [...]" (572). After these five recapitulations of the incident, Pitawall concludes with a synthesis of them, writing:

> Ueberschauen wir hiernach nochmals die Scene, so glauben wir, daß der Tell geschossen, weil er nicht anders konnte, und daß Geßler nicht geglaubt, er werde schießen, sondern daß er die grausame Forderung nur gestellt, um den Tell und seinen Knaben zugleich verderben zu können, denn in dem Knaben sah er den Rächer des Vaters. Mit kaltem Hohne stellte er das Gebot: "du schießest den Apfel vom Kopf des Knaben oder du stirbst mit dem Knaben. Zum Rechten mit einander sind wir nicht hier." (573)

Not only does Pitawall provide a variety of accounts of the event, but he also caps them off with a revision of the multiple Tells into one historical person – simultaneously also explaining Gessler's true motivations and meanings. What Pitawall does here essentially dramatizes the practice of literary interpretation, showing the broad spectrum of possible interpretations and settling for just one. Despite the fact that he cites Schiller often and reverently, this strategy questions the authority of the classic's version and disentangles the ideas and the history that have gone into it, negotiating the web of history, critique and oral traditions. It both underscores the multivocality of Schiller's version and brings

[95] This archival manuscript is cited elsewhere in the text as well and refers to the "Weißes Buch" (the "Weisses Buch von Sarnen") a book compiled between 1470-72 by the Obwaldner scribe Hans Schriber; the second volume of this compilation contains the first known text about "Thall" (Wilhelm Tell) and his evil landvoigte "Gijssler" (Gessler).

the hybrid strategies of self-authorization used in colportage novels to bear on the canon. It presents multiple "shades of Tell," multiple possibilities, then attempts to distill what is most interesting, most believable, most correct. Rather than strive for fidelity, as most traditional adaptations do, Pitawall entices his readers by opening up gaps, providing extra information and sifting different kinds of evidence provided by different sources.

The citations of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* interspersed throughout Ernst Pitawall's adaptation of the play show that the societal and cultural position of the work also has a role in its adaptation. Tell, as a character, is treated by Pitawall almost as an institution, to be constructed through narrative, critique, and varied accounts of historians – one version, one voice is not enough for this figure. As mentioned earlier, however, Pitawall also creates his own narrative that is sometimes parallel to and sometimes intertwined with the Tell story. In the next section, I examine how Pitawall expands and embellishes the narrative world to add more sensation, more characters, more drama, and, unexpectedly, he draws in a work by Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) to add flavor to a complicated parallel plot line.

EXPANDING *WILHELM TELL* AND BORROWING COLOR FROM HEINE

The opening of the story already incorporates one of the main strands of the "extra" plot Pitawall adds to the story. In the first chapter, Pitawall focuses on three characters: Wilhelm Tell, his sweetheart Betli, and a mysterious Jewish maiden, whose name is later revealed as Lea. The focus here is on Lea, who is exotic and beautiful, and on her fish-out-of-water quality as a Jewss in the Alps. She has been attending mass at the local church and Tell painfully imagines "daß dieses zarte Wesen dem grausamsten

Martertode ausgesetzt war, wenn Jemand ahnte, daß sie als Ungläubige die Messe besucht habe" (14).[96] The narrative voice explains, "Der Jude war damals fast so gut wie vogelfrei, und selbst da, wo er den Schutzzoll erlegte, war er nicht immer gegen den fantisirten Pöbel sicher" (14). She explains her situation to Tell, that she is living alone with a servant, and that her father has told her not to circulate among the locals. Tell, in interacting with her, thinks to himself:

> Nein – sie ahnte es nicht, was sie bedrohen konnte, wenn der Judenhaß plötzlich aufloderte unter dem Pöbel, entfacht von fanatischen Priestern, sonst hätte sie es nicht gewagt, ihm Vertrauen zu schenken, sie fühlte nur den Druck der Abgeschiedenheit von allen Menschen, das Trübe der Einsamkeit, und fühlte instinctmäßig, daß sie des Schutzes guter Menschen bedürfe. (14)

He treats her almost paternally, telling her that her father is wise to tell her to keep to herself, and that he will speak to her father when he arrives and use his local influence to ensure that her family is unmolested (15). Lea, in reflecting on the encounter – she has longed for this kind of an encounter, for the opportunity to ask a Christian man, "ob es denn wahr sei, was man ihr gesagt, daß Jeder, auch der Aermste, ihr Volk verachte und Einer der Besten hatte freundlich zu ihr gesprochen, wie ein Bruder!" (15). Of course, the next person Lea encounters, a poor woodcutter who has fallen and hurt himself, also recognizes her heritage immediately. She tends his wounds, feeds him and sends him on his way with some money. He murmurs to himself

> "… 'nein,' […] 'und wenn's der Dominicaner von der Kanzel sagte, die steht nicht mit dem Bösen im Bunde, das ist ein Engel des Himmels und todtschlagen will ich mich lassen, ehe ich dulde, daß ihr ein Leid geschieht!'" (16)

[96] It is unclear why Pitawall does not use the subjunctive mood in this quote, or in the next.

This introduces the parallel narrative of Lea and her father's time in Switzerland as Pitawall's counterpoint to the conventional Tell story. This inclusion mixes sensation, stereotype and complicated messages about religious tolerance with the legend of the founding of Switzerland's ur-democracy. The first chapter opens up a thematic spectrum that is completely unrelated to the core canonical story about Tell; rather Tell is presented as a tolerant and humane man who sympathizes with Lea's position – which the reader learns about in more detail in the first parts of the novel.

The appeal of this extra story is manifold. First, Lea is a sweet and semi-foreign heroine of a domestic fantasy that unfolds against the backdrop of Tell's heroism and dry historical explication. Lea is attractive and loveable, but her destiny is fraught with obstacles due to her background, medieval prejudices, and, as becomes clear later in the narrative, her father's history, plans and megalomania. Second, it allows Pitawall to tap into historical currents that are larger than the Tell story itself. In the first few parts of the novel, Pitawall explains that Lea and her father fled a small town near Frankfurt after anti-Semitic violence and moved to Spain. Now they have come to Switzerland, where Lea's father, known sometimes as Astolf and sometimes as Rabbi Ben Jochiva, is conspiring to find and groom a scion of the Hohenstaufen dynasty for power. The back-story here is complicated. Astolf's first motivation is founded on Frederick II HRE's legacy of religious tolerance, his wars with the Papacy, and Astolf's hope that a new Hohenstaufen would protect European Jews as Frederick did. Second, he has not-so-secret visions of money and prestige that might come with helping a Hohenstaufen to a

throne.[97] Third and finally, when more about Astolf and Lea's family history is revealed, a poignant connection to the Hohenstaufen family line becomes clearer. By "resurrecting" the Hohenstaufen line, Astolf hopes to right wrongs done to his own father, whose home was burned down because he sheltered a Christian woman who was secretly married to the illegitimate son of Frederick II, Enzo of Sardinia, referred to as Enzius in the narrative, who was the last living heir (86). In this convoluted history, Pitawall transforms Rudenz, already a character in the well-known Schiller play, into Enzius's son and thus an unlooked for living member of the Hohenstaufen line. Here, Pitawall is warping the structure of the legend, but also embellishing its historical context, the struggle between the Wittelsbacher and Habsburg dynasties for control of the Holy Roman Empire. This seems to be an idea that is all Pitawall, despite his exuberant use of source material from all other points of the compass.

By making Rudenz a secret Hohenstaufen whom Astolf hopes will function as a wrench in the works, Pitawall is planting an ace-up-the-sleeve in the narrative. In Schiller's play, Ulrich von Rudenz is Attinghausen's nephew, somewhat corrupted by his time at a Habsburg court, whose love for a good Swiss woman allows his patriotism and democratic values to be awakened. But for Pitawall, Rudenz functions as a link between

[97] In particular, Frederick's handling of blood libel is especially interesting, since Pitawall's narrative later includes an account of Lea and her father coping with accusations of blood libel. "When the bodies of children alleged to have been murdered by the Jews in Fulda (1236) were brought before [Frederick], he determined that he would finally settle the question. Frederick read about the problem himself and became convinced that the Jews were innocent of the charge. Being unable to obtain a clear-cut opinion or decision from the Church authorities or nobility, he had the original idea of convening a council of apostates, who as former Jews and devout Christians should be able to give a definitive answer. Frederick subsequently published their unequivocal refutation of the blood libel and prohibited the libel's circulation throughout his domains." (Michael and Zeldes 221)

two parallel story strands – the tales of Tell and Lea. In the first third of the novel, we are introduced to Rudenz before he has spent time at court, and it is Astolf, Lea's father, who initially seeks to corrupt and control Rudenz by revealing to him the secret of his heritage. The older man discovers Rudenz in Padua selling a family heirloom, which Astolf recognizes as belonging to Enzius's wife. Astolf then reveals his knowledge of Rudenz's family background once the young man has accompanied him to Switzerland and enjoyed Lea's hospitality, pressuring him to accept guidance in his future career. Astolf and Lea's story offers the reader popular and familiar sensation, and Pitawall improbably but successfully grafts their saga onto his deconstruction and reconstruction of the Tell story.

Just as Tell's encounter with Lea sets the tenor for her role in the story, Tell also has an encounter with Astolf and Rudenz in the initial part of the novel; the pair are in danger on a misty mountain path, and Tell rescues them. Whereas Lea reveals her sweet nature during her chance meeting with Tell, her father, Astolf, shows cynical greed – this is prominent among the many clues Pitawall provides that point to Astolf's Jewishness, which has not been explicitly mentioned in the novel at that point. During the trouble they experience on the road, Astolf is hysterical and unhelpful in the crisis, threatening their Swiss guide, who is unable to continue in the fog. Of the guide, he says, "Er will, daß wir ihm den Lohn verdreifachen, oder er hat uns hierher geführt, um mit unserem Gut davon zu gehen, wenn wir erstarrt vor Frost hier eingeschlafen" (24). His obsession with money and belief that others are also solely motivated by money fits the anti-Semitic stereotypes already examined in the last chapter. After Tell has rescued the two men and

their guide, Astolf insists on paying him, and Tell refuses multiple times, expressing a specifically Alpine sense of honor:

> [...er erwiderte], daß er für Geld und Dank nicht in einen Abgrund steige, wohl aber, um eine angeschossene Gemse nicht verhungern zu lassen, es sei daher selbstverständlich, daß er dasselbe mit Freuden für einen Menschen thue. (26)

Astolf refuses to accept this reasoning, and this first meeting sets up a tension that will reappear again and again. In many other instances, Pitawall depicts Astolf attempting to transform gestures of humanity into transactions in order to foreshadow his later emergence as a manipulative villain. The contrast between the humane and hospitable Swiss and strict, calculating Astolf of course also serves to mark the Swiss countrymen as the unimpeachable "good guys" of the novel. These initial encounters with Tell set a clear tenor for the plot that straddles the events taken from the play – it will consist in a narrative of Lea's helplessness, dependence and goodness and how these qualities are endangered by Astolf's quest for vengeance and power and his tragic misunderstanding of the world's workings. As mentioned in the Dreyfus chapter as well, this was perhaps a play on the "good Jew" and "bad Jew" opposition present in Gustav Freytag's bestseller *Soll und Haben*.

As the reader learns more about the pair, Pitawall also introduces an entirely new text by a different luminary, Heinrich Heine's "Der Rabbi von Bacherach," a novelistic fragment published in three chapters in *Salon* in 1840.[98] Pitawall repurposes Heine's text

[98] The title sometimes has the alternate spelling "Der Rabbi von Bacharach," where editors have taken it upon themselves to correct Heine's spelling based on the conventional spelling of the town's name. Heine began working on a historical novel "The Rabbi of Bacherach" around 1824. He published a fragment of the novel in 1840, following the Damascus Affair, a pogrom against Jews in Damascus in February 1840 that took place after false accusations of ritual murder. Although it is referred to as a fragment, this prose

as the family history of Lea and Astolf, marking it out with just a few footnotes, although he makes use of nearly the entirety of Heine's text. "Der Rabbi von Bacherach" tells a story of a rabbi and his wife coping with an accusation of blood libel. Heine sets the tale in 1489, but Pitawall nominally adapts it to the period of the first Swiss Confederacy at the turn of the fourteenth century. When strangers join their Passover table and plant the bloody corpse of a child in their midst, the couple flees in the night and leaves their community to cope with the fallout. The harrowing grief in the aftermath of this leads to the wife's death. Pitawall molds the story to his own narrative, quoting much of it verbatim, but adapting its perspective and characters to fit his own set-up – for example, where Heine's fragment looks back on the medieval suffering of Jews, in Pitawall's story the events have to be made more immediate (90). The person recounting the story in Pitawall's text is Astolf's servant, Isaschar; he has agreed to tell Lea the story of why she and her father have spent their lives travelling. Isaschar explains,

> "Es war damals eine schwere Zeit für die Kinder Israels. Entstand eine Pest oder geschah ein Unglück, so hieß es, die Juden tragen die Schuld, sie hätten den Zorn Gottes herabgeflucht und mit Hülfe der Aussätzigen die Brunnen vergiftet. Halbnackte Männer und Weiber der Christen, die sich selber geißelten und dabei ein Marienlied sangen, zogen durch die Straßen, ermorderten die Juden und nahmen ihr Hab und Gut und zwangen sie zur Taufe mit gräßlichen Martern. [...]" (86-87)

And Heine's text reads very similarly:

> Die große Judenverfolgung begann mit den Kreuzzügen und wütete am grimmigsten um die Mitte des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts, am Ende der großen Pest, die, wie jedes andre öffentliche Unglück, durch die Juden entstanden sein sollte, indem man behauptete, sie hätten den Zorn Gottes herabgeflucht und mit Hülfe der Aussätzigen die Brunnen vergiftet. Der gereizte Pöbel, besonders die

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work likely was not small parts of a larger whole. It is also generally asserted that Heine wrote the third chapter in 1840, while the first two chapters were composed earlier (Sammons 26-27).

> Horden der Flagellanten, halbnackte Männer und Weiber, die, zur Buße sich selbst geißelnd und ein tolles Marienlied singend, die Rheingegend und das übrige Süddeutschland durchzogen, ermordeten damals viele tausend Juden oder marterten sie oder tauften sie gewaltsam. (Heine, Chapter 1)

The perspective of Heine's text looks back in a historical way, marking out a clear period, the time of the great persecution of the Jews in the mid-fourteenth century, and a clear region, southern Germany and the Rhine region. Comparing the two accounts, it is clear also that Pitawall takes care to make his version more appropriate to spoken language pruning away adjectives and inessential clauses. Pitawall does not cite Heine in these passages where he has more heavily adapted the text, however he does mention Heine in a footnote in a few places where his own expertise might not hold weight, for example in his description of Passover dinner rituals, which he marks with the note "Die Beschreibung der Passahnacht von Bacharach – vgl. Heinrich Heine: "Salon" 3. Bd." (88). He notes Heine as well when he describes the synagogue in the Frankfurt ghetto, even though the entire description of the family's entrance into the ghetto is lifted from Heine's fragment. Unlike Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, Heine's text is seamlessly subsumed into the narrative.

The Heine citation and the Lea and Astolf side plot generally are not well-integrated into the portion of the novel that focuses on retelling the birth of the Swiss Confederacy. Lea and Astolf add color and attention-grabbing mystery to the novel. But what about Heine's narrative? Pitawall was almost certainly attracted to its grisly details and dramatic moments. However, he also delves into the unfairness of the treatment of Jews – Lea, hearing the story of her family's persecution, reacts with indignation:

> Lea's Antlitz färbte die Röthe der Empörung. "Wer gab den Menschen das Recht, Andergläubige zu knechten um ihrer Religion willen?" sagte sie mit erregter Stimme, "und wie konnte ein Volk so elend sein, eine beschimpfende Tracht anzulegen und sich dafür mit schmutzigen Gelderwerb zu trösten?" (93)

However, her second question is ripe with latent anti-Semitism. Isaschar continues his story, describing how precisely this conflict caused Astolf to withdraw from his own community just as he fled in the night from Bacharach. Astolf himself is a strange mixture of anti-Semitic stereotype and advocate for religious tolerance. While Heine's text, on its own, engages with cultural hostility towards Jews and the tensions surrounding assimilation (Schreiber 32-33), the way Pitawall integrates it here turns it into a morality tale that seems to criticize Astolf for his wish to go unnoticed in society and to be fairly treated.

Pitawall's expansion of the text, although perhaps not executed in a very skillful way, nonetheless wraps the legend of Tell in some of the layers of plot that were important for colportage novels: travelling wise men, manipulative villains, good girls with bad parents, and a birth secret that transforms the foundations of the main story (without, of course, significantly altering its main events). Each colportage novel, whether an adaptation or not, offers a smorgasbord of different angles, sources and information. A freewheeling variety of topics, events and information helped make each installment of the novel seem fresh, a new look at a slowly accumulating strata of narrative.

ADAPTING *FAUST*

Pitawall's Tell adaptation appears at the beginning of the colportage novel's popular period, and as a point of contrast I want to examine an adaptation that came towards the end of the format's heyday: an adaptation of Goethe's *Faust* published around 1880 by the Berlin publishing house Werthmann. This novel does far less overt "literary" or literary historical analysis, but nonetheless has much in common with Pitawall's adaptation. This particular novel is not extant in the Kosch collection, but an intact copy is held by the Berlin Staatsbibliothek. Its author, Nathan Jacob wrote under the pseudonym N.J. Anders and was born in Berlin in 1835. After a stint working for an itinerant book binder, he began earning his living as a "freier Schriftsteller" in Berlin in 1858 (Kosch and Nagl 266). Unlike Pitawall, Anders was born to an impoverished family and was orphaned at six years of age. The difference in their backgrounds points to the diversity of authors engaged in writing these novels.

The publishing house for the adaptation, Werthmann, first began publishing in colportage format in the 1880s and only has fifteen titles represented in the Kosch bibliography. [99] Werthmann's colportage novels are relatively short for the time, consisting of between 30 and 50 parts. The copy of the novel itself has decorative initials that span three lines at the beginning of each chapter, and the text is spaced with leading, suggesting that Werthmann generally aspired to a slightly higher print quality than many

[99] None of the Werthmann titles are present in the Kosch collection; he includes them in his bibliography based on mentions in Russell's *Gesamt-Verlags-Katalog*).

other colportage novels.[100] *Faust* was sold in 45 parts and had a total length of 1,440 pages. Anders wrote at least two other colportage novels, *Der Findling oder Das ausgesetzte Grafenkind* in 1889 and *Kornblume und Veilchen oder "Unser Wilhelm" und "unser Fritz": Patriotische Erzählung* from 1888-90, both for the Grosse publishing house, where Pitawall also published much of his work. *Kornblume und Veilchen* has the distinction of being the longest single colportage novel at 200 parts and 4,808 pages. It is quite clear that Anders was able to capture an audience's attention, maintain suspense over a lengthy narrative and work over material for his readers.

Although N. J. Anders bills his colportage novel *Faust* as "frei nach Göthe," he refers in a semi-scholarly way throughout to earlier Faust texts, not venturing to hide or blur the seams between these various sources. For example, Anders explains general beliefs about magic in the Faust period, writing in his fifth chapter:

> Wir müssen, um den Leser mit den Verhältnissen der Zeit, in der unsere Gesichte spielt, vertraut zu machen, darauf verweisen, daß der Zauberglaube damals sehr stark verbreitet und namentlich unter den Wittenberger Theologen viele Anhänger hatte. (75)

He marks this introduction with footnotes referring to Heinrich Düntzer's (1813-1901) *Erläuterungen zu den Deutschen Klassiker*, volume 12 of 1882, which is devoted to *Faust*, and to Augustin Lerchheimer's (1522-1603) *Christlich bedencken und Erinnerung von Zauberey* of 1585, a treatise against the persecution of witches.[101] As in Pitawall, historical digressions are a recurring feature of the text, and Anders's careful footnotes

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100 Misnumbering of chapters in the copy of the novel I consulted perhaps speaks against this conclusion.

101 Lerchheimer is the pseudonym of Hermann Witekind or Hermann Wilken, a humanist and mathematician.

make the "frei nach Göthe" subtitle of the novel seem suspect – the adaptation is anything but "free", attempting to pin Faust's tale and its predecessors down in a concrete historical context and to make this process visible to the reader.

Anders includes a laundry list of "bedeutende Forscher," and makes references to primary texts from the late sixteenth century. When one examines how these are marshalled in the text itself, they are there to embroider and make more rich already exciting scenes. As mentioned in chapter three, footnotes were a common marker of authority and authenticity in colportage novels. Anders fills the margins of his text with asides to the reader, informing him of the fact that, for example, belief in magic was common in the sixteenth century (75), certain paragraphs are a prose gloss of Goethe's play (76-78), or that certain events come from an older Faust legend (79). He devotes a chapter to the *Auerbachs Keller* scene and marks the chapter itself as modeled on Goethe. Footnotes and idiosyncratic in-text citations and exhortations abound. This eclecticism, as we saw in Pitawall's adaptation and the other novels examined in this dissertation, is characteristic for colportage novels.

Unlike Pitawall, Anders does not maintain a distance between his narrative and Goethe's. Although he footnotes certain parts of the text as "belonging" to the Goethe drama, he never cites verse or invites the "immortal words of the greatest German poet" into the narrative the way Pitawall did. Rather, he reproduces the most famous and memorable lines from Goethe's verse drama in prose glosses. Consider, for example, the following parallel texts in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Anders glosses Goethe

Anders		Goethe	
76	"Da habe ich nun mich spät und früh gequält!" rief er, sich verzweifelnd vor die Stirn schlagend! "Die beste Zeit **meines Lebens dem Studium gewidmet**, über Folianten geschwitzt bis in die Nacht und **bin nun so klug wie vorher**!)) Was nützt mir meine **Philosophie, was Theologie und Jurisprudenz**? All mein Studiren hat mich nur dahin geführt, **zu wissen, daß ich nichts weiß**!	Nacht	Habe nun, ach! **Philosophie,** **Juristerei und Medizin,** **Und leider auch Theologie** **Durchaus studiert, mit heißem Bemühn**. Da steh ich nun, ich armer Tor! Und **bin so klug als wie zuvor**; Heiße Magister, heiße Doktor gar Und ziehe schon an die zehen Jahr Herauf, herab und quer und krumm Meine Schüler an der Nase herum – **Und sehe, daß wir nichts wissen können**!
107	"Denn, merket junger Freund, alles Wissen ist nichts. **Grau, Freund, ist alle Theorie und grün des Lebens goldner Baum**."	Studierzimmer II	**Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie** **und grün des Lebens goldner Baum**.
120	"Nun denn vernehmet," erwiderte der Gast, "ich bin ein Theil von dem, der mich gesandt und **Alles, was Ihr Sünde, Zerstörung oder Böses nennt, ist mein Element.**((" "Haha," lachte Faust, "**wie kommt es, daß Ihr Euch einen Theil nennt und ganz vor mir stehet**?" "Glaubet Ihr vielleicht," antwortete der unheimliche Gast spöttelnd, "daß ich es machen sollte wie die **Menschen, die sich wahnwitzig ein Ganzes nennen, während sie doch nur der winzigste Theil eines Getriebes sind, dem sie willenlos dienen müssen?**" [...]	Studierzimmer II	Mephistopheles: Ich bin der Geist, der stets verneint! Und das mit Recht; denn alles, was entsteht, Ist wert, daß es zugrunde geht; Drum besser wär's, daß nichts entstünde. So ist denn **alles, was ihr Sünde,** **Zerstörung, kurz, das Böse nennt,** **Mein eigentliches Element**. Faust: **Du nennst dich einen Teil, und stehst doch ganz vor mir**? Mephistopheles: Bescheidne Wahrheit sprech ich dir. Wenn **sich der Mensch, die kleine Narrenwelt** **Gewöhnlich für ein Ganzes hält** – [...]

These initial examples take us through the first few installments of the serial novel, and only up until the fourth scene of Goethe's *Faust, Studierzimmer II*. Unlike Pitawall, he

omits large parts of the original and edits those he includes fairly heavily. However, similarly, Anders nests the Goethe content within a larger frame, using other Faust legends to create a longer narrative that shows, for example, Faust's relationship to his father and an early love. Anders places his footnote references on the turns of phrase that are almost taken verbatim from Goethe's work, but uses less "famous" phrases more loosely, without marking their provenance. In terms of format, Anders is engaged in superficial and simple translation from dramatic verse to epic prose, he transforms the verse play into narrated dialog.

In doing this, Anders strips Goethe's language of its recognizable meter, cross-rhyme and end-ryhmes. He streamlines some of the inversions Goethe makes in order to achieve these poetic effects. This is perhaps most obvious in Anders's paraphrase of the Faust's famous opening monologue, where the interjections of "ach" and "nun" are so idiosyncratic and maintain the stress of the *Knittelvers*. Anders apparently liked the "nun"s, adding one to the line he marks as Goethe's, "und bin nun so klug wie vorher!" His citations, as well as the form of the paraphrasing indicate that he made some effort to maintain parts of Goethe's original language. However, a reader of Anders might nonetheless be at pains to make a direct link between his prose and Goethe's verse. This, perhaps, is the "free" recounting of the play that the novel's title promises – Anders is free to fill in all the details he can around Goethe's work and is free to convert difficult verse into quick blocks of dialogue. He is free to collect and compile and to present his findings in an attractive jumble for the reader.

Beyond Goethe's famous drama, Anders also cites extensively from older Faust books, including Widmann's 1599 *Faustbuch*, as well as nineteenth-century receptions of the Faust legends, chief among these Gustav Schwab's (1792-1850) *Das Volksbuch von Doktor Faustus*, which has appeared in myriad editions since it was first published in 1836/37 in the two-volume *Die Deutschen Volksbücher* (Fröschle 654-5). Schwab's place in German literary history is that of a "Mittler" or a "Nacherzähler" (655), some accounts place emphasis on his role as a Romantic collector similar to the Grimms (P. Stein 282). As a source to select, Schwab is interesting because his reputation in retrospect has been so firmly constructed as "prolific, but unoriginal" (Garland 786) even though his work enjoyed immense popularity throughout the nineteenth century, especially in bourgeois homes. Anders's preoccupation with Schwab, shown in his constant citation of Schwab's Faust story suggest, perhaps, that he wished to align himself with a popular, well-known and "proper" book. It could also be that he viewed Schwab as a model for himself as a colportage writer (the ideal colportage author, like Schwab, is "prolific" but his work requires that a healthy balance be maintained between familiarity and originality). Ultimately, citations create connections in order "to organize a textual frame of reference, secure discursive authority, or acquire aesthetic value" (Campe and Höcker 41). By making frequent citations, Anders is underlining the unoriginality of his story, the fact that his narrative is the product of "research" and not fantasy – securing a discursive authority and positioning his text in a realm far from the frame of reference "dime novel," although the books topics (magic, bargains with the devil, seduction of innocent girls) are thoroughly familiar to readers of cheap literature. Whatever the case, citation as a

practice shores up the aesthetic of authentication that I proposed in chapter three, and it is a much-loved strategy in colportage novels. In the case of adaptations like *Wilhelm Tell* and *Faust*, it also allows the reader access to a text immersed in and composed of other texts. These texts are open to both immersive reading and distanced reading, as the citations provide clearly demarcated (with footnotes, authors names) evidence of the heterogeneity of the story.

In the afterword to his colportage novel *Faust: Romantische Erzählung für das deutsche Volk*, N.J. Anders makes much of the difficulty of compiling a Faust novel amidst a field of Faust literature that ranges from persiflage to academic treatises (1440). Goethe's text receives a special place of its own as a gem among the other sources, and the only one which Anders claims is "equally known among scholars and laymen" (1440). Amidst this thicket of texts, Anders closes with the note that his own fantasy has also contributed to the composition of the novel, which he hopes will, at the least, achieve its purpose, which is to spread general "Verständnis" for Faust (1440). A paratext meant to serve as a closing orientation to the significance of the novel and the texts it consulted leaves the reader swamped in layers of sources. Anders's adaptation is far less explicitly analytical than Pitawall's. However, Anders also spins his thread from a haphazard and wide variety of texts in a way that creates not just a sensational story, but also an intertextual basis on which to "understand" Faust. Like Pitawall, Anders is also participating in the institutionalization of a text, but both achieve this through sensation, compilation and ingenuity.

CONCLUSION

The incompatibility between colportage novels and works of the canon is superficial. As this chapter has demonstrated, canonical works presented colportage authors with the unique opportunity to construct colportage narratives out of works that were inherently sensational, hybrid and multivocal. The fact that colportage novels engaged in this kind of adaptation shows that the German canon-building process was on its way to full establishment in all strata of society. Readers of popular fiction were receptive to novels that analyze and dismantle works the way Pitawall's adaptation does, but there was also a market for broad pastiche similar to Anders's adaptation.

The professional discourse of colportage producers and publishers was fraught with the tension between the notion of reading as edifying and uplifting and reading as an entertainment, diversion – the entertainment end of the axis tended to become distorted towards social problems like *Lesewut*, *Volksverdümmung* and other fears about the implications of broad reading audiences and broadly distributed texts. These discourses were meaningful for the businessmen and for their industry – in my introduction of the colportage novel producer in chapter two, I outlined their status as "Auchbuchhändler," as latecomers, upstarts and opportunists in what had been an oversaturated, over-regulated, over-priced and cash-poor market. Nonetheless, they bought into the timeworn notion of the publisher as "gatekeeper of Enlightenment"; however, they also understood that their behavior in the market was not that of agents of Enlightenment. Thus, they made many attempts to justify the social, literary, and market necessity of colportage and relate it to the projects of democracy, universal education, and popularizing literacy.

We see this kind of rhetoric sprinkled throughout the novels themselves, as they seek to explain historical contexts and weigh literary merits for readers. One piece that is missing here is what the readers themselves thought about colportage novels – why they were reading them. But we can infer. Readers reveled in what the colportage novels always provided: fiction laced with fact, complicated, unreliable and compelling material that fulfilled and overturned clichés, for contradiction and for sensation and for story-telling conventions. They wanted everything in their novels, they wanted stories that comfortably accommodated literature that symbolized the German nation as well as orientalized foreign villains. And this is what colportage novels offered readers: something for everyone, wrapped up into one eclectic format.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Curiosity about what seemed, initially, to be an obscure popular print format sparked research that led to this dissertation. I have found my curiosity amply rewarded; the German colportage novel is a rich, diverse and capacious format embedded within a unique culture of practices, from its production, composition and sale to its consumption. As I learned more, I began to see these novels as evidence of a precarious moment in the historical development of German popular culture; they are a landmark on the horizon between folk culture and mass culture, and I have traced this in my dissertation by closely examining their intertextuality and their aesthetic make-up. Their production combined market savvy with a unique approach to dealing with the clash of textual forms taking place in the late nineteenth century, embedding competition between different media within their texts. These insights stem from research that pursued basic questions about the role of colportage novels in German literature. First, if their content was as trivial and regressive as many critics have claimed, why were they so successful in cornering a new market of readers? Why, in short, were they so popular? And why do we read relatively little about them in the history of German literature and in literary scholarship? Second, what was their relationship to the larger literary landscape of the period?

These questions at first seemed to point to a fairly traditional cultural history approach, which was fruitful in establishing a historical picture of colportage novels. However, as I pointed out above, I began to understand these works as defined by a specific culture (of distribution, writing and reading practices) and by a textual hybridity predicated on media change that allowed the transgression of specific forms. This

emerging picture of the novels showed a need for close-reading and textual analysis, which I pursued in the latter chapters of this dissertation. Overall, these two methods of examining colportage novels are complementary, pointing out resonances between the culture of the colportage novel and their content and thoroughly demonstrating how traits of the form such as the presentation of information as entertainment, its politics of affect and sentiment, flow both through the culture of production and consumption as well as through the texts themselves.

Initially, my work required a reevaluation of the profile of colportage novels in previous scholarship, where they have never been well established as an object of study. As I pointed to in the introduction, one of the main reasons for this after the advent of general acceptance of the study of popular or ephemeral literature lay in the difficulty of finding intact copies of the novels, which often were not included in public library collections. This was much alleviated in the early 1990s following the production of a bibliography of colportage novels, based primarily on the private collection of Günter Kosch. I found that much of the more contemporary work on colportage novels focuses exclusively on the books' social role and milieu without giving much attention to their content and actual make-up. Where researchers did conduct close-reading or textual analysis, they were hampered by either the length of the format or the scarcity of the actual objects – and therefore only closely examined one title. Thus, upon discovering that a large corpus of colportage novels, Kosch's collection, was publicly available at the German Literature Archive in Marbach, I embarked on the process of surveying and closely reading a variety of colportage novels as a basis for repositioning colportage

novels within the literary ecology of the nineteenth century and gaining a new understanding of how their cultures of production and consumption articulated with their textual content.

In my research, I searched for unifying traits in a heterogeneous body of works and for textual strategies that might explain their appeal and that might also broaden an understanding of how colportage novels functioned as texts. Early on, as I became more and more aware of these texts' dependence on appropriation of material from other media, I narrowed the focus of my close textual analysis to colportage novelizations of current events and adaptations of other works. Understanding colportage novels' role as vehicles of appropriation, as compilers and filters of information is an important insight that shows the complementary relationship between their market culture (targeting new readers) and their content. As I have shown, the novels' ability to straddle genres and media is a hallmark of their culture of consumption and their composition. This was not a relationship that emerged only in examination of clear adaptations or novelizations, although it was heightened in these case studies; no matter the novels' overall subject matter, their writers exuberantly appropriated other texts and were almost hyperactive in their citations, plagiarisms, patchworks and pastiches. Looking at these purely from the standpoint of market and social conditions (including their rapid serial production), this appropriation activity could perhaps be attributable to expedience, to a need for filler. But what close reading demonstrates is that this was a logical and deliberate strategy: colportage novels succeeded because they appeared verifiable but were also sensational, half weighty and half flight-of-fancy. They were written to provide very real information,

cut with entertainment and drama. The marketing culture surrounding them hyped them as offering all things to their readers, and so they were written to be the Swiss Army knife of novels, mixing realism, Gothic horror, sentiment, reportage and true crime into a heady serial reading experience.

FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In my work, I situate colportage novels within a time of proliferation of formats, distribution methods and marketing strategies in German print culture. It was a time for opportunists and innovators, and this environment sets the stage for the advent of a popular print format that reveled in the productivity and excess of the time. The publishers of colportage novels were at the forefront of innovating new marketing strategies for new products and cornering new markets. Publishers had a great deal of control over the content and composition of the novels. The publishing environment, where it always paid to have an eye on the competition, certainly influenced the writers of colportage novels, such that they also organized themselves to compete with and to assimilate other areas of print culture, which was the focus of chapter two. This is also evident in chapters three, four and five, which show how colportage authors sought to define their narratives against other sources of information like family magazines, newspapers and other literary works. Sometimes, the colportage novel narrative simply swallows up an outside text, integrating it seamlessly. In other instances, the outside texts are presented to the reader with explicit citation; all of this contributed to a kind of narrative that offered multiple perspectives on the events at issue. The exuberant absorption and montage of texts to be found in colportage novels meant a subscriber

could view her novel as a digest of sorts, a novel produced from the most interesting parts of other texts. Their patchwork appropriation of other texts allowed them to offer not only the expected, but also historical digressions, scenes of foreign lands, and even literary criticism.

Another theme underlying this survey of the publishing environment is the intricate and close relationship between colportage novels and the newspaper and periodical print industry. At least for part of the nineteenth century, they grew alongside one another, innovating with price points and distribution methods to and seek out new buyers. One implication of this finding is that it is fruitful for literary scholarship to think about practical "sachbezogene" print and fiction together; a particular strength of this approach is that it allows scholars to conceptualize different media narratives as different ways of communicating the same subject matter. Colportage novels were part of a reading "diet" that included news reportage, but provided information in a different way. By examining the overlap and tensions between colportage and reportage in narrating events, we can get a feel for the demands the texts made on their readers and, in turn, the expectations of everyday consumers of print. Closer reading here also shows definitively that colportage novels catered to a politically aware readership with interest not only in German settings but also in events around the world, and were closely in tune with whatever was current at the time.

A third and final significant point to make about colportage novels within the larger landscape of German-language and even European literature is the fact that they were a uniquely German phenomenon. Although chapter two shows the transnational

influences and foreign models (business and narrative) that powered the development of colportage novels in Germany, chapter one and chapter two together show that they are a striking example of the interpretation, appropriation and transformation that can take place in transcultural exchange. Although the colportage novel has analogs in other countries, there is no direct match to the culture of production, distribution and consumption that sprang up around them in Germany. Although, to an extent, colportage novels were marketed and sold outside of German-speaking countries, there is little evidence that the format was ever successfully imported or reproduced outside of Germany.

As noted above, there are many reasons why colportage novels have been overlooked in scholarship: material scarcity, aesthetic issues, lack of secondary evidence about their production, among others. I worked around the problems of scarcity and lack of secondary evidence in setting up my project. However, in my reading, I discovered that the novels, of course, sometimes fulfill all the expectations one might have of trivial literature's aesthetic deficits: there are quick-paced plots that occasionally disregard realism or that reveal inconsistencies, there are sentimental descriptions rife with clichés, there are domestic heroines and villains of all stripes. The surprising thing, however, is the surfeit of detail that surrounds all of this – times, dates, and explanations of foreign terms as in-line examples and sections of text from family magazines, newspapers and encyclopedias as examples that take up almost as much space on the page as the expected clichés listed above. The way these texts worked with outside sources, current events and multiple-layered accounts of situations functioned together with their distribution method

and sales packaging to create an impression of authority and currency. I detailed a host of these strategies in chapter three. The novels worked with what I term strategies of authentication to appeal to readers who wanted to comb through text rich with details and information. The status of these texts as fictional is always opposed to these practices. However, what the fiction label promises, as does the hype and industry surrounding "real" and "authentic" information, is the thrill of both fact and fakery, the promise of true stories, but also embellishment and drama. This blending of detail-heavy erudition with sensation indicates the place of priority that cultural aspirations had in the readership, as well as to the role of colportage novels as early vehicles of what we call "infotainment" today.

The juxtaposition of authentication and current and new information with familiar clichés in this literature was also key to colportage novels' popularity because it harnessed affect to convey information. This linkage was not always systematic, but it had the function of contextualizing facts and of encouraging readers to identify emotionally with political issues and historical events. These well-worn storytelling conventions were not the product of the writer's fatigue or forced attempts to hit marketing sweet spots, but amounted to a sensational rendering of politics, current events, history and classical literature that structured them narratively and gave them a visceral impact. The purpose was to generate a world of melodrama that made sense of the big issues of the day and invited the reader to weigh evidence or speculate about outcomes himself. The affective structuring of these issues made them part of a universal vocabulary of good and evil, right and wrong. Colportage novels filtered and reassembled

the public agenda of the time, this was a unique "service" they offered as a literature, and it was key to their success in the late nineteenth century.

Finally, my dissertation addresses canonical literature and the colportage novel, where reading as a form of upward mobility and of practicing cultural aspiration comes into play along with the hallmarks of colportage novels: sensation, digression and textual appropriation. Colportage novels that adapt canonical works toe a line between reverence and disrespect, tantalizing readers with patchwork texts that tout their veracity and faithfulness while indulging in the freedom of a form that scrambles notions of authorship and authority. Close reading of colportage novel adaptations reveals how in touch they were with their time, 1871-1914 – a period when the German canon was extremely powerful in bookselling and in the culture – in terms of production, marketing and content. I show how these novels dismantled and reassembled German dramas, and how they explicitly characterized this work of reassembly to their readers as a critical enterprise with sensational hooks. In these particular novels, the sensation revolves around, for example, measuring the distances between the historical Wilhelm Tell and his likenesses in Friedrich Schiller and in other accounts of his life or in poking historical holes in the legendary tale of Faust. I think this chapter shows best how no subject matter was weighty or solemn enough to resist the imaginations of colportage novels or the affordances of sensation.

These findings contribute to a better understanding of how colportage novels worked as narratives and how they fit into the larger sphere of German literary history. Rather than focusing on the deficiencies of colportage novels, I have focused on the

characteristics that show them as an integrated part of both the marketplace and the literary culture of the time. In doing so, I have not placed priority on the major literary movements of realism and naturalism, although many colportage novels do have narrative moments that are inflected by these currents. Rather, I focus on the novels' strategies of authentication and their attempts to rewrite and assimilate the world for their readers, because these are part of a broader and deeper-running fascination with the accessibility of information that is plain to see in popular entertainments as well as in literature. If we regard realism and naturalism as "peaks" that extend above the surface, what my work traces in the novels is the submerged cultural background, the broader substrate of these critically and historically renowned movements. Further study of the novels using realism or naturalism as a specific lens would be fruitful, but is not essential to the general introduction and theory of colportage novels that I have laid out in this dissertation. My approach is also advantageous because it opens the way for new critical perspectives on colportage novels which have interdisciplinary thrust and contemporary resonance – in short, my account of these novels uncovers not only their literary relevance, but also their potential as cultural objects of interest to historians as well.

This work on colportage novels bears directly on the development of medial modernity, tracing the intertwinement of the media environment, the production and distribution of the novels with their content. The complex formation I have outlined had roots both in the opportunism of writers and publishers, but also in a deep sensitivity to cultural and literary currents shared by both producers and consumers of these texts. In this way, readers find in these novels a kind of concentrated and crystalized narrative of

the most alarming, important and interesting events of the time. These novels were aggressive in their appropriation of literary value (*Literaturgut*), distilling it into a heady cocktail of intrigue, politics, and melodramatic individual fates. The colportage novel author and the medium itself thrived on assimilation, on making the world a colportage novel and vice versa.

In part, by examining both the media environment of colportage novels and their content and modes of appeal, I lay a foundation for applying concepts based on the study and analysis of newer media to a much earlier stage. The parallels between colportage novels and historical and current serial forms, from railway literature to soap operas, are unmistakable. Colportage novels, like other serial forms over the ages, were a symptom of media change and the pioneers in new markets. A particular affordance of the serial that suits it to its role in the vanguard of transformation is its ability to produce a parallel narrative world, a hyperdiegesis, with continuity stretching over multiple parts. In chapter three, I showed how advertising material explicitly educated readers about engaging with hyperdiegesis and about viewing it as a mirror of everyday life. Transmedial elements of the novels, including the way they used illustrations, graphic supplements and texts to open up a large and wonderfully detailed, if melodramatic narrative reality, also helped deepen the experience of these novels as vehicles for a separate reality. These texts did not just produce "daydreams of revolution," as Bloch called them, rather they distilled the outside world into a concentrate and then reproduced it as an ongoing reading experience of adventure, fantasy, horror and lavish detail. This account of colportage novels thus provides cultural and media historians with a starting point for viewing serial literature,

despite its tame home in print, within the lineage of more contemporary serial forms in film, radio, television and, much more recently, the Internet.[102] Notions of media convergence, intermediality and even infotainment are still quite new, but they may open up new avenues for the study of literature as a cultural commodity in the late nineteenth century – with colportage novels and other serialized forms among early examples.

LIMITATIONS

This dissertation could have been something much larger and grander: namely, the starting point of a genealogy of modern media institutions in Germany; however, this is well beyond the scope of a dissertation and perhaps beyond the scope of an entire research career. However, what I have found and argued, has served to illuminate an interesting and much neglected branch of this genealogy. It has also raised many tricky questions and many conflicting perspectives that I have had to prune away in the process of writing. In this section, I want to highlight the gaps that seem most glaring, in hopes that these may one day be filled in by my future work or the work of other interested researchers.

One major issue that haunts this project is that of the notion "quality" or canon and the problems it continually presents for scholars of the popular. My readings of colportage novels could be seen as too optimistic or perhaps not critical enough precisely because I have sought to place this project outside the discourse of quality. However, I cannot side-step it entirely because of my efforts to position colportage novels within

[102] Online publication of serial literature is becoming mainstream – a prominent example is Amazon.com's Kindle Serials.

broader print culture, a sphere that is given contour and dimension by decades of ahistorical reflection on quality as well as the powerful dynamic of quality at the time. Flattening and smoothing this dynamic was necessary for understanding colportage novels as a part of a whole rather than the periphery of a center. It cannot be excluded entirely, and I hope that later work on these novels may be able to delve more deeply into the issues that I was unable to incorporate into this project.

Another of "unsolved mystery" that my dissertation has insufficient scope to put to rest entirely is the definition of the colportage novel itself. As already mentioned in the introduction, the body of literature that I am referring to with the term "colportage novel" is riddled with gaps and complexities. Although it is clear that these novels share important traits and a highly specific culture of reading and production, the bounds of Kosch's bibliography and collection may amount to a retroactive, artificial construct – the great complexity of print in the late nineteenth century and the strong differences between texts included in the collection (for example, the presence of "crossover" authors like Clara Mundt/Luise Mühlbach beside anonymous hacks) make it difficult to make a strong argument for the colportage novel format as a standardized, organic whole. Accepting the messy fringes attending to this class of novel and treating these novels as a standardized format was necessary for seeing these titles as part of a larger whole. I must leave full, critical examination of the vagaries of these novels' bibliographical profile for later work or for the able eyes of other bibliographers, book historians and media scholars.

AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

More than anything, my work makes clear that German colportage novels have great potential for further research and that such research could prove immensely fruitful. In my close-readings, I touched on topics related to race, nationalism, colonialism, religion, and gender. These are areas of study in their own right, and colportage novels could present excellent case studies for discussing these issues in connection with popular culture and literature. In addition, I have made the claim, just above and elsewhere in the dissertation, that these novels are a distinctly German print format, despite their incorporation of transnational influences. However, this idea needs much more research and reflection. More extensive comparative research could, for example, reveal more information about why this format was so prevalent in Germany in the 1870s, whereas similar British forms of popular literature that circulated in a comparable way, such as penny dreadfuls and bloods, enjoyed a boom much earlier. Comparative research could yield important findings that might support or invalidate my claim about the special Germanness of these novels.

Despite my focus on these novels as a nationally-bounded format, I have found evidence that the novels were circulated transnationally, especially in areas that had significant populations of German immigrants (i.e. the United States and in other urban centers in Central European countries). Research on influences and networks in publishing in Europe has also made me deeply aware of the vibrancy and importance of transnational and even trans-Atlantic connections in publishing in the late nineteenth century. Research on the attempts at exporting colportage novels to other countries and

cultures would, I think, be very valuable. As I mentioned in chapter two, empirical work on the transmission of British and French novels in continental Europe shows their hegemonic grip on the markets (Moretti 187). Understanding more about transnational flows of fiction and non-fiction print that are currently "below" the sightline of aggregate empirical or digital humanities work (primarily due to their absence in digital corpora) could shed more light on the issue.

Although my dissertation broadly sketches the synergy between the social and cultural and the text present in colportage novels, there is more detail that could be filled in here to broaden conversations about neglected reading publics and the literature they read. One particular area that needs urgent attention is the relationship between women and colportage novels, which has been intimated in my work, but is not the focus. A significant topic that would benefit from examination under a dedicated feminist theoretical lens is the notion that women of the lower classes, as consumers of literature, drove the sales of colportage novels. Another issue that could benefit from further research is the many, varied and sometimes surprising representations of women and gender more broadly in the novels. A final characteristic of the novels that I would like to see studied is the surprising outward reach of the novels in terms of their content and information – they were written to bring the world home to a German readership and many of the novels depict extensive travels or the experiences of Germans in far-off places.

The end of a colportage novel is usually abrupt. It ties together loose ends, but not all; there are elements of happiness (a reunion of family members or a marriage),

elements of retribution (the gruesome punishment of a villain), the airing of some great secret (news of an unexpected inheritance) and every so often a hint at continuation (a pregnancy, an escaped ne'er-do-well, the beginning of a journey). The happiest element of my dissertation, its strongest feature, is the work it does to introduce, reframe and understand colportage novels as a coherent object of study worthy of close attention because of the emphasis the novels place on authentication, currency and intertextuality. Its shortcomings are eclipsed by the many horizons it opens up for continuation in further study.

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