

AN ANALYSIS OF GOTTFRIED KELLER'S

NOVELLE PANKRAZ DER SCHMOLLER

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AN ANALYSIS OF GOTTFRIED KELLER'S

NOVELLE PANKRAZ DER SCHMOLLER

by

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Pankraz der Schmoller, the first "Novelle" in the first volume of Keller's Die Leute von Seldwyla (1856), was probably written in the spring of 1855, soon after the completion of the educational novel, Der grüne Heinrich. Although Die Leute von Seldwyla, containing five Novellen, was enthusiastically reviewed by Keller's contemporaries, Pankraz der Schmoller never received the same close attention as have two other Novellen from the same collection, Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe and Die drei gerechten Kammacher.

Critical opinion on the worth of Pankraz der Schmoller as a first Novelle is divided. Hermann Meyer in Der Typus des Sonderlings in der deutschen Literatur expresses his favorable opinion of Pankraz in these words: "Schon in diesem Erstling der Seldwyler Geschichten sind Erfindung and Charakter unerhört echt und ursprünglich."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hermann Meyer, Der Typus des Sonderlings in der deutschen Literatur (Amsterdam, 1943), p. 147.

Alfred Biese in Deutsche Literaturgeschichte, on the other hand, finds fault with Keller's lack of technique:

So köstlich die beiden Novellen Pankraz der Schmoller und Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster sind, Keller war in ihnen noch nicht auf der Höhe seiner Meisterschaft. Noch wirkt die Charakterzeichnung oft mühsam und gesucht, und die lehrhafte Absicht tritt in den Vordergrund.<sup>2</sup>

Fernand Baldensperger, one of Keller's foremost biographers, also finds the *Novelle* lacking in technique:

B. Auerbach était bein venu à conseiller à son ami plus de simplicité et moins de caprice dans le choix des ressorts de l'action. Alourdie aussi par des défauts et des inexpériences de forme, cette nouvelle rappelle, par là encore, le roman qui, vers la même époque, s'élaborait si péniblement et prenait si lentement tournure. L'humour ne s'y trouve pas tout à fait à l'aise; un souci assez indiscret d'y placer des réflexions personnelles, --une appréciation du théâtre de Shakespeare entre autres--y retarde mal à propos le cours de récit; et l'on ne donne vraiment qu'à demi tout aux auditrices du narrateur, assoupies sur leurs chaises.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Alfred Biese, Deutsche Literaturgeschichte, III (Munich, 1911), p. 302.

<sup>3</sup>Fernand Baldensperger, Gottfried Keller: Sa Vie et ses oeuvres (Paris, 1899), pp. 163-164.

Most literary historians mention Pankraz, der Schmoller only briefly without treating any specific aspect of it. Camillo von Klenze in From Goethe to Hauptmann, for example, expresses only the opinion that its technique reminds one of that of an old woodcut.<sup>4</sup> Friedrich Kirchner disposes of the Novelle with one general statement: "In Pankraz, dem Schmoller zeichnet der Dichter die Folgen weiblicher Erziehung."<sup>5</sup> E. K. Bennett in A History of the German Novelle finds only two distinguishing features in the story: first, that it is an exception to the rest of the Novellen comprising Die Leute von Seldwyla because its setting is not Switzerland, but India and North Africa; and second, that it contains good examples of Keller's "almost wilful delight in apparently unimportant details."<sup>6</sup> Ernst Alker, in his extensive history of German literature

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<sup>4</sup>Camillo von Klenze, From Goethe to Hauptmann (New York, 1926), p. 122.

<sup>5</sup>Friedrich Kirchner, Die Deutsche Nationalliteratur (Heidelberg, 1894), p. 607.

<sup>6</sup>E. K. Bennett, A History of the German Novelle, rev. H. M. Waidson (Cambridge, 1961), p. 184; hereafter this work will be cited as "Bennett" and the page no.

of the nineteenth century, calls Pankraz der Schmoller, in his usual lengthy manner:

noch ein abgesplittertes und geschliffenes Stück aus dem Lebensroman, eine heiter-ernste Selbstspielung, gestalteter Beitrag zu dem von Keller so geliebten Problem der Erziehung des unbändigen Ich durch Lebensmächte, Enttäuschung und reuevolle Erkenntnis.<sup>7</sup>

Keller's biographers and critics find two outstanding features in Pankraz der Schmoller. Their most striking observation is that, like Der grüne Heinrich and Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster, Pankraz der Schmoller is autobiographical. Typical of this attitude is Albert Köster's remark in his monograph Gottfried Keller: "Pankraz ist in den Grundzügen Keller selbst."<sup>8</sup> Jakob Baechtold continues the tradition when he maintains: "In Pankraz, dem Schmoller lebt ein gut Teil des jungen Gottfried Keller."<sup>9</sup> The second

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<sup>7</sup>Ernst Alker, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von Goethes Tod bis zur Gegenwart, II (Stuttgart, 1950), p. 23.

<sup>8</sup>Albert Köster, Gottfried Keller (Leipzig, 1923), p. 86. Further references to this book will be by author's name and page number.

<sup>9</sup>Jakob Baechtold, Gottfried Kellers Leben (Stuttgart, 1913), p. 133. Further references to this book will be by author's name and page number.



observation made about Pankraz der Schmoller by several critics is that its theme is *Erziehung*, for the story shows development of character and contains strong pedagogical tendencies. Through the figure of Pankraz, Keller demonstrates the pedagogical theory that a man may be cured of his faults by having to take an overdose of these faults from others. Pankraz is cured of his sulkiness only in a psychological battle with a lion, here alleged by Keller to be the sulkiest of beasts.

Although most of Keller's critics mention either the autobiographical element or the theme of "*Erziehung*" in Pankraz der Schmoller, no really detailed study of this *Novelle* exists. The best study, in Gottfried Kellers Frühe Novellen by Hans Richter,<sup>10</sup> presents a fairly complete analysis of only the structure of Pankraz der Schmoller. The purpose of this thesis, is, therefore, to analyze *Pankraz der Schmoller* with emphasis not only on structure, but also on themes and motifs, characters, and language.

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<sup>10</sup>Hans Richter, Gottfried Kellers Frühe Novellen (Berlin, 1960). Further references to this work will be by author's name and page number.

## II. STRUCTURE

In January of 1856 Friedrich Vieweg and Son of Braunschweig published Gottfried Keller's volume one of Die Leute von Seldwyla; as a subtitle Keller used not "Novellen," but "Erzählungen." In writing to his friends about the important event of his first major publication, Keller did not refer to this group of stories as "Novellen," but also as "Erzählungen" and "Charakteristiken."<sup>11</sup> Although a few critics believe Keller's term "Erzählung" is the correct designation for Pankraz der Schmoller, the term "Novelle" has often been applied to it and is, I believe, the more appropriate term.

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<sup>11</sup>In a letter to Hermann Hettner from Berlin, January, 1855, Keller wrote: "Bei Scheube, der nun in Gotha residirt, wird auf Ostern ein Band Charakteristiken von mir erscheinen, novellistischer Natur, mit dem Titel: Die Leute von Seldwyla." Ten months later, in October he wrote to his friend Ferdinand Freilingrath: "Nächstens erscheint ein Band Erzählungen von mir. . . . Dann mache ich zwei Bandchen Novellen, welche hier bei Franz Duncker erscheinen." These letters are quoted from Emil Erma-tinger, Gottfried Kellers Leben, Briefe und Tagebücher, Vol. II (Stuttgart, 1920).

W. G. Howard, who accepts Goethe's definition of the Novelle as "eine sich ereignete, unerhörte Begebenheit," is one of the few critics who refuses to designate Pankraz der Schmoller as a Novelle. In comparing Pankraz to Goethe's Novelle, he states that Keller's story has innumerable striking events, but that it is not concentrated enough to qualify as a Novelle as Goethe defined the genre. Howard states:

Eine unerhörte Begebenheit, die sich ereignet hat, vermochte nun auch Gottfried Keller darzustellen--im Pankraz fehlt sogar der Löwe nicht und über unzählige Begebenheiten hat er eingestandenermaßen berichtet; aber etwas so konzentriertes wie die Goethe'sche Novelle hat Keller niemals geschrieben.<sup>12</sup>

Howard continues in his comparison by saying that Keller needed more room for the slow development of his ideas, went in circles around the subject, looked at it from different sides, and rambled on according to his fancy and disposition.

Although Keller himself used the word "Erzählung" in referring to the various stories of Die Leute von

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<sup>12</sup>W. G. Howard, "Über die Technik der Charakterschilderung bei Gottfried Keller," The Germanic Review, IX (1934), 240.

Seldwyla, Pankraz der Schmoller fulfills some of the basic demands common to numerous definitions of the Novelle. The "Wendepunkt," which Tieck required for the Novelle,<sup>13</sup> is in Pankraz the encounter with the lion. Pankraz fulfills, furthermore, the three essential requirements which Johannes Klein<sup>14</sup> set forth in his treatment of the theory of the Novelle: one, das zentrale Geschehnis (Pankraz' encounter with the lion); two, the Leitmotif (Pankraz' sulking); and three, the Idee--which corresponds to Paul Heyse's silhouette theory, that is, whether the entire action may be stated in one sentence--<sup>15</sup> a sulky boy runs away from home, is cured of his faults by dangerous events in the cruel outside world and returns home a hero.

Pankraz best corresponds to E. K. Bennett's definition of the Novelle as "a narrative in prose, usually shorter than a novel, dealing with one particular situation, conflict

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<sup>13</sup>Ludwig Tieck, Schriften (Berlin, 1828-40), XI (1829), lxxxvi.

<sup>14</sup>Johannes Klein, Geschichte der deutschen Novelle von Goethe bis zur Gegenwart (Wiesbaden, 1954), pp. 5-7. Further references to this book will be by author's name and page number.

<sup>15</sup>Paul Heyse, Deutscher Novellenschatz (München, 1871), I, xviii-xix.

event, or aspect of a personality; it narrates something new in the sense of something unusual or striking."<sup>16</sup> The noteworthy circumstance in Pankraz is Pankraz' particular personality trait, his sulkiness. Bennett further states that the Novelle relates an event "of so much importance that the narration of the changes which it produces in his [the main character's life] seems to the poet worth recording."<sup>17</sup> The duel of wits with the lion changes Pankraz' immature, unfriendly outlook on life to one of good-humor.

Silz noted: "The Novelle often inverts the chronological order, starting with the conclusion and then going back or part-ways back to show how this final situation came to be."<sup>18</sup> Pankraz returns home a polite, friendly man: his story of how he acquired this sunny personality takes up the greater part of the Novelle.

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<sup>16</sup>Bennett, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Bennett, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup>Walter Silz, Realism and Reality. University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages of Literatures, XI (Chapel Hill, 1954), p. 7.

Keller's method of composition in Pankraz is somewhat complex. First, the author describes Pankraz' boyhood up to the time when he ran away from home at the age of fourteen. Secondly, he describes Pankraz' homecoming. Then Pankraz himself relates in the first person his adventures during the intervening fifteen years. The author twice interrupts to relate briefly the reactions of Pankraz' listeners--his mother and sister. At the end of Pankraz' story the author again picks up the thread of narration to say a few words about Pankraz' life after his return home.

Bennett calls this method of composition a "story within a story" or a "Rahmenerzählung."<sup>19</sup> Himmel also divides the story into a "Rahmen" and "Binnengeschichte" and tells about the different viewpoints toward the hero in these respective parts.<sup>20</sup> Agnes Waldhausen, in comparing Pankraz to Spiegel, das Kätzchen and Der Landvoqt von Griefensee, calls then all "unechte Rahmenerzählungen":

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<sup>19</sup>Bennett, p. 184.

<sup>20</sup>Hellmuth Himmel, Geschichte der deutschen Novelle (Bern, 1963), pp. 258-259.

Die Verschmelzung von Rahmen und Einlage ist eine so innige, daß man hier kaum von umrahmten Einzelerzählungen reden kann. Der Rahmen wird ganz unverständlich, wenn wir ihn der Einlage berauben, und die Einlage verlangt . . . nach dem Rahmen zu ihrer Abgründung und Vollen- dung.<sup>21</sup>

Hans Richter, on the other hand, states a view completely different from both Bennett and Waldhausen:

Derartige Ansichten entsprechen jedoch nicht dem wahren Sachverhalt; denn der Bericht des Pankraz besitzt durchaus keinen Eigenwert und nicht einmal relative Selbständigkeit, sondern stellt eine unmittelbare und notwendige Fortsetzung dessen dar, was Keller vorher erzählt. Da durchweg ein und derselbe Held im Mittelpunkt steht, da dieser in einem und demselben Prozess und immer unter dem Aspekt eines und desselben Problems gestaltet wird, kann von einer Rahmenerzählung keineswegs die Rede sein, wenngleich der Autor noch einen anderen Erzähler vorschickt.<sup>22</sup>

Until a better classification is suggested, however, the best designation for this Novelle remains that of "Rahmenerzählung." Although the main character of both the frame and inner story is the same, and the plot of the inner story is merely a continuation of that of the frame, the

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<sup>21</sup>Agnes Waldhausen, Die Technik der Rahmenerzählung bei Gottfried Keller (Berlin, 1911), p. 49.

<sup>22</sup>Richter, p. 45.

different narrators of the frame and inner story have different points of view. Moreover, the interruptions by the author neatly divide or "frame" Pankraz' narration into three distinct parts.

The introductory frame takes up the first quarter of the Novelle. This frame is divided into two parts which in Pankraz' life are chronologically separated by his autobiographical narration, the inner story of the Novelle. The first part of the frame is devoted to the economic situation of the boy's family, the characterization of Pankraz, his mother and his sister Estherchen, and the motivation of Pankraz' disappearance. Pankraz' family is poor. His widowed mother must spend all her time spinning in order to earn money for milk and butter with which she cooks their only sustenance, the potatoes which she herself grows. In addition to this meager harvest, she receives an annual widow's pension. This small income barely sustains her family from one year to the next; however, "indem die ärmlichen Gewänder der Kinder um jene verlängerten Wochen zu früh gänzlich schadhaft waren und der Buttertopf überall seinen Grund durchblicken ließ"



(VII, 10).<sup>23</sup> In this one phrase about the butter pot, Keller adequately sums up the pitiful financial situation of the family.

Pankraz is portrayed as a moody, lazy boy of peculiar inclinations and habits: he lingers a long time in bed every morning, passes the day drawing flying bombs and smoke clouds in a notebook, and spends every evening watching the sunset and reading in the same geography book. Keller sums up the boy's personality in one sentence: "Im übrigen war es ein eigensinniger und zum Schmollen geneigter Junge, welcher nie lachte und auf Gottes lieber Welt nichts tat oder lernte" (VII, 11). Comprised in this statement we find the first mention of Pankraz' main personality flaw, namely his sulking, his tendency to withdraw into a world of his own.

To demonstrate the habitual squabbling among the family members, Keller shows them at mealtime, usually a happy or at least harmonious event in normal family life:

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<sup>23</sup>References in parentheses following the text are to Keller, Sämtliche Werke, ed. Jonas Fränkel (Zürich, 1924-29).

Die Mutter kochte nämlich jeden Mittag einen dicken Kartoffelbrei, über welche sie eine fette Milch oder eine Brühe von schöner brauner Butter goß. Diesen Kartoffelbrei aßen sie alle zusammen aus der Schüssel mit ihren Blechlöffeln, indem jeder vor sich eine Vertiefung in das feste Kartoffelgebirge hineingrub. Das Söhnlein, welches bei aller Seltsamkeit in Eßangelegenheiten einen strengen Sinn für militärische Regelmäßigkeit beurkundete und streng darauf hielt, daß jeder nicht mehr noch weniger nahm, als was ihm zukomme, sah stets darauf, daß die Milch oder die gelbe Butter, welche am Rande der Schüssel umherfloß, gleichmäßig in die abgeteilten Gruben laufe; das Schwesterchen hingegen, welches viel harmloser war, suchte, sobald ihre Quellen versiegt waren, durch allerhand künstliche Stollen und Abzugsgraben die wohlschmeckenden Bächlein auf ihre Seite zu leiten, und wie sehr sich auch der Bruder dem widersetzte und ebenso künstliche Dämme aufbaute und überall verstopfte, wo sich ein verdächtiges Loch zeigen wollte, so wußte sie doch immer wieder eine geheime Ader des Breies zu eröffnen oder langte kurzweg in offenem Friedensbruch mit ihrem Löffel und mit lachenden Augen in des Bruders gefüllte Grube. Alsdann warf er den Löffel weg, lamentierte und schmollte, bis die gute Mutter die Schüssel zur Seite neigte und ihre eigene Brühe voll in das Labyrinth der Kanäle und Dämme ihrer Kinder strömen ließ (VII, 12-13).

The use of the phrase "militärische Regelmäßigkeit" is significant inasmuch as Pankraz later becomes a soldier and is so orderly and self-disciplined that he rapidly advances in rank.

The motivation for Pankraz' sudden decision to run away from home is motivated by such quarrelling at dinner time. Pankraz comes home late to supper one day, only to

find that not only has Estherchen eaten part of his allotted portion, but that the remainder has been allowed to grow cold. Pankraz goes immediately to his room, angry and hungry, and disappears during the night.

Keller bridges the span of time (fifteen years) between Pankraz' disappearance and return by a brief account of his mother's and sister's life during his absence. Their lives remain, for the most part, unchanged. Estherchen stays with her mother not only out of loyalty to her, but also out of curiosity; she wants to be present whenever Pankraz might return home. A third reason is that she finds no worthy prospects for marriage among the men of Seldwyla.

Pankraz' reappearance on a summer evening fifteen years later is foreshadowed by several very strange incidents. First "ein fremder Leiermann" appears in the village square one day and plays "ein sehnsüchtiges Lied von der Ferne" (VII, 17). This song, of course, makes the mother think of Pankraz, and she cries for her lost son. The same afternoon another stranger whom Keller labels a "Herumtreiber" appears in the square; he carries with him American eagle which he annoys by poking a stick through the bars of its cage. This causes Pankraz' mother to

reflect and wonder if perhaps her son could be in a foreign land beyond the sea like America. Immediately following this incident there occurs the greatest spectacle of all. Some men lead into the square a camel, monkeys, and a dancing bear. Keller reports ironically how the gruff, growling bear reminds the mother of her son. All these strange events cause Estherchen to remark prophetically, "Mir ist es nun zumute, als ob Pankraz ganz gewiß noch kommen würde, da schon so viele unerwartete Dinge geschehen und solche Kamele, Affen und Bären dagewesen sind," (VII, 19). Immediately after the mother replies, "Ich werde es nie erleben, daß er wiederkommt" (VII, 19), a French officer arrives in an elegant coach. Estherchen and the mother recognize Pankraz by the way he skips the top step when he rushes up the stairs; yet they can hardly believe that this man who now greets them so affectionately is the same person once known for his sulkiness. Pankraz, himself, remarks on his change in attitude when he replies to Estherchen's query about the lion skin he brings with him:

Dies ist . . . vor drei Monaten noch ein lebendiger Löwe gewesen, den ich getötet habe. Dieser Bursche war mein Lehrer und Bekehrer und hat mir zwölf

Stunden lang so eindringlich gepredigt, daß ich armer Kerl endlich von allem Schmollen und Bössein für immer geheilt wurde. Zum Andenken soll seine Haut nicht mehr aus meiner Hand kommen (VII, 22-23).

Pankraz' statement is very significant, for it is a hint of the forthcoming turning point of Pankraz' life and of the *Novelle*.

Pankraz' narration of his adventures to his mother and Estherchen forms the second and longest portion of the *Novelle*. Pankraz leaves out no detail in telling his story: his departure in the night; his ambitious work on farms during the day, his arrival in Hamburg, his trips to America and back to England on an English ship; and his service in the English colonial army in India. Pankraz quickly runs through this early part of his adventures, but dwells at length on Lydia, his colonel's daughter.

The author interrupts Pankraz' narrative at this point for the first time to remark that the mother and Estherchen fall asleep when Pankraz first begins to tell about Lydia (much like Barbara and Marianne who fell asleep when Wilhelm Meister talked about his childhood). This interruption marks the end of the first division of Pankraz' narration: his life to the time he fell in love with Lydia.

The second part of Pankraz' story is the slowest-moving part of the Novelle, for here he gives voice to his many and varied opinions on women, and Lydia in particular. Pankraz realized he had fallen in love when he found that on hunts his daydreams about Lydia prevented him from concentrating on shooting. He begins to read Shakespeare and mistakenly compares Lydia to noble women characters like Desdemona, Helena and Imogen. The climax of this portion of the narration comes when Lydia, a real coquette, declares her love to Pankraz the day he intends to go off on a military campaign. Pankraz, at first unbelieving, finally falls at her feet, sobs, declares his love, and for the first time in his life reveals his inner emotions to another person. The proud young man's downfall comes when he tells Lydia of his unworthiness, for she has flirted with him only in order to prove to herself that she can attract a man. Through her icy response to his declaration of love, Pankraz suddenly sees through her angelic facade, and after a fierce quarrel he leaves for the war. Some months later, when he returns from battle and sees her flirting with a group of coarse, vain officers, he decides once and for all that she is

only a flirtatious coquette and rejects her. He leaves the English army and goes to Paris, but the French mode of life only reminds him of Lydia. Thereupon, he joins the French Foreign Legion to escape from his dreams of Lydia.

Klein has erroneously called Pankraz' meeting with Lydia the "Wendepunkt" of the Novelle.<sup>24</sup> The affair with Lydia, however, does not cause the astonishing change in Pankraz' personality. He is still a "Schmoller" even after he quits the English army.

This story of Pankraz' love affair ends with the author's second brief interruption. As the author recounts, Pankraz wakes the women, who have fallen asleep during the long slow narration about Lydia (their falling asleep enables Pankraz to talk without being bothered by non-essential questions and comments), and they all go to bed. Pankraz continues his narration on the following morning by telling how, as an officer in the French Foreign Legion, he came to the turning point in his life. While he was hunting a particularly crafty and dangerous lion, Pankraz,

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<sup>24</sup>Klein, p. 264.

lost in daydreams of Lydia, left his gun by a bush while he descended into a ravine to fetch water. When he returned, the lion was standing ten paces from him, close by the weapon which he had absent-mindedly left behind. All he can do is stare for hours at the lion and try to pretend he is the braver of the two. This extreme manifestation of stubborn sulking cures him of his fault. As he expresses it:

Es war die bitterste Schmöllerei, die ich je verrichtet, und ich nahm mir vor und gelobte, wenn ich dieser Gefahr entränne, so wolle ich ungänglich und freundlich werden, nach Hause gehen und mir und andern das Leben so angenehm als möglich machen (VII, 78).

Fortunately for Pankraz, two soldiers from a search party which had been sent after him, find the two and help Pankraz kill the lion. He says of his change in attitude, "Ich lachte wie ein Narr mit den guten Soldaten, welche über die Freundlichkeit und Gesprächigkeit ihres bösen Obersten sehr verwundert und erbaut waren" (VII, 80). In the same week, Pankraz reports, he resigned from the Foreign Legion and set out for home. Subsequent events upon his arrival in Seldwyla have already been related by the author at the beginning of the Novelle. Thus, with



Pankraz' story of his encounter with the lion, his resulting "conversion" and his decision to return home, the author brings the reader up to the point in time where he first began the narrative, i.e. the present. From the reader's standpoint, those events which happened at the beginning of the Novelle (Pankraz' arrival in Seldwyla, recognition by his mother and sister and then Pankraz' own narrative) are now brought to their conclusion with Pankraz' remarks on his decision to return home: "Noch in selber Woche aber führte ich mein Gelübde aus, kam um meine Entlassung ein, und so bin ich hein" (VII, 80). The author picks up the thread again only to say: "So lautete die Geschichte von Pankrazens Leben und Bekehrung" (VII, 80), and to inform us briefly that they all "lived happily ever after."

### III. THEME AND MOTIF

The main theme in Pankraz der Schmoller is education (Erziehung), long a favorite topic in Keller's works. This theme of education, especially moral education, played a great role in Keller's own life. Being himself the child of a widowed mother, he seems to have keenly felt in later years the lack of the paternal guiding hand in his childhood. He left home at an early age and was forced to test his talents in many trades before finding the sphere which afforded him the most success and satisfaction. After years of poverty spent in studying art in Munich, he realized that his talent was not great enough for an artist's career. He again experienced disappointment when, having studied philosophy and literature in Heidelberg and Berlin from 1848 to 1855, he was still unable to write a successful play. In 1855 he returned home penniless to Zürich. The same year, no doubt after much reflection on the futile efforts of recent years, he published Der grüne Heinrich and the first volume of Die Leute von Seldwyla. Later, in 1861,

he assumed the position of chief clerk of the canton of Zürich and devoted many years of service to his country.

Keller's own experiences and his early views on education are implied in the autobiographical novel, Der grüne Heinrich, in which a young boy learns through bitter experience that the way to happiness comes not through artistic pretensions and idiosyncrasies, but through responsible citizenship. In the educational Novelle, Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster, Fritz Amrain finds the way to a successful business career through the constant supervision of his industrious mother. In the other educational Novelle, Pankraz der Schmoller, the education of Pankraz is not directed toward material success, but toward the gradual development of a mature and harmonious disposition.

The development of Pankraz consists of three stages which correspond to the three divisions of his story. In the first stage, realizing that he is a burden on his family, Pankraz seeks independence. In the beginning of the story Pankraz accepted the fact ("wie ein kleiner Indianer, der die Weiber Arbeiten läßt") that his mother and sister should support the family. His laziness and

parasitical dependence on his family become a humiliation to him when he returns home in the evening after watching the sunset to find that his sister has eaten part of his meal. Estherchen, already back at the spinning wheel, where she has worked all day, laughs at his anger as if to deny that he has any right to the food. Pankraz, furious at Estherchen's taunts, runs away during the night. Upon his return home, he tells his mother and sister that his anger was not really directed against Estherchen, but at himself for being such a parasite. His feelings of guilt were strong, but vague. Only much later did he realize the exact cause. He confesses:

Als ich damals auf so schnöde Weise entwich, war ich von einem unvertilgbaren Groll und Weh erfüllt; doch nicht gegen euch, sondern gegen mich selbst, gegen diese Gegend hier, diese unnütze Stadt, gegen meine ganze Jugend. Dies ist mir seither erst deutlich geworden. Wenn ich hauptsächlich immer des Essens wegen böse wurde und schmollte, so war der geheime Grund hiervon das nagende Gefühl, daß ich mein Essen nicht verdiente, weil ich nichts lernte und nichts tat, ja weil mich gar nichts reizte zu irgendeiner Beschäftigung und also keine Hoffnung war, daß es je anders würde; denn alles was ich andere tun sah, kam mir erbärmlich und albern vor; selbst euer ewiges Spinnen war mir unerträglich und machte mir Kopfweg, obgleich es mich Müßigen erhielt (VII, 26-27).

In his wanderings after running away from home, Pankraz worked "wie ein Bessessener" on a neighboring

farm to earn his breakfast and lunch. This is the first time in his life that he has earned his food. With this activity he overcomes one deficiency within himself, his laziness, and thereby reaches the first level of his development. Though he has taken a great step forward, his development is only partial, for he is still a sulker. Illustrative of this persistent trait is the incident on the farm where, he reports, he impulsively joined the laborers in the field, "ohne ein Wort zu sagen oder zu fragen." The onlooking farm workers could only laugh in puzzled astonishment at the strange young man's frantic activity. Having achieved his goal of earning his meals, he threw down the pitchfork, wiped his mouth, grabbed up his little bundle, and without losing a word, continued on his way.

In the second stage of his development Pankraz learns to distinguish between mere appearance (Schein) and reality (Sein). While in the service of the English colonel in India, he begins to read in the colonel's library in order to learn more about the world, which he feels has somehow passed him by without involving him in its affairs. He describes his feelings of isolation in these words:

Ich war so ein eifriger und stiller Leser, der sich eine Weisheit ausbildete, von der er nicht recht wußte, ob sie in der Welt galt oder nicht galt, wie ich bald erfahren sollte; denn obschon ich bereits vieles gesehen und erfahren, so war dies doch nur gewissermaßen strichweise, und das meiste, was es gab, lag zur Seite des Striches, den ich passiert (VII, 37).

After he has read most of the books in the colonel's library, Lydia gives him a volume of Shakespeare's plays. Pankraz becomes fascinated by the characters in Shakespeare's plays; he is particularly attracted by their sharp, crystal-clear personality and the driving force of their ambition. He fails to see that Shakespeare is deceptive because he depicts only one side of a character's personality. This penetrating interest in Shakespeare, and his own ambition to become more actively involved in life ultimately lead him to compare the noble inner strength of Shakespeare's heroines to the shallow, coquettish beauty of Lydia, the colonel's daughter. In his enthusiasm for both his new loves, Shakespeare and Lydia, he hastily begins to see parallels between this coquette and the appealing heroines of Shakespeare:

Gut! dachte ich, wenn ich diese schönen Bilder der Desdemona, der Helena, der Imogen und anderer sah, die alle aus der hohen Selbstherrlichkeit ihres

Frauentums heraus so seltsamen Käuzen nachgingen und anhängen, rückaltlos wie unschuldige Kinder, edel, stark, und treu wie Helden, unwandelbar und treu wie die Sterne des Himmels: Gut! Hier haben wir unsern Fall! Denn nichts anderes als ein solches festes, schöngebautes und gradausfahrendes Frauenfahrzeug ist diese Lydia, die ihren Anker nur einmal und dann in eine unergründliche Tiefe auswirft und wohl weiß, was sie will. Diese Meinung ging gleich einer strahlenden heißen Sonne in mir auf, und in deren Licht sah ich nun jede Bewegung und jede kleinste Handlung, jedes Wort des schönen Geschöpfes, und es dauerte nicht lange, so überbot sie in meinen Augen alles, was der gute Dichter mit seiner mächtigen Einbildungskraft erfunden, da dies lebendige Gedicht im Lichte der Sonne umherging in Fleisch und Blut, mit wirklichen Herzsschlägen und einem tatsächlichen Nacken voll goldener Locken (VII, 52-53).

Pankraz' infatuation for Lydia lasts only as long as he admires her from afar. When at last he hesitatingly declares his love, her haughty tone of voice and look of triumph convince him that to her he was only a challenge to her wiles, another conquest to be made, but certainly not a person really worthy of her love. He realizes that in spite of her beautiful and noble exterior, her soul is that of just an ordinary "Soubrette." But with this disappointing rejection comes the awareness that he has been initiated into the hardships of real life:

Mit diesen Worten wandte ich mich endlich von ihr ab und ging ohne ferner nach ihr hinzublicken, aber mit den Gefühle, daß ich das, was mir jemals

in meinem Leben von reinem Glück beschieden sein mochte, jetzt für immer hinter mir lasse und da es jetzt vorbei wäre mit meiner gläubigen Frömmigkeit in solchen Dingen (VII, 66).

With this new knowledge Pankraz has reached the second level of his education.

Yet Pankraz is still very much his old sullen self. He reports that after his release from the English army and a short sojourn in Paris, he was "wieder so einsilbig und trübselig als je." Until Pankraz is cured of his sulkiness his development is not complete.

In the third part of Pankraz' story, Pankraz is converted from a sulker to an amiable man when he sees his own personality mirrored in that of the lion. Pankraz and the lion have several traits in common. Pankraz accepted food from his mother and sister without earning his keep; and like Pankraz, this lion also leads a negative existence; he has turned predator in stealing lambs from the herdsmen's flocks. Moreover up to this point, Pankraz had always had a very reticent, indecisive nature. In the episode with Lydia, he twice balked and refused to be the first to declare his love, even when she very obviously encouraged him. In like manner, the lion in the confrontation with Pankraz, has no intention of being the first to make a



move. It stirs from sulking immobility only to growl fiercely when Pankraz begins to stir. The lion, like Pankraz, is a proud beast; however, its actions are based on fear of being physically harmed; while Pankraz, in his confrontation with Lydia, was afraid of being emotionally hurt. Previously Pankraz responded to a difficult situation by the only emotional defense he knew: sulking. The outward manifestation of this trait, total immobility, is now employed in the situation with the lion to save him from physical harm. In this confrontation, Pankraz realizes that the lion is doing exactly what he has done: sulking for fear of being hurt. He learns from this psychological battle how difficult it is to have to accommodate a sulker. In other words, Pankraz' very faults effect their own cure, a method of procedure which, according to Hauch, is "wholly in accord with the common educational theory of the discipline of natural consequences."<sup>25</sup> Pankraz recognizes that he would have caused himself and others much less grief if he had considered

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<sup>25</sup>Edward Franklin Hauch, Gottfried Keller as a Democratic Idealist (New York, 1916), p. 67. Further references to this work will be by author's name and page number.

the feelings of others. His subsequent resolution to become less self-centered is expressed in his friendly comradeship with his two rescuers and by his immediate departure for Seldwyla to rejoin his family. Only a small, ineradicable trace of his former sulkiness remains, which he shows when he refuses to repeat the story of his love to his mother and Estherchen. For all practical purposes, however, he has been cured of his sulkiness, and his education as a complete, harmonious human being is now accomplished.

Appearing in both the main episodes of Pankraz' development, the coquettish rejection by Lydia and the duel of wits with the lion, the motif of Spiel (play or game) serves to illustrate graphically the attitude of the characters and their situation. The first time Spiel is mentioned it refers to a very concrete circumstance, a chess game. In India it is one of Pankraz' more pleasant duties as the colonel's aide to play with his commander a daily game of chess, a psychologically and intellectually very challenging pastime. But this routine activity finds its parallel nearby in Pankraz' bewildering encounter with the colonel's daughter. He realizes only too late, however,

that Lydia is merely interested in toying with his emotions. Her alternating shyness and friendliness win his attention but leave him puzzled about her intentions. One day, for example, while he is working in the colonel's garden, she appears three different times, only to flirt for a short while and disappear again. The third time she comes, "mit einem feinen kunstvoll in Elfenbein gearbeiteten Geduldspiel aus China . . . und [versuchte] ganz still das Spiel zu lösen." Such a Geduldspiel is actually symbolic of Lydia's temptation of Pankraz and her attempts to lead him to a declaration of love. It is also significant in this episode that when Pankraz finally confesses his love to Lydia (and thereby loses the Geduldspiel) Keller again uses the image of a Spielzeug:

Sie lachte vor sich niedersehend und voll Zufriedenheit lauschend, die Hand unter das Kinn stützend, und sah immer mehr einem seligen Kinde gleich, dem man ein gewünschtes Spielzeug gegeben, als sie hörte und vernahm, wie nicht einer ihrer Vorzüge und Reize und nicht eines ihrer Worte bei mir verlorengegangen war (VII, 60).

In the third part of Pankraz' narration the motif of Spiel becomes most obvious. Pankraz' favorite recreation in Africa is the sport of lion-hunting. The particular

lion, which Pankraz is hunting and which almost takes his life, is a notoriously dangerous beast. The hunt seems to Pankraz to be as much of a game for the lion, his mirror image, as it is for Pankraz himself. Here the Spiel-motif again characterizes a situation:

Nie war ich behaglicher, als wenn ich so seelenallein auf den heißen Höhen herumstreifte und einem starken wilden Burschen auf der Spur war, der mich gar wohl bemerkte und ein ähnliches schmollendes Spiel trieb mit mir wie ich mit ihm (VII, 75).

Furthermore, Pankraz' whole life may be considered a game in which Pankraz plays against the world and, though apparently losing on several counts, wins happiness by overcoming his own deficiencies. Keller's juxtaposition of Spiel, a word which usually denotes happiness, and Pankraz' Schmollen, a serious, unhappy attitude, is excellent in that it shows the opposing influences which may be involved in the development of an introvert personality.

#### IV. METHODS OF CHARACTERIZATION

Since Pankraz der Schmoller is a Novelle dealing primarily with the complete personality reversal of the hero, it was very important for Keller to delineate very strongly Pankraz' sullen personality. Lydia's coquettish manner also had to be skilfully portrayed, since Pankraz' affair with her is most important for his development. The characterization of the minor figures, Pankraz' sister Estherchen and his mother, needed only to be sketched in with a few quick strokes of the pen, for their only function is to provide the motivation for Pankraz' flight into the world, by making him see his own laziness.

Like many authors, Keller modeled the characters of this Novelle after certain personal friends and members of his family. Opinions vary concerning the particular models for the various characters. Huber believes, for instance, that Betty Tendering, a friend of Keller's in Berlin, was the model for Lydia. She was attracted to Keller and hoped to flatter him by visiting his mother

in Zurich. Keller finally realized that he was being chased and took revenge by giving some of her traits to Lydia.<sup>26</sup>

Dolores Schmidt, on the other hand, offers the suggestion that Lydia's prototype was not Betty Tendering, but Johanna Kapp, daughter of the government official Hofrat Christian Kapp, whom Keller met while visiting in the home of an important personage. He was at first very much attracted to her, but his letters during 1855 and 1856 indicate that he became much more embittered about her coquettish nature than he was about Betty's.<sup>27</sup>

Many biographers see Keller's sister Regula as the model for Estherchen because of her bright, sunny nature. Baechtold, for instance, reports that a foreign visitor, soon after the story was published, remarked on leaving Keller's house, "Sehr erfreut, auch Estherchen gesehen zu haben."<sup>28</sup> Keller's mother, also, was most likely the

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<sup>26</sup>Walther Huber, Gottfried Keller und die Frauen (Bern, 1919), p. 76.

<sup>27</sup>Dolores G. Schmidt, "women in the Life and Works of Gottfried Keller" (Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Texas, 1955), p. 112.

<sup>28</sup>Baechtold, p. 133.

model for Pankraz', in that both had similar problems in trying to feed, clothe and educate their fatherless children.

There can be little doubt that Keller projected his own personality into that of Pankraz. Albert Köster, for example, notes the similarities between Keller's long stubborn silence toward his friends and Pankraz' fifteen-year absence from home. He also remarks that Keller sometimes called his diary his "Schmollwinkel."<sup>29</sup>

Once Keller had chosen a model for his figures, he portrayed them by developing one outstanding trait of their personality. Thus it is that Pankraz is "der Schmoller." Lydia is called "eine schelmische Kokette." Estherchen is the teasing little sister and the mother's main quality is devotion to her family. Three of these figures, Pankraz, his mother, and Estherchen, are introduced simply and objectively at the beginning of the story. There the personalities of Estherchen and her mother are completely presented, while Pankraz' character is scrutinized and developed throughout the narrative.

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<sup>29</sup>Köster, p. 86.

The first person whose moral qualities are described, however, is not a character who appears in the story, but Pankraz' dead father. This may seem a strange beginning, but to Keller it was logical, for he apparently believed that a person's character is to some degree hereditary. It is significant that Pankraz' father was "Keiner von den Schlimmsten" of the men of Seldwyla and that he felt a strong desire to be an "ordentlicher und fester Mann." These remarks may indicate that in Keller's eyes Pankraz is also a good boy at heart and by virtue of his hereditary make-up has the potential of becoming a useful citizen.

In his description of Pankraz' background Keller now proceeds very logically to the social situation of the family and sketches realistically their physical surroundings, the old tumbledown house near the town wall, the small potato field, and the mother's single source of income, her spinning wheel. These meager surroundings indicate that the characters are poor, hard-working people, concerned primarily with little more than just earning an honest living.



After this general description of the family, we see each child described in some particular detail. First Keller sketches briefly the physical appearance of Pankraz, whose physiognomy even is expressive of his serious disposition. He is, in Keller's words, "ein unansehnlicher Knabe von vierzehn Jahren, mit grauen Augen und ernsthaften Gesichtszügen." In like manner Keller describes the young boy's actions, and leads the reader to conclude that Pankraz must be a person of unusual moods and habits. The author relates, for example, how Pankraz in all seasons of the year wanders up to the summit of a small mountain nearby to witness each day the sad parting of the sun. The influence of nature on Pankraz establishes him thus as a romantic, moody boy:

Wenigstens kam er mit abwechselnder Stimmung von diesem Vorgang [the sunset] zurück, und wenn es recht rotes und gelbes Gewölk gegeben, welches gleich großen Schlachtheeren in Blut und Feuer gestanden und majestätisch manövriert hatte, so war er eigentlich vergnügt zu nennen (VII, 10-11).

Keller finally reduces the boy's characteristics to one formula-like statement: "Im übrigen war es ein eigensinniger und zum Schmollen geneigter Junge, welcher

nie lachte und auf Gottes lieber Welt nichts tat oder lernte" (VII, 11).

The girl Estherchen is introduced in similar manner, proceeding from external appearance: "Seine Schwester war zwölf Jahre alt und ein bildschönes Kind mit langem und dickem braunem Haar, großen braunen Augen und der allerweißesten Hautfarbe" (VII, 11). Further characteristics are presented as being in contrast to those of her brother: "Dies Mädchen war sanft und still, ließ sich vieles gefallen und murrte weit seltener als sein Bruder." Her characteristic action of singing indicates a happy personality in contrast to Pankraz' moodiness. Keller then contrasts the two children through the mother's eyes:

Doch obgleich es mit alle diesem freundlicher war als der Knabe, so gab die Mutter doch diesem scheinbar den Vorzug und begünstigte ihn in seinem Wesen, weil sie Erbarmen mit ihm hatte, da er nichts lernen und es ihm wahrscheinlicherwise einmal recht schlecht ergehen konnte, während nach ihrer Ansicht das Mädchen nicht viel brauchte und schon deshalb unterkommen würde (VII, 12).

The relationship of Pankraz and Estherchen also, when Keller presents them together, enables the reader to penetrate more deeply into their personalities. Estherchen,

for example, shows her bright, sunny nature in her relationship to Pankraz. His tyrannical behavior often makes her cry, but her basically happy disposition soon shows through her tears, as if "die Sonne ihrer Heiterkeit wieder hervorstrahlte" (VII, 13-14). On the other hand, Keller shows us her mischievous nature as she frequently attempts "mit lachenden Augen" to steal Pankraz' food.

Keller never devotes a complete paragraph to depicting the mother's qualities. Only by occasional glimpses of her thoughts and actions do we receive an impression of her personality. First of all, the author mentions her serious concern and her lonely struggle to satisfy the physical needs of her children: "Die Mutter war unzufrieden, daß die Kinder nicht entweder mehr verstand oder mehr zu essen oder beides zusammen erhielten" (VII, 10). In general, Keller presents a very favorable image of her in calling her "die gute Mutter" when she shares her own portion of food with her hungry children.

Lydia is introduced much later in the story, and we receive our first impressions of her not from the omniscient author, but from the fickle Pankraz. However, many of the same methods are used in introducing her as

were used in introducing the other characters. First of all Pankraz gives a rather long history of her parental background, for the incompatibility of her parents has certainly had a negative influence on Lydia's personality:

Es [der Kommandeur] was ein seltsamer Mann von etwa fünfzig Jahren, dessen Gattin in Irland lebte auf einem alten Turm, da sie wo möglich noch wunderlicher sein mußte als er; solange sie zusammengelebt, hatten sie sich fortwährend angeknurrt, wie zwei wilde Katzen, und sie litten beide an der fixen Idee, daß sie sich gegenseitig ineinander getäuscht hätten, obwohl niemand besser füreinander geschaffen war. Auch waren sie gesund und munter und lebten behaglich in dieser Einbildung, ohne welche keines mehr hätte die Zeit verbringen können, und wenn sie weit auseinander waren, so sorgte eines für das andere mit rührender Aufmerksamkeit. Die einzige Tochter, die sie hatten und die Lydia heißt, lebte dagegen meistens bei dem Vater and war ihm ergeben und zugetan, da der Unterschied des Geschlechts selbst zwischen Vater und Tochter diese mehr zärtliches Mitleid für den Vater empfinden ließ als für die Mutter, obgleich diese ebenso wenig oder so viel taugen mochte als jener in dem vermeintlich unglücklichen Verhältnis (VII, 34-35).

With this background it is not difficult to understand how Lydia became the spoiled child and coquette who so intrigued the young officer from Seldwyla.

Next, in describing one of her characteristic activities--playing chess with her father--Pankraz calls her playing "kindisch." Lydia's immaturity is the key

to her personality. She is childish in always wanting to have her own way. Not only does she not care to learn to play chess well, but she does not even seem interested in following the instructions of her father. Instead, she patiently lets herself be defeated. She is also childish in wanting attention, as shown in her constant flirtation with Pankraz.

It is of some note perhaps that Lydia's beauty is described in very general terms: "Es war ein wohlgestaltetes Frauentzimmer von großer Schönheit."

Pankraz also found a certain beauty in her inner qualities. One of the qualities he liked best about Lydia was the combination of independence and childlike shyness. He elaborates on this combined quality thus:

Doch war sie nicht nur eine Schönheit, sondern eine Person, die in ihrem eigenen feinen Schuhen stand und ging und sogleich den Eindruck machte, daß es für den, der sich etwa in sie verliebte, nicht leicht hinter jedem Hag einen Ersatz oder einen Trost für diese gäbe, eben weil es eine ganze und selbständige Person schien, die so nicht zum zweiten Male vorkomme. Und zwar schien diese edle Selbständigkeit gepaart mit der einfachsten Kindlichkeit und Güte des Charakters und mit jener Lauterkeit und Rückhaltlosigkeit in dieser Güte, welche, wenn sie so mit Entschiedenheit und Bestimmtheit verbunden ist, eine wahre Überlegenheit verleiht und dem, was im Grunde nur ein unbefangenes

ursprüngliches Gemütswesen ist, den Schein, einer  
weihevollen und generalen Meisterschaft gibt  
(VII, 37-38).

Lydia's personality is the only one which is not immediately apparent to the reader; for it is from Pankraz, who is taken in by her beauty, and not Keller that we learn about her. While her apparently good nature is presented by epic means, that is through Pankraz' direct description of her parentage, beauty, and personality, her true nature, that of a coquette, becomes evident only through dramatic means, in this case, through dialogue. For example, to make Pankraz feel sorry for her, she cries and pretends that he has been unkind to her. She says, "Was wollen sie denn! . . . Ist es je erhört, eine schöne und feine Dame so zu quälen und zu mißhandeln! Aus welchem barbarischen Lande kommen Sie denn? Was tragen Sie für ein Stück Holz in der Brust?" After a few more such statements have brought poor Pankraz to a confession of love, thus satisfying her ego, Lydia's tone changes completely. She then remarks with the air of a contented secure feeling:

Ich danke Ihnen sehr, mein Freund, für Ihre herzliche Zuneigung! Glauben Sie, es schmerzt mich, daß Sie um meinetwillen so lange besorgt und eingenommen waren;

aber Sie sind ein ganzer Mann und ich muß Sie achten, da Sie einer so schönen und tiefen Neigung fähig sind! (VII, 60).

With this direct, icy address, Pankraz and the reader finally realize that Lydia is not the sweet, naive girl she pretended to be, but a conceited, egotistical coquette.

Keller's most striking method of characterization is the leitmotif of Schmollen, which he first advances for the reader in the title of the Novelle. Keller never gives a precise definition of Schmollen but tells only that, in Pankraz' case, it derives from his imagining that he was unjustly treated. Keller first describes this feeling in this manner:

Es ward dies eine ordentliche und interessante Beschäftigung für ihn, bei welcher er die müßigen Seelenkräfte fleißig übte im Erfinden von hundert kleinen häuslichen Trauerspielen, die er veranlaßte und in welchen er behende und meisterlich den steten Unrechtsleider zu spielen wüßte (VII, 13).

In fact, Pankraz develops a great sense of empathy with anyone or anything he believes to be a victim of injustice. As a boy one of his favorite activities is thrashing injustice among other boys, a pastime which Keller examines in detail and which very well clarifies the boy's personality for the reader:

Doch nahm er bei dieser Lebensart merklich zu an Gesundheit und Kräften, und als er diese in seinen Gliedern anwachsen fühlte, erweiterte er seinen Wirkungskreis und strich mit einer tüchtigen Baumwurzel oder einem Besenstiel in der hand durch Feld und Wald, um zu sehen, wie er irgendwo ein tüchtiges Unrecht äüftreiben und erleiden könne. Sobald sich ein solches zur Not dargestellt und entwickelt, prügelte er unverweilt seine Widersacher auf das jämmerlichste durch, und er erwarb sich und bewies in dieser seltsamen Tätigkeit eine solche Gewandtheit, Energie und feine Taktik, sowohl im Ausspüren und Aufbringen des Feindes als im Kampfe, daß er sowohl einzelne ihm an Stärke weit überlegene Jünglinge als ganze Trupps derselben entweder besiegte oder wenigstens einen ungestraften Rückzug ausfuhrte (VII, 14).

Pankraz actually gloried in the feeling of being unjustly treated. This martyrdom may have accounted for his decision not to stay in America, a country he describes as a land of freedom and justice:

In Neuyork hatte ich zwar den Fuß an das Land gesetzt und auf einige Stunden dies amerikanische Leben besehen, welches mir eigentlich nun recht hätte zusagen müssen, da hier jeder tat, was er wollte, und sich gänzlich nach Bedürfnis und Laune rührte, von einer Beschäftigung zur andern abspringend, wie es ihm eben besser schien, ohne sich irgend einer Arbeit zu schämen oder die eine für edler zu halten als die andere (VII, 31-32).

In such a country, he senses that he probably would suffer very little injustice, and consequently would have no reason to sulk.



The beginnings of Pankraz' sulkiness are to be found in his youth. He does no work all day long, and his mother never tries to cure him of his idle habits, but actually humors his tyrannical attitude. Pankraz' sour disposition, therefore, actually is the result of an overly developed sense of pride, intensified by feminine surroundings. Pankraz actually is lacking in confidence, a weakness we can see in his refusal to take the first step toward making friends with other people. This paradoxical combination of pride and lack of confidence leads him to display "eine sehr ausgebildete und künstliche Art zu Schmollen, mit welcher er seine Mutter, seine Schwester und sich selbst quälte" (VII, 13).

One of the main characteristics of Schmollen seems to be withdrawal either physically or mentally, accompanied by silence and hostile behavior. Pankraz mentions his terse nature several times. Ironically this very fault which prevents a normal relationship with others helps him in his military career. When he is a mere recruit, he realizes his advantage as he says: "Und nun kam mir mein Schmollwesen sehr gut zu statten, indem es mir eine vortreffliche lautlose Pünktlichkeit und Aufmerksamkeit

erleichterte und es mir fortwährend möglich machte mir in keiner Weise etwas zu vergeben" (VII, 33). In India Pankraz says that he was relatively happy and no longer so sullen:

Ich war Soldat, Verwaltungsmann, Gartner, Jäger, Hausfreund und Zeitvertreiber, und zwar ein ganz sonderbarer, da ich nie ein Wort sprach; denn obgleich ich jetzt nicht mehr schmolte und leidlich zufrieden war, so hatte ich mir das Schweigen doch so angewohnt, daß meine Zunge durch nichts zu bewegen war als etwa durch ein Kommandowort oder einen Fluch gegen unordentliche Soldaten (VII, 36).

His Schweigen indicates that he still has the sulking habit, and he remains, therefore, a sulker, although he no longer has a good reason for his sullen disposition. Even though he is happy when he is near Lydia, he sulks in her presence:

Auch war mir das Schweigen, besonders gegenüber den Weibern, so zur anderen Natur geworden durch das langjährige Kopfhängen, daß ich beim besten Willen jetzt nicht hätte eine Ausnahme machen können, auch wenn es sich geschickt hätte (VII, 42).

In the confrontation of the lion, Schmollen finds its most extreme expression, complete immobility. Pankraz himself states, "Es war die bitterste Schmollerei, die ich je verrichtet," because he must stand motionless facing the

lion for twelve hours. But as often employed in the treatment of excessive habits, it seems to have been the overdose necessary to cure him.

Pankraz is also characterized by contrast with the ordinary Seldwylers, whose characteristics Keller had portrayed in the introduction to the collection Die Leute von Seldwyla. The usual young men of Seldwyla prosper from age twenty to thirty-five or thirty-six and then begin to fail in their undertakings. Pankraz, however, is no ordinary Seldwyler, for he returns ready for life at the age when the typical Seldwyler has spent himself. The townspeople take note of this peculiar circumstance upon Pankraz' homecoming, but fail to realize that his sulking, an apparent defect, was actually advantageous in getting him through the dangerous Glanzalter, for it preserved his existence "wie der scharfe Essig ein Stück Schöpsenfleisch." Keller says of their bewilderment:

Dies war nun ein höchst verwickelter Fall für die in ihren Vergnügungslokalen versammelten Seldwylers, sowohl für die Jungen als wie für die Alten und sie kratzten sich verduzt hinter den Ohren. Denn dies war gänzlich wider die Ordnung und wider den Strich zu Seldwyl, daß da einer wie vom Himmel geschneit als ein gemachter Mann und General herkommen sollte gerade in dem Alter, wo man zu Seldwyl sonst fertig war (VII, 24-25).

In this respect sulking probably put Pankraz above the rank of the ordinary man. As Hauch states:

His sulkiness was after all not so reprehensible as at first sight might appear. In reality it was a part of the vague longing for something better, and it rose mainly through a vague sense of his incapacity to attain it; a vague dissatisfaction with himself that soured everything in life for him. In the end, this eccentricity which at first threatens to spoil his own life and also that of those connected with him proves his salvation. He loses it when he has become fully reconciled to the commonplaces of an ordinary but useful existence.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Hauch, p. 69.

## V. STYLE AND LANGUAGE

In reading Pankraz der Schmoller, one is struck by the constant presence of Keller the humorist as he narrates in a friendly and casual manner this amusing anecdote of a young man's development from sulking adolescent to a thoughtful and cheerful adult. The essence of Keller's narrative style in this Novelle is the simple informality peculiar to all of his writings and his own personality. His goal here is to instruct, to demonstrate how Pankraz develops into a useful human being; yet even with this didactic element, Keller never moralizes. He never forgets that as a literary artist, he must also entertain and must, therefore, maintain a cordial relationship with the reader. Thus, as J. G. Robertson aptly remarks: "A master of style in the classic sense Keller may not be, but his prose is the expression of himself; direct, vigorous and independent."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>J. G. Robertson, A History of German Literature, rev. by Edna Purdie (New York, 1962), p. 485.

Keller and Pankraz write in a similar straightforward manner. Both, in looking at the young man's career, are objective. Keller describes in the very beginning the characteristics of the boy's sulking, and Pankraz criticizes and analyzes his own deficiencies. Thus Keller mentions the boy's "ausgebildete und künstliche Art zu schmollen" (VII, 13), and Pankraz speaks of his "Schmollen und Bössein" (VII, 25), "Groll und Weh" (VII, 27), "schlimme Launen," (VII, 41) "das langjährige Kopfhängen" (VII, 42), and "Schmollerei" (VII, 74). Both keep up a fairly fast pace in telling the story, but occasionally linger on detailed description. Keller, for example, spends a paragraph telling how and under what circumstances the boy draws in his notebook; later he devotes an entire page to comment on the food and wax candles that Pankraz brings home with him. Pankraz devotes almost an entire page to the relationship of the governor to his wife, and almost two pages to his opinion of Shakespeare's characters. In none of these passages are the elaborations necessary to plot. Both use colorful expressions that are not at all intellectual, but seem to come from the typical speech of the Swiss middle class. For instance, Keller says that

Pankraz expects Estherchen to work all day while he plays, "wie ein kleiner Indianer der die Weiber arbeiten läßt" (VII, 12) and later says that because of his Schmollen his existence was preserved, "wie der scharfe Essig ein Stück Schöpsenfleisch" (VII, 25). Pankraz calls the behavior of the commander and his wife that of "zwei wilde Katzen" (VII, 34). He says he knows as much about women "wie ein Nashorn vom Zitherspiel" (VII, 40). The young men courting Lydia are "Hansnarren" and "Strohköpfe" (VII, 72). Both from an autobiographical standpoint and the similarity of their manner of narration, therefore, Keller and Pankraz are the same person.

While most of the *Novelle* varies between passages of fast-paced narration and elaborate description, there is some dialogue. It occurs for the first time at Pankraz' homecoming when Estherchen asks about his lion skin. This question gives Pankraz the chance to reply that it once was a living lion, who became his teacher and converter. The dialogue here supplies an opening for Pankraz' story. Dialogue is used again at the high point of the Lydia episode. After reading a number of pages of Pankraz' descriptions of his love for Lydia, the sharp dialogue

offers a welcome change, especially after the declarations of love turn to anger. Here the reader has to chuckle at Pankraz' confused rage and mixed metaphor when he reproaches Lydia with the words, "O Fräulein! Sie sind ja der größte Esel, den ich je gesehen haben" (VII, 66).

Keller is outstanding in his ability to create atmosphere; he does so not only by describing physical surroundings, but also by portraying the activities and customs of people. His best description of Seldwyla is found just before Pankraz' homecoming. Here Keller does not delineate its houses, streets or mountainous landscape, but shows the people of the town carrying out their customary activities in the "Glanz" of Seldwyla. He tells us, for example, "Die Falliten und Alten hämmerten, näheten, schusterten, klebten, schnitzelten und bastelten gar emsig darauf los, um den langen Tag zu erwerben, den sie nunmehr zu würdigen verstanden" (VII, 16). He continues in describing the activities of the children, Estherchen and her mother, some of the tradesmen and townspeople. In a few minutes come the foreign "Leiermann," the "nobleman from America," the camels, apes and bears, and the scene changes to one of great activity.



Occasionally Keller uses descriptions of nature to create a mood for a character. Thus when the potatoes are in full bloom, the skies are blue, and the sun reflects gold on Pankraz' notebook, Pankraz' daydreaming increases threefold. In India, when Lydia approaches him on the day of his departure for the war, they stand in a fragrant orange grove. Pankraz, in looking back on this experience, describes the effects of this fragrance as "befooling":

Ich glaube diesen betörenden Hauch und Duft noch jetzt zu fühlen, wenn ich daran denke; wahrscheinlich übte er eine ähnliche Wirkung auf das Geschöpf, das neben mir ging, daß es seine wundersame Leidenschaft, welche die Liebe zu sich selbst war, so aufs äußerste empfand und darstellte, als ob es eine wirkliche Liebe zu einem Manne wäre (VII, 58).

Keller's language in Pankraz der Schmoller is concrete plastic, and colored. It is very definitely the language of the educated Swiss middle class with its colorful, often earthy, expressions heightened by a poet's sensitiveness for idiom and diction. The language is perhaps not as informal as the language of the other Seldwyla stories. William Schreiber has called attention to the lack of old saws in this Novelle, and accounts for its somewhat more serious language by explaining that

Keller, himself did realize the earthiness prevailing to a large extent in his Heinrich and soon came to realize that a Novelle will differ stylistically from a biographical novel. With boundless, untiring effort he had ventured into something new, but his Pankraz as yet remained a singular achievement.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>William Schreiber, "Gottfried Keller's Use of Proverbs and Proverbial Expressions," JEGP, LIII (1954), p. 516.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Pankraz der Schmoller has not received a great amount of critical attention because, although an educational Novelle, it does not have the scope or general humanitarian interest of a novel like Wilhelm Meister or of Der grüne Heinrich. Nor had Keller yet attained the artistic mastery of style and technique that he later manifested in Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, Kleider machen Leute, or Die drei gerechten Kammacher; nevertheless, for a first Novelle, Pankraz der Schmoller shows an amazingly well-developed sense of the craft of fiction. Written soon after the completion of the novel Der grüne Heinrich in 1855, it reflects the two main qualities of this previous work since it is to some extent autobiographical, and its theme is education.

Pankraz der Schmoller has many of the elements considered by various literary critics and historians to be necessary for a Novelle. It relates the story of an even more striking event than that of Goethe's Novelle, namely that a man not only was able to hold a lion at

bay for twelve hours by standing completely still and staring at it, but also that the man's own faults are cured by having to sulk for this extremely long period of time. It shows other characteristics of the Novelle in that it has a Wendepunkt, leit-motif, only a few characters, and is limited to one noteworthy aspect of a personality, namely Pankraz' sulking. Before the collection Die Leute von Seldwyla was published, Keller had unsuccessfully attempted to write drama, had composed promising, but not excellent, poetry and had finished one novel. For the very reason that Pankraz der Schmoller is a Novelle, it represents an advancement in Keller's literary accomplishment, for as Theodor Storm aptly stated, "Die Novelle ist die Schwester des Dramas und die strengste Form der Prosadichtung."<sup>33</sup>

Pankraz der Schmoller has a very simple plot and a well-unified structure. It is told through a frame and inner story, a frequently used technique among nineteenth-century writers of Novellen. The author

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<sup>33</sup>Der Briefwechsel zwischen Theodor Storm und Gottfried Keller, ed. Peter Goldammer (Berlin, 1960), p. 94.

introduces the story by telling of Pankraz' boyhood and homecoming as a mature man. Pankraz himself fills in the events of the intervening years, which seems to be as penetrating self-analysis as it is pure narration. The frame technique is further developed by two interruptions of the author, which divide or frame Pankraz' story into three parts: his early wanderings, the love episode with Lydia, and the confrontation of the lion. The author's brief remarks at the end of the Novelle bring the reader up to the point where Pankraz begins his narration, and they conclude the story with a happy ending.

The theme of education finds its source in Keller's own life, for, like Pankraz, he too had to overcome obstacles in conquering his faults and in finally becoming a useful citizen. The development of Pankraz takes place in three stages: the search for independence, desire to be involved in life, and realization and repentance of his personality flaw. These steps correspond to the structural divisions of his narration.

Keller's means of characterizing his figures are varied. Beginning with social or parental background, he proceeds to describe physical appearance, characteristic

actions and concludes with a straightforward judgment of moral qualities. A person may be fully characterized in one paragraph, as Estherchen is, or the characterization may begin in the title of the Novelle, as it does for Pankraz, be continued through the leitmotif of Schmollen and end with the concluding paragraph of the Novelle.

Keller's style in this Novelle shows an alternation between pure, fast-paced narration and detailed description not essential to plot or characterization. This alternation is of advantage since it gives a certain rhythm to the story which holds the reader's interest. Although Keller paints no majestic pictures as in the opening paragraphs of Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe, nor is as humorously satirical as in the characterization of Züs Bünzlin in Die drei gerechten Kammacher, he is expert in creating atmosphere through the description of customs and activities of people. His language is simple, direct and is well suited to the story, because it has "selber etwas Schmollendes, Brummiges, aber auch Treffendes."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Klein, p. 264.

In the development of the nineteenth-century Novelle, Pankraz der Schmoller represents a transition between romanticism and poetic realism. It is romantic in its theme of Pankraz' vague desire and search for something better; and its language is reminiscent of Novalis' romantic Heinrich von Ofterdingen when Pankraz' mother speaks of "die fernen blauesten Länder" where her son might have gone. It has qualities of poetic realism in that Keller sees the imperfect conditions that exist in the world when, for example, Pankraz works for a ship's captain who also smuggles guns. Pankraz himself has a tremendous obstacle to overcome in his own sullen disposition, but the story ends on an optimistic note when he returns home with a harmonious personality.

In the development of Keller's art, Pankraz der Schmoller represents an advanced stage of artistic mastery that soon, with Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe in the same collection of Novellen, manifested its highest achievement.

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