

Johann Nikolaus Becker (1773 - 1809)
and the Development of German Travel Literature
in the Eighteenth Century

by
Karl Krueger

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Department of German
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Direction des acquisitions et
des services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa (Ontario)
K1A 0N4

Your file *Votre référence*

Our file *Notre référence*

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-78011-8

Canada

JOHANN NIKOLAUS BECKER (1773-1809) AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF GERMAN TRAVEL LITERATURE
IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY

KARL KRUEGER

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

© 1992

Permission has been granted to the LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA to
lend or sell copies of this thesis, to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm
this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS to
publish an abstract of this thesis.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts
from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

Abstract

Johann Nikolaus Becker is a little-known German writer whose period of literary production encompassed the last decade of the 18th century, and whose genre of choice to express his opinions on the spread of the French Revolution in Germany was the travel report. Becker, like many other authors at this time, wrote travel reports as a way of bringing attention primarily to social and political conditions in his own country and abroad. One can, from the point of view of its popularity and importance in the latter half of the 18th century, infer that this literary genre had achieved a high level of development.

The genre of travel literature has a rich and long history. It has, however, not received the degree of scholarly consideration that it has warranted. Rather, it has often been considered as a "lower" form of literature not deserving the same kind of attention as other forms of prose. Instead, the role of "Gebrauchsliteratur" has frequently been ascribed to it and its use has been primarily as a source for historical, geographical, or social research.

The last thirty years, however, have seen an increase in the amount of serious study accorded this genre, and

scholars and academics are coming to view it not only as a source of important knowledge relevant to other subject areas, but also as an entertaining and valuable form of literature in its own right.

This thesis will seek to examine the development of German travel literature and Becker's own contributions to the genre. In the first half, after the Introduction the theoretical considerations in terms of an appraisal of the current status of research in the area of travel literature and problems of definition will be addressed. This will be followed by a history of the genre with special emphasis given to its evolution during the important years of the latter part of the 18th century.

The second half will serve to introduce and discuss the relatively obscure Becker and his travel reports, particularly as they reflect his own developing ideas on the spread of the ideals of the French Revolution and on the practices observed in his own country. It is hoped that the reader of this thesis will gain some insight into Becker and his place in the context of German travel literature in the 18th century.

Dedication

To my parents.

Table of Contents

Preface.....	4
1. Introduction.....	7
2. The Genre of Travel Literature.....	13
2.1. General comments.....	13
2.2. Current Status of Research.....	17
2.2.1. Reference Works.....	17
2.2.2. Monographs.....	20
2.2.2.1. Peter J. Brenner.....	20
2.2.2.2. Manfred Link.....	28
2.2.2.3. Joseph Strelka.....	33
2.2.2.4. Hermann Schlösser and Others...	37
2.2.3. William E. Stewart and the "Reise- beschreibung" of the Eighteenth century.	44

3. The History of Travel Literature.....	53
3.1. From the Beginnings to the Eighteenth Century.....	53
3.2. The Development of Travel Literature During the Eighteenth Century.....	62
3.2.1. General Comments.....	62
3.2.2. Fictional Travel Literature and its Relationship to the Rise of Middle Class Consciousness in Germany. Example: Defoe's <u>Robinson Crusoe</u>	67
3.2.3. "Bildungsreisen".....	70
3.2.4. The Emergence of Theoretical and Practical Travel Aids.....	75
3.2.5. Topographical Travel Reports.....	79
3.2.6. The Development of the Social and Political Travel Report.....	83
3.2.7. Travel Literature in the Context of the French Revolution.....	87

4. Johann Nikolaus Becker and his Contributions to the Travel Literature of the Eighteenth Century.....	105
4.1. General Comments.....	105
4.2. Biography.....	108
4.3. Becker's Travel Reports.....	120
4.3.1. <u>Über Mainz</u>	120
4.3.2. <u>Fragmente aus dem Tagebuch eines Reisenden</u> <u>Neu-Franken</u>	151
4.3.3. <u>Beschreibung meiner Reise</u>	173
5. Conclusion.....	209
6. Bibliography.....	214

Preface

"Wandern gibt mehr Verstand als hinterm Ofen sitzen."

PARACELSUS

In our time the word travel does not evoke the same connotations it did in the near or distant past. Today, when man and his machines are travelling to ever farther reaches of outer space, when a trans-Atlantic flight takes only a few hours, and when we can drive in relative comfort to the most distant and isolated areas of our landmass in automobiles equipped with on-board computers, we tend to forget how arduous or primitive the activity of travel can be. The fact is, however, that even as recently as two hundred years ago, travel whether over great distances to different continents or just within one's own country, was at times a taxing and dangerous undertaking. No wonder that throughout history travel was a mark of achievement which inspired in more sedentary people an admiration and respect for those who actually had been to places that for others could exist only in their imagination. It is not surprising, therefore, that many who undertook great journeys for business, for

pleasure, for religious purposes, or for any other reason, recorded and published their experiences in order to entertain and enlighten all those who remained at home but had access to the literature of the day. Travelling has always been an important factor in the human experience and has been the subject of literature since written communication first evolved. The combination of the two elements of travel and literature also forms the subject of this thesis.

Although I have always had a great personal interest in travel, I owe my interest in its relationship to literature to my thesis advisor Dr. Claus Lappe. His assistance and guidance have certainly been invaluable to me, not only for the thesis itself, but also for my entire course of studies at the University of Manitoba.

I wish to thank also my other professors at the University of Manitoba, Dr. R.J. Glenndinning, Dr. Victor G. Doerksen, and Dr. G. Beckers who have all in their own singular way contributed to my understanding and appreciation of German language and literature.

Greatly deserving of praise and thanks are my parents who have put up with me during my academic pursuits all these years and to whom I owe the opportunity I have had to study German; their teaching nurtured in me an appreciation for my heritage language.

Lastly I wish to acknowledge other members of my family as well as and my close friends both in Canada and Germany

who have shown, or at least feigned an interest in what must seem to them to have been an interminably long course of studies leading up to my M.A. degree. Their encouragement, tutoring and prompting have been greatly appreciated.

1. Introduction

Although the history and the political significance of events which took place in continental Europe in the latter half of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries may at present seem to be greatly overshadowed by the frantic and wondrous pace of change in our own time, its legacy continues to pervade and indeed dictate our way of thinking and our way of life to a profound degree. In fact, it is no exaggeration to suggest that the ideas sown and nurtured in the turbulent years of the French Revolution have led somewhat paradoxically, in part to both the creation and dissolution of the political configurations of our modern age in Eastern Europe including the former Soviet Union. The development and consequences of these great events (both old and new) continue to spur the scholars of our day to ongoing analysis of their origins, development, and historical expression.

It is also of significant interest to examine the spread of great new ideas and to determine how they gained a firm and lasting foothold among the general population. Today, the conveyance and transmission of ideas and news to

the general public is often taken for granted. Through the mass media our cravings to receive and transmit news and information are gratified almost instantly. Furthermore, the rights that we take for granted which rest to a large extent upon the notion of a free press make it possible for us to receive information easily and freely. How different this all is from the days of the French Revolution! How rarely in this day and age are we moved to reflect that two centuries ago the dissemination of ideas and news was so much different than it is now. Two hundred years ago Europeans knew much less about what went on in neighbouring countries and how events elsewhere could affect them; nor was their information always accurate or up to date. In those days of horse-drawn carriages news - true to the idiom - still travelled fast, but not nearly as fast as via the airwaves that are at our disposal today. At that time the printed word and not graphic film footage was king; print was the main medium by which news, ideas, and information were transmitted. But even when the news was "en route" many negative forces hindered its reception and further transmission. One of these forces which immediately spring to mind is, of course, limited literacy. It is a fact, that only a small percentage of the population could read at that time. A second force was censorship. The notion of the freedom of the press had not yet been universally accepted, indeed had hardly even been envisioned. The tight reins of censorship often managed to

prevent, at least in part and for a while, the spread of news and ideas.

But the compound pressure created by those people whose desire for news had to be satisfied, and by those who were eager and able to share their own experiences and viewpoints on their world led to a boom of travel literature in the 1700s, particularly in Germany. Manifest in the form of diaries, exchanges of letters, narrative prose, or even novels, this kind of writing gained immense popularity during the latter part of the "Age of Enlightenment". People wanted to know what it was like and what was happening elsewhere on their globe. "Elsewhere" at this time could mean anywhere. With overseas exploration still being very important at this time, people wanted to know what the strange new lands being discovered, settled, and exploited were like. Such curiosity led directly to the great success and popularity of such works as Georg Forster's Reise um die Welt, a widely read and important account of Cook's second South Seas voyage, and the continued success of earlier albeit fictional works such as Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe.

But people also wanted to know what was happening closer to home; therefore, it was no surprise that in a new climate of social change in the late 18th century many travellers, particularly German ones (as their country was destined to be profoundly affected), at the first sign of political upheaval in 1789 made their destination Paris,

centre-stage of the French Revolution. Once there, the travellers recorded their experiences and their own thoughts on the event and its possible ramifications for an eager, inquisitive, and nervous public in Germany.

So it was, that not only specifically "writers", but also scientists, intellectuals, businessmen, and civil servants were increasingly more apt to record details and observations of their travels with a critical and discerning eye for the benefit of contemporaries and posterity. Germany and the Germans were well-represented here. And among these new writers of travel literature were many lesser-known or "minor" authors who admittedly produced no works of great literary significance. Some of these authors published only little and gained a certain amount of attention or notoriety. Some eventually even found for themselves a niche in the popular and critical canons of travel literature. Still others published and then, for whatever reason, quietly faded into obscurity, their writings doomed to rest in dusty, dark, and dank archives. In some cases, on the basis of their merits this was appropriate; in other cases unfortunate.

Johann Nikolaus Becker was one author whose writings have been buried in oblivion for many years and to my mind, undeservedly so. Becker was one of the many literary wayfarers of German extraction who, in the wake of the French Revolution, travelled primarily in his own country, but also

to other areas (how far his travels took him we do not know for sure), and as he travelled, he recorded his impressions and ideas about the places he visited and the people he came in contact with from his own unique "enlightened" and reform-minded viewpoint.

One can only hypothesize why Becker faded from the limelight. Perhaps he was not controversial enough. Perhaps not enough people felt that he was a good writer - although my task here is to do him justice - or very possibly his works suffered the fate of being lost amongst the many other published works of a similar political nature in circulation at the time. Whatever the reasons, however, the lack of attention accorded to his works seems to me at least to have been unjust.

The objective of this thesis is to give an overview of both the literary works of Johann Nikolaus Becker as well as of the man himself in the context of the rising importance of travel literature in Europe, particularly in the 18th century. I wish to present Becker and what is known of his life in the context of his own contributions to the transmission of ideas and thoughts in those heady yet uncertain days two hundred years ago. In the course of so doing, I have also deemed it necessary to provide some background on the political and historical situation of Becker's time and place, and to provide an outline of the genre of travel literature itself. A summary of the state of scholarly research

in the genre will also be included. As a consequence, it is hoped that Becker's achievements will thereby be compared with those of his better known contemporaries and with the judgments pronounced by history and the literary critics.

Not by way of excuse, but for reasons of explanation, one must also bear in mind that in dealing with a figure such as Becker, one often has little to go on in terms of both primary and secondary literary sources. Only very recently have some of his works, which were published anonymously or under pseudonyms, been positively attributed to him. To my knowledge, only one scholar, Wolfgang Griep, has had anything more than a cursory comment to make about Becker. This being the case, I hope that I will indeed be able to convey a well-rounded if not entirely complete picture of the man and his place in history and provide an enlightened and intelligent response to his literature. While he may not be in the same elite class as Goethe and Schiller, Becker nonetheless deserves to be "rehabilitated" on the merits of some entertaining, witty, frank, and enjoyable literature which further enhances and augments our own understanding of eighteenth century Germany and, in small part at least, our own fast-paced world.

2. The Genre of Travel Literature

2.1. General Comments

As suggested in the foregoing introduction, in order to come to some sort of understanding of Becker and his works, it is clear that as with similar treatments of other authors and their literature, the historical and intellectual age in which Becker lived must be the subject of some careful scrutiny. In order to derive significance for our own understanding, one needs to consider as well the questions and problems, history and development, of a genre of literature which, according to numerous literary critics, has suffered from a lack of serious academic scholarship. The historical and intellectual context in which Becker wrote will be discussed later; the literature of travel will be discussed first.

As in the discussion of any genre of literature, diverse theories and ideas always emerge. The situation with respect to travel literature is no different, but while it represents perhaps one of the oldest of genres, it has been substantially neglected according to several leading scholars, a circumstance which is particularly unfortunate in re-

lation to its obvious importance. It is only recently that it has received any substantial amount of critical scholarship and appreciation.

Travel literature, because it has tended to be cast in an image of "lower" or popular literature - literature of reduced merit or justification, in German sometimes called "Zweckliteratur" or "Gebrauchsliteratur" - has suffered in the past at the hands of literary critics. Some readers and literary critics see "respectable" travel literature only in the highly perfected art form, the ideal example of which is considered by many to be Goethe's Italienische Reise. At the other extreme is the popular notion that at its best, travel literature is merely a good guide or handbook similar to the Michelin Guide or the Let's Go series. In between, however, fall a great many other forms of travel literature which contain the basic element of travel and the descriptions of foreign as well as local areas of interest. Some of these defy easy categorization. Examples one can offer are "Reisebericht", "Reisebeschreibung", "Reiseskizze"; i.e., works which generally have as their primary goal an objective description coupled with a certain subjective bias. To these forms can be added the fictional "Reiseroman" in which the element of travel can sometimes form merely an occasional motif.

It is small wonder that attempts to establish workable and appropriate parameters for literature of this sort can

be a daunting task. When to the problems of establishing a simple definition are added more esoteric or theoretical considerations such as subject/object relationships, the accuracy of descriptions, the question of the impossibility of establishing absolute "truth" in travel descriptions, and the fact that this kind of literature requires of the reader at times knowledge of diverse areas which may include geography, history, anthropology, biology, politics, and economics, the job of defining and categorizing the literature of travel becomes even more complex.

One popular approach has been to define the literature of travel according an elementary fiction/non-fiction dichotomy. Under the heading of fiction fall some works such as Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe as well as the popular "Münchhausen" stories. Under non-fiction on the one hand would be included the already mentioned travel guidebooks and similar pedestrian works; on the other hand (and herein lies the problem) something with more literary refinement such as Forster's Reise um die Welt would fall into the same basic category.

Another problem of such an over-simplified dichotomy is how to deal with an account of a real voyage or journey which is spiced up with anecdotes and embellishments which are purely fictional. Even more subtle is the problem which arises when the writer's objectivity in making assessments of events and expressing observations must be questioned.

My purpose in drawing attention to the above considerations is, of course, not to make the whole problem seem bigger than it really needs to be, but simply to point out that establishing parameters for travel literature is a difficult task and that it will be necessary in this thesis to come to some kind of understanding about the genre and in so doing create some kind of critical framework within which we can best examine and evaluate Becker's life, times, and works.

Hopefully the foregoing comments have served to introduce the most frequently occurring points of contention raised by scholars and literary critics in dealing with travel literature. In the following pages I will present an overview of some of the major trends of scholarship in the area of travel literature as well as a brief history of the genre. I will narrow the emphasis to the last quarter of the eighteenth century, the time during which Becker was active.

2.2. Current Status of Research

2.2.1. Reference Works

If one is looking in the volumes of critical research for a precise and encompassing definition of what the literature of travel is, one is bound to be disappointed. Little agreement exists among scholars who have occupied themselves with the genre. A cursory glance at some of the many literary encyclopedias will substantiate this claim. The first indication we have of this lack of critical agreement is that if one is looking for information on travel literature one must expect to find it under a number of different headings. Some writers place anything even remotely associated with a connection between literature and travel under such general headings as "Reiseliteratur" or "Reisebeschreibung". Among these, however, are also some authors who are careful to point out that a difference exists between fictional and non-fictional travel literature. One author makes the distinction between "Reiseführer" and "Reisewerke" (Kirchner). Another between "Reisebericht" and "Reiseroman" (Metzler Literatur Lexikon). Still others have yet a different approach. Horst and Ingrid Daemrich in

their work on themes and motifs in literature (the title already revealing much about their ideas concerning the relationship between literature and travel) include their consideration of travel literature under a heading called "Fahrt". Some even refuse to consider any non-fictional travel accounts as genuine literature. The only heading relating to travel literature in at least one reference work is "Reiseroman" (Rehm).

The specific definitions offered up in these reference works are as inconsistent as the headings under which they are found. In Träger's Wörterbuch der Literaturwissenschaft, under the heading of "Reiseliteratur" it is stated that "Reiseliteratur" is a very wide-ranging term under which can appear literature relating to science, general knowledge, entertainment, and art. In short, it would seem that Träger would include most things which could be encountered while travelling. He goes on, however, to argue that some works should be excluded from the canon of travel literature for what he deems to be their purely fictional nature and in which "zumeist Funktion, Wirkungsabsicht usw. den Reisege-danken so integrieren, daß ganz andere Momente als bestimmend erscheinen" (429). As examples are listed works which one would probably expect to find under the heading of "Reiseroman". Kirchner, under the heading of "Reisewerke", adds the following qualifier: "Darunter versteht man im all-gemeinen die Beschreibung einer Einzelreise, vornehmlich ei-

ner solchen, die in unbekannte oder wenig bekannte Gegenden führte" (633). He then confines himself to dealing only with factual works. Gero von Wilpert in his Sachwörterbuch der Literatur, seems to want to keep his perception of travel literature as general as possible. He writes that "Reiseliteratur" includes "das gesammte dem Stoff nach von Reisen berichtende Schrifttum" (631). He then proceeds to list almost every possibility imaginable. In his essay he jumps freely between fiction and non-fiction, the travel guide-books and reports being ascribed a literary value.

In the face of the divergence of these initial critical opinions, it would seem safe to suggest that, stripped to its basic elements, a discussion of travel literature, as one might logically expect, centres around two elements: travel and literature. The element of travel can occur either as a fictional or non-fictional motif. The degree of literary refinement is variable. All variations and permutations relating to the extreme positions have been articulated. As far as a working definition for the purposes of this thesis is concerned, it may prove to be necessary for the time-being to remain fairly general in order to facilitate the tracing of the history and scholarship of this genre.

2.2.2. The Monographs

2.2.2.1. Peter J. Brenner

As far as deeper critical research in the area of travel literature is concerned, it is necessary to reassert that as a genre of its own it has certainly been under-represented in the standard canon of literary critics and historians. In what is today the most modern and the most comprehensive compendium on the topic of the literature of travel, Peter J. Brenner's Der Reisebericht in der deutschen Literatur (published in 1990),¹ the author laments this fact more than once. In his study he offers an impressive review of the history of the "Reisebericht" (travel report), as well as of the scholarly attention it has received since the earliest times. Brenner offers a very extensive bibliography of travel literature and its theory, and the chapters are organized according to literary and historical periods, bringing the reader up to date on the latest and most widely cited sources pertaining to the subject area. For each period the author offers commentary and a review of critical works and in some cases the original works themselves, and

¹Cited hereafter as Reisebericht.

creates a general chronological survey. It is a very valuable work in the area of research on travel literature and will in the course of this thesis be referred to frequently.

As far as Brenner's work is concerned, he himself gives consideration primarily to the non-fictional manifestations of travel literature. While he too grapples with questions of genre distinction, for his own purposes he concentrates on factual works and places them under the heading of "Reisebericht". As to his consideration of the word "Reisebericht" as a designation for the genre of travel literature, it is clearly spelled out in a previous work by him entitled: Der Reisebericht: die Entwicklung einer Gattung in der deutschen Literatur². Writing in 1989, he offers the following explanation and definition:

Zur Bezeichnung der Gattung erscheint der Begriff des 'Reiseberichts' unter den vielen konkurrierenden Kategorien - wie Reisebeschreibung, Reiseliteratur oder auch Reiseroman als der plausibelste, ohne daß das zu dogmatischen Diskussionen herausfordern sollte. Der Begriff kennzeichnet mit der gebotenen Neutralität den Sachverhalt, um den es geht: die sprachliche Darstellung authentischer Reisen. Über ästhetische Qualitäten und Ambitionen ist damit nichts ausgesagt; die Gattung vereinigt in dieser Beziehung die extremsten Gegensätze. Auch ist damit nichtspräjudiziert über den Wahrheitsgehalt des 'Berichts'. Er soll sich per definitionem nur auf wirkliche Reisen beziehen, aber den Verfassern liegt doch ein breiter Spielraum zwischen Authentizität und Fiktionalität der Beschreibung offen, der sowohl individuell wie auch epochenspezifisch ganz verschieden ausgefüllt wurde. (9)

²Cited hereafter as Entwicklung.

Deciding not to enter what he sees as a fruitless discussion, he offers in the above study his limitations to what is meant by German travel literature. Suggesting that arguments over terminology are seldom productive, the term "German travel literature" is addressed for pragmatic reasons, and reduced to that travel literature which is the product of a "deutschsprachigen Kulturraum" in which for the last 900 years or so, German literature per se has developed (8). Brenner points out that well past the Middle Ages, the majority of all literature was written in Latin anyway. And, to be sure, some great works of German travel literature in the eighteenth century were written in languages other than German. Brenner mentions two examples here. One is Johann Casper Goethe's Viaggio per l'Italia, written in Italian, the other is Alexander von Humboldt's Relation historique, written in French (9). Another obvious example is Forster's A Voyage Round the World which was first written in English.

Having dealt with these initial concerns about terminology we can now turn to Brenner's observations about the actual topic of the "Reisebericht". The "Reisebericht" considered as a narrative account of an authentic journey is one of the oldest genres of our cultural literary heritage. Brenner is, of course, not the only writer who has found much truth in the dictum of Matthias Claudius which reads: "Wenn jemand eine Reise thut, so kann er was erzählen"

(cited in Brenner, Entwicklung 7). These words have received some notice throughout history, but as we know, the relationship between travel and literature had manifested itself many years prior to Claudius' saying so and the redeeming values of this relationship have been recognized not only by critics of literature, but also by the public at large. Such is still the case today, but as Brenner argues, the importance and the value of travel literature, and in particular its literary merit, have not always been uncontested (Brenner, Entwicklung 7).

Brenner feels that as a rule, in the "Reisebericht" the contents have traditionally been more important than the literary form or quality. Through what he calls its "soziale Rolle," travel literature defined itself until well into the eighteenth century not by literary quality or claim to artistic merit, but by its function of transmitting news and information and relaying (supposedly) authentic experiences and observations gathered while travelling (Brenner, Reisebericht 1). It is this sort of obligation to "authenticity" or "truthfulness" which simultaneously robs many examples of travel literature of any claim to aesthetic merit or worth.

It is very much due to this consideration that scholars have been hesitant to include fully many works relating to travel under the heading of "finer literature". Even today this problem has not been fully resolved. Conflicting views remain. At the crux of the argument are concerns that what

is essentially in some sense a mode of reporting, could also have aesthetic worth. On the whole, therefore, Brenner feels strongly that travel literature has been neglected and not been the subject of the same literary and theoretical considerations as the novel, drama, or poetry. The genre has suffered from what Brenner suggests is a selective approach: "[die neueren] Untersuchungen leiden unter dem selektiven Blick, mit dem sie die Gattungsgeschichte wahrgenommen hat" (Entwicklung 7). Brenner finds reasons for optimism, however, and remarks that the situation has changed significantly for the better. The reasons he gives are gleaned from the discussions in the 1960s and 1970s about reassessing the hitherto designated functions of literature as a whole. During these years debates in the area of "Germanistik" gave rise to a new orientation in terms of methods of analysis and the perceptions and functions of literature. The impetus for this new orientation came in no small part from literary circles in the former German Democratic Republic and Marxist-leaning western critics.

Until the 1970s, the literature of travel was investigated almost exclusively through the works of those writers whose place in the canon of "higher" literature was firmly entrenched (Goethe and Heine, for example). Everything else was considered as reporting, and valued at most for its extraneous information about other non-literary subject areas. Since the 70s, however, both research and interest extending

to other works of travel literature have increased. This increase has been aided by the strong interdisciplinary nature of many of the texts which makes them suitable for use by scholars in a host of other subject areas. The criticism which Brenner reserves, however, is that the focus of the new interest is too narrow, and the conclusion he has drawn is that the majority of the new research is confined to the more "mature", more "critical" "Reisebericht" particular to the 18th century. A consensus of most of the historians of literature does grant that the 18th century did indeed represent a zenith for the travel report, but one must not overlook the fact that the scope of travel literature in terms of its history is much wider. The narrow approach has in Brenner's view led to the lack of development of a "systematischer Diskussionszusammenhang" (Entwicklung 8) in so far as other epochs are concerned.

Continuing his general remarks in Entwicklung about the slow process of recognition of the travel report, Brenner feels that research in the last few years has reaffirmed its multi- or interdisciplinary nature and confirmed that a simple linguistic or a simple "poetologisch" approach cannot do justice to the specifics and peculiarities of the entire genre. In any given case political, philosophical, historical, social, ethnological, geographical, and other factors must be considered in addition to the purely literary viewpoints (Entwicklung 8).

Bearing this in mind the author states in his later study that the vast interdisciplinary knowledge required to appreciate many examples of travel literature creates a problem in itself, since the kind of specialized knowledge required of a scholar of German literature could eventually be well outside of the established parameters of his discipline (Reisebericht 2). He goes on to argue that a truly worthwhile preoccupation with travel literature should not confine itself simply to a basic descriptive analysis of text and the usual interpretive attempts. A unilateral approach on such a level would preclude or at least greatly reduce the many benefits and advantages offered by literature of this sort. This, as Brenner and other critics have stated, is part of the conundrum which has hindered the development of a unified and comprehensive approach to dealing with travel literature in the past.

Conversely, however, the one-sided approach has proven to be of benefit to scholars and critics in other subject areas. Historians, for example, can and have read texts of travel literature in order to augment their understanding of history, but in so doing avoid the onus of having to assess the value of the literature per se, leaving this task to the literary critics. Therefore, in terms of consolidating the above and other factors, the research and treatment of travel literature has indeed fallen short of the goal of providing a solid, unified, and conclusive direction to critical

investigation. To quote Brenner:

Auch wenn die Zahl von Forschungsbeiträgen inzwischen fast schon bedenkliche Ausmaße angenommen hat, läßt sich von einer 'Reiseliteraturforschung' im strengen Sinne des Wortes nicht sprechen. (Reisebericht 3)

This thinking permeates Brenner's work as he begins his actual analysis and consideration of those who, in his eyes, have made significant contributions in the area of travel literature. It is perhaps ironic in the face of his bemoaning the absence of adequate discourse and debate, that Brenner then goes on to list and examine hundreds of works that have made some contribution to the discussion. It will, of course, be well outside the scope of this work to deal with all of the authors he mentions. I will instead limit myself to the works of those authors who in the course of my own reading have been most beneficial and which seem to have garnered the most respect from their peers in this area of research.

2.2.2.2. Manfred Link

One of the earliest scholarly works which focuses its attention on tracing the history and development of an appreciation in German literary circles for travel literature, and one of the first works which merits consideration for its attempt to define the limits of the genre, is a dissertation by Manfred Link written in 1963. Entitled Der Reisebericht als literarische Kunstform von Goethe bis Heine, this work represents a noteworthy attempt to establish, order, and discuss the inherent elements and questions in the defining of the various parameters of travel literature. It is indeed a precedent-setting work in this area. "Es ist kaum übertrieben zu sagen, daß Link mit seiner Arbeit am Anfang der neueren germanistischen Reiseliteraturforschung steht", writes Brenner, for example (Reisebericht 20). Link does, in fact, have much to contribute to the discussion. His main contribution is his attempt to differentiate and categorize the literature of travel according to workable and tenable designations. Link establishes four main headings, and because of the important nature of his work it would seem justifiable to engage in a more comprehensive and detailed description of these headings. The first heading is called: "Reiseführer und Reisehandbücher". Since earliest

times these works have sought not so much to report on a particular journey which has already taken place, but rather to prepare the reader (usually a prospective traveller) for a journey which he will soon undertake. This type of travel literature is today's equivalent to guidebooks and handbooks in the vein of Let's Go or others.

The second heading is called: "Wissenschaftliche und populärwissenschaftliche Reiseschriften". Falling into this category are primarily the increasingly more popular voyages of discovery, particularly overseas, and their corresponding reports. Largely factual but not immune to infiltration by exaggerations, embellishments, or rhetoric, their intention was to inform the reader about cultural, geographical and scientific discoveries in the lands visited. Literary pretensions depended, of course, on the author and the readership to whom he addressed himself.

Works in these first two groups mentioned found their justification in the transmission of factual knowledge and information. In some cases, though, they did aspire to higher levels of style and expression.

The third group, says Link, contains the following: "Reisetagebücher, Reiseberichte, Reisebeschreibungen, Reiseschilderungen und Reiseerzählungen". It is this group to which he devotes the bulk of his attention and discussion in his treatise. More consideration will be given later to this group of Link's terms.

The works in the fourth group fall under the heading of "Reisenovellen und Reiseromane". Of this group Link writes the following: "Eine erlebte oder auch fiktive Reise bildet noch den Vorwurf und das zentrale Motiv dieser Werke, doch bestimmen die Gattungsgesetze der Novelle oder des Romans bereits ihre Struktur und Sprachform" (7).

Link continues his work under the chapter heading of "Formkriterien und -aspekte einer Typologie" to defend his groupings and make some general comments about them. He asserts as Brenner and others still do, that various factors must be considered when categorizing a work. Among them is an assessment of their interdisciplinary nature, whereby aspects such as religion, philosophy, politics, satire and the like, must be considered (9). He further confirms, that as one proceeds through groups one to four, a trend of increased fiction ("Fiktionalisierung") is evident. Parallel to this development is the fact that as one proceeds through the same order, the objectivity of the work diminishes and/or is compromised. He adds that the works in the first three categories are almost always based on authentic or real journeys; in the fourth one they may be but seldom are (10).

To round off our look at Link's contribution to this area of classification of the various manifestations of travel literature, let us direct our attention to his reflections about the third heading which includes the term "Reisebericht". Treating this heading as his main concern,

Link draws various conclusions about it in the course of his work through an examination and analysis of works by Goethe, Heine, K.P. Moritz and others. The conclusions that he draws are that first, the "Reisebericht" is the only type of travel literature besides the guidebooks and the reports about voyages of discovery, which in the tradition of Horace's dictum of "prodesse et delectare" gives information on foreign and unknown regions and concurrently has the express aim of providing entertaining reading. Secondly, the "Reisebericht" is characterized by objectivity and factuality. Thirdly, the route itself determines the construction and outline of the work. Observations, facts, etc., are localized and dated. Fourthly, fictionalization and epic integration are not present; the facts remain at the forefront, the "what" retaining importance over the "how" (186).

Interesting, too, is what Link has to say about Laurence Sterne's influential work A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy which was published in 1768. For this work Link uses the interesting and subsequently oft repeated phrase "kopernikanische Wende" to describe its importance to the development of the genre as a whole. As Link sees it:

Sterne hatte mit seiner 'Empfindsamen Reise' [...] in ausdrücklichem and oft polemisch betontem Gegensatz zu den traditionellen objektiven Reiseberichten nicht mehr die bereiste Gegenstandswelt, sondern nur noch die empfindsamen Herzenserlebnisse des reisenden Subjekts darstellenswert [gegeben]. (188)

As such, the fact/fiction boundary to Link's fourth and final classification seems to have been reached.

Brenner is filled with praise for Link's work and deems his model in large part to be plausible from the point of view of the literary critic. He pronounces the following judgement:

Er faßt die Reiseliteratur prinzipiell als eine Form des Erzählens auf, die entsprechend mit dem Instrumentarium der Erzählforschung untersucht werden kann. Allerdings bedeutet das für den Literaturwissenschaftler eine Einengung des Forschungsbereichs, wie sie charakteristisch für die Zeit ist, in der Link seine Dissertation vorgelegt hat. Als eigentlicher Gegenstand kommt nach diesen Kriterien für den Philologen nur jene dritte Gruppe der Reisetagebücher, Reiseberichte, Reiseschilderungen und Reiseerzählungen in Frage, die noch nicht reine Fiktion und nicht mehr reine Information ist. (Reisebericht 21)

Since Link the research and discussions have gone far beyond the ground broken by his book. Although there have been an expansion and branching out of critical analysis, a significant focus has remained on Link's quest to classify and differentiate between the various directions the genre has taken.

2.2.2.3. Joseph Strelka

Joseph Strelka, like Link, is also a widely quoted source in much of the critical analysis dealing with travel literature. Written in 1971, Strelka's work entitled "Der literarische Reisebericht" begins also by asserting that: "Der Reisebericht gehört zu jenen literarischen Ausdrucksformen, zu deren genauerer Begriffsbestimmung bis jetzt sehr wenig getan worden ist" (63). He augments this statement with a footnote, which refers to Link's contemplations on the same thought. As with Link, Strelka's primary goal is also to classify and categorize the various forms encountered in an investigation of travel literature. He states that in setting the parameters for his treatise:

[...] werden doch keineswegs alle Reiseschilderungen der Sprachkunst als literarischer Ausdrucksform und als Gegenstand der Literaturwissenschaft zuzuzählen sein. Umgekehrt wäre es ebenso falsch, alle nicht-fiktionalen Reiseberichte von der Sprachkunst überhaupt auszuklammern. (63)

Thus it seems that he is intent on placing some fairly strict limitations based on his perceptions of "Sprachkunst".

Strelka then goes on to delineate his ideas regarding

the place and nature of the literature of travel using an analysis based on what he terms a "komplexe und dynamische Subjekt-Objekt-Beziehung, die für die Reisebeschreibung und ihren jeweiligen Standort sehr wichtig ist" (64). Elaborating on this point, he outlines the important steps involved in this progression:

In der ersten Form überwiegt ausschließlich das Objekt des Beschriebenen und der Zweck der Information über die kulturellen und geographischen, geschichtlichen und landschaftlichen Besonderheiten der bereisten Länder oder Landstriche [sic] führt zu einer Form der Darstellung, bei welcher das Subjekt des Beschreibenden vor der Objektivität und Faktizität des Beschriebenen fast völlig verschwindet. (64)

In the second phase outlined by Strelka, the subject advances significantly into the foreground. The writer's impressions and observations gain principal importance in addition to the inclusion of the other elements which the writer deems important. Elements of style and the use of various literary devices also have a bearing on the degree to which this shift in subject/object emphasis takes place. "Tritt dazu noch eine gewisse Sprachkraft," Strelka adds, "dann ist die Grenze von der nicht-literarischen zur literarischen Reisebeschreibung eindeutig überschritten" (64).

It is in regard to this point that Strelka is most often criticized by other scholars. It seems here that in using such a term as "gewisse Sprachkraft", Strelka is once

again attempting to define certain works of travel literature based on perhaps an aesthetic norm or at least a qualitative judgment to which the work should not aspire. In so doing he demonstrates the shortcomings which a purely "poetologisch" approach is doomed to inherit. Brenner vigorously derides Strelka's intention to commit himself to a classification on the basis of something as vague as a "gewisse Sprachkraft". "Der ideale Reisebericht wäre danach "geprägt von einer essayistisch-subjektiven Kunstform" the paradigm of which would be Goethe's Italienische Reise (Brenner, Reisebericht 23). Strelka's reasoning it seems would add nothing beneficial to the discussion. It appears obvious, that regardless of which literature or which author one deals with, a "gewisse Sprachkraft", or different level or quality of writing will be present. "Sprachkraft" cannot be used to make differentiations among genres. Writes Brenner:

Es ist unmittelbar einsichtig, daß in der Reiseliteratur - wie in jeder anderen literarischen Gattung - Unterschiede in der "Sprachkraft" und in der literarischen Gestaltungsfähigkeit der Autoren festzustellen sein werden. Sie können aber eher intuitiv konstatiert als wissenschaftlich begründet werden und vermögen allenfalls Qualitäts-, nicht aber Gattungsunterschiede zu fixieren. (Reisebericht 23-4)

Thus Brenner gives a rather negative assessment of Strelka's point of view.

Finishing Strelka's argument, however, we see that as a result of the changing subject/object balance in the third

phase, what occurs is a situation in which "die Subjekt-Objekt-Spannung fast völlig aufgehoben scheint" (64). He does concede that a certain flux exists between the borders of his classifications, but insists that distinctions can be drawn.

Then, in reliance upon Link, Strelka traces the development of the "Reisebericht" viewed from the vantage point of this subject/object dichotomy, from the early pilgrimages to the 20th century. He asserts that the "Reisebericht" reaches its apex "erst mit der Überwindung der aufklärerisch-rationalistischen Haltung" (69). This development is embodied (here Strelka concurs with Link) in the "kopernikanische Wende" brought about by the appearance of Sterne's Sentimental Journey. In Sterne, Strelka sees the subjective response to one's surroundings taking precedence over everything else (68).

2.2.2.4. Hermann Schlösser and Others

One writer who seeks to supersede the works of both Strelka and Link (and others) is Hermann Schlösser. Despite perhaps severely compromising his credibility by attributing Link's four part classification to Strelka in the introduction to his volume Reiseformen des Geschriebenen, Schlösser's post-modern approach (Brenner, Reisebericht 659) in this work as well as two others³ has found a fairly favourable reception on the part of some critics. In Reiseformen des Geschriebenen, he begins with a reference to Strelka's (Link's!) research and states that there cannot exist a single genre called travel literature. From his opening remarks, we are led to believe that he calls into question the possibility of finding a workable definition of "Reiseliteratur". He supports this position with the argument that such literature aspires to be more than pure literature; its objectives extend far beyond the usual for "just" literature. What must be considered is a more holistic strategy acknowledging the interrelationships between

³Hermann Schlösser, Wunschbilder des Reisens. Reiseberichte gestern und Heute (Berlin: 1982) and "Rom - ein abendländisches Reiseziel," Universitas 42 (1987): 632-643.

travel, writing, and reading:

Der Reisebericht verweigere sich der Gattungszuordnung, weil er mehr und anderes sein wolle als nur Literatur [...]. Schlösser [fordert] vom Reisebericht, daß er sich darstellen solle als spezifischer Ausdruck eines Bewußtseins, in dem Reisen, Schreiben und Lesen zusammenfallen. (Brenner, Reisebericht 636-37)

Thinking from this point of view, Schlösser presents his own version of the history of scholarship on the literature of travel by attacking and criticizing the models which have been erected prior to his own. He goes beyond Link and Strelka by seeking to establish more concrete connections between the process of writing and the process of traveling. His work forms an outline which one can follow to trace further the developments in the history of scholarship in this genre. One must, therefore, briefly follow Schlösser's outline in order to cover various other points of view which emerge in the discussion of this topic.

Schlösser, too, shares the view that the "Reisebericht" or "Reiseliteratur" was treated as a lesser literary genre, until the late 1960s but that it finally gained in stature at this time: "[Weil] man an nicht-fiktionalen Texten neue Methoden der Textwissenschaft erlernen wollte, wurde man aufmerksam auf bisher Vernachlässigtes" (Schlösser 11). Under the heading of "Vernachlässigtes" came such literary forms as the essay, report, or "Reisebericht". The "Reisebericht" of the later 18th century gained favour at this

time because it was appreciated for its role in political agitation. Therefore Schlösser does not find it surprising that a large impetus towards greater interest and appreciation came from the profusion of East German literature in these areas (see Schlösser 11, footnote #10).

Characteristic of the rebuke of traditional literary scholarship in the 60s and early 70s, Schlösser feels, are the comments of Jost Hermand.⁴ Writing in 1970, Hermand states:

Was könnte nicht alles zur Literatur gehören, wenn wir endlich mit jenem Asthetizismus brechen wollten, der nur das Gattungserfüllte, nur das Lyrische, Epische, Dramatische [...] als 'literaturhaft' anerkennt? Reiseberichte, Memoiren, Tagebücher, Biographien, Aphorismen, Briefe, Chansons, Essays, ja alle Arten der Zweck- und Gebrauchsliteratur würden damit [...] zu ebenso wichtigen Dokumenten des menschlichen Geistes erhoben wie eine epigonenhafte Ode oder ein halbgelungener Roman. (cit. in Schlösser 12)

Zlatko Klatik⁵ states it forcefully as well:

[...] die Reisebeschreibung eines begabten Künstlers bedeutet ein tieferes Eindringen in das Wesen als der Roman eines schlechten Autors. (cit. in Schlösser 12)

⁴Jost Hermand, "Probleme der heutigen Gattungsgeschichte," Jahrbuch für internationale Germanistik 2/1 (1970): 89-94.

⁵Zlatko Klatik, "Über die Poetik der Reisebeschreibungen," Zagadnienia Radzajow Literakich 11 (1969): 126-153.

Schlösser, however, because of his own views has little good to say about these approaches primarily on the basis that "[w]enn man [...] das hier Gelungene nur dem dort Mißlungenen gleichstellt, dann ist man vom Wert der nichtfiktionalen, nichtgattungsgebundenen Literatur noch nicht sehr überzeugt" (12). He seems to equate Klatik's "Wesen", for example, with Strelka's "gewisse Sprachkraft" as an inappropriate means to categorize genres. Schlösser moves on to another influential theoretician and directs his attention to the work by Ralph-Rainer Wuthenow entitled: Die erfahrene Welt, Europäische Reiseliteratur im Zeitalter der Aufklärung. For Schlösser, Wuthenow represents a somewhat unique yet forced attempt to bring his own order to the puzzle. "Wer sich für theoretische Fragen interessiert," writes Schlösser, "der kann mit Wuthenow studieren, wie in der Entwicklung der Reiseformen, von der Abenteuer- und Entdeckungsreise bis hin zur Forscher- und Künstlerreise, 'Subjektivität' in historisch exakt bestimmbareren Vorgängen 'objektiv' entsteht" (13). Wuthenow does indeed adhere to the premise that the literature of travel, while developing parallel to and in close relationship to the ideals of the Enlightenment, reaches new heights during this period as far as the genre is concerned. Characteristic of this development is the view that facts step into the background in order that the means of presentation (the subjectivity, if you will) can be featured.

Wuthenow's work is in fact an excellent presentation of some lesser-known works of travel literature specific to the Enlightenment, but I would agree with Schlösser in the opinion that Wuthenow falls short of providing an exact description of the characteristics of the genre and setting parameters for useful discussion. He never really gets past what Schlösser calls "Gattungspoetik" (14).

Next in line in Schlösser's review is the work of Thomas Bleichner.⁶ Bleichner makes an even more deliberate attempt to evade the question of a genre definition. Instead, he makes distinctions between various literary aspects ("Aspekte") such as "Reise als Strukturelement", "Reise als Thema", "Reise als Genre-Problem", "Reise-Stil", and others. In this scheme Bleichner sees travel as an element or theme in different types of literature and not as an independent genre determinant.

Taking a similar approach as Bleichner but a few years before him was Hans-Joachim Possin in his work Reisen und Literatur. Das Thema des Reisens in der englischen Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts.⁷ Possin, according to Schlösser, does away with the "Reiseliteratur" genre distinction in favour of what he terms a 'Literatur des Reisens' (Schlösser 14).

⁶Thomas Bleichner, "Literarisches Reisen als literaturwissenschaftliches Ziel, Einleitung," Komparatistische Hefte 3 (1981): 3-10.

⁷Published in Tübingen, 1972.

Possin believes that the advantages of this term lie in the realization that there is not such a significant difference between fictional and non-fictional "Literatur des Reisens" as the traditional conceptions of travel literature tend to suggest. He sees the problem of distinguishing between various kinds of travel literature solved in reducing (similar to Bleichner) travel to a structural element of more established genres. Brenner, however, offers this warning:

Aber der Preis, den Possin dafür zahlen muß, ist zu hoch: Zwar bedarf es keiner Rechtfertigung der Reiseliteratur als eines Gegenstandes der Philologie mehr, aber die eigentlich erkenntnisträchtigen Probleme der Reiseliteraturforschung werden eliminiert. (Reisebericht 22)

Getting back to his own thesis, Schlösser concludes his considerations by reiterating that "Reiseliteratur" is no genre. Instead, he wishes to postulate, using the same terminology as Possin, a "Literatur der Reisenden" which he feels points beyond specific problems of form and genre distinction. Schlösser's aim seems to be to establish that there is a unity or correlation between writing and traveling:

Statt dessen sei eine "Literatur der Reisenden" zu postulieren, die sich nicht über bestimmte Formen erschließt, sondern in einer Betrachtung des reisenden Schreibers und seines Verhältnisses zum Geschriebenen. (17)

As Brenner examines the more recent studies of travel

literature from the 1960s and 70s he sees in Schlösser's work the exploration of the concept that the relationship between "Ich" and "Welt" is important even when considering a definition of travel literature. Brenner sees this concept as forming the thread that holds Schlösser's ideas together. He feels that Schlösser is seeking a post-modern escape route but does not criticize him on account of it. In his assessment of Schlösser and in his own closing remarks, Brenner sums up the situation of the present state of research on the literature of travel and its limits:

Gegenüber diesen postmodernen Perspektiven ist der Blick auf die Geschichte der Reiseliteratur tröstlich: Es ist wohl kein Zufall, daß sich Schlösser dezidiert auf das Reisen als Paradigma der von ihm angestrebten neuen Erfahrungsformen beruft and daß er deren Explikation im Medium der Reiseliteraturgeschichte vollzieht. Schlösser ist nicht der erste, dessen Welt- und Selbstverständnis durch Reiseerfahrungen ins Wanken geraten ist; und er ist auch nicht der erste, der diese Erfahrung mit dem traditionellen Mittel des Schreibens darüber zu bannen versucht. Das immerhin ist eine Lehre, die sich aus den vielen Jahrhunderten der europäischen Reiseliteraturgeschichte ziehen läßt: Der Gattung ist es noch stets gelungen, Methoden der Verarbeitung zu entwickeln, welche die Erfahrung der Fremde in den Kontext des Eigenen einbinden. Das absolut Fremde ist dem Reisenden unerreichbar geblieben; und wo er es erreicht haben sollte, kann er nicht darüber berichten. Der Reisebericht wie auch die Forschung darüber bleibt stets gebunden an die Prämissen okzidentalen Denkens und Handelns, so verführerisch sich auch der Gedanke an deren Preisgabe dem Reisenden oder dem Theoretiker ausnehmen mag. (Reisebericht 660)

2.2.3. William E. Stewart and the "Reisebeschreibung" of the Eighteenth Century

Of particular interest to our study of the travel literature of the 18th century is the work of William E. Stewart. Published in 1978, his treatise Die Reisebeschreibung und ihre Theorie im Deutschland des 18. Jahrhunderts, is often referred to in the study of the 18th century "Reisebeschreibung" (travel description). Stewart, like other scholars, also sees in the 18th century the "golden age" of this genre (9). Interesting for our present situation is his very readable and informative initial chapter dealing with the history of literary scholarship of 18th century travel literature. Like Brenner and Schlösser, Stewart's work forms a convenient outline to follow in a study of this subject area.

Stewart shares many of the same concerns which have been outlined above regarding the classification of the literature of travel, particularly as it relates to the 18th century. Of specific interest to him is the balance between the aesthetic quality of this kind of literature and its informational benefits. In view of his considerations, Stewart feels that competent scholarship is lacking as much for this

time-period as for the genre as a whole, and that it has therefore overlooked many of the finer aspects of the 18th century "Reisebeschreibung".

He begins his analysis by referring to the respected historian and part-time literary scholar Robert Prutz and his work Über Reisen und Reiseliteratur der Deutschen (1847). Stewart believes that this is the first scholarly treatment which directs its attention to the travel literature of the 18th century. Prutz, like some of his successors chooses the year 1768, the year of Sterne's Sentimental Journey, as an appropriate point at which the serious consideration of the "Reisebeschreibung" can begin. Prior to that time Prutz sees in the "Reisebeschreibungen" nothing more than "trockene Kompendien" and feels that only in the "Blütezeit der Sentimentalität" did the first aesthetically pleasing works of travel literature meriting advanced criticism emerge (Prutz 36).

It was more than fifty years after Prutz that a geographer named Friedrich Ratzel made a significant contribution to the fledgling discussion, showing a somewhat more well-rounded consideration of the literature of travel. In his essay Reisebeschreibungen (1898), Ratzel places most of his emphasis on the many pragmatic uses of this genre but at the expense of its artistic merit. Stewart quotes Ratzel as writing:

Wir können uns nicht unterfangen [...], die merkwürdigen Wechselwirkungen zwischen der Reisebeschreibung und der schönen Literatur aufzuweisen. Das erfordert eine besondere Arbeit, die dem Literaturhistoriker besser liegt als dem Geographen. (cit. in Stewart 11)

Therefore Ratzel at this point already affirms the dualistic nature of the "Reisebeschreibung", but it is clear with which result: "Reisebeschreibung" is still clearly distinguished from "schöne Literatur".

In the years immediately following Ratzel's treatise, three new works which replied to his challenge appeared. The three works were by K.O. Oertel in 1899, B.Richter in 1900, and K. Müller in 1905⁸. According to Stewart the works of all three undertake an analysis of the style and form of the "Reisebeschreibung", but that they all fall short in their task of doing the genre justice by virtue of the fact that they judge the works from the point of view of the aesthetic expectations set by the German Classical period of literature (12). In applying these standards to the Reisebeschreibung, its distinctive merits obviously must remain neglected. This severe reaction by writers trying to offset the extreme position taken by Ratzel did in the end, according

⁸ K.O. Oertel, Die Naturschilderungen bei den Deutschen Geographischen Reisebeschreibungen des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts, diss., Leipzig, 1899; B. Richter, Die Entwicklung der Naturschilderung in den deutschen geographischen Reiseberichten mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Naturschilderung in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts, diss., Leipzig, 1900; K. Müller, Über den Einfluß der klassischen Literatur auf die Reiseschilderungen. Diss. Leipzig, 1905.

to Stewart, do the reputations of the travel descriptions of the 18th century more harm than good (12).

In later works, for example E. Heilborn's Deutschlandreisen in alter Zeit: 17.-19. Jahrhundert written in 1934, the attempt was made to redeem the literature of travel, whose image had suffered at the turn of the century. But in Stewart's view, the newer approaches of Heilborn and others, in an obvious attempt to offset previous misguided ones, overstated their case while using the same stringent criteria as the ones used at the turn of the century. This did little to further the cause of 18th century travel literature because, as has become evident, any one-sided approach was doomed to fall short of its goal (Stewart 12). In another attempt, A.R. Schultz,⁹ much the same way Ratzel did, placed heavy emphasis on researching the travel descriptions for use as historical and other sources. The inherent lack of appreciation of this genre as representative of "fine literature" and a lack of cohesive study continued to be the norm.

Stewart criticizes Manfred Link's work as well, on the basis of the implications that it has for the travel literature of the 18th century. In Link he sees a tendency to view factuality as a negative, fiction as a positive criterion -

⁹A.R. Schultz, Schiller and the Literature of Travel, diss., Wisconsin, 1940; "Goethe and the Literature of Travel," Journal of English and Germanic Philology 48 (1949): 445-469.

the same pattern under which Stewart feels this literature has been burdened for years. He suggests that from this vantage point Link traces the positive developments of travel literature only in so far as it displays an increased fictional content. Stewart draws his conclusion based on Link's attempt to assess the various categories of travel literature (Stewart 13). His assessment of Strelka is equally unflattering. After pointing out that Strelka's Der Literarische Reisebericht initially appeared in a collection of essays devoted to "Nichtfiktionale Literaturgattungen", Stewart takes him to task for creating restrictions which are too narrow - and that at a time when the "Literaturforschung" was trying to expand the accepted horizons of the genre and literature on the whole. He criticizes Strelka also for echoing Prutz's assertion that one can only talk of a German literature of travel, after it had "freed" itself from the confines of the ideals of the Enlightenment.

Stewart then makes an interesting point in relation to the whole tug-of-war nature of the discussion. He writes:

Es ist kaum verwunderlich, daß gerade die pragmatische Dimension der Reisebeschreibung von der Forschung in besonderem Maße vernachlässigt wurde, wurde die Gattung doch für gewöhnlich nur insofern für literaturfähig erachtet, als sie ihre Zweckgebundenheit gleichsam zu transzendieren vermochte.
(13)

This point clearly demonstrates the vicious circle inherent in the various attempts to apply traditional aesthetic norms

to the travel description. On the one hand the literature is supposed to be informative; on the other hand it is supposed to be a literary masterpiece. If it makes pretensions to straddle the dividing line at any time, it is censured from both sides. Stewart continues with this thought in his justification for his own work, saying that in the 18th century the "Selbstverständnis" of the genre was not yet to be found in its literary construction and form, but rather in what he calls its "Wirkungsabsicht" or "rhetorischen" Aspekt". This, Stewart insists, must be more closely scrutinized in viewing the history of the scholarship in this area, as well as the history of the pragmatic intentions of this genre. He continues:

Es stellt sich heraus, daß die pragmatische Dimension der Reisebeschreibung im Grunde nur bei einer einzigen, selten vertretenen Forschungsrichtung ein gewisses Maß von Beachtung fand: Es handelt sich dabei um eine literaturwissenschaftliche Tradition, die in ihrer Fragestellung an die Reisebeschreibung eine Erkenntnis des 18. Jahrhunderts aufgreift, nämlich die Einsicht in das politische und gesellschaftskritische Potential der Gattung. (14)

To prove that this point had in the past been recognized but not necessarily appreciated or developed, Stewart directs our attention again to Prutz and Ratzel. Ratzel clearly felt that the genre could be used "[um] auch den politischen Theorien den Weg in die Reisebeschreibung [zu öffnen]" (cit. in Stewart 14). And Prutz wrote: "Und wer

möchte leugnen, daß dieser politische, dieser soziale Gesichtspunkt bei weitem der wichtigste ist, den ein Reisender haben kann?" (43) The shortcomings of these two authors, in the view of Stewart, however, lies in the fact that beyond these elementary recognitions, no more explanation or discussion of the topic is forthcoming. It seems that these scholars thereby chose to ignore one of the most important aspects and opportunity for the study of the "Reiseliteratur" of the latter half of the 18th century.

In continuing to trace the political and social aspects of the genre's development, Stewart turns to the studies by R. Philippsthal and R. Elsasser¹⁰ and offers their works as examples where scholars writing about travel literature did indeed cast more than just a cursory glance at the political ramifications of the genre. But he deems their work, too, to fall short of any long-term or larger significance:

Ließen sich die Vertreter der idealistisch-normativen Literaturwissenschaft zuungunsten pragmatischer, insbesondere wirkungsgeschichtlicher Fragestellungen zu einseitig von formal-ästhetischen Erkenntnisinteressen leiten, so verfallen Philippsthal und Elsasser in das gegenteilige Extrem, sich ausschließlich einer Fülle von inhaltlichen und pragmatischen Gesichtspunkten zu widmen und dabei die Reisebeschreibung als Form völlig aus den Augen zu verlieren. (15)

¹⁰R. Philippsthal, "Deutsche Reisende des 18. Jahrhunderts in England," Festschrift zum 13. Allgemeinen Deutschen Neu-Philologentage in Hannover Pfingsten 1908, (Hannover: 1908), 77-100; R. Elsasser, Über die politischen Bildungsreisen der Deutschen nach England (vom achtzehnten Jahrhundert bis 1815), (Heidelberg: 1917).

In this case again he sees that the literary merits are ignored and the emphasis on the one-sided positions continues to hold sway.

It takes a long time, as far as Stewart is concerned, before a truly fruitful work on this topic which establishes some sort of equilibrium between the two poles materializes. He points to the year 1974 and the work of a group of academics calling themselves the "Westberliner Autorenkollektiv"¹¹, and specifically to their consideration of Georg Forster's Ansichten vom Niederrhein. This group of authors was the product of the 1960s and somewhat left-leaning in its convictions, prompting Stewart to chastise them for what he terms "ideologische Einseitigkeit"; nevertheless, he maintains:

[...] die Arbeit [vermag] jedoch meines Wissens erstmalig ein gewisses methodisches Gleichgewicht in der Erforschung der faktologischen Reisebeschreibung des 18. Jahrhunderts herzustellen, indem sie bei ihrer Untersuchung der Pragmatik ständig Rekurs nimmt auf die Reisebeschreibung selbst, sowohl als Gattung als auch in der konkreten Ausprägung des Forsterschen Werkes. (15-16)

In this case then, Stewart sees the writers as indeed being able somehow to fuse the "formal-ästhetische" stream with the "inhaltlich-pragmatische" one. For Stewart their work represents an important development in the history of schol-

¹¹Gert Mattenklott and Klaus R. Scherpe are the editors of materials published by the "Westberliner Autorenkollektiv". See the bibliography.

arship in the literature of travel and breaks the ground for later writers like Wolfgang Griep and others whose recent attempts now centre around a more balanced consideration of travel literature in the context of its social and political milieu. The contributions of these men will feature prominently in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

3. The History of Travel Literature

3.1. From the Beginnings to the Eighteenth Century

Having directed our attention to the theoretical research in the area of travel literature, that is, what the views of various scholars are on its justifications as a genre, let us move toward a brief review of the history of travel literature up to the 18th century. Emphasis will be placed on those specific streams or developments which most directly pertain to and influence the later travel literature.

It was mentioned in the previous section that the literature of travel must logically be one of the oldest forms of literature whose roots certainly go back to the dawn of civilization and the beginnings of written communication. For example, one can point here to the Hebrew wanderings recorded in the Bible. And as with so many facets of Western culture, the literature of travel can also be traced back to the Greeks. A work no less famous than Homer's Odyssey provides just one example. Written in the sixth century BC it is, of course, a largely fictional account with travel being more of a motif than a subject in itself. While certainly

not resembling in any significant way the "Reiseberichte" outlined previously in this thesis, it does nonetheless represent one of the earliest manifestations of travel literature.

In late antiquity the travel guides in the tradition of the "Periegesis" and later the "Itinerarium" which offered information on travel routes and lodgings came into wide circulation. The Romans carried on the Greek tradition but tended towards a strictly geographical and practical emphasis (Witte 28).

In the Middle Ages the tradition of travel literature was continued in Western Europe, albeit for a somewhat different purpose than it had served before. It was, in fact, the phenomenon of the pilgrimage and its distant relative the crusade which represented in the early Middle Ages the single most important impetus for travel. And with the eventual popularity of pilgrimages the old "Itinerarium" was superseded by specifically tailored guides and handbooks for pilgrims (Kirchner 633).

As the Middle Ages continued, the tradition of the epics and sagas still famous today gained popularity. These works were representative of a new secular direction taken by the travel literature spawned by the pilgrim travel literature. As a result travel literature became ever more fantastic, fuelled by the secular motivations of fame and glory.

The bulk of the travelling during the Middle Ages was, logically, done by members of the nobility who had the means both to travel and to have their journeys recorded and embellished by personal chroniclers and secretaries. It would, however, be remiss to assume that the famous and powerful were the only people who travelled extensively or that the Holy Land and other religious destinations were the only ones visited. Particularly since about the 10th and 11th centuries, there are records of other people travelling; scholars, diplomats, mercenaries, merchants, and artisans. The reasons why people travelled were also more varied and came to include business, education, and in some cases, recreation (Brenner, Reisebericht 53).

As we move into the late Middle Ages and towards the historical turning point represented by the Renaissance and the age of Humanism, we find that as far as Western Europe is concerned, the literature of travel continued still to be dominated by pilgrimages and religious motivations (sincere and otherwise) (Brenner 53). Other kinds of travel literature were, of course, gaining in prominence but still constituted only a small portion of the total.

A very interesting and important turning point for travel literature came with the intensified emphasis on discovery and the expansion of known geographical and scientific horizons. Emphasis was now increasingly placed on the accumulation and transmission of knowledge and "facts", and

this again was reflected in a steady stream of "factual" travel reports. The "Entdeckungsreisen" following Columbus' example, spawned many "Reiseberichte" in which the charting of new geographic regions and the discoveries of new and strange peoples and their cultures, as well as strange and exotic animals and plants, the likes of which had never before been imagined, became the focus. The forging of a new "scientific method" was reflected in the literature of travel.

The effects of this new age on the literature of travel were numerous and varied. Along with the more factual contributions, however, came also the more "literary" ones. It is perhaps a paradox, but this age of discovery, with its new approach to the scientific and natural world also gave rise to a new and in some ways reactionary response through travel literature in the form of escapist works typified by the "Staatsroman". With reports of beautiful tropical islands and idyllic new cultural settings came visions of utopias and paradises on earth. As a result a tradition begun by Thomas More's Utopia became popular. Far from being factually-based, these works reflected the fantasy of man's hope for a better lot somewhere else on earth. Thus travel becomes a motif in the form of the fictional voyage to fictional distant islands and cultures which, when in contrast with the protagonist's own world view, exposes his world's political, moral and social shortcomings (Metzler 632). A

certain relativization emerges wherein one's own egocentric, selfish and corrupt society is compared to and contrasted with the one represented by the "noble savage" who is at one and at peace with nature and his fellow human beings. This tradition and this use of travel literature as a means of criticizing through contrast and comparison will come to gain importance again later in the 18th century.

Another important variation of travel literature, which enjoyed an overall increase in popularity as time went on and travelling as a whole became easier, was the one influenced by the "Bildungsreisen". These educational journeys were not anything new - they had existed for many centuries even in an organized form - but it was during the Age of Discovery, however, that they gained immensely in popularity and became standardized throughout the countries of Europe.

Traditionally there were actually two forms of "Bildungsreisen". The "gelehrte Reise" or scholarly journey, and the "Kavalierstour" or "Grand Tour". The oldest of the two is the "gelehrte Reise". It was characterized in medieval times by travelling monks and other scholars who visited monasteries and church libraries in order to gather and share knowledge, usually religious or philosophical (Peitsch, Forsters "Ansichten" 142). As universities were founded, they, too, became important destinations, indeed, eventually the most important ones. From these beginnings evolved a standardized agenda for most scholastics to fol-

low, and what one had by the 16th century was a kind of intellectual elite, not necessarily associated with the Church, which in the spirit of the Renaissance travelled across Europe and sometimes the Middle East with fairly well-established destinations. Their aims were the broadening of their own intellectual horizons as well as those of their colleagues and eventually of the public at large. Destinations came to include also private book collections, museums, and antique collections. "Pilgrimages" were now undertaken, not in order to pay homage to relics and Holy sites, but rather to gain knowledge of antiquity and to come in contact with rare books, manuscripts and artifacts (Peitsch, 142). This interest began to centre itself around Northern Europe once the Italian scientific boom had come to a halt. Although there was no great publishing activity on the part of most of these travellers, there was much private correspondence between individuals; many observations and debates were recorded in personal diaries, journals and, of course, letters.

The "Kavalierstour" on the other hand, differed substantially from the "gelehrte Reise". It grew out of the tradition of the "Ritterakademie", and soon became an important and widely-accepted tradition among the nobility and royalty of Europe. Since the 16th century it gained immensely in popularity to the point at which it was considered an integral part of every young noble's worldly education. The

tour was designed to round off this education by having the young men, under the watchful eye of personal tutors, visit and spend time at some of the most prominent courts of Europe, particularly those of Holland, France, and Italy. In order to gain insight into the exact emphasis of these "Bildungsreisen", one need look no further than the titles of some of the resultant travel literature. Take for example the report on the tour of the 16 year old margrave Christian of Brandenburg written by his tutor Sigmund von Birken entitled Hochfürstlicher Brandenburgischer Ulysses: oder Verlauf der Länder Reise, welche der Durchleuchtigste Fürst ... Herr Christian Marggraf zu Brandenburg durch Teutschland, Frankreich, Italien und die Niederlande, auch nach den spanischen Frontieren hochlöblichst verrichtet: Aus denen mit Fleiss gehaltenen Reiss-Diariis zusammengetragen und beschrieben durch S.v.B. (1669). What is most important in this literature are the exploits and achievements and the activities of the young noble. For example, it was important to note which official functions he attended or to the audiences of which king, prince, or noble he was invited. Other important things learned on the Grand Tour were horsemanship, fencing, hunting, dancing, and modern languages. The emphasis thus was not so much on learning per se, as on finding one's niche in aristocratic society and making contact with the other royal houses of Europe. The main aim was to hone the "rough edges", to become well-versed in the

courtly customs and traditions of Europe (Peitsch 141).

The basic characteristics of both the "Kavalierstour" and of the "gelehrte Reise" have been outlined above. How the two traditions came to resemble each other later in history, particularly in a political and social context, will be discussed as we look into travel literature in the 18th century.

In the Baroque and Rococo periods travel literature continues its increase in popularity and wins more respect as a literary form. A move towards a "Literarisierung" of travel literature is afoot, and is witnessed to in many works, not only in fictional treatments but also in nonfictional ones.

An interesting trend of this period was that represented by the Baroque "Gesellschaftsroman" (Metzler 632). In some ways similar to the "Staatsroman", the "Gesellschaftsroman", as its name implies, concerned itself with the notion of society at the time. It resembles the idealistic and utopian themes outlined for the "Staatsroman", but is usually characterised by an overtly didactic message and mode of presentation. The emphasis was on the creation of a fantasy setting which would best present the context needed for the social criticism inherent in these works.

In all, from the 16th to the 18th century the continued exploration and exploitation of new lands around the globe led to continued interest in travel, which constantly pro-

vided more and more material for literature - factual and fictional.

To sum up this time span, we must point out that Baroque travel literature obviously had a significant effect on subsequent literature of all kinds; and that the time period - the Age of Discovery - led to the entrenchment of the "Reisebericht" in the standard reading lists of the day and those to follow. By the end of the 17th century at least one scholar suggests that the "Reisebericht" had triumphed as a literary genre (Witte 28). The stage, it seems, had been set for the "golden age" of the travel report in the 18th century.

3.2. The Development of Travel Literature During the Eighteenth Century

3.2.1. General Comments

A consideration of the history of the 18th century cannot ignore two very important developments in our civilization - the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. These manifestations shaped and defined the path of change and development in the 1700s and 1800s and influenced the geographical, political and philosophical boundaries of Europeans for years to come. The writings of Rousseau, Kant, Fichte, Lessing, and Diderot exerted a significant influence on social and intellectual institutions of their day, through their efforts to spread the ideas of the "Enlightenment", and helped to initiate the establishment of a middle class consciousness, one of the lasting legacies of this period in history. Added to the contributions of these men was also the prodigious progress being made in the sciences and in travel and exploration by men such as Captain James Cook, and others. These men and the developments which shaped their age had a direct and lasting influence on the direction which literature of all kinds was to continue to

take in the 1700s and the 1800s. Their contributions aided the laying of a foundation for increased social and political awareness and for more open and more direct questioning and criticism.

Travel literature, of course, did not escape the effects of this age, and its development at this time represents an important yardstick by which to measure the whole genre and the work of Becker and his contemporaries. In order to assess best the significance and relevance of the all-important French Revolution on travel literature, it is necessary to go back to approximately the beginning of the 18th century to trace the gradual rise of its politicization in a cultural and intellectual context and the resultant trend towards serious social and political analysis of many areas of the human experience.

On the whole, the history of both travel and travel literature in the 18th century is characterized by a marked increase in their popularity. Due to the rise of new social conditions, first and foremost of which was the emergence of a stronger, more mobile middle class, an increased predilection for travel among the various social classes made itself felt. This trend continued steadily and unabated to the point where in the second half of the 18th century, travel by Europeans had reached epidemic proportions. The testimony of contemporaries bears this out. "In keinem Zeitalter der Welt wird so viel gereist, als in dem unsrigen, wo das

Reisen zu einer Art von Epidemie geworden ist", writes an anonymous person to the editor of the Teutsche Merkur in November, 1784 (151). And on the concomitant increase in the literature of travel the same author writes: "Es ist wohl kein Wunder, daß bey so häufigen Reisen in unsern bücherreichen Zeiten der Reisebeschreibungen so viele verfertigt werden."

This increase in the publication of German travel literature in the 18th century has been well documented.¹² It has, for example, been established that in the reading clubs of the day most books dealing with geography were in fact now "Reisebeschreibungen". And while book production between 1770 and 1800 doubled, the number of works of travel literature increased fivefold (Griep, "Reiseliteratur" 739). Travel literature was now much sought after and had established its own place on the shelves of libraries and reader circles ("Lesegesellschaften").

Although statistics may point to a certain irrefutable degree of popularity, it must be borne in mind that readership even at this time must have been limited. Evidence strongly suggests that it was primarily the middle and upper middle classes who were most interested in travel litera-

¹²For additional information on the increase in publishing in Germany and Europe at this time see, for example, Rudolf Schenda, Volk ohne Buch. Studien zur Sozialgeschichte der populären Lesestoffe 1770-1910 (Frankfurt a.M., 1970) and Reinhard Wittmann, "Die frühen Buchhändlerzeitschriften als Spiegel des literarischen Lebens", Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens 13 (1973).

ture. What emerged was a kind of "bürgerliche Publizistik" (Peitsch, "Ansätze" 218) of which travel literature was an important part and which attempted to define and characterize the aims and desires of the rising middle class. "Die Reiseanweisungen und Reisebeschreibungen gegen Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts wenden sich, zum Teil ganz explizit, an einen gelehrten Leserkreis, wobei auch der Kaufmannsstand immer mehr einer Realienbildung durch Schule und Journale zustrebte" (Elkar 55).

The analysis of this literary form points to a reciprocal relationship between travel (in this case the reception of the resultant literature) and the emergence of a stronger more cohesive middle class consciousness in Germany,¹³ for undoubtedly this consciousness was enhanced by the evidence (travel literature) of its own making.

Generally, the development of an interest in both travel and travel literature in the 18th century is identified by a steady and continuing trend towards a more and more critical consideration of travel as a way of gaining and imparting knowledge on a wide range of topics related to the human experience. This trend culminated in the socially and politically conscious travel literature of the late 18th century. At the root of this trend, however, are other sig-

¹³For a comprehensive review of the various treatments of this topic of the rise of the middle class in Germany see the books and relevant chapters by Bruford, Gooch, Möller, Stern and Valjavec.

nificant underlying causes, the complex interrelation and parallel development of which must be discussed. They are the emergence of merchant capitalism and a middle class consciousness and the influence of works like Defoe's Robinson Crusoe on both the emergence of the middle class and the literary refinement of the genre of travel literature, the contribution and increased importance of "Bildungsreisen" as a means of more critical manifestations of travel and travel literature, the emergence of a pragmatic school of thought educating the traveller through the use of handbooks and topographical and statistical travel reports, and finally, the development of the social and political oriented travel report prior to and during the French Revolution.

The sum total of these developments led to travelling and to the writing of travel reports by segments of society which previously had not done either. This heightened interest contributed towards a more critical approach to travel and travel accounts as an important means of conveying information and imparting critical observations on the social and political state of Europe.

3.2.2. Fictional Travel Literature and its relationship
to the Rise of Middle Class Consciousness
in Germany.

Example: Defoe's Robinson Crusoe

The path towards more critical travel literature was initially manifested in fictional works like the aforementioned "Staatsroman", "Gesellschaftsroman", or "Reiseroman" where an author created utopian visions of civilizations as a means of directing criticism upon his more familiar surroundings. For the early 18th century the most important example of such fictional travel literature was Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe published in 1719. This work has been appraised by Griep, Elkar, Peitsch, Stewart and others as being important for the understanding of the emergence of the middle class consciousness in Germany and of its increased inclination towards travel.

That the development of travel literature and the emergence of a potent middle class enjoyed a reciprocal relationship in regard to their respective developments can be explained in the following way: an increase in merchant capitalism brought on by the age of discovery and colonization of new lands and territories throughout the world, led

to the development of a new class of merchants and traders. Its demands for literature relating to travel and geography led to a stream of literature which has been identified as "historisch-merkatorisch-geographisch". The ensuing "literarische Verarbeitung" of these works, in the form of the "Reiseroman" saw the hero come to embody the attributes of the middle class "Bürger". Here Crusoe serves as the prime example: "in seinen Helden konkretisieren sich Geschichte und Gesetzmäßigkeiten der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft" (Griep, "Reiseliteratur" 741, 742).

In Germany, Griep argues, the works following in Crusoe's tradition are marked by "ökonomische Rationalität" in so far as style and "Handlungsstruktur" are concerned (742). Capital has bequeathed to the middle class more mobility, and this is reflected in the "Reiseroman" where its heroes have the opportunity to dissociate themselves from the reigning feudal order:

Reisen und Aventuren entstammen demselben sozialen Bedingungsgefüge; sie werden in den Romanen zu Zeichen für die Mobilität und Autonomie des als Privatmann agierenden Helden. In strenger Scheidung von der Sphäre der staatlichen Gewalt wird hier bereits ein bürgerlich strukturierter Erfahrungsbereich vorgebildet, der sich real erst im weiteren Verlauf des Jahrhunderts festigt. (Griep, "Reiseliteratur" 742-43)

Thus Defoe's fictional work is important to later factual forms of travel literature for two reasons. First,

it presented a type of role model for the middle class which aided its self-identification; secondly it gave impetus to further works in the same tradition. These subsequent works eventually laid the foundations for the further development of critical and politicized travel literature.

3.2.3. "Bildungsreisen"

The apparent growth in importance of the middle class and the existence of fictional literary characters like Robinson Crusoe did, however, not alone determine the continuing trend in the 18th century towards politicization. While there were many signs that the middle class was beginning to assert itself more strongly in many sectors of daily life, what was also of significant importance was the continued predilection for travel by the nobility and royalty in the context of an Enlightenment trademark - a desire for a broader base of knowledge pertaining to the many topics, scientific and philosophical, having to do with man's existence.

The nobility, as well as the traditional scholars (clergy and university students), signified their increased interest in travel through their individual, class-specific "Bildungsreisen". The origins and characteristics of the nobility's and the upper class' version of the educational journey, the "Kavalierstour" (Grand tour), have been outlined previously in this thesis (ch.3). Of specific concern to us is the fact, that, as was the case in other segments in life, throughout the early 18th century the middle class

moved towards the objectives sought by the nobility. Griep writes that:

Etwa seit der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts ist es für junge Adlige üblich geworden, eine Bildungsreise zu repräsentativen ausländischen Höfen zu unternehmen. [...] Den Adligen folgt das gebildete Bürgertum, das im ständig wachsenden Behördenapparat des absolutistischen Staates in zunehmendem Maße gebraucht wird. ("Reiseliteratur" 743)

Therefore, in addition to a new well-to-do class of merchants and traders arose also a well-educated middle class traveller whose importance to the state was justified by his vital function as bureaucrat and civil servant. These learned people accompanied their benefactors on their travels, partook in trade missions as diplomats, and so on. This eventually widened further the scope of influence of the middle class in so far as travel and the experience of geographical "Erfahrungsraum" was concerned (Bödeker 93-95, Elkar 63).

While the middle class was travelling in ever greater numbers, their further aspirations were finding expression in a critique of the Grand Tour itself. Peitsch writes:

Im Verlauf des 18. Jahrhunderts verstärkte sich die Stimme der bürgerlichen Kritik an der Grand Tour, die gegen die Funktion einwandte, daß die Vorstellung, Erziehung ginge an Höfen durch Nachahmung vonstatten, "Rakes" oder Libertins produzieren müßte und gegen die Objekte des feudalen Interesses, daß nur "Nachahmungssucht" herauskommen könnte, weil es einzig auf das Äußerliche ginge

und überdies die Unfähigkeit, Vergleiche anzustellen, das Erzlaster der sehr jungen Reisenden wäre. (Forsters "Ansichten" 141-42)

The result of such criticism were the own counter-balancing attempts of the middle class to arrive at a more well-rounded conception of "Bildungsreisen", specifically "gelehrte Reisen". Those partaking in the "gelehrte Reise" were not the "durch den Feudalabsolutismus politisch ausgeschaltete und durch den Hof geprägte Adel", but rather a "sich allmählich verbreitende Schicht der weltlichen, d.h. nicht mehr im Dienst der Kirche stehende Intelligenz" (Peitsch, Forsters "Ansichten" 142). The result of the general realization of what "the educational possibilities of well-directed travel were" was, as William Mead has pointed out, that the Germans, in particular, "had the reputation [...] of deriving more profit from their journeys than any other travelers" (375).

This development had the end result that led to a more serious consideration of the world one lived in; for in the refining of the concept of the "gelehrte Reise", further impetus was given to the growth of more critical travel literature. A development was noticeable whereby the traditional goals of the original scholarly journey described above (ch.3) were replaced by other interests, namely "[...] spezialisierte wissenschaftliche Interessen an Teilgebieten der Gelehrsamkeit, andererseits [...] die erweiterte Aufmerksam-

keit auf die gesellschaftlichen Bedingungen, unter denen Gelehrsamkeit sich entwickeln könnte" (Peitsch, Forsters "Ansichten" 143). Thus the 18th century "Bildungsreisen" of the middle and upper middle classes came to be related closely to the "Kavalierstour" in its evolution, but with the difference that: "mit dem bürgerlichen Aufbruch zugleich ein grundlegender Perspektivwandel verbunden [war]" (Griep, "Reiseliteratur" 743). The perspective for the nobility changed from placing an emphasis on "Herrschaftswissen" (744) to a more enlightened and well-rounded understanding of social and political issues.

It must be acknowledged, however, that the "Bildungsreisen", in particular the "Kavalierstour" of the 18th century, did not contribute a great deal in terms of travel reports per se. Most of them found expression only in unpublished diaries and the like. Those which were set to be published, like the aforementioned Hochfürstlicher Brandenburgischer Ulysses..., of 1723 (ch. 3) were aimed, however, at glorifying the young noble rather than at imparting to the reader any sort of relevant educational material.

The "gelehrte Reisen", usually had a more solid tradition of producing travel reports, and it was those, like J.J. Winkelmann's report on his trip to Paris in 1741, and J.J. Reiske's description of his trip to Leyden in 1738, which fuelled the appetite of readers seeking information and observations about other places. It was through these

works that an educating process took place. Works such as these became, in a sense, substitutes for travel, for "nicht nur das Reisen selbst, sondern ins besondere auch die Reiseliteratur [wurde] zu einem Bildungserlebnis" (Elkar 63), and it was in this vein, that later writers like Goethe (Italienische Reise, 1786) set out on their own "Bildungsreisen".

3.2.4. The Emergence of Theoretical and Practical Travel Aids

As a result in part of the new emphasis being placed on the importance of the "gelehrte Reise", it is not surprising that there was also a parallel increase in the theoretical and practical considerations, a kind of science of travel which was aimed at the new, well-educated, well-intentioned class of travel consumers referred to earlier. In the mode of the earlier handbooks and travel guides there appeared detailed philosophical and scientific guidelines for travelers suggesting what knowledge they should acquire prior to departing and what they should pay special attention to while underway. An enlightened despot who was to rule with the best interests of his people at heart was now expected to get the greatest benefit possible out of his tour. Such considerations gave rise to a program of well-reasoned and well-planned journeys approached with intelligence and practicality.

One of the contemporary sources most often quoted in today's secondary literature regarding this new intellectual aspect of travel literature is the prominent publicist and university professor at Göttingen, August Ludwig Schlözer, who between the years 1772 and 1795 gave a series of lectures on travel which dealt with more esoteric concerns such

as the intellectual justifications for travel.¹⁴

Schlözer advocated an intelligent and balanced approach to travel - not too "worldly" nor too studious:

Schlözer setzt letztendlich doch den gebildeten Leser voraus, der an seinem Kollegium teilhat, wobei nicht das formale Wissen der entscheidende Gesichtspunkt ist, sondern wohlgestaltete und gut überlegte Umsetzungsmöglichkeiten, Vernunft und Einsicht zu handeln. (Elkar 58)

The traveller was advised to seek out and absorb useful social information, emphasizing matters which were educational, but at the same time identifiable with middle class values and beliefs. As a result of this new approach which was clearly aimed at the intelligent middle class traveller, there appeared numerous detailed guide books specifically designed for him.¹⁵

¹⁴Schlözer's lectures have been preserved for us in: Ludwig August Schlözer, Vorlesungen über Land- und Seereisen, nach dem Kollegheft des stud. jur. E.F. Haupt, ed. Wilhelm Ebel (Göttingen: 1962).

¹⁵Interesting as well as entertaining, perhaps, from our point of view is a list of elements to which the traveller should pay attention to or be prepared to encounter and know something about. This list is from Graf Leopold Berchtold, Anweisung für Reisende, nebst einer systematischen Sammlung zweckmäßiger nützlicher Fragen, (Braunschweig: 1791) simplified by Elkar: "von folgenden Künsten und Wissenschaften ist es unumgänglich notwendig, daß ein Reisender sich Kenntnisse erwerbe": 1.Gesetzgebung, 2.Naturgeschichte, 3.Mineralogie, Metallurgie und Chemie, 4.Mathematik, 5.Mechanik, 6.Hydrostatik, Hydraulik und Architektur, 7.Perspektive, 8.Erdbeschreibung, 9.Navigation und Schiffbaukunst, 10.Ackerbau, 11.Sprachen, 12.Arithmetik, 13.Zeichnen, 14."eine lesbare und geschwinde Hand", 15.Schwimmen, 16.oberflächliche medizinische Kenntnisse, 17.Musik, 18.Ge-

Behind the pragmatic approaches of Schlözer and others lies a very didactic intention which manifests itself in some travel literature. In the latter half of the 18th century education had become one of the great themes in travel, which maintained and refined the tradition begun by the "Kavalierstour" and the "gelehrte Reise" centuries earlier. As an illustration of this pervading new attitude we can turn to Herder, who in 1769 wrote: "Wie anders lernt man die Welt kennen; je weiter man in sie tritt: jeder Schritt ist Erfahrung, und jede Erfahrung bildet" (cit. in Bödeker 95). "Weltkenntnis" and "Erfahrung" were elements, it was felt, which learned people could acquire while travelling. Travel had come to be seen by the Enlightenment as the means to acquire knowledge and to gain insight into the world particularly on a socio-political level. However, travel had to be conducted correctly. Schlözer and others advocated a well-rounded approach to travel and offered prescriptions and theories with the aim of furthering the idea that travel was a useful and indeed necessary way of educating oneself about

schmack, 19. Menschenkenntnis, 20. Kenntnis des vaterländischen Staates, 21. vorläufige Bekanntschaft mit den Ländern, die man besuchen will" (Elkar 56-57). Similarly detailed travel handbooks are also: Franz Posselt, Apodemik oder die Kunst zu reisen. Ein systematischer Versuch zum Gebrauch junger Reisenden aus den Gebildeten Ständen überhaupt und angehender Gelehrten und Künstler, 2 vols. (Leipzig: 1795), or: Heinrich August Ottokar Reichard: Handbuch für Reisende aus allen Ständen. Nebst zwey Postkarten (Leipzig: 1784).

the world, acquiring and disseminating information, and understanding one's niche in society.

3.2.5. Topographical Travel reports

The travel reports resulting from a pragmatic approach have been termed alternately "lexikographisch", "topographisch" or "statistisch" (Peitsch, Forsters "Ansichten" 144-45). "Lexikographisch" is the term used to describe the encyclopedic nature of most of these works, "topographisch" is the term applied to reports dealing with one's own country, and "statistisch" refers to the ones dealing with foreign countries (Peitsch 144-145). All three kinds are often characterized by vast amounts of detail, a plethora of statistics and figures, relating to census information, economics, government finances and a myriad of other topics designed to familiarize the reader with all aspects of a country.

Champion of the new emphasis on the "topographischer Reisebericht" was undoubtedly Friedrich Nicolai. His enormous and unprecedented travel report, Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahre 1781. Nebst Bemerkungen über Gelehrsamkeit, Industrie, Religion und Sitten, set an important standard for subsequent writers of travel literature. This mammoth account of his travels which appeared in 12 volumes contained liberal amounts of theorizing and hypothesizing, pragmatic recommendations, and re-

ports of actual travels which he undertook. It was generally well received at the time and lauded for its comprehensiveness, frankness and predisposition to criticism. Over and above the vast amounts of information contained in the work, it gave a significant impetus to the debate regarding the advocacy of a more "critical" and forthright approach to travel literature.

In a letter to the publicist Dohm's Deutsches Museum, an influential publication at the time, Nicolai wrote about his work in 1783 that:

Die Gemeinnützlichkeit eines solchen Werk's fiel mir freylich gar sehr in die Augen. [...] Hierzu könnten Reisebeschreibungen die nützlichsten Dienste thun, worinn versucht würde, die hauptsächlichsten deutschen Provinzen, besonders nach ihrer Verfassung, Religion, Gelehrsamkeit, Industrie und Sitten, so viel ein Reisender davon bemerken kann, zu schildern. (cit. in Stewart, Die Reisebeschreibung 253)

Nicolai does, however, appreciate the problems associated with carrying out such a program successfully. He refers to some of his problems:

[Probleme] an die nicht jeder denkt, welche man aber stärker zu empfinden anfängt, je weiter man in einer Arbeit wie die meinige kommt. Wenn man den wahren Zustand der Dinge schildern will, so muß man freymüthig reden. Ich habe es seit dreyßig Jahren wohl erfahren, welche bittere Feindschaft man sich zuziehet, wenn man nur von den Schriften seiner Zeitgenossen freymüthig zu urtheilen wagt. Und nun! Wenn man Vorurtheile in Religionsgebräuchen, Mängel in Verfassungen, in Gelehrsamkeit, in Industrie, Besonderheiten in Sitten be-

merken, und seinen Namen dabey nennen, und die Scene weder nach Griechenland noch nach Marokkos verlegen will, sondern ganz simpel heraussagt: "In diesem Land oder Orte in Deutschland findet sich dieses oder jenes!" da ist es wohl sehr schwer zu sagen, wo man anfangen und wo man aufhören, was man sagen oder verschweigen soll, wenn man Wahrheit hervorbringen, durch Wahrheit Nutzen stiften und doch wissentlich nicht beleidigen, und doch schonen will, was des Schonens würdig ist. (cit. in Stewart, Die Reisebeschreibung 254)

Thus Nicolai openly lobbied for the right to criticize frankly and forthrightly and to state his honest personal impressions truthfully, no matter whom it might offend - even if one wrote about one's own country. His tools were "Wahrheit" and "Freymüthigkeit". Both of these expressions, in fact, became symbols for the new and open "Reisebeschreibungen", and were picked up on by numerous contemporaries. "Freymüthig" meant not to hold back or be shy in a subjective analysis even of one's own country. With Nicolai begins a new "gattungsgeschichtliche Phase, in der die Reisebeschreibung offenkundig tendenziös wird" (Stewart, Die Reisebeschreibung 255).

The ideas which Nicolai and his imitators pursued began to wield much influence in shaping the genre of travel literature and thus became the subject of some serious literary criticism and debate. A new platform of "Freymüthigkeit," was being erected which in time, provided for direct confrontation and free expression regarding religious institutions, political institutions, and social conditions.

Stewart uses the term "politischer Brisanz" to describe this development, and he writes that: "Man hatte in der Gattung ein [...] ideales Instrument entdeckt, die Belange des Bürgertums überzeugend vor der Öffentlichkeit zu vertreten" (Stewart, Die Reisebeschreibung 259). The days of subtle and polite contrasts were over and the publishing of "Reisebeschreibungen" had become entrenched as an important mode of the formation of political ideas (Bödeker 109).

3.2.6. The Development of the Social and Political Travel Report

The developments which came about because of the new concepts relating to travel literature in the first three quarters of the 18th century point to the strengthening of the notion that travel and travel literature was in a sense a middle class apparatus which could be used to draw critical comparisons on issues directly affecting it as the Enlightenment proceeded. As some members of the German middle class, particularly civil servants and businessmen made their way around Europe they became more familiar with the inner workings of such neighbouring countries as England, Holland, and France. When observations about the success of the middle class in these countries filtered back to Germany they began to set a standard whereby Germans could measure their own circumstances. Travellers marvelled at the degree of political freedom in England, the religious freedom and economic prosperity of Holland and later at the courage and determination of the French masses. They compared these countries with Germany, a country still suffering from particularism, living under the yoke of the most restrictive trade constraints, pervasive censorship, and

countless petty tyrants and despots, and then realized, in comparison, how badly off they were. Hence, literature in the form not only of travel reports but also of emerging journalistic reports played a pivotal role in creating an awareness of the contrasts between Germany and other European countries.¹⁶ Griep maintains, in fact, that:

Reisebeschreibungen sind so - neben den Privatkorrespondenzen - noch während des gesamten 18. Jahrhunderts wesentlicher Bestandteil eines Nachrichtennetzes, das die Ebene der staatlichen Verlautbarungen, das 'Intelligenzwesen' unterläuft. ("Reiseliteratur" 746-47)

It would be premature, however, to talk of a new development in travel literature which resulted in direct hard-hitting criticism. This new trend was in fact still not very overt or widespread, partially for the obvious reason that no matter how critical and knowledgeable the middle class had become, until it developed some kind of collective idea of class-consciousness and self-confidence or some sort of power base, it would logically lack the pragmatic and practical experience needed to develop a theory of criti-

¹⁶What developed was what Bödeker has called the "aufklärerische Inlandsreise" (98). Both Peitsch, (*Ansätze* 218) and Bernhard Weissel, *Von wem die Gewalt in den Staaten herührt. Beiträge zu den Auswirkungen der Staats- und Gesellschaftsauffassungen Rousseaus auf Deutschland im letzten Viertel des 18. Jahrhunderts*, (Berlin: 1963), use the term "Europäische Orientierung" to describe the move towards a European focus in travel literature.

cism. But certainly other factors also played important roles in retarding the growth of overt critical expression. Many of the travellers were in the service of their king or nobleman and expressing views unacceptable to their employers could be hazardous to their livelihood and even in some cases to their lives. But this hesitancy was gradually being overcome and by about 1780 the stage had been set for more intensely critical literature; the "aufklärerische Politisierungsprozeß" in travel literature had been initiated and was making its influence felt (Bödeker 109).

While Nicolai stood out because of his formulation of a theory of critical travel literature, others writing at about the same time, like Ludwig Wekhrlin and Johann Kaspar Riesbeck, were putting such ideas into a fully practical and pragmatic mode. Wekhrlin with his Reise durch Ober-Deutschland in 1778 and Riesbeck with his Briefe eines reisenden Franzosen über Deutschland an seinen Bruder zu Paris, published later in 1784 had already begun to direct the emphasis of their writings towards acute social criticism, and to change the literary venue to a more political one. On the basis of the titles alone the shift towards examination of one's immediate surroundings is evident. The contents display an obvious strain between middle class and aristocratic interests.

Riesbeck, for example, who calls his political orientation "aufgeklärter Absolutismus" (cit. in Peitsch, For-

sters "Ansichten" 189), pays close attention to the governing methods of the individual dukes and princes in their respective principalities. Peitsch explains: "die einzelnen Fürsten werden auf Teilgebieten miteinander verglichen; eine besondere Rolle spielen der Ämterkauf, die Steuerungerechtigkeit und die Verschwendung der öffentlichen Finanzen" (Forsters "Ansichten" 189). The following quotation taken from Riesbeck's work shows his position and demonstrates his frank and open tone:

Während die Größeren Höfe Deutschlands ihre Wirtschaft und Verwaltung soviel als möglich zu vereinfachen und in ihren Staaten die strengste Ökonomie einzuführen suchen, herrscht unter den kleineren noch eine Verschwendung, Pracht und Scheinliebe, die alle Schranken und beinahe auch allen Glauben übersteigt. (cit. in Peitsch 190)

The writers referred to eventually became popular examples for many of the later Jacobin writers of travel literature who looked to Riesbeck's and Wehrlin's travel descriptions as important inspirations for their own critical expressions.

3.2.7. Travel Literature in the Context of the French Revolution

As the French Revolution neared, not only were writers of German travel literature becoming evermore educated, casting an increasingly critical eye upon the world around them; a heightened sense of social responsibility prompted more travellers to take up the pen in defense of their own ideas and observations. When on the 14th of July, 1789, the Bastille fell at the hands of an angry and passionate French mob, the end was drawing near for the French monarchy and its previously unassailable position atop the pyramid of feudal power. The consequences of the elimination of the French monarchy reverberated all across Europe and particularly in the neighbouring German-speaking lands to the east. To say that the events of the French Revolution have had an impact on world history forever is to state the obvious, but it must be noted that its consequences for Germany were particularly acute. Part of the lasting effects and conditions resulting from the occurrences in France is owed to some degree to the fledgling journalistic movement in Germany of which the writers of travel literature were a part. Those

who ventured to Paris and reported first-hand their observations and impressions and who shaped German public opinion with their enthusiastic and encouraging support and positive attitude towards the initial ideals "liberte, egalite and fraternite" had a profound influence on future developments in Germany.

Heinrich Campe was one of the first and probably also one of the most influential of the Germans to be in Paris almost from the outset of the Revolution. A list of those who followed him there later reads like a veritable "who's who" of 18th century German democratic and literary circles. Included are men such as Georg Forster, Gerhard Anton von Halem, Georg Kerner, Adolf Freiherr von Knigge, and Andreas Georg Friedrich Rebmann.

In this early phase of the Revolution a great euphoria and an eager reception of the turn of events can be detected, not just by travellers but also by a large part of the intellectual community. Indicative of their enthusiasm was an "aufklärerischen Optimismus" (Ruiz 232), and these "Freiheitsspilger", as Ruiz calls them, "standen [...] bei allen persönlichen Nuancen grundsätzlich positiv zum neuen Evangelium der Freiheit, Gleichheit and Brüderlichkeit. (Ruiz 232). As a result, a writer's trip to Paris soon began to assume the character of "ein[es] Glaubensbekenntniss[es]" (Ruiz 232). Excerpts from Campes Briefe aus Paris, (1790)

prove with exactly what degree of zeal and joy the events were encountered:

So vorbereitet erreichten wir endlich hinter Quevrain die Grenze des freigewordenen Galliens. Die Empfindungen, welche sich meiner bemächtigten, als wir hier auf einmal an den Hüten und Mützen aller, welche uns begegneten - Bürger und Bauern, Greise und Knaben, Priester und Bettler - das Symbol der glücklich errungenen Freiheit, die französische Kokarde, und die frohen, auf ihren nunmehrigen Vorzug vor andern Völkern stolzen Gesichter, welche darunter hervorglänzten, erblickten, kann ich Ihnen nicht beschreiben. Ich hätte die ersten, die uns so begegneten, umarmen mögen. Es waren, so schien es mir, keine Franzosen mehr, meine Reisegefährten und ich hatten, unserm damaligen Gefühl nach und in Beziehung auf sie, gleichfalls für den Augenblick aufgehört, Brandenburger und Braunschweiger zu sein. Aller Nationalunterschied, alle Nationalvorurteile schwanden dahin. Jene waren wieder zum Besitz ihrer lange entbehrten Menschenrechte gelangt; wir auf unserer Seite fühlten gleichfalls, - und wohl mir, daß ein Braunschweiger dies noch fühlen kann und unter dem Schutze seines großen und edlen Fürsten dies noch fühlen darf, - daß wir Menschen waren. (12-13)

For a time, the happenings in France formed the central theme for travel literature in Germany. Archenholz writes:

Die Französische Revolution verdrängt durch ihr gewaltiges Interesse alles, die besten Gedichte bleiben ungelesen, man greift nur noch nach Zeitungen und solchen Schriften, die den politischen Heißhunger stillen. (cit. in Ruiz 235)

Obviously travel literature had found its political niche, for as Ruiz asserts: "zu diesen Schriften gehörten die Reiseberichte", and: "[m]it der Französische Revolution

entstand also ein neuer Typ des Reisenden, nämlich der "politische Reisende" (Ruiz 233). This new political awareness also made its effects felt on the travel literature genre.

Discussion at this time began to centre on the degree of political subjectivity acceptable under the new conditions. Whereas Nicolai still tried to preserve some sort of balance between social and political criticism and descriptive information, others no longer felt obliged to do so given the weight of their task. Campe, for instance, writes as follows:

Sie erwarten nun sicher nicht, mein lieber T., daß ich Sie in ganz Paris herumführe, Ihnen eine örtliche Beschreibung davon machen und die sogenannten Sehenswürdigkeiten dieser unermeßlichen Stadt Ihnen der Reihe nach aufzählen soll. [...] Was sind steinerne Palläste, was Tempel und Denkmäler an einem Orte, wo man jetzt eben damit beschäftigt ist, ein unvergängliches Ehrendenkmal unseres Jahrhunderts, das erhabene Gebäude eine auf Vernunft und Recht gegründeten neuen Konstitution zu errichten? Was sind tote Gemälde und Bildsäulen, rührten sie auch von den ersten Meistern der Welt her, zu einer Zeit, da man das große Schauspiel eines ganzen der Sklaverei entronnenen Volkes in den Momenten seiner politischen und moralischen Wiedergeburt beobachten kann, indem es beschäftigt ist, seine Ketten vollends abzustreifen, um nun das Ungeheuer, welches sie geschmiedet und sie ihm angelegt hatte - die willkürliche Alleingewalt - selbst damit zu fesseln? Wer mag hier jetzt etwas anderes sehen, oder wer [...] mag von etwas anderem reden oder gar seinen abwesenden Freunden von etwas anderem schreiben als von diesem einzigen großen Volksschauspiel, welches die ganze Seele des erstaunten Zuschauers unwiderstehlich auf sich zieht und festhält? Also weg mit allem, was Sie in dem "Sejour de Paris" in den "Curiosites de Paris", in dem "Guide des etrangers" und in zwan-

zig anderen Kompilationen dieser Art umständlicher und vollständiger beschrieben finden, als ich es ihnen beschreiben kann und mag. (146)

And Halem makes the following comment:

Ich hätte zu viel nachzuhohlen, wenn ich alle Gebäude und Plätze nennen und beschreiben wollte, die wir nach und nach auf unseren Zügen besucht haben. Man findet das auch an den anderen Orten beschrieben. Ich weilte also lieber bei dem, was man nicht findet. Interessanter wäre es, glaube ich, für Sie, unter die Menschen in ihrem jetzigen exaltierten Zustande geführt zu werden, wo es mir möglich war, bin ich in ihrer Mitte gewesen, und habe gesucht, die Sitten lebendig, wie sie vor mir aufliegen, zu haschen. (292-93)

Thus there was a distinct movement towards a heavy concentration on reporting and "living" the prevalent social and political circumstances and "[a]ls neu erscheint auch der bewußte Verzicht auf umfassende Beobachtung und ordnende Information" (Griep, "Reiseliteratur" 750). This tactic which Campe also puts to good use is evident in his emotional and impassioned description of his perception of the French Revolution. Soon writers like Campe (who was in Paris during the Revolution) without necessarily making it their express aim, wrote great propaganda for the new state of affairs in France through the direct and open partisanship which came to the fore. Campe's descriptions in Briefe aus Paris:

[...] stellen einerseits eine radikalisierte Weiterentwicklung der von Nicolai geforderten Freimütigen Reisebeschreibungen dar, [...] andererseits sind sie aber auch von einer subjektiven Begeisterung getragen. (Stewart, "Gesellschafts-politische Tendenzen" 35)

During the heat of the Revolution, not all writers and intellectuals, however, saw in his extreme political subjectivity the most suitable way to describe the events. Some felt strongly that a level head had to be retained which could distinguish between emotional subjectivity and the objective truth which was in fact for most men of the Enlightenment the highest and most laudable of all goals. Rebmann wrote:

Wer [...] Gemälde aus der Wirklichen Welt aufstellen, wer, wie ein Architekt, den Riß eines fehlerhaften Gebäude [sic] liefern will, damit man es lesen lerne, muß selbst den Reiz des Gemäldes opfern um eine Wahre Darstellung zu liefern. (Kosmopolitische Wanderungen 34)

In relation to the propagandistic effect of the reports emanating from France, it is important to note that over and above their pure journalistic or news value was the fact that the practical nature of the description provided a fruitful contrast to the situation in Germany:

Waren die Reisebeschreibungen über das revolutionäre Frankreich schon deshalb politisch gefährlich so stellte sich unbestreitbar Zündstoff dar, soweit sie zum Vergleich mit den deutschen Zuständen reizen mußten und ausdrücklich oder implizite eine Kritik an besagten Zuständen enthielten. Waren sie

doch dem französischen AncienRegime durchaus vergleichbar. (Ruiz 238)

And proof of the potential political danger of the travel literature comes from the ranks of the conservative and reactionary forces at the time. Their reactions in the press and elsewhere to the reports emerging from France demonstrate that they were concerned with the possible side effects. C.E. Brandes, an outspoken critic of the Revolution at the time, felt for instance, that:

Die schriftlichen und mündlichen Nachrichten von Reisenden vermehren vollends das Wohlwollen gegen die Revolution. (cit. in Stewart, "Gesellschaftspolitische Tendenzen" 37).

Censorship, too, was, of course, tightened and publishers at times added disclaimers at the beginning of texts dealing with the Revolution. Stewart believes that:

Umfang und Umständlichkeit dieser Vorsichtsmaßnahmen machen deutlich, mit welcher Brisanz die neue Spielart der politischen Reisebeschreibung behaftet war. ("Gesellschaftspolitische Tendenzen" 38)

But the direction in travel literature taken by men such as Campe and Halem is only one of two distinct trends forged by the heat of the French Revolution. "Generell lassen sich zwei Typen von Reiseberichten bei den deutschen Jakobinern unterscheiden: der mehr informierende und der

mehr agitatorische Typus" (Stephan 178). Campe and Halem sought to fulfil a need to inform and in doing so consciously or unconsciously glorified the events taking place. Their duties, however, were those of the journalist providing first-hand original information regarding the actual occurrences taking place:

Sie wollten dem Leser über die Veränderungen im Nachbarland Informationen aus erster Hand bieten, den von konservativen Kreisen verbreiteten Vorurteilen über die Revolution in Frankreich mit Fakten entgegentreten und dem Leser die Vorzüge der republikanischen Staatsform verdeutlichen. (Stephan 178)

But if the travel literature of these two men represents a "mehr informierende" type of "Reisebericht", then men such as Forster, Rebmann, and Knigge fell into the category of the "mehr agitatorische" type.

This second, more aggressive type of travel literature did not necessarily stem directly from France or Paris (although some of it did) but often from within Germany's own borders. The tradition of the "europäische Orientierung" had become even more precise as German Jacobin writers began to focus more specifically on Germany. However, they did so not to present a neat geographical or statistical analysis, but rather to expose the shortcomings of a well-known area or city by placing its characteristics into direct contrast with the exciting developments in Paris and with the ideals

of the French Revolution. With this emphasis on a German-orientated "Reisebeschreibung [...] verfolgten die Jakobiner die Absicht, dem Leser Einsicht in die politischen und sozialen Verhältnisse zu vermitteln und die Ungerechtigkeit des Feudalsystems zu brandmarken" (Stephan 178).

The Jacobin's target audience was still the enlightened and educated middle class, but the writers' sympathies lay with the middle and lower classes who suffered most as a result of the political constellations in their own country. The objects of their concern were universal, numerous, and wide-spread and included such things as human rights, economic backwardness, revolution, and censorship, but the biggest targets were the Church and the nobility which were most often singled out for criticism and calls for reform or abolition.

It should be pointed out that these travel reports which now appeared in Germany were not rabid attacks on government per se, nor were they calls for the execution of all nobility. The pervading trend towards Enlightenment by peaceful means and calls for Enlightened "Despots" was by and large continued in travel literature. Few if any of the writers were seeking the head of the king; rather they sought to redefine a noble's role in a benevolent, unselfish and moral government. Attacks were, therefore, seldom directed at the Crown, but rather at the abuses of lesser nobles and the suffocating government institutions and

bureaucracy ("absolutistische Bürokratie", Griep, "Reiseliteratur" (757)), as well as at other concerns such as absentee landlords, bribery, nepotism, simony, and other prevalent abuses by unchecked nobility and the Roman Catholic Church.

Fitting into the mould described above are works such as Rebmann's Kosmopolitische Wanderungen durch ein Theil Deutschlands (1793), Forster's Ansichten vom Niederrhein, von Brabant, Flandern, Holland, England und Frankreich im April, Mai und Junius 1790 (1791), Knigge's Briefe, auf einer Reise aus Lothringen nach Niedersachsen geschrieben (1793), and Georg Kerner's Briefe über Frankreich, die Niederlande und Teutschland (1797). Taking up where Riesbeck and Wehrlin left off, the men writing these travel reports, the true Jacobin and other less political writers of travel literature demonstrated a confrontational nature and laid out the perceived injustices in no uncertain terms. Their favourite method was still to draw comparisons as we see in Rebmann's comments in his Kosmopolitische Wanderungen:

Blicke noch einmal zurück auf jene Paläste, blicke auf die geputzten Spaziergänger und dann schnell, ohne dein Auge zu wenden, hieher! Hieher auf die jämmerlichen Hütten, die den halbnackten Bewohnern den Einsturz drohen, auf Menschen, die unter schnarrenden Strumpfwikerstühlen mit Mühe durch ununterbrochene sitzende Arbeit sich vom Hungertode zu retten vermögen, auf verkrüppelte Kinder, schmutzig und blaß - kurz auf lauter Gegenstücke, die ein feindseliger Zauberer dir auf jene Bilder der Pracht und des Reichtums vors Auge gestellt zu haben scheint. An jenem Ende der Stadt betäubte dich das Rasseln der Karossen, hier hörst du nur

das Seufzen einer Mutter, die für ihre Kleinen kein Brot hat, oder höchstens die einförmige Melodie eines geistlichen Liedes, die den Magen zur Ruhe lullen soll - dort stauntest du über die prächtige Livree des Läufers, hier muß eine arme Familie die Materiallien dazu um einen unglaublich geringen Preis verarbeiten, damit der Kaufmann dem Müßiggänger, der seinen Bedienten mit Aufwand einer Summe kleidet, wovon diese arme Familie ein Jahr lebt, desto leichter und länger Kredit geben kann - die Federn, die auf der Promenade vom Kopf der stolzen Fabrikanten herabwehten, triefen vom Schweiß dieser Unglücklichen, deren vielleicht jeder in dieser Woche einige gehoffte Groschen weniger erhält, damit jene dann am Sonntage desto leichter einige Louisd'ors verspielen kann - hier verkauft eine verzweifelnde Mutter ihre einzige Tochter ins Freudenhaus, weiht sie zum Opfer des Lasters, um Brot auf einige Wochen zu haben, während unter den Linden die Kupplerin das durch den Menschenhandel gewonnene Geld mit einem Bezahlten [...] durchbringt. Oh, Freund! jene Paläste in eine und die Tränen dieser Unglücklichen in die andere Schale, welche wiegt schwerer, die des menschlichen Glücks oder die des menschlichen Elends? (95-96)

The direct confrontation between "Bildern der Pracht" and "Bildern des Elends" exercises a powerful criticism, and as Stephan writes: "zielte auf die emotionale Mobilisierung des Lesers" (179).

For men like Rebmann and Forster, it was particularly the poor and the downtrodden who aroused their sympathies and whose plight pointed to a foul political, economic, and social system. Granted, to earlier enlightened travellers the pervading idea was that although the cause lay somewhere it could be corrected; this later more critical consideration held that these evils pointed to serious mismanagement on the part of governments and rulers. Rebmann also takes

the opportunity in his travel report Wanderungen und Kreuzzüge durch einen Theil Deutschlands to criticize openly those who are to blame for the circumstances being as they are. The finger points directly at the "absolutistische Bürokratie":

Diese Leute gleichen Schwämmen, die sich in Blut und Tränen vollsaugen. Sie haben keinen Begriff davon, daß sie Staatsdiener sind, sondern das Interesse des Fürsten ist ihre Losung, welches sie sorgfältig von dem Interesse des Volkes abzusondern verstehen, ob sie gleich dies heilige Interesse immer sorgfältig zum Deckmantel brauchen. (cit. in Griep, Reiseliteratur 757)

The hoards of beggars and impoverished people in Cologne gave Forster impetus for his own conclusions as to their plight. Although for him these unfortunate people are called "Raubbienen", they are compared on the other end of the scale with the nobility who seemingly offer them no other choice for existence.

Das sicherste Zeichen eines zerrütteten, schlecht eingerichteten, kranken Staats hat man immer daran, wenn er eine große Menge Müßiggänger nährt. Der Fleißige, der die Früchte seines Schweißes mit diesen Raubbienen theilen muß, kann sich endlich des Gedankens nicht erwehren, daß man die unbilligste Forderung an ihn thut, indem man seiner Redlichkeit die Strafe auferlegt, die eigentlich strafwürdigen Faullenzen zu füttern. Die natürliche, unvermeidliche Folge dieser Reflexion ist, wenn man sich zu schwach fühlt dem Übel abzuhelfen, eine tödliche Gleichgültigkeit gegen das gemeine Beste, gegen die Verfassung selbst. Welcher Staat kann public spirit von seinen Bürgern erwarten, wenn er sie mißhandelt? Es ist gleichviel, ob ein Despot oder eine Horde von Bettlern die Frei-

heit des arbeitsamen, tugendhaften Bürgers vernichtet; diese Ungerechtigkeit muß der Staat allemal büßen. (Werke II, 415.)

Forster's condemnation of the city of Aachen, in medieval times a thriving and vibrant city, is transmitted through a comparison of the more economically successful areas around it. Those who must take the blame range from the nobility, to the Church and to the outdated guilds:

Um sie her, auf allen Seiten, sind nach und nach ansehnliche Staaten entstanden; der Fleiß, die Freiheit und das Glück haben im Wettstreit mit einander vielen neuen Städten einen Grad von blühendem Wohlstand geschenkt, den Handel in andere Kanäle geleitet, den Geist der Menschen entwickelt und gebildet, wie er an einem vereinzelter Orte, und bei hartnäckiger, blinder Anhänglichkeit an altes Herkommen, nicht mit fortrücken konnte. Sodann aber haben die Tyrannei des Aberglaubens, die noch immer gegen andersgesinnte Religionsparteien wüthet und die Nichtkatholiken von manchen Vorrechten des Bürgers ausschließt, die Wuth der Parteien, die unaufhörlich um die Alleinherrschaft einer nur dem Namen nach freien Reichsstadt kämpften, und endlich der finstere Despotismus der Zünfte, zur Sittenverderbniß, zur Verblendung über das wahre Beste des gemeinen Wesens und des einzelnen Bürgers, zum Müßiggang, zur Bettelei und zur Entvölkerung kräftig mitgewirkt. Wo ist der Wohlstand der so vielen ihn untergrabenden Feinden widerstehen könnte? Was ächte Bürgertugend allein wider die übrigen ungünstigen Umstände vermocht hätte, stehet dahin; mit ihr hat man die Probe nicht gemacht, und ohne sie verblühen die Staaten, selbst im Schooße des Glücks! (Werke II, 473).

It is evident from the above excerpts, that writers like Rebmann and Forster demonstrate a considerable degree of understanding of the social and economic factors which

they express not just in empty rhetoric and polemics, but rather in an intelligent and careful analysis of living conditions in a social and economic context. As part of a truly political agenda, these men, through their travel reports, provided useful and interesting information to the reader, and no doubt, helped in part to instill some sense of the democratic and revolutionary ideals emanating from the French Revolution.

While many writers of travel literature in Germany continued to follow this agenda, it must be acknowledged that in the end the wildly enthusiastic and euphoric nature of the reception of German travel literature and its reaction to the French Revolution had serious negative effects on the political travel report in the long term. The new biting nature of the travel literature was countered by extremely tight censorship in Germany. Thus, in the short term at least, rather than increasing personal freedom, the reins of censorship were in general pulled ever tighter. Evidence comes to us once again in the form of book reviews, this time in the Neuen allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek of the anonymously published Vertrauten Briefe über Frankreich (1792) (later attributed to J.F. Reichard) in which the reviewer writes:

Wie der Vf. heißt, wissen wir nicht, und wenn wir es auch wüßten: so würden wir uns wohl hütten, seinen Namen den literarischen und politischen

Spürhunden, deren Zahl immer größer wird, Preis zu geben. (NADB, 8 1794: 558)

More than anything else though, the drastic turn of events in the French Revolution had a profound and lasting effect on the substance of travel literature. The Jacobin terror and the execution of the French King in 1792 led directly to writers shying away from overt political content in their travel reports. The execution was shocking enough for most people; the rapid spreading of violent and radical upheaval from the depths of the lower classes, however, did perhaps more to frighten and upset the more "Enlightened" middle-and upper-class Germans who felt they could rely on a more rational and intelligent reform and overhaul of existing political institutions (Stewart, "Gesellschafts-politische Tendenzen" 38). The threat was not only perceived but in some ways also very real in its ramifications for travellers. The xenophobic nature of the French Jacobin dictatorship led to a distrust of many things not French; indeed there existed a very real danger to travellers who were sometimes harassed on suspicion of being spies or traitors to the cause of the Revolution (Ruiz 241). This was not necessarily a deterrent to the many German Jacobins seeking refuge in France, for particularly after the collapse of the republic at Mainz in 1793, a steady stream of exiles travelled to France to escape persecution. With men such as Forster and Rebmann "die in Frankreich ein Asyl gegen den

Zugriff der Reaktion suchten und fanden, wurde eine Tradition gegründet der im 19. Jahrhundert manche wertvolle Reiseberichte zu verdanken sind" (Ruiz 242). Thus these men formed a group of hard-core, embittered, diehard Jacobins who, amid a general German backlash and anti-revolutionary sentiment, continued to hold out hope for far-reaching reforms or even for a revolution in their homeland, and in expounding their basic positions in their travel literature laid the foundations for those who were to follow after them.

As a result a new trend in travel literature came about in which disillusionment, resignation, and a subsequent shift away from political content took place. This led to what some scholars call the "Entpolitisierung des Reiseberichts" (Ruiz 246; Stewart). Because of the turn of events in France, the reading public seemed to lose its interest in purely political literature, and those journalistic organs which only a few years earlier had made politics the number one cause were now calling for the end, or at least the moderation, of the politicization of the travel report. Consider, for example, the review which appeared in the Neue allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek in 1796 of A. Moltke's Reise nach Mainz:

Das ganze besteht auslauter Rhapsodien, die offenbar beweisen, es sey dem Verf. nicht sowohl darum zu thun gewesen, uns seine Reise zu erzählen, als vielmehr auszusagen, wie und was er über Menschenrechte, 'Freyheit und Gleichheit, über unsere deu-

tsche National- und bürgerliche Verfassung, über die französische Revolution und ihre Folgen, und über ähnliche, jetzt übliche Modematerien denke. (NADB, 26 1796: 92)

The attitude of this reviewer stood in direct contrast to the recently held position which made political content the responsibility of every author. In the face of this development one can, according to some scholars, point to a consistent trend of "Entpolitisierung" and eventually "Eskapismus" (Ruiz and Stewart), in which writers of travel literature attempted to set an agenda of "Freiheit von jeder politischen, wissenschaftlichen oder sonstigen Zweckbestimmung" (Stewart, "Gesellschaftspolitische Tendenzen" 41). Travel reports about the idyllic surroundings of the Swiss Alps and story-book Swiss villages surfaced and filled the void existing in those readers who no longer sought an abundance of political content:

[S]o könnte man ohne Übertreibung von einer Steigerung dieser Gleichgültigkeit ins regelrecht Zynische sprechen. (Stewart, "Gesellschaftspolitische Tendenzen" 44)

One cannot deny, however, that the Jacobin writers such as Forster, Rebmann and Becker, still continued to observe a solid tradition of well-written, critically appreciated travel literature which added greatly to the development of the genre and continued to aid the cause of reform. Griep,

for example, sees in these men writers of "progressive[n] Reisebeschreibungen" ("Reiseliteratur" 762) and disagrees with Stewart by stating that men such as Becker are representative of a group of writers which even in the last five years of the century, sought to use travel literature as an active element in hastening political change, and in so doing laid the foundations for the next generation of writers of travel literature, Heine, Börne, and Gutzkow.

4. Johann Nikolaus Becker and his Contributions to the Travel Literature of the Eighteenth Century

4.1. General Comments

"Becker (Johann Nikolaus) D. der R. zu Paris (vorher zu Wetzlar, Wien, Berlin und London): geb. zu Beilstein 1773."

So begins the short but important biography of Becker in the definitive register of living authors of the day, Das gelehrte Teutschland oder Lexikon der jetzt lebenden Schriftsteller (IX: 70).

Unfortunately the above is about as comprehensive a contemporary biography that one is able to find on Becker. With the exception of the above entry and one other in the same source (XI: 55), it has been left up to obscure personal accounts of some of his contemporaries, some parenthetical references regarding him in other works, his own limited literary output, and some subsequent research in the last ten years to piece together what we now know about this interesting man who, to scholars of 18th century travel literature has become an increasingly important German writer.

Mentioned earlier in this treatise (ch. 2) was the fact that most of what we can now positively account for, insofar as Becker, his life, and his works are concerned, is owed to the work of Wolfgang Griep. It had been my intention at the outset of my own research to offer new facts about Becker and augment what I initially felt was sketchy information by Griep, but I was limited by the unavailability of and access to certain important materials. I did, however, in the course of my own research and perusal of the original texts of Becker's works encounter some correlations that were not immediately obvious, but which I hope will offer further enlightenment on my subject in the remainder of this thesis. Naturally those questions which have until now not been answered will form the basis for further study of Becker's works. Although the product of my research may not be necessarily new or provocative, I hope that it will make an honest contribution to the overall understanding of Becker and his works in the context of other travel literature of the 18th century. The genre of travel literature has been, I trust, treated competently in the first part of the thesis, and I hope that its overall connection to Becker, his life and his works, which has been the primary concern, will serve to sharpen and augment our overall understanding of this time-period. My own work makes a contribution by the fact I have, going beyond previous treatments of Becker, brought to the fore a well-rounded picture of his in-

teresting and entertaining biography and his known published works in the context of travel literature as a whole in the 18th century.

4.2. Biography

Beilstein ist ein schmutziger, kleiner und sehr unbedeutender Ort, der ehemals dem Grafen von Metternich - Winneburg gehörte, der hier zwei Beamten hatte. Büsching und alle Geographen thun diesem elenden Neste von kaum funfzig [sic] über einander hängenden schmutzigen Häusern und Hütten die Ehre an, es eine Stadt zu nennen, und zwar die Hauptstadt des gräflichen Gebiets. Mir war es unmöglich, dabei nicht in ein lautes Gelächter auszubrechen. (Beschreibung 356)

These are Becker's words in the last of his travel reports. Nowhere in his writings does he acknowledge the fact that he was born there, but at present we have no need to doubt the assertion of Gelehrtes Teutschland that in 1773 this was indeed the case.

Very little is known about his childhood. That he was schooled, however, in Koblenz becomes clear in the course of his writings (Beschreibung, Intro. XIII). This fact would lead us to surmise that his parents were perhaps not typical inhabitants of Beilstein, as schooling for a young child elsewhere would have been costly and thus points to some mobility on the part of his parents who would either have had the money to send him there and/or the freedom to be able to relocate there.¹⁷

¹⁷In his article in Walter Killy's Literatur-Lexikon, Griep has suggested that Becker's father was a "Kellermeister" - a wine butler or cellar manager. Although this

To assume that Becker's family was Catholic would also be missing the mark. Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of the population in this region of Germany was Catholic, Becker clearly asserts his adherence to the Protestant confession (Über Mainz 38) and at one point relates the problems he encountered as a Protestant growing up in a predominately Catholic community (Beschreibung 119).

Further signs of Becker having come from a family of at least some means, are evident in the fact that he attended the University of Mainz at the beginning of his studies. Becker says himself that Mainz was one of the more expensive cities for a student to live in (Über Mainz 37), so his attendance at University suggests that he came from at least a middle class background which did not represent the norm for this area, particularly in consideration that at that time, the Mosel Valley was economically stagnant.

For reasons we do not fully understand, however, Becker transferred his studies from Mainz to the University at Göttingen in 1793. He does not justify this change anywhere in his writings, but one logical reason we can put forward in explanation is that Göttingen was at the time considered the foremost university for liberal-minded intellectuals and adherents of the Enlightenment. Göttingen must have appealed to his emergent interest in political and social ideas.

job was probably carried out at the court of the duke, one would be hard-pressed to ascribe wealth to a person holding such a position. Questions in this regard remain.

Furthermore, we do know that the letters in Über Mainz, were written to a friend who was studying at that university. This fact no doubt provides a clue for Becker's motivation.

Before leaving Mainz, Becker had already published his first travel report entitled Über Mainz (1792), which was an account of his perceptions about the city from the point of view of his life as a student there.

The next set of dates that we must scrutinize for Becker's biography, however, begin to lead us into some confusion. According to Becker (Fragmente 200) he was in Göttingen in the summer of 1794. This still seems probable. Griep, in addition, has pinpointed Becker's graduation from this university as having taken place in 1796. After that, he, like many other young lawyers, would have headed to Wetzlar to begin his apprenticeship. Why then, in his first letter of the Fragmente, dated March 1796, does he assert that he has already been in Wetzlar for one and one half years? This would place his graduation sometime in 1794. Furthermore, we know that Wetzlar was also a very expensive city to live in and that the average time of an apprentice's stay there was six months (Goethe lasted only five). How can one explain Becker having been there so long? Also, even if Griep has somehow placed his date of graduation incorrectly, if Becker had indeed been in Wetzlar for one and one half years, this would account for a time of study in Göttingen of a mere one and one half years, a much shorter time than

the normally required three years for a student of jurisprudence. In any event some questions remain to be answered regarding Becker's movements during these years.

Further questions surround Becker's next movements. A mere three months after his last letter from Wetzlar we are confronted with the news that Becker, in June of 1796, is in Vienna. Neither through his travel reports nor through secondary literature do we know exactly what he was doing in this city. Granted, Gelehrtes Teutschland's allusion to Becker's involvement in legal circles there can be corroborated through the author's enlightening description of the "Reichshofrath" (Fragmente 577 ff.), but Becker himself never clearly states his reason for having gone to Vienna. Through his description of the University there, we can also hypothesize that he may have been in its employ (Fragmente 70, 124). Griep also puts forward the theory that he may have been there in the service of his lord, the Duke of Metternich-Winneburg, who was the reigning Duke at Beilstein, but who had for many years made his residence at the court of the Emperor in Vienna. This possibility is reinforced by later evidence which suggests that Becker accompanied the Duke to Rastatt to attend the talks there leading to the "Rastatter Frieden."

Whatever Becker's reason for being there was, we know from his last letter from Vienna, that Napoleon had appeared at the doorstep of Vienna in April 1797, and that Becker had

to obey an edict stating that all foreigners must leave the city. He did so, apparently without the accompaniment of the duke, and his ensuing travels described in Fragmente took him all the way to Prague, parts of Silesia, Moravia und Bohemia.

But more questions remain. In the preface to Fragmente the publisher (presumably Becker himself) talks of having "Nachrichten and Anekdoten von Moskau bis Lissabon, und von Norwegens Grenze bis an die äusserste Spitze von Italien." His travels to these places as well as Gelehrtes Teutschland's assertion that he had been in London have not yet been substantiated and indeed fall partly outside of the realm of possibility. The question arises: Was Becker ever in these places, or does he mention them, as Griep suggests, in part to hide his actual whereabouts and cover up his identity? Many questions in this area remain unanswered.

Sometime in 1797 or 1798, Becker found himself in a somewhat precarious situation. As mentioned earlier, Griep has assumed that Becker was in all likelihood a member of the Emperor's delegation to Rastatt, probably in the service of the Duke of Metternich-Winneburg who was sent there to attend the talks. Evidently the Duke's handling of the talks and his own petty demands did not agree with Becker's personal philosophies and prompted him to make his feelings known in this regard in an article in a journal entitled Die Geißel edited by Rebmann. The article was entitled "Ist der

Graf von Metternich-Winneburg als Emigrirter zu betrachten oder nicht? Brief eines Moselaners an einen Bürger in Paris." In this tract Becker viciously attacks the Duke's claims to compensation and reparations resulting from Napoleon's invasion of the left Bank of the Rhine. Becker's arguments are fuelled by his distaste for absentee landlords like the duke under discussion. This article as well as another critical one entitled: Zur kritischen Geschichte des Rastadter Friedens (Berlin, 1798), together with what Griep has termed a "nicht gerade schmeichelhafte Äußerung" ("Nachwort" 163) to this same duke served to have Becker imprisoned in Würzburg. Becker spent ten months there awaiting a trial before finally succeeding in a daring escape. The details are best described through an account written by Friedrich Albert Klebe¹⁸:

Durch die Hilfe einer versteckten Summe Geldes, die man bei der Visitation nicht fand, wußte er sich Freunde unter den Soldaten und Domestiken zu machen, und entkam nach einer mühevollen Arbeit von mehreren Wochen, die er zum Durchbrechen der Mauern seines Gefängnisses anwandte, wirklich ins Freie auf den Wall. Die Liebe half ihm weiter. Sie hatte Seile für ihn bereit, womit er sich den Wall hinablassen wollte. In dem Augenblicke, da schon sein Gefährte, ein Stallknecht, hinab war, wurde Lärm auf der Zitadelle, man rief nach Wache, und nun mußte er eilen. Im Herunterlassen, welches die Angst beflügelte, zerschnitt er sich das Innere

¹⁸Friedrich Albert Klebe, Reise auf dem Rhein durch die Deutschen Staaten, von Frankfurt bis zur Grenze der Batavischen Republik, und durch die Französischen Departemente des Donnersbergs, des Rheins und der Mosel und der Roer. Im Sommer und Herbst 1800. (Frankfurt: Esslinger, 1802).

der Hände am rauhen Seile bis auf die Knochen. Doch entkam er durch den Spessart in Begleitung seines mit ihm entflohenen Gefährten, stand unsägliche Schmerzen an seinen verwundeten Händen aus, war oft in Gefahr, wieder arretiert zu werden, kam aber glücklich durch den Kaiserlichen Vorposten in der Gegend von Frankfurt und auf das linke Rheinufer. - Die detaillierte Geschichte dieses Arrests und der Flucht des B. Beckers ist unendlich interessant; vielleicht habe ich noch Gelegenheit, sie ausführlicher mitzuteilen (cit. in Griep, "Nachwort" 163 f).

It was probably after his flight from Würzburg, that he eventually made his way to Paris as stated in Gelehrtes Teutschland, but this stop is again not mentioned specifically anywhere by Becker himself. The only clue that we may have is the fact that the preface to his next travel report Beschreibung meiner Reise in den Departementern vom Donnersberge, vom Rhein und von der Mosel is dated the 27th of August 1798 in Avignon, France. According to this travel report which spans May to about August of 1798, Becker undertook travels to the various "Departements" then under French administration. Becker asserts that the letters contained in the report were written to a friend in Paris and were written "entfernt von seinen Vaterlande und aus Erinnerung" ("Nachwort" 164). Griep has suggested that Becker in 1799 also may have met Rebmann in Paris where, for a few short months, they may have pursued journalistic projects together ("Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner" 65).

The remaining years of Becker's life continue to be clouded in some confusion, but Griep has pieced together

some of the details. Near the end of 1799 he worked as a lawyer in Koblenz and immersed himself in an undistinguished journalistic career as well. Working with the better-known Franz Lassaulx, he edited the newspaper Bewohner des Westrheins later renamed the Coblenzer Zeitung in 1801. Other projects with which Gelehrtes Teutschland associates Becker are Egyptische Blätter in 1800 (Gelehrtes Teutschland IX: 71) and Magazin der peinlichen Rechtgelehrsamkeit, für die vier neuen Departemente auf dem linker Rheinüfer (1800) (Gelehrtes Teutschland, XI: 55). Also mentioned in Gelehrtes Teutschland is that Becker wrote "verschiedene Gedichte im Voßischen Muselalmanach, und Aufsätze in der Geißel" (IX: 71). Of these, only the aforementioned article about the Duke of Metternich-Winneburg has so far been positively attributed to him.

Other works listed in Gelehrtes Teutschland (IX) but to the best of my knowledge nowhere presently in circulation are: Versuch einer Geschichte der Hochmeister in Preußen; seit Winrichs von Kniprode bis auf die Gründung des Erbherzogtums (Berlin 1798) and Wezel seit seines Aufenthalts in Sondershausen (Erfurt 1799).

One other important event in Becker's life which no doubt had a profound influence on him is also well-known to us. It exemplifies well the adventurous and noteworthy life led by our protagonist. During the time of political and social upheaval brought on by the occupation, recapture and

subsequent re-occupation of the left bank of the Rhine during the late 1700s and early 1800s, pirates, highway robbers and lawless gangs found opportunity, amid the uncertainty of the situation to exercise their own power and influence on a rural population already battered by the ravages of war. Claiming some grassroots support (although not nearly to the degree of popularity of a Robin Hood), the gangs led by such notorious criminals as the "Schinderhannes" and the "Fetzer", essentially had free reign in many of the outlying areas around Koblenz, Trier and Cologne.

Becker came to play a significant role in the eventual capture and prosecution of the gang leaders and their followers. Becker outlines the entire process in a legal treatise entitled Actenmäßige Geschichte der Räuberbanden an den beyden Ufern des Rheins. Erster Theil. Enthaltend die Geschichte der Moselbande und der Bande des Schinderhannes (1804). The author, B. Becker (The "B" remains unexplained - perhaps "Bürger"?) is described as being the "Sicherheits-Beamten des Bezirks von Simmern." Becker like many German intellectuals who openly supported the ideals of the French Revolution had found employment in the French government's administration of the occupied left bank of the Rhine.

Although largely a legal report, it is nonetheless interesting to read and is informative even for readers of our day. Griep has written about this report:

Becker ist ein genauer Beobachter, und er weiß um die sozialen und psychischen Bedingungen, die aus Johann Bückler den Schinderhannes, aus Matthias Weber den Fetzler gemacht haben. Gerade darum ist es ein nüchterner, distanzierter Bericht; die sozialrevolutionäre Glorie um die armen Räuber schufen im nostalgischen Rückblick erst die späteren Generationen. ("Nachwort" 165)

Becker's own role in the apprehension of the suspects is also outlined in a footnote on page 144 of the report. It reads as follows:

Der Friedensrichter des Cantons Kirn, dem das Publicum, wie man gesehen hat, so manche Arrestation der Mitschuldigen des Schinderhannes verdankt, ist Dr. Becker, Verfaßer gegenwärtiger Geschichte und dermalen Sicherheits-Beamter des Bezirks von Simmern. Er war einer von den Männern, welche von Jean Bon-St. Andere zur Ausrottung der Bande des Schinderhannes ausersehen wurden; er hat vollkommen dem ihm bewiesenen Zutrauen entsprochen, und wegen seiner der öffentlichen Sicherheit geleisteten Dienste ein besonderes Belobungsschreiben von dem Justiz-Minister erhalten.

Signed by the publisher, the footnote perhaps betrays Becker's own sense of importance in the matter of the apprehension. Becker's interest in these gangs is already alluded to in Über Mainz, where on pages 115-117, he conveys a few stories he had been told relating to some of the more "noble" acts of some of the bandits. One of them is retold as follows:

Ich will dir bei dieser Gelegenheit einige, so wie ich sie aus dem Munde eines hiesigen Kriminal-

richters habe, erzählen. Man findet selte und auffallende Auftritte darunter. Eines Tages, als diese Räuber im Spessart ihr Wesen trieben, und manchen Wanderer niederwarfen, wurden sie von einer Schwadron Husaren überfallen. Sie wehrten sich verzweifelt, mußten aber zuletzt der Überlegenheit weichen. Der Sohn eines alten Räubers, der auch zugleich Hauptmann war, wurde bei dieser Attaque gefährlich verwundet. Gleich pakten ihn die Übrigen auf, und trugen ihn tiefer in den Wald. Hier legte er bei seinem Vater eine Generalbeichte ab, und wurde förmlich absolviret, dann aber mit einem Beile vor den Kopf geschlagen, daß er nichts verrathen könne, mit dem Bedeuten er müsse dies zum Wohl des allgemeinen Besten thun. - Zu anderer Zeit wollten sie auf den durchfahrenen Postwagen Jagd machen, von dem sie wußten, daß er reich und schwer beladen war. Sogleich wurden einige Spionen abgefertigt, um auszukundschaften, mit was für Personen der Wagen besetzt sei. Diese brachten nun den Rapport, daß niemand, der ihnen gefährlich werden könnte, sich darauf befände. Allein eine hochschwängere Frau, die in dem Schrecken abortieren und sterben würde, sei unter der Gesellschaft. Gleich wurden die Aeltesten der Rotte zusammen gerufen und ein allgemeiner Rath gehalten, der aber dahin ausfiel, daß man diesmal trotz den vielen Reichtümern bloß aus Rücksicht der schwangeren Frau den Wagen verschonen sollte. (Über Mainz 116-117)

He ends the discussion by asking: "Findet man wohl ähnliche Beispiele in den Protikollen [sic] des peinlichen Gerichts?"

Sadly, however, the "Actenmäßige Geschichte" is the last piece of writing we can turn to in a consideration of Becker's life and literary career. Becker died, still a young man at the age of 37. Griep has pieced together the last few years of his life in this way:

Es scheint als ob Becker nun hätte seßhaft werden wollen: er hatte in Simmern gerade einen Hausstand gegründet und geheiratet, als ihn auf einem winterlichen Dienstritt durch die Soon so unglücklich der Huf seines Pferdes traf, daß er noch ander Unfallstelle starb. Das war am 17. Dezember 1809. ("Nachwort" 165)

Fifty years after Becker's death, in his history of the Rhineland, Christian von Stramberg¹⁹ eulogized Becker with the following words:

Becker war, bei seinem stürmischen auffahrenden Wesen ein sehr gütiger gemüthlicher Mann, das Muster eines guten Ehemannes und zärtlichen Vaters. (cit. in Griep, "Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner" 67)

¹⁹Christian von Stramberg, Denkwürdiger und nützlicher Rheinischer Antiquarius, (N.p.: n.d.) 414.

4.3. Becker's Travel Reports

4.3.1. Über Mainz

Becker's first published work, Über Mainz, seems to have received little or no popular acclaim in its day. Secondary mention of it is nowhere to be found except in Gelehrtes Teutschland, almost ten years after it was published; but it deserves our interest for two reasons. First, it was written by a young Becker, not more than 20 years old, and hence, represents a convenient starting point from which to measure the evolution of his ideas on the progress of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Secondly, as an early work, in so far as Becker is concerned, it offers the student or scholar of 18th century travel literature today an important, indeed an almost textbook example of a work which still stands squarely in the tradition of the "aufklärerisch-systematisierende[r] Objektversicherung" (Griep, Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner 67).

While appearing a few years later than both Nicolai's trend-setting theories and some of the more critical works of men such as Rebmann and Forster, Becker's first travel report need not be seen, on the basis of Griep's classification as regressive. Elements of critical observation and

the permeation of the ideals of the French Revolution are evident, and as such this work merits some extensive consideration.

Über Mainz was published in 1792, just after Becker's stay at the university at Mainz, and presumably prior to his leaving for the University of Göttingen. It was published anonymously and the place of publication was given as "Auf einer Rheininsel".²⁰ The full title reads: Über Mainz. In Briefen an Freund R. This "Freund R", we are led to deduce from statements in the sixth letter of the work (47), was a student at the University of Göttingen.

The work itself consists only of a series of letters - 18 in all. They are numbered 1-17 and 19. Whether the 18th is missing as result of a typographical or printing error, or whether it had not been included for some other reason, is unknown. No introduction precedes the letters.

From the first letter we glean that Becker had, prior to his departure for Mainz - his final destination on a trip to the "drei geistlichen Churfürstenthümer" (3) - promised his friend to write regularly about his travels. Becker, however, did not live up to his promise, because as he

²⁰Gelehrtes Teutschland interestingly lists co-authorship of Über Mainz with a person called Kratz. Who he was I could not deduce with any certainty. Griep makes no mention of the co-authorship anywhere. It is true that numerous inaccuracies pervade Gelehrtes Teutschland, therefore, whether there was another writer involved and to what degree may never be known for sure. No indications emerge from the text itself.

writes: "Von Trier und Cölln ist es mir unmöglich, dir auch nur eine Sylbe zu schreiben" (3). And in what may be interpreted as the beginning of Becker's later, much more obvious anti-clerical stance he continues:

Ich beschleunigte meine Reise, so viel nur möglich war um endlich einmal aus diesen Ländern zu kommen. Da ist fast kein einziger Gegenstand, der aufgezeichnet zu werden verdiente. Ich habe die sogenannte Eifel in der Runde durchstrichen, und ich glaube nicht viel übertrieben zu haben, wenn ich die ganze Strecke einem Sumpfe in einer schönen ländlichen Gegend vergleiche. Doch izt bin ich in einer Stadt, die meine ganze Aufmerksamkeit an sich zieht, besonders da faßt alle Reisebeschreiber wenig oder gar nichts davon gesagt haben. (3-4)

Whether Becker was actually in Trier and Cologne prior to arriving in Mainz, we cannot say for certain. Nor can we positively assert that these references were added to disguise his identity or just to give leverage to an anti-clerical position. No reasons for or references to the first part of this trip are evident in this work or in his later ones.

Like many of the typical topographical travel reports of the later Enlightenment, Becker begins by providing a history of the city he is visiting and a general description of the surrounding area. At the beginning he focuses on its Roman as well as its early Christian heritage. Through these initial letters one comes to appreciate and recognize immediately Becker's wide scope of knowledge and literacy as he

relates the history of Mainz and the surrounding area. One senses at the outset that Becker is a highly intelligent individual and a keen observer who has a thorough understanding and grasp of the material he is discussing. He writes in a clear and concise manner which is easy to understand and without being condescending or stuffily contorted.

Nonetheless, initially, Becker presents us with a bit of a paradox. For all his conciseness and clarity, he puzzles the reader somewhat, particularly the one expecting an aggressive Jacobin document, regarding his philosophical standpoint. Early on, for example, he offers some kind remarks for the laying of the foundations of the Catholic Church by St. Boniface.

Nach und nach schimmerte wieder die Hoffnung besserer Zeiten. Bonifaz, der deutsche Apostel, betrat das Theater der Welt, und ihm hat eigentlich das hiesige Erzbisthum seine Größe und sein Ansehen zu danken. [...] Die neuen Bischöfe baueten nun Kirchen und Klöster, stifteten Pfarreien, errichteten Schulen und verbreiteten Religion, Sitten und Aufklärung. (6-7)

Such a statement is surprising in light of some of his later travel reports, and the later chapters of Über Mainz. In this case Becker conveys a conciliatory attitude towards the early Roman Catholic Church for helping to sow the seeds of modern civilization in Europe, and in particular, Germany. One is hard-pressed to find similar praise in the travel reports of other Jacobin writers at the time.

Surprising, too, are his frequent references to the "Pöbel", the first of which occurs in Über Mainz on page 13. We read for instance:

Der Pöbel, der immer geneigt ist, Sachen, wovon er den Ursprung nicht finden kann, einen misteriosen Anstrich zu geben [...]. (13)

Words such as these do appear from time to time in his works and lead the reader to puzzle over Becker's stance regarding members of the lower classes. Again, on page 22 we read:

Es ist ein ausgemachter Grundsatz, daß die Einwohner der unbebautesten Gegenden die dümmsten sind. (22)

Furthermore he mentions that the lower class in Mainz has:

[...] einen abscheulichen Aczent, der dem Ohre jedes Fremden unerträglich ist. Desto besser spricht man aber in der ersten Klasse. (29)

One wonders, if Becker simply sees the lower classes as a group of people who are hopelessly corrupted by the superstitions of the Catholic Church or as feeble-minded simpletons who cannot be entrusted with concepts such as good manners, and civility, not to mention liberty, equality, or brotherhood. The point of view of these remarks seems to

stand in stark contrast to the pervading attitude among progressive intellectuals at this time (for example Rebmann and Forster) as well as to some of Becker's own positions as often expressed in his later writings; that is, that he is a man concerned with the plight of the people, and with implementing the ideals of the French Revolution to their benefit.

Another curious observation to be made about Becker's first travel report is that some of the other subjects which he addresses, such as the theatre and entertainment in Mainz, gardens, walkways, city-planning, population estimates, library facilities, architecture, the state of the roads, and industries are all dealt with in a way which runs contrary to Campe's demand, for example, to ignore all static things not directly associated with immediate social change.

The above observations lead us to sum up our first impressions of the early pages of Über Mainz, by asserting that we have received conflicting signals. On the one hand, the author reveals himself to be cool-headed and pragmatic, writing in a matter-of-fact style, praising the early work of the Church; on the other hand, he aims caustic remarks at the poorer and less fortunate lower classes while at the same time praising the upper classes in terms of "civilized" life and behaviour ("Um so schöner ist aber der obere Theil der Stadt, besonders da, wo die kurfürstliche Residenz

liegt" 25). In the light of some of his later works, and in the face of the fact that Über Mainz was written at a time when the revolutionary fever was running at its highest pitch, and travel reports for many years had already been preaching "Freimüthigkeit", "Wahrheit" and "Politik", this may seem surprising; and from this point of view, on the surface at least, the early pages of this first work would tend to disappoint a reader looking for more critical and even "revolutionary" information. As such, Becker's Über Mainz is in part a reflection of a somewhat outdated tradition of travel reports which had been in vogue earlier in the century.

By the end of the 4th letter in Über Mainz, the reader is still waiting for the first clear sign as to what Becker's position really is. Up to this point, his letters contain no unequivocal hints of bias or adherence to a particular point of view regarding social, religious, or economic issues. At this juncture, the reader is questioning why the book was published anonymously as the content would not seem to offend anyone, save those who could not read it.

As one reads on and delves deeper, however, one notices certain trends towards more open criticism of some established institutions. Becker's targets are most obviously, of course, the Roman Catholic Church and the existing feudal hierarchical power structure headed by the European aristocracy, and especially the abuse of their power.

The many abuses of the Church at that time are well-known and have been documented often throughout history. Nepotism, pluralism, simony, the hoarding of monies collected as tithes, the frivolous lives of monks and nuns spent behind the walls of monasteries, the alleged lurid sexual practices taking place therein and, of course, of concern in Northern Europe, the steady stream of wealth flowing south to Rome - all these have also received their fair share of criticism through the centuries and weighed heavily on the minds of reformers during the Enlightenment. Becker, as we shall see, addresses most of these concerns at one time or another in his writings; at times with the anger and the vigour which was not always evident in the attacks of other writers on an institution which so many people in his day regarded as the supreme authority in their lives.

Schon lange wirst du gewünscht haben, ich möchte dir auch etwas von den Rechten des hiesigen Kurfürsten sagen. Sie sind größtentheils in Staatsrechte bestimmt. Er wird durch die Wahl des Domkapitels ernannt, dann muß er eine Kapitulation beschwören. Doch hat man nicht selten Beispiele, wo Einer blos aus Empfehlung des kaiserlichen Hofes zu dieser Stelle erhoben wurde, obschon das hiesige Domkapitel, so viel nur möglich, seine Wahlfreiheit gegen kaiserlichen Einfluß zu schützen trachtet. Das der Kaiser Einen aus seiner Mitte vorschlagen kann, ist gegründet. Ist nun Einer gewählt, so muß er die Bestätigung des Pabstes und das Pallium holen, welcher Schaafspelz ihm 30000 Gulden kostet. Auch die Annaten, die er dem römischen Hofe bezahlt, machen eine beträchtliche Summe aus. Wie viel Geld die katholische Geistlichkeit in einem Jahrhunderte nach Rom wandern läßt, hat der Verfasser des Faustins artig berechnet. Möchten doch einmal deutsche Fürsten

diese Misbräuche einsehen lernen, und sich mit vereinten Kräften dagegen stellen, wie schon der König von Neapel in neuern Zeiten mit gutem Erfolge sich gegen dieses Unwesen gestemmet hat. (34-35)

These lines are to be read in the fifth letter and in them Becker's true attitude begins to show through, albeit with some timidity. Initially, the criticism manifests itself quite mildly and matter-of-factly, but the use of terms such as "Schaafspelz", and "Unwesen", define the direction Becker chooses to take more enthusiastically later in his writings. By this time the reader begins to question Becker's own religious persuasion. Only a few pages later he provides us with an answer: "[...] diese Anordnung, welche wir Protestanten [...]" (38). In the light of this revelation the reader is also confronted with Becker's conception of education in the framework of a Catholic versus Protestant debate centred around "Erziehung". Again, Becker's ideas represent no radical position or heavy-handed condemnation, rather one that was at the time commonly held by Catholics and Protestants alike. The following excerpt found in Becker's sixth letter to his friend whom Becker calls an "Erzfeind der Theologen" (49), speaks for itself regarding the concerns the author raises about young children being educated in Catholic areas of Germany at the time. A bit of boasting and perhaps a sanctimonious attitude is, however, evident:

Zum Schlusse dieses Briefes will ich dir noch von den Einrichtungen der sogenannten unteren Schulen

einige Nachrichten geben. Es tut mir leid, daß du von mir hören mußt, daß Augustinermönche auf diesen Kathedern sitzen, denn ein gelehrter und aufgeklärter Mönch ist und bleibt allzeit eine Ausnahme von der Regel. Die Erziehung und der Unterricht der Kinder in diesem Alter sollte besonders klugen und erfahrenen Leuten anvertrauet werden, denn das, was man sich in diesem Alter fest eingeprägt hat, verläßt man sehr schwer. Daher kömmt auch der vorwaltende Aberglaube, daß noch immer unter verschiedenen Religionen Intoleranz herrscht; daher kömmt es besonders, daß bis jetzt die Vereinigung, alle Religionen in ein Ganzes zu schaffen, nur ein Gedanke redlich denkender Menschen war. Wie traurig muß es für einen aufgeklärten Katholiken seyn, wenn er keinen andern Grund des Vorzugs der Protestanten vor ihnen erforschen kann, als seine Erziehung; wie schmerzend muß es sein, wenn er unter seinen Glaubensgenossen keinen Campe, Salzmann, Villaume u.a. findet? Diesem Allen ließ sich am besten dadurch abhelfen, wenn die Fürsten sich vereinigten, und gegen jesuitische Erziehung und Mönchsgrundsätze Dämme setzten. Viele haben dieses zwar schon gethan, aber es thut keine allgemeine Wirkung, bis alle Fürsten gleiche Gesinnungen hegen. Dies aber kann nicht statt haben, so lange Fürsten selbst noch von Mönchen erzogen und unterrichtet werden, denn auf die Erziehung und Grundsätze der Fürsten selbst gründet sich das Glück der Unterthannen. Ich wollte wünschen, daß jeder Fürst einen Wieland oder Goethe zum Erzieher gehabt hätte. Was diese gewirkt haben, wissen die Herzogthümer Weimar and Gotha mit überzeugenden Beweisen zu belegen. (52-53)

But it is not the Catholic education system alone which does not sit well with Becker; most aspects of the Roman Catholic Church do not. As the letters progress, Becker's criticism gets more and more vehement and vociferous. In the eighth letter we read the following colourful remarks:

[J]eder, der da weiß, welchen Einfluß der geistliche Stand auf das Volk hat; weiß, daß Pfaffen das größte Unheil in der Welt gestiftet haben; weiß, daß ihr starker Einfluß auf den Staat, wenn

er auch izt schon ungleichvermindert ist, doch nie ganz wieder aufgehoben werden könne. (61)

And Jesuits, the "Jünger von Loyola", especially their vast wealth, receive the same unflattering attention from the author:

Das Jesuitenvolk hat hier noch viele Nahrung. Bald glaube ich, daß Gott dasselbe zur Strafe des menschlichen Geschlechts auf die Erde verpflanzt hat, denn die alten scheinen täglich jünger zu werden, um desto mehr Unheil anrichten zu können. Daß die hiesigen Jesuiten allerlei Gewerbe getrieben haben, kannst du daraus schliessen, daß man ihren Reichthum bei der Aufhebung des Ordens 600,000 Fl. schwer befunden hat; 120,000 Fl. löbte man allein aus ihren vorräthigen Weinen. (66)

The "Jesuitenhorde" (66) is criticized further on the basis of a published organ²¹ of their order from which Becker derives the following credo: "Laßt das Volk in der Dummheit irren, daß wir desto ungehinderter schmaussen und trinken können!" (66). Becker continues by saying that:

In diesem Journale findest du natürlicherweise Alles verachtet, was lobenswürdig, und alles gepriesen was, ungereimt, oder mit einem andern Worte, jesuitisch ist. Dieser unverschämte Kritiker wagt sich oft an Gegenstände, wovon er gar keinen Begriff hat, und behandelt Männer, vor denen das gelehrte Deutschland den größten Respekt hat, wie Troßbuben [...]. Aber daß sich diese Race in die Hausangelegenheiten von Privatmännern mischt, daß sie da den Saamen des Unheils streuet, das kann ich ihr nicht verzeihen. (66/67)

²¹Becker does not provide us with a title.

The rest of this tell-tale chapter is devoted to exposing and discussing some of the other irregularities or contradictions which Becker feels are inherent in the establishment of the various orders and institutions of the Church, for example, the extreme riches accumulated at the expense of gullible worshippers which were described above. His criticism is hard-hitting and to the point, written with dry wit and dripping with sarcasm. Yet one can detect a note of hypocrisy in light of Becker's later accounts of the fine hospitality he is afforded in the form of fine wines and plentiful and delectable cuisine and other delights at some of the monasteries he visits while on his travels. No doubt he justifies his criticism on the basis that their lifestyle is financed by the poor citizens and peasants who get nothing in return. Their taxes and tithes Becker sees as just disappearing into a deep black hole, with absolutely nothing coming back in return in terms of our modern notion of social services or improved standard of living.

What Becker also finds particularly offensive is the Catholic Church's propensity for spreading and sustaining superstitions and rituals and the double standard he perceives between the rules of the church and the conduct of its servants. Becker sees some of the superstitions as being foisted upon an unwitting and uneducated public as a deliberate means of keeping them subservient and obedient. All told, Becker sees the orders as useless financial burdens on

the state, which are best eliminated altogether as their benefits are far outweighed by their liabilities. Becker is certainly not alone in this view. The very contentious issue concerning the dissolution and disbanding of religious orders, was often on the reform menu of proponents of the Enlightenment, and attempts had recently been made under the Elector of Mainz to implement reforms. Constant political haggling and strong pressure from the Church, however, made this this process a difficult one for him.

And Becker does not in any of his writings shy away from graphic explanations or risqué descriptions as a means of discrediting the Church's institutions. Observe, for example, the following remarks about the "widernatürliches Leben" behind the cloister walls:

Wie überlegt öfters die Entschlüsse sind, sich in den widernatürlichen Nonnenstand zu begeben, zeigte hier ein Beispiel, das alle Aeltern wohl beherzigen sollten: Zwo Nonnen fühlten das, wozu sie geschaffen waren. Das Kloster zu verlassen, war aus mancherlei Gründen nicht wohl möglich; um nun den Trieb, der sich bei ihnen nicht in kleinem Maaße auf einem empfindlichen Platz gesammelt hatte, zu befriedigen, liessen sie sich von einem Müller die Besuche machen, welches dann den Erfolg hatte, das sie nach 9 Monden im Altmünster glücklich entbunden wurden. (72)

And of the superstitious old practice used to induce abortions Becker writes that:

Zu Agnesen bewahrte man einen gewissen Schleier, der sich von der h. Agnes herschreiben sollte. War

eine Mutter in Kindesnöthen, so lief man geschwind zu diesen Nonnen, gab so viel Geld, als das man verlangte, und nahm mit Ehrfurcht den heiligen Schleier, legte ihn der kranken Mutter auf dem Leib, und dann mußte sie glücklich abortieren, wenn schon der Teufel seine Künste daran wagte, um der Mutter Schmerzen zu machen. Dies schändliches Gewerbe trieb man eine lange Zeit, bis man endlich denselben niemals mehr vorzuzeigen geboten hatte. (72-74)

Becker's writings are filled with such examples and in some cases even more explicit ones, which served to disparage the Church and point out its abuses and shortcomings. However, the reader of his works notices that his pronouncements on the topic are not those of a man who has the single-minded purpose of simply engaging in mockery and gratuitous disrespect. He writes for example that:

Beispiele dieser Art sind sehr vielfältig lächerlich und auffallend, aber es ist besser, sie werden vergessen, damit die Nachwelt sich nicht über dergleichen Ungereimtheiten zu ärgern hat, und daher lassen wir den Vorhang über diese Szenen nieder! (74)

While granting that sarcasm, ridicule and irony become effective tools for Becker to expose the absurdity and the injustice of many practices such as those indulged in by the clergy, one also gets the impression in Über Mainz, that he does make an honest attempt to be as fair as possible in his evaluation, even though he seems to delight in castigating the hallowed institutions of the Church. This fairness char-

acterizes his entire repertoire of travel reports. It is illustrated by the following statements:

Doch kann man nicht sagen, daß die hiesigen Mönche sich schlecht aufführen, oder Ausschweifungen begeben, die sie unterdem Mantel der Heiligkeit versteckten [...]. In manchem Kloster wird freilich noch gut gegessen und getrunken [...]. Dieses aber mag ich ihnen gönnen; wenn sie sich nicht in Jugenderziehung und häusliche Angelegenheit mischen, oder durch sonst heimliche Mönchs-Ränke ihren Vortheil zu anderer Schaden zu befördern suchen. (69)

The above may be a somewhat back-handed compliment. The following words, however, found on the next page are remarkable:

Der Praelat nennt sich einen Herrn, von und zu. Er ist ein sehr ordentlicher Mann, und behandelt seine Leute nicht wie mancher Praelat, der in seiner Jugend von Kloster-Almosen lebte, und dem [?]wohl^[22] öfters diese zu vergessen und sich zu erheben pflegt. Er speißt mit den anderen Herrn des Klosters an einem Tische und verräth nicht den geringsten Stolz. (70)

And again:

Denn man schätzt heut zu Tage die Freiheit viel mehr, als daß man sich in ein dunkles Kloster sollte einsperren lassen. Wer in der Kapuzze schlüpft, thut es entweder aus Zwang oder Armuth. (71)

²²Four characters in the text at this spot are not legible.

Such examples testify to Becker's efforts to mitigate the severity of his criticism. He perhaps does so out of the conviction that even these "misguided" clerics can be enlightened.

Becker is, of course, not alone in his criticism of the Church at this time; many other writers characterized the Roman Catholic Church in this way, indeed, some like Riesbeck much more vehemently. And as Inge Stephan writes:

Durchgängig vorhanden in der jakobinischen Publizistik [...] waren zwar die häufig sehr polemisch und kämpferisch vorgetragene Forderung nach Trennung von Staat und Kirche, die Kritik am Klerus und an der Kirche als Institution sowie die Forderung nach Religionsfreiheit, nach Reinigung des Christentums von allen überflüssigen und schädlichen klerikalischen Beifügungen und nach Rückkehr zu den Grundsätzen der "Natürlichen Religion" - Forderungen, die schon in der älteren vorrevolutionären Aufklärung vorhanden gewesen waren [...].
(70)

What is noteworthy, though, is that in Becker's case he was obliged to earn his living in a largely Catholic area under the rule of a conservative despot. Hence one may be able to explain some of his mitigating remarks on that basis; remarks such as those found in the tenth letter:

Jeder Reisender muß sich mit mir freuen, wenn er die toleranten Gesinnungen der hiesigen Einwohner gegen anders Denkende bemerkt. Man wird keinen Bürger antreffen, der gegen einen Nichtkatholiken bloß deswegen, weil er nicht seinen Religions-Grundsätzen anhängt, spottet oder schimpfet.
(81)

As we focus our attention now on another institution which receives much of Becker's criticism, we can preface his observations with the statement that at this time in Europe the institution of monarchy was rife with corruption, overly concerned with its own preservation, and in danger of having its power base eroded. The French Revolution revealed this malaise most strikingly. The lesser nobility and aristocracy was, in fact, coming under criticism from all sides. One of the most contentious issues was that of the absentee landlords, who would amuse themselves at the most prestigious royal courts of Europe utilizing the tax revenues of their often diminutive realms. This kind of exploitive behaviour was most acute in Germany where particularism of the most suffocating kind had existed for centuries. Most nobles there were free to act as they wished, with little or no central authority to answer to, and thus sucked their own little principalities dry to sustain their high-profile, lavish and ostentatious existences. The inhabitants of these smaller mostly rural domains suffered hardship and poverty as a result. Becker's own lord, the Duke of Metternich-Winneburg, was a prime example of this kind of petty despot and is well characterized in the following description.

Der Graf Franz Georg Karl von Metternich-Winneburg-Beilstein ertrug das Leben in der Provinz nicht. Er residierte lieber als kurtrierischer Gesandter in Wien und als kaiserlicher Minister in Brüssel [...]. Und das standesgemäße Leben verschlang alles, was das Land hergab. Die

Zeitgenossen beschrieben ein Duodezfürstentum, wie man es eigentlich nur in Büchern zu finden glaubt: der Graf dick, phlegmatisch, eitel wie ein Pfau, hochmütig und verschwenderisch - ein vollkommener Parasit; die Untertanen abgehärmt, ausgemergelt, bettelarm und bis zur Erschöpfung mit Fronarbeit beladen. (Griep, "Nachwort" 161)

And Becker himself states in his tract in Die Geißel:

Ihm war es gleich viel, wie es in seinen Herrschaften stand, wenn nur zur bestimmten Zeit die Gelder richtig einkamen und die armen Unterthanen keine Rückstände bey der herrschaftlichen Casse hatten. ("Ist der Graf von Metternich-Winneburg als Emigrirter zu betrachten oder nicht?" 292)

On the whole, however, Becker reserves better treatment for the nobility and the ruling class than for the church. This is understandable as offending the nobility through a published work could easily result in imprisonment or loss of livelihood. Becker it seems was aware of these possibilities when he was writing Über Mainz. It is apparent that he would like to say more than he does, but that he resists the temptation to do so. In the fifth letter, for example, we read the following seemingly gratuitous flattery: "so hat der iztige Kurfürst, der große Kenner, Liebling und Gönner der Kunst, eine besondere Zeichenschule für Junge Leute errichtet." Indeed, throughout the early pages his tone remains benign when mentioning the nobility, although he is not always quite as obsequious as above. In subsequent passages Becker makes a point of relating or dwelling upon

those aspects of monarchy which are of benefit to the community in general. "Um so schöner ist aber der obere Theil der Stadt, besonders da, wo die kurfürstliche Residenz liegt" (25) he writes for example. Almost the entire tenth letter is dedicated to giving positive treatment to the Elector of Mainz, the Archbishop Friedrich Karl. This in itself is not entirely surprising, for by many accounts, Friedrich Karl was well-liked by Catholics and Protestants alike. Although thwarted early in his reign by a conservative and ambitious clergy, he managed to appeal in part to Protestants by continuing the process of enlightened reform initiated by his predecessor, Joseph Emerich. It was the latter, in fact, who had managed to wrestle control over matters of education from the powerful Jesuit order in Mainz. Friedrich Karl was eventually able to carry out reforms as well. Becker's assessment of the Elector begins like this:

Ich komme auf den Fürsten, der gewiß in jeder Rücksicht ein bedeutender Mann ist. (87)

The Elector is "nicht nur ein ausgebildeter, sondern auch ein auf seinen Staat äußerst aufmerksamer Mann" (87). Becker does acknowledge, however, that certain contradictions have emerged concerning the Elector as a result of his being in "die öffentlichen Nachrichten," but that his own character study of the Elector is based entirely on his own observa-

tions and notations. Blanning offers proof about the dualistic perceptions of the Elector. In Reform and Revolution in Mainz he writes that:

No other Elector of Mainz has received so much attention from historians and no other Elector of Mainz has been condemned so unanimously. This has been partly due to the many unfavourable comments made about this person by contemporaries. (163)

But in his later work, The French Revolution in Germany, he cites Johann Konrad Dahl,²³ writing in 1916, who ascribes to Karl Friedrich much credit for the relative prosperity of the city during the Elector's reign:

A dazzling court, which in its final phase under the Elector Friedrich Karl could not be compared with any other (except Vienna), the academic institutions of a first rate university, the large number of rich clergy and imperial nobles, who brought with them and spent incomes deriving from half Germany - all this gave the city of Mainz (whose taxes were insignificant) such a high level of prosperity as only a few cities can boast. (33)

Agreement about the Elector's qualities is still lacking, but Becker, as I have suggested, views him favourably and criticizes him seriously only on one specific point. On page 91 of Über Mainz we read:

²³Johann Konrad Dahl, Statistik und Topographie der mit dem Großherzogthum Hessen vereinigten Lande des linken Rheinufers (Darmstadt, 1816).

Nichts als Prachtliebe und Verschwendung kann man dem Fürst zur Last legen.

In the final analysis Becker may have liked him simply because the Elector, unlike many other heads of state or reigning monarchs, made his territory home and ruled it with the aim of bettering the lives of its citizens.

Becker's tone is much different in the very next chapter when he discusses the lives and education of the lesser nobility. He begins his criticism of the court at Mainz as follows:

Der hiesige Adel ist einer der zahlreichsten und mächtigsten im ganzen Deutschland. - Gemeiniglich ist es dieser Menschenklasse zur anderen Natur geworden, sobald sie ihre Stärke fühlt, dieselbe zu benutzen, und mit schnöden Blicken auf die anderen Kinder der Natur herabzusehen. Daß man davon hier mehr als an irgend einem anderen Orte überzeugt werden kann, wollte ich mit hundert Beispielen beweisen, wenn nicht der lächerliche Ahnenstolz schon bekannt genug wär, eben so wie gemeiniglich wahre Verdienste dem leidigen Geld nachstehen müssen. (93)

Becker feels, however, that this is the result of what he terms "sklavische Erziehung" (p. 94). Becker's words demonstrate the popular middle class belief which criticized the typical aristocratic upbringing as based on the imitation of court manners and traditions in contrast to a well-rounded education designed to prepare the young nobleman for ruling his land instead of just holding court.

In his text, Becker traces the development of a young noble's education from his infancy at the "Brust der Amme" - a practice about which he adds: "(daß die Großen ihre Kinder hier so wie an andern Orten nicht selbst säugen, kannst du dir leicht vorstellen)" (94), - to their period of tutelage under a "Hofmeister." The latter, Becker sees only as parasitic idiots who teach their protégés little more than the traditional courtly etiquette, superficial manners, and how to impress ladies with vapid words of flattery.

In describing the entire process, Becker also demonstrates once again his sarcastic wit, a characteristic which is developed and put to good use particularly in his later writings. Quotations such as the following serve to illustrate this point:

Freilich muß es der gnädigen Frau schmeicheln, wenn ein galantes Herrchen bei jedem Namens- oder Geburts- Tage ihr seine Geistesprodukte überreicht, und dabei so begeistert thut, als habe Apoll und die heiligen Neun Musen ihm durch ein unterirdisches Orakel die Alexandrinen eingehaucht. (94-95)

And on the same page:

Der H. Hofmeister weiß ihnen nichts anderes vorzuplaudern, als Romanzen und Idyllen, an klassische Arbeiten wird gar nicht gedacht. Römische oder griechische Schriftsteller findet man sehr selten in den Händen der Adligen Jugend, ja sie wird nicht einmal mit der Literatur ihres Vaterlandes bekannt gemacht. [...] Die meisten verstehen nicht einmal ihre Muttersprache; ein ärmliches französisches Wortgepräng ist alles, womit

sie sich unterhalten [...]. Doch alle diese Tod-sünden wären noch zu verzeihen, hätte man zugleich mit den französischen Ungereimtheiten auch die französische Leichtfertigkeit und Munterkeit eingeführt. Allein die Kinder sind so steif und plump, daß es kaum anzusehen ist. Wer am meisten den Kopf in die Höhe zu werfen weiß, kann sich den vorzüglichsten Beifall erwerben. (95-96)

Becker's castigation of the superficial education of nobles continues through to their Grand Tour. After recalling the glory days of knights who set off to make a name for themselves and to maintain the family honour at great personal risk, Becker presents the modern picture of the hopelessly vain and egocentric young duke who travels to Versailles:

Da wird dann viel von neuen Moden und dem Großen Ton, als dem Endzweck der ganzen Reise, gesprochen und man freut sich, hierinnen immer mehr Kenntnisse zu sammeln. (96)

Following on the heels of these lines, are a few more paragraphs which suitably demonstrate Becker's biting sarcasm and acerbic wit. In them he describes the usual end result of these kinds of "educational" journeys which, he concludes, are entirely deleterious:

Venerische Krankheiten, stumpfe Sinne und abge-spannte Kräfte sind die sichersten Folgen davon (97)

This characterization pertains to the young nobility but Becker claims that their vices stem from similar paren-

tal stock. Becker describes the older generation of nobility in the following way:

Stolz, Verschwendung, Ausschweifungen und Verletzung ehlicher Treue sind die Hauptzüge davon. (97)

One must guard against disregarding Becker's remarks as empty criticism or simple, unwarranted complaints. Becker seems at least partly justified in his criticism and seems to give a fairly accurate picture of the situation during his lifetime. Evidence for this is presented through the many other contemporary reports and by subsequent critical scholarship such as that of T.C.W. Blanning. Blanning writes that:

On his return to Mainz, the young noble had every opportunity to lead a social life entirely among members of his own class; at court, in the palaces or in the noble club on the 'Große Bleiche', the centre of Mainz high society. Restricted of course to the Imperial Knights, membership of the latter fluctuated between sixty and seventy. There were two ballrooms and several rooms open each day for gaming. The climax of the season were the masked balls held in December, January and February, when two eight-piece bands performed in the ball-room, refreshments were provided and the gaming tables were laid out. (Reform and Revolution 97)

Blanning continues:

It is certain that the combination of snobbery and predilection for French culture paraded by many nobles irritated intellectuals intensely. In 1780

Risbeck [sic] wrote of the Mainz nobility: "They all speak a wretched French jargon and are really ashamed of their mother-tongue; also very few of them have any close acquaintance with the literature of their fatherland, because on the other hand they know even the most trivial of our [i.e. French] authors."²⁴ He observed that most of them brought home from the Grand Tour only the parrots of the Parisian fish-women and a taste for French clothes. (197)

But while presenting some evidence in support of Becker's position, Blanning also counters with the idea that, in some cases at least, the situation was not entirely as deplorable as has often been contended. He notes that:

Although doubtless many of the nobles richly deserved this abuse, it is not difficult to show that there were so many exceptions as to make these generalisations worthless. 198

He suggests that far from having interests only in "galanterie à la mode" (198), many nobles demonstrated a wide range of abilities and interests. Blanning goes on to list various items of evidence to support his view, ranging from a new interest by some of the nobility in "enlightened" reading material (the works of the great popular philosophers, for example) to the aristocracy's role in establishing the very successful theatre life in Mainz, something to which Becker devotes an entire letter in Über Mainz (XVI).

²⁴Riesbeck in his Briefe eines reisenden Franzosen (1783), was pretending to be a Frenchman.

And, indeed, Becker also displays a sense of fairness, not wishing to deride those who do not deserve to be derided. In Über Mainz he admits that not all nobles are unproductive or a detriment to a well-run society.

Indessen darfst du nicht glauben, daß in dem Kreise der hiesigen Großen kein gutgesinnter und wohlthätiger Mann sei. Um dich vom Gegentheile zu überzeugen, darf ich dir nur einen Freiherrn von Dalberg nennen, der auch Frankreich besucht, aber sich Menschenkenntniß und Wissenschaften erworben hat. (100)

Becker then devotes considerable space to present a flattering description of this Karl Theodor Freiherr von Dalberg, a member of one of the oldest families of the Imperial Knights and the elected co-adjutor of Mainz. Becker holds him up as an example of a useful member of the aristocracy and who does a good job of running a state and directing his efforts to improve the lot of the under-privileged in society (page 101).²⁵

Thus Becker does have some respect for well-intentioned nobles and for those, like the Elector of Mainz, entrusted with higher office. And part of Becker's early position concerning the role of government may well be found in his statement in the fourteenth letter of his first travel report:

²⁵For Blanning's similar assessment of Dalberg see Reform and Revolution, p.199.

Der hiesige Landesherr weiß sehr wohl, daß der Zweck seiner Regierung ist, Bürgerglück zu schaffen. Diesen sucht er auch möglichst zu erreichen. (125)

For Becker, those who warrant the most criticism are the petty nobles and the young, spoiled and listless members of the aristocracy who gallivant around Europe in the lap of luxury and deliberately neglect to better themselves or to improve the lot of their subjects. Nevertheless, Becker hesitates to suggest that all monarchies be repudiated and that all governing authority be handed over to the ordinary people.

It is imperative that one read the works of Becker, paying special attention to his interpretation of the French Revolution and its implications for his homeland. With regard to this topic Über Mainz remains somewhat puzzling. Granted, one notices an enlightened response from Becker in his call for responsible government and the increased welfare for the ordinary citizens, but one must bear in mind that this work was written in 1791-92 after the euphoric initial reactions to the French Revolution by enthusiastic and supportive intellectuals across Europe. While Campe, in his Briefe aus Paris, gave a glowing and emotional testimony on behalf of the French Revolution Becker expresses no such enthusiasm. In Über Mainz one finds no empty slogans, and no verbose lectures on the freedom and liberty of the individual. In fact, a careful reading of Becker's work does not

unearth any direct mention of the French Revolution until page 58 where he casually mentions a certain person being the author of the "beliebte Geschichte der Französischen Revolution." To be sure, there are later passages which do betray his admiration for the political events in France and the potentially positive developments for mankind to be derived from them, but overt enthusiasm is lacking. Little more than the practical application to everyday situations of the basic revolutionary tenets is obvious. An example is provided in the 11th letter, as Becker describes the blatant, public physical abuse of a poor peasant at the hands of a nobleman who felt slighted at the peasant's inability to get out of his path on a street:

Wie abschreckend dieses Verfahren für einen Bürger ist, und wie es gerade der wahren politischen Theorie entgegen läuft, scheint man nicht zu erwägen. (103)

This "wahre politische Theorie" would seem to refer to the basic tenets of the Revolution encompassing the notion of universal human rights, and the humane treatment of one's subjects.

In addition, it seems that Becker, at this point in his writings does not hope for or desire a similar revolution for Germany. Nor does he fear any reprisals from the French in his homeland: "von den Franzosen [ist] auch nicht so leicht ein Überfall zu befürchten [...]" (106).

Such a sentiment was, however, not atypical of German intellectuals at the time. The predominant mood was one of praise and admiration for the French people who were perceived to be united in brotherly love and content to spread their ideas of freedom peacefully, and few Germans outside of the nobility had concerned themselves much with the prospect of the French forcing their revolution upon the rest of Europe as was the case probably within months of Becker having written his report.²⁶ On page 107 Becker presents another somewhat puzzling position:

Mann hatte damals [vor einem Jahr] vor einem Überfall von Seiten der Demokraten eine panische Furcht, die überflüssig gewesen wäre, wenn man wie in der benachbarten Pfalz die Aristokraten verbannt and verjaget hätte. Der Hof scheint aber hierüber ganz anders zu denken, denn er nimmt nicht nur die Emigranten mit Freuden auf, sondern sucht ihnen auch noch durch gute Bewirthing ihr Schicksal erträglich zu machen. (107)

Besides addressing the topic of the "Emigranten," which we have already noted was the impetus for Becker's tract against the Duke of Metternich-Winneburg, he seems at this point to be advocating the abolition of the aristocracy, something which contradicts his earlier remarks. The reader is led to wonder what Becker's true position is. Is he, at this point, still a pragmatic philosopher who has some sort

²⁶On April 10, 1792, France began war with the Austro/Prussian Alliance.

of conception of the limited relevance of monarchy, or has he already joined the other German Jacobins who, Inge Stephan says, rejected "die Monarchie als Staatsform" (73). Stephan continues: "Das vom aufgeklärten Absolutismus entworfene Idealbild vom Monarchen als 'Hausvater' wurde als 'äußerst unpassende Parallele' zurückgewiesen [...]" (73).²⁷

Becker's first work can hardly be typified as Jacobin; however, the suggestion cited above may serve as a clue for assessing his subsequent travel reports. Nevertheless there remain other inherent contradictions. His apparent distaste for the "Pöbel" has already been noted in this chapter (p.124), but it would be inappropriate to characterize his position as upper class snobbery. His truly compassionate descriptions of the lives of the poor wine growers around Mainz (127), effectively counteract such an impression:

Der Bauer wird in hiesigen Landen gar nicht geachtet, ob man gleich einsehen muß, daß er die erste Stütze des Staats sei. Die Steuer - und Landtaxen wären noch erträglich, und der Landmann hätte nicht so sehr deswegen zu klagen, allein unter diesen gibt es sehr viele arme Leute, und der hiesige Weinbauer muß am meisten leiden. (127)

It will be left up to Becker's later travel reports to determine the true path which his convictions will take.

²⁷Stephan attributes the words "äußerst unpassende Parallele" to Rebmanns Das neue graue Ungeheuer, (Altona 1795), I p.48ff. Although that work appeared in 1795, the notion was not unique even in 1792.

On the whole, Becker's report is a very traditional kind of topographical report, free from any seriously embarrassing diatribes, excessively dangerous political critiques, posturing utopianism, or extensive programming. The topics he broaches are typical and Becker tries to give a readable, enlightened, well-rounded, and informative account of the city of Mainz and the surrounding areas as he observed them during his stay there. With the exception of a few passages regarding the Roman Catholic Church, one is indeed sometimes at a loss to explain why the author felt it necessary to publish his travel report anonymously. Becker's youth and perhaps his concern for his family in Beilstein, a predominantly Catholic area, may have deterred him from revealing his identity. The social criticism and the political views of this work place it squarely in the mainstream of contemporary travel literature: its ideas are neither too radical nor too dangerous.

4.3.2. Fragmente aus dem Tagebuch
eines reisenden
Neu-Franken

Becker's next known work differs significantly from Über Mainz. It was published six years after his first travel report, and a great deal had happened to change the political landscape in both France and Germany during the interim. The city of Mainz had seen days as a republic, Louis XVI had been executed, the days of the Jacobin dictatorship had passed, and Napoleon's armies had been fighting successful campaigns in Europe. Does Becker's next work show any signs of having been influenced by the continuing course of the Revolution? An initial glance at the title prompts the reader answer with a resounding yes. This second work, published in 1798 bears the full title: Fragmente aus dem Tagebuch eines reisenden Neu-Franken. The title alone serves to point out the development and intensification of Becker's support for the French Revolution. He now calls himself a "Neu-Franke." The once "verhaßten Franzosen" had come to be called by those Germans sympathetic to the revolution, "Franken" or even "Brüder" (Inge Stephan 32) and hence, Becker's use of the term "Neu-Franke" can leave no doubt in the reader's mind as to where the author's sym-

pathies lie. The term does indeed suggest the "offen zur Schau gestellte Sympathie für die Revolution" that Griep associates with this work ("Nachwort" 159). Becker, however, does not yet wish to let the world know that he is the "Neu-Franke". The work was published anonymously. The subtitle reads simply: "Herausgegeben von seinem Freunde B." The place of publication is given as "Frankfurt und Leipzig."

The work, unlike Über Mainz, begins with some introductory remarks. First there is a dedication, cryptically addressed: "An F.J. Cl. in D." Who this person is has not been established, but one can infer from this dedication, that it is a friend of Becker's who studied at the University of Göttingen with him, - a friend who may well have had to flee his fatherland, possibly as a result of his political beliefs. The dedication was signed in Warsaw in May of 1797.

The dedication is followed by a preface by the publisher who, according to Griep, can be assumed to be Becker ("Nachwort" 161). Besides extolling the virtues of the book, it offers references to Becker's far-ranging travels to Moscow, Italy, Lisbon and other places mentioned previously in this thesis (p. 112). From the preface we also learn something about the author's theories of travel. He claims to draw on a variety of informational sources, not wanting to limit himself to an elitist or one-sided viewpoint; he

strives for a well-rounded one, gaining insight from as many different experiences as possible:

Der Verfasser ist einer von denen, die seit einigen Jahren mit ihrem Wolfstornister auf dem Rücken ganze Länder durchziehen, und vor den gewöhnlichen Reisenden das voraushaben, daß sie ihre Nachrichten nicht allein in glänzenden Gesellschaften, in Wirthshäusern, oder wohl gar in Bordellen sammeln. (Vorrede des Herausgebers)

The ideas expressed in the above sentence are not unlike those of some other Jacobin travellers of Becker's day. For example, Johann Gottfried Seume felt similarly that it was unacceptable to restrict the point of view in a travel report to that of the first class traveller who visits only those sites associated with aristocratic or upper middle class values. Information, it was felt, must be gathered from all segments of society. Seume achieved this goal by means of walking from destination to destination, for as he writes in Mein Sommer 1805: "So wie man im Wagen sitzt, hat man sich sogleich einige Grade der ursprünglichen Humanität entfernt. Man kann Niemand mehr fest und rein in's Angesicht sehen, wie man soll [...]"²⁸ (cit. in Griep, Reisen 752). Inge Stephan writes that: "diese Art des Reisens sie [Jakobiner] mit den Unterschichten in Kontakt brachte und ihnen einen unmittelbaren, unverfälschten Ein-

²⁸Johann Gottfried Seume, Mein Sommer 1805 (1805). See also Seume, "Spaziergang nach Syrakus im Jahre 1802", Seumes sämtliche Werke 8 vols. (Leipzig: 1863) vol. 1.

druck von den Lebensbedingungen des Volkes verschaffte" (180). Rebmann in his Kosmopolitische Wanderungen also asserts that his method of travelling differed significantly from that of someone "der in einer stolzen Extrapost ankommt, im besten Gasthof seines Leibes pflegt und sich auf Assembleen, Picknicks und Bällen herumwirbelt und jedem Gegenstand, der seine Betäubung zerstreuen könnte, sorgfältig ausweicht" (39).

But despite all of Becker's own efforts to widen the scope of his descriptions, some anecdotes, the publisher feels, had to be omitted. Evidently there was some material, deemed even from the point of view of a "Neu-Franke", as being too risky to include:

Was die Briefe über Wien betrifft, so hat sich der Herausgeber genöthigt gesehen, manche geile Ranken daran zu beschneiden, damit sie nicht an einem oder dem andern Orte Bauchgrimmen erregen möchten. (Vorrede)

Regarding the form of this second work, it too presents quite a contrast to Über Mainz. The most obvious one is that it concerns more than just one city. It is a collection of letters written from different locations but succeeds nonetheless in not becoming entirely topographical. In the framework of a "Reisebericht", Becker offers a number of discussions about various topics, not just a simple journal or diary wherein travels merely provide the means for contrast and comparison. Rather, in Fragmente, a number of

smaller essays emerge. Becker arranges his letters with a definite program in mind for demonstrating his own point of view on social and political issues as opposed to offering simple descriptive and topographical information on specific cities or locales.

The work is laid out very carefully and explicitly. Each set of letters has a title. The first is entitled: "Drey Briefe über das Reichskammergericht in Wetzlar" the next: "Fünf Briefe über Wien". Following them are sections entitled: "Etwas über die Juden in Prag", "Durchflug durch Böhmen, Mähren und einen Theil von Schlesien". The last section which consists of only one letter and functions almost as a kind of appendix to aid the understanding of the preceding chapters, is a defence of his alma mater, the University of Göttingen (called the "Königin der teutschen Akademien" in the dedication), entitled: "Göttingen gegen einige Brochürensreiber und Kläffer vertheidigt."

The University of Göttingen was, of course, renowned for its progressive and liberal attitudes, and, during the late 1700s, as an established "think-tank" of Enlightenment ideals. The university was home to some of the best known enlightened thinkers, such as Ludwig August von Schlözer, Ludwig Timotheus Freiherr von Spittler, Johann Christoph Lichtenberg and Johann Stephan Pütter. Becker writes his treatise in order to defend these men and others against attacks from conservatives who believe: "steif und fest,

alles Unheil welches die Französische Revolution angerichtet hat, sey größtentheils von hier [Göttingen] ausgegangen" (190). He continues and uses an example to demonstrate to what degree this unfavourable reputation has spread and how it has affected him personally:

Es ist jetzt da [Wien] eine schlechte Empfehlung, wenn man hier studiert hat, und es ist mir selbst begegnet, daß ein Minister, bey dem ich etwas suchte, und der sonst nicht von dem gemeinen Schlage war, zu mir gesagt hat: gut, Alles recht gut, aber wären sie in Göttingen nie gewesen. (192-193)

Becker does not dispute the fact that some ideals of the French Revolution had found a warm reception in Göttingen - this was obvious - but emphasizes rather that the ideas accepted and discussed there did not result in open and radical calls for revolution and for the kind of terror which had occurred in Paris a few years earlier. He argues that the great minds at the university should be seen as intelligent and pragmatic moderates expounding truth and common sense. For example, in defense of Schlözer he writes on page 193:

Es ist gewiß, daß Schlözer dadurch [his "Staatsanzeigen"] der teutschen Publicität einen eigenen sehr vortheilhaften Schwung gegeben und die Nation auf gewisse Dinge vorbereitet hat. Aber wo hat er gewaltsame Revolutionen gepredigt? Ist nicht vielmehr in allen seinen Schriften durchaus ein edler Abscheu vor denjenigen Vorfällen sichtbar, die in unsern Tagen die Menschheit geschändet haben? Und hat nicht der edle Mann die Fortsetzung seiner

Staatsanzeigen sehr gern und freiwillig aufgegeben, um der in diesem Kriege so sehr bedrängten deutschen Nation noch häufigere Ursachen zum Klagen zu geben, um nicht Öl in's Feuer zu gießen? (193-194)

In defense of Spittler, an historian who had made the "error" of saying that history speaks for itself, Becker relates that:

Spittler ist durch zwey Worte in dem zweiten Bande seiner Staatengeschichte in der ganzen österreichischen Monarchie auf einmal ein Jakobiner [29] geworden, ohne zu wissen, wie? wenn vorhin die Theologen über ihn geschrieen haben, so thun es die Politiker jetzt in einem noch ungleich stärkern Grade, versteht sich, die Hofpolitiker. [...] So können es ihm die Herrn doch nicht verzeihen, daß er den Kayser Josef einen wohlwollenden Despoten genannt hat [...]. Genauer betrachtet hatte das Publikum längst über Josef auf eben diese Art entschieden, ehe Spittler obige 2. fürchterliche Worte [wohlwollenden Despoten] drucken ließ, und es wundert mich, daß man nicht die ganze historisch-litterarische Welt Jakobiner nennt, weil sich ihr Fach nie herabläßt, den Großen zu schmeicheln. Wenn derjenige ein Jakobiner ist, der Josefen einen wohlwollenden Despoten nennt, so sind wir alle Jakobiner und so hat Österreich gewiß tausend und aber tausend Jakobiner in seinen Staaten. [...] Oder soll es vielleicht gar Mode werden, die Sünden Friedrichs III. Karls V. der Ferdinande ec. zu beschönigen, oder erstreckt sich der Grundsatz der österreichischen Universitäten: die Person des Fürsten ist heilig und unverletzlich, auch über das Urtheil der Geschichte? Ist es dies, so würde ich mich wenigstens mit dem Beynamen eines Jakobiners und Sanskulotten sehr geschmeichelt fühlen. (195-197)

²⁹The word "Jakobiner" is, of course, used here in a pejorative sense. In Becker's time in Germany the use of the word was different then it is today.

As the letter continues, it becomes obvious that Becker's glowing endorsement of the university and the community in Göttingen is steeped in fond reminiscence. No doubt he also feels a sense of duty to his old university. He writes enthusiastically of the studious atmosphere, its religious tolerance, affordability, and other factors. Underlying his statements (and this is why this letter is so important to us) is the fact that Becker, by defending proponents of the Enlightenment, is clearly expounding his own position vis-a-vis the French Revolution. "Yes", Becker admits, dreadful events associated with the revolution, - "Tage die die Menschheit geschändet haben" (193) - have taken place, but he, not unlike the moderates he studied under, still believes in the basic qualities of Freedom, Equality and the Rights of Man, and claims that to resign oneself to anything less would be a betrayal of many years of progress. If, as Griep rightly asserts, the Fragmente are "ungleich radikaler" than Über Mainz (Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner 68) then such a confession verifies that claim.

The rest of the work carries its own import although at first glance one is led to suspect otherwise. Until about two-thirds of the way into the first paragraph of the first letter originating from Wetzlar, one appears to be confronted with a work which bears a striking resemblance to Über Mainz; a polite, matter-of-fact travel report wherein the author modestly resolves to do his best to write a

pleasing and entertaining description of his most recent travels. The final one-third of the paragraph, however, shows shades of the familiar sarcasm of Becker and foreshadows its later use as one of his most effective tools for criticizing social and political abuses:

Es kann auch seyn, daß mir da und dort ein Wörtchen einfallen möchte, das nicht jedem Gaumen behagt; ich werde mir aber so viel möglich angelegen seyn lassen, im Ganzen von meinem Gegenstande mit Anstand zu sprechen, damit der unbefangene ehrwürdige Richter nicht die Miene verziehen möge, wenn auch gewisse Kläffer wie gewöhnlich laut werden sollten. (3-4)

Becker's stay in Wetzlar, while being a part of his apprenticeship, also provided him with a perfect opportunity for observing, judging and attacking those elements he deeply despised within the absolutist German states. At question here is the "Reichskammergericht" and its political and bureaucratic apparatus.

Often portrayed in German history and literature and by men such as Goethe, as one of the most corrupt and quintessentially bureaucratic public institutions of its time, the "Reichskammergericht" was a meeting place for everyone from small-minded, incompetent and petty civil servants to vain, superficial government ministers. Granted, it may never really have been as bad as it was purported to be

(even Goethe missed the mark somewhat³⁰) but it nonetheless provided reform-minded intellectuals like Becker with an easy target for their attack on the existing social and political structures. Becker seizes the opportunity and criticizes all conceivable aspects of life in Wetzlar and at the law courts, with his usual keen and discerning sense of observation and his sarcastic tone. Unlike in Über Mainz, here all things smacking even remotely of upper class airs and privileges are the target of criticism. Becker begins his damnation of the law courts with a short historical introduction. On the basis of some simple "then and now" comparisons in regarding the history of the city, he draws the conclusion that Wetzlar "ungleich wohlhabender war, als sie jetzt ohne den Aufenthalt des Kammergerichts seyn würde" (4), and follows with his initial topographical characterization of the city itself (4). After his opening remarks it seems as if Becker can hardly wait to tear into the despised petty abuses the court is famous for. Within the parameters of what is a well-organized and informative overview of the entire judicial process at the courts in Wetzlar, he, as a true rebellious "Neu-Franke" sets to work attacking the outdated institution. Not going unnoticed by Becker, for ex-

³⁰Interesting in this connection is Griep's article "Aus dem Tagebuch eines reisenden Neufranken. Bemerkungen zu Johann Nikolaus Beckers Leben und Werk". In it Griep contrasts the perceptions of the "Reichskammergericht" of Becker and Goethe.

ample, is the laziness among the appointees of the court evident in Wetzlar:

Ich hörte sogar einmahl Einen laut im Theater sagen: es `ist doch zum Rasend werden, daß man hier so viele Langeweile hat und nicht weiß, wo man die Zeit hinbringen soll. Und doch hatte der Mann gegen 30. unerledigte Extrajudicial-Sachen im Hause, und seit 2. Jahren noch nicht ein einzigemahl judicialiter referirt; aber dagegen Bälle entreprenirt, Tänze aufgeführt, Lustparthieen gemacht, Gastmäler gegeben, Faro gespielt u. dgl. (23)

In addition to his comments regarding the absence of the work ethic, Becker also presents various examples of perverted logic practised by the legal bureaucracy (21-22) and identifies various other abuses some of which include sleeping on the job and "was eben so arg ist, Zeitungen und Journale lesen" (25) during sittings. And when the members of the court do meet at the "Audienzen" Becker complains that:

[...] man hört dabey nichts als ein unverständliches Gemurmel, das ich in der That mit einem Truthahnsgekoller vergleichen möchte. (36-37)

Becker criticizes as well the personal and private lives of those associated with the courts. He does so with the biting wit and sarcasm which is every bit as entertaining as it is informative. We read, for example, about the upper social circles associated with the court hierarchy:

Gesellschaften sind so fade und leer, daß man alle Lust an ihnen verliert. Ausgenommen, daß man im Staatstalar und Degen dabey erscheinen muß, findest du weder die Schmausereien der Wiener und Münchener, noch den Aufwand der Hamburger darinn. Das wäre nun freilich nicht viel verloren, wenn man auf der anderen Seite durch eine gewürzte Unterhaltung entschädigt würde. Aber damit sieht es noch erbärmlicher aus. Sprichst du mit dem Assessor, so dreht sich alles um mandata S. et C.C. und die Weiber haben entweder schon ihre Cicisbos, oder die stecken hinter einem so stinkenden Stolz, daß man davon laufen möchte. Selbst hier behaupten sie einen gewissen Rang unter sich und bilden gleichsam ein weibliches Kammergericht. Die Frauen der kurfürstlichen Assessoren gehen den andern nach einer gewissen Ordnung vor. Sie sitzen auf Faulbetten, während sich die andern mit Sesseln begnügen, reichen dir mit unbeschreiblich affectierter Hoheit die Hand zum Kusse und werden von dem Männervolke mit einem Schwale von Titulaturen überhäuft, daßes zum Todtlachen ist. Was für erbärmliche Rollen oft hierbey gespielt werden, übersteigt allen Glauben. Da sitzt z.B. die gnädige Frau, die durch die Beförderung ihres Mannes auf einmahl aus dem Bürgerstande getreten ist, und belästigt deine Ohren mit dem abscheulichsten Deutsch oder dem Patois französischer Fischweiber, das ihren Krämer- oder Kammermädchen-Stand nicht verkennen läßt; erzählt dir ihre Abenteuer zu der Zeit, als Karl XIII. bey Pultawa geschlagen ward, auch wohl etwas von Butter und Käse u. dgl. Die Andern sind in beständige Parthieen an die Spieltische vertheilt, wo oft sehr hoch gespielt wird, selbst Faro nicht ausgenommen, für das im vorigen Winter von der Frau eines Assessors und einem österreichischen General eine eigene Bank errichtet war. (7-9)

And as if to say to the reader that he really is not making all of this up, Becker refers him to Goethe:

Wenn du mehr von diesen Erbärmlichkeiten lesen willst, so kannst du eine meisterhafte Schilderung von der Hand des vortreflichen Göthe [sic] in Werthers Leiden finden, die buchstäbliche Wahrheit

ist, und jedem, der selbst hier bekannt ist, ungemaines Vergnügen machen muß. (10)

All in all, Becker concludes:

Eine künftige Visitation wird hier erstaunlich viel auszumisten haben. (23)

The situation at Wetzlar is indeed tailor-made for his own program of criticizing the many shortcomings of the establishment as he perceives them. Through Becker's characterization, the reader, if not yet convinced of the need for reform of some of the state's existing institutions, would certainly be inclined to add them to the list.

It must be noted that in the Fragmente, Becker makes the effort, as he had in Über Mainz to be as fair as possible. In fact, right after mentioning Goethe's name, Becker takes the position that not all men of jurisprudence associated with the courts in Wetzlar are to be condemned equally. He suggests that upstanding men are to be found in the community, but that one must unfortunately often go out of one's way to find them. In this case Becker's words are genuine, not hypocritical or designed to flatter.

Willst du dich gut unterhalten, so mußst du einige der Assessoren, die wirklich viele Routine und Weltkenntniß besitzen, besonders besuchen. Wenn du dieses Glück hast, so wirst du in der That Ausbildung, Artigkeit, Liebe zu den schönen Künsten

und Wissenschaften und einen muntern Ton finden.
(10)

And paradoxically, the young apprentice does indeed find a rather tolerant and liberal mood in the city of Wetzlar itself:

Außer einigen Universitäten und Reichsstädten findest du gewiß keinen Ort in Teutschland, wo die politischen Meinungen so frei sind, als hier. Du kannst dich geradezu für den wärmsten Anhänger der Franzosen erklären, ohne daß du in Gefahr kommst, nur den geringsten Vorwurf zu hören. Die größten politischen Ketzereien und die ungereimtesten Behauptungen finden ihre Vertheidiger. Ich habe noch nirgends in öffentlichen Häusern über die Angelegenheiten der Zeit so ungescheut rasonniren gehört, als hier, und das verschiedene Interesse der Disputirenden Partheien, giebt nicht selten zu den lächerlichsten Auftritten Anlaß. In allen Stücken ist man frei und ungenirt, wenn man nur will, und mit dem Gerichte in keiner Verbindung steht. Man trinkt, schmaust, spielt mit Karten und Würfeln, und geht in Bordelle, weil es hier keine Polizeyknechte und keine Beleuchtung giebt. Gesetze die heute z.B. gegen die Hazardspiele gemacht werden, sind morgen schon vergessen und übermorgen hört man schon wieder die Würfel in den Gasthöfen rasseln. (45-46)

Thus here, as in the previous "Reisebericht", Becker demonstrates his ability to offset his negative comments with positive ones when it is justified, ameliorating his cynicism by remaining pragmatic and realistic.

On the whole, in these letters originating from Wetzlar Becker generally steers clear of direct personal attacks against the most prominent figures in German politics (ex-

cept in the case of the Duke of Neu-Wied)³¹ and from attacks on the church as well. Paramount in Becker's mind is his intention to highlight and to publicize his own beliefs about the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. All the sarcasm and all the criticism serves him well as a vehicle for the strengthening of his reformist position.

Not only does Becker register numerous legitimate complaints, he also offers his own solutions to some of the problems. As a way of curbing the rampant laziness prevalent at the law courts, for example, he proposes a simple but straightforward solution - "Preßfreiheit" (23):

Ein sicheres Mittel, der Faulheit Grenzen zu setzen und Eseln den Eingang in das Heiligthum der Themis zu verschließen, wäre gewiß die Preßfreiheit. (24)

He clarifies that statement in the following way:

Ich begreife darunter nicht die Freiheit über die Gebrechen des Gerichts, ohne Scheu seine Meinung sagen zu dürfen, die jedermann vermöge der teutschen Constitution schon hat, und die sich auch ohne das von selbst verstünde, sondern die allgemeine Freiheit, die Relationen der Beisitzer zu lesen, drucken zu lassen, mit Noten zu begleiten u.s.w. (24)

On the basis of such openness, Becker argues, the whole system would be coerced into becoming more expedient, effi-

³¹The full, entertaining and bizarre account by Becker of the "Neuwieder Sache" is found in Beschreibung meiner Reise in the 13th letter.

cient and above all, fair, because of the public attention directed upon it. But the biggest benefit of all Becker sees in the fact that it would encourage ordinary citizens in an open and public forum to challenge injustices foisted upon them by feudal lords and would lead in the end to much better treatment of subjects by their rulers:

Und was noch herrlicher ist: einige wichtige Sachen, z.B. der Unterthanen gegen ihren Fürsten, würde die Sache der ganzen Nation werden, und der teutsche Gemeingeist vielleicht wieder aufblühen. Wenn Alles im werthen teutschen Vaterlande so stünde, wie es von Gott und Rechtswegen stehen sollte, und wenn die Vorstellungen des Bürgers zu Regensburg und Wien Gehör fänden, so lohnte es sich wohl der Mühe, daß ein Mann voll Geist und Kraft sich an diesem Gegenstande versuchte. Doch ist es vielleicht auch zu hoffen, daß die größte Revolution aller Zeiten, nebst so manchen andern wohlthätigen Einflüssen auf Teutschland auch diesen hat, und dadurch eines Theils für die Wunden entschädigt, die sie, freilich nur durch die Unbesonnenheit gewisser Fürsten, geschlagen hat. (26-27)

The conclusions he draws on this topic contain far-reaching implications for him:

Aber ich getraue mir, ich der Weltbürger, dem du das wohl nicht zutrauen solltest, für die Behauptung mit Degen und Rohr zu Felde zu ziehen, daß durch die Bemühungen des Kammergerichts dem Sankulotismus [sic] teutscher Tamerlane zehnmal mehr gesteuert worden ist, als durch alle Rescripte des Reichshofraths seit seiner Existenz. (28)

What is this if not a perfect reflection of the new ideas coming from France? From here Becker proceeds to outline case studies regarding the right of subjects to take their lords to court, and he tries to establish a case for his beliefs on the basis of the ideals of equality and responsible government as promoted by the French Revolution. He leads the discussion into the absurd and burlesque with the inclusion of the "Neuwieder Sache" mentioned above (p.164).

The issue of subjects taking their rulers to court leads Becker again to one of his basic premises and he presents it in such a way as to make proud any reformer whose heart beats in time to the Marseillaise:

Aber daß die Sache eines Unmittelbaren oder gar eines Reichsstandes reiflichere Überlegung verdiene und wichtiger sey, als die eines Bürgers, ist die unverschämteste Behauptung, die man machen kann, und der Grund dazu läßt sich nur in den teutschen Reichsgesetzen, die noch mehr dumme Streiche gemacht haben, und in dem verbrannten Gehirn kriechender Sklaven suchen. Dergleichen Gesetze zeigen mehr als zu sehr, wie der überflüssige Adel vor dem nothwendigen Bürger und noch nothwendigern Bauern begünstigt wird. So gar bis in die Audienzen erstreckt sich die Albernheit und der Präsident sitzt mit größern Ernste und mehrern Assessoren, wenn Urtheile gegen Stände publizirt werden, als wenn es sich um die Sache eines Privatmannes handelt. (41)

All in all, based on the first three letters of this travel report, it must be said that Becker's tone has changed dramatically in the course of six years. The trepidation displayed at times in Über Mainz has all but disap-

peared and the author now refuses to mince words. He is generous in his use of sarcasm and satire, yet exercises restraint at the appropriate times, adopting a level-headed and pragmatic tone in order to make a serious point. Apart from the obviously more animated nature of his presentation, one also notices a more mature and more complex writing style. At the same time his language absorbs many expressions from the revolution such as "Despotismus," "asiatischer Despotismus," "überflüssiger Adel" as well as such positive terms such as "Freiheit," and "Weltbürger". Such a change in vocabulary alone points to a definite strengthening of his convictions, or at least a vastly greater degree of self-confidence in presenting his own position.

In the third letter from Wetzlar, Becker's second travel report suddenly takes on a much more "typical" and traditional form in that Becker emphasizes topographical matters rather than political considerations. As such this chapter more than the previous two reminds the reader of Über Mainz in its style and content as he discusses a wide range of topics such as fashion, concerts, night life, taverns, balls, costs of living, etc.

Of considerable interest in this last letter from Wetzlar is the inclusion by Becker of a retracing of the storyline of Goethe's Werther ("der Roman aller Romane") (49-50). Becker pays homage to it by recounting the suffering Werther's (he calls him by his historical prototype -

Jerusalem) movements through the area around Wetzlar and, of course, "Waldheim".³² Becker does it tastefully and interestingly and through it offers the reader some wonderful prose. The inclusion of this section is also an interesting reminder of how popular Die Leiden des jungen Werthers still was at that time, almost a quarter of a century after its appearance. On the basis of an obscure travel report, today's reader is reminded of the importance and influence of Goethe's work, and how the ideas it contained found popular expression in the thoughts and actions of men such as Becker, who were motivated to try to change the stifling conditions outlined in Goethe's novel.

In directing our attention now to the letters from Vienna, written, we assume, while Becker participated in further apprenticeship duties at the "Reichshofrath", we notice the "freimütig-kritischen" tone from the earlier letters about Wetzlar carried over here for use in an analysis of the Austrian city and its political institutions. Austria, the most reactionary and conservative state in Europe at the time, was at war with France. Austria was notorious for its well-maintained network of spies, strict censorship and strong police and military presence in the everyday life of its citizens - inviting targets for Becker, who generally is not very malicious or overly critical in

³²In Becker's text it is referred to as "Waldheim". What is meant, of course, is "Wahlheim".

these matters in this travel report. He follows a more topographical and descriptive approach, and looks at the Viennese in a generally light-hearted manner. He continues to rely on his sense of humour and projects a kind of laissez-faire attitude vis-à-vis the world of the Viennese, accepting that things are simply different in their part of the world and avoiding openly critical comparisons with Germany. Obvious social and political differences are, of course, mentioned, but Becker's more topographical approach here is typified in his descriptions of things like inns, pubs, cafés, restaurants, architecture, streets, gardens and the like. Becker suggests, however, that in time the Austrians, too, will see the light and benefit from the ideas of the French Revolution as Prussia and parts of Germany were now more open to do. He demonstrates an air of superiority over the much-maligned Viennese and delights in poking fun at them. A hint of snobbery is revealed in Becker's words.

Becker's letters from Vienna end somewhat suddenly, however, with news that the French are on the capital's front steps and that he is obeying an edict, forcing all foreigners to leave the city. In some masterful passages Becker manages to describe the ensuing havoc which the news of the imminent arrival of Napoleon "mit seiner nie besiegten Armee" (129) has instigated. And in the ensuing chaos Becker also finds opportunity to praise some of the Viennese

for displaying characteristics which he never thought they possessed:

Es ist merkwürdig, daß der Wiener seit dieser Hiobspost [that Napoleon's armies are threatening the city] ein ganz anderer Mensch geworden ist. Er geht nicht mehr mit dem Knechtsgeföhle und dem Fajaken-Gesichte wie ehemals über die Strasse, sondern er fängt an, ein wenig laut zu werden. Ich habe seit der Zeit Dinge gehört, die vor zwey Tagen noch keiner zu sagen gewagt hätte, wenn du ihm goldene Berge geschenkt hättest. Die Spionen verhalten sich dabey ziemlich leidend: sie sind aber mehr als jemahls beschäftigt, und die Polizey wird nach der Zeit gewaltig viel aufzuräumen bekommen, um wieder Alles in das vorige Gleis zu bringen. (130-31)

In connection with this point, Griep extrapolates and suggests that Becker is conveying the following point:

Wo als Vaterlandtugenden Knechtschaft und Untertanengeist verlangt werden, kann sich patriotisches Gefühl nur schwer entwickeln. Statt dessen ist viel Raum für Freiheitsverlangen und Sehnsucht nach Besserem [...]. (Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner 69)

Becker obviously views the situation in the same light as he hypothesizes on what might have happened had Napoleon decided to invade the city:

So ausgemacht ist es, daß eine Nation unüberwindlich ist, wenn sie für ihre Freiheit ficht, so finde ich nicht, daß hier ein Bürger in dem Falle war, für sie zu fechten. Er trug die Waffen gegen den Feind für die Aufrechterhaltung einer Monarchie, die im Grunde den Meisten gleichgültig ist, und stritt für einen Regenten, nicht für Freiheit und Leben. (141)

As such, Becker sees the French as great liberators, despite the general posturing of the Austrian population. On what can on the one hand be interpreted as a noble and impassioned outburst and on the other hand as an astoundingly naive view of the realities of the situation - one better suited to times prior to 1792 - Becker offers the following:

Ich gebe gerne zu, daß ein solcher Aufstand von Bedeutung gewesen seyn würde, wenn eine rohe barbarische Nation an den Grenzen erschienen wäre, die alles geplündert, niedergehauen, verbrannt und den Rest in die Sklaverey geschleppt hätte. Hier aber war dergleichen nicht zu besorgen.^[33] Wo ist der Mann der es läugnen kann, daß jeder einzelne Bürger lieber dem Feinde einen Theil seines Vermögens als Brandschatzung abtritt, als Leib und Leben für eine Verfassung wagt, deren Umsturtz kein Verlust seyn würde, besonders wenn er Weib und Kind durch seinen Tod an den Bettelstab bringt. (141)

That the Austrians did not have to make that decision is a fact of history. In the ensuing treaty of Campo Formio the capital was spared; the left bank of the Rhine, however, was placed under French administration. Becker himself came to know this new political reality and it is from there, that his next "Reisebericht" originates.

³³For evidence of the conflicting points of view regarding the perception of the French as liberators or conquerors see Blanning's two works wherein he maintains that the French generally acted more like conquerors than liberators. Streisand, an East German, tries to make a case to prove the contrary.

4.3.3. Beschreibung meiner Reise in den Departementern
vom Donnersberge vom Rhein und von der Mosel
Im sechsten Jahr der Französischen Republik

As if Becker felt that the Fragmente was not a clear enough confession of his political beliefs or convictions, one year later he set out to state his case once and for all in Beschreibung meiner Reise. This work, whose full title reads Beschreibung meiner Reise in den Departementern vom Donnersberge vom Rhein und von der Mosel im sechsten Jahr der Französischen Republik. In Briefen an einen Freund in Paris, was, unlike Becker's previous travel reports named by author, in this case a confident and self-possessed "Bürger J. N. Becker." Published in Berlin in 1799 by Christian Gottfried Schöne, this pinnacle of Becker's literary achievements is written with clarity and focus as he demonstrates the confidence he has in the new French administration of the left bank of the Rhine. Becker, obviously feeling that the developments in Germany caused by the spread of the French Revolution are permanent, no longer feels the need to cower behind anonymity when it comes to stating his true feelings and speaking his mind.

Or is Becker's motivation revenge? If our suppositions are correct, then the thoughts and ideas expressed in this latest travel report come very shortly after his brush with German despotic authority and his subsequent prison sentence. The "Neu-Franke," after escaping from Würzburg and reaching the safety offered by his like-minded political allies in France, has now taken the opportunity to direct his vitriol against the old regime in Germany with vigour and enthusiasm. "Rücksichten hat er auch nicht" writes Becker on page X of the preface,

denn er [the author] fühlt keine Mächtigen über sich, der über seine Äußerungen die Miene verziehen könnte; er hat sich des Rechtes des freien Mannes, seine Meinung ungescheut zu sagen, in vollem Maaße bedient[...].

Unlike his previous travel report, Beschreibung meiner Reise includes a lengthy and pragmatic preface which unequivocally expresses and defines the author's own political and philosophical standpoint. It is as close to a precise credo of Becker's beliefs as one is able to find. As such, this preface merits some considerable and careful attention.

In contrast to the majority of his previous travels Becker states in the opening sentence of his preface:

Der Verfasser dieser Briefe ist in dem Lande geboren, durch welches diese Reise geht. (III)

The sentence above contains only a few short words, but for our assessment of Becker's new position they speak volumes. Unlike his previous aim of providing the reader with insights gathered from new and different surroundings, Becker has opted here to select an area for his "Reisebericht" which cannot be neatly characterized and presented as a novelty to the curious reader. On the contrary, the author has consciously chosen to write about an area and about aspects with which he is already very familiar, not with the aim of introducing it as something unknown but to present it in terms of its political and social realities as they exist in light of the recent political developments. He wants to reintroduce this area of his homeland and present it in a different light. He wants to throw light on the political reality of the region.

His second sentence in which he makes his second point is equally important:

Er bekennt sich schon seit der Zeit, da er selbstständig denken gelernt hat, zu der Parthei, deren Sache er in diesen Briefen führt. (III)

How much more explicit can Becker be? Besides indicating to the reader that he is definitely writing as an adherent to a specific ideology, he also deems his position to be self-evident and one which coincides with "gesunder Menschenverstand" (IV), the implication being, of course, that contrary

positions are simply unreasonable. To buttress further the self-evident nature of his position, he claims to have held this view since he was old enough to think for himself. In invoking this popularly held formulation of the Enlightenment, that freedom and human rights have a logical and natural origin, Becker has committed himself totally to one side and launched a bold attack. He proceeds in a selfconfident and aggressive manner:

Mit dem Ablaufe dieses Jahrhunderts hat sein Vaterland eine Revolution erlitten, die jetzt schon alle geistliche und weltliche Despotie verschlingt, und künftig Dinge erwarten läßt, die der kühnste Geist noch vor 9 Jahren nicht ein Mahl ahnen konnte. (III)

The Roman Catholic Church, after a brief reprieve in the Fragmente, is the first target of his wrath:

Der Katolizismus und seine Diener sind dahin, Ungeheuer, die seit Jahrhunderte an dem Mark der wackern Menschen nagten, die die Ufer des Rheins bewohnen, - Beförder des Betrugs, des Aberglaubens, der Falschheit, des Meuchelmords und der Giftmischerei, - Feinde des gesunden Menschenverstandes, die sich gegen Alles verschworen, was nicht zu ihren Taschenspielerkünsten paßte. Drei Obermönche liegen im Staube, in ihnen stürzt das ganze Gebäude nach, die - Bastille der Hölle, die biß zur letzten gewagtesten Spitze schwindelnder Höhe hinauf geführt war. (III f.)

Becker's polemic is not for the faint of heart. He continues:

Auf ihren Trümmern erhebt sich das Gelächter des Volks über die Wunder, die man ihm vorgespiegelt hat: wie hier die unbefleckte Jungfrau einem Mönche den Hosenknopf lös't; dort CHRISTUS mit einer Nonne Karten spielt und die Brautnacht feiert; hier sich Pfaffen unter dem Unterrocke MARIE'Ns versammeln; dort ST. ANTON durch eine Messe erweicht, gestohlene Sachen zurückbringt, hier ST. DOMINIK MAGDALENE'N die Strümpfe flickt; dort ALOIS der Päderast, eine Katze bemannt; XAVIER seine durchnäßte Kutte von Teufeln trocknen läßt; FRANZ der Seraliker, Schweinen predigt und Koth frißt; IGNATIUS mit dem bekannten Verse VIRGIL's den Teufel austreibt, und ein unschuldiges Kindlein von dem betlemitischen Kindermorde von einem Sperling an einem seidenen Faden über das mittelländische Meer nach Rom getragen wird u.s.w. (IV f.)

And then, almost in answer to the raised eyebrows of the reader, he offers his excuse and justification for this vicious condemnation of the Church:

Vielleicht wird mancher die Freimüthigkeit, die überall in diesem Buche herrscht, mit strenger Kritik tadeln, denn es giebt Leute, die überall weder durch Spott aufgeräumt, noch die Pudenda der Sünder während ihres Lebens in puris naturalibus dargestellt wissen wollen. Alles das soll man den kommenden Zeiten überlassen, oder doch wenigstens der Schwachen wegen, den Sündern ein Mäntelchen um die Lenden hängen. Dieser Meinung hat der Verfasser nie sein können, und er hat daher auch seinen Glauben in keinem dieser Briefe verläugnet, wovon sich der Leser auch bei der flüchtigsten Durchblätterung überzeugen wird. (V f.)

The "Freimüthigkeit" intimated here is certainly of a much stronger variety than that suggested by Nicolai previously.

Becker's next point is that for him, as for the socially critical authors of travel literature such as Riesbeck and Wekherlin "war [...] die 'Jagd auf Zahlen'

nicht etwa obsolet, deren vollständige Dokumentation aber nicht das Ziel seines Programmentwurfs, der Beschreibung politischer und sozialer Zustände in zukunftsweisender Absicht" (Griep, "Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner" 71). As Becker says, he considers it to be:

Pflicht der Zeitgenossen, ihren Nachkommen wenigstens Data zu liefern, aus denen sie den Zustand und den Geist der jetzigen Zeit kennen lernen können [...] Wahrheit! Wahrheit! ist das große Ziel, dem wir entgegen streben müssen, und nach ihr hat auch der Verfasser gerungen. (VI)

But Becker also dismisses any anticipation of an "enzyklopädisch-systematisierende Landesvermessung" (Griep, "Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner" 71), for on his mind is definitely not the production of a tourist handbook filled with facts, tables and the like, but rather to expose traditional abuses:

Der Verfasser weiß es übrigens recht gut, was man an ihn für Forderungen machen könnte, und er gesteht, daß sein ganzes Buch für den Statistiker keinen Dreier werth ist. Für diese war aber auch dieß Mahl die Arbeit nicht berechnet, und konnte es auch nicht sein. Der Statistiker will Zahlen, die sich in terris incognitis nicht finden lassen. Jetzt, da sie endlich ein Mahl cognitae werden, ist es noch zu früh, Jagd auf Zahlen zu machen. Es muß sich da noch so manches entwickeln, ehe wir mit Ernste auf bauchbare Materialien zu dem großen statistischen Gebäude denken können. Anstalten hat der Verfasser indessen jetzt schon der Probe wegen zu einigen kleinen Sammlungen gemacht, die ihm wenig Mühe gekostet haben, denn jetzt giebt es in seinem Vaterlande keine Bonzen und keine Bassen mehr, die den Publizitäts - Jüngern das Haupt vom

Rumpfe hauen; oder Staatsverbrechen! schreien, wenn man ihnen in die Rechnungen ihrer Verwaltungen sieht. (VIII f.)

And Becker also sees in his program a clearly didactic purpose:

Dann glaubt er auch, daß viele der Sanskulotten, wenn sie öffentlich mit ihren Namen genannt werden, sich besinnen, und während dieses Besinnens wenigstens einige Augenblicke auf dem Wege stille sehen, auf dem sie das ihnen anvertraute Volk so rasch in's Verderben führen (VII),

but he expresses his doubts about its effectiveness:

Die meisten, die Sanskulotten im eigentlichen Verstande des Wortes sind, das heißt, Leute, denen durchaus kein Gesetz heilig ist, werden freilich durch öffentliche Rüge nicht gebessert werden, das hat der Verfasser schon längst empfunden und bei andern Gelegenheiten erfahren. (VII f.)

Then, by resorting to a more rhetorical approach, Becker establishes a correlation between his bold declarations and those of an important German folk-hero, Ulrich von Hutten. His famous expression "Jacta est alea" is echoed by the current author when he states:

Jacta est alea, sagt auch der Verfasser (obgleich kein Hutten), indem diese Briefe aus seinen Händen in's Publikum gehen. Er weiß es, daß sie bei all ihrer Unbedeutenheit Bauchgrimmen erregen werden, und er sieht schon im Geiste die Obscuranten, die Gassenjungen der ehemaligen Höfe, die Despotenknechte und die Feinde der jetzigen Verfassung gegen sich zum Kampfe heranrücken; er sieht, wie die Titel sonst heißen, die ihnen ihre leeren Köpfe

eingeben mögen, von der Erde zu tilgen. Doch er ist ohne Furcht! Wer an der Auszehzung krank liegt, und den Tod, wie man zu sagen pflegt, auf der Zunge hat, ist für einen gesunden jungen Mann ein unbedeutender Gegner. (XI)

Becker then ends his preface with a poem written by Hutten. It precedes the obligatory thanks and acknowledgements directed at Becker's publisher.

Thus, in the course of Becker's introductory remarks, his own program for Enlightenment and reform, indeed, his own political platform has been expounded. In so doing, Becker has given the reader a point of reference from which to judge and interpret the subsequent pages of his text. The reader is then faced with the choice of accepting or rejecting his ideas. He does, however, offer a warning of sorts to those who may choose not to pay heed to his suggestions. Interestingly, he does it in the context of a sort of apology or response to criticism which he, no doubt, faced as a result of his aforementioned consideration of the "Pöbel" in his earlier travel reports. The following quotation offers the reader a striking example of his frankness and honesty:

Man hat den Verfasser an diesem und jenem Orte oft gefragt, wenn in Gesellschaften die Rede auf das Land kam, von dem hier die Rede ist: ob denn gar nichts zu Loben da wäre? Außer der schönen herrlichen Natur, unter den vorigen Regierungen nichts, gar nichts. Die Menschen sind hier gut und brav, aber damahls verdienten sie kein Lob, vielleicht nicht ein mahl Bedauern. Wer sich das Joch freiwillig auflegen läßt, und es gern trägt, der verdient unser Mitleid nicht. Seine Sklaverei

drücke ihn zu Boden! - Ihre jetzige Freiheit haben sie von ungefähr gefunden. (XI-XII)

In summation, Becker, in the "Vorrede" does his utmost to make his position clear. In order to further this aim he furnishes the body of his work, in contrast to his previous two "Reiseberichte", with a very detailed table of contents in which the places visited, as well as the topics, persons and occurrences discussed are listed in order. Becker clearly intends Beschreibung meiner Reise to serve as a kind of revolutionary handbook for the politically uninitiated.

Generally, the same basic topics are discussed in Beschreibung meiner Reise as in the other works, but with the difference that now the same topics are much more openly and directly dealt with in terms of his own, newly defined political and ideological platform. In order to lend more emphasis to the already familiar targets of his criticism, Becker resorts to rhetorical methods as a way of crystallizing his position, instead of continuing to rely on a more judicious and even-handed approach. As a result, one of the first things the reader of Beschreibung notices is Becker's increased use of slogans and catchwords as a means of conveying his message. Included in this approach is a whole range of metaphors - from religious and military to revolutionary. Hence the language of Beschreibung is punctuated by such phrases as: "Apostel des Despotismus," "Corps der Obscuranten," "junge Republikaner," "aufblühende Freiheit,"

"Früchte von dem Baume der Freiheit". The following reference may serve to illustrate the positive expectations Becker has for the areas now under French control:

Aber Dank sei es der fränkischen Republik, die ihre Großthaten mit der Wiedergeburt des herrlichsten Landesstriches krönt. (3)

Such expressions were not often to be found in the previous two works.

Becker's increased tendency to intersperse his prose with poems and dedications does not go unnoticed by the reader; nor do his increased references to the many well-known intellectuals and historical figures whom he uses to arouse pride and patriotism in his fellow countrymen and as a means of appealing to grassroots supporters of German democracy and freedom. Becker's reliance on the aforementioned devices reveals one of the strengths of his writing style. They play an important role in increasing the effectiveness of his "Reisebericht."

Not coincidentally, Becker begins his actual journey with a stop in Mainz, a city of great importance and significance for German republicans as a result of the events ("Mainzer Republik") which took place there in 1792/93. Only a few months after Becker's departure for Göttingen in 1792, Mainz became the site of the first German Republic. It was at this time governed by a conglomerate of German (albeit

French-appointed) Jacobins sympathetic to the causes of reform and revolution. Under the perceived tutelage and protection of the occupying French armies, the Mainzer Jacobins' platform was for a short time implemented and the first German republic became a flawed and fleeting reality. However, before the end of 1793, after a protracted siege, Mainz was again turned over to the coalition forces and those German Jacobins who had been unable to flee during the siege were captured and incarcerated.³⁴

It is from this time, that is, just after Mainz had been restored to German control, that a letter, which Becker quotes in his travel report of 1799, originates. Becker includes this letter to produce a reference point whereby he can assess his "neugeschaffenes Mainz" (p. 10). His aim initially is to set up a contrast:

"Es war. Dieser Gedanke begleitet alle meine Schritte. Wo ich hinkomme, nichts als militärische Zeichen, und traurige Spuren der Belagerung. Biß zur tiefen Indolenz ist der ehemahls jovialische Mainzer herab gesunken. Eine todte Stille herrscht in dem goldenen Mainz, die nur zuweilen durch das Geräusch der Waffen unterbrochen wird. Überall ungewohnte Gesichter, ausgestorbene Gassen, alle Häuser beschmutzt, das Theater geschlossen, alle Musik eingestellt, die schönsten Kirchen in Spitäler und Magazine verwandelt, die Denkmäler des Alterthums umgestürzt, die ganze Stadt wie eine Landschaft, die die Pest hinter sich gelassen hat. Der ehemahlige Gassenlärm ist nicht mehr. Al-

³⁴For a complete history of the Republic at Mainz refer to the works by Blanning, Julku, and Träger.

les sitzt hinter den Riegeln seines Hauses. Bekannte kennen ihre Bekannte nicht mehr, und Freunde sind verdächtig geworden. Ich ging in einige Häuser, wo ich vor mehreren Jahren gern gesehen war. Aber Mißtrauen und Furcht hat die Freundschaftvertrieben. Bei jedem Geräusche fährt man auf, als pochte ein österreichischer oder preussischer Soldat an dem Thore; als käme ein Spion, um in dem Heiligtum der Freundschaft einen Klubbisten zu suchen. Es ist das alte herrliche Mainz nicht mehr". (11-12)

It is perhaps somewhat ironic that in this passage Becker's correspondence partner is describing Mainz under the same, that is, the German order, that was present when Becker himself wrote about the city in Über Mainz. As Griep says:

Der Brieffreund erfährt eigentlich die alte, vertraute Ordnung: 1793 war der Kurfürst nach Mainz zurückgekehrt und hatte seine nur kurz unterbrochene Politik in gewohnter Weise fortgesetzt. Aber der Brief schildert Fremdes: der Freund erkennt das Vertraute nicht mehr. Damit das, was eigentlich absolutistische Normalität ist, als bedrückender Ausnahmezustand, als erzwungene Friedhofsruhe erscheinen kann, muß vorher etwas entscheidend anders gewesen sein: "Es war." Der erste Rückblick evoziert so den zweiten, die Besinnung auf die Republik von 1792/93. ("Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner" 73)

And then Becker, from his own present perception, harkens back to the "good old days," for he now is in a city again under French occupation and direction. A somewhat idealized description of the 'born-again' city is the result:

Die dem Mainzer eigenthümliche Fröhlichkeit zeigte sich wieder in der buntesten Mischung mit Leichtsinn und Genuß. Wo ich eine alte Bekanntschaft

wieder fand, sprach man mit Entzücken von der Zukunft, und suchte dadurch das Ungemach der Gegenwart zu vergessen. Jene düstere Falte, die durch den langen schrecklichen Krieg und den nicht selten bleiern drückenden Mangel auf ihren Gesichtern stand, war durch den Genuß der neuen, freilich bis jetzt noch für den diesseitigen Deutschen wenig wirksam gewesenen Freiheit, völlig verwischt. Mich freute das jovialische Volk, das sich sein Paradies so ganz mit lieblichen Farben zu malen weiß. Alle die unerschwinglichen Auflagen seit sechs Jahren, und die Verwüstung der Gefilde ringsumher wird uns schon das neuerschienene Götterkind mit Wucher vergelten, sagen sie. Glückliche Regierung, der es gelungen ist, die öffentliche Meinung für sich zu bannen! (18 f.)

But the author also acknowledges that not all is perfectly in order in this new state of affairs and that the road to revolutionary and democratic utopia has been and will continue to be a difficult one. Becker points, for instance, to the vacillating convictions of the Mainzers themselves and how some of them are not yet deserving of a better system of government. Indeed, he feels that at issue is also a lack of experience and a true desire for liberty in the sense that the citizens of Mainz were not yet ready for their freedom.

Im Taumel der Freude über Custine's Einzug hatten die Mainzer wie Bachanten um den Freiheitsbaum getanzt und ausgelassen geschwärmt, aber es war nur ein Wunderglaube an die Franken, und sprudelnde Vergötterung der neuen Verfassung, ohne inneres Selbstgefühl und lauterer Bewußtsein angebohrner Menschen-Rechte, wie es die Amerikaner und Franken hatten. Kaum waren aber die neuen Besitznehmer abgezogen, und hatten den Preussen und mit diesen

der alten Regierung wieder Platz gemacht, als sich ein entgegen gesetzter Schwindel aller Köpfe bemächtigte. Alle Herzen schlugen wieder dem Fürsten entgegen [...]. [E]ben den Mann, gegen den man kurz vorher im Klubb die wütigsten Reden mit angehört hatte, und dem man vorwarf, daß er mit dem Gelde des Landes einen empörenden Luxus verbreitete. (47)

Obviously Becker has doubts that some people will ever be able to find their way to an understanding of freedom and a new order. In a letter from Bingen, for example, an exasperated Becker suggests that some of the sheltered rural population may never be able to rise above their present level of existence:

Sind sie vielleicht so sehr unter dem Joche gewesen, daß keine Erschütterung sie mehr wecken kann?
(85)

In view of the shortcomings of the spreading of enlightenment throughout Germany, Becker maintains that serious mistakes have also been made along the way and that the failures must not be ignored, but serve as lessons. For instance, Becker points to some of the members of the Jacobin Club in Mainz themselves but his tone is conciliatory as he excuses them for their behaviour:

Wir wissen es jetzt recht gut, daß in dieser Gesellschaft oft eine unanständige Sanskulotten-Sprache geführt wurde, daß man Dinge darin ver-

breitet hat, die nicht zu beweisen waren; dieß ist aber nun ein Mahl der gewöhnliche Fall. Wenn der Geist seine land getragenen Fesseln abwirft, so erhebt er sich doppelt mächtig über die Schranken der Convenienz, biß er sich an das blendende Licht gewöhnt. Auch kann nichts anders erwartet werden, so lange ein Staat nicht aus lauter vollkommen vernünftigen Menschen besteht. Indessen hat dieser Klubb doch auf dem linken Rheinufer herrlich gewirkt, und biß tief in die Mittelklasse hinab, Ideen verbreitet, welche die Bewohner dieser düstern Gegenden dem schönen Ziel näher bringen, das ihnen gegenwärtig bevorsteht. Er erweckte die Willensfreiheit wieder [...]. (25)

In his explanation of the Club members' point of view, he also comes to their defense in the face of the harsh treatment accorded them when they were captured by the coalition forces after the collapse of the Mainzer Republik:

Es muß jeden braven Mann freuen, daß man die harte und unmenschliche Behandlung der gefangenen Klub- bisten in den preussischen Staaten gleich nach dem zu Basel mit der Republik geschlossenen Frieden freimüthig beurtheilte.^[35] Jene Behandlung ließ sich gewiß mit den weisen Reformen in dieser Monarchie (die nach ihrer Verfassung vielleicht noch etwas mehr als Monarchie ist) wodurch Friedrich II, und sein zweiter, mehr als sein unmittelbarer Nachfolger, gewaltsame Revolutionen entfernen. (26)

More serious criticism is reserved for the French military and General Custine, the chief commander in Mainz at the time, whose failed military operations in the region

³⁵The treatment reserved for the captured Jacobins form an interesting starting point for Griep's article "Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner".

and whose inability to secure the Mainz Republic from the coalition forces led to much of the hardship for those Germans who had committed themselves to implementing reform and change. Becker also suggests that the initial conduct of the French military towards the "liberated" people was less than exemplary:

Ewig denkwürdig wird für Mainz der großsprechende und feige Custine bleiben, der durch seine Gehilfen zuerst am Rhein Furcht und Schrecken verbreitete und allgemeines Freudengeschrei unter den Freunden der Revolution bewirkte. Schade, daß dieser Mann es war, den die ersten Köpfe in Mainz vergötterten, und ihm einen Weihrauch streuten, der in Republiken nicht geduldet werden sollte. Seine Proklamationen (meist Böhmer's Werke) enthalten Alles, was man von der Art lesen kann. Wie staunt man nicht, wenn dieser fahrende Ritter, der nicht ein Mahl Muth hatte, den von der Natur selbst überwundenen Preussen ihre Magazine bei Koblenz wegzunehmen, und den unvertheidigten Ehrenbreitstein zu besetzen, sich planlos in der Wetterau herumtreibt und gegen den Landgrafen von Hessen-kassel predigen läßt.[36] (22)

Griep, in considering these words, says that one must take into account the overall developments on the left bank in a political sense to understand fully Becker's position and to reach the conclusion that while Becker's personal position on his need and desire to see reforms initiated by the French Revolution is very clear ("Becker beharrt auf seinen revolutionären Grundsätzen von Freiheit und Menschen-

³⁶Custine was later executed during the Jacobin dictatorship in France.

recht" ("Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner" 74)), his position towards the French involvement therein vacillates:

Wenn Becker in seiner Beschreibung trotz der auch für ihn offenbaren Mängel an der bedeutenden Initialfunktion und Erziehungsarbeit des Mainzer Klubs festhält, so wirft dies zugleich ein überraschendes Licht auf den Gestus des Titels: der Bürger befindet sich gerade nicht in vollständiger Übereinstimmung mit der neuen französischen Politik. (74)

One can find further proof of this position primarily in Becker's decidedly weak and perhaps somewhat abashed criticism of the behaviour of the French soldiers vis-à-vis those people who are being "liberated" :

Die Republikaner haben sich hier [Koblenz] nicht republikanisch betragen. Man sah freilich keine brennenden Dörfer, aber geplünderte und zerfleischte Menschen, entehrte Weiber und Mädchen, und wütenden Hunger auf allen Seiten. (160)

And of the extraordinary requisitions demanded by the French army to keep their war machine operational, he maintains:

Ungeheuer war allerdings diese Auflage [...]. Man hat den Franzosen oft vorgeworfen, daß sie ohne allen Rückblick auf die Verhältnisse und den Ertrag eines Landes Brandschatzungen ausschreiben. Aber ich bitte, wie soll es einem fremden Volke möglich sein, ein Land kennen zu lernen, das man im Lande selbst nicht ein Mahl kennt? (236)

It is obvious that Becker is not entirely comfortable with some of the results of the French presence in Germany. Becker is not completely satisfied with the French role in bringing about reform in the German-speaking lands. While he is firmly convinced that reform is moving in the right direction, he does not lightly suffer the problems and hardships presented by the French model.

But despite the reservations he may harbour regarding the French direction of reform and revolution in Germany, Becker continues to examine the state of affairs in the places he visited, albeit in a somewhat rambling manner. His point of view, is that which has been outlined in the "Vorrede" and he exercises his criticism and praise as the situations and cases may warrant. The first two letters deal almost exclusively with the advent of the ideals of the French Revolution to Germany and with their implications, particularly as they impacted on the "Mainzer Republik". Up to this point his travelogue exudes an entirely political nature which is certainly in contrast to his previous "Reiseberichte" wherein - apart from some vehement denunciations of the Catholic Church - the emphasis was on narration. These first pages of this work demonstrate more forceful and directed expressions of deep personal convictions. By the end of the second letter, however, the author begins to mellow somewhat in his attitude and touches of his previous writing style appear. A good example is evident on page 53

in his light-hearted retelling of an anecdote regarding the "rights", as Becker sees them, of the monarchy. When he relates that in Mainz in the "prächtigsten Theile der Stadt", the crass segregation of the classes has been dampened and that the middle class has come to inherit parts of the city previously off-limits to them, he describes also the vain attempts among some persons to resurrect the nobility and their previously inherent rights. Speaking at first from the point of view of the aristocracy he chides:

Alle alten Völker haben ihren Adel gehabt, sagen die Herren, und ihr Republikaner selbst, die ihr doch von begünstigten Volksklassen nichts hören wollt, habt euren Adel. Warum wollt ihr denn uns, die wir seit Jahrhunderten das Recht auf unsere Güter ersessen haben, aus euerer Mitte vertreiben?

Becker continues in the narrative:

Vor einigen Wochen hatte sogar Einer die Kühnheit, hier öffentlich eine Schrift über die Rechte des Adels diesseits des Rheins zu verbreiten, und sie dem Regierungs-Kommissär zur Prüfung vorzulegen. Er bekam aber die lakonische Antwort: "Wer nicht arbeitet, soll auch nicht essen." Seit der Zeit haben sie wieder ein Pamphlet in Umlauf gesetzt, worinn sie zu erweisen suchen, daß sie in der That arbeiteten. Das ganze läuft aber zuletzt auf eine alberne Schnurre hinaus, die dem Publikum viel Spaß gemacht hat. Ein Kammerherrn-Schlüssel, der kein Gemach öffnet, ist freilich eine schwere Last, und täglich eine Singstunde im Dom, die man aber allenfalls abkaufen oder von einem Anderen halten lassen kann, ist ein würdiger Dienst für einen Gehalt von 4000 Gulden. (53-54)

And by the end of the second letter and into the third, one notices that Becker has returned to his earlier style which was so effective in the previous two "Reiseberichte". Nonetheless, his present effort remains characterized by a more direct approach to things such as politics, the Catholic Church, economic evaluations, and the like. He still demonstrates a fairly pragmatic approach, and continues to be optimistic rather than pessimistic. He also continues to deride, expose, and criticize all of the same elements of society which he had attacked in his previous works.

One of his most frequent targets of criticism is that of absentee landlords. He points out that the nobility has throughout the ages, in almost every part of Germany, sapped the strength of their subjects, thereby robbing them of almost all possibilities to achieve a better life, free from poverty and deprivation. This consideration merits considerable treatment in his fourth letter, originating from Bingen. Here, regarding the people of the Palatinate, he writes the following:

Die ehemalige Verfassung der Pfalz war im hohen Grade despotisch. Es gab hier keine Landstände, und Alles hing von dem Willen des Hofes ab. Das Elend der Pfälzer stieg zum höchsten Grade, als der Kurfürst seine Residenz von Mannheim nach München verlegte. Das Interesse der regierenden Minister vertrug sich nicht mit dem Wohl der Unterthanen. Man fing an von allen Seiten zu brandschatzen, und, um sich selbst die Quellen des vielfältigsten Genusses nicht zu verstopfen, ver-

fielen die Minister auf drei Dinge, die zu dem völligen Unglücke noch fehlten: Diensthandel, Zölle und Lotto. (96)

Becker then turns his attention to the particularly destructive practice of the selling of public offices on the part of those in power in order to finance their own lavish existences:

Was nur irgend eine Stelle war, die ihren Mann ernähren konnte, wurde öffentlich ausgedoten und von den Ministern an den Meistbietenden verkauft [...]. Am meisten wurde auf die sogenannten Landschreibereien in diesen Gegenden geboten, die so recht zum Brandschatzen des armen Bauern angelegt waren. (96-97)

The oft-maligned Graf von Metternich-Winneburg also draws some more criticism in regards to this topic:

Die Orte, wo der Flachs am besten gedeiht, gehörten dem Grafen von Metternich-Winneburg, bei dem es Grundsatz ist, seine Einkünfte außer Landes zu verzehren. Und wenn es ja auch einem Beamten eingefallen wäre, seinen Herrn auf diesen Gegenstand aufmerksam zu machen, welches nie geschehen ist, so wäre doch bei dem bekannten guten Willen des Grafen wegen der zerrütteten Finanzen und einer beispiellosen Nachlässigkeit und Indolenz nichts zu erwarten gewesen. (106)

In the above passages especially, Becker lashes out equally at the petty-minded bureaucrats and at the ministers

who, taking the lead from their employer, worked not for the betterment of the people but only for themselves. As Becker continues, he criticizes the predilection of the nobility, who over the years had based their whims on the principle of serfdom and old feudal rights, for putting their own petty interests ahead of those whom they should be protecting and serving:

Denke Dir ein Mahl, Pfalz, Hessen, Baden und Trier ausgenommen, ein Paar Dutzend winzige Fürstchen, Gräfchen und Reichsritter, die alle mit Macht über Hand und Hals ausgerüstet, hier auf ihren Burgen thronten, oder wohl gar die Einkünfte ihrer Güter im Auslande verschwelgten, und die Verwaltung gefühllosen Beamten überließen. Was einer that, bestritt der Andere; keine Einigkeit und keine wechselseitige Aufmunterung war zu finden; nichts als Hader und Zank, Mißgunst und Partheigeist unter dieser Heerde von Regenten. Ich weiß Beispiele, daß hier Tausende an Prozesse über eine Jagd, die nicht zwei Gulden werth war, am Reichshofrathe und am Kammergericht verschwendet worden sind. 'Es ist ein Familien-Recht', sagte der Graf, der diesen Prozeß anhängig machte: wo meine Ahnen im vierzehnten Jahrhundert Wölfe gehetzt haben, will ich auch Rebhüner schießen, und setze lieber alle meine Herrschaften, meine Hunde and Bauern dran, ehe ich nachgebe. Die Leibeigenschaft hatte hier den höchsten Grad von Grausamkeit und Unmenschlichkeit erstiegen. (107)

Through these observations and various more personal attacks like those on the "Herzog Karl" (one of the "größten Eulenspiegeln seiner Zeit" (99)), his uproariously funny retelling of the "Neuwied Sache" (259-303), and his evermore numerous and biting remarks on economic conditions as a

result of the ancien Regime that he encounters on his travels, Becker expands his simple and direct views. The autocratic rule, as practised in his day in Germany, will be doomed to failure, because all the individual dukes, princes, and kings, rather than governing for the well-being of their subjects, put their own petty interests and the desire to maintain an outdated conception of absolutism ahead of the basic needs required to sustain the lives of their subjects from whom the nobility benefit the most. Becker feels that if rulers were wont to govern intelligently and humanely in the true and most honorable sense of the term "enlightened despot", things might not necessarily be the way they are now; the nobles might avoid an eventual violent overthrow and also prevent costly and destructive warfare with France. Obviously, Becker's view can be considered a little naive but certainly not outrageously so. He remains pragmatic in saying that all that is really needed as a start is a middle ground wherein the basic needs for life of an individual are guaranteed by utilizing intelligently and fairly the resources that nature has provided.

By the end of the third letter, Becker's dislike and disdain for the nobility has reached new heights. It is with some surprise, that we read on page 73 that:

Ich muß indessen offenherzig gestehen, daß ich in einem schönen Lande lieber eine Abtei finde als einen adeligen Hof.

He explains his statement by saying that:

Der ärmere Theil des Landes hat gewiß noch einigen Vortheil von seiner Gastfreundschaft, und das Geld wird doch wenigstens noch in Lande verschwelgt. Aber der Adel trägt es nach der Hauptstadt und giebt keine Allmosen auf seinen Schlößern. Der abtheiliche Unterthan steht sich auch hier in der That besser, als der ritterschaftliche. Jener hat doch einen Hinterhalt in der Eifersucht des Landesherrn, besonders, da der Weg nach Rom abgeschnitten war. Dieser aber hängt einzig und allein von der Laune seines Tirannen ab, [...]. Glückliche wir, die wir weder Mönche noch Adel haben! (73)

While this particular statement does stand somewhat in contrast to some of his previous remarks about the Church regarding its uselessness to society, Becker's basic impression and consideration of the Church does not differ much at other times in Beschreibung from those views expressed in his opening preface. In the course of this work, Becker makes every effort to ridicule and deride the clergy and in the process finds a depiction of their moral shortcomings to be the most convenient way to do this. Perhaps one of the more scurrilous examples of his tactics is to be found in the following excerpts. In a letter from Boppard on the Rhein he writes the following:

Zwei Kapuziner saßen zur Beichte. Ich beobachtete einen davon, einen jungen beleibten Mann, und merkte es jedes Mahl an seiner fannischen [sic] Miene und an einer sonderbaren Unruhe des Unterleibs, wenn ihm das Mädchen etwas gegen das sechste Gebot beichtete. Er that dann gewöhnlich

nur kurze Fragen, auf die eine lange Antwort, wahrscheinlich die ausführliche Geschichtserzählung folgte. Ermahnungen ertheilte er gar nicht, sondern absolvierte ohne weiteres "a pessatis mortalibus". [...] Die Beichte eines achtzehnjährigen blühenden Mädchens, das ich am Abend vorher über einem Fleischtopfe mit einem meiner Reisegefährten ertappt hatte, war mir noch interessanter. Ich ließ mir von meinem Freunde den ganzen Hergang erzählen, und wußte all so ziemlich, was das reuige Kind zu beichten hatte. Der Kapuziner bewegte sich die Lippen, strich sich mit der rechten Hand sanft seine Schenkel, und heftete die Augen starr auf ein gegenüber stehendes halbnacktes Marienbild. (134-35)

Another excerpt, while a little less explicit, continues to illustrate the penchant of the orders to enjoy life in a way that they are not sanctioned to do, and to show that they, like the nobility, do so without particularly much concern for the poorer people around them:

Ich habe mir das Vergnügen nicht versagen können, einige fette Abteien, die mir auf meinen Streifereien eben in den Weg kamen, ein wenig nach Republikaner Art zu brandschatzen. Man kann ihnen einen großen Grad von Gastfreiheit nicht absprechen. Überall war ich willkommen, und auf einige Tage besser, als in dem ersten Gasthofe der vornehmsten Stadt bewirthet. Diese Mönche wissen nichts von Kasteiungen und Bußtagen, sondern sind ächte Bonvivants. Ein eigener Gastmeister, wozu gewöhnlich der galanteste Mönch gewählt wird, ist bestellt, die Fremden zu unterhalten, mit ihnen zu speisen, und ihnen auf jede Art Vergnügen zu verschaffen. Den Morgen fingen wir mit einem stattlichen Frühstücke an und endigten ihn beim Billard oder auf einer Jagdparthie. Darauf folgte das Mittagmahl in einem besondern Speisesaal, wozu aber nur wenige Mönche geladen wurden. Sobald die Braten aufgesetzt waren, beehrte uns gewöhnlich der Herr Abt mit seiner Gegenwart, die dann mit kostbaren Weinen und Speisen gefeiert ward.

Nachmittags ging's in der Kloster-Equipage auf die abteilichen Meierhöfe, wo die epikuräischen Mönche unter den muntern willigen Mädchen Stoffzur Beichte einsammelten. Die alten grämlichen Herrn, die für den Genuß abgestorben waren, winkten freilich mit den Fingern und keiften ein wenig, wenn eine rothwangige Dirne in den Umarmungen eines jungen Mönchs kreischte; das war aber gewöhnlich nur das Signal zu neuen Unternehmungen. So ging es weiland täglich in den Abteien zu, denn täglich fanden sich Fremde ein, die Gelegenheit dazu gaben und bewirtheet werden mußten. (239-40)

Becker also sees in this kind of life a waste of human resources. The opportunity to lead "la dolce vita" made that the highest aspiration for some rather than using their talents in a better and more productive way to benefit the society they were expected to serve.

Dieß Leben lockte die wackersten Bauernbursche, die die Welt blos aus dem Trierischen und aus den Abteien kannten, dahin. Ein Student auf dem Gymnasium zu Koblenz hatte keinen Wunsch, als ein Mahl in einer Abtei unterzukommen, und die reichsten Pächter und Bauern glaubten sich einen sanften Sitz im Himmel zu bereiten, wenn sie einen Abteiherrn, oder wohl gar einen Prior und Abt in ihrer Familie zählten. (240)

Throughout this work, Becker criticizes the orders, their lack of usefulness in society and the general drain they formed on the economy of a region. As in the previous work he does not forget to mention the Church's ostensible aim of keeping citizens and pious believers in a life of darkness through superstitions, deception, and religious

education in order to justify, retain, and protect their often purely epicurean existences. We find an example in the fourth letter, for example, where Becker states:

Die größte Reform bedarf unstreitig die Erziehung der Jugend, die biß jetzt den unheiligsten Händen der Pfaffen und Mönche, und des Adels, in der Despotie der Beamten, denen man weiland in ihren Anmaßungen und ihrer Macht keine Schranken zu setzen vermochte, lag dererste Zerstörungskeim der heranwachsenden Bürger. Jene waren dabei interessirt, die Finsterniß recht sistematisch zu verbreiten. Sie, die ihre Ämter, ihren Rang und ihre Rechte entweder gekauft, oder geerbt hatten, mußten scheel zum Glücke ihrer Mitbürger sehen, denn so wollte es ihr Eigennutz und ihre künftige Sicherheit. Der freie Gebrauch der Kräfte der Vernunft mußte dem Landmanne geschmälert werden, wenn er nicht gegen seine Tirannen auftreten sollte. So blieb denn Alles vernachlässigt, was ihm die Augen hätte öffnen können. Der albernste Katechismus, voll vom abgeschmacktesten Gewäsch, wurde den jungen Leuten eingepreßelt, und weiter nichts. "Monstri causa" möchte ich dir wohl ein Bild davon entwerfen [...]. Der Fanatismus und Aberglaube mußte sich freilich hinter vier Wände verkriechen, aber hier wütet er noch immer fort, und schießt aus dem Hinterhalte seine Bolzen. (116-18)

But again, in his inimitable style, Becker also grants concessions where they are called for. He concedes, for example, that despite all of the negative influences of the Church in this area (Hunsrück), its educational institutions have had the effect that people do indeed enjoy a basic level of education not found in some other parts of Germany:

Noch Eins, zum Schlusse. Ich befinde mich hier in einer der düstersten Gegenden Deutschlands. Aber

ich muß gestehen, daß ich die Bildung des gemeinen Landmanns hier viel besser gefunden habe, als in der Nähe von Deutschlands aufgeklärtester Stadt, in der Nähe von - Berlin. Es ist ein höchstseltener Fall, hier auf einen Bauer zu treffen, der nicht schreiben und lesen kann. Dort, damit ich nicht übertreibe, giebt es unter sechs kaum Einen, der sich auf diese Künste versteht. Und selbst in Berlin hat es unter der Mittelklasse mit der gerühmten Aufklärung ein Ende. (120)

Another aspect of Becker's last travel report which sets it apart from his previous ones is his increased concern with matters of an economic nature as they affect the welfare of the state and its citizens. In Beschreibung he devotes much more attention to analyzing the ways in which the ancien regime and the Catholic Church have failed to offer their subjects a viable and beneficial economic base in order to further and secure the lives and livelihoods of the lower classes in Germany. Becker in this work demonstrates a basic knowledge of some theories of sustainable economic development. He does not become very technical in his analyses, but rather, as he does throughout his writings, offers logical, common sense suggestions as he brings to the reader's attention those economic factors or situations which are negative, those which are positive, and those which he feels will be affected for the better as a result of being influenced by the ideals of the French Revolution. Here too, Becker displays a keen sense of understanding of the basic needs of people to prosper and enjoy

life. As such he continues in the mould of the other Jacobin writers at the time who recognized the need for reform in the area of economics and saw the benefits and prosperity which might accrue to a society freed from exploitation by an elite. In Becker, these economic considerations become yet another vehicle for his denunciations of the nobility and the governing bureaucratic institutions. This becomes clear especially in the paragraph quoted above (p. 192f.) about the negative effects the selling of offices had on the overall economic development in the Palatinate.

One of Becker's most noteworthy disclosures concerns the government's failure to contribute to the long-term economic benefit and is to be found in the following lines in his consideration of the "improvements" undertaken in Koblenz under the reign of the Elector there. Becker writes:

Das einzige, was Koblenz Klemens Wenzel'n zu verdanken hat, ist seine Verschönerung; aber dafür hätte sich freilich weit etwas besseres thun lassen. Palläste bauen ohne Geld, und Vorstädte anlegen, ohne sie zu bevölkern, bleibt immer ein schlechtes Stück Arbeit. Hätte man dafür Fabriken angelegt, den Künsten und den Handwerkern aufgeholfen, den Weinbau verbessert, die Wissenschaften unterstützt und den Aberglauben verbannt, so würden auch jetzt noch die Republikaner den Namen des Kurfürsten mit Dankbarkeit nennen [...]. (243)

In the passage above Becker demonstrates a very progressive, almost modern notion of the need for providing substantive rather than cosmetic reforms. He feels that in the short

term the improvements undertaken in Koblenz are laudable, but that in the long run, as a means of providing a stable basis for an economy and for benefitting a wider range of people, other more direct attempts for fostering growth in the economy should have been undertaken.

Another passage which also demonstrates very clearly how Becker feels the French Revolution will benefit Germany is found (page 48) in his discussion of the elimination of tolls on the Rhine. He writes:

Das große Werk der freien Rheinschiffahrt, das die Republik den deutschen Fürsten aufdringt, wird gleich nach geschlossenem allgemeinen Frieden die schönsten Früchte tragen. Die Zölle, die schon der Engländer Thom Wilkes in der letzten Hälfte des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts "mira insania Germanorum" nannte, diese Zölle waren schuld daran, daß die meisten Waaren, die aus der Gegend von Lüttich und Malmedi kamen, auf der Achse fortgebracht wurden, daß wir hinter unsern handelnden Nachbarn weit zurück blieben, und die Waaren aus der Ferne um ein Drittheil höher bezahlen mußten. (48 f.)

In continuing his discussions about the cultivation of economic development through trade less inhibited by over-taxation, Becker demonstrates that he - like other German writers of travel literature - saw in neighbouring European countries positive examples to be looked to as a means of implementing change in Germany. Becker continues:

In Deutschland denkt man gar nicht daran, den Handel gemeinschaftlich zu kultivieren, denn

dergleichen Geschäfte werden auf dem Reichstage als Lappalien betrachtet. Einer jagt dem Andern durch schlechte Waaren, die er wohlfeiler geben kann, den Vortheil ab, statt, daß man nach den Grundsätzen der Franzosen, Engländer, Holländer und anderer handelnden Nationen darauf bedacht sein sollte, schönere, wohlfeilere und dauerhaftere Sachen zu produzieren, und damit den Absatz in's Ausland zu befördern. Wenn in Deutschland an eine Vereinigung zu denken wäre, so würde diese von einem unendlichen Vortheil sein. (49)

Becker also demonstrates an understanding of basic agricultural science and observes on his travels the need to make the most of the natural resources offered by the native countryside. In a letter originating from the area around Bingen in the Rhine Valley, Becker offers that:

So wie man bei Bingen den Berg erstiegen hat, und eine Stunde landeinwärts gegangen ist, verändert sich der Boden. Obst, Wein und zarte Gemüse kommen hier nicht mehr fort. Dieß geht in dem jenseitigen Theile des Hunsrücks an der Mosel so weit, daß man nur eine Viertelstunde Wegs sich aus den Thälern erheben darf, um auf ein Mahl in einer ganz neuen Welt zu sein. Die kalten Winde, die hier auf dem hohen Bergrücken herrschen, lassen die zarten Gewächse gar nicht aufkommen. Desto besser gedeihen aber die starken Feldfrüchte, Hafer, Korn, Kartoffeln und Kohl. Mit diesen Produkten versehen die Einwohner ihre Nachbarn am Rhein und an der Mosel, die ohne diese Zufuhr verhungern müßten. (100)

In the next paragraph Becker is led to elucidate on another situation of social and economic importance - the plight of the wine growers in the Rhine Valley. We have already mentioned in this thesis (p. 150), based on Becker's

comments in Über Mainz, that this topic is of importance to him, and the recurrence of their situation as a topic of discussion in Beschreibung meiner Reise, suggests that it weighs substantially on his mind. Again Becker expresses his sympathy for the wine growers' uncertain plight:

Ein Vergleich zwischen dem Acker- und Wein-Bauer fällt sehr zum Nachtheil des letzten aus [...]. Im Sommer hat er keine bestimmte Arbeit, denn er hat keinen Acker und keine Fabriken, und nichts, wodurch er sich mit seinen Nachbarn verbinden kann, als das kümmerliche Geld, das er aus dem Ertrage seiner Weinberge lös't. Diese Ernte gedeiht im Durchschnitte alle sechs Jahre ein Mahl. In den übrigen Jahren muß er darben, oder Wucherern in die Hände fallen. Er wird genöthigt, den Wein frisch von der Kelter, oder gar am Stocke zu verkaufen, auch wohl auf mehrere Jahre sich voraus bezahlen zu lassen. Diese Noth des Weinbauers giebt den spekulirenden Wucherern am Rhein und an der Mosel ein weites Feld, und sie haben ihre Betrügereien ordentlich in ein System gebracht, in dem sie sich einander nicht zu beeinträchtigen pflegen. (100 f.)

Becker continues in this vein over the course of the next few pages, detailing how the wine growers are often placed at the mercy of loan sharks and speculators and how for centuries these poor peasants have had to endure this exploitive treatment. Once again, Becker sees the Church as a prime culprit.

Die größten Wucherer in diesen Gegenden sind die Pfaffen und Weinschenken in den kleinen und großen Städten. Bei jenen findet man auch die edelsten Weine. Sie häufen aus dem Ertrage ihrer fetten

Pfründen im Winter so viel baares Geld auf, daß sie im Stande sind, im Herbst ihre Keller zu füllen. So bald der Sommer da ist, und nur einige Aussicht zu einer gesegneten Ernte verspricht, machen sich diese Harpien auf die Beine, baares Geld in der Tasche und Honig auf der Zunge. Meist sind sie schon Gläubiger der Weinbauer. Sie drohen mit Aufkündigung des Kapitals, mit Erpressung der rückständigen Zinsen, und bringen es durch allerlei unerlaubte Mittel dahin, daß ihnen die armen bedrängten Leute die Hoffnung auf ihren Herbst verkaufen. (102 f.)

Forster in his Ansichten vom Niederrhein also wrote of the vintners, but it is Becker's assessment which shows perhaps more compassion and understanding in interpreting their situation. While Becker attributes many of their troubles largely to their being taken advantage of by those with more power, Forster is somewhat quick to ascribe responsibility to the wine growers themselves. Forster writes:

Aber auch in ergiebigeren Gegenden bleibt der Weinbauer ein ärgerliches Beispiel von Indolenz und daraus entspringender Verderbtheit des moralischen Charakters. Der Weinbau beschäftigt ihn nur wenige Tage im Jahr auf eine anstrengende Art; bei dem Jäten, dem Beschneiden der Reben u.s.w. gewöhnt er sich an den Müßiggang, und innerhalb seiner Wände treibt er selten ein Gewerbe, welches ihm ein sicheres Brodt gewähren könnte [...]. [U]nd ist nun der Wein endlich trinkbar und in Menge vorhanden, so schwelgt er eine Zeitlang von dem Gewinne, der ihm nach Abzug der erhaltenen Vorschüsse übrig bleibt, und ist im folgenden Jahr ein Bettler wie vorher. Ich weiß, es giebt einen Gesichtspunkt, in welchem man diese Lebensart verhältnismäßig glücklich nennen kann. Wenn gleich der Weinbauer nichts erübrigt, so lebt er doch sorglos, in Hofnung auf das gute Jahr, welches ihm immer wieder aufhilft. Allein, wenn man so raisonnirt, bringt man die Herabwürdigung der Sittlich-

keit dieses Bauers nicht in Rechnung, die eine unausbleibliche Folge seiner unsichern Subsistenz ist. (383 f.)

The similarities between two like-minded authors of travel literature such as Becker and Forster, do not, of course, end here, but in regard to the topic above at least, one sees how their positions differ, albeit slightly. Both show a concern and agreement on the fact that the wine growers' lot in the Rhine Valley is indicative of failed economic, social and political preconditions.

The conclusion to Becker's travel report is also interesting. It actually consists of three different parts. The first is entitled: "Rückblick". The second, "Controversen", addresses an ongoing personal dispute which Becker has with an unusually belligerent civil servant at the "Post", with whom Becker apparently came into contact in his travels around Frankfurt. The third section consists of an interesting dictionary, listing examples of words found in the local dialects in the "Departements" of the Mosel region. It lists numerous examples of the regional differences in the German language and would no doubt be of interest and help to linguists today. By Becker's own admission it is not very detailed, for as he writes:

Von meinem Versuche läßt sich aber auch nichts Gutes sagen. Er ist die Arbeit von einigen Stunden der Rückerinnerung an das Land, in dem ich unter

der Zuchtruthe bigotter Pfaffen mein Knabenalter
verlebte. (420)

Of most importance to us in giving a final summation of Becker's last travel report, is the "Rückblick". In it Becker sums up the ideas he has expressed in the earlier part of the work in terms of what the future holds for the Rhine and Mosel areas under the continued administration of the French republic. The first paragraph demonstrates Becker's rather optimistic prognosis. He begins by writing that:

Wenn ich den Blick auf die Gegenden zurückwerfe, die ich hier durchwandert habe, so drängen sich mir die schönsten Aussichten in die Zukunft auf. Das französische Volk wird die großen Versprechungen erfüllen, die es den Einwohnern gemacht hat, und die Morgenröthe des kommenden Tages bricht schon wirklich herein, denn die Satelliten des Despotismus sind entfernt, und die Menschheit kann sich nun wieder ermannen, frei von den Ketten, die sie drückten. Die Wunden werden auch in kurzer Zeit geheilt sein, die der Krieg geschlagen hat. (379)

From the views which Becker outlines in the first paragraph of this last section, he goes on in the course of the next four pages to provide a clear and concise plan for the future development, mostly economic, of the area based on various considerations, such as natural resources, climate, wild life and its conservation, and the like. The

catalyst in the progressive and positive development of the area lies in the fall of nationalism and the unification of those seeking a better system free from despotic interference. As part of his closing remarks, Becker writes that:

Man denkt nicht mehr daran, daß man aus Mainz, aus Trier, aus Koblenz, aus Zweibrücken, aus Bonn ist, sondern fühlt es recht, daß man ein Glied der großen Nation, daß man ein Franke geworden ist. Und so muß es sein, wenn Friede und Glück gedeihen sollen. Auch die Spuren des lächerlichen Nationalstolzes, der den Bewohnern der Rheinländer von jeher eigen war, und den Deutschen so schlecht kleidet; die Ausflüsse des von den ehemaligen Fürsten nach Möglichkeit beförderten Nationalhasses werden verschwinden, sobald man sich mehr daran gewöhnt, den Franzosen nicht mehr mit einer Elle zu messen, die vor zehn Jahren vielleicht gerecht sein mochte, jetzt aber als eine Antiquität in die Rüstkammern jenseits des Rheins gehört.
(380 f.)

5. Conclusion

Although literary critics and historians are still far from a consensus regarding an evaluation of Becker's contributions to both the form and the substance of the travel literature of his day, it seems certain that his contemporaries and modern scholars would agree that he was a thinker and a writer of considerable importance.

Becker's travel reports contributed greatly to a new level of significance to the form itself and allowed him to use it as an effective vehicle for comment not just on the geography of places he visited but also on their historical, social, and political features.

Considered on an individual basis, all three of Becker's travel reports have obvious and distinct characteristics. Of Über Mainz, for example, one can assert that it is clearly a traditional topographical travel report which contains generally objective descriptions of public institutions, places of interest and the like. The descriptions are characterized by a light-hearted and appealing style. Criticism of contemporary forms of government and social institutions, such as the Catholic Church, is evident, but not the over-riding concern.

In the Fragmente, Becker's tone changes dramatically. In this travel report he has clearly committed himself to supporting the spread of the ideals of the French Revolution in Germany. While continuing to adhere to his earlier pragmatic and matter-of-fact style, he has modified it to the extent that it becomes noticeably more open, more bold and more complex. Despite his sharper and more aggressive tone, however, he still remains optimistic, objective and fair, giving credit where it is due both to individuals and institutions which serve a useful purpose.

Beschreibung meiner Reise begins with an outspoken and candid confession of his political and philosophical beliefs together with a pledge for his further support of the fight to implement the ideals of the French Revolution in his own country. His initial remarks are caustic and aggressive, but do not set the tone for the entire work. The succeeding chapters are much less emotional and often bear a close resemblance to his previous works. Noteworthy in this work is his increased emphasis in dealing with certain elementary economic factors as well as his critical view of some of the effects of the French Revolution in Germany, particularly where the impact of the French military is concerned. In addition, Becker also betrays a certain frustration at the unwillingness of some Germans to realize what benefits can be derived from reform in Germany. Generally, in Beschrei-

bung meiner Reise, Becker's attitude remains fair and well-meaning.

In a broad, over-all assessment of Becker's three "Reiseberichte" one can point to certain obvious patterns. Whereas the first report, Über Mainz, still stands out as a traditional topographical travel report, the last one, Beschreibung meiner Reise is clearly the work of an author whose views have matured on both the benefits and the drawbacks of the French Revolution on German society. In between fall the Fragmente, which lack the degree of conviction of the latter, but go well beyond the initial tepid responses to the Revolution in the former. Hence, there is a steady progression evident in Becker's own understanding of reform and revolution in Germany and in his growing desire to make his point of view public. In short, with each travel report Becker becomes more open and more frank in his criticisms of society and in his suggestions for reform.

The changes in his style run parallel to his decreasing reliance upon topographical descriptions and objective observation, while placing increasing emphasis on subjective analysis and critical consideration.

Throughout Becker's works, however, there are many constants. The main targets for his criticisms are consistently the Roman Catholic Church and the aristocracy, the reigning feudal order. He sees in this order only corrupt and self-serving institutions which view its citizens and

subjects simply as a means to ensure the protection and the prosperity of their own interests. Their selfish efforts in this regard are seen as resulting in the economic and moral ruin of the state.

What must also be mentioned at this point is that Becker's travel reports, besides bearing important testimony to an age in German history which we are always seeking to understand better, also provides interesting and enjoyable reading. Becker writes clearly and concisely and is a superlative narrator. All of his travel reports can therefore be characterized as containing a good mixture of useful pragmatic travel information, telling criticism and thoughtful reflection which makes for entertaining reading.

Throughout his works Becker displays his sympathy for and adherence to the basic tenets of the French Revolution and sees in it much opportunity for positive social and political change in Germany. He is, however, not an idealist. He subscribes to the belief that the course of change is fraught with troubles and setbacks, but that in the end, a better world will result. He realizes that he can only play a small part in the process, but that his contributions will not be in vain. In Becker's own modest assessment of his work he hopes only that:

[...] seine Bemühungen wenigstens Tropfen sind, die, wenn sie wiederholt herabfallen, endlich doch noch Felsen aushöhlen können. (Beschreibung meiner Reise, VIII)

Even though Becker's place in literature and history has not yet been definitively assessed, it is this writer's hope and the focus of his efforts in this thesis to bring forward an appreciation of the significance of Becker's contribution to the understanding of the literature, geography, and history, as well as the moral, ethical and social climate of his time.

6. Bibliography

6.1. Primary Sources

- Becker, B [Johann Nikolaus]. Actenmäßige Geschichte der Räuberbanden an den beyden Ufern des Rheins. Erster Theil. Enthaltend die Geschichte der Moselbande und der Bande des Schinderhannes; verfaßt von B.Becker, Sicherheits-Beamte des Bezirks von Simmern. Cöln: Keil, 1804. Frankfurt a.M.: Verlag Ferdinand Keip, 1972.
- Becker, J[ohann] N[ikolaus]. Beschreibung meiner Reise in den Departementern vom Donnersberge, vom Rhein und von der Mosel im sechsten Jahr der Französischen Republik.: In Briefen an einen Freund in Paris. Berlin: C.G. Schoene, 1799 [cit. as: Beschreibung meiner Reise].
- [Becker, Johann Nikolaus]. Fragmente aus dem Tagebuche eines reisenden Neu-Franken. Herausgegeben von seinem Freunde B. Frankfurt/Leipzig: n.p., 1798 [cit. as: Fragmente].
- New Edition: Kleine Bibliothek der Aufklärung. Eds. Wolfgang Griep and Harro Zimmermann. Bremen: Donat & Temmen, 1985. App. and notes by Wolfgang Griep. [cit. as: "Nachwort"].

[Becker, Johann Nikolaus]. "Ist der Graf von Metternich-Winneburg als Emigrierter zu betrachten oder nicht?"
Die Geißel 3.7 (1799): 286-303.

[Becker, Johann Nikolaus]. Über Mainz: In Briefen an Freund R. Auf einer Rheininsel [Frankfurt]: 1792.

Campe, Joachim Heinrich. Briefe aus Paris zur Zeit der Revolution geschrieben. Braunschweig: Schulbuchhandlung, 1790. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1977.

Halem, Gerhard Anton von. Blicke auf ein Theil Deutschlands, der Schweiz und Frankreich bey einer Reise vom Jahre 1790. Hamburg: 1791.

Rebmann, Georg Friedrich. Kosmopolitische Wanderungen durch einen Teil Deutschlands. Introd. Hedwig Voegt. Frankfurt a.M.: Insel, 1968.

6.2. Journals

Neue Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek. Kiel, 1793-1806
[cit.as: NADB].

Das gelehrte Teutschland oder Lexikon der jetzt lebenden Schriftsteller. Lemgo, 1801 and 1805 [Cit. as: Gelehrtes Teutschland].

Der Teutsche Merkur. Weimar, 1790-1810.

6.3. Articles in Reference Works

- "Becker, Johann Nikolaus". by Wolfgang Griep. Walter Killy Literatur-Lexikon; Autoren und Werke deutscher Sprache. Ed. Walter Killy. München: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1988, pp. 372-373.
- "Fahrt (Reise, Lebensfahrt)". Themen und Motive in der Literatur: Ein Handbuch. Ed. Horst S. and Ingrid Daemmrich. Tübingen: Franke, 1987.
- "Reisebericht." Metzler Literatur Lexikon: Stichwörter zur Weltliteratur. Eds. Günther and Irmgard Schweikle. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984 [cit. as: Metzler].
- "Reisebeschreibung." Kleines Lexikon der Weltliteratur. 1958 ed.
- "Reiseführer." Lexikon des Buchwesens. Ed. Joachim Kirchner. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1953.
- "Reiseliteratur." Sachwörterbuch der Literatur. Ed. Gero von Wilpert. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner, 1961.
- "Reiseliteratur." Wörterbuch der Literaturwissenschaft. Ed. Claus Träger. Leipzig: VEB, 1986.
- "Reiseroman." Metzler Literatur Lexikon: Stichwörter zur Weltliteratur. Eds. Günther and Irmgard Schweikle. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1984.

- "Reiseroman". by Walter Rehm. Reallexikon der Deutschen Literaturgeschichte. 4 vols. Berlin: Gruyter, 1928.
- "Reisewerke." Lexikon des Buchwesens. Ed. Joachim Kirchner. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1953.

6.4. Secondary sources - Travel Literature

- Bates, E.S. Touring in 1600: A Study in the Development of Travel as a Means of Education. New York: n.p., 1911.
New York: Burt Franklin, 1964.
- Beyrer, Klaus. "Des Reisebeschreibers 'Kutsche'. Aufklärerisches Bewußtsein im Postreiseverkehr des 18. Jahrhunderts." Griep and Jäger, Reisen im 18. Jahrhundert. 50-90.
- Black, Jeremy. The British and the Grand Tour. London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Bödeker, Hans-Erich. "Reisen - Bedeutung und Funktion für die deutsche Aufklärergesellschaft." Griep and Jäger, Reisen im 18. Jahrhundert. 91-110.
- Brenner, Peter J., ed. Der Reisebericht: Die Entwicklung einer Gattung in der deutschen Literatur. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1989 [cit. as: Entwicklung].

- Brenner, Peter J. Introduction. Entwicklung. Ed. Brenner, 7-13.
- Brenner, Peter J. Der Reisebericht in der deutschen Literatur: Ein Forschungsüberblick als Vorstudie zu einer Gattungs - Geschichte. Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur. 2. Sonderheft. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990 [Cit. as: Reisebericht].
- Conrads, Norbert. "Politische und staatsrechtliche Probleme der Kavalierstour." Maczak 45-64.
- Cox, E[dward] G[odfrey]. A Reference Guide to the Literatur of Travel. 3 vols. Seattle: U of Washington P, 1935.
- Elkar, Rainer S. "Reisen bildet: Überlegungen zur Sozial- und Bildungsgeschichte des Reisens während des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts." Krasnobaev 51-82.
- Griep, Wolfgang, and Hans-Wolf Jäger, eds. Reisen im 18. Jahrhundert: Neue Untersuchungen. Neue Bremer Beiträge 3. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1986.
- Griep, Wolfgang, and Hans-Wolf Jäger, eds. Reise und Soziale Realität am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts. Neue Bremer Beiträge 1. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1983. Griep, Wolfgang. "Reisen und deutsche Jakobiner." Griep and Jäger, Reise und soziale Realität. 48-79.

Griep, Wolfgang. "Aus dem Tagebuch eines reisenden Neufranken. Bemerkungen zu Johann Nikolaus Beckers Leben und Werk." Thomas Höhle, ed. Reiseliteratur im Umfeld der Französische Revolution. Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg Wissenschaftliche Beiträge. Halle: 1987. 48-79.

Griep, Wolfgang. "Reiseliteratur im späten 18. Jahrhundert." Hansers Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur vom 16. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart. Ed. Rolf Griminger. München: 1980. 739-764. [Cit. as: "Reiseliteratur"].

Harbsmeier, Micheal. "Reisebeschreibungen als mentalitätsgeschichtliche Quellen: Überlegungen zu einer historisch-anthropologischen Untersuchung frühneuzeitlicher deutscher Reisebeschreibungen." Maczak 1-32.

Hibbert, Christopher. The Grand Tour. New York: Putnam's, 1969.

Jäger, Hans-Wolf. "Kritik und Kontrafaktur. Die Gegner der Aufklärungs- und Revolutionsreise." Griep and Jäger, Reise und soziale Realität. 79-93.

Krasnobaev, B.I., Gert Robel and Herbert Zeman, eds. Reisen und Reisebeschreibungen im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert als Quellen der Kulturbeziehungsforchung. Studien zur Geschichte der Geschichte der Kulturbeziehungen in Mittel- und Osteuropa 6. Berlin: Ulrich Camen, 1980.

- Laermann, Klaus. "Raumerfahrung und Erfahrungsraum. Einige Überlegungen zu Reiseberichten aus Deutschland vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts." Piechotta 57-97.
- Link, Manfred. Der Reisebericht als literarische Kunstform von Goethe bis Heine. Diss. Köln, 1963. Köln: privately printed, 1963.
- Maczak, Antoni, and Hans Jürgen Teuteberg, eds. Reiseberichte als Quellen europäischer Kulturgeschichte: Aufgaben und Möglichkeiten der historischen Reiseforschung. Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 21. Wolfenbüttel: Herzog August Bibliothek, 1982.
- Mattenklott, Gert, and Klaus R. Scherpe, eds. Westberliner Projekt: Grundkurs 18. Jahrhundert: Die Funktion der Literatur bei der Formierung der bürgerlichen Klasse Deutschlands im 18. Jahrhundert. Literatur im historischen Prozeß. Ansätze materialistischer Literaturwissenschaft Analysen, Materialien, Studienmodelle. vol. 4/1. Kronberg/Ts.: Scriptor, 1974.
- Mead, William Edward. The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century. Boston: n.p., 1914. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1972.
- Mucha, Eberhard. Die Formen der Jungdeutschen Reiseliteratur. Diss. Berlin, 1955. Berlin: privately printed, 1955.

- Neuber, Wolfgang. "Zur Gattungspoetik des Reiseberichts."
Brenner, Entwicklung. 50-67.
- Peitsch, Helmut. "Ansätze zu einer revolutionär-demokratischen Politisierung der Menschheitsperspektive."
Gert Mattenklott and Klaus R. Scherpe 216-42 [cit. as: "Ansätze"].
- Peitsch, Helmut. Georg Forsters 'Ansichten vom Niederrhein': Zum Problem des Übergangs vom bürgerlichen Humanismus zum revolutionären Demokratismus. Europäische Hochschulschriften 230. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1978 [cit. as: Forsters "Ansichten"].
- Peitsch, Helmut. "Das Schauspiel der Revolution: Deutsche Jakobiner in Paris." Brenner, Entwicklung. 306-32.
- Piechotta, Hans Joachim, ed. Reise und Utopie: Zur Literatur der Spätaufklärung. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1976.
- Piechotta, Hans Joachim. "Erkenntnistheoretische Voraussetzungen der Reisebeschreibung: Friedrich Nicolais Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahre 1781." Piechotta 98-150.
- Prutz, Robert. Schriften zur Literatur und Politik. Comp. Bernd Hüppauf. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1973.
- Robel, Gert. "Reisen und Kulturbeziehungen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung." Krasnobaev 9-37.

- Ruiz, Alain. "Reiseberichte über Frankreich im Zeitalter der Französischen Revolution." Maczak 229-51.
- Segeberg, Harro. "Die literarisierte Reise im späten 18. Jahrhundert. Ein Beitrag zur Gattungstypologie." Griep and Jäger, Reise und soziale Realität. 14-31.
- Schlösser, Hermann. Reiseformen des Geschriebenen: Selbsterfahrung und Weltdarstellung in Reisebüchern Wolfgang Köppens, Rolf Dieter Brinkmanns und Hubert Fichtes. Wien [Vienna]: Hermann Böhlau, 1987.
- Stagl, Justin. "Der wohl unterwiesene Passagier: Reisekunst und Gesellschaftsbeschreibung vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert." Krasnobaev 353-84.
- Stewart, William E. "Gesellschaftspolitische Tendenzen in der Reisebeschreibung des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts." Griep and Jäger, Reise und soziale Realität. 32-47 [cit. as: "Gesellschaftspolitische Tendenzen"].
- Stewart, William E. Die Reisebeschreibung und ihre Theorie im Deutschland des 18. Jahrhunderts. Literatur und Wirklichkeit 20. Bonn: Bouvier, 1978. [Cit. as: Die Reisebeschreibung].
- Strelka, Joseph. "Der literarische Reisebericht." Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik 3.1 (1971): 63-75.
- Witte, Karsten. Reise und die Revolution: Gerhard Anton von Halem und Frankreich im Jahre 1790. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1971.

- Witthöft, Harald. "Reiseanleitungen, Reisemodalitäten, Reisekosten im 18. Jahrhundert." *Krasnobaev* 39-50.
- Wuthenow, Ralph-Rainer. Die erfahrene Welt, Europäische Reiseliteratur im Zeitalter der Aufklärung. Frankfurt: 1980.
- Wuthenow, Ralph-Rainer. "Zur Form der Reisebeschreibung: Georg Forsters Ansichten vom Niederrhein." Lessing Yearbook 1 (1969): 234-54.

6.5. The Cultural Life in Germany in the Eighteenth Century

- Bruford, W.H. Germany in the Eighteenth Century: The Social Background of the Literary Revival. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1935.
- Lutz, Bernd, ed. Deutsches Bürgertum und literarische Intelligenz: 1750-1800. *Literaturwissenschaft und Sozialwissenschaft* 3. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1974. Möller, Helmut. Die kleinbürgerliche Familie im 18. Jahrhundert: Verhalten und Gruppenkultur. *Schriften zur Volksforschung* 3. Berlin: Gruyter, 1969.
- Prüsener, Marlies. "Lesegesellschaften im 18. Jahrhundert: ein Beitrag zur Lesergeschichte." Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens 13 (1973): 369-594.

Valjavec, Fritz. Die Entstehung der politischen Strömungen in Deutschland: 1770-1815. München [Munich], Oldenbourg, 1951.

West, Hugh. "Göttingen and Weimar: The Organization of the Knowledge and Social Theory in Eighteenth Century Germany." Central European History 11 (1978): 150-161.

6.6. The French Revolution - General Reading

Bosher, J.F. The French Revolution. New York: Norton, 1988.

Hampson, Norman. The French Revolution: A Concise History. London: Thames and Hudson, 1975.

Schmitt, Eberhard. Einführung in die Geschichte der Französischen Revolution. München, 1976.

6.7. Germany and the French Revolution

Blanning, T.C.W. The French Revolution in Germany: Occupation and Resistance in the Rhineland 1792-1802. Oxford: Clarendon, 1983.

Breuer, Dieter. Geschichte der literarischen Zensur in Deutschland. Heidelberg: Quelle und Meyer, 1982.

- Brinkmann, Richard, et al. Deutsche Literatur und Französische Revolution: Sieben Studien. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1974.
- Eberle, Friedrich, and Theo Stammen, eds. Die Französische Revolution in Deutschland: Zeitgenössische Texte deutscher Autoren: Augenzeugen, Pamphletisten, Publizisten, Dichter und Philosophen. Stuttgart: Reclam, 1989.
- Engels, Hans-Werner. Gedichte und Lieder deutscher Jakobiner. Deutsche revolutionäre Demokraten 1. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1971.
- Frühwald, Wolfgang, Georg Jäger, and Alberto Martino, eds. Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur. 1. Sonderheft. Forschungsreferate. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985.
- Gooch, G.P. Germany and the French Revolution. 1920. n.p.: Frank Cass, 1965.
- Hocks, Paul, and Peter Schmidt. Literarische und politische Zeitschriften: 1789-1805: Von der politischen Revolution zur Literaturrevolution. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1975.
- Kaiser, Gerhard. "Über den Umgang mit Republikanern, Jakobinern und Zitaten." Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift Sonderheft. 49 (1975): 226-242.

- Kurz, Gerhard. The Great Drama: Germany and the French Revolution. Trans. Robert Elsie. Bonn: Internationales, 1989.
- Mieth, Günther. Vom Beginn der großen Französischen Revolution bis zum Ende des alten deutschen Reiches 1789-1806. Literarische Kultur und gesellschaftliches Leben in Deutschland. Berlin (East): Rütten und Loening, 1988.
- Segeberg, Harro. "Was gehn uns im Grunde alle Resultate an, wenn wir Wahrheiten feststellen!" Überlegungen zum Stand der Jakobinismusforschung, veranlaßt durch zwei Neuerscheinungen über Georg Friedrich Rebmann (1768-1824)." Frühwald, et al. 160-82.
- Schneider, Franz. Pressefreiheit und politische Öffentlichkeit: Studien zur politischen Geschichte Deutschlands bis 1848. Neuwied am Rhein: Luchterhand, 1966.
- Stephan, Inge. Literarischer Jakobinismus in Deutschland: (1789-1806). Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976.
- Stern, Alfred. Der Einfluß der Französischen Revolution auf das deutsche Geistesleben. Stuttgart: Cotta'sche, 1928.

- Streisand, Joachim. Deutschland von 1789-1815 (Von der Französischen Revolution bis zu den Befreiungskriegen und dem Wiener Kongreß). Lehrbuch der deutschen Geschichte. 5th ed. Berlin (East): VEB, 1981.
- Träger, Claus and Frauke Schäfer, eds. Die Französische Revolution im Spiegel der deutschen Literatur. Frankfurt a.M.: Röderberg, 1975.
- Voegt, Hedwig. Die deutsche jakobinische Literatur und Publizistik: 1789-1800. Berlin (East): Rütten und Loening, 1955.
- Wilke, Jürgen. Literarische Zeitschriften des 18. Jahrhunderts (1688-1789). Teil 1: Grundlegung. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1978.
- Wilke, Jürgen. Literarische Zeitschriften des 18. Jahrhunderts (1688-1789). Teil 2: Repertorium. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1978.

6.8. The "Mainzer Republik"

- Blanning, T.C.W. "The Nobility and Revolution in Mainz, 1792-1793." Gedenkschrift Martin Göhring. Studien zur Europäischen Geschichte. Ed. Ernst Schulin. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1968. 107-119.
- Blanning, T.C.W. Reform and Revolution in Mainz 1743-1803. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1974.

- Deutsche Jakobiner: Mainzer Republik und Cisrhenanen 1792-1798. Exhibition catalogue. 3 vols. Mainz: n.p. 1981.
- Grab, Walter. "Eroberung oder Befreiung? Deutsche Jakobiner und Franzosenherrschaft im Rheinland 1792-1799." Archiv für Sozialgeschichte. 10 (1970): 7-94.
- Julku, Kyösti. Die Revolutionäre Bewegung im Rheinland am Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts. 2 vols. Helsinki: n.p., 1965.
- Scheel, Heinrich, ed and comp., Die Mainzer Republik 1 : Protokolle des Jakobinerklubs. 2 vols. Berlin (East): Akademie, 1975.
- Träger, Claus. "Aufklärung und Jakobinismus in Mainz 1792/93." Weimarer Beiträge 9.4 (1963): 685-704.
- Träger, Claus., ed. Mainz zwischen Rot und Schwarz: Die Mainzer Revolution 1792-1793 in Schriften, Reden und Briefen. Berlin (East): Rütten und Loening, 1963.