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Behind the Paravent

A Study of Konrad Bayer's Dramatic Texts

by

Trina Scott

A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD to the National University of Ireland

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Introduction

When speaking of his friend and co-author in 1983, shortly after what would have been Konrad Bayer's fiftieth birthday, Gerhard Rühm made the following statement: "Die Faszination, die von Bayer ausgeht, ist der Ausdruck eines völlig unangepaßten Lebens, umgesetzt in eine völlig unangepaßte Literatur" (Brömme Kultur 11). For Konrad Bayer life and literature were, above all, an experiment; an experiment, as Rühm's statement suggests, in which life and literature overlapped, and in which it is often difficult to separate one from the other. Although not all the details of Bayer's life are known, there is enough evidence to suggest an indisputable link between the biographical and the literary.

The experimental nature of Bayer's life is described by Rühm as follows: "er experimentierte, auch mit sich, mit seinem körper. seine wünsche waren grenzenlos, er wollte fliegen, sich unsichtbar machen, er wollte alles können" (Sämtliche Werke 18). The experimental nature of Bayer's work resulted in texts that often challenge readers to the point of disorientation and leave them with more questions than answers. Oswald Wiener's description of a typical encounter with Bayer could equally be applied to his literary texts, which are characterised by the same tendency to disrupt, to challenge, to question:

> Wenn Konrad eintrat, befiel eine gewisse Spannung, die Situation gestattete nicht mehr ein Ruhen in ihr oder eine Bewegung mit ihr, man war nunmehr gezwungen, sie immer wieder, ihre Einzelheiten, die Möglichkeiten ihrer Interpretation, der Interpretation der eigenen Erscheinung in ihr, die konkreten Anblicke und ihre möglichen Bedeutsamkeiten durchzugehen und die Möglichkeiten von Veränderungen vorwegzunehmen. ("Einiges" 39)

Comments by Rühm, the compiler and editor of Bayer's Sämtliche Werke, also give some indication of the unusual, experimental character of Bayer's literary work. He

refers, for example, to "das bei den arbeiten bayers eher fragwürdige mittel der gliederung nach gattungen" (Sämtliche Werke 826) and describes the editorial difficulties he faced as follows:

> konrad bayer hinterliess ein zum nicht geringen teil fragmentarisches werk: einiges war begonnen und nicht oder nicht ganz zu ende gebracht worden, das meiste von dem, was ungedruckt blieb (und das war ziemlich viel), hätte er zweifellos noch überarbeitet und abgerundet - er hat seine texte, auch die längst abgelegten, immer wieder hervorgeholt und verbessert (es gibt im allgemeinen um so mehr lesarten, je älter ein text ist). endgültige fassungen ("saubere reinschriften" existieren nicht eben viele) hat konrad bayer meist für die akute publikation oder, bei theaterstücken, für eine konkret geplante aufführung hergestellt; aber auch in bereits gedruckte texte hat er zuweilen noch veränderungen eingetragen . . . was die entscheidung eines gewissenhaften herausgebers für eine verbindliche druckfassung immer wieder verunsichern muss.
> (Sämtliche Werke 820-821)

The above quote which, to a certain extent, characterises Bayer's literary texts as works-in-progress also gives some idea of the difficulties facing the Bayer commentator.

This thesis is a study of Konrad Bayer's dramatic texts. It has evolved out of various attempts to read those texts, some failed and some more successful. It does not claim to be authoritative or complete, since the nature of Bayer's texts, as will become clear in the course of the ensuing chapters, means that they resist such an interpretation. To accept this was an important prerequisite for the writing of this thesis, but a difficult one to fulfil because for the Bayer commentator it constitutes a certain acceptance of defeat even before one begins. I empathise with Kurt Strasser who, in the introductory remarks to his doctoral thesis, states: "Schließlich möchte ich noch erwähnen, daß die vorliegende Arbeit zwangsläufig zu einem Experiment wurde, bei dem es keineswegs feststand, ob es abgeschlossen werden konnte, oder wie dieser

Abschluß aussehen könnte" ("Die Kunst" 4). The same is true of this thesis, which was also forced to bend to the radical, experimental nature of Bayer's work. However, the chapters that follow do, I believe, make up a valid study, which looks at aspects of Bayer's dramatic works that have hitherto received little or no attention from commentators. The title of the thesis - "Behind the Paravent" - was inspired by Bayer's reference in stage directions for one of his dramatic texts to the paravent as "zentrales requisit" (Sämtliche Werke 764). The directions describe how a scene is to be played behind screens, from behind which various parts of the actors' bodies emerge. As will become evident, the paravent can function as a useful image of Bayer's unconventional method of text production, a method which ensures that the reader of his dramatic texts always has the sense that he/she is not privy to the "full picture" because something always remains concealed. This dissertation is thus an attempt to look behind the paravent that Bayer places before his dramatic texts.

Outline of thesis

Chapter 1 will begin by providing some introductory information about Konrad Bayer, including details of his life and his membership of the Wiener Gruppe, a formative phase in his development as a writer. It will also consider the historical and cultural climate of 1950s Austria that provided the backdrop for Bayer's literary work. The phenomenon of the Wiener Gruppe will then be examined against the background of preceding experimental movements, for the purpose of situating Bayer's work historically and artistically. The aim of this historical and artistic survey is to prepare for the confrontation with Bayer's texts that makes up the other chapters of the thesis.

Chapter 2 will constitute a close textual study of one of Bayer's dramatic texts using criteria from the field of text linguistics. Such a study will offer an entry point into Bayer's texts and will supply material which will form the basis for the interpretative investigations of the chapters that follow it. Chapter 3 will consider the influence of language philosophy and the ideas of Max Stirner on Bayer's dramatic works and will use the findings of these investigations to examine a central concern of Bayer's texts - the relationship between language and the individual. In Chapter 4 the figure of the Lion of Belfort, a recurring figure in Bayer's dramatic texts, is discussed. The final chapter of this thesis will examine the recurring motifs of violence and cannibalism and will consider them in terms of the findings of preceding chapters.

Review of secondary literature

At this stage I shall give a brief overview of the existing secondary literature on Konrad Bayer, which I subsequently engage with in more detail in the relevant sections throughout the thesis. Following various shorter publications, including, for example, the proceedings of the 1979 Konrad Bayer Symposium published in 1981, the first comprehensive survey of Konrad Bayer's work, Ulrich Janetzki's Alphabet und Welt. Über Konrad Bayer appeared in 1982. Also the author of several articles on Bayer, Janetzki remains, to date, his most prolific commentator, with the relationship between language, the individual and reality being the main focus of his studies.

The only other publication of considerable length that deals exclusively with Bayer's works and not, for example, with those of the "Wiener Gruppe" as a whole,[1] is

[1] Of the studies of the "Wiener Gruppe" only André Bucher's Die szenischen Texte der Wiener Gruppe devotes any attention to Bayer's dramatic texts.

Kurt Strasser's Experimentelle Literaturansätze im Nachkriegswien. Konrad Bayer als Beispiel, published in 1986. As its title suggests, this study uses Bayer as a "Beispielsfall" (Experimentelle Literaturansätze 2) of experimental literature in the Austria of his time and much of it concentrates on placing Bayer's works in a historical and cultural context.

There are two sources of collected materials about Bayer and his work: the published proceedings of the Konrad Bayer Symposium referred to above and a 1983 edition of the journal protokolle dedicated to the author, which includes personal memories and impressions of Bayer from Ernst Jandl and Oswald Wiener as well as critical essays.

If the corpus of literature about Bayer's work is not all that substantial, the part of it dealing with his dramatic texts is less so, and is restricted to the shorter scholarly forms.[2] Karlheinz Braun's paper entitled "Konrad Bayer und das Theater", presented in 1979 at the Konrad Bayer Symposium, marks the first attempt by a commentator to confront Bayer's dramatic works. The 1983 Bayer edition of protokolle featured a piece by Wolfgang Max Faust bearing the title "Fleisch, Blut und Sprache. Notizen, Texte, Kritiken zum Theatralischen von Konrad Bayer". It was 1991 before Bayer's dramatic texts received further attention, this time in a paper given by Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler at a Stanford Symposium on avant-garde literature of twentieth-century Austria. Schmidt-Dengler's paper, entitled "Die Einsamkeit Kasperls als

[2] Janetzki's Alphabet und Welt concentrates on Bayer's prose and while a section of Strasser's study treats Bayer's "Dramatik", its main concern is not with Bayer's dramatic texts but with the use of his literary works to exemplify features of the experimental literature of the Austria of his day. Sonja Kaar notes that, despite revived interest in the Wiener Gruppe in the 1980s and 1990s, little attention has been paid in secondary literature to the dramatic texts of Bayer, H. C. Artmann and Gerhard Rühm and describes these texts as "ein Randgebiet der Forschung" (3, 49).

Langstreckenläufer. Ein Versuch zu H. C. Artmanns und Konrad Bayers Dramen", seems to have inspired two recent "Diplomarbeiten" on Bayer's dramatic text kasperl am elektrischen stuhl by students under his supervision at the University of Vienna: "Die Gestalt des *Kasperl* als Identifikationsfigur für das Theater Konrad Bayers. Eine Untersuchung anhand 'kasperl am elektrischen stuhl'" by Ulrike Huber, submitted in 1996, and "verbrechen oder wunder: ein vollständiger mensch. zu konrad bayers 'kasperl am elektrischen stuhl'", submitted by Lieselotte Spalt in 1997.

André Bucher's Die szenischen Texte der Wiener Gruppe, published in 1992, is the only lengthy study of the dramatic works of the "Wiener Gruppe", but only one chapter of it is devoted to Bayer and it focuses on two of his texts.

The dearth of secondary literature on Bayer's works and the insubstantial nature of the existing criticism on his dramatic texts point to the need for a more substantial study of this area. With this thesis I hope to make some contribution towards meeting this need.

Chapter 1

1.1 Konrad Bayer and the Wiener Gruppe - A Profile[3]

Konrad Bayer was born in Vienna on 17 December 1932. His fascination with the arts began during his schooldays, when he wrote poetry, drew, founded an artists' club called "genie und irrsinn" and played the banjo in a band. After his "Matura" in 1951 his parents refused to allow him study art; instead Bayer attended commercial courses and his father got him a job in a bank, where he worked for six years.

It was in Vienna's "Artclub", originally founded in 1946 and described by Gerhard Rühm as "sammelbecken aller - damals noch spärlichen - fortschrittlichen künstlerischen tendenzen" (WG 7) that Bayer met up with H. C. Artmann and Gerhard Rühm, whom he calls "gleichgesinnte" (SW 7). These three were later joined by Oswald Wiener and Friedrich Achleitner and the Wiener Gruppe was born. Rühm points out that the members of the Vienna Group[4] did not invent this name for themselves and that the Group was not founded on the basis of a defined, thought-out programme. Its members were simply friends, united in their radical, experimental attitude towards art, who found in each other respect and encouragement instead of

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[3] As many aspects of Bayer and the Wiener Gruppe's background and work are treated in later sections of this chapter, this profile is intended to give an introductory outline to the above. The profile draws on three main sources: Gerhard Rühm's "vorwort" to Konrad Bayer's Sämtliche Werke (Wien: Klett-Cotta, 1996), referred to in the following as SW, Bayer's "autobiografische skizze" (SW 7-8), and Rühm's foreword in Die Wiener Gruppe. Achleitner, Artmann, Bayer, Rühm, Wiener. Texte, Gemeinschaftsarbeiten, Aktionen (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1985), referred to in the following as WG. Rühm's role in the documentation of the Vienna Group's history and work has been described by Gisela Steinlechner as follows: "Als Nachlaß-Verwalter und Herausgeber des größtenteils unpublizierten Materials der *Wiener Gruppe* hat Gerhard Rühm deren legendäres Nachleben nicht unwesentlich beeinflußt, zumal er sich in seinem vielzitierten Vorwort in der Funktion eines Identitätsstifters betätigt, der vor allem die Gemeinsamkeiten hervorhebt" (70).

[4] In an essay entitled "the vienna group" which appeared in "The Times Literary Supplement" of 3 September 1964, Bayer refers to the Wiener Gruppe as "the vienna group" and "the group", terms which I will also use in this thesis (SW 724-725).

the disinterest and rejection to which they had been accustomed. Not until 1958, when Dora Zeemann referred to them as "die Wiener Dichtergruppe" in an article in the Neue Kurier, did they became known by this name (WG 12, 26).[5]

In the post-war Austrian climate of restoration and provincialism Achleitner, Artmann, Bayer, Rühm and Wiener were drawn together by their common interest in preceding experimental artistic movements such as Dadaism, Futurism, Surrealism, Constructivism and Expressionism, which fuelled their discussions in cellars, cafés and each other's homes late into the night and inspired them in their own literary endeavours. 1956 saw the production of the Group's first collaborative works and in 1957 Bayer gave up his job at the bank and also his brief study of psychology to dedicate himself to his literary work. At this time he also ran the gallery of his painter friend, Ernst Fuchs. 1957 was also the year of the Group's first public performance, a "Monsterlesung" of some of their work to date, entitled "dichtung", which was forced to a close at midnight because the audience almost came to blows. Other performances followed, including in December 1958 and April 1959 the Group's two "literarische cabarets", Happening-type performances during which the Group members read, sang, acted and danced. Despite the success of its two literary cabarets, the Group's failure to obtain financial support from the state and the way in which its other literary efforts

[5] In an interview with Michael Krüger H. C. Artmann disputes the existence of the Wiener Gruppe, claiming it was a journalistic invention and that while it was a convenient marketing ploy for its supposed members, that authors such as Jandl, Mayröcker and others should also have been included (Fuchs and Wischenbart 15-16). Kaar highlights Artmann's ambivalent attitude to the Group, pointing out that while distancing himself from it, he is associated with Rühm's 1967 anthology and the 1985 Walter Buchebner project. Kaar attributes his stance to his involvement with all sorts of artistic groups and his aversion to any type of categorisation (25-26). It should be noted that the term "Wiener Gruppe" has not been used exclusively to refer to Achleitner, Artmann, Bayer, Rühm and Wiener, but that it was also used in the press to refer to a group of young film-makers around Ferry Radax. The term also features in the full title of publikationen, Andreas Okopenko's avant-garde journal, which was, in fact, publikationen einer wiener gruppe junger autoren (Fuchs and Wischenbart 71).

were constantly mocked in the press, left its members feeling rejected and isolated and forced them to search for recognition outside of Austria.

The second literary cabaret signalled the beginning of the Group's gradual break-up. Artmann had already ceased to collaborate with the others in 1958 and after the second literary cabaret the other Group members began to go their separate ways, with occasional collaborative work continuing in smaller groups.[6] Bayer spent the winter of 1959/60 in Italy acting in a film by Ferry Radax, whom he had also worked with in 1955. He got married and travelled with his wife to France, where they spent time at the house of Friedrich Hundertwasser, before Bayer went to Switzerland to act in another Radax film. In 1962 he became editor of Gerhard Lampersberg's avant-garde magazine edition 62, of which only two issues appeared.

In search of the recognition denied them in Austria, Bayer and Rühm went in June 1963 to visit Artmann in West Berlin, where he had lived since 1960. A more receptive public awaited them in Germany and they made immediate contacts, reading from their works on radio. Bayer was invited to read at the "Tagung der Gruppe 47" in Saulgau, where he met Ledig-Rowohlt, who offered him a contract for his unfinished novel der sechste sinn. For an author who had enjoyed little recognition this must have been a significant breakthrough, but as Rühm points out, it seemed to come too late: "das eis

[6] Becker discusses the Group members' differing opinions regarding Artmann's departure. While Rühm is discreet, and writes in his "vorwort" of Artmann's inconspicuous detaching of himself from the Group's activities due to his new-found popularity as a dialect poet, Bayer refers to "Thronstreitigkeiten" between Artmann and Wiener, and the latter's "Machtübernahme" (Fuchs and Wischenbart 62). According to Becker: "Die eigentliche 'Wiener Gruppe', wie Oswald Wiener sie versteht, ist eine ohne Artmann" (Fuchs and Wischenbart 60). Group members also seem unable to agree on the exact date of its break-up: for Wiener the literary cabarets symbolised the end (1959), while for Rühm this was marked by the premiere of die kinderoper (1964) (Fuchs and Wischenbart 63). This indicates that while the collaborative work of the Vienna Group is important, its members should also be considered as separate and individual entities whose work was not dependent on the Group.

schien gebrochen zu sein. doch konrad bayer strahlte eine steigende unruhe aus, man hatte das gefühl, es ginge ihm alles noch nicht schnell genug. dabei litt er immer häufiger unter der vorstellung der sinnlosigkeit von allem" (SW 19).

Rühm also tells us that Bayer was anxious that the Wiener Gruppe should make one final appearance together in a performance of die kinderoper, which Achleitner, Bayer, Rühm and Wiener had written in two nights in 1958, and in which they played themselves. Bayer organised the publicity and invitations for what was to be, on 10 April 1964, the Group's "abschiedsvorstellung" (WG 36).

Only a few weeks before his death Bayer read again for the Gruppe 47, this time in Sweden, a reading which Hans Mayer, who knew Bayer personally, describes as being "ein eklatanter Mißerfolg von durchaus bedenklicher Art". This, he explains, was due to "unverkennbare Spiele mit wohlbekannten Judennamen . . . mit jüdischen Lebensformen" which those present found offensive (212). Janetzki recounts that Bayer's reading from der sechste sinn, which contains Jewish names, was interrupted by heckles accusing him of anti-Semitism (Alphabet und Welt 129). Mayer stresses that it is possible that this reaction was based on a misunderstanding that could have been put right had Bayer taken the opportunity to explain himself (212). Friends of Bayer seem to be in disagreement as to the effect that this experience had on him. Britta Hutter describes him as being "schlecht gelaunt" and "recht niedergeschlagen" on his return from Sweden, while Oswald Wiener asserts that the criticism of the Gruppe 47 did not upset him (Janetzki, Alphabet und Welt 129, 191). On Sunday 10 October 1964 Bayer committed suicide by gas, in what his friends Rühm and Artmann

have described as an accident, part of an ongoing game of Russian roulette that Bayer was playing with his life.[7]

It is helpful to study the literary work of Bayer and the Vienna Group in the context of the particular set of historical and cultural circumstances out of which it emerged. The next section therefore aims to supply background information that will contextualise the phenomenon of the Group. It is also apparent that the Vienna Group played an important part in Konrad Bayer's life and in his development as a writer. Since Bayer was not a theoretician and did not formulate his thoughts and theories in manifestos or other such documents, although of course his literary texts reveal his ideas in their own way, statements and manifestos by other Group members assist the reader of Bayer's texts in gaining additional insight into his and the Group's literary works. What also emerges from the above profile is that an enthusiasm for previous experimental movements was central in the Vienna Group's formation and in its activities. An understanding of the Group's joint undertakings against the background of preceding movements should, therefore, prepare the reader to better confront Bayer's texts. For the purpose of this thesis, I will limit the investigation that follows the historical section to considering the similarities between the Vienna Group and two preceding movements - Dadaism and Surrealism.

[7] In conversation with Ilse Brömme for an article commemorating what would have been Bayer's fiftieth birthday in 1983, Rühm describes Bayer's death as follows: "Wohl war er ein suicider Typ, der seine Selbstmordversuche aber immer so angelegt hatte, daß er aufgefunden werden konnte. - Eine Art russisches Roulette. Auch am 10. Oktober 1964 war die Wohnungstüre nicht versperrt. Sein Tod war gewissermaßen ein Unfall", and Artmann says of Bayer's suicide: "Für mich war es ein Unfall, eine für Bayer typische Show" (Brömme Kultur 11)

1.2 Austria after the Second World War: A historical and cultural overview[8]

In 1945 Austria was a country in search of an identity. Since the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918 and the massive territorial losses that ensued, it had suffered an identity crisis which its various post-Empire incarnations – First Republic, "Ständestaat" and "Ostmark" – had failed to resolve.

After the Second World War Austria desperately needed to distance itself from Nazi Germany and establish itself as an independent nation. Apart from defining itself in terms of what it was not, i.e. German, it found it difficult to state what it was and what it represented. As Peter Melichar puts it: "Die neue österreichische Identität war also eine ex negativo: man wußte nur, was man nicht mehr sein wollte" (Weibel and Steinle 508). This problem was exacerbated by the fact that for ten years Austria was occupied by Allied forces. Between 1945 and 1955 the Allied Commission for Austria exercised supreme authority over the country, despite the existence of political parties and elections. While in practice Allied control depended on the cooperation of the population and its political leaders, the fact that ultimate authority rested with external forces meant that Austria's activities had a provisional quality about them, which further delayed the formation of an Austrian identity.

Another important factor in this regard was "Austria's confused and confusing situation as a cross between defeated enemy and liberated victim" (Bushell 63). The Moscow Declaration of 1943 had described Austria as "the first victim of Hitlerite aggression", while also reminding it of its responsibility for its participation in the war and the necessity of its own contribution to its liberation. After the war Austria claimed

[8] The following is by no means an exhaustive study of this period in Austrian history, but rather an outline of the prevailing historical and cultural climate, the purpose of which is to establish a context for the Wiener Gruppe.

the status of collective victim (Bushell 12) and set about distancing itself from its former "oppressor" by denying any active involvement in the Nazi regime. In the opinion of the coalition governments of the post-war period, this could be best achieved through the restoration of an older Austria. This was facilitated by continuity in the personnel of the two main political parties, the Austrian People's Party and the Socialist Party, many of whose leading figures had been involved in the administration of the "Ständestaat".[9] This, coupled with the re-implementation of the Constitution of 1929, meant a speedy, if cosmetic, restoration of the pre-World War 2 state of affairs.

The main concerns of the three-party government formed after the elections of November 1945 were the rebuilding of Austria after the ravages of the war and the negotiation of the "Staatsvertrag" which would herald Austria's new independence and nationhood. Since stability was of great importance to both, Austria's main political parties came together in a spirit of cooperation which, while being conducive to the quicker achievement of these objectives, effectively meant the lack of any meaningful opposition. The three-party government was replaced in November 1947 by a Grand Coalition of the two main parties that remained in power until 1966.

The Austro-American Marshall Plan agreement of 1948 signalled the beginning of a new period in Austrian history, namely the "Wiederaufbau", which lasted well into the mid-1950s, and also the alignment of Austria with the Western powers. The ongoing negotiations on the "Staatsvertrag" took place against the background of rising Cold War tensions. The Soviet Union, reluctant to withdraw troops from their strategic position in Austria, succeeded in prolonging the negotiations by making unacceptable

[9] Sigurd Paul Scheichl points out that this continuity was due to the lack of other suitable candidates for such positions, since many young Austrians had died in the war and most middle-class intellectuals had collaborated with the Nazi regime (167-168).

demands. This delayed the formation of an independent Austria, and as they watched the Eastern European democracies of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary become Soviet satellites, Austrians began to fear a similar fate or, at best, the division of their country between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies. Thus, Austria's political leaders were anxious to tread carefully, but were also determined to prove Austria's rightful claim to independence.

A problem faced by the political parties in trying to gain voters' support was the Allies' strict denazification policy and the "Verbotsgesetz" of 1947, which prevented National Socialists from working and disenfranchised them, affecting half a million Austrians or one family in four (Weibel and Steinle 180). This became an issue in 1948, with elections due the following year. The parties were aware that there were votes to be gained from former members of the pre-war nationalist camp and the ÖVP in particular tried to establish links with less incriminated National Socialists. The "Amnestie der Minderbelastungen" of June 1948 made this exercise worthwhile. It also demonstrated Austria's eagerness to return to normality and forget about its unpleasant recent past.

Reluctance to accept any responsibility for the horrors of National Socialism is also evident in one of the few government statements on culture in the immediate post-war period, which declared the need to lead "die vom nazistischen Geist verseuchte Jugend" back to the "Austrian idea" (Gutkas 32). The implication is that National Socialism was essentially a problem only for the youth and essentially abhorrent to all things truly Austrian.

Michael Mitchell points out that the "österreichische Idee" and its incarnation in "der österreichische Mensch" were two concepts which were central to the formation of an identity for Austria at this time and says of them: "These were presented as the

distillation of 'Austrianism' as it had developed down the centuries . . . as objective, value-free expressions of the essential Austrian nature . . ." (Bushell 59).[10] While the cultural "Wiederaufbau" was hampered by lack of finances, especially since many important cultural buildings had been partially or fully destroyed during the war, the institutions that embodied Austria's cultural fame internationally - the Philharmoniker, the Wiener Symphoniker, the ensembles of the Burgtheater and the Staatsoper, the Vienna Boys Choir and the artistic treasures of the large collections had remained intact and Austria made extensive use of them in order to reassert its cultural standing, sending its artistic treasures on a tour of Europe and North America in 1948 to promote the Austrian idea (Gutkas 55). Greisenegger notes that when invited to appear in Europe, the soloists and musicians of the Staatsoper were almost always accompanied by leading politicians, "die die Chance nutzten, in durch *Mozart* und *Strauss* verklärter Atmosphäre für das neu entstandene, noch lange um seine Existenz ringende, in der Staatenfamilie isoliert bleibende Österreich zu werben. Das Staatstheater hatte der Staatspolitik zu dienen" (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 237). In post-war Austria the role of culture and education was to "foster and promote an idea of Austrian nationhood" (Bushell 6); it was not a question of art for art's sake, instead art was expected to "play its part in the forming of the national consciousness" (Bushell 6). This patriotic cultural ideology was based very much on continuity with the more distant glorious past of the Austro-Hungarian Empire rather than on a fresh

[10] Egon Schwarz refers to the abundance of secondary literature about the Austrianness of Austrian literature, much of which relies on the undisputed existence of an Austrian national character, without any attempt to document or prove the contentions made regarding typical Austrian characteristics. This, Schwarz claims, leads to a mystification that continues the process of restoration initiated in the 1950s (106-108). The fact that such articles dubbed authors with connections to the Habsburg monarchy as representative of Austrian literature and of the Austrian idea (Bushell 58-59) inspired the Italian Germanist Claudio Magris to coin the phrase "Habsburg Myth" to describe this phenomenon, which Barker defines as "the tendency to celebrate a society which existed far more in the imagination of the writer than it had ever done in reality" (Bushell 43).

start.[11] Thus, in the midst of a housing crisis, the Stephansdom and the Burgtheater, symbols of an older Austria, were rebuilt.

Education was also to assist in the promotion of the Austrian idea. Ernst Fischer, member of the Communist Party and first Minister for Education after the Second World War, tried to ensure that the school curriculum emphasised Austria's unique culture and instilled a love of "Heimat" in young Austrians (Robertson and Timms 181-183). In an attempt to dissociate Austria from Nazi Germany, on school certificates "Deutsch" was substituted by "Unterrichtssprache".[12] Fischer was soon replaced by Felix Hurdes of the ÖVP, who in 1949 introduced a subject called "staatsbürgerliche Erziehung" into the national curriculum. The aims of this subject were "Heimaterziehung", the cultivation of a consciousness of Austrian culture, and "politische Erziehung", the education of children to become loyal citizens of the Republic. No reference is made in Hurdes's document to Austria's recent past (Robertson and Timms 188).

As the economy began to improve, more funds became available for cultural expenditure. In 1954 Dr. Heinrich Drimmel became Minister for Education and he concentrated mainly on the cultural representation of Austria abroad and the fostering of what was deemed to be representative culture. By the 1950s what Mitchell calls "collective amnesia" (Bushell 56) about what had happened in Austria between 1938 and 1945 had set in. In histories and literary histories that received official support and

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[11] This attitude is epitomized by Alexander Lernet-Holenia in his 1945 statement: "In der Tat brauchen wir nur dort fortzusetzen, wo uns die Träume eines Irren unterbrochen haben, in der Tat brauchen wir nicht voraus-, sondern nur zurückzublicken . . . wir sind . . . unsere Vergangenheit" (qtd. in Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 245), and echoed by the historian Heinrich Benedikt in his 1954 Geschichte der Republik Österreich: "In der Vergangenheit Österreichs liegt seine Zukunft" (qtd. in Achleitner and Fetz 17).

[12] Knight points out that this measure is often wrongly attributed to Fischer's successor, Felix Hurdes, who was consequently ridiculed for trying to invent a new language dubbed "Hurdestanisch" (Robertson and Timms 189).

were distributed by the Ministry of Education as gifts to foreign universities, embarrassing facts from the Hitler period were glossed over or simply ignored. Official policy seems to have been to emphasise Austria's continuity with the Empire and deny that Nazism had anything to do with Austria. This was all part of what Kurt Bartsch has called "die offiziöse 'austriakische Renaissance' " (Bushell 57).

As in political life, in cultural life those who had "stood by their country" after the "Anschluß" were favoured above those who had gone into exile, and so returned exiles felt excluded from the Austrian cultural arena, into which, by the 1950s, collaborators with the National Socialist regime had been rehabilitated. This state of affairs prompts Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer to refer to the literature of this period as "eine Literatur der Reichsverweser" (5). The re-establishment in 1948 of the "Großer Österreichischer Staatspreis" in accordance with the same principles as before 1938 represents for Amann a missed opportunity:

> Österreichische Literaturpreise wurden also unmittelbar nach dem Krieg nicht, was ja durchaus im Bereich des Denkbaren läge - und was auch für ein neues staatliches Selbstbewußtsein Signalfunktion hätte haben können -, als Instrument der Wiedergutmachung oder als Anreiz zur Heimholung der vertriebenen und emigrierten Autoren verwendet. Repräsentative österreichische Literaturpreise gingen im großen Umfang gerade an jene Autoren, die entweder bereits unter dem Austrofaschismus oder unter dem Nationalsozialismus oder unter beiden Systemen gefördert und ausgezeichnet worden waren. (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 47)

Amann goes on to name winners of state-funded prizes for literature in the 1950s, several of whom were included in the "Bekenntnisbuch österreichischer Dichter" of 1938 which contained "die z.T. hymnischen Bekenntnisse von 71 österreichischen Autoren zum 'Anschluß', zu Hitler und zum Nationalsozialismus" (Aspetsberger, Frei, Lengauer 47). These include Max Mell, Franz Karl Ginzkey, Robert Hohlbaum, Paula Grogger, Erna Blaas and Karl Heinrich Waggerl. As Amann ironically puts it: ". . . für

all diese Autoren war die Teilnahme an Jubel-Anthologien zum 'Anschluß' an Hitler-Deutschland, war die Teilnahme an irgendwelchen 'Bekenntnisbüchern', waren Wahlaufrufe für *Hitler* und Führergedichte jedenfalls kein Ausschlußgrund von alsbaldigen öffentlichen Ehrungen im befreiten Österreich" (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 47). Hackl, when referring to the awarding of prizes almost exclusively to writers who had been writing in the First Republic and during National Socialism, emphasises that the compatibility of such authors with the state vision of Austrian culture meant that their murky pasts were overlooked: "Doch die literarische Tätigkeit im Dienste der Nazis wurde verdrängt und verziehen, soweit Autoren in das literarische Konzept der Ära DRIMMEL[13] paßten. Preiswürdig war nicht die literarische Qualität oder der Erfolg . . . sondern die ideologische Verwertbarkeit im Sinne des neuen Österreich-Bewußtseins . . ." (21).

Further evidence that this was the case is the fact that Hermann Broch, who had been forced to flee Austria in 1938, was not awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Vienna because his work was "zu wenig österreichverbunden" (Scheichl 163) - the same reason, Broch suspected, for his not being awarded the Wiener Literaturpreis. "Österreichverbundenheit" was, it seems, the most important criterion in all matters cultural in post-war Austria. Thus, while in West Germany and Switzerland authors were trying to come to terms with the horrors of World War 2, official Austrian cultural policy was trying to ensure that writers and the reading public would forget it ever happened and concentrate on adhering to the official version of Austrian identity which offered a much more pleasant alternative. Recent history was, therefore, ignored or reinterpreted to fit in with Austria's current vision for itself. Mitchell points out that the convenient interpretation of the "Ständestaat" not as a

[13] Hackl is referring here to Dr. Heinrich Drimmel, Minister for Education (1954-1964).

semi-fascist authoritarian state, but as one opposed to Hitler and therefore anti-fascist, facilitated the rehabilitation of writers from that period who could now be presented as model Austrian patriots and "pillars of official cultural policy", despite the fact that many of them had supported the Nazi regime, which resulted in an atmosphere which "was not conducive to any meaningful process of denazification" (Bushell 60-61).

Mitchell also reports that while in the years immediately after 1945 the Austrian PEN Club screened new members and those applying for readmission for connections with the fascist regime, it found it difficult to go against public opinion and official attitudes, especially in view of the fact that there were many more writers in Vienna who had remained in Austria under Hitler than returned exiles, and the Club's denazification policy was gradually relaxed. The Club's president, Franz Theodor Csokor, who returned to Vienna from exile in 1947, did organise readings of the works of writers who had been killed by the Nazis, but these, like other similar ventures, ran contrary to the official propagation of the conservative Austrian idea and were met with indifference on the part of a public that preferred not to be reminded of the recent past (Bushell 68-70).

The successful completion of the "Staatsvertrag" negotiations, due in part to Austria's acquiescence to the Soviet demand that it become a neutral state, consolidated the official version of Austrian national identity, as Austria's nationhood was recognised by the international community. The opportunity at the last minute to omit from the "Staatsvertrag" the part of the preamble that dealt with Austria's participation in World War 2 and the responsibility that accompanied it was gratefully seized. On May 15 1955 the state treaty was signed by the Austrian government and the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union, the USA, Great Britain and France, and Austria proudly took her place among the European nations as an independent state

with a clear conscience. Melichar characterises the significance of the "Staatsvertrag" as follows:

> Durch das verwirrende Procedere des diplomatischen Hin und Hers und durch die zehnjährige Verhandlungsdauer wurde der Staatsvertrag bereits am Tage seiner Unterzeichnung über seine politische Bedeutung hinaus gleichsam ein mythisches Gewebe, in dem die österreichische Identität für ewige Zeiten konserviert schien. Österreich - Opfer einer Freiheitsberaubung - war wieder frei . . . Gleichzeitig bildete der Staatsvertrag einen symbolischen Damm gegen die Vergangenheit und vermittelte den Eindruck, ein für allemal reinen Tisch gemacht zu haben, das Vergessen legitimierend, die Erinnerung als Nostalgie freigebend. (Weibel and Steinle 509)

Thus, the achievement of independence seemed to legitimise the policy of national identity pursued by the state and lend credence to the Habsburg myth.

A frequently-used image during the ten years since the end of the war had been that of the "Hausbau". After the ravages of the war and the hardships of the immediate post-war period, most Austrians yearned for the security and comfort that an independent, well-organised state would grant them, a house of their own, so to speak, that was warm and cosy. This had resulted in years of hard work and sacrifice on the part of the ordinary people and in compromise and consensus among politicians, as all pulled together to rebuild Austria. This, at least, was the version propagated by officialdom and summed up by Bundespräsident Körner in 1955 as follows: "In zehn Jahren harter, opferbereiter, gemeinsamer Arbeit aller ist das Haus des neuen Österreich erbaut worden . . . Trotz mancher Meinungsverschiedenheiten haben wir uns immer wieder über den Bauplan geeinigt, weil das Bauen wichtiger war als das Streiten" (qtd. in Jagschitz and Mulley 174). With the signing of the "Staatsvertrag", the basic structure of the new house of Austria seemed to be complete, the next task of government and people was to decorate and furnish it, and ensure its standing in the European neighbourhood, a task requiring further cooperation and hard work.

The government of the new Austria strove to ensure the continuing cooperation of its citizens with the so-called "Produktivitätssteigerungskampagnen" of the 1950s. In view of decreasing US aid, these campaigns were aimed at making Austria economically viable and at consolidating its position among the western industrialised countries. The key word in the advertising used was "Lebensstandard" and the idea was to motivate ordinary Austrians to work harder, produce more and thereby contribute to the general and individual economic good. Hand in hand with striving for a better standard of living went social peace and harmony, without which the achievement of the former would be impossible. The campaigns were successful, and while in 1954 the standard of living in Austria was 40 percent below Western European level, by 1961 it was only 20 percent below it (Jagschitz and Mulley 22).

The protection of the fledgling state was also a matter of concern for the government. Thus, the "Wehrgesetz" of 1955 made military service obligatory for all males between eighteen and fifty and, despite initial financial difficulties, Austria began to rearm so that it would be able to defend itself should the need arise. On the international front, Austria became a full member of the UN in 1955 and joined EFTA in 1959. At home, the ongoing issue of Südtirol continued to occupy politicians.

Culturally speaking, the authorities were anxious to continue to promote what they deemed representative culture, and so many of the older museums were renovated and became tourist attractions, one of the most popular being the "Schatzkammer", the Habsburgs' treasury. The propagation of the Habsburg myth continued and took an ironic turn when, in 1961, the government refused Dr. Otto Habsburg-Lothringen entry into Austria, as they feared that his return might prove to be a threat to the Republic. In the new state's theatres an older generation of dramatists reigned supreme, due to the fact, as Buddecke and Fuhrman explain, that drama is a literary

genre which needs the public institution of the theatre for its realisation (182). Therefore, the work of playwrights born in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and now approaching the twilight of their careers proved most popular. These dramatists included some returned emigrants such as Franz Theodor Csokor, Felix Braun and Ferdinand Bruckner, some authors just out of National Socialist quarantine like Arnolt Bronnen, Rudolf Henz and Alexander Lernet-Holenia and others, whom Buddecke and Fuhrmann describe as attempting "eine neue Anpassungsvolte", such as Max Mell, Richard Billinger and Friedrich Schreyvogel (183).[14] While Heimito von Doderer was the favoured writer of prose, in the theatre Franz Theodor Csokor was, in the immediate post-war period, initially hailed as the most important Austrian contemporary dramatist. However, this popularity was short-lived because Austrian audiences of the time were simply not interested in the contemporary issues dealt with in his plays: "Audiences and theatres looked back to the past, either to avoid having to face up to the present, or as part of the ideology of the 'Austrian Idea' " (Bushell 74). Csokor's criticism of "der österreichische Mensch", implicit in the criticism of "der römische Mensch" in his play Caesars Witwe, certainly did not go down well with those anxious to ensure the survival of that particular breed of Austrian.[15] And so, Greisenegger recounts, the programmes of the state theatres were dominated by the classics and plays offering light entertainment, works which often alluded to the golden

[14] That playwrights favoured under National Socialism were successful in the Second Republic is evidenced by the fact that Mell and Billinger both had plays performed in the Burgtheater in 1951, while Schreyvogel's work was performed fifty-nine times in the Akademietheater in the same year (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 263-264, 267)

[15] Csokor's Caesars Witwe is in sharp contrast with Billinger's play Das Haus (1949), performed in the Burgtheater in 1951. In Das Haus a celebration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the building of a house is combined with the engagement party of its owner, whose brother, an officer in the American army, happens to return unexpectedly while the party is in progress. The returned emigrant is contrasted unfavourably with his brother who endured the difficult war years in Austria, defending the three hundred-year old house against evil and ensuring the survival of those who lived in it (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 264-266). Thus, the text clearly echoes the Austrian government's post-war interpretation of Austria's role in World War 2.

age of the monarchy. The experimental works of the inter-war years were studiously avoided, as were references to the present or the immediate past (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 227).

Meanwhile, in the cinema the Habsburg myth also dominated. While American and European films of this time featured sex goddesses like Marilyn Monroe, Jayne Mansfield and Brigitte Bardot, amongst the most popular home-grown Austrian films were Ernst Marischka's three "Sissi-Filme", which revolved around the romantic legend of the Empress Elisabeth, affectionately known as Sissi, and the Emperor Franz Josef, who ruled the Habsburg Empire for sixty-eight years.[16] Leinfellner attributes the success of this trilogy to Austrians' need to escape the reality of post-war Austria and to its glorification of an old familiar order and the monarchy in a time of change and uncertainty (Jagschitz and Mulley 55-56). Leinfellner points out that Austrian film of this time differs greatly from that of other countries both in content and in the characters it portrayed:

> Die überwiegende Mehrheit der österreichischen Filme wich der Auseinandersetzung mit der Gegenwart oder unmittelbaren Vergangenheit aus und flüchtete in die Darstellung einer heilen Welt; sie verlegte die Handlung in das kaiserliche Wien, oder in eine idyllische Gegend, die eine Traum- oder Urlaubswelt war. Die Sentimentalität dominierte . . . Die Welt des österreichischen Films hatte kaum Berührungspunkte mit der Realität. Kaum ein Film spiegelt die Tatsache wider, daß dieses Jahrzehnt eine Zeit der Verunsicherung und Orientierungssuche war . . .
> (Jagschitz and Mulley 56)

Such films fitted in very well with official cultural policy and its notion that all was right with the Austrian world. One of the things the authorities feared most was art

[16] It is interesting to note that in his dramatic text attila ante portas H. C. Artmann indicates that the role of "chaperon rouge" is to be played by the actress Romy Schneider, star of the Sissi trilogy (406). Perhaps Artmann, by indirectly associating the Empress Elisabeth with a fairy-tale character, is subtly ridiculing the fairy-tale version of Austria's past concocted by the government in the post-war period.

which forced the public to question the status quo and might cause cracks to appear in the walls of the edifice that was the Second Republic.

However, the house of the new Austria was not as cosy as its architects would have the inhabitants believe. Peter Handke describes the Austria of 1955 as follows:

> Als der Staatsvertrag erreicht wurde, war ich 13 Jahre alt, und es hieß, daß Österreich nun frei sei und daß die Besatzungsmächte das Land verlassen würden. Ich aber . . . fühlte mich in dem befreiten Land alles sonst als frei, und es gab andere Besatzungsmächte als die so genannten, weitaus realere, weitaus bedrückendere . . . ein Österreich, in dem man sich auch ohne Russen und Engländer besetzt fühlte, von den Besatzungsmächten der materiellen Not, der Herzenskälte der Religion, der Gewalttätigkeit von Traditionen, der brutalen Gespreiztheit der Obrigkeit, die mir nirgends fetter und stumpfsinniger erschien als in Österreich.
> (Das Ende des Flanierens 56)

This description of Austria corresponds to the way in which the members of the Vienna Group and the avant-garde perceived the climate of the time. They were exposed to what Handke calls "die mörderische Gewalt dieser doch eigentlichen Besatzungsmächte" (Das Ende des Flanierens 58-59), to the brutality of the authorities and the public who were outraged at and terrified by what they perceived as dangerous attempts to rock the very foundations of the house they had so painstakingly constructed.

Yet, a generation of younger writers born after the First World War, who lacked the confidence and certainty of previous generations of writers and found no place in the cultural arena of the Second Republic, felt compelled to question the status quo. As Ilse Aichinger wrote in the journal Plan in 1946: "Wir mußten an allem verzweifeln, ehe wir glauben durften, und alles, was wir schrieben, ist erzeugt worden im Dunkel der Verfolgung und der Verlassenheit" (qtd. in Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 352). Andreas Okopenko describes this persecution and abandonment as follows:

> Mit der Intensivierung modernistischer Bestrebungen in Österreich . . . verschärfte sich der Widerstand verschiedener Kreise gegen diese Tendenz . . . Immer wieder wurde für die Modernen halbernst die Zwangsjacke oder das Fallbeil und ganz ernst ein Veröffentlichungsverbot durch elastische Verwendung des Begriffs "Schmutz und Schund" gefordert. Es gab Bilderstürme, Krawalle und Prozesse . . . James Gordon (Morning News, Wien) hatte schon am 18. Jänner 1947 geschrieben: "A surrealist in Vienna must feel as lonely and misplaced as an Eskimo in Darkest Africa, for in this city, probably more than in any other capital in Europe, art is conventional to a picture postcard degree." (8-9)

The marginalisation of those who did not conform with the official "Österreich-Bild" meant that young experimental writers and artists were ignored or ridiculed, or even condemned as criminals: "Wer eine sprachkritische, sinnliche, ‚destruktive' Kunst machte, die nicht mehr in den sanktionierten Bereich einer höheren Welt des Guten, Wahren und Schönen verwies, der wurde als kommunistisch, pathalogisch, kriminell oder zumindest als unfähig denunziert" (Jagschitz and Mulley 284). Evidence that this was indeed the case is the fact that in 1963 Gerhard Rühm became a suspect in a murder case because parallels with the crime had been found in one of his texts. Such treatment at the hands of the authorities forced many young artists and intellectuals out of their unwelcoming home, prompting Hans Weigel to write of "das geistige Fernweh-Syndrom": "Fort, nur fort! Das ist fast zum nationalen Slogan Österreichs geworden, das ist vor allem das Losungswort der Jugend dieser Zeit . . . Die kleinste deutsche Bühne wird für unsere Schauspieler, die obskurste amerikanische Universität wird für unsere Gelehrten zum Mekka. Nix wie auswandern!" (Jagschitz and Mulley 179-180). Thus, in its own insidious way, the cultural policy of post-war Austria could be said to be almost as ruthless as that of the German Democratic Republic, in that culture was very much the instrument of the state, with the aim of indoctrinating its

citizens and the consequence of excluding those who did not conform who, subsequently, often fled their home.[17]

Those who stayed at home in Austria were expected to comply with the rules of the new house that had been so carefully erected. Peter Huemer chooses the story of the lady in the bath and the gentleman who, upon inadvertently barging into the bathroom, says to her "Pardon, Monsieur" as a metaphor for 1950s Austria, claiming that it reflects a decade in which sexuality was suppressed along with the past. The man who pretends not to be able to differentiate between a naked man and a naked woman is held up as an example of the perfect gentleman: "Denn gutes Benehmen in diesem Jahrhundert ist Übersehen, Vergessen, Verdrängen" (Jagschitz and Mulley 208), all elements necessary for rebuilding Austria. At a time of great insecurity, Huemer argues that new formalities, rules and manners gave Austrians something to cling to, while their inability to mourn the atrocious events of the recent past gave rise to "die geradezu manische Sehnsucht nach gutem Benehmen" (Jagschitz and Mulley 210), which, in turn, gave them an excuse to forget the past and focus on the future:

> „Anstand" wird zum Schlüsselwort einer österreichischen Generation, die nichts dafür kann, die nirgends dabei war, die nie etwas bemerkt hat, die den Abscheu der Welt nicht ganz begreift und die notgedrungen nach den Nazigreueln versucht, neue Respektabilität zu gewinnen: Wären wir anständig geblieben, wäre das alles nie passiert, sind wir jetzt und bleiben in Zukunft anständig, wird uns die Welt wieder achten. (Jagschitz and Mulley 210)

This accounts for the success of the many "Anstandsbücher" that appeared in the 1950s. The emphasis on manners and good behaviour was also, of course, another

[17] Robert Menasse attributes the development of an "Anti-Heimat-Literatur", a literary genre particular to Austria, to the fact that after the Second World War Austria became a nation, but not a "Heimat", the concept of "Heimat" having been destroyed by Austria's Nazi past, the economic miracle, mass tourism and "die Selbstdefinition Österreichs als Naturreservat und Museum" (Weibel and Steinle 481-482). It seems that, instead of creating an authentic national identity for its citizens, the cultural policy of the first phase of the Second Republic succeeded only in creating what Menasse calls "die Anti-Heimat par excellence" (Weibel and Steinle 484).

component of the general process of restoration, in that it reflected the restoration of older and nobler traditions.

However, as Huemer puts it, "Anpassung produziert Wut" (Jagschitz and Mulley 210), and this was true of the younger generation in Austria, many of whom refused to conform to the expectations placed upon them by their parents and by the authorities. They rebelled and protested, through their behaviour, dress, hairstyles and the music of rock and roll.[18] Among their idols was James Dean, star of Rebel Without A Cause. Like Dean's character in the 1955 film, these young people, many of them "Halbstarke" or teddy-boys, believed themselves misunderstood. To the older generation their protest seemed pointless, now that the world, despite everything, seemed to be in order again, and the authorities regarded it as dangerous. Thus, these "angry young men" tended to be criminalised so that the questions they posed did not have to be answered.

Accounts of 1950s Austria frequently describe it as a decade of contradictions, a paradoxical combination of exciting change and progress, a spirit of discovery and adventure and a desire to open up to and explore the outside world on the one hand, and reactionary claustrophobia on the other, a decade which Huemer describes as being characterised above all by the fear of freedom (Jagschitz and Mulley 218).

[18] Siegfried Mattl analyses the paradoxical attitude of the Austrian state towards American mass culture which, on the one hand, was thought to have "eine sinnauflösende und sozial desintegrative Wirkung", but, on the other hand, gave Austria access to the know-how it needed to become part of the European consumer society, something which politicians and economists greatly desired. This, Mattl claims, gave rise to a extremely peculiar brand of modernity, a curious mixture of popular culture and (Catholic) state ritual which he terms "regressive(n) Modernisierung", a modernity that favoured conformity above individualism (Achleitner and Fetz 18).

1.3 Dadaism, Surrealism and the Wiener Gruppe

As mentioned in the introductory profile of Konrad Bayer, there is no doubt that the members of the Wiener Gruppe identified themselves with certain experimental movements which had gone before. Indeed, there is much evidence to support this, partly in the form of statements by members of the Group, and also in the Group's activities, techniques and theories about art. This section aims to examine in general terms the connections, similarities and differences between such experimental movements as Dadaism and Surrealism and the Vienna Group.

When recounting the genesis of the Group, Gerhard Rühm describes how, after World War 2, progressive artists in Austria tried to piece together from patchy sources a picture of modern experimental art:

> nach sieben jahren gewaltsamer absperrung galt es aufzuholen, was sich inzwischen draussen getan hatte, für uns junge, die bisher verfemte moderne kunst zu rekapitulieren. sie hatte, gerade in österreich, auch vor 1938 nur eine kleine minderheit erfasst; die grossen bibliotheken hatten es versäumt, rechtzeitig ihre wichtigsten dokumente zu sammeln oder sie waren 'gesäubert' worden. wir waren auf verstreute dürftige privatbestände angewiesen. die bruchstückhaften informationen über expressionismus, dadaismus, surrealismus, konstruktivismus wurden gierig aufgenommen, herumgereicht, mühsam zu einem bild zusammengefügt; es hatte fast etwas sektiererisches an sich. man musste zunächst einmal die wichtigsten namen und titel herausfinden, um überhaupt zu wissen, wonach man näher suchen sollte, das machte jeden hinweis, jedes kleinste zitat zu einer aufregenden entdekkung. (WG 7)

He explains how in the years immediately following the removal of the Nazi regime Austrians were plagued by confusion, uncertainty and the fear "sich durch irgendeine äusserung als nazi zu entlarven" (WG 7). Since most people avoided drawing attention to themselves at all costs, those who did, through their interest in modern art, were considered by the majority to be "verrückt, abwegig" (WG 7). Rühm describes how, in such a climate, like-minded people gravitated towards each other and towards the

"artclub", which he describes as "die einzige international bedeutende wiener künstlervereinigung der nachkriegszeit" (SW 10): "in einer atmosphäre von ignoranz und wütender ablehnung war man aufeinander angewiesen, um nicht ganz isoliert zu sein" (WG 7).[19]

In these days before the Wiener Gruppe officially came into existence, when its members were simply like-minded people, friends who enjoyed meeting in the artclub and discussing art and literature late into the night, Rühm reports how they pored over any available material on earlier literary ventures to which they were drawn:

> artmann besass ein schon ziemlich mitgenommenes exemplar von soergels 'dichtung und dichter der zeit - im banne des expressionismus', das für uns eine wichtige informationsquelle wurde, vor allem die kapitel über den 'sturm', august stramm und 'dada'. auch die 'anthologie der abseitigen', herausgegeben von carola giedion-welcker (bern 1946), hatten wir uns beschafft. im amerikahaus entdeckten wir die 'last operas and plays' der gertrude stein. holz, scheerbart, carl einstein, stramm, schwitters, nebel, behrens, roul [sic] hausmann, serner, arp, gertrude stein - das waren dichter, die, sofern überhaupt bekannt, kaum zur kenntnis genommen und als zurecht verschollene aussenseiter abgetan wurden. für uns repräsentierten sie die aufgefundene, eigentliche tradition, der sich unsere bestrebungen organisch anschlossen. wo soll es *weiter*gehen, wenn nicht sinngemäss bei den 'endpunkten'? (WG 9)

Clearly, for the members of the Vienna Group the sources mentioned above acted as stimuli for the works that they would produce. The Group members saw themselves as taking up the last threads of a tradition which they had missed out on and wished to continue. As is evident from the previous section, this tradition was very much at odds with the one espoused by the state authorities at the time. Rühm reveals that he himself

[19] Okopenko is anxious to clarify that although the Vienna Group has become synonymous with "die Moderne" in Austria, there was more to the Austrian avant-garde of the 1950s. Borrowing a geological term, he refers to the Wiener Gruppe as "die vierte Formation" (6). He identifies three earlier "formations", including the group of authors around Otto Basil's journal Plan, those involved in the journal Neue Wege, with Edgar Jené's and Max Hölzer's Surrealistische Publikationen, Hans Weigel's Stimmen der Gegenwart, Okopenko's own journal publikationen and the circle of writers around Hermann Hakel (1-14).

was most interested in the Constructivists, while Artmann preferred Black Romanticism and Surrealism, the latter being the movement which enjoyed greatest popularity in the artclub and provided "wertvolles material" (WG 9) for the Wiener Gruppe.

When writing of the Vienna Group's activities, both Rühm and Oswald Wiener make reference to the earlier movements to which the Group was drawn. In his essay entitled "das 'literarische cabaret' der wiener gruppe" (WG 401-418), Wiener explains why the Group chose "literarisches cabaret" as the title for its performance of 6 December 1958:

> diskussionen gab es um den namen unserer veranstaltung. wir entschieden uns für 'literarisches cabaret' aus sentimentalen wie praktischen gründen; es erinnerte an zürich im ersten weltkrieg und gab überdies potentiellen besuchern ein gefühl von qualtinger, der zu dieser zeit in wien mit seinem 'brett'l vor dem kopf' etc. grossen erfolg hatte, und weiters wurde der name dem nummeraufbau unserer soiree gerecht. 'literarisch' hiess es, um uns eben von qualtingers crew zu distanzieren . . . (WG 404)[20]

With his reference to Zürich, Wiener clearly means the "Cabaret Voltaire", formed by Dadaists there in February of 1916 as a centre for artistic entertainment. However, comments by both Wiener and Rühm make it clear that the Vienna Group, while strongly influenced by movements such as Dadaism and Surrealism, in no way saw its endeavours as mere replications of the activities and works of these predecessors, but was anxious, while drawing on such sources for inspiration, to achieve something new and original. In the essay mentioned above Wiener describes how he and Rühm tired of these sources of inspiration:

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[20] Here, Wiener is referring to the cabarettist Helmut Qualtinger, whom Schwarz describes as a "moral philosopher". His brilliantly satirical characters Travnicek and Herr Karl embody the ailments of the Second Republic, in particular "Austria's unresolved relationship to the Fascist past". In Schwarz's view, Herr Karl "represents a high point of post-war literature, the culmination of the Austrian version of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* or coming-to-terms-with-the-past" (119).

> 1958 hatten sich unsere quellen so ziemlich erschöpft . . . unser studium des expressionismus und des dadaismus resultierte - jedenfalls was mich betrifft - in langeweile und überfütterung. besonders rühm hatte sich da ein wissen erworben, das einem fachgelehrten alle ehre gemacht hätte, aber er begann die sache für tot zu halten, und ich hatte den eindruck, er bemühe sich immer bewusster, diesen hintergrund abzubauen. (WG 402)

Rühm describes how the Group discovered spoken language and the surreal figurativeness of dialect: "der differenziertere klang gesprochener sprache, der umgangssprache, wurde entdeckt, die transformationen des dialekts, seine 'surreale' bildlichkeit, etwa wenn man redensarten wörtlich nimmt" (WG 13). While acknowledging here the Group's debt to Surrealism, he goes on to point out that the potential surreal quality of dialect was something which the Surrealists had overlooked:

> der surrealismus, der sich stets auf das unterbewusste beruft, hat die nicht unwesentliche tatsache übersehen, dass der dialekt in unserem "täglichen" denken und daher auch in unserem unterbewusstsein eine eminente rolle spielt. seine wirklichkeitsnähe und unmittelbarkeit des ausdrucks schliesslich lässt die chance, durch neue gegenüberstellungen der worte eine verfremdung und damit eine neuwertung derselben zu erzielen, besonders hoch erscheinen. so glauben wir, dem dialekt ganz neue seiten abzugewinnen. (WG 20)[21]

This points, on the part of the Vienna Group, to the achievement, by new means, of an end similar to that of the Surrealists: namely, the breaking down or making strange

[21] While Artmann's dialect poetry endeared him to the Viennese public, some of whom, he complains in a conversation with Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler and other members of the Wiener Gruppe, still ask him, "Wann schreiben Sie wieder einmal so was Liebes?" (Fuchs and Wischenbart 27), these poems are, in a different way, just as critical of the post-World War 2 Viennese as Qualtinger's Herr Karl, emphasising as they do "the cruelty, the sadism, the demonism, the cynical brutality and a dozen other propensities" of the lower middle class of Vienna ". . . which history has recorded but which the legend refuses to acknowledge" (Schwarz 118). In the conversation mentioned above, Rühm refers to the "reiche Tradition auch des Bösen und auch des formal sehr Eigenartigen" of Viennese dialect and its use in nineteenth-century "Wiener Volkstheater" (Fuchs and Wischenbart 20). Therefore, by using dialect in their works the members of the Vienna Group were drawing on an older Austrian tradition. The influence of Viennese Volkstheater on Bayer's dramatic texts is examined in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

("verfremdung") of the usual structures of the world in order to recompose them ("neuwertung") on another level.

It is clear from the above evidence that the members of the Wiener Gruppe identified themselves to a large extent with preceding experimental movements in art and literature. It is also clear, however, that they saw themselves as taking up, in Rühm's words, the "endpunkte" of this experimental tradition, not in order to repeat it, but to continue and advance it. I now wish to outline the similar sets of circumstances surrounding the origin of Dadaism and Surrealism and the Vienna Group.

1.3.1 Historical and cultural background

All three groups of artists emerged in the shadow of the World Wars: Dadaism, which started in Zürich in 1916, became popular in Paris immediately after the First World War, and by 1921 had been subsumed by Surrealism, while the members of the Wiener Gruppe began their activities in the post-World War 2 Austria of the 1950s. The three groups faced similar political and cultural climates. After the First World War, Europe stood in the shadow of dramatic events, its population having witnessed extreme devastation over which it had no control. There was an atmosphere of widespread incomprehension as people tried to come to terms with the fact that the values they had believed to be absolute had been overturned by the war. The Dadaist and Surrealist movements emerged in an attempt by artists to reflect in some way the radical changes which the European consciousness and society had undergone, and which left a world in which nothing was the same as it had been. Dadaism in particular was a movement of protest against the senselessness of the war and against a society

which had allowed it to happen. This prompted Dadaists to reject the past so as to start anew.

In post-World War 2 Austria, the Vienna Group raised a similar voice of protest against the status quo. The reactionary and restorative mood that held sway in Austria in the 1950s has been described in the preceding section and it was against this mood that the members of the Wiener Gruppe revolted, setting themselves apart from the traditional, conservative, provincial literature fostered by the state, and engaging with the Establishment in what Kurt Strasser calls a "Kulturkampf" ("Die Kunst" 18), a battle which called for extreme measures if the mighty Establishment were to feel any of the blows dealt by the minnows of the Vienna Group:

> Die protestierenden Autoren griffen zu recht drastischen Formen des Protestes. In der Literatur sprach man schamlos von "scheissen und brunzen" (Bayer und Rühm WG S. 298 f). Bekannt ist, daß Oswald Wiener in der Aula der Wiener Universität seine Notdurft verrichtete etc.. Letzten Endes ging der Kampf mit einer Niederlage des Establishments aus . . . Der monolithische Charakter des österreichischen Nachkriegsliteraturbetriebes wurde aufgebrochen.
> Sieger gab es in diesem Kampf nicht; die Wiener Gruppe löste sich auf; Konrad Bayer starb. ("Die Kunst" 19)

As Strasser points out, the members of the Vienna Group were not only protesting against a provincial "Literaturbetrieb", but also against the society that had produced it, a society that did not take kindly to the new literature produced by the Group, which offended the "Austrian idea" and the Habsburg myth being propagated by the state and threatened to rock the foundations of the new, carefully-constructed Austria. The extent to which the average Austrian took offence at this literature is clear from Rühm's account of the audience's reaction to a reading by Artmann, Achleitner and Rühm himself on 9 December 1959 from hosn rosn baa, their hardhitting collection of poems in dialect:

> der spiesser fühlte sich hier tatsächlich auf sein wiener schnitzel getreten und reagierte dementsprechend beleidigt. für einen vortragsabend (9. 12. 59) wurde ein beliebter burgschauspieler, der komiker richard eybner, gewonnen, gemeinsam mit den autoren im mozartsaal des konzerthauses (zyklus 'die berühmte stimme') aus 'hosn rosn baa' zu lesen. solange eybner die unverfänglicheren gedichte vortrug, ging noch alles gut, doch als die reihe an uns kam, entstand im publikum unruhe, die sich zu einem kleinen pfeifkonzert und rufen wie "in die gaskammer", "kulturschande" steigerte, einige besucher verliessen empört den entheiligten saal. (WG 30)

This reaction characterises the rejection, outrage and often ridicule which more often than not met the Vienna Group's various endeavours. Due to the radical nature of its literature, the Wiener Gruppe found itself in a more and more isolated position, which the members of the Group perceived to be the result of the continuation of the "'gesunde' kulturpolitik" promoted by the Nazis against "entartete kunst" (WG 7). Thus, while "NS-belastete Autoren" such as Billinger, Mell, Nabl and Schreyvogel had their work published without controversy in Wort in der Zeit, the literary journal subsidised by the Ministry for Education, the publication in 1964 of works by Rühm and Bayer was met with what Rühm and Wiener call a "sturm der entrüstung" (Achleitner and Fetz 32). The poetry editor of Neue Wege lost his job when in 1957 he tried to feature the Vienna Group (Schmid-Bortenschlager 121). In 1958 Doderer resigned his position as editor of the cultural section of the "Kurier" newspaper out of protest after the paper forbade him to publish works by the Group. The concerted effort of the Establishment to quash all attempts by the Group to gain a wider audience for its work led to increased frustration among its members:

> eine gewisse unruhe machte sich bemerkbar. eine fast beklemmende ungeduld darüber, noch in wien festzusitzen; zumindest bei bayer und mir. artmann hatte österreich 1960 verlassen. wir fühlten uns hier abgeschnitten, auf verlorenem posten. von einigen wenigen abdrucken in zeitschriften und deutschen anthologien abgesehen, häufen sich unsere unpublizierten manuskripte in der schublade. wir haben hier keine chance. rundfunk, fernsehen, verlagswesen beherrscht ein arroganter provinzialismus. "avantgardisten" sind von vornherein

> suspekt, die sollen doch gleich ins ausland gehen, in österreich brauch ma des ned. (WG 33)[22]

Thus, Dadaism, its successor Surrealism, and the Vienna Group share a voice of protest, a revolt against the status quo and a rejection of the past. Just as in the first Dadaist manifesto Richard Huelsenbeck demanded "die Zertrümmerung der deutschen Kultur-Ideologie" (Erdélyi 233), it could be said that in 1950s Austria the Wiener Gruppe demanded the smashing to pieces of the "Österreich-Ideologie" and the cultural policy that went with it, a demand symbolised by the "Klavierzertrümmerung" of the Group's second literary cabaret which Fetz describes as an "Attacke gegen das starre, konservativ-bürgerliche Kulturverständnis" (Achleitner and Fetz 10).

It is in the joint undertakings and performances of the movements that the group dynamic, such an intrinsic part of their endeavours, can be best seen at work. Some of these undertakings and performances are treated in the following section.

1.3.2 Activities and performances

Similar patterns can be identified in the activities and life cycles of Dadaism and the Wiener Gruppe. Both consisted of individuals who supported each other in an experimental approach to literature in the face of outside opposition. Both enjoyed intense periods of productivity which were to be followed by the eventual breaking-up of the groups, and both groups of writers met with rejection and ridicule, their contribution to twentieth-century literature being acknowledged only much later. Both

[22] In their 1970 protest against the treatment of experimental artists and themselves in particular, Rühm and Wiener chronicle year by year their rejection and ridicule at the hands of Austrian cultural officialdom and object to its attempt to reclaim these artists which it forced into exile "für den ruhm der kulturpolitik ihrer 'heimat' " (Achleitner and Fetz 33).

initially met in cafés and cellars, places suited to the "underground" nature of their activities, and both loved to perform and hold demonstrations in order to gain the attention of the public.

The performances of the Dadaists in the Cabaret Voltaire lasted until the early hours and often led to friction with the police and neighbours, something which can also be said of the Wiener Gruppe's performances. Evenings at the "Cabaret Voltaire" consisted of a mixture of cabaret songs and dramatic readings of plays, novels and poems, a programme very similar to that of the Vienna Group's "literarische cabarets". While the Wiener Gruppe intended with these "cabarets" to provoke their audiences into reflection and possibly a new awareness of language and the world around them - "haben wir vor, unser publikum zu erziehen, dann dazu, seinen wahrnehmungskreis zu erweitern" (WG 419) - the Dadaists had taken this idea further by holding "provocation-demonstrations", during which they provoked the audience by jangling keys for hours and banging on tin cans. Like the demonstrations of the Dadaists, performances by the Vienna Group were rarely free from controversy and Rühm describes how the Group's first public appearance on 20 June 1957 almost ended in violence:

> wir brachten einen querschnitt durch unsere bisherige arbeit - einzel- und simultanlesungen, tonbänder und projektionen, eingestreut auch theoretisches -, bis wir durch den nicht mehr zu überhörenden eintritt der sperrstunde um mitternacht (das programm lief ohne pause durch) zu einem ende kommen mussten. im zuschauerraum gärte es und war mehrmals am rande einer schlägerei. (WG 25)

While not going to quite the same extremes as the Dadaists in their provocation-demonstrations, the Vienna Group employed similar provocative tactics. In his essay on the Group's two literary cabarets, Oswald Wiener describes how they ensured the audience's attention:

> weil wir meinten, das publikum von zeit zu zeit wieder in trab bringen zu müssen, dachten wir an eine 'erregung der aufmerksamkeit'. wir stürmten alle miteinander die bühne und versuchten so viel lärm wie nur irgend möglich zu erzeugen. wir arbeiteten mit schreien ("achtung!!"), trillerpfeifen, trompetenstössen, getrampel und gekreisch. es war nicht viel schlechter als die ursprünglich in erwägung gezogenen presslufthämmer und sirenen gewesen wären, alle zuschauer starrten auf die bühne. schläfer erwachten. (WG 409)[23]

Both Dadaists and the Wiener Gruppe alike wanted not only to provoke their immediate audiences with their artistic activities, but also hoped that this provocation would spill out onto society at large. This desire and the radical, anti-establishment flavour of both groups led them to meddle in a minor way in political affairs. It should be noted, however, that such involvement in politics took second place to both groups' artistic activities.

Both protested against war, the Vienna Group through Artmann's manifesto against Austrian rearmament in 1955, in which the following lines appear:

> wir protestieren mit allem nachdruck
> gegen das makabre kasperltheater
> welches bei wiedereinführung einer
> wie auch immer gearteten wehrmacht
> auf österreichischem boden
> zur aufführung gelangen würde . . .
> (WG 18)

Dadaists, some of whom had experienced war first hand, raised a similarly outraged voice against military activity through, amongst others, George Grosz, who mercilessly satirised and caricatured the military and assumed the role of "Propagandada", distributing his notorious sticker slogans all over Berlin.

Further evidence of Dadaism's interest in political affairs is to be found in the Berlin

[23] Rühm and Wiener point out that the Vienna Group's literary cabarets constituted the first two Happenings in Europe, preceded only by those of the Gutai group in Japan, of which the Vienna Group had no knowledge at the time (Achleitner and Fetz 31).

Dadaists' support for the Spartacist revolution of 1918 and the preoccupation of their publication Der Dada with social revolution. One edition of Der Dada featured a manifesto by Richard Huelsenbeck and Raoul Hausmann that contained serious demands for revolutionary social reforms, along with suggestions for making the world more Dadaist, such as, for example, the establishment of the simultaneous poem as the "Communist state prayer" and the use of churches for Dadaist performances (Grossman 71). This calls to mind the Wiener Gruppe's plans to stage a coup d'état with the help of the rebellious "Halbstarken", who were causing the authorities much concern at the time. Their aim was to oust "die saturierte, noch von der naziideologie verseuchte ältere generation" and replace it with a "diktatur der progressiven jugend" (WG 16). Plans were made to take command of the press and radio and to permeate society with the literature of the Wiener Gruppe:

> leuchtreklamen sollten nicht mehr der werbung dienen, sondern rhythmische 'konstellationen' blinken, kilometersteine semantische signale tragen, die sich beim vorbeifahren zu einem weiträumigen textgebilde zusammenfügen, düsenjäger sollten 'laut- und wortgestaltungen' in den himmel zeichnen. wiener war bereit, das gesamte erziehungswesen total zu reformieren. bei uns wäre alles nach zweck- und profitfreien, ästhetischen gesichtspunkten gegangen. da uns alle institutionen hoffnungslos reaktionär erschienen, hatten sich die umwälzenden aktionen gegen so gut wie alles bestehende zu richten. (WG 17)

However, for both groups their artistic endeavours were, in the final analysis, more important than any political activities. This is confirmed by Rühm, who says of the Vienna Group's plans described above: "uns gefiel diese vorstellung so gut, dass wir, schon im hinblick auf die fade organisationsarbeit, gar nicht mehr daran dachten, sie in die tat umzusetzen (was utopisch war). die vorstellung war uns immer schon ein ziemlich vollwertiger ersatz für den nachttopf . . . die verwirklichung einer idee war uns oft als ihre reproduktion langweilig . . ." (WG 17).

1.3.3 Theories about art

Emerging as they did out of similar climates, it is not surprising that Dadaists, Surrealists and the Vienna Group shared a common attitude to art, believing that it had to be reinvented to reflect the new world where nothing was as it had been. In Malcolm Cowley's words about Dadaism: "Here were new subjects waiting to be described, machinery, massacre, skyscrapers, urinals, homosexuality, revolution - for Dada nothing could be too commonplace or novel, too cruel or shocking, to be celebrated by the writer in his own fashion" (qtd. in Grossman 116). This attitude to art was shared by the members of the Vienna Group, as is clear from Rühm's description of their early days together: "gemeinsames wurde sichtbar: eine progressiv radikale einstellung zur kunst, die uns von ausgetretenen wegen wegführte. für die anderen literaten gingen wir entschieden 'zu weit' . . . nun stand alles zur verfügung, unser geschmack hatte die wahl. wiener und ich erklärten alles mögliche für literatur . . . der schock wird als unmittelbarster eindruck in die kunst eingeführt" (WG 12-14). Dadaists, Surrealists and members of the Vienna Group alike shared a radical desire to shock, to push art and literature to their limits and take them further than others had ever done. From this it becomes clear that all three groups were also devoted to experiments and investigations.

In the three groups' theories common ground can also be found. All were of the belief that the writing of literature was not something sacred, reserved for the extremely talented chosen few, but that anyone could be a poet. Tristan Tzara, the self-proclaimed leader of the international Dadaist movement, stated the following in 1931: "It is perfectly evident today that one can be a poet without having ever written a line" (qtd. in Grossman 21). The same sentiment is echoed in H. C. Artmann's "acht-punkte-proklamation des poetischen actes" of 1953: "es gibt einen satz, der

unangreifbar ist, nämlich der, dass man dichter sein kann, ohne auch irgendjemals ein wort geschrieben oder gesprochen zu haben" (WG 9-10). For Dadaists and Surrealists, poetry was more than a way of communicating thoughts and emotions. It was, rather, a way of life, that reflected the very existence of its creator - to quote Tzara again: ". . . we repudiated all distinctions between life and poetry, our poetry was a manner of living" (qtd. in Grossman 151). Artmann's "acht-punkte-proklamation des poetischen actes" stresses that to be a poet it is not necessary to produce poetry in written form. More important is the desire "poetisch handeln zu wollen" (WG 10). Poetry is thus regarded as a certain way of thinking and living. Points 2 and 7 of Artmann's proclamation uphold the purity of the poetic act, which should not be contaminated by personal ambition:

> 2) der poetische act ist dichtung um der reinen dichtung willen. er ist reine dichtung und frei von aller ambition nach anerkennung, lob oder kritik . . .
> 7) der poetische act ist materiell vollkommen wertlos und birgt deshalb von vornherein nie den bazillus der prostitution. seine lautere vollbringung ist schlechthin edel. (WG 10)

Surrealists were similarly warned to turn away from the temptation to abuse Surrealism for their own gain or with intention of publication, for fear that this might warp or compromise the purity of the message (Carrouges 138-139).

In their art Dadaists and Surrealists elevated the freedom of the individual above anything else, and revolted against any external authority that might interfere with it. This was a reaction against the loss of freedom experienced during the war, when, for example, conscription forced young men to fight for their country, and people felt shut into a system over which they had no control. A blossoming of individualism took place in art as artists reacted against this sense of having been treated like cogs in a machine. A lack of trust in the authorities and the system that had culminated in such

destruction and devastation resulted in a turning to the self for new possibilities. As has been illustrated, in the 1950s in Austria the members of the Wiener Gruppe were confronted with a climate and society that allowed the experimental artist little opportunity for self-expression, something which was at odds with the Vienna Group's lifestyle and literature, where the individual was all-important. Rühm's description of the Group's first poetic demonstration - "une soirée aux amants funèbres" - reflects this situation well:

> bezeichnend an dieser (ersten) manifestation war . . . der protest gegen das konventionelle, anonyme, normative, der sich jedoch weniger durch eine aggression nach aussen, als mehr durch ein subjektiv bedingtes anders-, eigensein ausdrückte, provoziert durch das belastende ärgernis, das man schon durch die kleinste abweichung vom üblichen hervorrief. (WG 11)[24]

The historical and cultural background out of which Dadaism, Surrealism and the Wiener Gruppe were born and their attitudes to and theories about art outlined above had significant consequences for the way in which these groups of writers produced their texts. The next section attempts an overview of the three groups' various methods of text production.

[24] Wolfgang Kos describes such "poetic acts" as gestures of "selbstinszenierten Außenseitertums" (Jagschitz and Mulley 180). Pfoser-Schewig and Weyrer note that because of its spontaneous and fleeting nature the poetic act consciously resists the demand of what they call "normative Poetik" that art should have a lasting value (Jagschitz and Mulley 288), while Fuchs points out that the Wiener Gruppe's removal of artistic production from the "Schreibstube" onto the street, as a consequence of the belief that the writing of literature is a way of life, can be regarded as a deliberate provocation of the prevailing bourgeois attitude to art (169).

1.3.4 Experiments with language and text production

As outlined above, central to Dadaism was its break with the past and the destruction of the old order. Dadaists rejected all links with this old order and one of their journals bore on its cover the Descartes quote: "I don't even want to know that there were men before me" (Grossman 166). Their break with the past demanded the overthrowing of all previous aesthetic conventions in favour of new forms of representation. Thus, all forms of punctuation, including the use of capital letters, were systematically done away with, and typography was violently disjointed. Tzara challenged his followers to brush aside the very foundations of society - morality, art, religion and the family and to destroy every last trace of history. He attacked the basic concepts of his society, including language and logic. In his "manifeste dada" of 1918, Tzara claims that logic is always wrong and kills independence with its chains: "La logique est une complication. La logique est toujours fausse. Elle tire les fils des notions, paroles, dans leur extérieur formel, vers des bouts, des centres illusoires. Ses chaînes tuent, myriapode énorme asphyxiant l'indépendance" (31).

Surrealism, an outgrowth of Dadaism, likewise condemned all art that reflected the notion that everything was logical, rational, and in harmony with the universe. Surrealists preferred to entrust the freedom of the individual to dreams and the subconscious. Like Dadaists, they believed the task of poetry was to break normal, logical thought patterns and crush habitual ways of thinking and feeling. Unlike Dadaists, however, their destruction had as its purpose construction or reconstruction. Both movements were intent on capturing life's essential spontaneity before it could be frozen into rational form, because they felt it would thus be represented more truly.

The anti-reason, anti-logic stance of the Dadaists and Surrealists, and their rejection of the past led, by necessity, to the creation of new forms of language, which were not

"tainted" by logic or by the past with which they were so disillusioned. There followed in the works of Dadaists and Surrealists a conscious rule-breaking and a playfulness that thumbed its nose at conventional language with its constricting forms. The members of the Vienna Group also despised the fixed nature of conventional language and saw, for example, in spoken language and dialect the opportunity to avoid its confining restraints:

> wir haben den dialekt für die moderne dichtung entdeckt. was uns am dialekt interessiert, ist vor allem sein lautlicher reichtum (besonders im wienerischen), der für jede aussage die typischen nuancen findet. selbst ein einziges wort kann in verschiedenen tönungen auftreten, also individualisiert sein (wir versuchen dies, soweit es mit 26 buchstaben möglich ist, durch eine phonetische schreibung darzustellen), während in der "schriftsprache" - der dialekt ist eine "gesprochene sprache" - jedes wort objektiviert und starr erscheint . . . (WG 20)

Just as the Dadaists and Surrealists rebelled against the traditional hierarchy of meanings, believing that anything can be the subject of a poem, for example, the members of the Vienna Group adopted a similar attitude (WG 13). For all three groups of artists form, along with the creation of new forms of expression, was more important than thematic content. Rühm writes of "die starke betonung des formalen" (WG 23) with reference to the Vienna Group's works, another characteristic they had in common with those of Dadaism and Surrealism, and which is reflected in the use of similar techniques of text production discussed below.[25]

Dadaists wanted, in the words of Hugo Ball, to "renounce the language devastated and made impossible by journalism" and wished poems to "discard language as painting had discarded the object" (qtd. in Grossman 117). This desire for poetry to go beyond words resulted in various experiments, including the "Lautgedicht" or sound

[25] For a more detailed comparative study of the linguistic experiments of Dadaists and the Wiener Gruppe, see Droschl 25-83.

poem. Other experiments include, for example, in the poems of Tristan Tzara and Francis Picabia, the "words in a hat" approach which relinquished the poet's power to manipulate language.The newspaper-clipping method involved cutting words out of newspapers, picking them at random from a bag and copying conscientiously the text that thus emerged. This juxtaposition of unrelated words to create verbal collages was an attempt to destroy traditional language, undermine its hierarchy of values and put an end to the resultant conventional forms of order.

Surrealists invented similar automatic techniques of expression, the aim of surrealism being, according to Breton in his definition of it in his Manifestes du surréalisme, to express pure thought, freed of all controls imposed by reason and by moral and social prejudices: "SURRÉALISME, n. m. Automatisme psychique pur par lequel on se propose d'exprimer, soit verbalement, soit par écrit, soit de toute autre maniére, le fonctionnement réel de la pensée. Dictée de la pensée, en l'absence de tout contrôle exercé par la raison, en dehors de toute préoccupation esthétique ou morale" (36). One Surrealist technique aimed at the expression of pure thought was automatic writing, a process described as follows by Breton: "Faites-vous apporter de quoi écrire, après vous être établi en un lieu aussi favorable que possible á la concentration de votre esprit sur lui-même . . . Écrivez vite sans sujet préconçu, assez vite pour ne pas retenir et ne pas être tenté de vous relire" (41). Here, Breton advises that to practise automatic writing one should settle in a place as conducive as possible to the turning inward of the mind upon itself, write quickly and without any preconceived subject, so quickly as not to retain or be tempted to reread what one writes.

Such experiments formed some of the "endpunkte" to which Rühm referred (WG 9) and which the members of the Wiener Gruppe took as their starting points. They too experimented with language - Oswald Wiener calls them "sprachingenieurs,

sprachpragmatiker" (WG 401) - they too set no limits on what could be used to create literature. Like Dadaists, Rühm experimented with sound poetry[26] and created poetic collages out of words found in crossword puzzles and on blotting paper. With his "konstellationen", which he describes as follows, he also tried to free words from their conventional associations: "anfang 1954 hatte ich begonnen, 'konstellationen' (wie sie später genannt wurden) mit isolierten begriffen zu machen. eine art "punktueller" dichtung, in der die einzelnen wörter eigenständigkeit gewannen" (WG 14).

"der methodische inventionismus", a montage technique discovered by the Vienna Group which employed mathematical formulae, can be likened to the Dadaist "words in a hat" approach, in that both enable all to write poetry - in keeping with both groups' belief that anyone could be a poet - and result in the relinquishing of conscious control on the part of the poet, who allows the laws of chance to replace him. Rühm describes this technique as follows, acknowledging its debt to Surrealism:

> der "inventionismus" wurde entwickelt, eine art systematisierung der alogischen begriffsfolgen des radikalen surrealismus - wie des von uns besonders verehrten benjamin péret. möglichst dissoziierte begriffsgruppen werden von einer arithmetischen reihe (am beliebtesten war die fibonacci-reihe) permutativ geordnet. das sprachliche material sollte auf diese weise aus dem kausalen begriffszusammenhang in eine art semantischen schwebezustand gebracht werden, auf "mechanischem" wege überraschende wortfolgen und bilder erzeugen. (SW 11)

Rühm also calls this method of producing literature "eine methodische hervorbringung von literatur, die es jedem ermöglichen sollte, zu dichten . . . dichtung als gebrauchsanweisung" (WG 14) and Bayer describes it as "dichtung als volkssport" (SW 718). Just as Surrealists rejected all forms of mediation, and aimed with psychic automatism for the dictation of thought without the control of the mind, the members

[26] Alfred Doppler highlights similarities between the sound poems of Hugo Ball, Paul Scheerbart and Kurt Schwitters and those of Gerhard Rühm (61-63).

of the Wiener Gruppe favoured spontaneity and rejected mediation. This is evident from Artmann's "acht-punkte-proklamation des poetischen actes", which stresses the improvised, irrational nature of the poetic act: "die alogische geste selbst kann zu einem act ausgezeichneter schönheit, ja zum gedicht erhoben werden . . . der poetische act ist jene dichtung, die jede wiedergabe aus zweiter hand ablehnt, das heisst, jede vermittlung durch sprache, musik oder schrift . . . der poetische act ist starkbewusst extemporiert" (WG 10).[27]

Like the Dadaists and Surrealists before them, the members of the Wiener Gruppe enjoyed working together on collaborative works, and just as their predecessors had used collage for this purpose, the members of the Vienna Group used montage, a technique they found particularly suitable for group work and whose playful element also brought the group closer together.[28] Rühm gives an interesting account of the process:

> 1956 entstanden die ersten gemeinschaftsarbeiten. artmann stöberte in seinen grammatiken herum (wörterbücher und fremdsprachige grammatiken gehörten zu seiner lieblingslektüre), kramte ein 'lehrbuch der böhmischen sprache' eines gewissen terebelski aus dem jahre 1853 hervor (oder war es bayer?), in dem sich eine sammlung einfacher sätze fand, die dem durch den inventionismus geschulten blick in ihrer willkürlichen aneinanderreihung als poetische verfremdungen auffallen mussten. artmann und bayer begannen die reihung in diesem sinne zu spezifizieren, wählten aus, gruppierten um - die erste 'montage' war fertig . . . die entdeckerfreude feuerte uns zu weiteren montagen an . . . jeder brachte geeignetes material an (bevorzugt waren anfangs ältere konversationsbücher), wir spielten uns aufeinander ein, warfen uns die sätze wie bälle zu. wenn daneben auch jeder für sich den erschlossenen

[27] It is somewhat difficult to reconcile this emphasis on spontaneity and lack of mediation, particularly through language, with the fact that, from a purely practical point of view, Artmann's poetic acts (for example, "une soirée aux amants funèbres") must have, at least to some extent, been planned in advance, and with the fact that he, along with the other members of the Group, used language, albeit with a varying degree of scepticism, to give expression to their art. This passionate desire to reject "jede wiedergabe aus zweiter hand" was, nonetheless, a desire shared by Bayer, and the paradox implicit in a writer rejecting the medium that he works with is a central aspect of his work.

[28] The fact that these artists engaged in collaborative creative processes such as demonstrations, performances, collage and montage is indicative of their situation as minority groups of like-minded individuals who revolted against the cultural Establishment and who perhaps thought that their efforts might make a greater impact if combined with those of others.

möglichkeiten weiter nachging, war gerade die montage eine technik, die die gemeinschaftsarbeit besonders begünstigte. (WG 22) [29]

Annamaria Droschl, when comparing the Dadaist collage and the montage of the Wiener Gruppe points out that central to both techniques is the inclusion of real elements or "Realitätsfragmente" (28), such as wood or glass for the artist, and for the author, words or sentences not originally written for artistic purposes from, for example, newspapers, signs or advertisements. This combination of life and art, in which the objects or words are removed from their usual context, results in a clash with the world picture that is normally considered to be "reality". For the person confronted with the collage or montage parts of it are at the same time familiar and strange. In the case of the montage, readers recognise fragments of it that form part of their everyday reality. However, when removed from their everyday context, these elements no longer make sense and while understanding on a semantic level seems possible, when readers try to grasp the content of the text, they fail due to the unknown word and sentence combinations whose individual elements are understandable (Droschl 32). Since readers are left with few points of reference for a conventional understanding of the montage, other means of interpreting the text are freed. Therefore, the development of such techniques as collage and montage corresponds to the demand of Dadaists, Surrealists and the Vienna Group for changes in the reading or perception habits of the spectator/reader. When normal reading or perceiving patterns fail, the imagination is stimulated as those confronted with the work of art or literary text are forced to consider alternatives, not only for understanding it but for looking at reality itself.

[29] Harriett Watts compares the Vienna Group's montage technique to similar techniques used by Dadaists, Surrealists and Constructivists (213-216).

Droschl also investigates how the montages of the Wiener Gruppe diverge from the collages of the earlier traditions. An essential difference between Dadaist collages and the montages of the Vienna Group is, in her estimation, that while Dadaists relinquished all control of the author in favour of spontaneity and chance, the members of the Vienna Group systematically constructed their montages, rearranging whatever pre-existing material they happened to be working with with a specific purpose in mind - that of presenting familiar, readymade language in various situations, in the hope of making the reader aware of the danger of using language in an automatic, unreflected, conventional way (Droschl 40-42).[30] Out of such experiments developed, according to Rühm, "eine bewusste gemeinsame auseinandersetzung mit dem material sprache überhaupt" (WG 23). Droschl claims that it is the Vienna Group's study of language philosophy and its effects on their linguistic experiments that differentiates their works from those of Dadaism. She points to their study of Wittgenstein and Mauthner and to the development among some of them of a "Sprachskepsis" directed not just at conventional language, but at all language or language as a medium to support her belief that, while the members of the Wiener Gruppe adopted some Dadaist methods of text production, they did so with different aims in mind (Droschl 51, 101-102, 106, 109).[31] Aware of the similarities between the Vienna Group's montage technique and

[30] The following comments by Rühm seem to confirm Droschl's assertion: "die bezeichnung 'collage' haben wir übrigens – als nur für bildende kunst zutreffend ('collagieren' heisst 'kleben') – in der dichtung abgelehnt; auch wollten wir uns durch den terminus 'montage', der stärker das konstruktive moment betont, unmissverständlich von der mehr spielerisch zufälligen 'dada-collage' abgrenzen" (SW 827). Rühm also speaks of "bewußte auswahl und umgruppierung" and of the "stimmungsgebende funktion" of the montages' titles, which helped create "ein bestimmtes assoziationsfeld" that gave banal sentences a certain unreal quality and poetic transparency ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 190, 194). He stresses that, contrary to what many critics think, the method of text construction was often not the most important consideration, but that it was often just a means of creating a mood or atmosphere: "unsere methodik hatte also nie etwas mechanisch formalistisches, sie war nie selbstzweck, sondern stand immer in bezug zu einem thema im weiteren sinn, zu einer idee" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 194).

[31] Chapter 3 of this thesis investigates the influence of language philosophy on the Vienna Group and on Bayer in particular.

similar techniques of its predecessors, Rühm is quick to point out that the Group's technique differed, for example, from the one used by the Dadaist Jean Arp to create the poems which he called "Arpaden": "im unterschied zu den dadaistischen 'arpaden' wurde vorgefundenes wortmaterial nicht in ein gedicht eingesponnen oder als 'anreger' verwendet, sondern ganze sätze wurden als fertige bestandteile zueinander in neue, poetische beziehung gesetzt; damit stand praktisch das gesamte schrifttum zur verfügung" (WG 22). Such an observation indicates on the part of Rühm an awareness of traditions that preceded the Wiener Gruppe, but also a definite desire to point out the fact that the Group's efforts were not merely slavish copies of the works of previous traditions, but aimed to use such traditions for their own new departures.[32]

Instead of using a familiarity with preceding literary movements to help them understand the works of the Wiener Gruppe, some critics have used the Group's self-acknowledged debt to such movements to dismiss them, in one commentator's words, as "großmäulige Störenfriede und Hochstapler im Windschatten Dadas" (Steinlechner 70). Alfred Doppler makes a similar observation:

> Artmann, Achleitner, Bayer, Rühm und Wiener haben darauf hingewiesen, daß sie sich durch die literarischen Techniken des Expressionismus, des Dadaismus und des Surrealismus haben anregen lassen. Das war der literarischen Kritik, die von dieser Literatur nicht viel mehr als den Namen kannte, ein willkommener Anlaß, die Autoren der "Wiener Gruppe" als Nachahmer und Nachläufer einer längst "überwundenen Strömung" zu kennzeichnen. (60)

It is my belief, however, that an understanding of similarities between the Wiener Gruppe, of which Bayer was an integral part, and some of its predecessors better equips the reader to approach Bayer's texts. Reading his texts against the background

[32] Fuchs argues that the Vienna Group's innovations, coupled with the fact that, in the context of the post-war traditionalism dominant in 1950s Austria, their reception of earlier avant-garde movements can be regarded as a "Neuentdeckung" (181), means that one is justified in using the term "avant-garde", and not "neo-avant-garde" when referring to it (180-181).

of possible influential traditions can provide the disoriented reader with essential points of orientation which help illuminate Bayer's methods of text construction and the philosophy behind them, as well as enabling the reader to identify Bayer's departure from, and further development of these traditions.

1.4 Review of Chapter 1

The aim of this chapter was to place Konrad Bayer historically and artistically. It began by providing biographical information about Bayer and outlining the formation of the Wiener Gruppe. A historical and cultural overview of post-World War 2 Austria outlined the circumstances surrounding the formation of the Vienna Group and revealed that the Second Republic was characterised by a restorative and reactionary mood that made life difficult for experimental authors such as the members of the Group.

Drawing on statements from members of the Group, I proceeded to highlight their conscious identification with the preceding experimental movements of Dadaism and Surrealism. In the sections that followed I pointed out similarities between the Wiener Gruppe and these earlier movements. Their historical and cultural backgrounds proved to be very alike, all of the groups emerging in the shadow of the two World Wars and sharing the position of outsiders in an atmosphere of rejection because their artistic experiments proved to be too radical for the Establishment. A close group dynamic, intensive periods of productivity followed by inevitable break-ups and a love of public performance and provocation were shown to be common characteristics of the three groups of artists. Similar theories about art and literature, which were no longer to be regarded as the domain of an élite, also united these groups, who declared that anything could be the subject of a poem and that anyone could be a poet. Such theories and their rejection of the past and of conventional language led Dadaists, Surrealists and members of the Wiener Gruppe to experiment with language and methods of text

production, experiments which included sound poetry, verbal collage, automatic writing and montage.

Thus, this chapter has served as an introduction to Konrad Bayer and has provided points of orientation which will be referred to in later chapters. By placing Bayer's literature in a historical context and by highlighting his involvement with the Wiener Gruppe and his debt to earlier experimental movements it was my intention to better prepare the reader to engage with Bayer's dramatic texts. This engagement is the concern of the next chapter.

Chapter 2

2.1 Reading Konrad Bayer - an introduction to Bayer's dramatic texts: der analfabet[33]

An important point to emerge from my introduction to Konrad Bayer and the Wiener Gruppe in Chapter 1 was the preoccupation with language and experimental methods of text production that was central to their literary pursuits. This prompts a more detailed investigation of Bayer's works on a textual level. A close study of one of Bayer's dramatic texts would seem to offer the possibility of a concrete, hands-on approach and seems like a good entry point into Bayer's theatre.[34] Such a study should highlight characteristics of Bayer's dramatic texts which, in turn, may provide a point of departure for further investigations of a more interpretative nature. With the use of scientific criteria from the field of text linguistics I hope to show the extent to which Bayer's dramatic texts depart from conventional literary texts and to identify features which may aid further explorations.

For the purpose of this analysis I have chosen the text of der analfabet, written by

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[33] In the most recent edition of Bayer's Sämtliche Werke Rühm notes the following about the text's title: "es gibt von diesem stück mehrere geringfügig voneinander abweichende abschriften. einige sind als 'der analfabet' überschrieben, andere tragen den längeren titel 'der analfabet tritt in rudeln und einzeln auf / er überfällt ausflügler'. da dieser auch in einem werkverzeichnis sowie in bayers aufsatz 'hans carl artmann und die wiener dichtergruppe' aufscheint, habe ich mich nun – entgegen früheren ausgaben – für den längeren titel entschieden" (SW 765). For the sake of brevity, I will refer to the text by its shorter title.

[34] Throughout this thesis I refer to Bayer's dramatic works not as "plays" but as "texts for the theatre" or "dramatic texts", and describe those who people them not as "characters" but as "speakers" or "figures". I favour such terms because they acknowledge some of the distinctions between Bayer's texts and conventional plays. Some of Bayer's dramatic texts are hardly recognisable as such. For example in diskurs über die hoffnung (1961), apart from the division of the text among four women speakers, there is no other acknowledgement that this is a text written for performance. There are no stage directions – the speakers' numbers, not names are placed before their lines. Even this sharing of the text among speakers is dispensed with in der see (1) (1961) and the text is preceded by the simple instruction "von einem mann und einer frau zu sprechen". The use of the verb "sprechen" is significant, because in Bayer's texts one does not encounter characters in the traditional dramatic sense, but rather voices or speakers.

Bayer in 1956. I chose this text firstly because its title seemed to hint at a language-related content and also because of the fact that, as noted in Rühm's "Anmerkungen" (SW 764-765), Bayer prepared it for performance and publication. This makes it as close to a "finished product" as any of Bayer's texts was ever likely to be. The inclusion of the "beilage für alle feinde des analfabetismus" which, according to Rühm, Bayer wrote for a planned performance of der analfabet also makes this text unique. It is thus the ideal text for such a study.

My analysis of der analfabet will proceed as follows: it will begin with a discussion of the "beilage" and a detailed description of the dramatic text itself. This will be followed by an analysis of the text using criteria from the field of text linguistics, after which I will return to the "beilage", with a better understanding of the text, to ascertain its importance. My review of this chapter will consider the value of such an approach to reading Bayer's texts and will summarise the findings that emerge from it.

2.2 "beilage für alle feinde des analfabetismus"

The dramatic text der analfabet consists of a "beilage für alle feinde des analfabetismus" and seventeen clearly indicated scenes. The "beilage" serves as an introduction to the scenes that follow. It reads almost like a "Gebrauchsanweisung" or "instructions for use" and its purpose is, presumably, to aid "alle feinde des analfabetismus" in reading the text. The "beilage" is, relatively speaking, the most accessible part of the text and warrants very close study, something which critics have not granted it to date. Commentators refer to it, usually quoting parts of it without systematically examining it and considering its implications.[35]

The "beilage" is for "alle feinde des analfabetismus" and "hat seinen freunden nichts zu bieten" (SW 148). Thus, already in the opening lines of his introduction to the text, Bayer divides his readership into friends and enemies of "analfabetismus". He has included the "beilage" for its enemies, who presumably need help in negotiating the paths of analphabetism or maybe need to be persuaded of its merits. Only those opposed to analphabetism need to read on. This leaves the careful reader with the question: "Am I an enemy or a friend of analphabetism?" It is a question which at this point cannot be answered because the reader does not yet know exactly what "analfabetismus" means in Bayer's terms.

Bayer next informs these "feinde" that eleven "figuren" change their positions. This sentence stands alone, separated from the rest of the text, and seems to state concisely

[35] This is true of Karlheinz Braun, for example, who does not even point out that what he quotes belongs not to the main body of the dramatic text but to the "beilage" (19). André Bucher describes the "beilage" as "[die] Reihe von verschachtelten Erläuterungen, die der Autor dem Text beigelegt hat" (141) and seems to find it more of a confusing hindrance than a help in understanding der analfabet: "Man könnte hier eine Konzeption in der Art von Rühms 'neuem theater' vermuten, eine Maschinerie, die die Grundelemente des Theaters korreliert, doch im Stück selbst werden keine weiteren Anweisungen in dieser Richtung gegeben" (142).

the content of the text. The choice of eleven figures, rather than an even dozen, may suggest that Bayer is avoiding the use of even, nicely-balanced combinations of figures. The fact that Bayer calls this a popular party game is also significant. Party games involving the changing of positions usually work on the premise that, with each round of the game, somebody is left without a place or a partner, is the odd one out and so is eliminated. The popular party game of people changing positions is, Bayer tells us, what the following play is about, and not without sufficient reasons - "nicht ohne hinreichende gründe" (SW 148). This, we are told next, is an explanation and, to emphasise that point, it is repeated:[36]

> dieses beliebte gesellschaftsspiel beschäftigt nachfolgendes stück nicht
> ohne hinreichende gründe.
> das ist eine erklärung.
> nicht ohne hinreichende gründe.
> das ist eine erklärung. (SW 148)

However, just when he has affirmed his "explanation" of the play, albeit without elaboration, Bayer states that, apart from this one explanation, there are others which are equally applicable or appropriate:

> das ist eine erklärung.
> andere sind ebenfalls zutreffend. (SW 148)

Having provided the reader[37] with what seems to be an explanation of the text, Bayer then makes it relative by throwing the text open to others. He goes on to make a general statement about explanations which calls into question their very validity: "alle erklärungen bleiben mangelhaft; so lasse ich es bei dieser bewenden" (SW 148). Since

[36] I have tried throughout this thesis to maintain, where possible, the original typography of Bayer's texts.

[37] I use the term "reader" throughout my discussion of the "beilage" because it is difficult to see how it could be incorporated into a performance of der analfabet and also throughout this chapter because my comments are based on a close study of the text, possible only through reading it, as opposed to seeing it in performance.

all explanations are inadequate, Bayer says that the one he has provided will do. In his belief in the inadequacy of explanations which are based on logic and rational thinking, Bayer displays a rejection of logic which resembles that of Dadaists and Surrealists outlined in Chapter 1. Rühm confirms this rejection by Bayer of rational order: "rationale ordnungen betrachtete er als willkürlich und einschränkend, versuchte sie aufzuheben oder zu ignorieren. argumentationen wies er schon zurück, weil es argumentationen waren" (SW 18).

The next section of Bayer's "beilage" is a "postscriptum" to it, in which Bayer provides further "instructions" on how to read the play. He starts by referring back to the positions ("standorte") which he mentioned the figures would change and here lists these positions, which are possible by themselves or in combinations, as:

personen
charakter
geschlecht
zeit
ort (SW 148)

The figures in the text will, therefore, change their personal identities, characters, gender, time and place. These are fundamental points of reference within the traditional theatre, as well as outside of it. It is taken for granted that identity, character and gender are inherent parts of the make-up of individuals and for Bayer to make them variable is to call into question the precepts on which the construction and conservation of identity, personality and character are based. The fact that time and place are also subject to change is not only a radical invalidation of the classic unities of time and place, but a withdrawal of the most basic coordinates for coherent action. Other variations of position used include:

entfernung
entfernung und rückkehr
addierte formen obiger bewegungen

sowie unverändert zu bleiben. (SW 148)

These variations are spatial, referring perhaps to the figures' positions and movements on the stage or perhaps to their changing relationships to one another.

Changes in character or in the person as a whole is, Bayer goes on to explain, a known occurrence, but one that is scarcely noticed or perceived. An occurrence, however, which, according to Bayer, deserves to be looked at more closely. It is in order to make this phenomenon clear that he has made gender a variable factor. This is probably the variation that he thinks will take the reader most by surprise. He states that he could also have used eleven women, eleven children or eleven hermaphrodites but that a mixture of genders was impossible.[38] In explaining why, Bayer uses the "Sie" form, with the word "Sie" appearing in capital letters that differentiate it from the rest of the text. Here, he is presumably addressing the "feinde des analfabetismus" for whom this introduction is written. He claims that if confronted with figures of both sexes, these "feinde" would have covered up the theatrical actions with sentimentality and surrendered themselves to them in undesired identification. So, Bayer does not want his readers to identify and sympathise with the text's figures or events and instructs them on this before allowing them to read the text. He prevents them from doing so by withdrawing the possibility of male/female love affairs, normally a major source of sentimentality and emotional identification. Deprived of such relationships, the reader is forced to remain objective and to concentrate on the text without being distracted and diverted by emotional considerations.

This could prove problematic, however. Having effectively withdrawn the

[38] The hermaphrodite is also one of the symbols of alchemy, a subject which greatly interested Bayer (SW 18) and which is discussed in Chapter 4.

possibility of rational explanations and understanding, Bayer also excludes emotional involvement, leaving one to wonder what remains that can be drawn on to approach the text. In brackets, as an aside to his friends, Bayer states the following:

> (für meine freunde:
> "mein mann hat sich gestern auch aufgehängt" oder "hübsches mädel")
> (SW 149)

This statement about a husband hanging himself foreshadows a scene in the play (Scene 4), where one figure claims that another has hung himself. This perhaps explains why this piece of the text is directed at Bayer's friends, who perhaps are already familiar with the play. The fact that both sentences appear in quotation marks means that Bayer attributes them to someone other than himself. This is, perhaps, Bayer's private joke with his friends regarding the sympathetic emotional reaction he would expect of alphabetised readers, had he allowed such identification to be possible. The females would, in Bayer's opinion, and to take an extreme example, compare the captain's alleged suicide reported in Scene 4 with the imagined suicide of their own husbands and the males could, for example, allow themselves to be distracted by the physical beauty of female figures. The mention of suicide is ominous, given that Bayer himself took his own life.

After this aside, Bayer returns his attention to the enemies of analphabetism by using again the "Sie" form in capital letters. He continues to describe what might have happened, had he allowed them to identify with the text's figures: "vielleicht hätten SIE an den zusammenhängen und betrüblichen sowie herzerquickenden, grauenhaft lyrischen, sowie grossartig banalen ereignissen vorbeigelauert, ohne den nötigen abstand zu wahren, der nun IHREN abendanzug als ein geflochtener rauhreif so wunderbar zieret" (SW 149). The use of the verb "vorbeilauern" is interesting here. The verb "lauern" means to lurk, to lie in wait for, and to combine it with the prefix

"vorbei" is unusual. Bayer uses it to get across the almost predatory way in which alphabetised readers lie in wait for connections in order to satisfy their expectations of a logical storyline. However, the use of "vorbei" with this verb suggests that in hunting down connections in the events of the text, be they sad, refreshing, terribly lyrical or magnificently banal, readers are missing out on something or passing something by because they are not keeping the necessary distance from these events. In what is perhaps an example of the terribly lyrical, Bayer maintains that this distance now decorates the readers' dinner jackets like a hoarfrost, signifying, perhaps, that they now approach the text with the icy coolness and disaffection required. This sentence seems also to illustrate Bayer's approach in the "beilage": anything that sounds like a comprehensible explanation must be undermined, in this instance by the highly poetic language in which it is expressed.

Bayer's use of the word "abstand" here is significant. His aim in denying his readers rational explanations and emotional identification is the achievement of this "abstand", a distance far more radical than, for example, the rational distance achieved by Brecht's "Verfremdungseffekt". By withdrawing the possibility of explanations and forcing the suspension of emotions, Bayer refuses to meet the expectation of understanding that goes with the reading of any text. The readers of the "beilage", stripped of their usual tools in approaching a text must, it seems, face der analfabet with minds wiped clean and feelings suspended. Thus deprived of any frame of reference, readers may confront the "auftretende realität" of the text, having attained the necessary "abstand" from their own reality. I will discuss later if and how Bayer achieves this "abstand" in the text.

Bayer next calls upon the reader's delight in the beauty of the absurd and in its truth. It seems that such a delight is something one must bring to reading the text.

Truth is normally associated with reason, logic and with explanations, which Bayer has invalidated with his earlier statements. He is suggesting that in his text the absurd replaces the reasonable, the logical, the explicable and truth is to be found in it. Bayer seems to be overturning some fundamental precepts on which our reality hinges. His "beilage" is perhaps an effort to prepare readers unversed in and opposed to analphabetism for the radical nature of the text.

This statement about the absurd is linked to the one which follows it by the causal conjunction "denn":

> ich bitte SIE ferner und gerne um IHRE freude an der schönheit des absurden, an seiner wahrheit etc.
> DENN DER FOTOGRAF (PAAR oder BAR) SAGT: (SW 149)

The conjunction "denn" normally denotes a logical conclusion, but the connection between these two sentences is far from logical, since this is the first time a photographer has been mentioned and what he has to do with the beauty and truth of the absurd is also unknown. Perhaps this is an example from Bayer of the type of absurdity one can expect in the text. The fact that this sentence introducing the photographer is written in capital letters suggests that it is to be linked to Bayer's references to the enemies of analphabetism, addressed as "SIE", with the possessive pronoun "IHR" also appearing in capitals. Is the photographer also an enemy of analphabetism? The statements which follow and are attributed to him, would seem to confirm this:

> "kunst muss immer und allen verständlich sein"
> oder
> "der mensch ist als wesen bekannt" (SW 149)

These statements contradict some of Bayer's earlier assertions. He would certainly disagree with the notion that art must always be understandable to all, as he would

with the claim that the human being is a known entity. He has made some effort in his "beilage" to stress how people are changing all the time, that even their very character is unstable. He has made his figures' gender variable to illustrate this point in the text. This statement of the photographer is therefore in direct contradiction with Bayer's own beliefs about the nature of human beings. Then why not attribute it to a photographer who believes that the camera never lies, that it can capture human nature on film and expose it for all to see and know? The photographer, with his belief that human beings and their world can be revealed and explained in pictures that are static and represent only one moment and one angle of reality, is to be taken, therefore, as an enemy of analphabetism, one of those whom the "beilage" addresses.[39]

In the final section of the "beilage", headed "ferner", Bayer gives his readers further instructions. He would like this text to be interpreted keeping in mind the fact that the human being is "komisch". It is unclear whether "komisch" means funny or strange here. He recommends that readers do not get worked up or excited about that fact. He seems here to be trying to control their reactions. He is perhaps reminding them to have a sense of humour and advising them not to get too incensed by what they read. He is possibly predicting the outraged and confused reaction of readers when confronted with the text and already poking fun at it.

Bayer then returns to the changes ("veränderungen") which he mentioned earlier in the postscript. He says that he is aware that such changes mostly take place more slowly but that he has skilfully concentrated them in a helpful allegory in order not to

[39] The type of close text study engaged in here must, as in this instance, be somewhat speculative at times, something which does not, however, detract from the overall validity of such an endeavour.

make too many demands on the attention of his readers: "mir ist ferner bekannt, dass sich veränderungen oft, sogar meist langsamer vollziehen. ferner: obwohl bei intensiver beobachtung das originaltempo genauso interessant erscheint, bringe ich derartiges in gefälligem gleichnis, kunstfertig konzentriert, um IHRE aufmerksamkeit nicht zu ermüden" (SW 149). He further notes that the number of possible points of view ("standpunkte") has been reduced to a piquant minimum in order to facilitate understanding: "da arbeit gespart wird, bei fast gleichem ergebnis, wurde ferner die anzahl der *möglichen* standpunkte auf ein pikantes minimum reduziert. die daraus resultierende geringe anzahl von schichten oder ebenen soll ferner allfälliges verständnis erleichtern" (SW 149). Bayer seems to be doing all he can to help the reader approach the play. He emphasises his attempts to make things as easy as possible for the reader by the repetition of "ferner", which occurs five times in this section of the "beilage". He appears to be contradicting himself by providing the reader with explanations, with a view to reaching an understanding of the play. However, Bayer prefaces the word "verständnis" with the adjective "allfällig", implying that understanding may not always arise or come into question. His final comment on the text, placed on its own at the end of the "beilage", is that it is very funny. This is the last thing the reader is told before being confronted with the play proper and prompts the question: why must the reader be told that it is funny?

I will now summarise the most important points to emerge from Bayer's "beilage" to der analfabet. Distinction is made between "feinde" and "freunde" of analphabetism. Although Bayer does not clarify what "analfabetismus" means, his division of his readership into its enemies and friends suggests that it stands for more than just the

inability to read and write. The use of the terms enemies and friends of analphabetism signifies in each case a conscious position on the alphabet and with this distinction Bayer seems almost to be differentiating two opposing world views. One could conjecture that "analfabetismus" represents a rejection of the alphabet and so of conventional language and conventional means of representation, a rejection which would resemble that of Dadaism and Surrealism.[40]

All explanations are "mangelhaft". It follows that understanding may not always be possible and therefore should not be expected. Change/variation is a major concern of the text. Bayer is anxious for his readers to become aware of the fact that they, like their world, are constantly changing. He wants them to embrace this side of themselves instead of denying it. It is absolutely necessary for readers of the text to maintain a distance from its events and figures. Without this distance ("abstand") readers would become too caught up in the text, too intent on making it conform to their expectations. Instead, a fresh approach to reading this text, and presumably all Bayer texts, is desired. A sense of humour, and pleasure in the truth of the absurd are required to confront the text.

In the "beilage" Bayer thus introduces the reader to some of the principles according to which the text of der analfabet is constructed. They are: change/variation, distance, the absurd, humour, understanding/explanation and reduction. It is my intention, after an examination of the text itself, to consider how these principles manifest themselves in the text and how the "beilage" can be linked to the main text.

[40] The significance of "analfabetismus" is discussed further in Chapter 3.

The "beilage" to der analfabet describes the place from which the reading of the text must start. Readers are told to suspend their usual expectations of action and characters and to expect instead constant change and absurdity; to put away their desire for explanations and take out their sense of humour and, above all, to maintain a distance from the text's events and figures. All of this, Bayer hopes, will enable readers to let go of their usual expectations when approaching a text and release their hold on the reality they normally accept unquestioningly in order to confront something new.

2.3 der analfabet: outline of figures and scenes

The aim of the following description is to prepare the reader for the detailed linguistic analysis that makes up the section that follows.

Before the dialogue of der analfabet begins, there appears a list of its *dramatis personae*, the "elf figuren" which Bayer refers to in his "beilage". They are listed as follows:

1
2
3
4
5
matrose 1
matrose 2
baumschulgärtner
(falscher) analfabet
lion von belfort
capitän (SW 150)

1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 remain unnamed. In his notes to Bayer's Sämtliche Werke, Gerhard Rühm refers to handwritten "regievorschläge" which appear on Bayer's manuscript: "1-5: fussballer mit nummern? matrosen mit nummern wie fussballer, sonst sehr altmodisch -" (SW 764).[41] This perhaps ties in with Bayer's use of the word "gesellschaftsspiel" in his "beilage", and the idea of the text as a game where people are constantly changing places, like footballers changing positions during a game of football. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 speak individually and at times in twos, threes or all together. The fact that they sometimes speak in unison indicates a sameness about them and at times it seems that they are almost interchangeable. In Scene 16, for example, the numbers of the figures are placed before their lines as usual, but the number of another

[41] Elsewhere, Rühm refers to Bayer's "schwäche für das maritime" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 194), which perhaps explains his use of sailor figures in der analfabet.

figure often appears in brackets alongside these numbers, as if either one could speak the line which follows. For example:

3 (1) er soll nicht so laut sein . . .
3 (2) komm, wir wollen uns ins gras legen und den matrosen geniessen
2 (3) sehr gern, aber gib mir deine hand (SW 164)

This idea that the figures are interchangeable would seem to be borne out in Scene 17, where lines previously spoken by 1, 2, 3 and 5 are repeated and instead spoken by others, namely the "matrose" and the "capitän".

Sailor 1 and sailor 2 are described by occupation and number. Again they seem to be interchangeable because in some scenes it is not specified which sailor is meant, with "matrose" appearing, with no number after it. As one would expect, there are some references to seafaring in the text, but there is no evidence of the two sailors "at work" so to speak, and they are not distinguishable in other ways from the other figures.[42]

The "baumschulgärtner" is described in Bayer's "regievorschläge" as having what might be called the typical appearance of a gardener: "baumschulgärtner: schürze blau, strohhut, giesskanne, sehr gross, athletisch, schön,-" (SW 764). He is mentioned in Scenes 1 and 2 by the others, who intend to go to him, and we learn that he has used up his last savings: "3 wir gehen zum baumschulgärtner. er hat seine letzten ersparnisse verbraucht" (SW 150). He appears in one scene only, Scene 9. The set for this scene is a particular one, described as "ödes felseneiland" (SW 158). It would appear that the others have arrived at their destination, that is the tree nursery

[42] The interchangeable nature of these figures confirms that they are not developed into characters in the traditional dramatic sense. Bucher has also commented on this when referring to the "elf figuren" of der analfabet: "Sie sind . . . nur schwach determiniert, verdichten sich nicht zu ausgeprägten Charakteren" (143). In view of this, the use of the terms "speakers" and "figures", which are closer to Bayer's original choice "figuren", seems, as I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, more appropriate.

gardener's home. It is, however, almost the exact opposite of what one would expect. Instead of finding the gardener surrounded by lush vegetation, he is on a bleak, rocky island. In this scene he seems to declare his passion for the Lion of Belfort and does not subsequently appear again.

Like the "baumschulgärtner", the "(falscher) analfabet" appears only once - in Scene 6, a scene which seems unconnected to the others, in which "matrose 1" and "matrose 2" talk of machines, night swallows, foundlings and drunk children. The "(falscher) analfabet" makes a brief appearance and one discovers little about him, except that he usually sleeps until midday, has got up an hour earlier than usual, reminds one of a machine, seems rather bad-tempered and speaks with an accent or speech impediment. The question of his relationship to the "real" analphabet is not addressed. Perhaps he is an impostor? This issue is dealt with in Chapter 3.

The Lion of Belfort is a favourite figure of Bayer's and also appears in some of his other dramatic texts.[43] He features in four scenes of der analfabet. In two of them, Scenes 8 and 9, the other figures declare their love, or at least their admiration of him. In the classroom of Scene 9, however, he is the object of their scorn. The Lion then appears as a nasty figure in Scene 15, where he seems to be torturing 5 and threatening to eat him. How his situation could change so radically is not explained and neither is his appearance. He is given human characteristics but it is not clear from the text if he also has a human form.

The reader meets the captain in Scenes 14 and 17 and is probably surprised to do so, since it is hinted in Scene 4 that he has hung himself. However, he appears in an elaborate costume in Scene 14 to apparently arrange a funeral with "matrose 2". His

[43] This figure will be treated further in Chapter 4.

costume is described as follows: "der capitän (tritt mit leichenbestatterhut, kindermatrosenanzug, einem *falschen* bart, schärpe, offizierspatent mit siegeln, gehänge mit degen und gedrehtem silberstock auf . . ." (SW 161). The description of his hat, rapier and stick is reminiscent of a grim reaper type figure and, indeed, the captain is almost always associated with death. When he appears in Scene 17, which is composed of extracts from Scenes 3, 4 and 16, the talk is of death and burial. At the end of the text, he and one of the sailors knock down a hired spectator who jumps onto the stage. This "gemieteter zuschauer" is not one of the eleven figures listed before the text and this is his only appearance.

The analphabet, who has, it would initially appear, the play's title role, never appears on stage. He is, according to Bayer's "regievorschläge", "eine allegorie der dummheit und des todes" (SW 764). He is referred to in the first line of the text and at random intervals throughout the play, seeming to rise from the figures' subconscious. The figures honour him as one would a king, but it is very clear that they also fear him. He is described as a wolf-like figure with a "fleischmagen" (SW 160), whom nobody knows and who has many forms. Though never seen, or perhaps precisely because of that and the many arbitrary references to him, he dominates the text.[44] The figure of the analphabet is examined in Chapter 3.

In der analfabet there is no development of the dramatic figures. Their function seems to be to speak the text rather than to become fully formed characters. This is supported by their lack of proper names (in Scene 16, 2 says "der name ist nicht wichtig" (SW 165)) and the way in which their identities seem interchangeable. All of

[44] Rühm's reference to the "umschließend stimmungsgebende funktion" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 194) of the titles of the montages of the Wiener Gruppe seems particularly apt in the case of der analfabet, which Bayer himself refers to as "quasi ein montagetheater" (SW 764).

this is also linked to Bayer's concept of "veränderung" as explained in the "beilage". Likewise, their relationships are inconstant and not developed, although there are many words, especially in the stage directions, which refer to the figures' emotional state. Instead, various relationships are touched upon and any changes in them or in the figures' emotions are not explained. This is undoubtedly part of Bayer's desire for "abstand" as outlined in the "beilage", where he states that he wants to prevent his readers from surrendering themselves to emotional identification and sentimentality. Referring again to his "regievorschläge", there is more evidence of this:

> jeder spielt für sich, in sich hinein, keine menschlichen bindungen. nur selten flammen diese auf (direkte ansprache).- . . . vielleicht für die nummern: fixierte standorte für jede szene (auch für mehrere), sprechende, selten bewegliche statuen, wenn sie nicht verwendet werden stehen sie reglos wie inventar herum, tragen nummern, fixiert an bezeichnete punkte, die sie kaum verlassen. (SW 764)

It is clear from this statement that Bayer's figures are like props ("inventar") to be used ("verwendet"), props that speak but rarely move.[45]

Just as there are no "characters" in this dramatic text, neither can one speak of a plot or storyline. The text is divided into seventeen scenes which are clearly marked. The end of all but three scenes is signalled by the phrase "(ende der . . .ten szene)" and the other scenes close with the following statements: "(die sechste szene friert ein)" (SW 156), "(betretenes ende der neunten szene)" (SW 158) and "(die sechzehnte szene schliesst, als ob das stück zu ende sei)" (SW 165). After the hired spectator is knocked down, a performance of the dramatic text would end with the falling of the curtain: "vorhang" (SW 166).

[45] This again justifies my choice of the term "figures" rather than "characters".

The scenes of der analfabet are linked by their figures and by recurring themes such as death/suicide/burial/mourning, cannibalism, the analphabet, violence, relationships and undercurrents of unhappiness and fear, rather than by a sequence of events. The effect is that of a collage of conversation fragments - in Bayer's words "quasi ein montagetheater" (SW 764) rather than a progression of the action. The same is true of the treatment of time in the text. The time-frame of the text and that of its readers is not the same. Neither does there seem to be a linear time continuum. There are big leaps in time which are not denoted by stage directions such as "two months later". As this area will be entered into in more detail later on in this chapter, at this stage I shall do no more than refer to it.[46]

der analfabet is, even on a visual level as it appears on the page, a dramatic text written for performance. The text is clearly divided among speakers and there are many stage directions in brackets. These stage directions are mostly used to indicate entrances and exits, pauses, the end of scenes, the speakers' emotions, how they say their lines and how they move around the stage. Very rarely do descriptions of costume or set appear in the stage directions. As mentioned above, the captain's costume is described in some detail in Scene 14 and in Scene 15 it is suggested that the Lion of Belfort and 5 are wearing sou'westers. Apart from this, we know nothing about the speakers' appearance in the other scenes. In most scenes it is not specified where the figures are and, apart from three scenes, the set is not described in the stage directions. The three scenes in which some indication of the speakers' location is given

[46] As outlined in Chapter 1, montage, much indebted to Dadaism and Surrealism, was a technique of text production used by the Wiener Gruppe. In my review of this chapter I discuss der analfabet as an example of the "montagetheater" mentioned by Bayer.

are Scenes 9, 11 and 15. Scene 9, in which the "baumschulgärtner" appears, is set against the backdrop of "ödes felseneiland". Scene 11, in which the Lion declares his desire to be a "stadtschüler", is set in a classroom shaped like an amphitheatre and in Scene 15 various suggestions are made regarding the set: "5 (als OPFER; aller wahrscheinlichkeit mit derben stricken gefesselt, stehend, im südwester? es regnet? das wasser läuft in strömen über die südwester? in einem schlafzimmer? in einem badezimmer? auf einer kommandobrücke? in einem aquarium, vor einem aquarium? . . .)" (SW 162). The question marks which occasionally appear after stage directions are explained by Bayer in a note in Scene 11: "die mit (?) versehenen regieanweisungen sollen als anregung verstanden werden" (SW 159). Clearly, Bayer wants to leave a lot to the director's and indeed the audience's imagination. The set is to remain fluid. This is confirmed by Bayer's reference in his "regievorschläge" to "bewegliche dekorationen und statische schauspieler" (SW 764).

In his "regievorschläge" Bayer also describes how he wants one scene to be played, without specifying which scene it is to be: "eine szene wird von einer herrengesellschaft (englischer club?) aus zeitungen herausgelesen, wobei man in fauteuils sitzt.- / szene hinter einzelnen paravents. man setzt einmal ein bein vor, hebt den kopf darüber und spricht, oder beide hände zur seite, dass sie sichtbar werden und spricht.- / der paravent ist zentrales requisit.-" (SW 764). However, such a scene does not appear in the words of the text, nor is a paravent mentioned. The paravent has already been mentioned in the Introduction to this thesis and is considered further in the review of this chapter.

My discussion of the "beilage" of der analfabet, which highlighted some principles according to which the text is constructed, and my summary of the text and its figures have given some idea of its unconventional and experimental nature. In the linguistic analysis that follows I will illustrate how this is achieved on a linguistic level.

2.4 der analfabet : a linguistic approach

The Russian structuralist Jurij Lotman summarises the relationship between the form of an artistic text and its content as follows:

> The literary scholar who hopes to comprehend an idea independent of the author's system for modeling the universe, independent of the structure of a work of art, resembles an idealist scholar who tries to separate life from that concrete biological structure whose very function is life. An idea is not contained in any quotation, even one felicitously chosen, but is expressed in the whole artistic structure . . . the dualism of form and content must be replaced by the concept of "idea" as something realised in a corresponding structure and non-existent outside that structure . . . The artistic text is an intricately constructed thought. All its elements are meaningful elements . . . The language of an artistic text is, in essence, an artistic model of the universe; in this sense, by virtue of its entire structure, it is a part of "content" and carries information. (12, 18)

Lotman advocates the elimination of the separation of form and content in favour of the concept of "idea". He argues that the language of an artistic text is an intrinsic part of its content. With this in mind, particularly in the case of an author so preoccupied with language and a dramatic text entitled der analfabet, a linguistic analysis of the language of Bayer's dramatic texts should provide a point of departure for further interpretative investigations.

In the analysis which follows I have drawn heavily on Roger Fowler's approach to literary texts as outlined in his book Linguistic Criticism.[47] In it Fowler illustrates how consistent stylistic choices, that is choices at a linguistic level, "signify particular, distinctive, orderings of experience; different outlooks on the world" (9). Fowler uses the term "mind-style" or "world-view" to describe this phenomenon.

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[47] I chose Fowler's Linguistic Criticism because of the comprehensive and workable character of its approach. One could equally use other sources such as de Beaugrande/Dressler's Introduction to Text Linguistics (London: Longman, 1981), whose categories for text analysis are similar to those that Fowler uses, or M. A. K. Halliday's An Introduction to Functional Linguistics (London: Edward Arnold, 1985), as Fowler bases much of his approach on Halliday's, or Maximilian Scherner's Sprache als Text (Tübingen: Nieymayer, 1984).

The notion of mind-style is based on Halliday's theory that language has an ideational function, that is that speakers or writers embody in language their experience of the real world and of the internal world of their own consciousness. As this experience and its coding in language differ from one individual to another, one individual's mind-style or world-view will differ from another's (Fowler 148). In the course of reading a text, the reader is exposed to a cumulative building of this world-view or a cumulative ideational structuring of the text that depends on regular and consistent linguistic choices which build up a continuous and pervasive interpretation of the world as represented in the text. Ideational structuring involves different types of linguistic features including transitivity, collocation and deixis (Fowler 150-151). Thus, an examination of the transitivity, collocation and deixis of der analfabet should illuminate the world-view represented in that text.

2.4.1 Transitivity

The transitivity system of a language is comprised of "a small set of presumably universal categories which characterise different kinds of event and process, different types of participants in these events, and the varying circumstances of place and time within which events occur" and ". . . consistent selections from the transitivity system can suggest different world-views" (Fowler 156). Fowler elaborates on this point by explaining that the semantic nucleus of a proposition is a predicate and one or more nouns associated with it, that predicates convey some sort of activity or state in which the associated nouns are involved and that there are different types of predicate. These include: action proper, "a movement or deliberate action with consequences, under the

control of the principal noun" (e.g. The horse swam across the river); states, "which simply attribute properties to objects" (e.g. The road is wide); processes, events or changes which "happen" to things without their control (e.g. John fell) and mental processes or states which are associated with the senses, thoughts or emotions of the noun (e.g. Henrietta listened. Brian was blissful). Fowler concludes that different types of mind-styles are associated with a dominance of one sort of pattern. For example, a predominance of action predicates may go with strong physical activity, the foregrounding of mental processes with an introspective mind-style and so on (Fowler 156-157).

On initial examination, the text of der analfabet seems to abound in verbs denoting action proper. Verbs which appear include the following: "zerfleischen", "sich vordrängen", "heiraten" (Scene 1), "trinken", "küssen" (Scene 2), "fressen" (Scene 3), "sich aufhängen", "retten" (Scene 4), "einschlagen" (Scene 6), "geben" (Scene 10), "auftreiben" (Scene 12), "sich entleiben" (Scene 13), "eingraben" (Scene 14), "garnieren" (Scene 15), "bestrafen", "treiben" (Scene 16), "begraben" (Scene 17), "niederschlagen" (at end of play). Even this limited selection suggests much strong physical activity and gives the impression that the text's figures are very active. However, when examined more closely, it becomes clear that this is not so. Some of the action verbs have as their subjects other figures not on stage at the time of utterance (e.g. In Scene 1 the "baumschulgärtner" is the subject of the verb "verbrauchen") or indefinite, unidentified subjects such as "man" ("man muss den kopf zwischen die beine binden und alle lampen auslöschen", Scene 1), "die frauen" ("die frauen fressen die toten frauen", Scene 3), "er" ("er hat sich aufgehängt", Scene 4) or

"wer" ("wer ein glas an den mund setzt, büsst seine lippenhaut ein", Scene 1). Often those action verbs used by the figures in reference to themselves are framed in the future or conditional forms or are combined with modal verbs indicating desires or intentions, as is seen in the following examples: "wenn du vor angst umkommst, werde *ich* den matrosen heiraten" (SW 152); "wenn ich dich wieder nehme" (SW 153); "ich werde dir helfen" (SW 157); "ich will meine keuschheit aus patriotismus opfern" (SW 158); "ich werde dich mit frischen salatblättern garnieren" (SW 163); "ich werde euch (*ganz*) exemplarisch bestrafen lassen!" (SW 163). Therefore these verbs, whose infinitives denote action proper, do not always represent "real" action that actually happens "live" on stage, but more often signal actions which the figures imagine themselves doing in the future or would like to do.

Even those action verbs used in the present tense with "ich" as subject are not always reliable indicators of actual occurrences, since a pledge or threat to do something is often followed by a failure to do anything: "4 ja ja ich geh schon" (SW 152); "2 ich kratze euch die augen aus (SW 152); "baumschulgärtner ich . . . schweige" (SW 158). Having promised to go, 4 stays where he is and, having threatened to scratch out the eyes of the others, 2 does not do this, nor does the tree nursery gardener fall silent in Scene 9. Scene 7 is a scene in which none of the figures' statements are fulfilled. The statement "dann singe ich mit dir" is repeated four times, and the statements "ich werde dir helfen" and "singen wir was anderes" are both repeated twice, but are followed neither by singing nor by help. This is combined with the repeated use of the construction "wenn + Konjunktiv II". Absolutely no physical activity takes place in this scene, despite the figures' verbal attempts to initiate some

type of action. Here we see that figures' use of verbs of action in their speech is no guarantee that that action takes place and, indeed, that speaking and action seem unconnected.

Actions which the figures of der analfabet actually perform include sitting down, standing up, turning, moving various parts of the body, walking around the stage, singing, shouting, pushing, grabbing, applauding, looking, pointing to objects, adjusting an item of clothing, handing over something and, right at the end of the text, knocking down an enthusiastic member of the audience who jumps onto the stage. Apart from the action mentioned last, these actions have no real consequences. They do not greatly affect those who perform them or other people and do not bring about any significant changes. The high density of predicates denoting states, simply attributing properties to objects, supports this notion of the figures as passive entities with little control over their environment. This type of predicate presents the noun going with it not as an agent acting deliberately, but rather assigns to it the role of object or experiencer, someone to whom something outside of his/her voluntary control happens. The following examples affirm this: "5 ich bin verloren" (SW 151); "matrose mit mir ists aus" (SW 155); "capitän du bist verzweifelt" (SW 161); "matrose 2 . . . um die wahrheit zu sagen, bin ich genauso blind wie du" (SW 162); "der löwe von belfort deine kniescheiben sind zerschlagen" (SW 162); "3 (2) du wirst alt" (SW 164). Again the figures are portrayed as inactive. Thus, having studied only a small part of the text's transitivity system, some conclusions about the world-view presented in the text can already be drawn.

Despite the dominance of verbs denoting action proper, it has been illustrated that this impression of activity is deceptive and that many of these actions take place in words alone and lack correspondence in deeds. Under closer scrutiny, the figures are shown to be mostly inert and passive, and rarely carry out effective actions with consequences. They often talk of action, but seldom put their words into practice in a way which will affect the world around them. This is linked to the fact that the text does not have an event-driven plot and that the figures are not characters in the traditional sense. Their function is that of presenting language rather than completing actions. They are speakers, not doers; voices, not agents of action.

Moving on to a different type of predicate, namely that of the mental process or state, adds a further dimension to this world-view. While there are many verbs denoting emotion and sensory perception (e.g. "weinen", "sich schämen", "lieben", "angst haben", "sich verlieben", "schmollen", "sehen", which appears many times, and "zuhören"), verbs indicating figures' thought processes are often in question form or framed in the negative or, using modal verbs, in the form of a desire or wish: "2 kennst du unsere sitten und gebräuche nicht mehr?" (SW 153); "matrose 2 niemend kennt ihn", "matrose 1 ich möchte wissen", "matrose 2 ja das möchten viele wissen" (SW 160); "matrose 2 glauben sie?", "matrose 2 ich weiss nicht", "der löwe von belfort . . . verstehst du?" (SW 162); "3 (2) was verstehst du unter hand?" (SW 164); "3 meinst du das im ernst?" (SW 165); "2 wer weiss . . ." (SW 163; repeated by captain SW 166). In addition to this, only once does a stage direction describe a figure in thought - in Scene 16 the stage direction "(überlegt)" (SW 164) is placed before one of 2's utterances. This suggests that these figures reflect little on

their situation and environment and do not engage in much introspection or evaluation. The examples quoted above point to an uncertainty and unease in the use of verbs indicating cognitive processes and a lack of understanding on the figures' part of the world around them. The frequency of verbs of emotion complements this by illustrating that the figures tend to rely on their instinctive reactions to their surroundings rather than attempt to decipher them logically through reason and understanding.

2.4.2 Collocation

Fowler states that the vocabulary speakers use is "a strong influence on, and indicator of, the range and structuring of their experience", and that the lexis of a speaker "can be regarded as mapping the conceptual repertoire of the speaker concerned" (151). Due to "overlexicalisation" (154), ". . . the extensive and repetitive use of sets of terms . . . particular lexical systems, and the ideas they symbolise, become foregrounded" (155). The term "collocation" means that "sets of words tend to turn up together in texts because they relate to the same idea" (64). These sets of words are also referred to as "word fields". Fowler quotes the example of a weather forecast, where "a very high density of meteorological terms is expected" (65) and explains that "a proliferation of terms in some semantic field indicates an unusual preoccupation . . . with a part of the culture's experience" (Fowler 155).

In der analfabet word fields with the highest frequency of terms related to them include the field of emotions. Verbs, adjectives and adverbs referring to the figures' emotional state appear in almost every scene. This reiterates the conclusion drawn from the text's transitivity patterns that the speakers tend to *re*act emotionally rather

than act intellectually. The speakers' emotional reactions often point to violent tendencies and violence is another word field which features in the text, as is evident from the following lexical items: "zerfleischen", "stoßen" (x2), "packen", "auskratzen" (Scene 1); "amfitheater"[48] (Scene 11); "kriegskünstler", "sich entleiben" (Scene 13); "mit derben stricken gefesselt", "zerschlagen" (Scene 15) and "niederschlagen" (end of text).

Vocabulary relating to literacy/teaching/knowledge forms another word field in the text. The words "analfabet" (x3), "gescheit", "weisheit" and "lehrreich" appear in Scene 1; "narr", "verstehen", "nicht kennen" in Scene 3; "richtigstellend", "verstehend", "erkennend" in Scene 4; "(falscher) analfabet" in Scene 6; "stadtschüler" (x2), "vergessen" (x2) in Scene 11; "analfabet" (x2) in Scene 12; "studium", "analfabet" (x2), "vergessen", "beweis", "fragen", "verstehen" (x2) in Scene 16. As is evident from the above, this field is dominated by the word "analfabet" and the figure of the analphabet is considered in Chapter 3.

The word field of the body is another important semantic field. Parts of the body are frequently mentioned: "kopf", "beine", "mund", "lippenhaut", "hände", "augen" all appear in Scene 1; "hand" and "fleischherz" in Scene 2; "kopf", "hand", "ohr", "herz", "magen" (x2), "hände" in Scene 4; "hand", "augen" in Scene 6; "lippen", "augen" and "narbe" in Scene 8; "brust" and "gesichtsausdruck" in Scene 9; "zähne", "fleischmagen" and "bart" in Scene 12; "mund" in Scene 13; "kniescheiben" and "arme" in Scene 15 and "herz" (x4), "ohren" and "hand" (x4) in Scene 16. These body parts often appear in stage directions that describe figures moving particular parts of

[48] Associated with violence because it was, in ancient Rome, the scene of battles between gladiators and struggles between Christians and lions.

the body: "matrose (schwerhörig, blick nach vorn, neigt kopf seitlich, hand ans ohr)" (SW1 154); "matrose (beide hände in den magen krampf) mit mir ists aus" (SW 155); "matrose 1 (hand über den augen, sonnenschützend, fernblickend) leb wohl" (SW 155). Sometimes a part of the body appears in connection with a participle, rather than with a finite verb: "1 (verlässt angeekelt mit vor dem mund gehaltener hand die szene)" (SW 161); "capitän (nähert seinen kopf dem des matrosen und blickt zu ihm auf. leicht geöffneter mund, zerfliessend)" (SW 162); "matrose 2 (schliesst die augen oder hält die hände vors gesicht. er richtet seinen kopf dem capitän mit gehobenem kinn entgegen)" (SW 162). Especially in the stage directions, the foregrounding of parts of the body results in the backgrounding of the whole human as agent and as consciousness. At times, parts of the figures' bodies seem to be moving about outside of their conscious control. This effect is created particularly by the use of participles which lack a named subject, as in the above examples.

The frequent references by the figures themselves to parts of the body and their combining of "herz" and "magen" with "fleisch" to create "fleischherz" (Scene 2) and "fleischmagen" (Scene 12) ties in with another of the text's important word fields, namely that of food, eating and cannibalism, which also appears in other Bayer texts.

This word field is one that features in Scenes 2, 3, 4, 6, 15 and 17 and is characterised by the following words: "fleisch" (x3), "gebraten" (Scene 2), "fressen" (x5), "pfeffer" (Scene 3); "gefressen", "zwiebeln" (Scene 4); "saucen", "gewürzen", "suppe" (Scene 6); "mit frischen salatblättern garnieren" (Scene 15) and "fressen" (x2) in Scene 17. The figures seem to view one another's bodies as meat:

> 4 suppe mit fleisch
> 2 wenn ich aber an dein fleischherz denke
> 4 zumal gebraten (SW 152-153)

The fact that it is linked to words like "gewohnheit", "sitten und gebräuche" (Scenes 3 and 17) suggests that cannibalism is not only practised by these speakers but that it forms part of their culture and tradition.

Words such as "begraben", "umkommen", "sterben" (Scene 1); "tod", "tot" (x2) (Scene 2); "trauer", "begräbnis", "sich aufhängen" (x3), "trauerkleider", "krepiert" (Scene 4); "sich entleiben" (Scene 13); "leichenbestatterhut", "erdbestattung", "bestattungsverein", "eingraben" (x2) (Scene 14) build up a word field relating to death. This conveys the speakers' preoccupation with dying and the rituals surrounding it.

These word fields, which feature not only in der analfabet but also in some of Bayer's other dramatic texts, provide the impulse for more detailed thematic explorations and the word fields of violence and cannibalism receive closer examination in Chapter 5. However, their domination of the lexis of der analfabet tells its own story. The vocabulary of the text reveals speakers who are emotionally motivated, who seem incapable of acting as agents since they lack conscious control over their own bodies, and who are obsessed with cannibalism and death.

While the instances of collocation indicated above lend a certain unity to the text of der analfabet, Bayer's distortion of the syntagmatic relationships (words which occur together in a certain context e.g. A dog barks) between words has the opposite effect in examples of what Fowler would term "defamiliarization", to which he opposes the term "habitualization". Fowler defines habitualization by explaining that "meanings become firmly established in the minds of members of a society in so far as they are coded in conventional, often used and familiar forms of expression". He goes on to explain that "various . . . linguistic practices can break this conventional coding and promote defamiliarization" (8). To achieve defamiliarization linguistically involves

breaking the tie between a linguistic sign and its concept, something which calls into question the validity of conventional linguistic codes (40-42). By distorting the syntagmatic relationships between words Bayer achieves just this, as, for example, in Scene 1 lamps are torn limb from limb and a shark screams with all its might: "3 so lasst uns die lampen zerfleischen" (SW 150); "5 hört, ein haifisch schreit aus leibeskräften" (SW 152).

In Scene 3 "fressen", a verb normally associated with animals, is given both "frauen" and "männer" as its subjects. Humans are given animal characteristics and animals are given human ones (e.g. the Lion of Belfort's desire to become a "stadtschüler" in Scene 11). Death and mourning are treated rather differently than one would normally expect, as these quotes from Scene 4 illustrate:

> 5 die trauer scheint überall in mode zu sein;
> ein wahres fest für alle die da leiden wollen
>
> matrose (hell, nach oben) er hat sich aufgehängt
> 5 (freudig) alle achtung, er hat sich aufgehängt (SW 154)

The combination of words like "trauer" and "in mode" is unusual and perhaps disturbing for the reader, as is the idea of mourning as a festive occasion ("fest"). This, along with the levity with which a suicide is treated by the "matrose" and 5 (one announces it brightly, while the other repeats the announcement joyfully), completely overturns the reader's expectations and assumptions when dealing with death. Bayer's description of price lists as "rachsüchtig" in Scene 15 also breaks the conventional linguistic code.

What Fowler terms "defamiliarization" is the "abstand" of Bayer's "beilage", the "making strange" of the conventional and of that which is perceived as normal. With such defamiliarizing techniques Bayer succeeds in calling into question conventional

linguistic codes and in making the reader reflect on their constructedness and artificiality and their influence on how we see reality.

2.4.3 Deixis

The use of deixis is also a way of characterising the mind-style or world-view of a text. It is concerned with any references to "the orientation of the content of a text in relation to time, place and personal participants" (Fowler 57). Deictic words include adverbs such as "there" and "now" and demonstrative and possessive pronouns like "our", "their", "this", "that" etc.. In der analfabet the deictic word which appears most often is "jetzt". It occurs eleven times in total and five times in Scene 1 alone. Thus, right from the start, the emphasis of the text is on the here and now. Other time markers include "heute abend" (Scenes 4 and 17), "diesen morgen" (Scene 4) and "heute" (Scenes 12 and 14), all of which are directly linked to the present, and "morgen" (the sentence "morgen ist alles vorbei" appears four times in all, twice in Scene 4 and two more times in Scene 17), which refers to the immediate future. The predominance of such deictic adverbs and of the present tense indicates that the figures of der analfabet are primarily concerned with now and with what will happen immediately after the present time. The repetition of "morgen ist alles vorbei" and the figures' preoccupation with death gives the text a sense of immediate danger and impending doom. The figures rarely use the past tense or refer to the past. They also seem unable to think very far into the future. They seem locked into the present time, incapable of reflecting on or learning from the past (something which may be positive

or negative) or determining the future. The question of time and the time-frame of der analfabet is considered in more depth later in this chapter.

The possessive pronoun "unser" is used only in relation to "sitten und gebräuche" (Scene 3, in the context of women eating dead women and men eating dead men) and "erdbestattung" (Scene 14). Since these are important elements of a cultural nature, it is clear that cannibalism and the rituals of burial bind the figures together in a group with definite customs and traditions. It is significant that it is cannibalism and death that are the dominant uniting factors for the figures of der analfabet.

Other points worthy of mention in the context of deixis include the use of "hierzulande" in Scene 10 by the figure referred to as 2. The reader automatically wonders where this country is. Could it be Bayer's Austria? However, there is no evidence in the text to substantiate this. The only indicators of where the figures might be situated in geographical terms include references to "die alpenvölker" and "die schweizer" in Scene 13 and to "die provence" in Scene 15. However, apart from situating the figures on the planet earth, a specific location is not given. Another interesting point is that, although the figures appear fixed in the present time and the reader is under the impression that time is not really passing, some references to the weather indicate changing seasons. In Scene 12 the figures refer to the ice and snow outside, while in Scene 14 it is "schrecklich heiss" and in Scene 15 the Lion of Belfort and 5 are dressed in sou'westers.

Thus the deixis of the text locates the figures firmly in the present, yet refers to the passing of time, does not provide a definite location for the events and unites the

figures through cannibalism and death. The world-view presented is a somewhat confusing and sinister one.

2.4.4 Context

The next area I wish to examine is context. Fowler distinguishes between three different types: "context of utterance", "context of reference" and "context of culture" (86). The context of utterance of a text is "the situation within which the discourse is conducted . . . the physical surroundings; the location of the participants *vis-à-vis* one another" (Fowler 86). Fowler points out that "settings and participants come to be recognised as stereotypes. The places where discourse occurs are perceived not as individual sites but as instances of institutions or routine settings like 'church', 'classroom', 'sitting-room', 'TV studio', etc." and that "people . . . communicate not just as individuals but in accordance with ascribed roles and statuses deriving from their functions within social structure: 'clergyman', 'teacher', 'child', 'salesman', 'boss', and so on" (Fowler 88). Such stereotyping is the consequence of cultural categorisation, an essential device for simplifying and making recognisable the material and social world, but which results in cultural conventions that sort out the objects and activities of societies into fixed categories with their distinct significances.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter in my initial description of the text, for the most part der analfabet lacks any context of utterance. In the majority of scenes there is no information given which would help the reader to construct a context. This is presumably deliberate on Bayer's part, as it prevents identification with a stereotyped, routine setting and automatic categorisation of the situation to facilitate understanding

and interpretation. (Bayer promotes "abstand" in his "beilage" to the text.) Without an obvious context of utterance, one is left with a series of isolated utterances by speakers who, for the most part, also lack a name or context that would assign them a social function.

In the few cases when Bayer does indicate a definite context of utterance by identifying a specific location or by assigning roles to his figures, it seems that he does so with the sole purpose of confusing and irritating the reader. In Scene 9 the "baumschulgärtner" of whom the other figures have spoken in preceding scenes appears. Bayer specifies a particular set for this scene: "das bühnenbild dieser szene ist ein bestimmtes" (SW 158). This set is one of "ödes felseneiland" (SW 158), which conjures up a picture of a bleak, barren, rocky isle - all in all, not where one would expect to meet a gardener. It is as if Bayer places him in such a setting to frustrate readers' expectations and deny them a comprehensible context.

Bayer also demands a specific set for Scene 11, this time a classroom arranged in the shape of an amphitheatre. Into this setting he places the Lion of Belfort. The classroom, the domain of human knowledge and instruction, is likened to an amphitheatre, in ancient Rome a place of violent conflict, and is invaded by a lion who wishes to become "ein stadtschüler", but is teased by the other figures and told to go off to the circus. Here a familiar context of utterance is made strange and unfamiliar. It is a successful attempt by Bayer to deautomatise the reader's approach when reading the text.

For Scene 15, the scene in which 5 appears "als OPFER", tied up and threatened by the Lion of Belfort, Bayer in his stage directions proposes various possible locations:

"in einem schlafzimmer? in einem badezimmer? auf einer kommandobrücke? in einem aquarium, vor einem aquarium?" (SW 162). He seems to be suggesting that any of the above settings would be suitable for the scene. This refusal to fix on one location withdraws the possibility of automatic assumptions based on context.

The end of the text, which is neither included in Scene 17 nor considered a scene in itself (it is not numbered Scene 18), is given a definite context, namely that of the theatre. But again this is not straightforward. The stage, normally the preserve of the actors, is invaded by an enthusiastic spectator, and, instead of basking in his appreciation, the actors of the previous scene, the captain and sailor 1 or 2, knock him down. Again the reader's expectations, if, at this stage any remain, are not fulfilled but frustrated.

As stated above, some figures of der analfabet bear numbers rather than names. However, the other figures are given specific functions by Bayer. They are identified as "matrose 1" and "matrose 2", "capitän", "baumschulgärtner", "(falscher) analfabet" and "lion von belfort" and so there is a certain expectation of what such figures should be like - for example that the sailors and captain should patrol the seas and perhaps even engage in naval battles. Although there are occasional references to military or naval life (e.g. "stramm stehen", "exaktes unisono", "seemann" in Scene 1; "steuerruder" in Scene 4; "matrosenanzug", "schärpe", "offizierspatent mit siegeln", "gehänge mit degen" in Scene 14; "seemannshut", "kommandobrücke" in Scene 15; "studium der marine", "ozeane" in Scene 16), these are, more often than not, incidental, and these figures are not engaged in seafaring. Likewise, our expectations of the "baumschulgärtner" are not fulfilled - there is no talk of gardening in the text

and, as already mentioned, the "baumschulgärtner" appears on a barren, rocky island. Thus, it seems that when Bayer provides a context of utterance, an opportunity to recognise a familiar situation or character role, he does so only to mislead and confuse.

The context of reference of a text is, according to Fowler, its topic or subject matter (89). As became clear in my analysis of the vocabulary of der analfabet, its topics include violence, cannibalism, death and the "analfabet". Fowler points out the importance of the relationship between the text's context of reference and its context of culture, which consists of "the whole network of social and economic conventions and institutions constituting the culture at large" (88). Although Bayer does not provide a definite context of culture, readers tend to automatically assume one similar to their own since there is no evidence to suggest that the text is set in another world. According to Fowler, "defamiliarization occurs when the context of reference introduces elements which deviate in any way from the expected cultural context" (89). Instances of defamiliarization of this kind can be identified in der analfabet.

In Scene 13 the figures talk about "die alpenvölker", and the fact that they carry alpenstocks is mentioned many times (context of reference). However, defamiliarization occurs when 2 states that the alpine people take their own lives with these alpenstocks, something which clashes with the expected cultural context (or at least the typical tourist image of it) of the "alpenvölker" happily going about their business in the Alps. A similar clash occurs when cannibalism is discussed in terms of the "sitten und gebräuche" of a seemingly "civilised" society. Also defamiliarizing is the fact that a lion talks and even wants to be educated and the "analfabet", an illiterate, should behave wolfishly and be feared by all. These clashes between context

of reference and context of culture highlight the familiar and yet unfamiliar aspects of the world of der analfabet, which is a possible world, partially understandable on the basis of our own world, but not actually experienced by the reader. Karlheinz Braun draws a similar conclusion, based on his reading of der analfabet: "So schafft der Autor, ohne die erfahrene Wirklichkeit zu kopieren, aesthetische Gebilde, für die es nichts Vergleichbares in der natürlichen und gesellschaftlichen Welt gibt. In seinem Kopftheater entsteht eine neue Wirklichkeit mit dem Material der Alltagswirklichkeit, jedoch ihrer normativen Logik entzogen" (19).

I have repeatedly referred to the disorienting, confusing, defamiliarizing and unconnected nature of der analfabet. I now proceed with an examination of the structure of the text to ascertain how cohesive it is, in order to identify specific linguistic devices with which cohesion is achieved.

2.4.5 Cohesion

The passage I have chosen for the purpose of this analysis is Scene 1 of the text (SW 150-152), which I will examine in detail. I will, however, also refer to the rest of the text where relevant. I have used Fowler's criteria for the construction of texts. He sees cohesion as being fundamental to the organisation of texts and explains that it is founded on a very simple principle: ". . . each sentence after the first is linked to the content of one or more preceding sentences by at least one tie" (61). He goes on to identify five kinds of cohesive relationship linking sentences: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

There are several examples of reference - "a word in a subsequent sentence, usually a pronoun . . . or a demonstrative . . . refers to some entity or action that has been

designated by another term in a preceding sentence" (Fowler 62) - in Scene 1 of the text. For example: "3 wir gehen zum baumschulgärtner. er hat seine letzten ersparnisse verbraucht" (SW 150). Here, the personal pronoun "er" and the possessive pronoun "seine" both refer back to "baumschulgärtner" mentioned in the previous sentence.

alle ausser 3 man muss den kopf zwischen die beine binden und alle lampen auslöschen.
2 das darf nicht sein. (SW 150)

In this example, the demonstrative pronoun "das" refers back to the whole preceding sentence.

5 ein zahn im schuh ist der name des analfabeten
1 schäm dich. das sollst du nicht sagen (SW 150)

Here again, "das" refers back to a complete sentence. The above are typical examples of the use of reference to avoid needless repetition and create a cohesive text. However, there are other examples where reference is used with quite a different effect.

When 5 and 1 together give the command "umarmt euch" (SW 151) it is unclear to whom the "euch" refers.

5 ich bin verloren
2 ich will, dass du zum baumschulgärtner mitgehst
weine nicht.
4 (drängt sich vor, brüllt) hilfe!
2 er wird ewig hinken, er hinkt
1 ich bin dieser unglückliche (SW 151)

In this example, one is unsure who "er" is. Is 2 referring to 5, the gardener or 4? The use of "dieser" in 1's sentence is also unclear. Why does 1 use the demonstrative here? Does it imply that he is the unhappy one who will always limp? This is not made clear. In Scene 2 and again in Scene 4 "sie" (plural) is used by the figures 2 and 5 respectively to refer to a group of people that they obviously consider as separate and

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different from themselves: "2 sie kommen und wollen dich holen" (SW 152); "5 . . . ja lügen können sie alle" (SW 154). Although it seems to be obvious to the figures themselves to whom "sie" refers, the reader remains ignorant and is left with the impression that it alludes to some sort of mysterious and deceitful enemy force which is waiting to pounce.

Several unclear references hinge on the use of the pronoun "er". In Scenes 4, 5, 14 and 17 "er" is used several times in relation to someone who has hung himself and is to be buried. In Scene 4 the reader is led to believe, although without complete certainty, that "er" refers to the captain:

matrose heute abend wird er begraben
5 der capitän
matrose (schwerhörig, blick nach vorn, neigt kopf seitlich, hand ans ohr) wer?
5 nimm dirs nicht so zu herzen
matrose (hell, nach oben) er hat sich aufgehängt
5 (freudig) alle achtung, er hat sich aufgehängt
(SW 154)

The reader presumes that the captain is the "er" referred to above, despite the fact that the sailor, who seems to know the details of the man's death, asks 5 who has died. One again makes this assumption in Scene 5, which consists of only one line:

matrose 2 (über die bühne spazierend, verbindlich)
er wird sich schon nicht aufhängen (SW 155)

However, in Scenes 14 and 17 this no longer seems possible, as the captain is one of the figures who appears in these scenes. In Scene 14 when "matrose 2" says: "du gräbst ihn ein" (SW 162), nobody knows who exactly is meant - not the reader, nor the captain, to whom this is said, nor, for that matter, the sailor who says it, as is seen in the rest of the passage:

capitän (als hofrat mit hörrohr)
wie bitte?
matrose 2 (zu capitän aber ohne seinen standort zu verlassen,

vorgebeugt, wie über einen fluss rufend)
eingraben!
capitän selbstverständlich
matrose 2 glauben sie?
capitän von wem sprichst du eigentlich?
matrose 2 ich weiss nicht, es ist schrecklich heiss heute
(SW 162)

The passage in Scene 4 quoted above is repeated in Scene 17, but this time with the captain saying the sailor's lines and the sailor saying those lines said by 5 in Scene 4. Again the reader is at a loss as to who "er" is. It surely cannot be the captain, since he is present and therefore not dead. Were we then wrong to assume it was he in Scene 4? If the captain was not the person who committed suicide then who was it? The reader is baffled and left with the feeling that he/she has somehow missed out on something while reading the text. The fact that one cannot even be sure who is dead and who is alive is very unsettling and shakes the foundations of the system with which one normally deals with the world. Thus, in der analfabet Bayer uses the accepted system of pronouns for reference but, instead of having its usual cohesive effect, this system has a destabilising effect because the rules of the system (i.e. that the person/thing referred to is evident from another part of the text) are not always adhered to. The result is confusion, disorder and a certain sense of anarchy, all of which, along with the rule-breaking that gives rise to them, are reminiscent of the anarchy and rule-breaking promoted by Dadaist writers as outlined in Chapter 1.

I have been unable to find in the text an example of substitution - "a word in the second sentence refers not to exactly the same entity as does the related word in the first, but some other entity to which the same term would be applicable. Halliday and Hasan's example: 'Would you like this teapot? - No, I want a square one.'" (Fowler 62).

Examples of ellipsis - "A part of a subsequent sentence which would repeat a phrase or idea explicitly stated in a preceding sentence is omitted, making the second sentence depend for its completeness on the first." (Fowler 63) - can be found in the text. (In these examples I have placed empty square brackets at the points of ellipsis):

5 + 1	umarmt euch
2	darf ich [ ]?
4 + 1	nein. nicht jetzt (SW 151)
5	ein zahn im schuh ist der name des analfabeten
1	schäm dich. das sollst du nicht sagen
5 (überzeugt)	ich *weiss* es!
	(entfernt sich, bleibt aber auf der bühne sichtbar)
4 (traurig)	[ ] nicht einmal blumen [ ]
5 (singt)	wer ein glas an den mund setzt, büsst seine lippenhaut ein (SW 150-151)

In the first example, the words omitted from 2's sentence are presumably "dich umarmen". This information is supplied by the previous sentence, thus making the second sentence dependent on the first for its completeness. In the second example, it is clear that the phrase "nicht einmal blumen" needs something more to complete its meaning. Normally this would be explicitly stated in a preceding sentence. Here, however, the preceding sentences fail to supply the missing information needed to complete the meaning of the phrase and 4's utterance seems totally unrelated to the text surrounding it. The result is a gap which the reader cannot fill.

Similar gaps are created in Scenes 2, 3 and 4 and are indicated in the examples below by empty square brackets:

4	fein, jetzt sehe ich, dass du mich wieder liebst
2	so küsse mir die hand
4	ich werde mich hüten [das zu tun]
2	dann will ich dir noch einmal verzeihen
4	[ ] suppe mit fleisch
2	wenn ich aber an dein fleischherz denke
4	zumal gebraten
2	was ist das fleisch gegen die liebe
4	eben deswegen (SW 152-153)

1 ich lebe wieder auf
2 das ist allerdings ein vorrecht
1 der capitän wird doch kein narr sein?
2 (betont) [ ] vom ganzen herzen
1 fressen? man frisst doch nur gemeine matrosen
(SW 153)

5 die trauer scheint überall in mode zu sein;
ein wahres fest für alle die da leiden wollen
matrose o ja!
5 [ ] grüss gott wird auch gefressen? [ ]

matrose (wendet sich matrosen zu)
ich komme um dich zum begräbnis einzuladen
(SW 154)

It is clear that the above examples go far beyond the ellipsis outlined by Fowler. In each case, the gap which occurs is not anticipated in a preceding sentence. In the first example, "suppe mit fleisch" is linked to the succeeding part of the text through "fleischherz" but it still stands apart from the main body of the text. The same is true of the other examples. All three examples introduce new elements that have not been anticipated. The result is the creation of islands in the text which are confusing, at least initially.

I consider it important to have a closer look at the term "gap". While in linguistics it refers to "a missing unit or value in the system, be it phonetic, lexical, or semantic; an absence possible according to the rules of the language" (as in Fowler's example), "in literary theory and in reception theory, gaps or blanks arise in a discussion of the informational content, and the reading process" (Wales 201). The examples quoted above from der analfabet are thus instances of gaps in informational content. While such gaps activate readers and demand that they work harder, more often than not readers, by drawing on their common and cultural knowledge or the context of the situation, can deduce or infer what is unspoken or unwritten and so fill these gaps for

themselves to make the text coherent (Wales 201, 248). Since, as has been illustrated, Bayer mostly denies his readers any context in der analfabet, and since the world of the text seems in many ways dissimilar to their own, readers of the text lack the frames of reference necessary to supply the missing information and so these passages, at least at first sight, are simply incoherent and very frustrating. When read more closely and examined together, however, these sections of text are joined by a common thread - namely eating and its more sinister correlate cannibalism. The way in which this theme involuntarily and unconsciously surfaces in the speakers' conversations highlights their obsession with it. This gapping, therefore, can draw the more determined reader's attention to one of the important themes of der analfabet.

There seems to be nothing unusual about Bayer's use of conjunctions in this text. The additive conjunction "und" is the one most often used (twenty-four times in total), the conditional conjunction "wenn" is used twenty times and "dass" ten times. Six of the "dass"-clauses introduce object clauses and four indirect speech.[49] Interestingly, there are only nine final conjunctions or conjunctival adverbs, expressing the purpose of an action/event (e.g. "damit", "um . . . zu", "dazu"). No causal conjunction, denoting a logical conclusion is used (e.g. "denn") and only one conjunction indicating the cause of an event/state appears (e.g. "da", "weil"). It is "weil" that is used in Scene 16. One single consecutive conjunction gives the consequence of an action/event (e.g. "so . . . dass", used in a stage direction in Scene 9).

[49] The object clauses introduced with "dass" are as follows: "du siehst an meinem beispiel, dass meine weisheit unergründlich ist"; "ich will, dass du zum baumschulgärtner mitgehst" (SW 151); "jetzt sehe ich, dass du mich wieder liebst" (SW 152); "wir verzeihen dir, dass du es nie gewesen bist" (SW 159); "du meinst wohl, dass die schweizer das alphorn in ihrem wappen führen" (SW 161); "hast du bedacht, dass wir den analfabeten vergessen haben?" (SW 165). The instances of indirect speech introduced by "dass"-clauses are: ". . . erzählt ihm, dass ich krepiert sei" (SW 154); "ich werde allen erzählen, dass du schnarchst" (SW 163); "gehst du so weit, zu behaupten, dass alle capitäne den matrosen gefährlich werden?" (SW 165); ". . . erzählt mir, dass er gestorben sei" (SW 166).

The speakers' discourse is therefore linked mostly additively, almost in list form, through extensive use of the conjunction "und", and not in terms of time, cause, purpose or consequence. This shows the speakers' inability to relate past, present and future actions, to determine why actions happen or how one action affects another, and to perform actions with a particular aim or purpose in mind. This ties in with the indications of transitivity patterns mentioned earlier that these speakers are incapable of effective action and that they are chiefly presenters of text.

Lexical cohesion, consisting of lexical reiteration and collocation, also contributes to textual cohesion. Lexical reiteration involves the repetition of words and occurs many times in der analfabet. Among the words most repeated in the text are "analfabet", "begraben", "sich aufhängen", "fleisch" and "fressen". This lexical reiteration very much complements the collocational word fields of death, cannibalism and the analphabet (and its associated field of literacy and knowledge). Indeed, this lexical reiteration and the text's word fields are what lends the text most of its cohesion by identifying thematic areas that the reader can focus on and use to tentatively interpret the text.

There are scenes and sentences, however, that are completely unconnected to the rest of the text. Scene 6, during which "matrose 1" and "matrose 2" mention "nachtschwalben", "findelkinder" and "betrunkene kinder" (SW 155-156) and the "(falscher) analfabet" makes his only appearance is one, as is Scene 7 where sailor 1 and sailor 2 bemoan the dark and suggest singing a duet, but never do (SW 156-157). Sentences which are not linked to surrounding sentences, or even to any of the text's word fields include the underlined among the following which I have selected from various scenes in the play:

3 wir gehen zum baumschulgärtner. er hat seine letzten ersparnisse verbraucht. jetzt merkt auf
alle ausser 3 man muss den kopf zwischen die beine binden und alle lampen auslöschen
2 das darf nicht sein.
1 (laut rhythmisch akzentuiert und einfallend)
EIN MUND IST IN KURZER ZEIT MIT EIS BEDECKT.
3 so lasst uns die lampen zerfleischen
4 + 5 es ist wahr (Scene 1, SW 150)

baumschulgärtner ich seufze und schweige. diese leidenschaft verschloss ich in meiner brust,
doch war es vergebens. bravo, bravo
(vor ihm liegt regungslos ausgestreckt, als ob er tot wäre, der lion von belfort)
1 er ist noch schöner geworden
baumschulgärtner er ist gewachsen und gut gewachsen
1 (springt auf) ich will meine keuschheit aus patriotismus opfern
(Scene 9, SW 158)

der löwe von belfort (beiläufig)
deine kniescheiben sind zerschlagen
5 (die arme sind nicht gebunden. er zieht an den krempen seines hutes. die ähnlichkeit mit einem babyhütchen ist dadurch unvermeidlich. er erinnert an eine 40jährige gutgehendepraxisarztensgattinvoropernballig, er schmollt, er sprüht gift)
ich werde allen erzählen, dass du schnarchst
der löwe von belfort keine schlechte idee, ich werde dich mit frischen salatblättern garnieren
5 (ein éclat) *ich habe röteln*
der löwe von belfort (schliesst ein grösseres geschäft ab)
nehmen wir unserer ersten eingebung folgend den nächsten zug in die provence
5 wenn wir dagegen den selbstkostenpreis betrachten (Scene 15, SW 162-163)

The above sentences and scenes stand out from the rest of the text and create gaps in it which the reader cannot fill. It is as if these sentences belong to other texts or other conversations and accidentally appear in the text of der analfabet. However, their presence is far from accidental. While leaving the reader perplexed, they do not have the effect of making the text totally incomprehensible. The impression that one at times

gets of snippets of different conversations strung together is evidence of Bayer's "montagetheater" referred to earlier and discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter, and of his principle of reduction and his anti-logic, anti-explanation stance as outlined in the "beilage".

In conclusion, therefore, der analfabet can certainly not be categorised as a highly cohesive text, but as a rather fragmented one. Bayer's use of reference and gapping is destabilising and confusing. He uses the accepted system of pronouns for reference without adhering to its rules and creates gaps in informational content, without providing the reader with the context or frame of reference necessary to fill them. The result is incoherence in many parts of the text. The predominance of the additive conjunction "und" means that the text is not connected in terms of cause, purpose or consequence. Although the text is not highly connected, there is, however, some lexical cohesion, chiefly due to the repetition of certain words and the emergence of word fields which allow the reader to gain some thematic footholds in the text.

Having completed a linguistic analysis of der analfabet, it seems useful to summarise my findings in this area. An examination of the transitivity system, vocabulary and deixis of the text in an attempt to discover its mind-style or world view yielded the following results. The speakers of the text are presented for the most part as passive experiencers, lacking control over their environment: primarily presenters of text rather than fully formed characters who, as active agents, are capable of acting purposefully and with consequences, and of driving the plot of a traditional play. They are motivated by emotion and not thought. There is a sense of urgency about their concentration on the present and immediate future. An obsession with violence,

cannibalism and the "analfabet" presides over their existence. Most of the time Bayer provides no context for their verbal exchanges so that they are suspended in an unidentifiable space for which readers have no correspondent in their range of stereotypical contexts. The discourse of the figures is fragmentary, but deliberately so, and yet cohesive enough to provide some guidelines or pointers for the reader.

At this point in my linguistic approach to reading der analfabet, it seems timely to return to its starting point, the "beilage für alle feinde des analfabetismus", in order to assess its relationship to the main body of the text, and consider why Bayer deemed it necessary to include it in der analfabet.

2.5 Evaluation of the "beilage"

The "beilage für alle feinde des analfabetismus" may be seen as a kind of "instructions for use" not only for the scenes that follow it and make up the text of der analfabet, but also for other Bayer texts. It is by no means a text in which Bayer abandons his programme of defamiliarization. As was evident from my treatment of it earlier in this chapter, like the main text of der analfabet, the "beilage" is also disjointed and is not always coherent. My reading of it therefore often consisted in attempts to fill the gaps left by this incoherence. However, the "beilage" is, in general, more accessible than the rest of der analfabet and the use of the "ich" form makes clear that Bayer wishes to address readers of the text directly in order to prepare them for their confrontation with it. In the "beilage" he outlines the principles according to which his texts are constructed, and attempts to instruct on how one can best approach them and what one can or cannot expect from them. These principles of construction include: change/variation; understanding/explanation; distance; the absurd and its truth; fun/humour and reduction. I will now demonstrate how these principles are applied to the structure of the text and why it is important to be aware of them when reading Bayer.

The principle of change is the first to be introduced with the line: "elf figuren wechseln ihre standorte" (SW 148) and is repeatedly referred to in the following phrases : "u.a. verwendete variationen des standortes", "die veränderungen des charakters", ". . . habe ich das geschlecht als variablen faktor eingeführt" (SW 148) and ". . . dass sich veränderungen oft, sogar meist langsamer vollziehen" (SW 149). Bayer also lists the "standorte" or positions that these eleven figures will change as "personen", "charakter", "geschlecht", "zeit" and "ort" (SW 148).

I have already noted that the figures seem to have no constant identity and that they are substituted for one another in various scenes of the text, leading one to believe that they are almost interchangeable. In Scene 14, Bayer also illustrates how one person can change and adopt many different roles. In that scene the captain takes on the roles of "marktschreier", "priester", "vertreter eines bestattungvereins" and "hofrat mit hörrohr" (SW 161-162). The role of the Lion of Belfort has also been shown to vary greatly from scene to scene. He goes from being the object of the others' admiration in Scenes 8 and 9 to the object of their scorn and ridicule in Scene 11, while he himself assumes, in Scene 15, the role of tormentor. He is an example of what Bayer terms "die veränderungen des charakters oder auch der ganzen person" (SW 148).

Gender, Bayer tells us, is another "standort" that is subject to change and is a variable factor in the text. Although by the end of the text all of the eleven figures except 3 and "matrose 1" have been designated as being male by personal or possessive pronouns, in keeping with his desire outlined in the "beilage" to prevent emotional identification on the part of the reader, Bayer explodes the whole concept of the possibility of a single stable gender with the following two sentences in particular: " matrose er war meine frau" (SW 155); "capitän dieser herr ist meine braut" (SW 166).

Since "zeit" also appears in the list of positions which the figures will change, it can also be expected to vary. In my analysis of the deixis of the text I highlighted the speakers' preoccupation with the present and the immediate future, evident from their extensive use of the deictic word "jetzt" and the present tense. However, there are indicators in the text that suggest the passing of time, although the reader may not initially be aware of this. These indicators do not appear in the stage directions, where one does not find phrases such as, for example, "one hour later", "the next day", "two

months later" and so on. Neither are there direct references in the text to times, days, dates, months or years. Despite the speakers' repetition of "morgen ist alles vorbei", tomorrow never seems to come, and the analphabet, who is frequently referred to during the text and whose arrival the reader constantly awaits, never appears. Yet, the time frame of the play is not that of the reader. In Scene 1 it appears to be daytime as 2 refers to "ein verfluchter tag" (SW 152). Scene 4 seems to take place in the afternoon since "heute abend" (SW 154) is referred to in the future and "diesen morgen" (SW 155) in the past. In Scene 6 it is again morning time as the "(falscher) analfabet" has got up before midday, which is unusually early for him. It is unclear, however, if this is the morning of the following day or some other morning. "matrose 1" and "matrose 2" complain about the dark in Scene 7, so presumably it is night-time in this scene.

Time also seems to progress on a larger scale, from season to season. In Scene 6 it is sunny, as sailor 1 has to put his hand over his eyes to shield them from the sun - "matrose 1 (hand über den augen, sonnenschützend, fernblickend)" (SW 155). While in Scene 12 sailor 1 and sailor 2 talk of ice and snow, in Scene 14 it is, according to "matrose 2" "schrecklich heiss" (SW 162) and in Scene 15 the stage directions suggest that it is pouring with rain. These changes in the weather, if not necessarily in the season, also confirm the passing of time.

Time can also be calculated according to the progression of events. For example, in the first and second scenes 1 and 2 talk of going to the "baumschulgärtner" and, when he appears in Scene 9, it seems that they have reached their destination, indicating progression of time and plot. However, the same cannot be said of the suicide and burial (of presumably the captain) referred to in Scene 4. In that scene the "matrose" says that he (the captain?) will be buried "heute abend" (SW 154). However, the captain himself, whom we presume to be dead, appears as an undertaker in Scene 14

and the burial never seems to take place. If a figure presumed dead can appear to organise what seems to be his own funeral, this confirms that the time continuum of the play is not a forward-moving, linear one. Another example of the time sequence being disrupted is Scene 5, in which "matrose 2" says that he ("er") will not hang himself, using the future tense, when Scene 4 has already referred to this suicide. It is clear that time in der analfabet is not divided up into orderly sections and that it does not progress in what is perceived to be the normal way. The result seems to be that time, although frequently referred to, provides no context, no frame of reference, no order and offers another example of Bayer's radical rule-breaking.

As already outlined in my discussion of deixis and context, the speakers' location in place is, for the most part, unknown, except for certain scenes discussed above where a specific place is identified. In these scenes, the speakers move from a barren, rocky isle to a classroom, to one of various possible locations such as a bedroom, bathroom, commando bridge or an aquarium in Scene 15, with no apparent physical movement, or at least none that is specified, between these places. The connections between these places do not exist for the reader and they seem to be linked only through being inhabited by the same speakers. There is in the speakers' incidental references to place also a subtle juxtaposition of sea (represented by the words "möven", "ozeane", "wasser", "capitän", "matrose") and land (represented by the words "gras", "strasse", "klassenzimmer", "felseneiland", "baumschulgärtner"), with the border between them referred to in Scene 4 by the word "ufer". Bayer, therefore makes "ort" another variation of "standort".

As promised by Bayer in the "beilage", the principle of change proves to be an intrinsic part of the structure of der analfabet, with the figures indeed changing the "standorte" of "personen", "charakter", "geschlecht", "zeit" and "ort" (SW 148). The

principle of change perhaps also explains the many gaps in the text, mentioned earlier, which the reader, unable to keep up with the changes outlined above, cannot fill.

Another principle of construction highlighted in the "beilage" is reduction. Bayer warns, perhaps with a degree of irony, that the changes ("veränderungen") outlined have been concentrated and that the number of possible "standpunkte" has been reduced to a minimum so that the resulting modest number of layers and levels should make understanding, should understanding arise, easier. These references to reduction and concentration explain many of the difficulties with regard to the text of der analfabet and a familiarisation with this principle of reduction is essential for reading the text. Such concentration explains, for example, the change in the other speakers' attitude to the Lion of Belfort. The reader who may have wondered why, having been admired by the others in Scenes 8 and 9, the Lion is ridiculed by them in Scene 11, should realise on consulting the "beilage" that the text is merely a concentrated summary of events, whose causal links have been omitted, if, indeed, they ever existed, so as not to weary the reader's attention. This reduction also accounts for the absence of a definite storyline and for the apparent leaps in time and place already discussed. But does such reduction and concentration of the possible layers and levels succeed in making understanding easier, as Bayer claims it should? From the point of view that the text consists of a reduced number of possible layers and levels, it must; for if confronted with any more in such a format, the reader would surely flounder. However, the reduction and concentration of events as a style of writing is something which readers, especially if unaware of it as a deliberate device, say, for example, if they have not read or understood the "beilage", find initially confusing and irritating. They must "forget" their usual expectations of a text and learn to process it in a new

way. This is, perhaps, Bayer's aim: to re-educate readers by overturning their normal text-processing patterns.

In the "beilage" Bayer points out that he wishes the text to be understood "unter dem aspekt . . . , dass der mensch komisch ist" and he also makes the following statement about it: "dieses stück ist sehr lustig" (SW 149). He is, therefore, at pains to point out the humour in the play. So, *is* the play funny? In Scene 3 the word "spass" appears twice, but in the context of death or cannibalism:

1 fressen? man frisst doch nur gemeine matrosen
2 (höhnisch) ein spass vorm tod?
1 hör auf mit solchen spässen . . . (SW 153)

In Scene 14 it is perhaps humorous that the captain seems to be arranging what the reader regards as his own funeral. In Scene 15 the description of 5 is comical: "5 (die arme sind nicht gebunden. er zieht an den krempen seines hutes. die ähnlichkeit mit einem babyhütchen ist dadurch unvermeidlich. er erinnert an eine 40jährige gutgehendepraxisarztensgattin voropernballig, er schmollt, er sprüht gift.)" (SW 162-163). However, this is in the somewhat sinister context of the Lion threatening to eat him. Taking these few examples, the humour of the text is, if anything, a black humour, associated as it is with death and cannibalism. Again one wonders if this is irony on Bayer's part and if his use of the word "lustig" adheres to the accepted code of meanings.

Bayer calls upon the reader's delight in the beauty of the absurd and its truth. In doing this in the "beilage", he seems to be hinting that the text may be absurd, but that it contains truth. In my examination of cohesion in the text I have already identified some scenes and sentences which, in the tradition of the absurd, seem totally

unconnected to the rest of the text. It is Bayer's instruction to delight in this absurdity and to consider its truth.

Distance or "abstand" and the possibility/impossibility of understanding/explanation are other principles according to which der analfabet is constructed. This has already been referred to in this chapter when considering defamiliarization. Bayer states that he wishes to avoid sentimentality and emotional identification and so does not use a mixture of genders among his figures in order to ensure emotional distance. I have already argued that by denying the reader reliable explanations and understanding (all explanations are "mangelhaft" and understanding is "allfällig" (SW 148-149)) Bayer ensures that this distance is also a rational one. Bayer's "abstand" thus, in effect, requires a suspension of the conventional methods of text processing. Readers should not expect meaning, explanations and understanding and should not feel entitled to them. The desire to explain and understand must initially give way to the event of the text, which the reader is forced to engage with. It has been shown that the distance or "abstand" desired by Bayer in his "beilage" is achieved and maintained throughout the text by various means, including the numbering of some speakers, the absence of a recognisable plot, the "veränderungen" of character, gender, time and place already discussed and through linguistic and stylistic devices such as the use of reduction, and Bayer's particular use of reference and gapping.

My discussion and evaluation of the "beilage" to der analfabet has shown that it can be regarded as an indispensable tool, a valuable map for negotiating the paths of Konrad Bayer's texts. It is the closest thing to a manifesto that Bayer produced, in that one can deduce from it his radical, experimental approach to literature.

2.6 Review of Chapter 2

The aim of this chapter was a close textual study, using criteria from the field of text linguistics, of one of Bayer's dramatic texts. Its purpose was to identify features that would illustrate the extent to which his texts depart from conventional literary texts and also assist in reading and exploring them further. der analfabet, for the reasons outlined at the beginning of this chapter, was chosen as the text which formed the basis for this study.

My initial discussion of the "beilage" to the text identified principles according to which Bayer constructs his texts, and the evaluation of the "beilage" demonstrated these principles at work in the dramatic text itself, illustrating how a familiarity with them can help in reading der analfabet and Bayer's other dramatic texts.

The linguistic analysis of der analfabet served to highlight some of the linguistic devices used by Bayer to disrupt conventional language. It was discovered, for example, that he uses the conventional system of pronouns for reference, but that he does not always adhere to its most basic rule - that the noun replaced by the pronoun can be easily identified by the reader. It emerged that the creation of textual gaps initially disorients the reader, but also serves to focus attention on specific themes. Bayer's refusal to provide a context of utterance for his speakers, a definite setting within which the reader can place the text, was also identified as having a defamiliarizing effect. The result of such defamiliarizing devices is that readers, while able to recognise fragments of text which they can understand, cannot comprehend the

text as a whole.[50]

I mentioned in my initial summary of the text Bayer's allusion in his handwritten "regievorschläge" to the paravent as "zentrales requisit" (SW 764) and I referred in my introduction to the paravent as a useful image of Bayer's method of text production. Just as his "regievorschläge" suggest that in one scene various body parts emerge from time to time from behind the paravent - "man setzt einmal ein bein vor, hebt den kopf darüber und spricht, oder beide hände zur seite, dass sie sichtbar werden und spricht.-" (SW 764) - the way in which Bayer constructs der analfabet on a textual level ensures that the reader always sees only fragments and that the "full picture" is never revealed. In my linguistic analysis I concluded that the above linguistic techniques and others were employed by Bayer to achieve defamiliarization, the "abstand" he mentions in the "beilage". This "abstand" challenges readers' expectations of what a dramatic text should or should not be and their normal approach to reading a text.

Another principle of construction for der analfabet is not mentioned in the "beilage", but is referred to in Bayer's "regievorschläge", where he describes the text as "quasi ein montagetheater" (SW 764). This description is also useful in understanding many features of the text discussed in this chapter. My linguistic analysis, for example, identified examples of incoherence in the text, created by seemingly inexplicable informational gaps that cannot be filled and sentences completely unconnected to the rest of the text that create the impression of snippets of

[50] The following comment by Okopenko regarding his own work reveals just how radical Bayer's rejection of conventional language would have been deemed in 1950s Austria, where any sort of rule-breaking or deviation from the norm was frowned upon: "Aber mindestens ebenso wie auf sexuelle und religiöse Keimfreiheit wurde zuweilen auf grammatikalische geachtet: ich saß anderthalb Stunden beim Gründer des 'Theaters der Jugend', um die Beistrichlosigkeit eines Satzes zu retten" (9).

different conversations strung together.[51] The predominance of the additive conjunction "und", I concluded, means that the text presents not a logical world view whose pieces can be explained in relation to one another, as would be the case if causal, purpose or consecutive conjunctions abounded, but rather a series of images or impressions almost in the form of an experimental cinematic montage. In my initial discussion in Chapter 1 of the montage technique as practised by the Wiener Gruppe, its effect on the reader was noted as follows: while understanding seems possible on a semantic level, when readers try to grasp the content of the text they fail due to the unknown word and sentence combinations whose individual elements are understandable. This is precisely what the reader of der analfabet experiences. The following definition of the term montage, taken from Gero von Wilpert's Sachwörterbuch der Literatur, could equally serve as a description of the text of der analfabet:

> Begriff aus der Filmkunst: die schon im Drehbuch vorgesehene künstlerische Aneinanderfügung einzelner Bildfolgen und Szenen in räumlich und zeitlich verschiedenen Situationen, die nicht sachlich-handlungsmäßig oder gedanklich verbunden sind, durch die Assoziationsfügung einzelner konkreter Gegenstände; als Darstellungstechnik auf Roman, Lyrik und Drama übertragen für die verfremdende Zusammenfügung versch. Wirklichkeitsebenen oder Wort-, Gedanken- und Satzfragmente unterschiedlicher Herkunft . . . (438-439)

Bayer's involvement in experimental film - he worked with Ferry Radax on a few occasions - may also explain why montage remained for him, long after the Vienna Group's early collaborative works, an important method of text construction right up to his latest works. Rühm tells us: "für bayer blieb die montage eine bestimmende

[51] This ties in with Bayer's own definition of montage: "die montage: (= vorgefundene textteile werden neu geordnet . . .)" (SW 721).

technik. zu einem höhepunkt brachte er sie wohl mit seinem 'vitus bering'. aber auch 'der sechste sinn' ist in seiner formalen anlage durch diese technik bestimmt" (SW 12).

Returning to der analfabet in light of the above definition, further montage-like features can be identified. I noted in my linguistic analysis of the text that no real development of the dramatic characters takes place, and that their primary function seems to be to speak the text. Like the camera in the medium of film, their function is to present the montage, the sequence of images with which the reader is confronted. Bayer's use at the end of almost every scene of the verb "einfrieren" to indicate that the scene is now over also has cinematic associations. As pointed out in Chapter 1, this method of text construction is one which has its roots in the Dadaist and Surrealist traditions of collage - the joining together on a single surface of various pre-existing elements to create something new.[52]

When discussing der analfabet, commentators remark on its defamiliarizing effect. Braun, for example, describes it as follows: "Dieses frühe Stück Bayers . . . enthält in nuce alle späteren Versuche des Autors: der Versuch, mit Hilfe des Alfabets (also der Form) dem Analfabeten zu seinem Recht zu verhelfen, oder anders ausgedrückt, einer durchrationalisierten, sich entfremdeten Welt das entgegenzusetzen, was sich unsere Schulweisheit nicht träumen läßt" (18). Bucher comments on the way in which the text seems to resist interpretation:

> . . . *der analfabet* enfaltet eine poetische Spontaneität, die rein zu bleiben, zu werden versucht, indem sie sich auf allen Ebenen den Zwängen der Repräsentation entzieht. Dieses Sprechen entfaltet den Text, gelöst von einem leitenden Prinzip, je aus Moment und je im Hinblick auf die Totalität der Möglichkeiten, die in ihm angelegt sind.

[52] Ulrike Huber identifies another use of the montage technique by Bayer, illustrating that kasperl am elektrischen stuhl consists of parts of other dramatic texts, namely die pfandleihe, die begabten zuschauer and die boxer (16-28) and Walter Ruprechter describes this characteristic of Bayer's texts as "Intertext" (120-123). I also noted in my initial summary of der analfabet in this chapter that Scene 17 is a collage of sections of three other scenes in the text.

> Es eröffnet einen assoziativen Raum, der in fortdauernder Ambivalenz alles in der Schwebe lässt. (148)

With my linguistic analysis I have illustrated how this defamiliarization and this "assoziative[n] Raum" are achieved. In the next chapter I consider the consequences of this approach for the reader and, in particular, for the interpreter of Bayer's texts, who is confronted with an ever-changing reality.

This chapter has highlighted features of Bayer's dramatic text der analfabet, all of which point to a rejection of conventional language and methods of text production. At this stage I have not attempted an interpretation of Bayer's approach to producing his dramatic texts, nor considered the aim of his radical experimental methods. This task I leave to the remaining chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 3

3.1 Linguistic experimentation and language philosophy

In Chapter 2 I illustrated by means of a linguistic analysis of the text of der analfabet how Bayer's texts depart radically from conventional literary texts. I highlighted the linguistic devices used by Bayer to disrupt conventional language, devices which set in motion a chain of disintegration and lead to the disruption of conventional linguistic codes. The achievement of such defamiliarization, or what Bayer terms "abstand", means that the reader of der analfabet, while able to understand fragments of the text, cannot comprehend the text as a whole. In Chapter 2 I concluded that this linguistic experimentation represents a rejection of conventional language and methods of text production and is designed to challenge readers' expectations of and approach to literary texts. In this chapter, by considering the motivation behind these radical linguistic experiments, I hope to be able to begin to interpret Bayer's dramatic texts.[53]

Bayer's use or, more precisely, his abuse of language in der analfabet is a clear rejection of its conventional and logical use. This characteristic of Bayer's work as a whole was also outlined in Chapter 1, where it was identified as something which he and the other members of the Vienna Group had in common with preceding experimental literary movements such as Dadaism and Surrealism. In that chapter I also referred to Annamaria Droschl's claim that the Vienna Group's study of language

[53] The precarious situation of the critic who tries to interpret Bayer's texts will have begun to become evident as a result of Chapter 2's linguistic investigations. The position of the critic will be discussed later in this chapter.

philosophy and, in particular, the works of Wittgenstein and Mauthner, distinguishes their works from those of Dadaist writers. Strasser makes a similar observation when analysing Bayer's place in twentieth-century experimental literature: "Er [Bayer] reagiert in einer anderen Zeit auf einen späteren Zustand derselben Krise. Er befindet sich auf dem Weg, den seine experimentellen Vorgänger beschritten haben, ein Stück weiter. Und er konnte auch schon weiter fortgeschrittene Reflexionen, beispielsweise die Ludwig Wittgensteins, zur Überwindung der 'Realität' miteinbeziehen" ("Die Kunst" 59).

It is clear from statements by members of the Wiener Gruppe that the Group's preoccupation and experiments with language had a theoretical basis that led to the development of a "Sprachtheorie", or rather "Sprachtheorien", because, as will become clear in the course of this section, different Group members subscribed in later years to different theories about language. The first task of this chapter is to attempt to delineate the development of these theories with particular reference to Bayer.

3.1.1 Language philosophy and the Vienna Group

When writing of the Vienna Group's early collaborative works Rühm makes the following remark: "nicht zuletzt aus diesen 'poetischen gesellschaftsspielen' . . . entwickelte sich schliesslich eine bewusste gemeinsame auseinandersetzung mit dem material sprache überhaupt, wie sie dann achleitner, bayer, wiener und ich in sitzungen intensiv betrieben" (WG 23). Oswald Wiener, in his essay on the Vienna Group's two literary cabarets, entitled "das 'literarische cabaret' der wiener gruppe", describes the aforementioned Group members as "sprachingenieurs, sprachpragmatiker" (WG 401), a description which again points to a conscious, almost scientific preoccupation with

the workings of language. A further statement by Rühm reveals that this preoccupation was accompanied by theoretical investigations. He describes the year 1958 as follows:

> als "gruppe" wurde es das jahr der engsten zusammenarbeit. weitere gemeinschaftsarbeiten entstanden, die theoretische arbeit wurde intensiv vorangetrieben . . . theoretisch beschäftigten wir uns vorallem mit sprachwissenschaft, denkmethoden, wittgenstein, den neopositivisten, der kybernetik; am eingehendsten wiener, bei dem diese auseinandersetzung sich auch unmittelbar in seinen literarischen texten abspielt. (WG 26-27)[54]

Rühm goes on to outline what can be understood as the first stage of the Group's language theory, which relies on Wittgenstein's Tractatus logico-philosophicus for its inspiration. This first theoretical position of the Group is founded on the belief in the possibility of a functionalist reform of language. At this time the members of the Group concerned themselves with the question whether a language could be constructed that was "vollkommen funktionell" (WG 27) in that it avoided misunderstandings and could produce clarity. Following Wittgenstein's Tractatus, they believed that the boundaries of language were the same as the boundaries of the world, and that an alteration or extension of the boundaries of language, for example through new forms of expression, would mean a broader experience of the world:

> eine vollkommen funktionelle sprache (eine fiktion, wie wir bald merkten) müsste auch völlig neue, eben nur durch sie mögliche einblicke geben; denn wir gingen davon aus, dass das denken des menschen dem stand seiner sprache entspreche, daher die auseinandersetzung mit der sprache die grundlegendste auseinandersetzung mit dem menschen sein müsse. neue ausdrucksformen modifizieren die sprache und damit sein weltbild. das besagt natürlich auch, inwieweit unsere dichtung über ihre äesthetische bedeutung hinaus wirksam sein soll. gerade in ihrer unabhängigkeit von einer sanktionierten gebrauchsweise besteht die chance, neue anschauungsformen zu provozieren, zu 'verändern'. (WG 27 - 28)

[54] Haller identifies "eine Dominanz sprachkritischer Reflexion" (58) as one of the main features of Austrian philosophy. It is, therefore, perhaps not surprising that a more intense preoccupation with language can be ascribed to Austrian, as opposed to German, authors. Thus the Vienna Group's fixation with language places it in the tradition of many other Austrian authors, for whom language is also a central theme – Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Karl Kraus, Ingeborg Bachmann, Ilse Aichinger and Peter Handke, to name but a few.

Wiener also refers to this initial phase in the essay referred to above: "wir waren alle überzeugt davon gewesen, dass wir in einer objektiven wirklichkeit lebten, und dass es, in diesem sinne nannten wir uns ja schliesslich dichter, unsere aufgabe war, die sprache zu einer optimalen annäherung an diese wirklichkeit zu zwingen" (WG 402).

This period of hope and enthusiasm was followed, Rühm tells us, by one of criticism and language scepticism, especially for Bayer and Wiener: "einer überschätzung, möglicherweise, der sprache und des funktionalismus, der sich bedenklich der ideologie näherte, folgte, besonders bei Bayer und Wiener, ein stadium der kritik und sprachskepsis" (WG 28). This marks the second phase in the Group's language theory: disillusionment following its members' initial idealistic hopes for language. Wiener sums up this disillusionment as follows: "vielfach hatten wir das gefühl, mit den reduktionsversuchen unserer sprache an die grenzen des möglichen gegangen zu sein, ohne allzuviel erreicht zu haben, und ich erinnere mich, dass bayer einmal meinte, wir würden noch beim blossen vorzeigen von gegenständen landen" (WG 402).[55] The Group's doubts were confirmed when Wittgenstein's Philosophische Untersuchungen contradicted his Tractatus and the theoretical basis of the Group's efforts heretofore was lost.

In his Philosophical Investigations, Wittgenstein repudiates his earlier assertion that the meaning of a word is the object for which it stands, thus making language the means by which the world is depicted, and instead maintains that the meaning of a word is its use in language, which is made up of many different activities which Wittgenstein calls "language-games". Like all games, these language-games are governed by rules which are, Wittgenstein claims, not imposed on us from outside, but

[55] "reduktion" was identified in Chapter 2 as one of Bayer's principles of text production.

are established by agreement, custom, training and collective use. Participation in language-games and the adherence to their rules that this participation requires is a habitual practice in which we are trained as juvenile members of our linguistic community (Grayling 67-83). If one remembers the Vienna Group's stance against logic and conventional language and their radical, rule-breaking methods of text production as described in Chapter 1, it is not difficult to understand their frustration and disillusionment with what they must have seen as Wittgenstein's affirmation of conventional language as a system based on the common consensus of its users. To quote Wiener: "vollends waren meine privatgötter ins wanken geraten. wittgensteins 'untersuchungen' . . . fegten für mich seinen 'tractatus' vom tisch. dennoch wurde mir klar, dass seine bemerkungen, ihm selber vielleicht nicht ganz bewusst, auf eine interpretation der sprache als prototyp der politischen organisation hinausliefen, und solches war mir, dem studenten einer neuen anarchie, zuwider" (WG 402). Wiener presumably understands Wittgenstein's interpretation of language in terms of a game played according to rules agreed by the members of a linguistic community as "prototyp einer politischen organisation" in the sense that it imposes on the individual a fixed linguistic system with rules which must be rigidly adhered to if the system is to function. His description of himself as "studenten einer neuen anarchie" marks the end of this second phase of the Group's "Sprachtheorie" and a split between Wiener and Bayer and the other Group members regarding their theories about language.

Earlier in this section I included a quote from Rühm which referred to Bayer and Wiener's particular scepticism and criticism of language. The two seem to have pursued a philosophy of language that caused tension within the Group and which, to a certain extent, cut them off from its other members. This is documented by Rühm:

> etwa von 1959/60 an hatte sich die kollektive zusammenarbeit in sich überschneidende co-gruppen aufgelöst. wiener distanzierte sich von seinen bisherigen arbeiten in einem stadium allgemeiner skepsis, die für eine "konstruktive" zusammenarbeit nicht gerade förderlich war. er lehnte damals ab, überhaupt noch etwas und schon gar nicht "literarisches" zu produzieren. bayer wirkte vermittelnd. während er mit mir an der operette 'der schweissfuss' zu arbeiten begonnen hatte, die, wenn auch mit grossem vergnügen, einer gewissen "angefressenen" stimmung entsprang, animierte er wiener zu gelegentlichen gemeinschaftsarbeiten ('starker toback', 'folgen geistiger ausschweifung') und zur fortsetzung seines ende 1962 begonnenen romans 'die verbesserung von mitteleuropa' . . . wiener und bayer huldigten zuletzt einem extremen individualanarchismus (sie selbst lehnten alle bezeichnungen ab), dem ich mich nur bedingt anschliessen konnte. die kritik, die skepsis an der sprache bewog mich nicht zur verneinung der kommunikation, sondern zu einer neueinschätzung der möglichkeiten innerhalb ihrer aufgeworfenen grenzen. (WG 34)

Here Rühm clearly attributes to both Bayer and Wiener an extreme scepticism and criticism of language tending towards a radical individual anarchism to which he, at any rate, could not subscribe.[56] Elsewhere he writes of Bayer: "er zweifelte mehr und mehr an einer kommunikationsmöglichkeit überhaupt, stellte die sprache als brauchbaren vermittler in frage . . ." (SW 16).[57] In view of these remarks by Rühm and the two texts that Bayer and Wiener produced together examined below, Wiener's reaction to Wittgenstein's Philosophische Untersuchungen and his subsequent remarks about the further development of his attitude to language can be assumed (in the absence of any statements by Bayer himself to confirm this) to have also influenced Bayer's position on language.[58]

The new anarchy of which Wiener claims above to be a student refers to the philosophy of Fritz Mauthner: "ich [Wiener] interessierte mich neuerdings für fritz

[56] The term "Individualanarchismus" is considered in more detail later in this chapter.

[57] As a writer, and so a dedicated user of language, this position amounts to an existential crisis for Bayer, a crisis that is examined later in the chapter.

[58] Analysis of the two Bayer-Wiener collaborations and some of Bayer's own dramatic texts later in this chapter will confirm this assumption. Bayer himself says of Wiener, "unbemerkt ist er zum theoretiker der gruppe geworden. er gibt anregungen. seine theorien bilden das rückgrat vieler versuche" (SW 723).

mauthner, einen autor dessen schriften damals völlig verschollen waren (sie sind es heute noch) und mir nur in unzureichenden bruchstücken zur verfügung standen" (WG 402). If Wittgenstein's language philosophy dominated the first and second phases of the Vienna Group's "Sprachtheorie", it is Mauthner's language criticism which dominates the third phase, which saw Bayer and Wiener following a different path to the other Group members. At this point a brief outline of Mauthner's philosophy is necessary. For this I turn to Markus Paul's Sprachartisten - Weltverbesserer. Bruchlinien in der österreichischen Literatur nach 1960, which also devotes a chapter to Oswald Wiener's "Sprachkritik".

Paul outlines Mauthner's philosophy as follows: "In Mauthners dreibändigem Hauptwerk 'Beiträge zu einer Kritik der Sprache' (1901/02), an dem er 27 Jahre gearbeitet hat, ist die Sprache der Urgrund allen Übels, das Gefängnis, aus dem sich die Menschheit befreien muß" (58). According to Mauthner, language is a whip, a weapon, an instrument of torture. His central theory is that language is of no value for a knowledge of reality, and is useful only for social communication among people. The aim of his "Sprachkritik" is to reveal this and so break the spell of language in order to free thinking from it. Paul explains that Mauthner viewed language as something fixed and static, unsuitable for representing the flowing, changing nature of reality. Mauthner maintains that language develops more slowly than the world, and therefore is an inadequate means of representing it. He speaks of the corpses of the past that we carry around with us in our language (Paul 58-61). Some of Mauthner's ideas about language are clearly incorporated into die folgen geistiger ausschweifung, Bayer and Wiener's first collaboration, where the three stages of their "Sprachtheorie" can be

traced. These three stages can be summarised as follows: an initial belief that a reformed language could facilitate a better understanding of the world, followed by disillusionment with language as a means of depicting reality, culminating in extreme language criticism and the view that, instead of extending the individual's understanding of reality, language acts as a trap which restricts individuals and prevents them from attaining this understanding. As well as illustrating the development of Bayer and Wiener's "Sprachtheorie", die folgen geistiger ausschweifung provides textual evidence of how Wiener's interest in Mauthner influenced his collaborator.[59]

3.1.2 die folgen geistiger ausschweifung: Bayer and Wiener's "Sprachtheorie"

In die folgen geistiger ausschweifung. vortrag für zwei personen, Oswald and Konrad, "zwei kinder, des lesens (‚wenn vom blatt gelesen wird,) oder des sprechens - viel besser! - (‚wenn frei gesprochen wird,) eben mächtig geworden - also im alter von 6 bis 7 oder von 2 bis 3 Jahren" (WG 319), climb onto high chairs behind a large desk and discuss language. The text was begun on 14 October 1960, continued on October 16 and 22 of the same year and finished "in einem raptus" on 21 April 1964 (WG 326), shortly after the Vienna Group's final appearance together.

Markus Paul, in the book referred to above, explains that the philosophical discourse of this first collaborative text deals initially with Wittgenstein's Tractatus and the relationship between sentence and thought (66). Paul draws comparisons between Bayer and Wiener's literary text and Wittgenstein's philosophical one:

> Die Überlegungen drehen sich um das Verhältnis von Satz und Gedanken. Die Möglichkeiten der Sprache sind begrenzt dadurch, "dass

[59] The second Bayer-Wiener collaboration starker toback is considered later in this chapter.

> ein satz eine erscheinungsform eines gedankens ist, ein abbild, eine analyse des gedankens." (WG 319) Das klingt unüberhörbar nach dem frühen Wittgenstein, für den der Gedanke das logische Bild der Tatsache ist (T 3), der sich im Satz sinnlich wahrnehmbar ausdrückt (T 3.1). Auch die Feststellung, "der satz verpackt den gedanken" (WG 320), findet sich fast wörtlich im "Tractatus": "Die Sprache verkleidet den Gedanken." (T 4.002). (66)

However, although Konrad and Oswald start out from Wittgenstein's position as outlined in the Tractatus, they soon become critical of the Wittgensteinian relationship between the thought and the "sinnvolle Satz", because they realise that the thought contains more than can be expressed through language:

> oswald: wenn der gedanke - beiläufig - in einen satz gepresst wird, verliert er aspekte, da der sprecher seinen satz versteht.
>
> konrad: der satz ist nicht nur analyse des gedankens, sondern auch übersetzung in die sprache . . .
>
> oswald: die gedanken eines anderen haben nur sprachliche erscheinungsform; die eigenen gedanken haben wohl auch sprachliche erscheinungsform, aber doch etwas mehr. die sprache stellt für die gedankenübermittlung stereotypen zur verfügung; diese stereotypen haben ihren ursprung in der tatsache, dass manche "gedankeninhalte" weitaus häufiger übermittelt werden sollen als andere. sie sind "kürzel". seltene ("unwahrscheinliche") gedanken haben nur diese stereotypen zur verfügung. die sprache folgt den statistischen häufigkeiten der stattgefunden habenden gedankengänge.
>
> konrad: es wird immer schwieriger, zu sprechen, wenn es sich um gedanken handelt, die noch nicht in die sprache übersetzt worden sind. (WG 321)

In this passage, as Konrad and Oswald philosophise about the inadequacy of language, the second phase of Bayer and Wiener's "Sprachtheorie", namely that of disillusionment with language, can be identified. The idea that the thought must be squeezed or forced ("gepresst") into a sentence conveys what the two perceive as the constricting nature of language, just as the use of the phrase "übersetzung in die sprache" conveys its indirectness. Translation into language means that thoughts lose

the "etwas mehr" which Oswald claims one's own thoughts have. The two see language as somehow reducing the individual's thoughts, which contain more than their linguistic forms can convey. These linguistic forms are merely "kürzel", shorthand forms which do not contain the full meaning. With the phrase "stattgefunden habende[n] gedankengänge" and the statement "die sprache ist ein system von gedankenbahnen" (WG 322), Oswald presents language as a very confined and confining system that regulates the individual's thoughts along existing and clearly demarcated paths. This idea is elaborated on by Konrad:

> konrad: . . . ist der gedanke eine verbindung von begriffen? ist nicht vielmehr der gedanke ein anlass begriffe, worte, namen zu produzieren, besser: herbeizuschleppen aus den abgegriffenen schubladen der vorratskammer, die mit dem vom ahnl geerbten proviant gefüllt ist, den der ahnl vom ahnl geerbt hat . . . also: begriffe, worte, meinetwegen auch gesten! - ja, gesten! zu produzieren, eher also herbeizuschleppen, deren anzahl und bestimmtheit, also unbeweglichkeit, - ja fixiert, fixe idee, eingerostet, konsequent, ja! o elend! der begriff, das wort, der name sind konsequent, kaputt, bestenfalls dreideutig, unbrauchbar, unbeweglich, tot. meine sprache ist trotz allem (ich meine: meine ausgezeichnete, für eine sprache wendige sprache!) der friedhof meiner gedanken! . . . ich muss diese leidigen assoziationsketten zerstören. (WG 323-324)

In his condemnation of language as something static, fixed and dead, a useless and unwanted heirloom, inherited from ancestors from another time, which regulates his thoughts and traps his individuality, Konrad is clearly drawing on Mauthner's "Sprachskepsis" as outlined above, and so the third phase of Bayer and Wiener's "Sprachtheorie" finds its literary equivalent.

I now wish to consider Bayer's experimental method of text production in the context of his "Sprachtheorie" as outlined in this chapter.

3.2 Linguistic experimentation and "Sprachkritik"

A knowledge of Bayer's attitude towards language is of considerable assistance in trying to understand the motivation behind his experimental approach to producing texts. Thus, having outlined in Chapter 2 how Bayer's texts deliberately disrupt the conventional use of language, I can now attempt to surmise why Bayer chooses such defamiliarization as a method of text production.

As discussed in the previous section, in die folgen geistiger ausschweifung it is evident that, drawing on Mauthner, Bayer and Wiener view language as an unwanted heirloom - a medium that is restricting, reductive, indirect and static. As such it is inadequate for representing and understanding reality, which is constantly in flux. Because it regulates the individual's thoughts along existing paths and cannot accommodate original thoughts, neither does it enable the individual to express him/herself. Consequently, in die folgen geistiger ausschweifung Konrad says with reference to language, "ich muss diese leidigen assoziationsketten zerstören" (WG 324). Bayer's method of text production in der analfabet can therefore be regarded as an attempt to undertake this destruction. The following description by Elfriede Gerstl of Bayer's work in general sums up what he attempts linguistically in der analfabet: "Das Aufbrechen alter Sprachmuster, die Befreiung der Begriffe aus den Gefängnissen der Semantik und Grammatik . . ." (43-44). Chapter 2's linguistic analysis has shown that Bayer's attempted attack on conventional language in der analfabet is successful in a number of ways.

Thanks to the various techniques outlined in Chapter 2, Bayer succeeds in undermining the usual function of language, namely to enable its users to understand

the world around them by imposing a logical order on it. In his "beilage" to der analfabet Bayer effectively denies his readers this understanding. In the text of der analfabet he does not present a world that is coherent and logical, nor does he people it with figures that have clear, fixed identities. Instead, the world of the text is incoherent and illogical and the identities of the figures that inhabit it are constantly shifting. What emerges is a reality that is fragmented, disconnected and forever in flux. Thus, instead of allowing it to fulfil its usual function of imposing order on a chaotic world, Bayer subverts language and uses it in such a way as to create what Bucher describes as "einen asssoziativen Raum, der in fortdauernder Ambivalenz alles in der Schwebe lässt" (148). In this way, Bayer undermines the prescriptive quality of language that presents a fixed version of reality and creates instead a text that, because of its ambivalence, offers various levels of reality and so is open to interpretation. A quote from André Breton, included by Bayer in the "vorwort" to der kopf des vitus bering which he wrote for a radio recording of that text in 1963, reflects this intention: "(die wirklichkeit ist nicht die summe der fakten, sie ist die summe der möglichkeiten: andré breton.)" (SW 533). In the "beilage" Bayer stresses that, in order not to weary the reader, he has reduced "die anzahl der *möglichen* standpunkte auf ein pikantes minimum" (SW 149). He also refers to "die daraus resultierende geringe anzahl von schichten oder ebenen" (SW 149). Both comments suggest that the actual number of possible realities is far greater than depicted in der analfabet. The question I would now like to consider is why Bayer seeks to undermine language in this way.

One could conjecture that with such experiments Bayer is searching for his own, autonomous and unique creative voice, a process which, as a writer, he engages in

through his literary texts. His extreme "Sprachkritik", however, means that this process necessitates an approach that attempts in various ways to free literature and language from their conventional forms. As I have already discussed, this approach results in a language that does not define and categorise, but is open, unstable and contradictory and therefore produces a literature that, because it liberates the writer and the reader from the limitations of conventional language and literature, has the potential to open new possibilities for art and life, for the creative artist and for the reader who is confronted with an artistic work that challenges him/her to engage with it actively and to question the reality which he/she had previously accepted automatically. Bayer's pursuit of his creative voice, the process that he sets in motion to find a mode of self-expression outside of the normative structures of conventional language thus has at least the potential to enable the reader to engage in a similar process of autonomous creativity.

The reader, deprived of the usual tools he/she uses to process literary texts, may, however, often be too disoriented to rise to this creative challenge. What then of the critic who is faced with the task of interpreting Bayer's texts? Since the sections that follow the next one mark the beginning of my attempts to interpret Bayer's dramatic texts, I would like to preface these investigations with some general remarks on this precarious pursuit.

3.3 "Betreten für Literaturwissenschaftler verboten!"[60]: the difficulty of interpreting Bayer

The principle problem that critics writing about Bayer invariably find themselves facing is the fact that they are dealing with texts that, as became clear in Chapter 2, seem deliberately designed to resist interpretation. Schmidt-Dengler, for example, refers in the context of the Wiener Gruppe to the "Widersetzlichkeit dieser Literatur" (Bruchlinien 141) and, with specific reference to Bayer, notes: "In diesem Sinne wird auch jede Literaturpädagogik gerade anhand der Gebilde eines Konrad Bayer auf die härteste, auf die unangenehmste Probe gestellt" (Bruchlinien 142). Similarly, Schuh observes: "Einer elaborierten Interpretation setzen Bayers Texte einen nicht unerheblichen, wahrscheinlich kalkulierten Widerstand entgegen" (71).[61] Siegfried J. Schmidt stresses the elusive nature of Bayer's texts, which ensures that they do not provide the reader with consistent material upon which he/she can base his/her interpretation: "Gleichwohl schreibt er [Bayer], aber die sprachlich erzeugten Welten verfestigen sich offenbar weder für den Autor noch für mich als Leser: Bayer gelingt es, sie disponibel zu halten . . . In diesen Welten kann es keine Argumentationen, keinen Diskurs unter konstanten Prämissen also geben" (67).

The resistance to interpretation that Bayer's texts display is a consequence of his dilemma of being at one and the same time a radical language critic and a committed author. As a language critic, Bayer's basic premise is that communication through language is impossible. As an author, he must use language, yet his texts must surely reflect this impossibility. This contradiction results in complex and sometimes almost

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[60] Schmidt-Dengler, using the analogy of the "Verbotsschild", coins this phrase to epitomise the challenge that Bayer's texts pose for literary critics ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 80).

[61] Chapter 2 of this thesis has illustrated Bayer's deliberate strategy of creating texts that resist interpretation. In light of this, Schuh's use of the word "wahrscheinlich" in this context is inappropriate.

cryptic texts that mirror Bayer's attempts to grapple with the paradoxical situation he finds himself in. As an author sceptical of language, Bayer uses it, but, as outlined above, he does so in a way that subverts its usual normative tendencies. Instead of depicting a coherent, ordered and fixed reality, the language of Bayer's texts creates a fluid reality that is ever-changing. Thus Bayer forces language to undermine itself.

In my discussion of the "beilage" to der analfabet I noted Bayer's denial of the reader's usual expectation of understanding. It is my contention, however, that one should not take this to mean that these texts cannot be understood on some level, or, indeed, on several levels. The "nachtrag" of Bayer's novel der sechste sinn contains the following statement: "man könnte sich mit der totalen bedeutungslosigkeit abfinden. ich kann es nicht" (SW 667). Bayer's literary works ultimately document his search for a self-expression that lends meaning of some kind to his writings and to his existence and so they are far from "bedeutungslos". However, when attempting to find meaning in them, the critic must tread carefully.

The following extract from kasperl am elektrischen stuhl is, in my opinion, a warning that the aspiring Bayer critic must bear in mind:

> reporter: sprechen sie oft?
> kasperl: sehr selten.
> reporter: und warum?
> kasperl: weil es viele betrüger gibt. man läuft da grosse gefahr, weil die wie ordentliche leut aussehen. die hören zu, die merken auf, alles nehmen sie beim wort.
> reporter: das ist eine rücksichtslosigkeit.
> kasperl: eine gemeinheit.
> reporter: eine frechheit.
> kasperl: es handelt sich um verbrecher. (SW 309)

Kasperl, a figure that will be examined in the following sections of this chapter, is, like Bayer, a language sceptic. He mistrusts language because of the way in which it is abused by those "betrüger" who listen to what someone says and then swindle the

speaker out of what he/she wanted to communicate by imbuing the words with a meaning of their own. These people are, in Kasperl's words, "verbrecher". The critic who tries to interpret Bayer's work presumably also runs the risk of becoming such a criminal. However, it should be remembered that Bayer's language criticism goes deeper than an awareness of the fact that some narrow-minded listeners, in Kasperl's case, and readers in Bayer's own case, may misunderstand and misinterpret what they hear or read. It is clear from the "beilage" to der analfabet that Bayer in any case deliberately denies understanding and that this is one of the principles according to which he constructs his texts. The challenge to the critic, therefore, is not just to avoid being a "verbrecher", but to acknowledge Bayer's experiment, his attempt to imbue his texts with instability, openness and contradiction, to embrace the idea that conventional understanding is not always possible and that Bayer's texts demand a different type of understanding and to allow the "Schwebezustand" that characterises these texts to be maintained.

For the critic the key is, perhaps, to remember Bayer's words of warning in the "beilage" to der analfabet - "das ist eine erklärung. / andere sind ebenfalls zutreffend. / alle erklärungen bleiben mangelhaft; so lasse ich bei dieser bewenden" (SW 148) – and the following sentences from the "nachwort" of der stein der weisen: "alles kann dies und jenes heissen. / alles mag auch etwas anderes heissen" (SW 530). The critic must concede that his/her interpretation of a Bayer text is not the definitive one, or indeed, the only one and must constantly acknowledge the "Widersetzlichkeit" inherent in texts that may suddenly block avenues of interpretation that have just been opened.

The floundering critic needs lifelines on his/her perilous interpretative voyage and so he/she tends to grasp at anything that promises to act as a guide through Bayer's texts. The linguistic analysis of Chapter 2 is one example of this. By examining one of Bayer's texts at a linguistic level, I was able to illuminate his abuse of conventional language. This, in turn, led me to an investigation of Bayer's language theory, an investigation which revealed him to be an extreme language critic. As a consequence, I wish now to examine the manifestation of this criticism of language in three of Bayer's dramatic texts: kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, der analfabet and idiot.

This brings me to my next "lifeline" - the figure of Kasperl. Since this figure has its origins in the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater" it would seem to be a sort of signpost that might assist in the negotiation of the text of kasperl am elektrischen stuhl. The next sections consider the historical background of this figure and its adaptation by other members of the Vienna Group. Analyses of kasperl am elektrischen stuhl and of Bayer's interpretation of Kasperl then follow.

3.4 The figure of Kasperl

When considering the significance of the figure of Kasperl in H. C. Artmann's and Konrad Bayer's dramatic texts, Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler remarks: "Die Wahl des Kasperl ist nicht beliebig; er ist nicht austauschbar . . . Zu denken ist vor allem an die Tradition des Hanswurst auf der Bühne des Wiener Volkstheaters; dieser hat vom derben Freßsack Stranitzkys bis zu Nestroys welt- und wortgewandten Raisonneuren unzählige Verwandlungen durchgemacht" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 81). The purpose of this section is to trace the origins of Bayer's Kasperl in order to compare him with his predecessors in the Viennese "Volkstheater" and also with his contemporaries in the works of other members of the Vienna Group.

3.4.1 Historical origins of the "Kasperl-Figur"[62]

Kasperl is one of a number of comic figures who appeared on the stages of the Habsburg Empire in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some of his ancestors include Arlecchino (Arlequin / Harlekin) of the Italian Commedia dell'arte, the English comic figure Pickelhering, Hanswurst of Joseph Anton Stranitzky's Wiener Haupt- und Staatsaktionen and Joseph Felix Kurz's Bernardon. Among his successors are the figures of Wurzel in Ferdinand Raimund's play Das Mädchen aus der Feenwelt and Titus Feuerbach in Johann Nestroy's Der Talisman (Scheit 88, 96). While Gerhard Scheit questions the very existence of the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater", suggesting that the line of succession from Stranitzky to Nestroy is a myth used to construct an Austrian identity and claiming that the origins of Stranitzky's theatre lie in German

[62] The following section concentrates on the Kasperl figure of the Viennese "Volkstheater" tradition rather than on the Kasperl of the European puppet theatre, as the former is of more consequence for the figure's adaptation by members of the Vienna Group.

touring companies, which, in turn, can be traced back to English players, and that Bernardon is not a development of Stranitzky's comedy but an import from Italy and France (29), for the purpose of my analysis all of these possible influences will emerge as helpful in gaining an understanding of Bayer's Kasperl figure.

The Italian Commedia dell'arte with its fixed characters and plot outline and its tradition of improvisation was, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a source of inspiration for touring German theatre companies, which adopted the characters of Pantalone (Pantalon), Colombina (Colombine) and Arlecchino (Harlekin) in particular (Hinck 74). The Italian comic figure of Arlecchino and its English cousin Pickelhering (who first appeared in 1620) were subsumed by the German Hanswurst in the seventeenth century (Hinck 83) - a seamless assimilation, as the functions and characteristics of the German variety of this figure remained unchanged:

> Wiederholung und Kontrastierung des Geschehens der höheren auf niederer Ebene; Parodie der edlen Gefühle und der heldischen Tugend des Herrn durch den leiblichen Bedürfnissen und Genüssen verhafteten, triebgebunden-obszönen und furchtsam-listigen Diener, die Parodie also des Erhabenen durch das Unanständig-Unzulängliche und die Dekouvrierung des Verstiegenen aus der Perspektive des "gesunden Menschenverstandes" . . . (Hinck 83-84)

Hinck points out that Hanswurst was simply a new name for a familiar figure, characterised above all by a "Polymorphismus" (84) that manifested itself in the comic figure's many roles.

It is Stranitzky, in his Haupt- und Staatsaktionen, who is accredited with adapting and developing the figure of Hanswurst for the Viennese "Volkstheater" at the beginning of the eighteenth century.[63] By giving Hanswurst a new costume - the

[63] While it is uncertain as to whether Stranitzky wrote the Haupt- und Staatsaktionen that featured Hanswurst himself, it is undisputed that he always played the role of Hanswurst in these dramas (Sonnleitner 339).

traditional garb of a Salzburg farmer - and making him speak Austrian German, Stranitzky created a provincial version of the comic figure and endowed him with what Hinck calls "kräftige volkstheaterhafte Impulse" (85).

The comic figure was by no means a main character at this point, but managed to spend a lot of time on stage, as he dominated the improvised scenes of the subplot (Sonnleitner 344). His chief function was that of a contrastive figure to the heroic and gallant kings and commanders he served. His comedy arose from his clashes with this world of lofty ideals, which were destroyed by his radical materialism and sensuality. He was concerned not with social ideas and changes, but with his immediate needs - food, drink and women (Sonnleitner 341). Scheit refers to his "maßlose Freß- und Saufbedürfnisse" (43) and attributes a phallic meaning to the "Pritsche" that he carried, interpreting it as a symbol of his sexual urges (39). He also describes scenes in which Hanswurst was pursued by women that he had deserted (39), but recounts that he always succeeded in escaping any danger (41). He describes him as "ein blutrünstiger Spaßmacher" whose task it often was to chop up the bodies of his master's victims, which he subsequently attempted to sell (42). He thus combined "die distinkten Formen der Komik der Herabsetzung des höfisch-galanten Codes und der Heraufsetzung des gesellschaftlich Tabuisierten und Verdrängten" (Sonnleitner 344).

Stranitzky's Hanswurst occupied a privileged position, comparable to that of the court jester and also enjoyed a similar "Narrenfreiheit". He was tolerated by his master because he knew that only Hanswurst would tell him the truth (Sonnleitner 342, 346). Scheit traces Hanswurst's historical trail back to "geldgierige, geile und blutrünstig-feige Clown-Figuren" of the Elizabethan theatre and to his more distant relative the fool figure, citing the fool's "Wandlungsfähigkeit", his distance to other characters and his closeness to the audience, often privy to his internal reflection, as common

characteristics (44-46). Another of Hanswurst's features was the way in which he repeatedly slipped out of character in order to stress the illusionary nature of the theatre (Sonnleitner 345). Also, while he took on many different roles, he remained the same unmistakeable Hanswurst (Sonnleitner 346), profiled by Beatrix Müller-Kampel as follows:

> . . . Verstöße gegen die Normgrammatik, falsches Verständnis und sinnwidriger Gebrauch von Begriffen, fäkale Ausdrücke und sexuelle Anspielungen. Charakterlich eigneten ihm namentlich Feigheit, Freßgier, Sauflust, Gewitztheit, Verschlagenheit, Unterwürfigkeit und zugleich eine abstruse Respektlosigkeit gegenüber gängigen Konventionen und Tabus. (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 41)

After Stranitzky's death in 1726, the figure of Hanswurst lived on in the actor Gottfried Prehauser who, from 1737 met with serious competition from Joseph Felix Kurz and his figure of Bernardon (Sonnleitner 346, 348). With the figure of Kurz-Bernardon came what Sonnleitner calls a "Reitalianisierung der Wiener Komödie" (351) as, influenced greatly by the Commedia dell'arte, Kurz extended the "Stegreifspiel" to all of the action. Music became an integral part of this drama, as did technical theatrical tricks. The action was constantly disrupted by the many speedy set changes and transformations of Bernardon (Sonnleitner 351). Scheit contrasts Bernardon with Hanswurst, stating that the former was "kein stehender Typus im Sinne des alten Hanswurst" and that for him a change of costume signified a change of identity (54). Like Hanswurst, however, Bernardon seems to have succeeded in disrupting the world around him:

> Die phantastische Welt der Bernardoniade kennt keine Hierarchien und Ordnungen, keine Handlungslogik; Himmel, Hölle, Erde, Götter, tote und lebende Menschen werden durcheinandergewirbelt, das barocke Universum jeder Transzendenz entkleidet und in das anarchische Spiel integriert; kurz, ein permanenter Affront nicht nur gegen die Ideologie ständischer Hierarchien und des zentralistischen Absolutismus, sondern

> auch gegen jede tradierte Dramenpoetik mit ihren wirkungsästhetischen Ansprüchen. (Sonnleitner 352-353)

Such was the disruption caused by Bernardon on stage that opponents of the comic figure, adherents of Gottsched who demanded an Aristotelian aesthetic and a rational comedy (Scheit 58), feared that it would spill out onto the streets and so they did their utmost to drive him from the Viennese stage. The so-called "Hanswurst-Streit" which lasted from 1747 to 1769 was, as Sonnleitner points out, actually a battle against Bernardon (358). An edict from Maria Theresia in 1752 allowed only French and Spanish comedies to be staged and interrupted Bernardon's Viennese career in 1760. Within a decade, the critics of Hanswurst and Bernardon had succeeded in procuring an official ban on extemporisation, citing the subversive and anarchic potential of the absolute theatre as a threat to the state, and its smutty humour and positive portrayal of vices as a danger to public morality (Sonnleitner 359-361). But the comic figure continued to enjoy huge popularity and in 1776 the "Spektakelfreiheit" returned some freedom to theatre companies and led to the opening of many small theatres and the rise of new comic figures such as Thaddädl and Kasperl (Scheit 59-60).

In view of opposition to Hanswurst and Bernardon, Philipp Hafner adopted a compromising approach to his comic figure. The action on stage was not disrupted, nor was the stage illusion undermined in any way. Hanswurst was given a precise social and professional identity - usually that of a servant - and did not adopt other roles. He no longer inhabited imaginary or fantastic worlds like the comic figures of Stranitzky and Kurz, but was firmly rooted in a bourgeois setting. His sexual comedy was suppressed, his gestures curtailed and, since Hafner formulated his plays fully in written form, his speeches were no longer improvised. Hanswurst now conformed to bourgeois morality. As Sonnleitner puts it: "Aus dem naiven Sau- und Krautschneider

vom Land ist ein strenger Sittenrichter seiner Herrschaft geworden" (366). Scheit describes Hafner's Hanswurst as "ein braver und . . . sparsamer Hausangestellter, ein Muster eben" (63) and interprets this portrayal of him as "die Verbürgerlichung oder genauer: die Domestikation der Haupt- und Staatsaktion" (66). No longer as humorous as he used to be, Hanswurst was provided with companions, Crispin and Kasperl, whose task it was to compensate for this comic deficit (Sonnleitner 364-367).

Kasperl soon advanced to being the main comic figure and simply replaced Hanswurst in many of the old plays. Since 1768 the Viennese folk theatre had moved out of the city into the suburbs and from this distance, Kasperl was not perceived as a threat to the honour of the national stage. In addition, Kasperl, popular with all classes, had supporters who defended him with the argument that all plays were now written and censored in advance. (Sonnleitner 372-373). In the Theater in der Leopoldstadt, which soon became known simply as the "Kasperltheater", Johann La Roche made the role of Kasperl his own. Müller-Kampel describes La Roche's Kasperl as follows: "La Roches Habitus und Erheiterungstechniken gründeten (darin dem Hanswurst ähnlich) auf einem Bauernkostüm, auf seinem vorstädtischen Wiener Dialekt, auf grotesker Mimik und Gestik, Drastik im Ausdruck . . . und einer kräftigen Stimme" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 42). Franz M. Eybl emphasises Kasperl's physicality and his effect on the audience, who clapped when he made his entrance and laughed before he opened his mouth: "Völlig dem Publikum zugewandt ist die Wirkung Kasperls: er 'stellt sich ganz vorne an die Bühne' und füllt das Theater mit seiner Körperlichkeit. Auf das Gesprochene kommt es dabei am allerwenigsten an, ebensowenig auf Illusion" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 25). Compared with Hanswurst, Kasperl was more sophisticated, funnier, more articulate, but also more timorous and obsequious. Another change meant that there were fewer

executions and violent acts on stage (Sonnleitner 378). In spite of this, Roger Bauer still views Kasperl as a symbol of resistance who reflected the climate of his time:

> Der andauernde Erfolg des Kasperls La Roche . . . muß auch und vielleicht vor allem in Zusammenhang gebracht werden mit dem damals in den achtziger Jahren einsetzenden Widerstand breiter Schichten der Bevölkerung (nicht zuletzt der untersten, plebejischen Volksschichten) gegen die "aufgeklärten" Reformen Josephs II., also auch gegen die Gedanken- und Vorstellungswelt des gebildeten - "hochdeutsch" und literarisch gebildeten - neuen Beamtenbürgertums. (qtd. in Scheit 60-61)

Hanswurst's last incarnation on the stages of the Viennese suburban theatre was Staberl, a figure created by Adolf Bäuerle. Bäuerle enjoyed his greatest success with the play Die Bürger in Wien which premièred at the Theater in der Leopoldstadt in 1813. Staberl signified the final phase in the comic figure's transformation:

> Mit Staberl hatte Bäuerle die Typenkomik in die Charakterkomik umgewandelt und den Prozeß der Professionalisierung der lustigen Figur zum Abschluß gebracht, die sich nicht mehr als antithetische Kunstfigur, sondern als Mitglied der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft definiert. Damit hat die lustige Figur zwar die Möglichkeit der Illusionsstörung eingebüßt, denn sie wird Bestandteil der Bühnentotalität, sie fällt aber aus dem Ensemble durch die narrativen und später reflektierenden Sequenzen heraus, die Staberl, sozusagen als Entertainer, an der Rampe dem Publikum vorträgt. (Sonnleitner 381)

While the role of the comic figure as a fixed type had disappeared from the suburban theatres of Vienna by the end of the eighteenth century - "von den Aufklärern von der Bühne vertrieben" (Sonnleitner 382) - the spirit of disruption and resistance that he embodied and his comic formula of "Kollektiv und Störenfried" were absorbed by nineteenth-century comedy, as Volker Klotz illustrates in his analysis of Nestroy's Der Talisman as a text in which what he calls the "Störenfriedformel" can be seen at work (45-55). Huber also observes that the figure of Kasperl was adopted by the puppet theatre, which established its own Kasperl tradition (62). The Kasperl of the puppet theatre is funny, naïve and cheeky, a figure whom the audience immediately

warms to and who takes on evil which, since he invariably has luck on his side, he always succeeds in overcoming. A crucial difference between this Kasperl and that of the "Volkstheater" is, according to Huber, that in the puppet theatre Kasperl no longer engages in critical social commentary (63-64).

Sonnleitner points out that the legacy of the comic figures of the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater" lasted into the twentieth century, revived in the works of some members of the Vienna Group: "Besonders die österreichische Avantgarde nach 1945 nahm sich dieser Figuren in einer erstaunlichen Intensität an, Gerhard Rühm, Konrad Bayer und H. C. Artmann reaktivierten die ästhetischen Potentiale des Hanswurst und des Kasperl" (382). The ensuing sections investigate how these three authors adapted these traditional comic figures in their dramatic texts.

3.4.2 The figures of Hanswurst and Kasperl in the dramatic texts of Gerhard Rühm and H. C. Artmann

When referring to the influence of the Viennese folk theatre on the Wiener Gruppe, Schmidt-Dengler writes: "H. C. Artmann, Gerhard Rühm and Konrad Bayer, jeder auf seine Weise, haben diesen Kasperl gleichsam neu inthronisiert" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 18). The aim of this section is to examine the figures of Hanswurst and Kasperl as they appear in the texts of Rühm and Artmann.[64] However, before investigating individual texts, I wish to consider why these authors chose to identify themselves with this particular tradition.

As was outlined in Chapter 1, the Wiener Gruppe did not consider itself, nor was it considered by others to be a part of the mainstream of 1950s Austrian literature, which

[64] This examination is restricted to aspects of the texts that are relevant to the discussion of Bayer's Kasperl figure.

in any event was an artificially constructed canon that consisted of works that were deemed to reflect the desired image of the Second Republic. Indeed, the members of the Group saw themselves as an opposition to this official version of Austrian literature. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the dramatic genre they should identify themselves with a theatrical tradition that was not acknowledged by the standard works of literary history and criticism (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 33) and earned the disapproval and criticism of the proponents of an intellectual and moral theatre. The Viennese "Volkstheater" resisted the pressure that tried to force eighteenth-century theatre to legitimise itself as an institution for state and moral use (Sonnleitner 334) and instead acted as "ein Gegensatz zu einem Theater . . . das sich als moralische Anstalt geben will" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 17).

As well as identifying themselves with a theatre that was outside of the established theatre - physically as well as ideologically, in that its home was not in the city centre but in the suburbs - Artmann, Rühm and Bayer aligned themselves with a theatre that, by relying on improvisation, to a large extent dispensed with the written word, thus placing itself beyond state control. Walter Hinck, when writing about the Commedia dell'arte, refers to the artistic autonomy that improvisation provides and claims that it reflects a more general process, that is the self-discovery of the individual (45). Hinck also describes the Commedia dell'arte's "Entlastung von den Ansprüchen der Kultur" and its "Lizenzierung alles dessen, was unter dem Tabu der Etikette steht oder was die Konvention zu tarnen verlangt" (44). The "Stegreiftradition" of the Viennese folk theatre and the freedom that it offered must certainly have appealed to Artmann, Bayer and Rühm. While they did not rely on extemporisation, choosing instead to produce written versions of their texts, the texts featuring Hanswurst and Kasperl retain some of the spontaneity of the "Stegreiftheater": the use of dialect signals a preference for

the spoken word and the often disjointed sequence of events in the dramatic texts of the Group members that feature a Kasperl figure could be said to reflect the chaotic nature of Viennese extemporised comedy. Schmidt-Dengler alludes to this in the following statement: "Jede Äußerung der *dramatis personae* will den Schein der Unmittelbarkeit wecken, sie scheint auf nichts und zu nichts verpflichtet zu sein. Daher die vielen Leerläufe, daher der Stillstand der Aktion, daher das offene Ende" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 82). When discussing Artmann's text die liebe fee pocahontas oder kasper als schildwache Schmidt-Dengler goes on to point out the improvised nature of the dialogue: " . . . jeder Fixierung durch die Schrift steht der Stegreifcharakter der Rede entgegen. Jeder Satz benimmt sich so, als ob er unmittelbar, unabhängig von den anderen Sätzen ausgesprochen wäre und keinem wie immer gearteten Vorsatz oder Kalkül sich verdanke" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 86). The state's muzzling of Hanswurst and Bernardon through censorship in the eighteenth century and its subsequent banishment of Kasperl from the Viennese stage find a parallel in 1950s Austria in the rejection and ridicule to which the Vienna Group were subjected at the hands of the Austrian cultural establishment, just as the subversive associations of the Kasperl of the "Volkstheater" are reflected in the texts of the authors of the Wiener Gruppe.

In 1955-56 Gerhard Rühm wrote six "hanswurststücke". Two of them, links ein bisserl recht and wackeres sylvesterfest hanswursts mit colombinen oder die zuerst gestörrte doch dann glücklich wiedererrungene unruh' im bette, feature Hanswurst in overtly sexual situations. In der mit colombina controversierende hanswurst Hanswurst and Colombina argue, calling each other names. As is evident from the passage below, Hanswurst undermines Colombina's speech by playing with the words she uses in order to frustrate her:

colombina: ich find' dich widerlich!
hanswurst: auch schon ein fund!
colombina: du gräbst dir dein eigen grab!
hanswurst: du bist eine wahre fundgrube! . . .
colombina: papagei!
hanswurst: mamagei! . . .
colombina: er macht mich rasend!
hanswurst: dabei finden wir uns gar net im grünen!
(Rühm, ophelia 72-73)

The fact that Rühm's Hanswurst is Viennese, is clearly communicated in hanswurst in lublin when he says: "wann ich nur in mein' wien wär'" (ophelia 74). Hanswurst knows he is in Poland, but has no idea how he got there. As it snows more and more heavily, he becomes increasingly afraid and thinks he is dreaming. The text ends with him shouting: "colombina, colombina!! - ich möcht aufwachen!" (ophelia 74).

Schmidt-Dengler and Zeyringer compare Rühm's "Hanswurst-Stücke" to Kurz-Bernardon's play Prinzessin Pumphia and highlight the similarity between Kurz's "bewußte Zerstörung des Dialogs" and Rühm's use of one-word sentences: "Die Sprache wird auch hier aus der Knechtschaft der Sinngebung befreit, Sinnsuche ist nicht gefragt" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 18). Rühm's Hanswurst also has other connections with the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater". Colombina, his female sidekick, is a figure that dates back to the Commedia dell'arte of the seventeenth century (Hinck 18). Hanswurst himself is fearful and cowardly, but also argumentative and difficult, and has very definite sexual urges, all characteristics associated at various times with the Viennese folk theatre's comic figure. While, unlike his predecessor, he does not inhabit a world of magicians and fairies, he does seem to have difficulty in distinguishing between fantasy and reality, and in hanswurst in lublin the reader is not sure whether what it is depicted is Hanswurst's dream or not.

H. C. Artmann's Kasperl figures have much in common with their ancestors in the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater".[65] This is clear in die mißglückte luftreise when Caspar, who is desperately begging a lantern-lighter for money, reminds him that he should recognise him: "ihr kennt mich doch!?? ich bin der caspar!" (Artmann, die fahrt 190). Artmann's Caspar is recognisable as the Kasperl of Viennese folk theatre on many levels. He is extremely versatile and can adopt a variety of roles – cook (aufbruch nach amsterdam), lover, poet (die mißglückte luftreise and Die Zyklopin oder Die Zerstörung einer Schneiderpuppe), bridegroom (die hochzeit caspars mit gelsomina), soldier (die liebe fee pocahontas oder kasper als schildwache) - while always remaining himself.

Artmann's Kasperl is often depicted as a victim of his sexual urges or as a troublemaker who clashes with the society he moves in, which means that he often has to extricate himself from dangerous, sometimes life-threatening situations: in die mißglückte luftreise he is about to be arrested when a voice "von irgendwo im zuschauerraum" calls out again and again, "der caspar darf nicht sterben!" (die fahrt 194); in die hochzeit caspars mit gelsomina he is trying to avoid the cannibal "herr sapristi di mangiatutti", whose daughter he has "dishonoured"; in die liebe fee pocahontas oder kasper als schildwache the good fairy Pocahontas assists him in escaping from the army, where he is accused of being a spy; and in punch he avoids execution by outwitting and then killing his would-be executioner. He is inevitably an extraordinary character who stands out from those around him and is consequently

[65] Between 1954 and 1966 Artmann wrote a number of dramatic texts featuring figures such as Caspar, Kasper, Pierrot and Punch, all of whom can be classified as variations of Hanswurst or Kasperl.

excluded. In die liebe fee pocahontas oder kasper als schildwache he is reminded repeatedly that he does not belong - "wer nicht johann heißt, der gehört nicht zu uns" (Artmann, die fahrt 284) - and is condemned by the captain, the leader of the community that surrounds him, as a rebel and a traitor. However, neither does Kasper show any inclination to try to belong. Instead, he compounds his status as a community outcast by removing what had given him the outward appearance of belonging, his uniform.

Like the Kasperl of the "Volkstheater", he often disrupts the action by deliberately misunderstanding what others have said – Punch, for example, during his conversation with the army officer whom he subsequently kills, pretends to hear "salat" and "hexenzieren" instead of "soldat" and "exerzieren" (Artmann, die fahrt 449). Similarly, Artmann's Kasperl also destroys the theatrical illusion he is a part of by addressing the audience directly. Although often described as stupid or foolish, more often than not he manages to triumph over his adversaries by outwitting them, or thanks to the intervention of magical forces,[66] and although cowardly and whining, he is often foolhardy and cheeky. He thus combines opposing characteristics. Whatever calamity befalls him, he seems to be able to survive and, as Punch, is capable of rape and murder. Even when it appears that he is about to die or is already dead, Artmann introduces a twist that prevents his death or casts doubt on it, making Caspar immortal. It seems that the voice from the audience in die mißglückte luftreise is right: "der caspar darf nicht sterben!" (Artmann, die fahrt 194).

[66] Viennese folk theatre abounds in magicians and fairies and has as a common motif the "Luftreise", by means of which Kasperl is often spirited away.

However, Artmann does not simply lift the figure of Kasperl out of the Viennese folk theatre and place him in the twentieth century without adapting the figure for his own purposes. Some of his Kasperl texts have an ending that is either open or uncertain. For example, die hochzeit caspars mit gelsomina finishes with Mangiatutti, who has been dancing around exclaiming "jetzt fressen wir den bräutigam!" (Artmann, die fahrt 260), ominously coming up behind Caspar and in punch, although a stage direction explicitly states that Punch is dead, the following statement seems to contradict this: "*punch (nr. 2 oder 1) tritt mit siegermiene hervor*" (Artmann, die fahrt 456). The open end is, Schmidt-Dengler observes, "bezeichnend für das Theater der Avantgarde" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 88).

Artmann's Kasperl, like Rühm's Hanswurst, sometimes seems unable to distinguish between fantasy and reality: in die hochzeit caspars mit gelsomina, when Caspar comes to after fainting, the other characters freeze, leading him to believe that he has been dreaming and is now in a waxworks museum and when Pocahontas appears, Kasper has to pinch himself to make sure that he is not dreaming. This blurring of the boundaries between Kasperl's inner world and the outer world, together with the conflict that often occurs between Kasperl as an individual and a group depicting society, is a feature associated with this figure that will be given further consideration in the next section.

Perhaps the most important innovation made by Artmann is the fact that he gives Kasperl a new role - that of "Dichter". In Die Zyklopin oder Die Zerstörung einer Schneiderpuppe, Artmann's first "Kasperlstück", this is particularly significant, as at the end of this play Pierrot, described by Schmidt-Dengler as Kasperl's

"Anverwandter" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 83), hangs himself in despair, wearing a sign with the words "pierrot als dichter" (Artmann, die fahrt 19). As Konrad Bayer also gives his Kasperl figure the role of "Dichter", I will delay further comment on this until the next section.

3.4.3 Bayer's kasperl am elektrischen stuhl

This investigation focuses on one text, kasperl am elektrischen stuhl. Unlike Artmann and Rühm, Bayer did not write a series of "Kasperlstücke", although, as will be illustrated later in the chapter, his Kasperl figure can be linked to other figures that do not bear that name. kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, a text which Rühm notes was "noch sehr im arbeitsstadium" (SW 780) when he came upon it, consists of sections of other dramatic texts by Bayer, namely die pfandleihe, die begabten zuschauer and die boxer (Huber 16).[67] The text begins with a speech by "der sprecher", who introduces the play. This is followed by a monologue by a female member of the audience who inveighs against this beginning, claiming that it does not fulfil the "anforderungen des modernen dramas" (SW 296). The action continues with a dialogue between "herr a" and "herr b", also members of the audience, who discuss the play and what they believe to be the set and the actors. It emerges that this "set" is actually the auditorium and the "actors" are, in fact, members of the audience. The "real" action finally gets underway with the entrance of "löwe, polizeichef" and "apollo, polizist".

[67] Huber illustrates by means of a diagram the extent to which kasperl am elektrischen stuhl is composed of these three texts (25). I agree with her assertion that Bayer's recycling of material in this way should not be regarded as arbitrary, but "als bewußt gesetzte Doppelung zentraler Aussagen" (23).

After a scene between these two members of the police force, Kasperl finally enters and announces that he wishes to report that he has killed his wife. This provokes nothing more than indifference from the police and annoyance from "herr a" and "herr b". When they complain that Kasperl is holding up the action, the "sprecher" apologises, saying: "tut mir leid. aber das ist ein ignorant" (SW 303). Kasperl is finally asked to fill out some forms, to which he replies: "bittschön, i kaun goaned schreim" (SW 304). When Kasperl says that he cannot write, the policemen despair of him and want him to simply go away. Although Kasperl maintains that he cannot write, he claims authorship of the play they are all appearing in, in a comical exchange with the police chief:

> löwe: beruf?
> kasperl: wie meinen?
> löwe: wie sind sie tätig? wos mochns den gaunzn tog?
> kasperl: a, wos i moch? jo wos moch i denn?
> löwe: das frage ich sie!
> kasperl: i moch theater in dem sie vuakumman.
> löwe: mochns kane witz!
> kasperl: es is woa! ollas wos sie sogn is von mia.
> apollo: a so a frechheid!
> löwe: sie sind zum tode verurteilt! (SW 305)

Significantly, it is not the crime of murder that earns Kasperl the death penalty, but the apparently far more serious one of having composed the police chief's words. With various interjections that would seem to confirm his authorship of the play Kasperl ensures that the action continues or explains what is happening, as in the following conversation with "herr b" about the guard who comes to watch over him as he awaits execution:

> herr b: wer ist denn das?
> kasperl: dos ist der aufseher, der passt auf mich auf.
> herr b: und was besseres is ihnen nicht eingefalln?
> kasperl: ich muss zugeben, nein. aber was haben sie gegen ein wachorgan? schaut doch immer gut aus. oder? schauns, des verhindert wenigstens, dass ich in meinem käfig zum monologisieren

> anfaung. sowos is meistens fad! ausserdem is a mit mia ind schui gaunga und hasd friedl. (SW 306)

The above leads one to assume that the other figures accept what Kasperl says and believe him to be the author of the play. However, this, as well as Kasperl's claim that he has killed his wife, is undermined later in the text.

While awaiting execution Kasperl receives a visit from Giselher, a friend of his who is a reporter. Their conversation, during which Kasperl denies ever having a wife, almost ends in Giselher stabbing Kasperl, but Apollo arrives in time to stop this, saying: "öha herr journalist, ned der justiz vuagreifn!" (SW 314). Kasperl's credibility as a reliable source of information is called into question and the reader must doubt whether he/she can take anything he says at face value. Does he have a wife or does he not? Has he commited the crime of murder or not? Can he write or not? Is he the author of the play or not? These are all questions that must, in view of Kasperl's conversation with Giselher, remain unanswered. After Apollo's intervention the electric chair of the play's title is brought onto the stage and the play ends with Kasperl scrambling onto it, to escape the woman in the audience mentioned above who offers him "die wärme einer weiblichen mitfühlenden brust" (SW 315), and in effect giving the order for his own execution with the words "los! anfangen!" (SW 316). The final line of the text, "apollo legt den grossen hebelschalter um" (SW 316), leads one to believe that Kasperl is then executed.

However, even Kasperl's ultimate fate is uncertain, because, as Rühm points out in his notes on kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, the play's ending is "noch skizzenhaft" (SW 780) due to the existence of two other handwritten versions. In one of these versions "löwe" and Apollo, dressed as doctors, strap Kasperl to the electric chair, which is

actually "ein schockapparat" (SW 780). When unstrapped, Kasperl grows wings which then transport him heavenward. The other version sees Kasperl believing he is dead, although the electric chair needs to be repaired because of a short circuit. I concur with Schmidt-Dengler who observes that it is not a question of deciding for one of the three endings, but of acknowledging the simultaneous existence of all three ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 88), thereby also acknowledging the uncertainty and open-endedness of the whole text.

Like Rühm's Hanswurst and Artmann's Casper, Bayer's Kasperl is identifiable as a traditional figure of Viennese folk theatre. "löwe" recognises him as soon as he is told his name: "löwe . . . : sie heissen? / kasperl: ich bin der kaschberl. / löwe: schon wieder." (SW 305). Kasperl clearly speaks Viennese dialect and also gives Vienna as his place of residence. In addition, he can adopt a variety of sometimes contradictory roles. As Huber observes, he enters the police station as an average citizen, but, in the course of the text, he is also a criminal, a husband and an author who cannot read or write (74). Like the Hanswurst of the "Volkstheater", his life is complicated by his involvement with women - the wife he claims to have murdered and the woman at the end of the text who sees herself as his saviour. Initially, he seems to be naive, stupid and deferential to the authorities - he gives himself up to the police and is at pains to be polite to them, as his repeated use of the word "bittschön" indicates. However, it soon becomes apparent that Bayer's Kasperl is also more devious than he at first appears. It seems to be his intention to trick the authorities into executing him. Having confessed the crime he alleges that he has committed, he asks hopefully: "wea i jetzt schon hingerichtet? (SW 304).

In the tradition of comic figures that stretches back to the Commedia dell'arte, Bayer's Kasperl is, above all, a social misfit (Hinck 18), a "Störenfried" who clashes with the community around him. To this community, Kasperl is at first nothing more than "ein ignorant" (SW 303), a "lästiger kerl" (SW 304) who disrupts the action on stage. Even after he claims to be the author of the play in which they are appearing, Kasperl's characters appear not to take him seriously : "der sprecher" says of his portrayal of them: "das kann man doch net ernst nehmen" (SW 305). However, at the same time, like the opponents of Hanswurst and Bernardon in the eighteenth century, they are anxious to get rid of him, something which proves difficult. Although seemingly nothing more than an annoying but harmless nuisance, Kasperl is dangerous not because he claims to have killed his wife, but because he claims to be the creator of the world that he and the other characters inhabit. Like Artmann's Kasper in die gute fee pocahontas oder kasper als schildwache, he places himself outside the collective and so is regarded as threatening and treated with suspicion. Just as he disrupts the action on stage and tears down the veil of theatrical illusion, Bayer's Kasperl equally threatens the reality of the other characters, who, he claims, are his fictitious creations. He thus not only challenges the authority of the policemen - "löwe" accuses him of "widersetzlichkeit gegen die amtsgewalt" (SW 305) - but the very reality of their existence. This is why Kasperl must die and why "löwe" instantly condemns him to death. Once again, Kasperl finds himself in a life-threatening situation.

However, Bayer's Kasperl differs from the Kasperl of the Volkstheater and his contemporaries in Artmann's texts in many ways. Right from the start of the text, by means of the "sprecher", the female member of the audience and "herr a" and "herr b", Bayer plays with the notions of reality and illusion. The speaker who introduces the play and at various stages of the text interjects with comments belongs to the illusion

on stage but is outside of the real action of the play. The "weibliche zuschauerin" similarly comments on the play from outside of it, but she becomes part of the onstage action at the end of the text when she charges towards the stage to try to prevent Kasperl's execution. Likewise, "herr a" and "herr b" are detached from the play to some extent, although their "loge" is situated on the stage and they speak directly to the characters who act out the main drama. They introduce another dimension to the concepts of reality and illusion by initially commenting on the action in the auditorium as if it were part of the play they have come to see. Added to these layers of theatrical illusion is the fact that Kasperl claims to have written the play that they all are performing in. By blurring the boundaries between actor and spectator and character and author, Bayer succeeds in creating the "variationen des standortes" (SW 148) he mentioned in the "beilage" of der analfabet. It is an example of the self-undermining nature of Bayer's texts that I referred to earlier when discussing the position of the critic in relation to Bayer's work and is a process that is continued in the figure of Kasperl.

Kasperl's statements seem to be governed by the same principle of "veränderung" that was shown to be a characteristic feature of der analfabet. Just as action in language was shown in that text to be no guarantee of real action and the reader therefore can not be sure, for example, whether the captain is dead or alive, in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl the reader must concede that Kasperl's claim that he has killed his wife does not automatically mean that this action has actually taken place, especially in view of the fact that Kasperl later maintains that he invented this wife.[68] It seems that the reader cannot afford to believe anything that Kasperl says. This is one

[68] Ulrich Janetzki also observes this in relation to another Bayer text, opposing what he terms "Sprache als Handlungsträger" or "Sprachhandlung" to "aktive[r] Handlung" ("Die Welt" 344-345).

way of ensuring that the reader maintains the "abstand" stressed by Bayer in his "beilage" – the rational and emotional distance that is necessary for the reading of his texts. Once again, as in der analfabet, Bayer seems to present a context of utterance only to undermine it. The reader must neither identify with nor accept Bayer's Kasperl as the Kasperl of the "Volkstheater".

That Bayer is undermining the conventions of the "Kasperltheater" is evident from the fact his Kasperl seems to want to be executed, a desire that transgresses the law regarding the immortality of Kasperl expressed in the phrase: "Der Kaspar darf nicht sterben!". However, this undermining of convention is, in turn, undermined by the existence of the three different versions of the end of the text referred to above. In kasperl am elektrischen stuhl Bayer seems to try to ensure that the text resists interpretation. I now wish to consider the findings of those who, in spite of this, try to interpret it.

Schmidt-Dengler interprets the Kasperl figures of both Artmann and Bayer in the context of the "Selbstverständnis der Autoren der 'Wiener Gruppe'" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 83) and the cultural climate of 1950s Austria, a view essentially shared by Huber (52, 72). Schmidt-Dengler argues that, as an author who is treated with suspicion, rejected as an outsider and under constant threat, Kasperl represents the Group's position as a subversive element on the fringes of the literary establishment: "Daß Kasperl in seiner Freiheit beschränkt und bedroht wird, zeigt wohl an, wie sehr sich diese Autoren ihrer prekären Lage bewußt waren. Kasperl, der ständig unterwegs ist, muß mit Fesselung und Bestrafung rechnen; bei Bayer wird er in einen Käfig gesperrt" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 92).

This is certainly one valid dimension that can be attributed to kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, particularly as the text contains overt references to 1950s Vienna.

Rühm confirms that some of the names used are "verballhornungen" of the names of certain Viennese critics whom Bayer found particularly unpleasant (SW 781). "herr weisenpeter" is one such critic and his accusations against communists and his suggestion that a prayer should precede all performances (SW 315) are allusions by Bayer to the Cold War tensions and Catholic ethos that held sway in Austria when the text was written. The audience members "herr a" and "herr b", ignorant and unappreciative, clearly stand for the Viennese public and its reaction to the literary endeavours of the Vienna Group.[69] Portenkirchner illustrates how the response of "herr b" to Kasperl's disruption of the action onstage - "merkt er denn net, dass er stört. die herren wollen ja weiterspielen" (SW 303) - symbolises the restorative attitude that prevailed in post-war Austria: "Die Kontinuität der Ordnung repräsentiert denn auch das im Nachkriegsösterreich herrschende Harmoniebestreben innerhalb einer Gesellschaft, die die Verbrechen der Nazizeit verdrängt und nicht die Verbrecher, sondern die 'Störenfriede' isoliert und ausgrenzt" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 257).

Kasperl is also interpreted by Schmidt-Dengler as a guarantor of freedom ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 86), who almost inevitably manages to avoid the attempts of others to restrict him and bind him to the rules and expectations of society. The critic claims that Bayer's Kasperl is very closely linked to the Kasperl figures of Artmann's texts, but makes the following observation: "Indes wird bei Bayer noch deutlicher, wie sehr die Autonomie dieser Figur den Übergriffen gesellschaftlicher Autoritäten ausgesetzt ist" ("Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 86). In view of this, then surely the fact

[69] That the climate of 1950s Vienna had a direct influence on the literary works of members of the Wiener Gruppe is also particularly evident in Kein Pfeffer für Czermak and Erlaubent, Schas, sehr heiß bitte! (both in H. C. Artmann, die fahrt zur insel nantucket. theater, Neuwied/Berlin: Luchterhand, 1969), two dramatic texts by Artmann which present Vienna in a very critical light.

that, as Schmidt-Dengler himself concedes, Bayer's Kasperl manages to overcome the obstacles that society places in the way of his autonomy makes him more of a hero than a victim? This, in my opinion, is a key difference between Bayer and Artmann's portrayal of the Kasperl figure that deserves closer consideration. It is one of several differences that point to a more radical interpretation of the figure on the part of Bayer.

As I base much of what follows on the assumption that Bayer's Kasperl wants to die, I first wish to present the arguments that support such an assumption. I referred above to the scene in which Kasperl arrives at the police station and confesses to having killed his wife. It seems that he does this because he believes that it will ensure his execution. When given forms to fill out, he thinks he has secured his fate and asks hopefully: "wea i jetzt schon hingerichtet?" (SW 304). When he is later told to go away, the disappointment and the determination to be executed that he expresses in the following extract would seem to confirm this desire:

> apollo: und jetzt verschwinden s!
> kasperl: oba bitte die hinrichtung!
> apollo: rrrauss!!
> apollo beginnt kasperl rauszudrängen.
> kasperl: oba bitte!!
> apollo schlägt mit knüttel auf kasperl ein, der sich verzweifelt im türrahmen festhält. kasperl entwischt und stellt sich im raum auf.
> (SW 304)

However, as I have already pointed out, one cannot necessarily believe what Kasperl says.[70] Whether Kasperl actually dies or not is an issue that the lack of a single ending to the play would also seem to leave unresolved. On closer inspection, however, none

[70] One must also bear in mind, especially in view of the fact that the illusionary nature of theatre is stressed throughout the text, that Kasperl's death, if it were to occur, would be a stage death and would therefore be a death that he would survive, a thought that introduces yet another dimension to the matter.

of the three possible endings seems to rule out the possibility that Kasperl's apparent wish is granted. Indeed, the various "Schlußversionen" lend credence to the argument that he wants to die. While the ending which appears as part of the typed manuscript does not show Kasperl dying, the fact that he gives the instruction for Apollo to begin the execution process supports the hypothesis that he at least desires this fate, while the stage direction "apollo schlägt den grossen hebelschalter um" (SW 316) would suggest that he is electrocuted. Even the alternative ending in which Kasperl does not die because of a short circuit sees him believing that he is dead and does not exclude the possibility that this is what he yearns for. In the other handwritten ending referred to by Rühm Kasperl grows wings and ascends upwards, which suggests that he is dead or at least that he is leaving the domain that he has inhabited. Since for the purposes of my further investigations it is interesting to consider why Bayer would create a Kasperl figure who seems to want to engineer his own execution and since the text does not discount this as a possibility, as I continue my discussion of kasperl am elektrischen stuhl I will hypothesize that Kasperl wants to die. I now return to my comparison of Bayer's Kasperl with Artmann's Kasperl figures.

Unlike Artmann's Kasperl figures, who are often cowardly and likely to burst into tears or faint at the first sign of trouble, Bayer's Kasperl shows no sign of weakness, but is uncompromising to the end. The fact that he ends up on the electric chair testifies to this. While one feels that Artmann's poet Pierrot commits suicide out of passionate desperation after the cyclops Enocchina destroys the "schwarze Puppe" that he has fallen in love with (die fahrt 17), it seems that Bayer's Kasperl deliberately

intends to do so.[71] Although both authors present Kasperl as a symbol of resistance, it is Bayer's version that is the more anarchic. I outlined above that Artmann's Kasperl figures seem to sometimes have difficulty in differentiating between fantasy and reality or like to see the world from a different perspective. In kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, Bayer takes this much further by making Kasperl the creator of the world of the text.[72]

Unlike Artmann's Caspar in die mißglückte luftreise, who, much to his horror, ends up in the arms of the widow, Kasperl manages to escape the woman in the audience who offers him the comfort of her bosom. And unlike his namesake in die gute fee pocahontas oder kasper als schildwache, Kasperl does not need the assistance of a fairy to achieve his goal. Nor is his identity defined in terms of other people: while Artmann's Kasper escapes from the military collective, he is still part of a community, the Indian community, where he will remain until the war is over, and has an emotional attachment to the captain's wife, albeit one that is based on his desire for revenge against the captain. Bayer's Kasperl, who as an author is the creator not only of the other characters' identities, but also of his own identity, is able, by bringing about his own execution to cut all such ties and be an individual entity.

Another feature that distinguishes Bayer's Kasperl from the Kasperl figures of the "Volkstheater" and of Artmann and Rühm's dramatic texts is his stance on language. While in the "Volkskomödie" the comic figure's apparent linguistic clumsiness may be

[71] As the reasons for Kasperl's apparent suicide bid are discussed in the following section, they are not given further consideration here.

[72] Portenkirchner notes this similarity, but does not differentiate between Artmann and Bayer's portrayals of Kasperl: "Kaspar fungiert in diesen Stücken nicht nur als tragische, von Einsamkeit und Tod bedrohte Figur, deren Außenseiterposition die Isolation der Wiener Gruppe wiederspiegelt, sondern auch als der Schalk, der im Gewand einer närrischen Sprache die herkömmliche Sichtweise verlacht . . Die Welt, aufgefaßt als Kasperltheater . .. " (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 258, 261).

understood as indirect criticism of the conventional linguistic system (Huber 61), and while Rühm's Hanswurst and Artmann's Punch have been shown to be inventive and sometimes subversive in their use of language, Bayer's Kasperl is far more radical in his attitude towards language. This is where my interpretation of this figure departs from those of the critics mentioned above and why, in my opinion, Kasperl must be considered in the context of Bayer's "Sprachkritik". The next section therefore continues the investigation with which this chapter began and examines the consequences of extreme language criticism for the individual in Bayer's texts by discussing Kasperl and two other figures with a definite stance on language - the analphabet and the idiot.

3.5 "Sprachskepsis" and the individual in Bayer's texts

3.5.1 The figure of Kasperl

When Kasperl announces that he cannot write, the reaction of Löwe is unequivocal - he wants nothing more to do with Kasperl:

> kasperl (dreht sich): bittschön, i kaun goaned schreim.
> löwe: daun lossns uns in rua und gengans zaus. (SW 304)

Kasperl is told to go home and is thus excluded from the "uns" of the police chief's statement. This "uns" consists of the linguistic community, those who can read and write. To the members of this community, Kasperl is simply a nuisance: "lästig" is how "herr a" describes him (SW 304). When Apollo discovers that Kasperl cannot write, he threateningly asks him if he has submitted a written application for a "bewilligung zur verübung eines mordes" (SW 304). Kasperl confirms that he has not and is promptly fined fifty schillings. Kasperl is punished for being ignorant of and not complying with the rules of the language community. He is beaten and pushed out of the police station by Apollo because he has not conformed to the rules of what Wittgenstein would define as that community's language-games, although in this case the idea of applying for permission to commit a murder is ridiculous anyway.

In his conversation with Giselher, the reporter, Kasperl later reveals the reason why he refuses to conform in this way, expanding upon his attitude to language, this time spoken language, referred to as "sprechen":

> reporter: sprechen sie manchmal?
> kasperl: ja, aber nie anders, als mich zu unterhalten.
> reporter: sprechen sie gern?
> kasperl: ich spreche nur zum zeitvertreib.
> reporter: aber mich dünkt, das sprechen sei eine sehr gefährliche unterhaltung?
> kasperl: das ist wahr, doch nur, wenn man zuhört.
> reporter: aber sie sprechen jetzt doch, um von mir gehört zu werden!
> kasperl: das ist eine lüge!wenn ich ihnen etwas mitzuteilen hätte, würde ich es sein lassen. es würde in den sätzen hängen bleiben.

reporter: es würde nur zu missverständnissen kommen,
kasperl: zu unstimmigkeiten führen,
reporter: zu schlägereien,
kasperl: zu streit,
reporter: ärger bereiten,
kasperl: freundschaften zerstören.
reporter: wenn man zuhört,
kasperl: weiss man nicht wie's gemeint ist.
reporter: sie könnten es nicht besser wissen,
kasperl: sie könnten lügen,
reporter: sie könnten es ehrlich meinen.
kasperl: aber wie soll das heraus?
wo soll das hinein? . . .
reporter: sprechen sie oft?
kasperl: sehr selten.
reporter: und warum?
kasperl: weil es viele betrüger gibt. man läuft da grosse gefahr, weil die wie ordentliche leut aussehen. die hören zu, die merken auf, alles nehmen sie beim wort.
reporter: das ist eine rücksichtslosigkeit.
kasperl: eine gemeinheit.
reporter: eine frechheit.
kasperl: es handelt sich um verbrecher. (SW 308-309)

This passage, quoted in part earlier in this chapter, appears not only in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl but also in its entirety, with some very minor variations, in die boxer (SW 215-217). die pfandleihe also contains most of the above, up to "hinein", again with few changes. The fact that Bayer uses this passage in three of his dramatic texts suggests that it includes some important ideas.

Speaking is described above by Kasperl on the one hand as something which he engages in for the sake of amusement or to pass time, and on the other hand as a dangerous activity that, if used to try to communicate something, can only lead to misunderstanding, disagreement and trouble. I have already discussed the position of the listener as outlined in this extract with reference to the critic of Bayer's work. From what Giselher (the reporter) and Kasperl say, it seems that the speaker can be just as much of a "betrüger" as the listener because one can never know if he/she is telling the truth, lying or just does not know any better. During his conversation with

Giselher Kasperl claims that he has various amounts of children, ranging from four to thirty million and one. He also claims at different stages of the dialogue that he is a widower, that his wife has left him and that he is engaged, and then tells Giselher that he invented the wife he claims to have killed:

> reporter . . .: sie hatten also eine frau?
> kasperl: nein.
> reporter: es ist gemein von ihnen, eine tote zu verleugnen!
> kasperl: ich habe sie erfunden. (SW 313)

Here, in what is an example of the principle of "veränderung" outlined by Bayer in the "beilage" to der analfabet, Kasperl illustrates how language can be used to create one's own reality, a reality that does not necessarily have to correspond to that usually depicted by conventional, normative language. The reality presented by Kasperl is not static and restricting, but is in constant flux and rich in possibilities. This demonstrates how Bayer, instead of allowing language to restrict his thoughts and impose a particular order on his view of reality, subverts language's normative tendencies and manipulates it in a way that unleashes its user's creative potential. The following line from 17. jänner 1962 is thus an apt description of what happens in Bayer's dramatic texts: "die wirklichkeit bläht sich . . . auf und zerplatzt" (SW 282).[73]

The position adopted by Kasperl can be linked to the Vienna Group's radical opposition against what Portenkirchner calls "das öffentliche Wirklichkeitsbild":

> Angesichts der Weigerung am herrschenden Diskurs teilzunehmen, wird das Mißtrauen gegen politische Auseinandersetzungen, gesellschaftliche

[73] The fact that language can be used to create one's own reality is demonstrated on a number of occasions in die boxer (for these instances see SW 209-211). The most obvious example is when the figure 1, who in this first round has taken a lot more punches than he has given, suddenly declares himself the winner of the round: "1: es ist wahr, ich habe gewonnen. / (er hört seiner stimme nach, springt hoch) / ich habe gewonnen, ich habe gewonnen, gewonnen, gewonnen!!! / (springt herum, sein betreuer läuft in den ring und flüstert ihm ins ohr. / 2 sitzt dieweil schluchzend am boden) / (ringrichter beginnt zu zählen, aber dann gong) (SW 215). The stage direction "er hört seiner stimme nach" emphasises that it is language that makes 1's victory a reality, a reality that is also validated linguistically with the words "es ist wahr".

> Normen und die bloße Übernahme konventioneller literarischer Formen deutlich und zeigt, in welche Stoßrichtung der Protest ging. Ein Protest, der sich vor allem gegen die Normierung der Wirklichkeit durch die Sprache richtete und dem mimetischen Prinzip jenes der Konstruktion von Wirklichkeit entgegensetzte.
> (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 237)

Just as the Hanswurst of the "Volkstheater" revealed "die Brüchigkeit des barocken Weltbildes" (Sonnleitner 357), by exposing the way in which reality is created through language, Bayer's Kasperl could be said to reveal the fragile nature of the reality presented to the public in 1950s Austria, a reality that was, at least partly, a myth born out of state propaganda and supported by a state-sponsored national literature.

Kasperl's position is paradoxical in that he rejects language on the one hand, while presumably using it to practise his profession as an author on the other. He thus embodies the dilemma that Konrad Bayer found himself in and so can be regarded as a self-referential figure. I have illustrated how both Kasperl and Bayer's creative use of language succeeds in undermining its deficiencies, making of it a potentially powerful tool for creative individual self-expression. Kasperl stresses that speaking is dangerous only if one listens. He claims that he speaks, not to be heard by others, but only to pass the time and amuse himself. If one applies Kasperl's logic to Konrad Bayer and construes that writing is an activity he engaged in not for the purpose of being heard by others but solely to amuse himself, then his texts can be read as very personal attempts to manifest the self and assert its existence, since it would appear to be futile to seek such acknowledgement from others. This points to an inextricable link between Bayer the writer and Bayer the man and reveals that, for Bayer, to write was to fulfil an existential need.

In the eyes of the society around him, Kasperl is a failure because he does not conform to its expectations. It seems that he has failed or refused to learn the written

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form of its linguistic system and rejects that system's spoken form. This anti-social behaviour is compounded by the fact that he maintains that he has killed his wife. Professionally, he is presented as being inferior to Giselher, the reporter, who also writes for a living, but, unlike Kasperl, plays the language-games of the linguistic community to which he belongs. Thus Kasperl is, in society's eyes, a nonentity, a failure, something which is, of course, far more critical of society than of Kasperl.

Things take on a different dimension, however, if one hypothesizes that Kasperl wants to be executed. However, it is not his alleged crime of murder that eventually ensures that he is sentenced to death, but the fact that he says he is the author of the play in which he and the other characters are appearing, that is, the creator of his own linguistic reality. His reporter friend Giselher seems to know that this is what has landed Kasperl in trouble, and he suggests that Kasperl would not have found himself in this situation if he too had become a reporter and had played society's language-games according to the rules: "no siggst, weast zu uns komman" (SW 306). Once again Kasperl is excluded from the "uns" of the linguistic community that cannot cope with his individualistic and creative use of language. This exclusion, however, appears to be exactly what Kasperl wants. His position as outsider is a situation of his own making. By rejecting the conventional language of the community that surrounds him, by refusing to participate in its language-games, Kasperl cuts off the lines of communication and alienates himself from others. In doing so, he escapes the community's linguistic ties. By killing his wife, if he actually does this, Kasperl removes another tie, namely that of marriage. The end of the play links Kasperl's self-exclusion and his wish to die:

> weibl. zuschauer: halt! dieser mann gehört mir. ehe er von uns geht, soll er mein lager teilen, mein eigen sein, die wärme einer weiblichen mitfühlenden brust verspüren, getröstet sein, gefunden haben was er

sucht, besitzen was er zerstört zu haben vorgibt. er, ein elender,
dürfen wir ihm diesen trost vorenthalten, er, der die gemeinschaft,
uns, missverstanden, soll kosten in ihrer kleinsten form, keimzelle,
jawohl familie, was die sozietas bedeutet. zu mir! in meine arme!
kaspar! du! ein verlorener!
sie läuft hinaus zur bühne. kaspar klettert über die vielen stufen rettend auf den stuhl.
kasperl: los! anfangen!
apollo legt den grossen hebelschalter um. (SW 315-316)

Kasperl chooses the electric chair instead of the female spectator who expresses her desire to save him in what one imagines to be the rhetoric of the propagandists of a sound society in Bayer's Austria. She represents "die gemeinschaft", "familie", "die sozietas" and Kasperl's running from her signifies his rejection of all these things - community, family, society. The female spectator's use of the verb "gehören" is significant. Kasperl's rejection of her symbolises his refusal to belong to anyone, his rejection of all ties, linguistic and social. To society he is "ein elender", "ein verlorener", but in his own eyes he has secured his salvation: "kaspar klettert über die vielen stufen *rettend* auf den stuhl" (emphasis added). To Kasperl salvation means that he succeeds in escaping the ties, linguistic and otherwise, of society. He is free, a true individual, not defined by outside forces but from within. Kasperl's salvation, however, also means death, because such an existence outside of the community cannot be sustained.[74]

[74] A comparison between Bayer's kasperl am elektrischen stuhl and Peter Handke's Kaspar (1966), a text that has been described as "the marriage of Wittgenstein and Kasperl" (Bodi 74), while promising to be useful in assessing the influence of Bayer on a far more well-known experimental writer who expressed his admiration for Bayer's work, lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Kaspar portrays a figure who, because he is subjected to the process of socialisation through language, loses his unique identity and becomes just like everyone else. This is, in effect, the position in which Bayer's Kasperl finds himself. By cutting all ties with society, most importantly the linguistic ties that bind him most tightly to it, he strives, in a sense, to reverse the process of socialisation through language depicted by Handke.

3.5.2 The figure of the analphabet

The title of der analfabet suggests that this text will feature a character with no knowledge of the alphabet. Like Kasperl, the "analfabet", by definition, cannot read or write. While far from the sympathetic, comic Kasperl of kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, the analphabet of Bayer's text has, at least, this in common with him.

From the very first line of der analfabet it is clear that the analphabet is regarded as someone great and powerful.[75] He is praised as a king would be: "1 (mit feuer) es lebe der grosse analfabet!" (SW 150). This line is repeated later in this opening scene, and again in Scenes 12 and 16. While the text's figures seem to have great respect for the analphabet, this respect is accompanied by fear. Since the analphabet never physically appears in the play, other sources must be relied on for any information about him.The text's full title supplies the following information: "der analfabet tritt in rudeln und einzeln auf. / er überfällt ausflügler" (SW 148). The figures of the text present the analphabet as an almost mythological figure and certainly as someone to be feared. In Scene 1 he is described as "wölfisch" (SW 150). In Scene 12 one learns that the two sailors have never seen him, that nobody knows him - "matrose 2 niemand kennt ihn" (SW 160) - but in spite of this, they seem to know that his teeth are as white as snow and cold as ice and that he has "einen fleischmagen" (SW 160). He is described as having "unzählige verwandlungen" (SW 160). The sailors fear him, which is not surprising because nobody survives him - "matrose 1 niemand überlebt ihn" (SW 160). The emphasis on the predatory, animalistic nature of the analphabet (the references to his teeth, stomach, his similarity to a wolf and the fact that he goes around in packs) suggests that he consumes and destroys everything in his path,

[75] Since this text has been discussed in detail in Chapter 2, a synopsis of it is not necessary here.

leaving nothing and no one to survive him. Such a description of the analphabet, whom the figures of the text praise as a king, explains, perhaps, why cannibalism is part of their customs and traditions. I have shown in my linguistic analysis of the text in Chapter 2 how cannibalism seems to regularly surface in the figures' subconscious, and the same can be said of the analphabet, who seems to dominate their existence.

In his notes on the text, Rühm refers to some "regievorschläge" which accompanied Bayer's manuscript, including the following statement: "der analfabet: eine allegorie der dummheit und des todes" (SW 764). He also includes the "legende" that Bayer wrote for the play:

> vor vielen, vielen jahren lebte ein chefarzt in seiner alten, efeuumwucherten heilanstalt. da kam der hilfswärter des wegs, ein äusserst dummer mensch.
> nun sprach der junge, schöne chefarzt, in seinen weiten, weissen, weichen mantel gehüllt: "mit ihnen habe ich zu reden, sie analfabet!" da bewunderten die umstehenden narren und närrinnen den hilfswärter noch mehr, der durch die gänge gehen konnte, nach links und rechts, nach oben und unten, der die schnalle zur gittertür in der hosentasche trug und den grossen park zu jedem wochenende verliess, wie es ihm beliebte. und noch nach vielen, vielen jahren hofften die leute in der heilanstalt, dass er wiederkommen möge, der schon solange ausgeblieben war, mindestens hundert jahre. und die leichten fälle, die sich auf der glasveranda sonnen und zuweilen durch die gänge gehen dürfen, reissen manchmal die türen auf und dann glauben alle schweren fälle, das ist er. (SW 763-764)

The "hilfswärter" of this "legende" is the analphabet of the dramatic text. In the "legende" he is described as being an extremely stupid person, which presumably causes the "chefarzt" to call him an analphabet. This gains him even more admiration from the "narren und närrinnen", who already admired him for the way in which he could move around freely, both outside and inside the institution. Over the years, he comes to be regarded in almost messianic terms by the inmates of the institution who hope, one hundred years later, for his return.

The dramatic text of der analfabet certainly contains some aspects of this "legende". The freedom and power associated with the "hilfswärter" (he can move freely through the corridors and holds the handle to the door) is also associated with the analphabet, who seems all-powerful. Obviously the term "analfabet" links the two; and both figures seem to take on an almost mythological character. The difference between them, however, is that while the second coming of the "hilfswärter" is awaited with joy and hope, the figures of the dramatic text seem to live in dread of the analphabet, who evokes far more sinister associations than his doppelgänger in Bayer's "legende". While the analphabet never receives a physical form because he never appears on stage, he nevertheless represents a definite position on language: like Kasperl he is ignorant of its written form.

3.5.3 The figure of the idiot

The title idiot, like der analfabet, suggests on a first reading a figure lacking in knowledge of some sort and there are, indeed, many similarities between the two figures. Just as the analphabet seems to be more animal-like than human, neither is the figure *a* in idiot fully human. He is, rather, "ein menschenähnliches wesen" (SW 243) known as *a*. At first a victim of violence - he is attacked by others if he attempts to speak - he himself soon learns to dispense violence with a vigour that leaves others totally defenceless and completely at his mercy. The terrible deeds we suspected of the analphabet from things said about him by other figures, are enacted by the idiot, who seems to be a larger-than-life version of the analphabet. The destruction, cannibalism and death associated with the analphabet become a gruesome reality in the excesses of

the idiot, who annihilates others in the extremely violent and gory attacks that make up the first scene.

In the second scene, entitled "2. szene scheissdreck", *a* negates almost everything as "scheissdreck", including his clothes and body, the theatre, art, science, philosophy, religion, politics, the state, love, pride, sexuality, friendship, hope, fear, the economy, chaos, nature, idealism, electricity, life and death, among other things. The speech culminates in *a* declaring himself to be an idiot: "ich bin ein idiot. idiot sein heisst für sich sein" (SW 249). This statement points to another meaning of the term "idiot", derived from the original Greek "idiotes", which Wolfgang Max Faust defines as "eigen, privat, eigentümlich" (145). Rühm confirms that Bayer could not decide on a final title for this text: "bayer schwankte zwischen dem titel 'idiot' und 'idiotes'" (SW 772).

a's speech is interrupted by the appearance of "ein mensch", who calls *a* "bruder" three times. Each time *a* knocks him down, but, interestingly, he does not kill him as he did the other figures in the opening scene. In a tirade of abuse directed at "der mensch", *a* objects to his mere existence. He finds it unfair that he has to see and hear the human being and accuses him of forcing his way into his eyes and ears, and of wanting to kill him. He also claims that having to look upon another being makes him want to kill himself. In the third scene *a* continues his harangue against "der mensch", claiming that communication between them is impossible and that he will speak only with himself: "ich weiss nichts von dir und will von dir nichts wissen, das heisst ich kann von dir nichts wissen, denn zwischen uns ist ein unüberbrückbarer abgrund des

unverständnisses . . . ich spreche mit mir" (SW 251). This scene ends with *a* kicking "der mensch".

Bayer's idiot has a clearly defined attitude to language. At the beginning of the text, any attempt he makes to speak is met with verbal or physical violence and he himself soon learns to react violently to the attempts of others to speak to him. In his "scheissdreck" speech he includes "scheissreden" (SW 245), but it is in his invective against "der mensch" that his attitude to language is best illustrated. He says to him: "ich kann nur mit mir sprechen. denn was ich spreche kannst du nicht verstehen, wie ich nicht verstehen kann was du sprichst" (SW 249). *a* believes that communication and understanding through language are impossible. He believes that there exist between individuals abysses of misunderstanding, which, it would seem, cannot be bridged by language. This echoes Kasperl's statement referred to earlier: "wenn ich ihnen etwas mitzuteilen hätte, würde ich es sein lassen. es würde in den sätzen hängen bleiben" (SW 308). Indeed, instead of bridging the gaps between people and helping them to understand one another, *a* is convinced that language does the opposite and results in misrepresentation and misunderstanding, because people think they understand each other, but really impose their own interpretation on what others say. It is this conviction that urges *a* to turn to physical violence, which in idiot seems to act as an alternative to verbal communication[76]: "du kannst mich nicht verstehen. du hörst IRGENDWAS und treibst damit unfug, sau, sau, ich zertrete dich (gibt ihm einen fusstritt)" (SW 251). The realisation of the impossibility of being understood by others

[76] Violence as an alternative to verbal communication in Bayer's texts is discussed in Chapter 5.

because of the lack of an adequate means of communication leads *a* to attempt to annihilate all other beings.

It is becoming clear that Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot have much in common. The next two sections therefore consider these figures' similarities and their significance for Bayer's work.

3.5.4 Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot: variations on a theme?

By virtue alone of the words used to refer to them, these three figures are associated with some sort of intellectual deficiency: the analphabet cannot read or write, referring to someone as an idiot implies that they are stupid and, as Müller-Kampel points out, to be called "Kasperl" when arguing with somebody is quite insulting, since it infers "geistige Beschränktheit" (Schmidt-Dengler, Sonnleitner and Zeyringer 33). This is the most obvious characteristic that links these three figures. Another is the variety of forms that they assume: the analphabet has "unzählige verwandlungen" (SW 160) and seems to combine both human and animal characteristics, Kasperl, like his predecessors in the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater", is many things at once - a murderer, an average citizen guilty of no crime, an author, an analphabet, a husband and father and a single man with no children - and the idiot is described as "ein menschenähnliches wesen" (SW 243).

All three are perceived to be dangerous and inspire fear in others. This is perhaps more obvious in the cases of the analphabet and the idiot, but those around Kasperl are very anxious to get rid of him and even condemn him to death. The analphabet and the idiot in particular are depicted as deadly and destructive, associated as they are with violence, cannibalism and death. Nobody survives the analphabet and the idiot tries to

wipe out all traces of humanity. Thus, these figures are immensely powerful and have an almost apocalyptic quality about them.

While Kasperl may be potentially extremely violent, this violence is not confirmed. It is never actually established that he has killed his wife and since he is a sympathetic, comic figure, he seems quite harmless by comparison with the other two. As with Kasperl, the violence of the analphabet, recounted by others, is never depicted on stage. In the previous section I referred to the idiot as a larger-than-life version of the analphabet because the atrocious deeds suspected of the analphabet are enacted by him. In my opinion, this, in conjunction with the common characteristics highlighted above, indicates that Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot are variations of the same figure, whose ever-increasing violence and radicalism mirrors Bayer's own downward spiral into extreme language criticism and desperation.

What also unites Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot is their rejection of language. Kasperl cannot write, the analphabet, by definition, cannot read or write and the idiot is extremely critical of language as a means of communication and rejects it. In this sense, the three embody Bayer's "Sprachtheorie", which, as Rühm has stated, culminated in extreme language criticism. This led Bayer to doubt language as a mediator. If unable to communicate with others, the individual is left in total isolation, to speak only with him/herself. To quote Rühm again:

> er zweifelte mehr und mehr an einer kommunikationsmöglichkeit überhaupt, stellte die sprache als brauchbaren vermittler in frage: sie eigne sich bestenfalls für insichbezogene dichtung - *sei* dichtung . . . der einzelne ist isoliert, gefangen in seiner subjektiven gedankenwelt. jedes gespräch ist ein monolog, man kann *sich* nicht verständlich machen . . . so entwarf er einen "einmannstaat", für sich, flüchtig auf einem notizblatt. (SW 16-17)

The rejection of language as a means of communication has, as is evident from the above quote from Rühm, serious implications for the individual. If communication with others is impossible, how are individuals to function in the world?

I now return to the three figures discussed above to see what consequences a rejection of language has for them as individuals. Of these three figures, the idiot is the one who verbalises his position most clearly. In his "scheissdreck" speech he not only rejects language as a means of communication ("scheissreden"), but also the cornerstones of knowledge which form the basis of civilization as we know it:

> a: die kunst ist ein scheissdreck
> die wissenschaft ist ein scheissdreck
> die philosophie ist ein scheissdreck . . .
> die erziehung ist ein scheissdreck . . .
> das denken ist ein scheissdreck (SW 246-247)

The "scheissdreck" speech, which denies the value of human knowledge as represented in philosophy, art, science, education and thinking, culminates in *a*'s proclamation of "idiocy", which is simultaneously a radical rejection of knowledge and a turning towards the self: "ich bin ein idiot. idiot sein heisst für sich sein" (SW 249).[77] The idiot's rejection of art, philosophy and science, disciplines that define and explain the world for us and control our way of thinking, is also a refusal on his part to think along their prescribed lines of thought and to be defined by them - a refusal fuelled by his hope of then being free to be himself. This freedom requires the destruction of the existing order which forces the idiot to conform, to be part of a community, to speak that community's language and to belong to its culture. This order is supported by the

[77] The idiot's rejection echoes similar rebuffs of traditional knowledge found in the Dadaist and Surrealist traditions, for example in Antonin Artaud's "Letter to the Chancellors of the European Universities" (see Waldberg 57). Tristan Tzara expressed a similar rejection: "We took Descartes' phrase: 'I don't even want to know that there were men before me', as the motto for one of our publications. This meant that we wished to regard the world with new eyes, to reconsider the very fundamentals and test the truth of the notions handed down to us by our elders" (qtd. in Grossman 166).

collected knowledge of its community, which is passed from generation to generation through the medium of language.[78] I have already noted that the idiot perceives the mere presence of "der mensch" as a threat to his own existence. "der mensch", with his constant cry of "bruder", represents society, community. In rejecting him, the idiot therefore rejects community and society and so raises the individual, the "ich", above all things. In this he resembles Kasperl, who also seeks to free himself from the ties of society, linguistic and otherwise, so that he will not be defined by its terms. Unlike Kasperl, the idiot does not choose to die, but to try and survive in the world he loathes. The consequences of this choice are considered later in this chapter. It is becoming more and more evident that the figures of Kasperl, the idiot and the analphabet not only embody Bayer's "Sprachtheorie", but also represent his ongoing attempts to explore possibilities for the creative artist to express himself/herself and for the individual to establish himself/herself as an individual entity in the face of a language and a community founded on a normative consensus. Let us now reconsider, in light of what we know about the figures of Kasperl and the idiot, what "analfabet sein" or "analfabetismus" could mean.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the text of der analfabet fails to illuminate fully what "analfabetismus" means, or in what sense Bayer uses this word. It is clear that the usual meaning of the word analphabet does not adequately explain the powerful,

[78] This notion is, of course, not exclusive to Bayer. Fowler, for example, makes the following general comments about language:

> The meanings of the words in a language are the community's store of established knowledge . . . language is the chief instrument of socialization, which is the process by which a person is, willy-nilly, moulded into conformity with the established systems of belief of the society into which s/he happens to be born. Language gives knowledge, and allows knowledge to be transmitted from person to person. But this knowledge is traditional, not innovative, for language is a stabilizing, stereotyping, mode of communication. (19)

respected and feared figure of the "analfabet" of the text. The text's "beilage" does hint at the inadequacy of this usual meaning of the word when it divides its readers into "freunde" and "feinde des analfabetismus" (SW 148). The fact that people can be classified as friends or enemies of analphabetism confirms that the use of the term in this text is not exclusive to illiteracy, and suggests a conscious attitude towards the alphabet system, rather than an inability to use it. However, this is not directly stated anywhere in the text itself. One can speculate that, in keeping with the chaotic, disjointed structure of the text, analphabetism signifies a rejection of the alphabet and the order it imposes on the world and surmise that "analfabetismus" thus represents an ushering in of chaos and confusion. The illusive nature of the text, however, denies confirmation of such an interpretation and it is in idiot and kasperl am elektrischen stuhl that the concept of "analfabetismus" is further elucidated. These texts confirm that "analfabetismus" does not represent an inability to read and write, but rather a deliberate rejection of language. In rejecting language, the analphabet, the idiot and Kasperl reject the collected knowledge of humankind, preserved in language by one generation for the next. They refuse to be dictated to by the "wisdom" of their predecessors, they refuse to have a system of ordering the world and the self prescribed to them by a knowledge and a language in whose making they had no part.

Scene 11 of der analfabet confirms this rejection of knowledge inherited through the medium of language. For this scene Bayer suggests, in a footnote, a particular set: ". . . ich will auch für diese szene ein bestimmtes bühnenbild vorschlagen. ich erwarte vielleicht ein klassenzimmer mit ansteigenden bankreihen, die einem amfitheater gerecht bleiben" (SW 159). I have already noted in my linguistic analysis of der

analfabet how Bayer normally refuses to provide a context for the scenes of the play: Scene 11 is one of the few instances where the set is described in such detail. One must, therefore, consider the implications of the set description carefully. Also, the placing of a lion in a classroom shaped like an amphitheatre must conjure up associations with the amphitheatre of ancient Rome, where Christians were thrown to the lions.

The classroom is, traditionally, most children's first contact with formal learning. It is the place where the knowledge acquired through the ages is, with the help of books, passed on to the young. In Scene 11 of der analfabet the classroom is likened to the amphitheatre. Just as in the amphitheatre Christians were torn to pieces by the lions, Bayer seems to suggest with the set for this scene that in sending children to be educated, to have their minds filled with knowledge we, metaphorically, throw them to the lions and send them to be attacked by the alphabet, to be tortured, beaten into submission and destroyed by the knowledge and world view it encodes. Ironically, in Scene 11 it is the humans who torture the Lion of Belfort and not the other way around. They reduce him to tears with their teasing when he announces his desire to be "ein stadtschüler" (SW 159). With this scene Bayer seems to be suggesting that it is better not to have knowledge, to be an analphabet, an idiot, a fool.

3.5.5 The fool as an alternative mode of being

With the figures of Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot Bayer is postulating an alternative mode of being. Simply looking at the terms used to refer to these three figures leads one to conjecture that this alternative existence is that of the fool.[79]

There is evidence to suggest that Bayer identified himself with this fool figure which recurs in varying forms in his dramatic texts. It is significant that in the fragmentary dramatic text qui & qua, which Rühm estimates was written sometime after 1958, Bayer associates himself with the character of "hans wurst". Rühm describes the "hanswurst-szene" as "das literarisch eher harmlose bruchstück" (SW 781) and finds it interesting mainly because it reflects relationships between members of the Vienna Group at a certain time. The figures, Rühm explains, represent members of the Group and their female partners of the time, with "hanswurst" being the Bayer character. Among what Rühm calls in the Sämtliche Werke Bayer's "unbezeichnete szenische bruchstücke" (SW 844) are two further, rather sketchy scenes which also feature a "hans wurst". Rühm dates the first version of one of these scenes to about 1954, which shows that the figure of the fool was one which preoccupied Bayer from an early stage and continued to do so, idiot having been written in 1960. Kasperl, as a dramatist, is another figure who illustrates Bayer's personal identification with the figure of the fool. These figures could, therefore, be said to represent Bayer's attempts to construct some form of existence for himself as an artist and as a private individual.

The three figures examined in this section have in common their rejection of language as a means of communication and of representing the self. This rejection of

[79] The similarities between the Hanswurst of the Viennese "Volkstheater" and the fool figure of the Elizabethan theatre have been referred to in section 3.4.1 (Scheit 44-46).

language leads to a rejection of the community which uses it, and so to the isolation of the fool figures who want to exist as individuals, and not just as members of a linguistic community in whose terms they are defined. In my linguistic analysis of der analfabet in Chapter 2 I noted that the text's figures (apart from the Lion of Belfort and the analphabet) are merely speakers or presenters of text. They are not individuals but are seen to be interchangeable. In the light of the discussions of this chapter, the figures of der analfabet could be said to be nothing more than vessels of language. It is language which controls them, not the other way around. Language makes them identical and prevents them from becoming individuals. They are the embodiment of Goldenberg's line in Bayer's novel der sechste sinn: "aber ich . . . das sind wir doch alle" (SW 659). By contrast, the figure of the analphabet, like Kasperl and the idiot, is a powerful figure, a true individual who, unlike the other figures of der analfabet, refuses to be ruled by language. However, Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot represent an existence, which has, as has been illustrated, consequences for the individuals who adopt it. Kasperl seems unable and unwilling to survive. He rejects society and is, in turn, rejected by it and sentenced to death. Although, as has been pointed out, Kasperl chooses to die, death seems to be the only solution for him. Since Kasperl is an author, and a Viennese author at that, it has been argued that kasperl am elektrischen stuhl can be read as a text about experimental authors - about those who, like Kasperl, refuse to play society's conventional language-games, and their fate in the Austria of the 1950s and 1960s (Schmidt-Dengler, "Die Einsamkeit Kasperls" 83, 92; Huber 52, 72). However, it is my contention that Bayer's fool figures embody an existential dilemma that goes deeper than that - that they do not merely reflect the

sense of rejection suffered by the authors of the Vienna Group - but that they also reflect Bayer's own personal dilemma and the existential crisis of any individual who, in his/her search for a means of self-expression and self-realisation is conscious of the restricting nature of language. The existence which Kasperl chooses is not a viable one, it seems, and can only culminate in death. What of Bayer's other fool figures? What consequences does the adoption of the same position have for them?

The analphabet is feared and respected by others. "matrose 1" says of him in Scene 12, "er hat unzählige verwandlungen" (SW 160), which would suggest that his identity is not defined or limited by the language of the community. In this sense, he would appear to enjoy the freedom sought by Kasperl. He is a powerful figure, revered as a king would be, and so has control over his own fate, as well as that of others. He is feared, presumably because he eludes the linguistic community by refusing to be defined in its terms. He is also associated with violence, cannibalism and death, which suggests that his existence is a constant struggle for survival. The analphabet never appears on stage in Bayer's dramatic text; only a "(falscher) analfabet" makes an appearance. This makes one wonder if the analphabet really exists and substantiates the hypothesis put forward above that the existence that Kasperl and the analphabet choose is not a viable one.

The idiot, unlike the analphabet, is very much present on stage. Unlike Kasperl, he does not choose to die, and so his existence demonstrates what the consequences are for the individual who has rejected language and society and tries to continue to live. The idiot's rejection of language and community results in an all-out war against others, whom he violently kills and consumes in his struggle for self-preservation. His

existence is a tortured one and, ultimately, it seems, just as untenable as that of Kasperl and the analphabet. It is significant that "der mensch" survives. This means that the idiot cannot eradicate all traces of community and society, which "der mensch" represents, and which the idiot sees as preventing him from achieving the existence he wants to carve out for himself. As long as the idiot is forced to see and hear "der mensch", as long as he speaks to him, which he does up to the end of the text, he has failed to realise his desire and is compelled to remain part of society and to use its language, with, it would seem, no prospect of escape.

In conclusion, the alternative mode of being embodied by Bayer's Kasperl, analphabet and idiot, which aims to free the individual from the restrictions of language and society, is one which ultimately cannot be maintained. The individual as represented by Bayer's fool figures cannot, it seems, exist in a vacuum, apart from society, no matter what measures he is prepared to employ. In the context of Bayer's literary achievements this, of course, is not the criterion according to which his works can be judged to have succeeded or failed. What is important is, rather, the experimental process engaged in by Bayer in his works, his attempts to overcome what he sees as an arrested language in order to give linguistic expression to the "ich", while at the same preserving the integrity of the self that is usually contaminated by the common currency that is language.

3.6 Bayer and Max Stirner's philosophy of individual anarchism

It has become increasingly clear in this chapter that the search for a meaningful mode of existence for the individual occupies a central position in Bayer's dramatic texts. I have already noted that Rühm ascribes to Bayer and Wiener what he calls an extreme "individualanarchismus" (WG 34). This reference to individual anarchism alludes to the philosophy of Max Stirner, as is evident when Rühm mentions Stirner specifically in the context of Bayer's increasing scepticism of language: "stirner bis zum solipsismus" (SW 17). These references to individual anarchism, solipsism and the direct references to Stirner - Rühm mentions him again as someone whom Bayer admired (SW 18) - prompt an investigation of Stirner's influence on Bayer and its manifestation in Bayer's own texts and in his collaborations with Oswald Wiener.[80]

In his survey of individualism, Steven Lukes refers to Stirner and his concept of the individual:

> The German idea of individuality . . . developed along various lines. In one direction, it led to an uninhibited quest for eccentricity and to the purest egoism and social nihilism. This development found perhaps its most extreme expression in the thought of Max Stirner, whose 'individualism' amounted to an amoral and anti-intellectualistic vision of freely cooperating and self-assertive egoists. (19)

These references to "purest egoism", "social nihilism" and "an amoral and anti-intellectualistic vision" could equally be applied to Bayer's idiot and to Kasperl and would again seem to justify a closer look at a possible relationship between Stirner and Bayer. Stirner's philosophy is outlined in his main work Der Einzige und sein Eigentum (1844), which has as its main concern the freedom of the individual from shackles of all kinds in order that he/she may achieve "Eigenheit" or "ownness",

[80] Rühm describes starker toback as "eine gemeinschaftsarbeit, der man eine vorliebe für max stirners 'Einzigen' . . . anmerkt" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 205) and Wiener himself, when referring to his work with Bayer, mentions "die Neigung zu einem extremen Individualismus" and Stirner in particular (Achleitner and Fetz 21).

mastery of the self and of the world. Reading Der Einzige und sein Eigentum, referred to in the following as EE, one is struck by the many parallels between it and Bayer's texts, which I will now outline.

Lehner summarises Stirner's philosophy as follows: "Das 'Ich' gegen den Rest der Welt" (5). One of the chief enemies of the individual in Stirner's eyes is the state, because of the authority it wields over the individual :

> Der Staat hat immer nur den Zweck, den Einzelnen zu beschränken, zu bändigen, zu subordinieren, ihn irgendeinem Allgemeinen unterthan zu machen; er dauert nur so lange, als der Einzelne nicht Alles in Allem ist, und ist nur die deutlich ausgeprägte Beschränktheit Meiner, meine Beschränkung, meine Sklaverei . . . Der Staat will aus den Menschen etwas machen, darum leben in ihm nur gemachte Menschen; jeder, der Er Selbst sein will, ist sein Gegner und ist nichts. (EE 264)

In the course of his examination of the influence of Stirner's philosophy on Dadaism,[81] Lehner asserts that what he calls "das polizeistaatliche Klima im vormärzlichen Preußen" (24) is reflected in Der Einzige und sein Eigentum. He draws a historical parallel between the Germany of the "Vormärz" period and the situation in which Dadaists found themselves after World War 1 - "Das autonome Subjekt tut sich schwer in einer vom 'Kollektivwahn' beherrschten Welt" (18) - and argues that the state, perceiving the autonomous individualism advocated by both Stirner and the Dadaists as a threat, strikes back by marginalising such individuals, whose subsequent disillusionment leads them to take up an even more radical stance (19, 23-24). It is Lehner's opinion that the process of marginalisation becomes more extreme in times of general political and economic crises (229).

In light of this, it begins to become evident why Bayer, an experimental author in 1950s Austria, was drawn to a philosophy like that of Stirner. To his ears, the above

[81] Lehner uses works by Walter Serner and Raoul Hausmann, both of whom appear on Bayer's "vaterländische liste", to illustrate the connection (121-142, 198).

quote from Stirner must have sounded like a description of the Second Republic. At a time when Austria wanted to subordinate its citizens to the Austrian idea, the official version of Austrian nationhood, and turn them into "österreichische Menschen", when - according to the "Produktivitätssteigerungskampagnen" - good Austrians were expected to work together for the general, as well as individual, economic good and to ensure social peace and harmony and when art was expected to be compatible with the patriotic cultural ideology propagated by the state, Bayer knew only too well the consequences of being perceived as an opponent of the state. His marginalisation at the hands of cultural officialdom undoubtedly affected his work, driving him to adopt a more and more radical stance, as Rühm confirms: "aus zweifeln, ressentiments und angestauter verbitterung entluden sich texte wie 'idiot', '17. jänner 1962', 'kasperl am elektrischen stuhl' . . ." (SW 14). I have illustrated in this chapter how a rejection of language by Bayer's fool figures is accompanied by a rejection of knowledge, order, authority and society, all of which are perceived as restricting the individual. Stirner's philosophy of individual anarchism also rejects all these things.

In this context, Bayer's embracing of Stirner's ideas and his creation of figures like Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot is understandable. Two of these figures seem to share Stirner's attitude towards the state. The idiot states this explicitly: "der staat ist ein scheissdreck" (SW 246) and Kasperl, as has been discussed earlier in this chapter, refuses to adhere to the state's laws and does not allow it to limit him or make him subordinate.

It is not only the authority of the state that Stirner and Bayer object to; society is also perceived by them as an obstacle to the individual's search for freedom. Stirner's criticism of the state extends to those on whose consent it bases itself, that is those citizens who support its structures, who are also to be regarded as enemies of the

individual: "Dem 'Ich' feindlich gegenübergestellt ist der angepaßte Mensch, der sein 'Selbst' freiwillig allgemeinen Interessen unterwirft . . Der konturlosen 'Masse' setzt Stirner die unbeschränkte Ganzheit des 'Einzigen' gegenüber" (Lehner 27). In contrast to the citizens who conform, there are, according to Stirner, "geistige Vagabunden, denen der angestammte Wohnsitz ihrer Väter zu eng und drückend vorkommt" (EE 134). No doubt Bayer himself, suffocating in the repressive climate of 1950s Austria where, as Huemer notes, values such as authority, obedience, family, chastity, cleanliness, subordination and good behaviour prevailed (Jagschitz and Mulley 218), would have identified with these vagabonds and, with his fool figures, he has given them a literary form.[82] Kasperl is at odds with the people around him - Löwe and Apollo who, as members of the police force, represent the state, Giselher the journalist, who conforms as the state wishes him to and so avoids trouble such as that which Kasperl finds himself in, "herr a" and "herr b" who, as previously stated, along with the woman in the audience, represent the Viennese public that in post-war Austria did not like to see its newly-created state and identity and its hard-earned security and prosperity threatened in any way. These figures represent "die konturlose Masse" (Lehner 27), while Kasperl is the vagabond who threatens all that they hold so dear. A similar dichotomy is evident in idiot. "der mensch" with his constant cry of "bruder" may even represent "den österreichischen Menschen", that illusive species that the state tried to cultivate for the purpose of vindicating Austria's claim to nationhood

[82] Rühm confirms this in his description of "une soirée aux amants funèbres", the first "manifestation" organised by Artmann in August 1953, in which Bayer participated: "bezeichnend an dieser ersten manifestation war . . der protest gegen das konventionelle, anonyme, der sich jedoch weniger durch eine aggression nach aussen, als mehr durch ein dokumentiertes, subjektiv bedingtes anders-, eigensein ausdrückte, provoziert durch das belastende ärgernis, das man damals schon durch die kleinste abweichung vom üblichen hervorrief" (SW 10). Those who took part in this demonstration clearly wanted to differentiate themselves from what Lehner calls "die konturlose Masse" (27).

during the "Staatsvertrag" negotiations, but at the very least symbolises society in general, while the idiot is Bayer's version of Stirner's "Einziger".

Stirner describes society as follows: "Die Gesellschaft, von der Wir alles haben, ist eine neue Herrin . . . ein neues 'höchstes Wesen', das Uns 'in Dienst und Pflicht nimmt!'" (EE 146-147) Elsewhere he calls the individual "der Sklave der Gesellschaft", who must live "nach den Gesetzen der Gesellschaft" (EE 219). Not only the wider community of society comes under fire from Stirner, but also the smaller community of the family, for parents are among those he condemns as "die wahren Jugendverführer und Jugendverderber, die das Unkraut der Selbstverachtung und Gottesverehrung emsig aussäen, die jungen Herzen verschlämmen und die jungen Köpfe verdummen" (EE 191). He accuses them of corrupting and dulling the minds of their children by filling them with self-contempt and reverence for God. They are "Jugendverführer und Jugendverderber" in that they seduce young people away from their true selves and so destroy them. Stirner's rejection of community, of other human beings is absolute: "Ich habe gegen Andere keine Pflicht" (EE 373). It is a declaration that frees him from others and empowers him to achieve "ownness". His refusal to be determined by state, society or family is epitomised by the following statement:

> Was, bin ich dazu in der Welt, um Ideen zu realisieren? Um etwa zur Verwirklichung der Idee 'Staat' durch mein Bürgertum das Meinige zu thun, oder durch die Ehe, als Ehegatte und Vater, die Idee der Familie zu einem Dasein zu bringen? Was ficht mich ein solcher Beruf an! Ich lebe so wenig nach einem Berufe, als die Blume nach einem Berufe wächst und duftet. (EE 428-429)

Stirner's aim, like that of Bayer's fool figures, is the freedom of the individual from all restrictions to enable him to become master of himself:

> Wer soll denn frei werden? Du, Ich, Wir. Wovon frei? Von Allem, was nicht Du, nicht Ich, nicht Wir ist. Ich also bin der Kern, der aus allen Verhüllungen erlöst, von allen beengenden Schalen - befreit werden soll . . . Mein eigen bin Ich erst, wenn nicht die Sinnlichkeit, aber

> ebensowenig ein Anderer (Gott, Menschen, Obrigkeit, Gesetz, Staat, Kirche u.s.w.) Mich in der Gewalt haben, sondern Ich selbst.
> (EE 192, 199)

I have already illustrated in some detail how Bayer's Kasperl and idiot's rejection of language leads them in turn to a rejection of society and all contact with others. Kasperl, by refusing to adhere to the linguistic rules of society, by alleging that he has killed his wife and by rejecting the advances of the woman in the audience, succeeds in severing all ties with others in favour of self-determination. The idiot is far more extreme in his rejection of community, savagely killing those who cross his path, as if their existence poses a threat to his. This is borne out by the idiot's claim that the very sight of "der mensch" makes him want to commit suicide. Stirner's denunciation of parents as outlined above finds an equivalent in the following statement by the figure Konrad in the Bayer-Wiener collaboration die folgen geistiger ausschweifung: "ich würde gern jede autorität abschaffen, wenn ich es könnte, aber dazu muss man erst die familie auflösen, die drohenden erwachsenen abschaffen. die herrscher!" (WG 325). Here Bayer seems to see the family, and in particular parents, as the first form of authority with which the individual is confronted, and thus as the basis on which all other forms of authority are founded. His use of the terms "die drohenden erwachsenen" and "die herrscher" echo Stirner's description of parents as "die wahren Jugendverführer und Jugendverderber" (EE 191).

According to Stirner, in order to free himself, the individual must first free his mind of all the thoughts planted there by others, thoughts which take on a life of their own and haunt the individual, preventing him from possessing himself and the world: "Die Gedanken waren für sich selbst leibhaftig geworden, waren Gespenster, wie Gott, Kaiser, Papst, Vaterland u.s.w. Zerstöre Ich ihre Leibhaftigkeit, so nehme Ich sie in die Meinige zurück und sage: Ich allein bin leibhaftig. Und nun nehme Ich die Welt als das,

was sie Mir ist, als die Meinige, als Mein Eigentum: Ich beziehe alles auf Mich" (EE 22). This idea of thoughts taking on a life of their own and taking over the individual, so that he/she has to destroy them to be capable of thoughts of his/her own is a concept that is even more crucial for Bayer as a creative artist and this is reflected in the idiot's rejection of knowledge and in Kasperl and the analphabet's rejection of language as prescribed systems of looking at the world.

Bayer's idiot objects to his existence being determined by thoughts which are the ghosts of the past, but which try to govern the future. He asks: "warum soll ich mich von einem gespenst, von einem scheissdreck, von einer zukunft tyrannisieren lassen" (SW 251). He rejects knowledge, which simply encodes the thoughts of previous generations; for him art, science, philosophy and education are nothing more than "scheissdreck" and he refuses to allow them to define the world for him, or to be himself defined by them, instead declaring himself an idiot who exists solely for himself. Stirner expresses a similar notion, claiming that civilization has obscured the individual to himself and urging his readers to become egoists:

> Jahrtausende der Kultur haben Euch verdunkelt, was Ihr seid, haben Euch glauben gemacht, Ihr seid keine Egoisten, sondern zu Idealisten ('guten Menschen') berufen. Schüttelt das ab! Suchet nicht die Freiheit, die Euch gerade um Euch selbst bringt, in der 'Selbstverleugnung', sondern suchet Euch Selbst, werdet Egoisten, werde jeder von Euch ein allmächtiges Ich. (EE 194)

The necessity for the individual to free him/herself from the thoughts of others is an idea developed further in Bayer's two collaborations with Oswald Wiener. In die folgen geistiger ausschweifung Konrad describes the thought as follows: "ist nicht vielmehr der gedanke ein anlass begriffe, worte, namen zu produzieren, besser: herbeizuschleppen aus den abgegriffenen schubladen der vorratskammer, die mit dem vom ahnl geerbten proviant gefüllt ist, den der ahnl vom ahnl geerbt hat . . . ich muss

die bilder zurückweisen, die gedanken. ich muss diese leidigen assoziationsketten zerstören" (WG 323-324). Here the thought is presented as something which is inextricably bound to the hackneyed supply of thoughts inherited from previous generations. Konrad concludes that he must destroy these "assoziationsketten", these links to the past thoughts of others. The need to free oneself from the thoughts of others is again stressed in starker toback: "Unsere Gedanken sind dazu da, um uns und die anderen von den Gedanken der anderen freizumachen. Denn die Gedanken der anderen sind meterdick überall" (WG 337).

Stirner's solution to the problem of the freedom and realisation of the individual is egoism. He calls on his readers to become egotists: ". . . werdet Egoisten, werde jeder von Euch ein allmächtiges Ich" (EE 194), warning them that this will require extreme measures, but will enable them to take control of their own existence: "Der Egoismus schlägt einen andern Weg ein . . . Er sagt nicht: Warte ab, was Dir die Billigkeitsbehörde im Namen der Gesamtheit - schenken wird . . . sondern: Greife zu und nimm, was Du brauchst! Damit ist der Krieg Aller gegen Alle erklärt. Ich allein bestimme darüber, was Ich haben will" (EE 301). Bayer's solution to the same problem is the creation of a unique literary style and of figures that could be described as "Egoisten" as defined by Stirner. Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot could all be said to take control of their own destinies and the idea of a war against all others is realised in the violent excesses of idiot.

Once the individual has freed him/herself from all exterior influences and ties, he/she is left with an emptiness that Stirner describes as "das schöpferische Nichts, das Nichts, aus welchem Ich selbst als Schöpfer Alles schaffe" (EE 14). The "ich" posited by Stirner can, it seems, once he/she has gained control of his/her own existence, extend this control to others and the world, so that they in turn become his/her

creation: "Und nun nehme Ich die Welt als das, was sie Mir ist, als die Meinige, als Mein Eigentum: Ich beziehe alles auf Mich" (EE 22). The "creative nothing" that Stirner refers to is, therefore, not something negative, but something that enables the individual to seize the world as his/her "Eigentum".[83] This empowerment of the individual even extends to the power over life and death:

> Mein Verkehr mit der Welt, worauf geht er hinaus? Genießen will Ich sie, darum muß sie mein Eigentum sein, und darum will ich sie gewinnen. Ich will nicht die Freiheit, nicht die Gleichheit der Menschen; Ich will nur meine Macht über sie, will sie zu meinem Eigentum, d.h. genießbar machen. Und gelingt Mir das nicht, nun, die Gewalt über Leben und Tod, die Kirche und Staat sich vorbehielten, Ich nenne auch sie die - meinige. (EE 372)

Thus, the individual supersedes church, state and even God, to whom Stirner likens himself: "Man sagt von Gott: 'Namen nennen Dich nicht'. Das gilt auch von Mir: kein Begriff drückt mich aus, nichts, was man als mein Wesen angiebt, erschöpft Mich; es sind nur Namen. Gleichfalls sagt man von Gott, er sei vollkommen und habe keinen Beruf, nach Vollkommenheit zu streben. Auch das gilt von Mir" (EE 429).

Stirner's notion of the individual as the creator of the world can be found in starker toback, in which Bayer and Wiener place themselves at the centre of the world, asking: "warum leben ausser uns noch menschen" (WG 330), and exclaiming: "Die Welt wir!" (WG 337). Following Stirner, the two see the world as their creation, in that it exists only in their consciousness: "unser bewusstsein begründet nicht unsere existenz. es ist unsere existenz" (WG 337). In this context, time and space are also products of their consciousness, which is simply their consciousness, pure and influenced, it seems, by nothing else:

> die zeit ist das bewusstsein konrad bayers und oswald wieners.
> und was ist der raum?

[83] Lehner asserts that, because of his creative powers, Stirner's "Einziger" is by definition an artist and that individual anarchism and artistic avant-garde are thus inextricably linked (227-228).

> der raum ist das bewusstsein konrad bayers und oswald wieners . . .
> und was ist das bewusstsein des konrad bayer und oswald wiener?
> das bewusstsein des konrad bayer und oswald wiener ist das bewusstsein konrad bayers und oswald wieners. (WG 329)

Just like Stirner, Bayer and Wiener, who in starker toback seem to become one (they share the same "bewusstsein"), ascribe the creation of the world not to God, but to themselves, although there is a marked difference between the serious, philosophical tone of Stirner's writing and the experimental, playful nature of Bayer and Wiener's text: "Da sah man die Welt, sie wurde immer . . . kompletter und viele waren, die es dem Konrad Bayer und dem Oswald Wiener zuschrieben . . ." (WG 327). This belief in their godlike powers is confirmed by a prayer entitled "gebet an Euch" (WG 338) which is not addressed to God, but to the "Euch" of its title, namely Bayer and Wiener. As Stirner does in Der Einzige und sein Eigentum, in starker toback Bayer and Wiener endow themselves with power over life and death:

> Heute zeigen wir unsere Macht und lassen das Zimmer grün sein. Und hinein denken wir uns Sessel. Und einen Tisch und Besuch der uns langweilt. Dazu denken wir uns selber Tee trinkend und unterdrücken nicht die Erektion, die durch die Wärme des Biers in uns aufstand . . . Weit oben im sogenannten Stockwerk liessen wir einen leben, obwohl wir ihn hätten töten können. (WG 329-330)

The idea of the world as the individual's creation is one which is also expressed repeatedly in Bayer's own work. In the short prose text seit ich weiss (1958) the "ich" claims to control time and weather and to have invented music, other human beings, in short, everything:

> seit ich weiss, dass alles meine erfindung ist, vermeide ich es, mit meinen freunden zu sprechen. es wäre albern. allerdings hüte ich mich, ihnen zu sagen, dass ich sie erfunden habe, weil sie schrecklich eingebildet sind und glauben, dass sie mich erfunden haben. es würde ihre eitelkeit verletzen . . . ich . . . erfand mir einen nachmittag mit sonne. es war sehr schön, aber langweilig. deshalb liess ich es 23 uhr werden, las ein buch und legte mich zu bett.

> ich habe den heutigen tag erfunden und bin sehr froh darüber. auch mit der erfindung der musik bin ich sehr zufrieden. (SW 393)

This extract gives expression to the notion that language can be used to create reality, a notion that also emerged in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl. Just as Kasperl claims the world of the text to be his "erfindung", the first person narrator of the above piece claims everything as his creation. Such is the potential of language for the "ich" of seit ich weiss, for Kasperl and for Konrad Bayer.

With reference to the above quote from starker toback, Markus Paul points out that, unlike Stirner, who thought that the freedom of the individual justified any crime, Bayer and Wiener realise that their power exists on a purely fictional level (69). The passage quoted above concludes with the line: "Wir benügten uns aber mit seiner Erfindung und feierten die Stunde mit einem kleinen Satz, der uns in den Sinn gekommen war" (WG 330).[84] The specific reference to "Satz" reveals that the reality created by Konrad and Oswald in starker toback, a reality over which they have total control, is a linguistic reality that exists nowhere but in their imagination, and also indicates that they are aware that this is the case. This awareness also characterises Bayer's fool figures. Kasperl can use language to create his own reality. It is, however, a version of reality that clashes with that of the community. Kasperl's reality is one which disrupts and challenges. Therefore the community perceives him as annoying, ignorant and potentially extremely dangerous. Consequently, he is sentenced to death. While a creative use of language is liberating for the individual in theory, in practice, since the linguistically-created reality of the individual cannot be projected onto the community's reality, which is created by conventional language, it does not give the

[84] Paul seems to be the only critic who has examined in any detail connections between Stirner and the Wiener Gruppe. However, because his study of these connections concentrates on the Bayer-Wiener collaborations and on Wiener's novel die verbesserung von mitteleuropa its value in the Bayer context is limited.

individual the freedom that he/she seeks. This explains why Bayer's attitude to language is ambivalent, ranging from a belief in the potential of a creative use of language, upon which his raison d'être as an author must surely be based, to utter despair and radical language criticism.

Paul extends the predicament of Bayer and Wiener to their situation in the world outside of the text:

> Das verweist auch auf den politischen Kontext, in dem solche Texte produziert werden. Denn wo nichts mehr möglich ist, läßt sich alles denken. Wo keine Handlungen denkbar erscheinen, werden sie durch Wörter ersetzt. Das Bewußtsein der Überlegenheit und Macht widerspricht völlig der realen Ohnmacht der Künstler im restaurativen Wien. Die Sätze dürfen deshalb nicht als appellativ mißverstanden werden, sie haben therapeutische Funktion, nämlich die, die Isolation im restaurativen Nachkriegs-Wien erträglich zu machen. (69-70)

Paul's juxtapositioning of Bayer and Wiener's position of power in the text of starker toback and the helplessness of their situation in the real world of the Vienna of their time is valid. However, in Konrad Bayer's case, such "therapy" does not seem to have made his isolation in post-war Vienna any more bearable, a fact borne out by the cynicism of a text such as kasperl am elektrischen stuhl and the desperation that is conveyed in idiot. Moreover, Paul's socio-historical interpretation, while useful, encompasses only one aspect of Bayer's language criticism and individual anarchism and, because it focuses on Bayer and Wiener's collaborations, underestimates the importance of the influence of Stirner's philosophy on Bayer's attempts in his works to forge an alternative mode of being for the individual. As my discussion of Stirner's Der Einzige und sein Eigentum and some of Bayer's works has shown, however, Stirner's influence is pivotal. Yet there does seem to be a discrepancy between Stirner and Bayer on an important point, namely that of language.

As has been illustrated in the earlier sections of this chapter, it is clear that Bayer's scepticism and criticism of language is central to his attempts to search for a mode of being for the individual. I have shown that at the basis of the actions of Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot lies their rejection of language, their belief that language cannot provide a vehicle for communication with others or for self-expression, but that it instead leads to misunderstanding between members of the linguistic community and to imprisonment for the individual who is trapped in a linguistic system not of his/her making, a system that regulates what can be said and so what can be thought, thus stifling the individual and preventing him/her from realising him/herself. This belief is encapsulated in die folgen geistiger ausschweifung when Oswald says: "die sprache ist ein system von gedankenbahnen" (WG 322) and Konrad claims: "meine sprache ist . . . der friedhof meiner gedanken!" (WG 323). Konrad's description of language as the graveyard of his thoughts could perhaps be extended to being the graveyard of the individual, for, if the individual is to use the "gedankenbahnen" of an inherited language, what hope does he/she have of preserving his/her individuality?

Ulrich Janetzki differentiates between Bayer's solipsism, which he sees as being based ultimately on his "Sprachskepsis", and Stirner's individual anarchism:

> In den Texten "seit ich weiss" und "von nun an" (GW. 250 f.), die noch am ehesten mit Stirner in Verbindung gebracht werden können, geht Bayer jedoch weit über Stirner hinaus. Die Welt erscheint in "seit ich weiss" nur als Inventar seines Bewußtseins, Kommunikation als Spiel mit der eigenen Erfindung. Es ist kein Entwurf einer *neuen* Welt, sondern eine Umdeutung: Die Welt existiert nur in der eigenen Vorstellung. Mögen sich auch die Anstöße hierzu auf Stirner zurückführen lassen - solipsistische Denkvorstellungen sind allerdings bei ihm nicht zu finden. Stirner lehnt moralische Kategorien nur solange ab, wie dem handelnden Subjekt nicht klar ist, daß sie nur "Seinetwillen" geschehen, das heißt den eigenen Bedürfnissen als Erstbegründungsinstanz nicht entsprochen wird. Bayer wendet sich gegen Wertmaßstäbe, ethische Normen und konventionaliserte Handlungsimplikationen deshalb, weil sie *sprachlich* als "wahr" und "notwendig" vorgestellt werden. Es ist eine von Stirner unterschiedene

> Reflektionsperspektive. "die beschränktheit durch die sprache ist eine jener unfreiheiten die max stirner noch gar nicht gefühlt hat", heißt es bei Oswald Wiener in "Die Verbesserung von Mitteleuropa, Roman" (S. LI.). ("Der Einzige und sein Sprachspiel" 61-62)

Janetzki highlights two Bayer texts which he thinks can be linked to Stirner's influence. In the discussion above, I have shown that Stirner's influence extends to many others. I have also confirmed Stirner and Bayer's similar extreme positions on the state, knowledge/education, society and the family, all of which they both see as shackles that restrict the individual. I have identified a common desire to achieve freedom for the individual from the thoughts of others and a common policy of egoism which has as its aim the claiming of others and the world as the property of the individual and the achievement of godlike powers. Both seem to advocate the use of extreme measures for the realisation of this objective, as is evidenced by Stirner's reference to "der Krieg Aller gegen Alle" (EE 301) and by the idiot's violent excesses. Perhaps it is the fact that Bayer's position is brought to life through the figures of his dramatic texts that makes it seem more extreme than Stirner's, which remains within the realms of intellectual theorising. It is my opinion, however, that the positions of both are equally extreme, although Stirner's position is not characterised by the pessimism that permeates Bayer's texts. This point is discussed again below.

As I mentioned above, and as highlighted by Janetzki, Bayer's search for an existence for the individual is founded on his language scepticism. This, however, would not seem to be true of Stirner. Yet it would be incorrect to claim that Stirner does not make any reference to language in Der Einzige und sein Eigentum. Like Konrad and Oswald in die folgen geistiger ausschweifung he blames language for regulating the individual's thoughts: "Wer einen Gedanken nicht los werden kann, der ist soweit nur Mensch, ist ein Knecht der Sprache, dieser Menschensatzung, dieses

Schatzes vom menschlichen Gedanken. Die Sprache oder 'das Wort' tyrannisiert Uns am ärgsten, weil sie ein ganzes Heer von fixen Ideen gegen uns aufführt" (EE 405). Stirner is critical of the normative nature of language and advocates the creation of a language that authentically reflects the reality of the individual, something which proves to be impossible due to the fact that the individual has to communicate on a social level as well as on an individual one (Lehner 44, 46-47). However, while Stirner is sceptical of language, language criticism does not form the basis of his individual anarchism, as is the case with Bayer. Oswald Wiener explicitly states that the restrictions of language were those of greatest concern to the members of the Vienna Group: "Als Zentrum der Einschränkung machten wir die Sprache aus (Whorf), und die auf sie zurückgehenden gesellschaftlichen Institutionen" (Achleitner and Fetz 27). However, it is not surprising that the normative power of language over the individual would be of greater concern to Bayer, an artist whose medium is language, than it would have been to Stirner. Attracted to Stirner's individual anarchism, Bayer does not simply replicate his philosophy but adapts it and relates it to his own situation, that of the creative individual trying to establish a unique identity through the common medium of language.

While Bayer's individual anarchism is partially explicable in terms of a reaction to the climate of 1950s Austria and can also be attributed to his own personality,[85] essentially it is founded on a deep distrust and scepticism of language. Therefore, while the situation in which he and other experimental authors found themselves in the Austria of the 1950s and early 1960s probably played a part in Bayer's individual

[85] Wiener highlights Bayer's radicalism by differentiating between himself and Bayer as follows: "Haben wir (K und O) mit dem Radikalismus bloß geflirtet? . . . K aber *war* radikal: der körperliche Einsatz (z.B. Rauschgift); die Tendenz, das Gedachte in Szene zu setzen, um es zu erleben . . . Ich habe Hemmungen . . . Mein Defekt ist die Tendenz, nach innen zu arbeiten . . . Flucht in die Theorie, Gedankenflucht . . ." (Achleitner and Fetz 20-21).

anarchism and his taking up of Stirner's philosophy, his radical stance, as expressed in texts such as kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, idiot and seit ich weiss, is not just about searching for a possible mode of existence for an experimental author in a reactionary cultural climate, but also has to do with the search for a mode of being for those individuals, including, of course, himself, who perceive their possibilities for self-realisation to be limited by language.

A state which Bayer seems to idealise as one which possibly offers the individual a chance for freedom and self-realisation is that of childhood. In two of his chansons he equates the new-born child with a state of "Unwissen" or not-knowing. In "das zarenkind, oder, was des menschen wille vermag" he describes the new-born child as "ein unwissend tier" (SW 92). In "dann bin ich gestorben" the first year of life is described as follows:

ich wurde geboren
am 17. august
bald wurde ich grösser
doch war's mir nicht bewusst
ich lernte auch sprechen
und bausteine brechen
dann bin ich gestorben
am 17. august
ein jahr nur ein jahr nur
hat mir gott geschenkt
doch war es ein reiches
wenn man es recht bedenkt (SW 91)

The "unwissend" of the first chanson is here represented by "nicht bewusst". In the second chanson it is clear that the ignorance or not-knowing of the new-born child is a positive and desirable state, the loss of which means death. This loss of ignorance is linked very clearly in "dann bin ich gestorben" with learning to speak ("sprechen") and a familiarisation with the basic structures ("bausteine") of the world. It seems that as soon as the child is capable of communication and of learning and being taught how

the world functions, a part of him/her, the truly individual part, dies, because he/she is then vulnerable to the invasion of Stirner's "Gespenster", which take the world away from the individual.

Fowler describes the language-learning process as follows: "A child learns the values and preoccupations of its culture largely by learning the language: language is the chief instrument of socialization . . ." (19). From an early age, children learn that in order to communicate and function in their society they will have to adhere to its linguistic code which provides them with tools for understanding the world. To quote the anthropologist Edmund Leach:

> . . . the physical and social environment of a young child . . . does not contain any intrinsically separate "things". The child, in due course, is taught to impose upon this environment a kind of discriminating grid which serves to distinguish the world as being composed of a large number of separate things, each labelled with a name. This world is thus a representation of our language categories - not vice versa.
> (qtd. in Fowler 15)

This idea of language as a product of common codes created for the purpose of communication among members of the linguistic community and used by that community as an agent of socialization handed down from one generation to the next is expressed in the following quote from Bayer's collection of texts entitled der stein der weisen: "es gibt nichts gemeinsames. nur die sprache schafft gemeinsamkeiten . . . alle meine vorfahren und auch alle anderen haben die sprache zusammengebosselt, haben ihre reaktionen damit eingerüstet und so wurde mit der sprache . . . alles gleich gemacht und nun ist alles das gleiche und keiner merkt es" (SW 529). While linguistic codes enable their users to experience the world as ordered and not anarchic, they are, of necessity, conventional and stereotypical and allow the individual very little freedom. It is against this loss of freedom that Bayer revolts.

As has been outlined above, for both Bayer and Stirner true freedom for the individual necessitates the cutting of all restricting ties, a wiping-clean of the slate of language and the knowledge it encodes so that the individual can start afresh in the forging of his/her own identity. The tone of Der Einzige und sein Eigentum is positive and buoyant. It begins and ends with the same sentence: "Ich hab' mein' Sach' auf Nichts gestellt" (EE 12, 429). While this is a statement which seems to have negative connotations, Stirner uses it in a positive and defiant way. Grimms dictionary defines the phrase "seine Sache auf etwas setzen, stellen" as "etwas zur grundlage seiner aufgabe, seiner pflicht, seiner handlungsweise machen" ("Sache"). To understand what Stirner means when he says "Ich hab' mein' Sach' auf Nichts gestellt", one must understand what he means by "Nichts". This is explained in the opening section of Der Einzige und sein Eigentum:

> Gott und die Menschheit haben ihre Sache auf Nichts gestellt, auf nichts als auf sich. Stelle Ich denn meine Sache gleichfalls auf Mich, der Ich so gut wie Gott das Nichts von allem andern, der Ich mein alles, der Ich der Einzige bin . . . Ich bin nicht Nichts im Sinne der Leerheit, sondern das schöpferische Nichts, das Nichts aus welchem Ich selbst als Schöpfer alles schaffe. (EE 14)

Thus, by "Nichts" Stirner means "das schöpferische Nichts", the creative nothing that remains when the individual has emptied himself of all exterior influences, the position from which the individual can become creator of all, the empty self that is the true, individual self. This is what he makes the "grundlage seiner aufgabe". Stirner returns to this thought at the end of Der Einzige und sein Eigentum:

> Eigner bin Ich meiner Gewalt, und Ich bin es dann, wenn Ich Mich als Einzigen weiß. Im Einzigen kehrt der Eigner in sein schöpferisches Nichts zurück, aus welchem er geboren wird. Jedes höhere Wesen über Mir, sei es Gott, sei es der Mensch, schwächt das Gefühl meiner Einzigkeit und erbleicht erst vor der Sonne dieses Bewußtseins. Stell' Ich auf Mich, den Einzigen, meine Sache, dann steht sie auf dem vergänglichen, dem sterblichen Schöpfer seiner, der sich selbst verzehrt, und Ich darf sagen:

Ich hab' mein' Sach' auf Nichts gestellt. (EE 429)

While Stirner acknowledges the transitory and mortal nature of the "Ich" at the end of Der Einzige und sein Eigentum, he also triumphantly reiterates his belief that it must form the basis of the individual's struggle for "Eigenheit". Bayer's individual anarchism is, however, far more pessimistic and inevitably seems to culminate in self-destruction. Since a return to Stirner's creative nothing or to the ignorance and innocence of childhood is impossible, and the other alternatives for the self-realisation of the individual presented by Bayer in his texts have been proven to be impracticable, the single option which remains for the individual seeking the freedom necessary for self-realistion is death, an option chosen by Kasperl in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl and by Bayer in real life.

3.7 Secondary literature on language and the individual in Bayer's dramatic texts

In this chapter I have found myself at the heart of Bayer's literary endeavours: his various attempts to establish in language a means of self-realisation for the individual, fuelled by the belief that language is a medium hostile to all such attempts. A central theme in Bayer's work, it is one which is at least referred to by most Bayer commentators. In the section that follows I attempt to summarise some of their arguments. I concentrate, however, on those of Ulrich Janetzki who, as I mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, is the most prolific Bayer commentator. Janetzki's observations often form the basis of others' arguments.

In his treatment of the individual in Bayer's texts Norbert Schnurrer, when discussing the dichotomy between mind and body ("Geist und Körper"), quotes the following passage from Bayer's der stein der weisen:

> *vorwort*
> auftreten mehrere körper.
> jeder dieser mehrerer körper hat ein bewusstsein.
> diese mehrere bewusstsein sind unsichtbar.
> jetzt ertönt einer dieser mehrerer körper mit hilfe seines bewusstseins reflexiv.
> alle diese mehrere körper sind bei unsichtbarem bewusstsein.
> alle diese mehreren echten körper und alle diese mehreren metaphysischen bewusstsein.
> jedes dieser bewusstsein heisst ich.
> alle diese mehreren körper haben verschiedene namen:
> hansi, franzi, otti, lotti, wolfi, heinzi, elfi, brunhilde.
> der körper hansi hat ein bewusstsein, das ich heisst.
> der körper franzi hat ein bewusstsein, das ich heisst.
> otti ist ein körper. der körper otti hat ein bewusstsein, das sich auch ich nennt.
> lotti ist ein körper. dieser körper hat ein bewusstsein namens ich.
> ich heisst das bewusstsein des körpers elfi.
> die bewusstsein der körper heinzi, wolfi und brunhilde heissen ich und sind sehr verschieden.
> ich heissen die bewusstsein noch vieler anderer körper, die aber heute nicht auftreten. (SW 520)

Schnurrer makes the following comments on the above passage:

> . . . das Bewusstsein hat Namen, Namen das es sich selbst gibt, und die lauten in allen Fällen - Ich. Auch die Körper haben Namen, diese sind aber unterschiedlich und machen den Einzelnen kenntlicher. Ich als Selbstbezeichnung ist somit die allgemeinste Aussage, die über den Menschen getroffen werden kann. Damit beschreibt jeder Mensch, der zur Autoreflexion fähig ist, sich selbst. Ich ist deshalb nicht nur der Ausdruck für das Allgemeinste, sondern auch für das Intimste - es ist die Schnittstelle zwischen Innen und Außen, zwischen Makrokosmos und Mikrokosmos. Das ist schließlich das Problem: die Schnittstelle definiert sich sprachlich, sowie das Bewusstsein nur durch Sprache existiert. (33)

As Schnurrer remarks, the problem for the individual consciousness is that it has no outer, physical form and, therefore, exists only in language, as it is only through language that it can make itself known to the outside world. For the individual who wants to exist as more than just a physical entity, to express him/herself through something other than his/her outer casing or body, language is the only medium. If language proves to be an inadequate medium, as it does in Bayer's texts, the individual, as I have illustrated in my discussion of, for example, Bayer's idiot, is forced to take desperate measures. Schnurrer, however, maintains that Bayer's figures are unaware of this problem and simply keep talking:

> Trotz der ständigen mißlingenden Kommunikation reflektieren die Personen diesen Tatbestand selbst nicht. Keiner der sprechenden und handelnden Personen scheint ihre Abgeschlossenheit und ihre Unfähigkeit sich mitzuteilen ein Problem zu sein. Zwar wird immer wieder, in vielen Gesprächssituationen, an der Möglichkeit sprachlicher Verständigung gezweifelt, aber ohne dabei die eigene Position mitzureferieren, mehr in der Form einfacher Feststellungen . . . Die Folge dieser Erkenntnisse ist nicht Schweigen oder Verzweiflung sondern unentwegtes Weitersprechen. (45)

While Schnurrer may be right in saying that the figures of Bayer's theatre texts continue speaking despite their mistrust of language, he is incorrect in his sweeping statement that not one of them reflects on, or is troubled by the fact that they cannot communicate with others or express themselves through language. The following desperate claims of the idiot confirm that he not only perceives this as a problem, but

that it is a source of much anguish for him: "a: . . . ich weiss nichts von dir und will von dir nichts wissen, das heisst ich kann von dir nichts wissen, denn zwischen uns ist ein unüberbrückbarer abgrund des unverständnisses . . . du kannst mich nicht verstehen. du hörst IRGENDetwas und treibst damit unfug, sau, sau, ich zertrete dich (gibt ihm einen fusstritt)" (SW 251). I have already illustrated how the idiot's need to realise himself as an individual, something which the existing systems of language and knowledge do not allow him to do, leads not to the "unentwegtes Weitersprechen" that Schnurrer refers to, but to a brutal violence that seems to replace language.

Walter Ruprechter essentially sees the solipsistic "ich" of Bayer's texts as part of the implementation of a Cartesian project - "das Projekt einer durchaus künstlichen, vom menschlichen Denken restlos kalkulierten und beherrschten Wirklichkeit" (123). He talks of a solipsistic subject "das die Welt als *seine* Welt und in der Konsequenz die Welt als seine Erfindung ausgibt" (125). I concur with Ruprechter on this point. As I have shown in this chapter, this vision of the "ich" is evident in texts like seit ich weiss, starker toback, kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, der analfabet and idiot.

Janetzki, in his discussion of the dramatic text 17. jänner 1962, notes another of Bayer's figures experiencing a similar dilemma to that of the idiot although, unlike the idiot, he does not turn to violence. Janetzki first quotes the relevant passage: "lautsprecher: / schachinger ist - nicht schachinger! / schachinger tritt auf. / schachinger: / ich möchte vorausschicken, dass ich mit diesem herrn weder verwandt noch identisch bin, ihn nicht einmal persönlich kenne" (SW 280-281). He then goes on to comment as follows:

> Die zu Beginn der Passage als "schachinger" vorgestellte Person, die im folgenden vorgibt, weder mit sich verwandt noch identisch zu sein, wird von Bayer als der eigenen Identität entfremdete Person vorgestellt. Sie kann sich zwar mit "ich" benennen, nicht aber begreifen. Die Identität gerät hier zum bloßen sprachlichen Etikett . . . Wenn die Sprache

> wirklich keine ich-bedingte Möglichkeit der Erkenntnis bereithält, wie kann das Subjekt sich dann in der Sprache überhaupt als selbstbewußtes begreifen? Und weiter: inwieweit ist "ich" dann auch nur eine sprachliche Fiktion? (Alphabet und Welt 77-78)

Here Janetzki sums up the dilemma of Bayer's individual. While language seems to offer the "ich" a means of realising itself ("Sie kann sich zwar mit 'ich' benennen"), it is only a label which lacks a linguistic support system that would allow the individual "[k]eine ich-bedingte Möglichkeit der Erkenntnis". So, while language is an inadequate medium for the realisation of the individual, paradoxically, as Schnurrer points out, the "ich" can only exist within this medium, and is trapped, therefore, within language. This is precisely why Bayer, in an attempt to subvert the deficiencies of language, engages in radical linguistic experiments in his texts. Janetzki seems to contradict himself, however, by suggesting that the "ich" is merely "eine sprachliche Fiktion". Bayer and his figures are fully convinced of the existence of the "ich". The problem they face is that it cannot be communicated or realised through language. The fiction is not that the "ich" exists only in language, but that language seems to offer a means of self-realisation by presenting it with a linguistic label by which to refer to itself, without providing the necessary linguistic support system for it to realise and communicate itself.

This theme of language and the individual is one to which Janetzki devotes much attention. In an article published in 1981, when discussing Bayer's prose text argumentation vor der bewusstseinsschwelle, he outlines the relationship between language and the individual as follows:

> Der Zusatz "vor der bewusstseinsschwelle" besagt, daß die Wahrnehmungsstruktur dem Subjekt bereits sprachlich vorgegeben ist. Sprache formuliert demnach ihrer inneren Struktur gemäß die (vom Subjekt dann entsprechend so 'erkannte') Wirklichkeit vor. Ungeachtet der subjektiven Beweggründe . . . begrenzt das sprachliche Regelreservoir das, was man als 'Erkenntnis' und 'Wahrnehmung'

> ansieht. Es ist demnach nicht möglich, einen Gegenstand oder Sachverhalt unabhängig von seinem sprachlichen Korrelat zu begreifen. Die der Erkenntnis vorgeschalteten Beschreibungsmechanismen ordnen ihn erst. ("Die Welt" 337)

Janetzki later goes on to state: "Sprache ist demnach kein neutraler Mittler zwischen Subjekt und Welt, sondern stellt sich als Zwischenwelt dar . . ." ("Die Welt" 340). He also speaks of the "Festschreibungstendenz der Sprache" ("Die Welt" 348), which through ready-made linguistic formulae prevents the individual from experiencing the world subjectively. These observations by Janetzki are confirmed by my examination of Bayer's texts in this chapter. Janetzki states that Bayer's language criticism motivated his experimental approach: "Diese scheinbar resignative Haltung ist für Konrad Bayer Anlaß gewesen, die sprachstrukturierten Grenzen auszuloten, um nicht automatisch den normierenden Festschreibungen der Sprache zu verfallen" ("Die Welt" 342-343). In Chapter 2 and in this chapter I have demonstrated, using some of Bayer's dramatic texts, to what degree he experiments with language in an attempt to free the individual from its limitations.

In his investigations Janetzki almost always concentrates on Bayer's prose texts, although he does examine the dramatic text diskurs über die hoffnung (1961), which in his view, has as its central theme "die Zweifel an der sprachlichen Beschreibungsmöglichkeit subjektiver Empfindungen" ("Die Welt" 340). Since my reading of this text varies somewhat from Janetzki's, I consider it worthwhile to describe in more detail his treatment of it. This text features four figures – "1. frau", "2. frau", "3. frau" and "4. frau". The "1. frau" and "2. frau" refuse to be drawn into a discourse by the "3. frau" and "4. frau" who are, in a sense, philosophers who want to

analyse and dismantle language, and who try to force the first and second woman into explaining "brennen" and "frieren":[86]

1. frau: wir brennen
2. frau: und frieren
3. frau: tun sie es für uns
4. frau: erklären sie
3. frau: was sie meinen!
1. frau: wir meinen nichts
2. frau: man kann es nicht erklären
1. frau: wir brennen
2. frau: und frieren (SW 273)

The first and second woman refuse to engage in this discourse and seem to have a different level of consciousness, a different mode of being, almost, accepting things as they are and rejecting all comparisons and circumscriptions in language:

3. frau: was ist kalt?
4. frau: was ist heiss?
2. frau: die hoffnung
4. frau: wie glühendes eisen?
3. frau: wie eis?
2. frau: keine vergleiche
1. frau: keine bilder
2. frau: es ist
1. frau: was es ist (SW 271)

The first and second woman are unassailable. They refuse to be drawn into further explanation, preferring to rely on the complete fusion of experience and word that characterises their existence. This fusion of experience and word is almost pre-linguistic in its simplicity. The two women use language as one would imagine it was first used - to associate a particular word with a particular object or experience. With these two figures Bayer seems to have arrived at the "blossen vorzeigen von gegenständen" (WG 402) referred to at the beginning of this chapter. The women's

[86] Bayer's choice of these verbs does not appear to be random. "frieren", in particular, is a recurring motif in his texts and words associated with this motif form another word field which might be investigated further.

sentences, when, indeed, they form sentences, are simple, not complex, and not highly connected.[87] Their whole identity and existence, and, indeed, their world-view is summed up by the following two statements:

1. frau: wir brennen einfach
2. frau: wir frieren einfach (SW 274)

It is as if they have "forgotten" or deliberately rejected the way in which language has come to be used, the way in which it has developed to encode meanings in conventional and familiar forms of expression and so to establish patterns of thought which allow the individuals little freedom in how they see the world or, indeed, themselves. Or they may simply have never realised or understood that language functions in this way.

Janetzki states that "Die Insistenz von 1 + 2 auf persönlichen Empfindungen" ("Die Welt" 340) leads the other two women to question them. He goes on to draw the following conclusion: "Es wird deutlich, daß 3 + 4 von der verbalen Äußerung nicht auf den dahinterstehenden Sachverhalt schließen können, bzw. dies auch nicht - im Gegensatz zu 1 + 2 - glauben, erwarten zu können" ("Die Welt" 340). While it is true to say that the third and fourth woman are not satisfied with the verbal statements of 1 and 2, I disagree with Janetzki that it is 3 and 4 who realise that they cannot expect to understand from the words of the other two exactly what they are trying to communicate. On the contrary, they continue to look for verbal explanations of "brennen" and "frieren" with questions such as: "wie glühendes eisen? / wie eis? / wollen sie / in dieser art / zum ausdruck bringen? / erklären sie / was sie meinen! / wie ist brennen? / wie ist frieren?" (SW 271, 273). And it is the first and second woman

[87] This was a feature also noted in my examination of cohesion in the linguistic analysis of der analfabet.

who constantly refuse to answer their questions with further verbal explanations, with replies such as: "keine vergleiche / keine bilder / es ist / was es ist / wir meinen nichts / man kann es nicht erklären" (SW 271, 273). Janetzki then claims the following: "1 + 2 akzeptieren die Auswegslosigkeit, authentische Erfahrung als solche in Sprache nicht überführen zu können und bestätigen, daß ihnen nur die Hoffnung darauf bleibt" ("Die Welt" 340). In keeping with the interpretation I postulated earlier, I disagree with Janetzki on this point. 1 and 2 have found their own way of expressing their experiences, namely through a complete fusion of experience and word. They know precisely what they mean when they say: "wir brennen / und frieren" (SW 273). The problem arises only when others try to understand what they mean by asking questions such as: "brennen wir? / frieren wir?" (SW 273). The answer that 1 and 2 give is a very definite: "das wissen wir nicht" (SW 273). It would seem, therefore, that language can be used to express subjective experience, but not to communicate this experience to others, the difficulty being that 1 and 2's subjective linguistic reality, just like that of Kasperl, cannot necessarily be understood by others.

Janetzki uses the text guten morgen, a dialogue of "Höflichkeitsfloskeln" ("Die Welt" 346), to show how Bayer criticises an unthinking, automatic use of language. This dialogue consists of prefabricated model sentences, empty formulae which are repeated mechanically, giving the impression that communication is taking place. Janetzki makes the following comments: "Solange man sich dieser oder ähnlicher Satzmuster bedient, degradiert man die Fähigkeit eigenen Denkens zu einer mechanischen Applikation scheinbar durchdachter Produkte . . . Auch hier richtet sich Bayers Kritik nicht gegen die Sprache schlechthin, sondern nur gegen die Benutzung solch verbrauchter Formeln" ("Die Welt" 346-347). Elsewhere Janetzki claims in a similar context: "Eine aus sprachkritischer Distanz entworfene Wirklichkeit hat die

potentielle Chance, subjektiven Bedürfnissen zu entsprechen" (Alphabet und Welt 60). In my opinion Janetzki's interpretation is too narrow and his emphasis on logic and reason ("Denken") is misplaced. Of course some of Bayer's texts make readers aware of the way in which an automatic use of language regulates their thoughts. However, this does not necessarily mean that simply thinking more about the language one uses solves this problem. With his literary texts Bayer is advocating something far more radical than that. Chapter 2's linguistic analysis of der analfabet demonstrated not a more critically discerning or thoughtful use of language, but a radical, experimental approach to using it that, through various defamiliarizing techniques, challenges some of its most fundamental rules and functions and dispenses with logic and order in favour of creativity and anarchy. Similarly, the "abstand" mentioned in the "beilage" to der analfabet is not the "sprachkritische Distanz" referred to by Janetzki, but again something far more radical - distance from what the reader usually perceives as reality. What the reader of der analfabet is presented with is not a fixed reality, but one that is forever changing, just like its figures, and as such could be described as several realities in one. Janetzki, I believe, also misunderstands Bayer's aim in all this when he says: "Er ist ständig auf der Suche nach einer begreifbaren Position, einem festen Standort, nach der objektiven Wirklichkeit" ("es gibt" 34). In the "beilage" Bayer, in keeping with his principle of "veränderung", specifically avoids fixed positions, clearly stating with reference to der analfabet: "elf figuren wechseln ihre standorte" (SW 148). As we have already seen, Bayer's commitment to the principle of "veränderung" is such that it not only refers to time and place, but also extends to changes in character and gender. The dramatic figures discussed in this chapter were also shown to be characterised by "veränderung". As for the notion that Bayer is in search of an objective reality, the opposite has been seen to be the case. It is the very concept that there is one single

objective reality that Bayer wishes to undermine with texts that present various open-ended and often contradictory realities. Bayer openly acknowledges this when he includes the following quote in the foreword to der kopf des vitus bering: "(die wirklichkeit ist nicht die summe der fakten, sie ist die summe der möglichkeiten: andré breton)" (SW 533).

I have outlined earlier in this chapter, drawing on statements by members of the Vienna Group regarding the development of their language theory, Bayer's own texts and his collaborations with Oswald Wiener, the various stages in Bayer's "Sprachkritik". Janetzki, however, claims that a chronological development of Bayer's investigation of language cannot be traced in his work: "Die dem Gesamtwerk abstrahierten, sprachthematischen Gesichtspunkte fassen einzelne Texte ungeachtet ihres Entstehungsdatums zusammen" (Alphabet und Welt 39). This view does not correspond to Rühm's statements about the development of Bayer and Wiener's language scepticism quoted by me in an earlier part of this chapter, or to my tracing of this development, using in particular the collaborations of Bayer and Wiener. With the help of these sources I have outlined this development from the Group's belief that an alteration of linguistic boundaries would mean a broader experience of the world, to a disillusionment with language that expresses itself through the violence of the idiot, to Konrad's description of language in die folgen geistiger ausschweifung as "der friedhof meiner gedanken" (WG 323), to the extreme individual anarchism of starker toback with its statement "Die Welt wir!" (WG 337).

In a 1983 article Janetzki draws parallels between Bayer's prose text herostrat and Sartre's Herostratos,[88] saying that Bayer's text begins where Sartre's ended - with the threat to annihilate society:

> Zwar negiert er sie [die Gesellschaft] mit der Grausamkeit eines Lautréamont, weil sie ihn hindert "Ich" zu sein, andererseits ist er auch auf sie angewiesen, denn nur durch den Akt der Beseitigung erweist er sich ihr gegenüber als überlegener Einzelner. Bayers Waffe ist die Sprache: ". . . aber ich bin überzeugt, diesen satz, diese formel zu finden, mit der ich mir alles untertan mache" (GW. S.200). Sartres Held hingegen greift zum Revolver. ("Der Einzige und sein Sprachspiel" 59)

For me, Bayer's herostrat brings to mind his idiot. Perhaps the sentence the herostrat is searching for is the idiot's statement "ich bin ein idiot. idiot sein heisst für sich sein". For with this formula the idiot sums up his mode of being which, as has already been discussed in this chapter, is based on a rejection of language, knowledge, and society, and on the supremacy of the individual above all else. Having made the above statement, the herostrat continues with the following threats:

> ich werde herrschen, ich werde ein furchtbarer herrscher und ihr die elenden sklaven meines wahnsinns sein.
>
> ich werde alles töten und die türme dieser finsternis mit den fahnen meines wahnsinns schmücken. ihr werdet jeden laut mit den schrecklichsten martern bezahlen; ich werde euch verstummen lassen und ein reich des schweigens errichten, eure augen vereisen, eure ohren vereisen, eure schamteile vereisen, ich will euch die liebe an der wurzel ausreissen. ich will euch die lust aneinander verderben, ich will euch das fleisch unter jeder berührung verfaulen lassen und euch mit diesem gestank in die maschinerie meiner gerechtigkeit treiben. meine henker werden nicht euresgleichen sein und ihr gehorsam wird in der grausamkeit enden, die in eurem denken keinen platz hat.
>
> und in dieser entsetzlichen kälte werde ich endlich allein sein. (SW 481)

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[88] Janetzki points out that excerpts from Sartre's text appeared in the Austrian literary magazine Der Plan in 1946, before being published in full in 1950: "Bei dem in 'Der Plan' auszugsweise abgedruckten Text 'Herostratos' handelt es sich um den Beginn der gleichnamigen Erzählung, die später innerhalb des Bandes 'Die Mauer' (Reinbek bei Hamburg 1950) vollständig veröffentlicht wurde" ("Der Einzige und sein Sprachspiel" 59)

The cruelty threatened by the herostrat is enacted by the idiot. The two figures are mirror images of one another, both driven by the desire to raise the individual above everything and everyone. In my view Janetzki, who does not make this link between the two, and who insists on Bayer's continued search for an ideal language, although later texts show that this search was replaced by extreme language criticism, underestimates the importance of this need to destroy society:

> 'Beseitigung der Menschheit' ist bei Bayer aber nur Metapher, da sich im Moment des Besitzens der authentischen Erfahrung (die sich in der aufzufindenden 'wahren' Sprache manifestiert) alles andere um ihn herum als überflüssig erweisen würde. Es wäre insofern nicht existent, als es seiner Erkenntnis (die nur auf das eigene Ich ausgerichtet ist) nichts hinzufügen würde. ("Der Einzige und sein Sprachspiel" 59)

In idiot the metaphor of the elimination of humanity outlined in herostrat is a metaphor no longer. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the idiot begins what seems to be the systematic annihilation of all other beings, except for "der mensch", whom he perhaps needs, as Janetzki has suggested with regard to the herostrat and his need of society, almost as a kind of model in order to construct his own opposing existence. The idea of the discovery of a "real" or "true" language that would eliminate the need to destroy society also seems to me to be misplaced in reference to the herostrat, whose aim is the creation of a "reich des schweigens". Surely it is despair at the knowledge that such a language does not or cannot exist that leads to the elimination of society in the first place. Janetzki himself seems to point to this when he says: "Die Begründung für diese existentiell so empfundene Einsamkeit basiert auf der These, daß Sprache keinen subjektiven Wahrheitswert besitzt, da subjektive Erlebnissmomente hinter nivellierenden Phrasen und Metaphern verborgen bleiben" ("Der Einzige und sein

Sprachspiel" 60).[89] The final line of herostrat seems to me to be particularly poignant with reference to Bayer's own predicament: his need, like that of the figures in some of his dramatic texts, to realise himself as an individual, away from society ("endlich allein sein") which battled against his need for the companionship it offers and without which one is "entsetzlich kalt".

By concentrating principally on Bayer's prose texts, Janetzki's analysis of Bayer's search for an alternative mode of existing for the individual is incomplete. This chapter has illustrated that Bayer's own dramatic texts and die folgen geistiger ausschweifung, which as a "vortrag für zwei personen" (WG 319) has a dramatic quality, are of considerable assistance in adding further dimensions to this analysis. For it is in the dramatic texts that Bayer's "Sprachkritik", which is, after all, the basis for his search for the "ich", is articulated most clearly.

Faust is not so sure, however, that Bayer's dramatic texts are successful:

> Wie ist Verständigung darüber möglich, daß Verständigung nicht möglich ist? Diese Frage, die Bayers theatralische Arbeit durchzieht, findet ihre erste Antwort in der Entlarvung der funktionierenden Umgangsformen und der Demaskierung der "Reden". Doch was entsteht jenseits dieser Entlarvung? Was bleibt, wenn die Entlarvung immer wieder neu, immer wieder anders und immer wieder gleich durchgespielt wird und eine schulterklopfende Verständigung jenseits der "falschen Verständigung" erzeugt. Muß nicht auch sie entlarvt werden? Denn dies scheint sicher: Für Bayer gibt es das Begreifen der "durch Phrasen verstellten und entstellten Wirklichkeit" nicht in einer neuen, reinen Sprache, einer unbefleckten "Paradiessprache", sein Blick auf Welt und Sprache führt eher zur unendlichen Reflexivität des Bewußtseins, das die Transzendierung der Verständigung über die Nicht-Verständigung hinaus fordert, wenn sie nicht endlos in sich selbst kreisen will. (144)

Faust suggests here that Bayer's constant criticism of language and his exposing of it

[89] Here Janetzki contradicts his earlier suggestion that subjectivity is merely a linguistic fiction by stating that the individual's "subjektive Erlebnissmomente" remain concealed behind language, thus acknowledging that subjectivity does exist at some level.

over and over again in different ways runs the risk of resulting itself in a new "schulterklopfende Verständigung" which in turn needs to be exposed. That Bayer was aware of the paradox inherent in carrying out an attack on language through the medium of language is certain. Wiener alludes to this when referring to the Group's disillusionment during what I described earlier in this chapter as the second phase of its language theory: "ich erinnere mich, dass bayer einmal meinte, wir würden noch beim blossen vorzeigen von gegenständen landen" (WG 402). Wischenbart concludes that the logical consequence of the realisation of the impossibility of communication through language is silence, but points out that this would amount to an admission of defeat: "Der Konsequenz zu folgen aber würde heißen, den Spielregeln, die zu unterlaufen das Unternehmen überhaupt erst begonnen wurde, ein diktatorisches Vorrecht einzuräumen" (Aspetsberger, Frei and Lengauer 365). This is one reason why, instead of retreating into silence, Bayer continued to write. Another is the fact that, as I stated earlier in this chapter, to write was, for Bayer to fulfil an existential need, for even the most radical language critic and individual anarchist needs to find some way of expressing his "ich" to the outside world. It was the struggle to find a way of doing this through language, while still preserving the integrity of the self, that obsessed Konrad Bayer and necessarily occupied a central position in his literary work. It was this struggle that results in dramatic texts and figures that are highly complex and challenging and thus far from being characterised by the "schulterklopfende Verständigung" referred to by Faust.

However, Faust, who finds many of Bayer's plays to be "gesucht, pennälerhaft, albern, leer" (136) ultimately decides that they fail to answer Bayer's questions about the "ich" in language:

> Die Stücke Konrad Bayers enthalten einen Widerspruch zu sich selbst. Ihre 'physische Dimension' kollidiert mit den 'Szenen', die das Bewußtsein sich wünscht und zu entwerfen vermag. Der Versuch ihrer Präsentation - so scheint es - führt nicht hinein in den Raum der Antworten, den Bayer sich auf eine Frage nach dem Ich (dem Ich in der Sprache) erhofft . . . (149).

Following my investigation of Bayer's "Sprachkritik" and texts in which he concerns himself again and again with language and the individual, I must agree with Faust's conclusion that the texts fail to offer answers to Bayer's questions about the "ich", but must equally assert that this is not due to any literary inadequacy on Bayer's part, but to the fact that in these texts he poses questions to which there are no answers. His daring efforts to explore these questions should, therefore, rather be admired. I also hope that this chapter, along with the others of this thesis, has shown them to be far from what Faust terms "gesucht, pennälerhaft, albern, leer".

3.8 Review of Chapter 3

This chapter has concerned itself with discovering the motivation behind Bayer's linguistic experiments as discussed in the preceding chapter. This investigation necessitated a closer look at philosophical considerations which influenced Bayer's attitude to language. Using statements by members of the Wiener Gruppe, Bayer's own texts and his collaborations with Oswald Wiener, I traced, in the initial sections of this chapter, how the development of his "Sprachtheorie" can be understood in terms of the philosophies of Wittgenstein and Mauthner. I then considered Bayer's linguistic experiments in light of this new information and suggested that his critical stance on language necessitated a radically experimental style which undermines the prescriptive and normative power of conventional language, liberates literature and language itself, and enables the author and, potentially, the reader to engage in a process of autonomous creativity.

Before attempting to begin to interpret Bayer's dramatic texts, I pointed out the way in which they seem designed to resist interpretation, something which presents the Bayer commentator with considerable difficulties.

A discussion of Bayer's kasperl am elektrischen stuhl was preceded by two sections that examined the historical origins of the "Kasperl-Figur" in the "Alt-Wiener Volkstheater" and its representation in the dramatic texts of Gerhard Rühm and H. C. Artmann. While Bayer's Kasperl figure was shown to have much in common with the Kasperl figure of the "Volkstheater" and with the figures of Rühm's and Artmann's texts, I concluded that Bayer's interpretation of this figure is far more anarchic. My

analysis of kasperl am elektrischen stuhl also illustrated that, like der analfabet, it is characterised by the principle of "veränderung" and is also a text that undermines itself.

By linking the figures of Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot, I illustrated how they articulate Bayer's language criticism and reflect his repeated attempts in his texts to fashion an alternative mode of being for the individual outside the normative structures of language. An analysis of these three figures showed that the existence they choose is essentially a negative one, in the sense that it can be defined mostly in terms of what it rejects, rather than in terms of what it stands for, based as it is on a rejection of language as a medium for depicting reality, communicating with others and representing the self. The aim of these rejections is the achievement of freedom for the individual.

The search for this freedom often results in an individual anarchism that subjugates everything to the individual. A comparison with Der Einzige und sein Eigentum revealed that this individual anarchism owes much to Stirner's philosophy. The individual anarchist of Bayer's texts sees the world as his creation: "seit ich weiss, dass alles meine erfindung ist, vermeide ich es, mit meinen freunden zu sprechen . . ." (SW 393). In fact, this quote can be read as a statement about Bayer's literature in which, as has been illustrated, he abandons conventional language for an experimental, highly individualistic, one could even say solipsistic style which proves to be problematic for the reader. In the context of the findings of this chapter, this style can now be characterised as the linguistic product of Bayer's "Sprachkritik".

This chapter has shown that the existence put forward by Bayer with the self-referential figures of Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot is one which, if it is to be

sustained, sometimes merits recourse to drastic measures. However, textual evidence shows that this position is ultimately untenable, a realisation which seemed to have tragic consequences for Bayer himself.

At this stage, despite the reservations I expressed regarding the precarious position of the Bayer commentator, I believe that the hope expressed at the beginning of this chapter that I might begin to interpret Bayer's dramatic texts has, at least to some extent, been fulfilled.

The next chapter considers another important figure of Bayer's dramatic texts – the Lion of Belfort. As this figure, unlike Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot, does not articulate a position on language, I have not included him in the investigations of this chapter. However, like these other figures, he forms part of Bayer's efforts in his dramatic texts to search for a mode of being for the individual and therefore merits further consideration.

Chapter 4

4.1 The Lion of Belfort[90]

The Lion of Belfort is a figure that recurs in Bayer's dramatic texts. Some texts feature him in their titles: ein abenteuer des lion von belfort (1954), ein anderes abenteuer des lion von belfort and der löwe zu belfort (dates unknown), while he appears in some scenes of der analfabet (1956) and kasperl am elektrischen stuhl (exact date unknown). In Rühm's "Anmerkungen" to der löwe zu belfort, to which he adds the term "(bruchstücke)" in his table of contents, the following comment is made:

> über den "lion de belfort", eine seiner lieblingsfiguren, wollte Bayer anscheinend ein grösseres stück schreiben. die hier zusammengefassten bruchstücke könnten teile dieses stücks sein, bei der ersten und dritten szene steht dies fest, selbst wenn man beachtet, dass es bei bayer ein paar stehende figuren gibt, die in sehr verschiedenen zusammenhängen und texten auftauchen - besonders auffallend der lion de belfort.
> (SW 778-779)

These comments point to the need for a closer examination of this favourite figure of Bayer's. The fact that Rühm numbers him among Bayer's "stehende Figuren" also suggests that he can be linked to Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot, who are essentially variations of one central Bayer figure.

André Bucher attributes the inspiration for this figure to Max Ernst (143), the Dadaist/Surrealist artist. Une semaine de bonté, a collage novel assembled by Ernst in 1933, features in its first chapter thirty-five collages dominated by a lion-headed man referred to as the Lion of Belfort. In Chapter 1 I outlined the Wiener Gruppe's affinity

[90] It should be noted that different variations of this figure's name can be found: "löwe", "der lion von belfort", "der lion zu belfort" and "der lion de belfort". For convenience, I frequently refer to these figures as the Lion of Belfort, although this does not acknowledge Bayer's use of the French or English word "lion" in his German texts.

with the preceding experimental movements of Dadaism and Surrealism. Using the figure of the Lion of Belfort it is possible to trace the influence of these movements in Bayer's work.

That Bayer identified himself with the Dadaist and Surrealist traditions is evident in the inclusion in his "vaterländische liste",[91] a list of Austrians whom he admired, of the Dadaists Walter Serner and Raoul Hausmann (SW 16).[92] Rühm also mentions Bayer's admiration of Serner and Hans Arp (SW 18). Ulrich Janetzki recounts that from 1960 Bayer bought books he could not get in Vienna from Giovanni Blumer, also a friend of Achleitner and Rühm, who lived in Switzerland (Alphabet und Welt 165-166). Bayer's choice of books reveals a particular interest in Dadaist and Surrealist writers.

Rühm describes Bayer as Artmann's protégé, and therefore also likely to be indebted to surrealism: "vielleicht unter dem einfluss, sicher aber unter der ermunterung h. c. artmanns begann er seine ersten gedichte und kurzen prosatexte zu schreiben. artmann, der ausgesprochen von der schwarzen romantik und vom surrealismus herkam, mussten diese texte mehr liegen als mir" (SW 9).[93] Janetzki points out, however, that Bayer's predilection for surrealism pre-dates his friendship with Artmann:

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[91] Sonja Kaar points out that this list is composed of "'Außenseiter' der österreichischen Literatur, die in den 50er Jahren kaum rezipiert waren" (186) and that Franz Grillparzer, along with other authors who would have been perceived as more representatively Austrian, is omitted. Grillparzer was on numerous occasions singled out by Wort in der Zeit and honoured by that journal as the quintessential Austrian (Hackl 176). Significantly, the reconstructed Burgtheater was "consecrated" in 1955 by a performance of Grillparzer's patriotic drama König Ottakars Glück und Ende (O'Brien 138). It is clear, therefore, from Bayer's list that he was consciously identifying with an alternative tradition within Austrian literature.

[92] It is interesting to note that Hausmann himself had a rather ambivalent attitude towards the young generation of authors who identified with him, complaining that the post-war generation was guilty of exploiting Dadaism, and dubbing the likes of Artmann, Rühm, Okopenko, Bayer and Jandl "Neodadaisten" who had nothing new to offer. At the same time, Hausmann tried to cultivate relationships with young artists and exchanged texts with them. Adelheid Koch attributes this attitude to Hausmann's "langjährige Nicht- und Fehlrezeption" (157).

[93] Bayer himself says of Artmann: "er war mir anschauung, beweis, dass die existenz des dichters möglich ist" (SW 714).

> Konrad Bayer hatte lange vor der Bekanntschaft mit Artmann seine Vorliebe für den Surrealismus bekundet. Schon in dem erstdatierten Gedicht "für judith" (1951) ist augenfällig, was er auch später (wenngleich anders modifiziert) beibehalten hat: Aneignung der Wirklichkeit durch surrealistische Umdeutung. Er selber hat nie bestritten, daß er u. a. dem Surrealismus wesentliche Anregungen verdankt. In seiner Rückschau auf die Wiener Dichtergruppe schreibt er 1964 für The Times Literary Supplement: "i were [sic] more indebted to surrealism, mannerism, black romanticism, or rather to french culture as a whole." (Alphabet und Welt 15)

The above statement by Bayer is echoed in his "autobiografische skizze": "der surrealismus hat mich ungeheuer beeindruckt" (SW 7), and is explicit in his quoting of André Breton in the "vorwort" to der kopf des vitus bering. Rühm explains how a mutual interest in Max Ernst brought about the beginning of his friendship with Bayer:

> 1951/52 lernte ich konrad bayer durch h. c. artmann kennen. wir trafen uns damals in grösseren, lockeren gruppen, so dass ein neues gesicht nicht unbedingt auffiel . . . ein buch über max ernst, das ich zuhause hatte, gab auch den anlass zu unserer ersten bewussten begegnung. max ernst begeisterte bayer besonders. so verbrachten wir zum ersten mal miteinander "privat" einen ganzen nachmittag und abend. (SW 9)

The appearance of the Lion of Belfort in Bayer's dramatic texts is textual evidence of his particular enthusiasm for Ernst's work. My study of this figure will begin with an examination of the Lion of Belfort as he appears in Bayer's dramatic texts. This examination is followed by a look at Max Ernst's depiction of this figure, which in turn leads to a survey of the lion's associations with alchemy. The chapter concludes with a review of the Lion figure.

4.2 The Lion of Belfort in Bayer's dramatic texts

In ein abenteuer des lion von belfort, the first of Bayer's texts to feature the Lion, he appears as a powerful military figure:

> der vorhang. ein cupferstichzimmer, rechts das conterfey des lion.
> der lion steht vor seinem lehnsessel
> hinter einem grossen barocken schreibtisch.
> er setzt sich,
> er streicht seinen schnurrbart,
> er trägt eine mit orden reich decorierte generalsuniform.
> apollyon bringt auf einer silbertasse
> sechs versilberte gabeln und sechs versilberte stilette.
> er überreicht sie mit einer decenten verbeugung.
> der lion erhebt sich und sticht sechs versilberte gabeln
> und sechs versilberte stiletten in
> über den tisch
> verstreute lorbeerblätter.
> die lorbeerblätter sind vergoldet. (SW 135)

These stage directions present the reader with a surreal scene. The word "cupferstichzimmer" is one created by Bayer. "Kupferstich", normally spelled with a 'k', usually refers to a copperplate engraving or etching. The word "Kupferstichkabinett" refers to a room in an art gallery, or possibly a house, used to display such works of art. "cupferstichzimmer", with the use of 'c' instead of 'k' and "zimmer" instead of "kabinett" has the effect of making strange or defamiliarizing and is another instance of the "abstand" referred to in Bayer's "beilage" to der analfabet. It may also be Bayer's way of alluding to the artist Max Ernst in his text. In this "cupferstichzimmer" is "der lion". Again the unusual spelling is somewhat disorienting. "lion" is not a German word and therefore draws attention to the name of this figure. The way it is used in the text leads one to believe that it could be a proper noun or the French or English word for lion. The appearance of the French place name Belfort in the title suggests that it is French, but since the Lion reads "The Times" in the text, this remains unconfirmed. Regarding the physical appearance of the Lion, the reader is only told that he has a moustache and wears a highly-decorated

general's uniform. He appears to have human characteristics, but one cannot be sure if he is human, animal, or, in the tradition of mythological human/animal figures, a combination of both.[94] Thus, from the start, an air of mystery surrounds the figure of the Lion. Here, he appears as a "Salonlöwe" in a bourgeois environment. He is a high-ranking, decorated military officer who lives in reasonable comfort, waited on by Apollyon, apparently his servant, a figure that can possibly be equated with the "apollo, polizist" who is the sidekick of "löwe, polizeichef" in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl. The name Apollo has mythological associations, while Apollyon is the name of the king of the locusts and angel of the abyss referred to in the Bible (Rev. 9.11). The choice of these names for the assistants of "lion" and "löwe" builds up the importance, mystery and sinister quality of the Lion.

The fact that the forks and stilettos brought to the Lion by Apollyon are silver-plated, and not real silver, and that the laurel leaves, classical symbols of victory, are "vergoldet" is a detail which underscores the sense of incongruity that surrounds the scene, and hints that all is not as it seems. This is confirmed when the Lion approaches a sofa which has remained concealed by a Japanese screen to observe his victim:

> der lion legt die zeitung auf den schreibtisch
> und tritt an ein sopha
> - das sopha steht an der rechten seitenwand und blieb
> dem scharfsinn des betrachters durch einen japanischen
> paravent verborgen -
> und betrachtet sein opfer
> mit unbewegter miene. (SW 135-136)

The incongruous use of the word "Scharfsinn" here seems to suggest that instead of remaining out of sight of onlookers, the sofa has remained concealed to their

[94] Among H. C. Artmann's dramatic figures are "ein beistand mit adlergesicht und hausschuhen" and "ein beistand mit löwengesicht und hausschuhen" (both in die hochzeit caspars mit gelsomina) and "ein männl. löwe" (in fauler zauber in schwarz-afrika).

astuteness or acumen, as if they have somehow not been perceptive enough to see it. The fact that a paravent is the cause of this is interesting. I referred in Chapter 2 to the paravent as an image of Bayer's method of text production, a method that makes certain that the "full picture" is never revealed to the reader and therefore that the texts resist interpretation. Chapter 2's linguistic analysis demonstrated that in der analfabet this is the case. The way in which kasperl am elektrischen stuhl was shown to undermine itself in Chapter 3 suggests that Bayer took care to similarly draw a screen across that text. Bayer's method of text production ensures that something always remains concealed to the reader's "scharfsinn" so that he/she cannot construct a coherent whole.

The Lion's victim is a woman who is dressed in underwear and tied with strong ropes to the sofa:

> diese frau
> ist mit derben stricken an ein sopha gefesselt.
> sie trägt dessous.
> ob die dessous einen leinenunterrock einschliessen,
> wird der phantasie des betrachters überlassen.
> dieser leinenunterrock
> ist von himmelblauen schleifchen durchzogen.
> dieser leinenunterrock und volants. (SW 136)[95]

Bayer again undermines the reader and his own text with his description of the woman's undergarments. At first he suggests that whether or not they include a linen underskirt is left to the spectator's imagination, although the fact that he mentions "leinenunterrock" at all is, in itself, suggestive and must interfere with the spectator's

[95] Rühm, when discussing das erste märchen für erwachsene, a collaboration between himself and Bayer, reveals the following: "dieser text wurde nicht von vorgefundenem sprachmaterial inspiriert, sondern von drei in einer illustrierten gefundenen reproduktionen erotisch-pikanter damendarstellungen aus der jahrhundertwende, deren eine ein 'fräulein' in damals gewagten dessous mit fantastischem hut und sonnenschirm zeigt, gelehnt an die reeling eines schiffes mit ausblick auf das meer . . ." ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 194). It is possible, therefore, that Max Ernst's work was not Bayer's only source of inspiration in creating the figure of the Lion of Belfort.

imagination. Bayer then subverts what the text has just suggested by describing the underskirt exactly.

In the next part of the text the focus shifts away from the woman and back to "lion" who, unperturbed and unemotional, busies himself with arranging flowers:

> der lion ordnet blumen in eine vase.
> die vase und ein japanischer blumentisch.
> apollyon weist hinter der scene die anschuldigung zurück,
> dass die blumen welk seien.
> apollyon beweist hinter der scene,
> dass man auch frische blumen parfumieren darf.
> die blumen auf dem blumentisch sind nicht parfumiert. (SW 136)[96]

Once again Bayer seems intent on disorienting the reader, who begins to ask such questions as: How can Apollyon refute the accusation that the flowers are withered if, according to the text, no such accusation has been made? And how can he prove "dass man auch frische blumen parfumieren darf" from backstage? And what is so important about the flowers anyway? These are questions which remain unanswered. Perhaps Bayer's invitation in the "beilage" to der analfabet to delight in the beauty of the absurd should be borne in mind here. After this interlude the Lion once again approaches the sofa:

> der lion tritt an das sopha:
> "mein besteck."
> apollyon tritt auf.
> apollyon tritt mit säge,
> seciermesser und vorschlaghammer auf.
> "das besteck. herr."
> der lion greift nach der säge.
> der vorhang: fällt. (SW 136)

The word "Besteck" can mean both cutlery and surgical instruments. The reference to

[96] "scene" is either English or possibly French, although the correct French spelling would be "scène". Interestingly, Bayer's letters to his girlfriend Ida Szigethy in 1956 and 1957 feature French and English words ("Briefe" 53-60). Bayer's use of foreign words indicates the influence of foreign language literatures on his work - I referred in Chapter 1 to the way in which the Vienna Group pored over any material they could find on preceding experimental writers - and also, perhaps, his desire to distance himself somewhat from conservative Austria by imbuing his texts with a cosmopolitan flavour.

"seciermesser" in the text suggests that the latter meaning is more likely here, although the fact that this knife is accompanied by a saw and a sledge-hammer leads one to believe that the Lion is not about to operate on the woman, but will dismember her - she is, after all, not his patient, but his "opfer". The other meaning of "Besteck" - cutlery - should not perhaps be excluded, especially since the text has already referred to "sechs versilberte gabeln und sechs versilberte stilette" (SW 135). Maybe after he has cut his victim into pieces, the Lion will then eat her. This scene will be discussed again later in the chapter with reference to parallels with Max Ernst's collage novel.

The full title of another text in which the figure of the Lion appears is ein anderes abenteuer des lion von belfort ohne sich in den vordergrund drängen zu wollen. So anxious, it seems, is the Lion not to push himself to the fore, that he does not appear at all in this dramatic text. Instead, one is confronted with a general and his adjutant who are described as follows: "sie blickten voll wehmut in die sterbende abendsonne und ihre herzen schwammen auf der melancholie des heldentums" (SW 283). The two weep and complain that no one can understand them and also that they are "lieblos" (SW 283). When a messenger brings them the news that the battle is lost, they decide to go home. However, when a second messenger brings them the following news, they decide to stay and wait:

2. kurier: "der feind, der feind
der böse feind
hat sich zu einem ding vereint
uns in sein herz geschlossen
die kleinen und die grossen" (SW 283)

Although the mention in its title of "ein *anderes* abenteuer des lion von belfort" would suggest that this text is a continuation of the Lion of Belfort adventure story, apart from the military setting, there is nothing to link the two texts.

der löwe zu belfort, as Rühm has pointed out, probably consists of fragments that Bayer wanted to include in a longer play about the Lion of Belfort. In the first scene the Lion himself does not appear but the figure of Apollyon, his servant in ein abenteuer des lion von belfort, does. He approaches three sailors and makes the following statement: "ich suche mörder mit guter figur" (SW 284). Bayer again disorients the reader by making Apollyon search not just for murderers, but for killers "mit guter figur". It becomes clear that he is recruiting for his master, who is, presumably, the Lion of Belfort:

> apollyon: mein herr sucht diener.
> gaius: was zahlt er?
> apollyon: genug.
> gaius: wer hat lust zu arbeiten?
> flavius, tiberius: niemand.
> gaius (blickt ironisch zu apollyon): so ist es.
> apollyon: wer spricht von arbeit? (SW 284-285)

Here again, as in ein abenteuer des lion von belfort, there is a somewhat sinister undercurrent as one wonders why exactly Apollyon is looking for the men. This is confirmed by the following comment by Bayer, which, according to Rühm, refers to this scene: "1. Akt. 1. Szene / Palast des Löwen / Apollyon, Löwe von Belfort, 3 Matrosen / wird er sie als opfer wollen? oder wofür? oder als schergen?" (SW 779). The fact that such a powerfully destructive figure as Apollyon, angel of the abyss, is the Lion's servant makes one wonder what devastation the Lion is capable of.[97]

In another scene the Lion actually does appear, this time "in seiner rolle als capitän und meerfahrer" (SW 286). Again, the Lion is in a position of authority and in uniform. This time he and his crew are on their way to conquer the North Pole. When

[97] The locusts over which the biblical Apollyon presides have the power to torture, but not kill "the persons who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads" (Rev. 9.4). They are described as having human faces, women's hair and, significantly, "teeth like lion's teeth" (Rev. 9.8). A further connection between Apollyon and Bayer's "lion de belfort" is that the name Apollyon contains "lyon", a variation of lion.

in danger of being attacked by four regiments of albatross, the Lion does not seem to worry about losing course and orders the sextant to be thrown overboard, relishing in the battle:

> palmiro im mastkorb: albatrosse, vier regimenter herr. sie halten auf uns.
> lion: kurs nordost, an die kanonen, werft den lästigen sextant ins meer. wir wollen eine heillose verwirrung in szene setzen. gebt ihnen die halbe seite. auf!
> . . .
> lion: DAS war eine schlacht!
> matrose: wir haben den kurs VERLOREN.
> lion: SIEG! wir haben GESIEGT!! (SW 287)

A man wearing spectacles then appears, looking for the train to Cracow, and claiming to be the discoverer of the North Pole. He is promptly shot and thrown overboard. In the fragments of der löwe zu belfort the Lion is again shown as a powerful, but rather erratic figure. Once again he is associated with violence.

The Lion of Belfort appears in four scenes of der analfabet in very different roles. In Scene 8 he is the object of the other figures' admiration. Indeed, they seem to desire him. The scene in its entirety is quoted below:

> mehr als alle (sitzend?) mein gott, das wird eine richtige liebeserklärung
> lion von belfort (tritt auf. musik)
> 1 sehr galant
> lion von belfort (geht während dieser szene von der rechten seite der bühne auf die linke und ab)
> 2 ich seh ihn gern
> 3 wir sassen bei tisch einander nicht gegenüber
> 4 was meine lippen verschwiegen, das sagten meine augen
> 5 die narbe kleidet ihn sehr wohl
> alle jetzt sind wir wieder allein
> (ende der achten szene) (SW 157-158)

In Scene 9 the Lion is portrayed in a similar way. The backdrop is one of "ödes felseneiland" (SW 158) and the "baumschulgärtner" makes his only appearance of the text in this scene:

> der baumschulgärtner im kreise aller
> baumschulgärtner ich seufze und schweige. diese leidenschaft verschloss ich in meiner brust,

doch war es vergebens. bravo, bravo.
(vor ihm liegt regungslos ausgestreckt, als ob er tot wäre, der lion von belfort)
1 er ist noch schöner geworden
baumschulgärtner er ist gewachsen und gut gewachsen
1 (springt auf) ich will meine keuschheit aus patriotismus opfern.
alle ausser 1 und baumschulgärtner (der sich so weit vorbeugt, dass man seinen gesichtsausdruck nicht mehr erkennen kann)
hurra, ein opfer
1 (setzt sich)
2 (springt auf) ich will meine keuschheit aus patriotismus opfern
alle ausser 1 und baumschulgärtner (wie oben)
hurra, 2 opfer (SW 158)

Is the Lion, who here lies stretched out as if dead, the cause of the tree nursery gardener's passion? Does he inspire 1 and 2 to want to sacrifice their chastity out of patriotism? (And if so, how might this be done?!) It seems that he does because there does not seem to be anyone else to which the "er" that the other figures talk about could refer. Here again, as in Scene 8, the Lion is an object of admiration as the other figures comment on his physical appearance. In Scene 11 this is far from being the case.

Here, in a classroom shaped like an amphitheatre, the Lion announces his desire to be "ein stadtschüler":

lion von belfort ich möchte ein stadtschüler sein
alle wir verzeihen dir, dass du es nie gewesen bist
lion mit wem habe ich die ehre?
matrose 1 und matrose 2 du bist der löwe von belfort!
lion bitte seid mir nicht böse (SW 159)

When the two sailors introduce the Lion to himself, he seems to sense that something is not right. They and the others go on to reduce him to tears with their childish teasing:

alle hast du uns was mitgebracht?
lion ihr habt wieder alles vergessen
alle *du* hast wieder alles vergessen
1 geh zum zirkus!
2 als komponist
3 als dirigent

4 als stallknecht
matrose 1 clown!
matrose 2 als löwe
alle (leiernder kinderchor, durchdringend und unangenehm)
als löwe, als löwe, als löwe
lion (erregt) artistenvolk!
alle (wie oben) als löwe, als löwe, als löwe
lion (leise?) ich möchte ein stadtschüler sein
alle (wie oben) als löwe, als löwe, als löwe
lion (weint bitterlich)
(ende der elften szene) (SW 159-160)

Bayer's choice of a "bestimmtes bühnenbild" (SW 159) for this scene is significant because it is one of the rare occasions when a particular set is specified. In a footnote to the text he describes the set as follows: "ich erwarte vielleicht ein klassenzimmer mit ansteigenden bankreihen, die einem amfitheater gerecht bleiben. ferner wären zwei nicht ansteigende bankreihen im vordergrund zu erwägen, welche dem publikum alle darsteller dieser szene (ausser dem lion) in rückansicht bieten würden, um den lion zu akzentuieren" (SW 159). Clearly, the Lion is the focus of this scene. The placing of him in a classroom shaped like an amphitheatre brings to mind the amphitheatres of ancient Rome, where Christians were thrown to the lions. In this scene, with the Lion of Belfort being tormented by the other figures in the centre of the arena, it seems that the situation has been reversed, and the lion has been thrown to the humans. They tease him because he is a lion and he is shown to be defenceless against their taunting.

In Scene 15 one meets yet another, very different Lion of Belfort. This time he is no longer the victim of others' scorn, but the figure "5" is his victim and it is the Lion who is fully in control:

der löwe von belfort (im südwester?)
man trägt in dieser saison keinen hut zum südwester verstehst du? keinen hut zum südwester!
5 (als OPFER; aller wahrscheinlichkeit mit derben stricken gefesselt, stehend, im südwester? es regnet? das wasser läuft in strömen über

die südwester? in einem schlafzimmer? in einem badezimmer? auf einer kommandobrücke? in einem aquarium, vor einem aquarium? wenn 5 fällt, stellt ihn der löwe auf, ohne den dialog zu unterbrechen)

5 du siehst im südwester ohne seemanshut einfach *lächerlich* aus!

der löwe von belfort (beiläufig)
deine kniescheiben sind zerschlagen

5 (die arme sind nicht gebunden. er zieht an den krempen seines hutes. die ähnlichkeit mit einem babyhütchen ist dadurch unvermeidlich. er erinnert an eine 40jährige gutgehendepraxisarztensgattinvoropernballig, er schmollt, er sprüht gift)
ich werde allen erzählen, dass du schnarchst

der löwe von belfort keine schlechte idee, ich werde dich mit frischen salatblättern garnieren (SW 162-163)

Is this the Lion's revenge on one of those who ridiculed him in the classroom of Scene 11? Again the Lion of Belfort is associated with the word "Opfer". The similarity between the description of 5 here and that of the woman in ein abenteuer des lion von belfort is striking. Both are referred to as victims, and the phrase "mit derben stricken gefesselt" is used in both descriptions. The Lion's casual reference to 5's kneecaps being shattered again suggests a propensity towards violence. The appearance of 5 and Bayer's vague stage directions lend the scene an absurd feel, as does 5's threat to tell everyone that the Lion snores. This harmless threat is met with the Lion's more sinister one to eat 5. In this scene of der analfabet the figure of the Lion of Belfort is closer to the familiar one of the texts previously discussed. No longer the object of others' admiration or scorn, as in Scenes 8, 9 and 11 of der analfabet, he is, once again, a potentially violent figure, whom one at least suspects of cannibalism, albeit a civilised cannibal who likes his "meat" with salad leaves.

In kasperl am elektrischen stuhl the Lion of Belfort appears in the guise of "löwe, polizeichef", a title which hints at power and authority and again sees him in uniform. As soon as the dialogue between "herr a" and "herr b" is over, the curtain goes up on

the "real" action and Löwe immediately launches into a monologue in which he introduces himself to the audience:

> löwe: ihr armseligen menschen, ihr sterblichen besitzer des erdbodens, der tiefsee und des himmelszeltes, ich bin es: der löwe von überall, herrscher über sieben weltmeere und ebensoviel erde, nachkomme des maldoror, sohn des melmoth, sohn des hugo schenk, bastard seiner majestät des kaisers maximilian von österreich und tirol, sohn des heliogabal, sohn des astaroth, sohn des hephaistos mit einem nilpferd, abonnent von tageszeitungen und lesezirkeln, ich bin das übel, der omnipotente fürst des erdballs, ich bin der falsche schatten im finsteren haustor, ich bin die kalte hand im kleiderkasten, nummer neunundneunzig im kleinen lotto, der blutfleck auf der autobahn, chef der polizei in 27 kulturstaaten. reichtum und macht, wollust und ehre teil ich aus nach meinem belieben unter meine ergebenen diener.
> (SW 300)

This is the only passage from a Bayer text in which the Lion describes himself. It amounts to an extremely convoluted self-portrait, a collection of disparate and sometimes contradictory allusions and references, in which Löwe gives an account of himself and his lineage. In this account, which is addressed to the mortal occupants of earth, sea and heaven, Löwe introduces himself as a world ruler. He is "der löwe von überall" but is, at the same time, a seemingly inconsequential subscriber to newspapers and magazines. Löwe gives himself an interesting pedigree and his ancestors - he names, for example, five different fathers - deserve closer consideration.

Lieselotte Spalt identifies three literary figures - Maldoror from Les Chants de Maldoror by Lautréamont,[98] Melmoth from Charles Robert Maturin's Melmoth the Wanderer and Héliogabale from Antonin Artaud's Héliogabale ou l'anarchiste couronné - whom, together with the nineteenth-century Austrian serial-killer Hugo

[98] Interestingly, Walter Serner, one of two Austrian Dadaists on Bayer's "vaterländische liste", translated, together with Tristan Tzara, parts of Les Chants de Maldoror into German. Andreas Puff-Trojan notes that the circle around André Breton identified with Lautréamont's work because of the way in which it threatened literary tradition (172, 176).

Schenk[99] and the historical figure of Kaiser Maximilian 1, the Lion claims as his fathers. Common to all three, Spalt points out, is the ability to change the existing order and create something new and unique (31).[100]

Bayer does not only look to literature and history when searching for ancestors of the Lion, but also to mythology and its gods, from whom the Lion is also descended. He claims to be the son of "astaroth" or Astarte, the most important goddess of the pagan Semites, goddess of love, fertility and war.[101] Among his fathers are Hephaistos, god of fire and iron work, who built palaces for the gods and weapons such as Achilles' shield, and the Syrian Heliogabalus (also known as Elagabal). The latter was high priest to the sun-god El-Gabal in Emesa, became Roman Emperor at the age of fourteen, but was killed during a rebellion of the Guard after he snubbed Roman tradition by attempting to place his god at the head of the Roman gods.[102]

The Lion is therefore a hybrid figure, a composite, it seems, of animal, human and divine, a crossbreed of emperors and gods, of reality, fiction and mythology. As such he is a unique, awe-inspiring creature, impossible to define or categorise. He is at once a seemingly harmless subscriber to daily newspapers and "das übel, der omnipotente fürst des erdballs". By making himself the descendant of all the figures mentioned above, he seems to be able to create his own identities. Löwe's monologue is another example of how Bayer, motivated by his critical attitude towards language, seeks a way in which to subvert it. Löwe's family tree draws on several traditions - historical, literary, biblical and mythological - all of which Bayer's "Sprachkritik"

[99] Hugo Schenk murdered several girls in Vienna between 1883 and 1884.
[100] Although Spalt comments on the Lion, she does not enter into a detailed investigation of this figure, concentrating instead on the figure of Kasperl.
[101] In the Greek and Roman traditions Astarte is known as Aphrodite and Venus respectively.
[102] Ronald Hayman observes that Antonin Artaud was interested in Heliogabalus because of the anarchy that his four years of misrule brought to Rome. Hayman refers to Heliogabalus's "exorbitant cruelty and vicious irresponsibility" and recounts that he put an actor in command of the Praetorians and a hairdresser in charge of the food supply (92-93).

views as restricting. However, by being inconsistent in his references to these traditions, by simultaneously making Löwe the descendant of numerous fathers, Bayer succeeds in subverting the normative force of language and in using it to create this time a figure that is unstable, contradictory and original.

The undoubtedly sinister nature of the Lion highlighted above is again evident in Löwe's speech. He declares himself to be "das übel . . . die kalte hand im kleiderkasten . . . der blutfleck auf der autobahn". In associating himself with evil and power ("übel" and "macht"), Löwe of kasperl am elektrischen stuhl retains some of the characteristics associated so far with the Lion of Belfort. As I have already outlined, his monologue supplies further information which I will discuss again later in this chapter. At this point, however, I will return to examining the figure of the Lion as depicted in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl.

Löwe's description of himself in his opening monologue, in which he builds up a picture of himself as a fearsome world ruler, is undermined by his behaviour later in the text. He is shown to be indifferent and lazy in his reaction to Kasperl's announcement that he has killed his wife. He simply says "no und?" (SW 303). He has no interest whatsoever in the fact that a serious crime has apparently been committed. When Kasperl demands a lawyer, he reveals his pomposity and self-importance:

> kasperl (erschöpft): i möcht a rechtskroft!
> löwe (steht hinter seinem schreibtisch auf): widersetzlichkeit gegen die amtsgewalt.
> sie heissen?
> kasperl: ich bin der kaschberl.
> löwe: schon wieder. (SW 304-305)

He illustrates his corruptness and the way in which he abuses his power to arbitrarily mete out justice when he condemns Kasperl, who claims to have written the play they are appearing in, to death:

kasperl: i moch theater in dem sie vuakomman.
löwe: mochns kane witz!
kasperl: es is woa! ollas wos sie sogn is von mia.
apollo: a so a frechheid!
löwe: sie sind zum tode verurteilt! (SW 305)

This image of Löwe is that of a complacent civil servant with an exaggerated sense of his own importance and is at odds with the impression he created at the beginning of the text.

While the figure of the Lion of Belfort is at times presented as weak and defenceless (der analfabet, Scene 11) or as the object of others' admiration or even desire (der analfabet, Scenes 8 and 9), the overriding impression of him is that of a powerful, rather sinister figure, capable of violence and cannibalism. Rühm, in his notes on der löwe zu belfort, includes Bayer's own comments about the figure of the Lion:

> zur figur des lion notierte er: "grimmige faulheit, die alles verschlingt / gefallene engel / verwandte: leviathan meerdrachen / opfersuchend, nur die schwachen anfallend / lion findet die jungfrau gar nicht / vollstrecker des unwiderruflichen urteils / über unschuldige hat er keine gewalt / verwesung (verwesungsgeruch) perversion / nicht grausam, grimmig, blind, gefrässig, alles verschlingend / sehr warm / sehr stark / . . ."[103] (SW 779)

This description of the Lion contains both positive and negative attributes. He is very warm and very strong, but a lazy, all-devouring fallen angel. The positive attributes account, perhaps, for the admiration of others witnessed in Scenes 8 and 9 of der analfabet. However, the fact that he devours everything and is described as "opfersuchend" fits in with the more dominant picture of him. As "vollstrecker des unwiderruflichen urteils" he is associated with death and also with decay ("verwesung"). At the same time, he is not cruel. Whether the "nicht" before

[103] Leviathan, a mythological sea serpent or dragon, is mentioned in the Old Testament. A monster associated with the darkness and chaos of the primeval world, Leviathan was defeated by God at the creation (Day 295-296).

"grausam" also applies to the other adjectives which follow is ambiguous, so that one is unsure whether the Lion is furious, blind, gluttonous and all-devouring or not, something which confirms Bayer's deliberate creation of a contradictory, ambiguous figure that resists interpretation. Bayer then lists what are presumably superstitions associated with the lion as an animal:

> . . . haut des löwen gegen irrsinn / löwenkopf über kopf ziehen / bei donner beginnt löwe zu brüllen / neben vergifteten speisen und getränken beginnt der schwanz zu schlagen / löwenherz am nabel erleichtert die geburt / rechtes löwenohr am ohr heilt taubheit / hund ist ein höllisches wesen / moderplätze schimmelpilz / lion ein nachttier / löwenkopf in der tasche schützt? / kann seinen eigenen kopf nicht sehen? (SW 779)

The association of these superstitions, many of them aimed at healing, with the Lion of Belfort again builds up the power and incongruity of this figure. Bayer ends his description of the figure of the Lion as follows: "der löwe symbolisiert die mächte des herzens - starkmut, stolz, reissende gewalt / versteinerung, vereisung" (SW 780).

It should be considered whether, in creating the figure of the Lion, Bayer drew on features typically associated with the lion as an animal. The Brockhaus entry on "Löwe" describes that animal as an "überwiegend nachtaktive Großkatze" found in Africa and Asia, quite a sociable creature who usually hunts in packs and is capable of devouring up to 18 kg of meat at once. It also notes that old, weak lions that have been excluded from the pack may occasionally attack humans. Bayer's Löwe is, therefore, removed from his natural habitat, but, by virtue of the fact that in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl he speaks Viennese dialect, can be deemed to be a naturalised citizen of Austria, while possibly being of French descent (de Belfort). Although apparently sociable while in the guise of a "Salonlöwe", he seems to hunt alone, except for the presence of Apollo/Apollyon, his assistant, and, as has been illustrated,

also seems to enjoy human flesh. The Brockhaus states that in art and mythology the lion has, at various times and in various cultures, represented the underworld, death, the sun and power. In the Bible both God and the devil are compared to lions, while early Christians associated the lion with the evangelist Mark. As king of the beasts and a symbol of strength, bravery and "kriegerische Tugend" the lion is one of the animals that feature most in coats of arms ("Löwe"). Many of these associations can also be applied to Bayer's Löwe: he too is associated with death and, through Heliogabalus, with the sun. He is powerful and bellicose. Indeed, his power goes far beyond that of the average lion in that he claims to be an omnipotent world ruler. However, Bayer's Lion also has a vulnerable, defenceless side, not normally associated with the king of the beasts.

To return to Bayer's notes, his figure is a symbol of courage, pride and raging violence and also a symbol of the human heart and the human condition, capable of both great good and great evil. The heart, likewise, is at times aflame with passion, and at other times as hard as stone and as cold as ice (the "versteinerung" and "vereisung" mentioned by Bayer). The Lion's ability to combine opposites is a characteristic that places him in the tradition of mythological creatures that subvert the dualistic patterns that dominate rational thinking. Bayer's method in the construction of the figure of the Lion of Belfort amounts to the creation of a "Sammelsurium". With complete disregard for logic and consistency, layer after layer is assembled to fashion the Lion's identity. The result is a creature that is founded in tradition, yet is unique to Bayer's texts, a figure that, like the Bayer texts discussed in

the previous chapters, defies the normative quality of language and so maintains its individualism.

Before examining Max Ernst's Lion of Belfort, I shall now briefly outline references to this figure in secondary literature on Bayer.

4.2.1 The Lion of Belfort in secondary literature on Bayer

Norbert Schnurrer, in his thesis "Konrad Bayer und das Theater", briefly analyses the figure of the Lion of Belfort and makes the following comments:

> Ein großer Raum für Assoziationen eröffnet sich durch die heroische Bezeichnung Löwe . . . Der Name Löwe hat eine hohe symbolische Aussagekraft. In ihm vereinigen sich tatsächliche und vermeintliche Eigenschaften eines Tieres, das gemeinhin als der König der Tiere gilt. Die heilende Kraft seiner überlegenen Stärke wurde gerne für schamanische Rituale gebraucht. Bayer bedient sich bewußt dieser Projektionen. (51-52)

Schnurrer is correct in his recognition of the suggestiveness of the word "Löwe", although, as I have pointed out, Bayer does not always use this German word to refer to his Lion figure. However, the conclusions he goes on to draw are, in my view, essentially flawed:

> Lion von Belfort ist kein gewöhnlicher Name, den man zur Geburt erhält. Vielmehr erinnert er an die Eigenschafts-Namen der Naturvölker, die man sich erst durch besondere Taten oder Fähigkeiten verdienen muß. Starkmut, Stolz, reißende Gewalt aber auch Gefräßigkeit, Grausamkeit und heilende Kräfte sind also die Attribute, die man diesem Namen anfügt . . . Es ist wiederum ein Spiel mit Namen, das Bayer hier betreibt. Die eingespielten Verknüpfungen die jener Tiername produziert, finden keine textuellen Entsprechungen. Im *analfabeten* protestiert Lion in der Art eines Kindes und verlangt trotzig Stadtschüler zu werden. In *der löwe zu belfort*, ist er in der Rolle als Capitän und Meerfahrer einer Reihe von surrealistischen Abenteuer (sic) auf dem Weg zur Eroberung des Nordpols ausgesetzt. Der Lion und seine Mannschaft erringen zwar einen Sieg in einer Schlacht, aber ein Gegner war nicht auszumachen. (Schnurrer 52)

In his surmising as to the origin of the name Lion of Belfort, Schnurrer seems unaware of the fact that the figure was not an original creation of Bayer's but was inspired by a collage novel by Max Ernst. Thus Schnurrer's talk of "Naturvölker" is irrelevant. His claim that the associations connected with the name "lion" find no equivalents in Bayer's texts is also incorrect. His choice of Scene 11 of der analfabet as an example to illustrate this point has been shown in my investigation to be merely a single aspect of the many identities of the Lion of Belfort. Evidently, what Schnurrer fails to comprehend is the multi-layered, contradictory nature of Bayer's Lion.

Although Bucher refers in a footnote to Ernst's collage novel, Une semaine de bonté, as the inspiration for Bayer's Lion of Belfort figure, he does no more than refer to it:

> Max Ernst hat diese Figur in seinem Collage-Roman *Une semaine de bonté* (Paris 1934/ Berlin 1963) geprägt. Die Bedeutung dieses Romans für Bayer zeigt sich schon darin, dass er die zentrale Figur des ersten Teils immer wieder aufnimmt (cf. die Texte *ein abenteuer des lion von belfort* (SW1 S. 119), *ein anderes abenteuer des lion von belfort* (SW1 S. 249), *der löwe zu belfort* (SW1 S. 250)). Eine Art Charakterprofil des *lion* findet sich in der Anmerkung SW2 S. 338. (143)

To my knowledge, a detailed examination of possible parallels between Ernst's Lion of Belfort and the recurring figure of Bayer's texts has not been carried out to date. Such an examination promises, however, to shed more light on this elusive figure.

4.3 Max Ernst and the Lion of Belfort

Before embarking on this examination, it is necessary to make some comment on the concept of the collage novel as created by Ernst. In his essay "Images of Dream and Desire: The Prints and Collage Novels of Max Ernst", Evan M. Maurer describes Ernst's three collage novels, La femme 100 têtes (1929), Réve d'une petite fille qui voulut entrer au carmel (1930) and Une semaine de bonté (1934) as follows:

> . . . books made entirely of series of illustrations having headings or captions, but no text . . . all of which are among his most disturbing yet attractive creations . . . The greatest innovation of the collage novels . . . involves Ernst's creation of a large number of works on related themes which he brought together in extended serial order. Following the premise of their literary structure, we can thus describe the individual collages as phrases or sentences that Ernst linked into a marvelous and very personal syntax to achieve the visual equivalent of paragraphs, chapters, and books. (54-55, 58)

Werner Spies considers Ernst's collage novels to be amongst the most significant contributions of Surrealism "in seiner Absage an literarische Konvention und an die Allwissenheit des psychologisch argumentierenden Erzählers" (9) and points out that Ernst's pictorial narrative does not follow a causal sequence (24).

The full title of Ernst's third, longest and final collage novel is Une semaine de bonté; ou, Les sept eléments capitaux. Maurer reports that it was assembled in a great burst of creative energy in 1933 while Ernst was on holiday in Italy, from various materials that he had brought with him: melodramatic pulp novels, scientific journals and natural-history magazines (78-79). M. E. Warlick describes the process as follows:

> In 1933, Ernst created the 182 collages of *Une Semaine de bonté* by combining images from nineteenth-century wood engravings that he had carefully clipped from French popular novels and from books on astronomy and natural science. The collages were photographically reproduced and printed as *clichés traits* (an etching process that resembles wood engravings), assembled into book form, and distributed in a limited edition by the Galerie Jeanne Bucher in 1934. (61)

The novel, according to Maurer, was influenced by various sources, including "the ancient hermetic philosophy of alchemy, a well-documented preoccupation of the Surrealists in Paris in the 1920s and 30s and one to which Ernst referred in his definition of the collage process" (79).[104] Maurer goes on to outline the connections between Une semaine de bonté and the symbols and processes of alchemy:

> One of these involves the association of the novel's component booklets with the elements earth, water, fire, and air, an arrangement that reflects the classic alchemical process whose ultimate goal is the attainment of spiritual purity. Similarly, Ernst's repeated references to marriage, sexual union, the joining of celestial and terrestrial entities, violence, death, and decay mirror the essential metaphors of alchemical theory, and his three most frequently used animal symbols, the lion, the bird, and the dragon, are associated with many aspects of alchemical procedures. Finally, in alchemy disparate elements are brought together through transformative processes to create unique entities of great purity and beauty. It was because Ernst recognised the kinship between magic and art that he compared the technique of collage to the alchemical process . . . (79-80)[105]

As well as having a love of Max Ernst,[106] Rühm states that Bayer was also interested in secret rituals, magic and alchemy (SW 18). In his creation of the figure of the Lion of Belfort, it seems that Bayer was drawing on both these sources. The apparently contradictory characteristics combined in his portrayal of the Lion figure

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[104] Warlick's essay examines in detail the significance of alchemy for Une semaine de bonté, which she describes as "Ernst's tribute to the alchemical tradition" (61).

[105] In Beyond Painting Ernst makes a direct link between the collage process and alchemy: "One might define collage as an alchemy resulting from the unexpected meeting of two or more heterogenous elements" (qtd. in Hopkins 134).

[106] Spies describes Ernst as a "Verneiner von Konventionen" (9) and Ernst once said of himself: "Mein Vagabundieren, meine Unruhe, meine Ungeduld, meine Zweifel, meine Glauben, meine Halluzinationen, meine Lieben, meine Zornausbrüche, meine Revolten, meine Widersprüche, meine Weigerung, mich einer Disziplin zu unterwerfen, und sei es meiner eigenen . . . haben kein Klima geschaffen, das zu einem ruhigen, heiteren Werk günstig wäre. Wie mein Benehmen, so ist auch mein Werk: nicht harmonisch im Sinne der klassischen Komponisten, nicht einmal im Sinne der klassischen Revolutionäre. Aufrührerisch, ungleichmäßig, widersprüchlich, ist es für die Spezialisten der Kunst, der Kultur, des Benehmens, der Logik, der Moral unannehmbar" (qtd. in Spies 9). In view of these remarks, it is easy to see why Bayer would have identified with someone like Max Ernst.

as outlined above, may mirror the attempts of alchemy to join disparate elements. Possible links between Bayer's Lion figure and alchemy are discussed later in this chapter.

Ernst's Une semaine de bonté is divided into seven sections corresponding to the days of the week. Each section is introduced with a title page listing the artist, the full title, and the word "Roman". Ernst also names the characteristics associated with each day, which he introduces with a quotation that sets the tone of its action (Maurer 80). The most important chapter or day with reference to Bayer is the first one, Sunday, consisting of thirty-five collages which have as their main protagonist the Lion of Belfort, represented by lion-headed men who dominate the action. Maurer next gives the historical background to this figure, which, he points out, has an equivalent in reality:

> Historically, the Lion of Belfort refers to a colossal stone statue 70 feet long and 52 feet high that was carved into the rock face that protects the city of Belfort in eastern France near the German border. Carved by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, sculptor of the Statue of Liberty, the lion is represented as a tragic figure - a powerful warrior lying on his side, wounded and tired yet still dignified and alert. The heroic lion was the symbol of the French defenders of Belfort and their leader, Col Denfert-Rochereau, who effectively engaged a besieging Prussian army of superior numbers and resources. Belfort therefore signified French pride in the face of German militarism, an emotion that took on contemporary meaning with the advent of the Nazi threat and subsequent conflicts. (80)

It is questionable whether Bayer had the historic tensions of this border area between France and Germany in mind with his adaptation of the Lion of Belfort, or, indeed, whether he was even aware of the historical equivalent of Ernst's Lion. However, I have illustrated that while the Lion is almost always associated with power, sometimes directly with military or naval power, he also has a vulnerable and

defenceless side. This would seem to correspond to the statue of the powerful, wounded but dignified warrior-lion as described by Maurer.

A closer look at the first book of Ernst's collage novel Une semaine de bonté reveals to what extent Bayer was inspired by it in the creation of his own Lion figure. The first collage of Une Semaine de bonté, for example, finds an almost direct equivalent in a Bayer text. [107] The collage (Appendix i) features a lion-headed man wearing an officer's uniform which is decorated with medals. His mouth open, he seems to be roaring, while looking over his shoulder at a picture of Napoleon. This collage is mirrored in the opening lines of Bayer's ein abenteuer des lion de belfort quoted earlier in this chapter, with the picture of Napoleon being replaced by a portrait of the Lion himself. The fact that Bayer replaces Napoleon, whom Maurer in his description of the collage calls "the quintessential European conqueror" (81), with a picture of the Lion himself is significant. In equating him with such an important and powerful historical figure, Bayer may be adding yet another layer to the assemblage of the figure of the Lion. On the other hand, by removing Napoleon, Bayer may be removing his Lion figure from a specific historical context that might detract from his multifarious identities. Since there are no specific references in Bayer's texts to the Lion of Belfort's historical or political dimension, the latter would seem to be a more likely explanation. In any event, the association of Bayer's Lion with the military and the portrayal of him as a powerful figure find direct correlation

[107] Some of the collages described in the following are included in an appendix to this thesis. For those not in the appendix, I refer the reader to the relevant pages of Max Ernst's Une semaine de bonté: A Surrealistic Novel in Collage (New York: Dover, 1976), referred to in the following as SB.

in Ernst's collages, where the Lion almost always appears, if not in uniform, then wearing a medal or some form of military decoration.

The collages that follow the first scene described above show the Lion in various roles as a gentleman, a rag-and-bone man or beggar, a clergyman and a criminal. They are very dramatic, involving fights, chases, train journeys, passion, torture and death. The climax of the Lion's adventures is his pursuit of a voluptuous woman with drinking and dancing which culminates in sexual union and the subsequent dismemberment and death of the woman at the hands of the lion-man. It is evident from this brief account of Ernst's novel that, as illustrated in my description of Bayer's Lion of Belfort, violence, torture and death also emanate from his version of this figure. Using some examples of Ernst's collages, I will now outline more direct parallels between these and Bayer's texts.

In many scenes of Une semaine de bonté the Lion is depicted with a captive woman. In the third collage (Appendix ii), for example, a semi-naked woman, who seems to be suspended from a brick wall, is attached to the Lion by a heavy chain. The Lion is wielding an axe-like implement. Whether he intends to cut the woman free or attack her is unclear. Two other collages (Appendix iii-iv) feature the Lion on a train with a bag of money, possibly stolen from other passengers who are tied up, one of whom is again a scantily-dressed woman. Later (SB 23) the Lion, dressed in black robes with skeleton-like fingers is seen drinking with a revealingly-clad, headless woman in a collage which foreshadows the events to come. The tension rises as three successive collages (SB 25-27) show a woman, dressed in the first two in undergarments and in the third (Appendix v) in a transparent sheath, posing

seductively, surrounded by snakes and lions, while the lion-man hovers at her shoulder, clutches at her or licks her bare breast. In a subsequent scene (SB 30) the woman, again half-naked, lies outstretched and possibly tied up on a bed, while the Lion, fully clothed and wearing slippers, tickles her foot with a feather. It is difficult to tell whether the expression on the woman's face is one of pleasure or anguish. What appears in this collage to be playful teasing, becomes in the next two collages blatant violence. In the first of these two scenes (Appendix vi) the woman has been pushed to the floor by the Lion, who maintains a firm grip on her wrist while raising what looks like a cane, presumably to hit her. Her clothes have been ripped so that her breasts are exposed, there are dark, blood-like stains on her skirts and, while she herself as yet appears to be unharmed, bones and entrails hang outside her dress. The next collage (SB 32) shows the woman, this time fully-dressed, falling to the ground as the Lion points a gun at her. On the ground beneath her is a black bundle, from which two legs protrude, leading one to suspect that this bundle consists of dismembered limbs of the Lion's other victims.

All of these scenes depict a menacing, potentially violent and murderous Lion figure that finds an equally menacing equivalent in Bayer's texts, where the Lion of Belfort is associated with tied-up victims referred to as "Opfer". Ernst's lion-man's pursuit of a voluptuous woman and his subsequent violence towards her, which presumably culminates in her death, are reminiscent of ein abenteuer des lion von

belfort, which features, as quoted above, a woman in petticoats, tied to a sofa.[108] This woman seems likely to meet a similar fate to that of the woman depicted in Ernst's collages, as, at the end of the play, the Lion approaches her with his "besteck" of saw, dissecting knife and sledge-hammer. The images from Ernst's Une semaine de bonté are also reflected in Scene 15 of der analfabet, in which 5, again described as an "Opfer", is tied up and seems to be the victim of the Lion's torture: the Lion tells 5 that his kneecaps are shattered and also threatens to eat him. Although Bayer in his "beilage" to der analfabet states that the gender of the text's figures is variable, in the stage directions of this scene he refers to 5 as "er". In spite of this, a comparison with the woman of Ernst's collages is not far-fetched, since the fact that 5's appearance is reminiscent of "eine 40jährige gutgehendepraxisarztensgattinvoropernballig" (SW 163), seems to endow him with female characteristics as well. Despite these similarities, it is important to note that Ernst's lion is a far more consistent and coherent figure than the Lion of Bayer's texts who, as has already been outlined, has a constantly shifting identity that is composed of more layers than the one that finds its parallel in Ernst's novel. The fact that Bayer created his Lion in a different artistic medium than the one Ernst used also points not to a desire to simply replicate Ernst's work, but to draw on it for inspiration.[109]

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[108] Ernst's use of images from nineteenth-century popular novels and Rühm's reference to "reproduktionen erotisch-pikanter damendarstellungen aus der jahrhundertwende" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 194) as a source of inspiration for one of his collaborations with Bayer explains the nineteenth-century bourgeois parlour feel of some of the collages and ein abenteuer des lion von belfort. The choice of Hugo Schenk, the nineteenth-century murderer of girls, as one of Löwe's fathers is also consistent with this ambience.

[109] In Chapter 1 I discussed the way in which the members of the Wiener Gruppe identified themselves with preceding experimental movements not for the purpose of reproducing the work of those artists, but in order to use it for their own new departures.

A point of intersection between the lion figures of Ernst and Bayer would seem to be the area of alchemy. As mentioned above, Max Ernst, and indeed the Surrealist movement as a whole, was drawn to alchemy, "the medieval chemical science and speculative philosophy whose aims were the transmutation of the base metals into gold, the discovery of a universal cure for diseases, and the discovery of a means of indefinitely prolonging life" ("Alchemy"). In its processes and aims Surrealists found equivalents to their own. The transmutation of lesser metals into gold symbolised for them the metamorphosis of man from a creature trapped by the human condition to one of light, capable of possessing his true self and arriving at the supreme point, where opposites fuse and the cosmic mysteries are revealed. The influence of alchemy on Une semaine de bonté has already been mentioned, as has Bayer's interest in the subject. By examining the processes and symbols of alchemy I hope to shed more light on its significance for Bayer's work and for the figure of the Lion of Belfort.

4.4 Alchemy

In his introduction to Jung on Alchemy Nathan Schwartz-Salant refers to alchemy as a "sacred art" and a "sacred science" (1-2) that was born in the second or third century B.C. and began to flourish again during the Renaissance (4). While outwardly it concerned itself principally with the transformation from one state to another - for example, the transmutation of base metals into gold - and tried to accelerate and imitate the earth's natural processes in a laboratory, such experiments were linked to "an inner or arcane work on the human personality" (Schwartz-Salant 2).

The alchemical process required that everything be reduced to water, "to a primal chaos, that is prior to the imposed forms of historical life" (Schwartz-Salant 28). This chaos is a symbol of the prized "prima materia" with which the alchemical work began. Once this primary state had been successfully achieved, the alchemist proceeded to subject the matter to further transformations, the aim of which was the attainment of the "lapis philosophorum", philosopher's stone or "Stein der Weisen". Each stage of the process was associated with a colour which gave it its name: "nigredo", "albedo" and "rubedo" (Schwartz-Salant 34-36). Thus, red, not gold, is the colour associated with the culmination of the alchemical work: "Das edelste Gold, die Goldkoralle, ist rot, die alles Leben spendende Sonne wird mit rot assoziiert, das Blut, die symbolische Grundlage menschlichen Lebens schlechthin, ist rot . . ." (Priesner and Figala 133). The "lapis" itself is always described as being red (Priesner and Figala 132). The stone was the substance with which the transmutation of metals was carried out most easily, quickly and effectively and because it "redeemed" metals from their unfinished state, it was compared to Christ, the redeemer of humankind. So precious was it, that its preparation was the best-kept secret of alchemists, who were

bound by their own moral code to disclose information about it in coded form only (Priesner and Figala 215-216, 219).

However, it seems that the work of some alchemists did not stop with metals but progressed to experiments with human life forms. Hopkins, who is concerned with the significance of alchemy for Max Ernst's work, states: "The production of the artificial man was one of the more esoteric goals of alchemy, a fact ignored by modern commentators who often stress the search for the 'philosopher's stone'" (132). He goes on to quote from Eliphas Lévi's Histoire de la Magie, a nineteenth-century book on the occult known to Ernst: "the supreme dream of philosophers was to accomplish the work of Prometheus by imitating the work of God - that is to say, by producing a man who should be the child of science, as Adam was the child of divine omnipotence. The dream was insensate perhaps, and yet it was sublime" (qtd. in Hopkins 132). Hopkins also notes Ernst's interest in Albertus Magnus, the thirteenth-century German theologian and mystic, who was reputed to possess the philosopher's stone and to have created a living, speaking artificial man (132). It would seem, therefore, that there is more to alchemy than chemical experiments with metals.

The lion is one of the many symbols of alchemy. The lion represents Hermes, who in turn is associated with quicksilver or mercury. Mercury, unique amongst metals in that it is a liquid at room temperature, was endowed by alchemists with various symbolic powers. Priesner and Figala describe it as follows:

> Als lebendige Kraft vermittelte der Mercurius zwischen Körper und Geist. Der Begriff war so ambivalent, daß er alle Gegensätze in sich vereinigen konnte und jeder individuellen Interpretation offenstand. Seine zwiespältige Natur symbolisierte das Bild des Hermaphroditen, in dem sich Männliches mit Weiblichem zu einer Einheit verbindet, die dem Lapis philosophorum das Leben schenkt . . . Dem Metall Q. war der *Merkur* zugeordnet . . . und somit stand es auch in enger Beziehung zu *Hermes* . . . dessen römische Entsprechung wiederum Merkur (lat. mercurius) war. Der Götterbote mit dem Schlangenstab (Caduceus)

> und den geflügelten Stiefeln symbolisierte die Flüchtigkeit des Q.s. (299)

Caitlín and John Matthews note that Mercury unites the many levels and processes of alchemy and that in its incarnation of the green lion it explores the heavens, the earth and the waters under the earth and so sets an example for alchemists to follow (264). The blood of the green lion is life-saving and life-giving and in this context it is not surprising to discover that the alchemical lion is also a symbol of Christ. In his writings on alchemy C. G. Jung ascribes many attributes to the lion. Before discussing these in more detail, I would like to elaborate on the link between alchemy and psychology as investigated and interpreted by Jung.

From 1928 Jung was engaged in the study of alchemical texts. In the processes and symbols of alchemy he discovered parallels with analytical psychology that enabled him to develop the central concept of his work - the process of individuation. His Psychologie und Alchemie (1944) and Mysterium coniunctionis (1955) are the result of his study of alchemy (Schwartz-Salant 22-23). In Jung's interpretation, the aim of alchemy was not the transmutation of metals but the discovery of the unconscious and the arrival of the individual at a state of unity and completeness in which the fundamental opposites of good and evil, male and female are united, a process which he called the "Individuationsprozeß". For Jung, the various stages of the alchemical process symbolised the different phases of the individuation process, with the "nigredo" representing the chaotic point of departure and the "rubedo" perfect unity and self-discovery (Priesner and Figala 290-292). Jung's vision of this newly-discovered self is described by Allison Coudert as follows: "Jungs 'Selbst' ist das seelische Bild, das die gute und die böse Seite der menschlichen Natur verkörpert, das

Licht und die Dunkelheit, den Teufel und Christus, das Männliche und das Weibliche und all die anderen grundlegenden Gegensatzpaare und Konflikte, die geeignet sind, den Geist des Menschen zu zerreißen" (169-170). Jung believed that while these contradictions are normally suppressed, alchemists projected the process of spiritual integration into their work and consequently described a deeply psychological drama in the terminology of chemistry. From Jung's point of view, the philosopher's stone was a fitting image of the self - a unit formed of opposites, binding "Materie und Geist, Seele und Körper" (Coudert 170).

As mentioned above, Jung frequently makes reference to the alchemical lion. In Psychologie und Alchemie he writes: " Löwen, wie überhaupt wilde Tiere, weisen auf latente Affekte. Der Löwe spielt in der Alchemie ebenfalls eine beträchtliche Rolle . . . Er ist ein 'feuriges' Tier, auch ein Sinnbild des Teufels, und stellt die Gefahr, vom Unbewußten verschlungen zu werden, dar" (265). As well as being a symbol of the devil, Jung explains that the lion is at the same time a symbol of Christ: "Alchemistisch sind beide (Löwe und Einhorn) Symbole des Mercurius, wie sie kirchlich allegoriae Christi sind" (Psychologie 622). The alchemical lion is often depicted with his paws cut off. According to Jung, this taming or subduing of such a wild creature symbolises the transformation of the angry, vengeful God of the Old Testament into the New Testament's God of love (Psychologie 597, 622). Another image of the wounded lion in alchemy is that of the green lion that lies in the Virgin's lap, bleeding from his side, an image which Jung comments on as follows: "Die Verletzung des Löwen bedeutet dessen Opferung und Mortifikation . . . Es handelt

sich also um die Kommunionssymbolik und um die Seitenwunde des im Schoß der Pietà liegenden Christus" (Psychologie 564-565).

Along with creatures like the dragon and the eagle, for Jung the lion represented a stage in the alchemical/individuation process, each phase of which brought a new degree of insight, wisdom and initiation (Mysterium 1: 169). For the next stage of the process to be reached, the creature symbolising the previous stage has to die. Jung explains that the cutting off of the lion's paws signifies the overcoming of the old, which makes the progression of the process possible (Mysterium 1: 170). He states that the frequent use in alchemical imagery of animals such as dragons, snakes, scorpions, toads, lions, bears, wolves, eagles and ravens symbolises the fact that the process of uniting the consciousness with the unconsciousness has, at first, undesired results, as poisonous creatures that represent the many transformations that the personality is undergoing come into being (Mysterium 1: 173). Jung claims that combative animals like lions, dragons, wolves and dogs are used to represent "die Phase des Kampfes der Gegensätze" (Mysterium 2: 121) and that the fierce lion symbolises a stage at which much discord still exists between the various elements being combined by the alchemist (Mysterium 2: 50-51). He describes the lion as follows: "Der Löwe ist seiner feurigen Natur entsprechend das 'Affekttier' par excellence" (Mysterium 2: 125). The Lion thus symbolises unrestrained passion and emotion which also has an erotic aspect and which should be seen as "eine Vorstufe der Erkenntnis unbewußter Inhalte" (Mysterium 2: 51, 53). Another incarnation of the lion referred to by Jung is Jaldabaoth, child of chaos, "der Erstgeborene einer neuen Ordnung, welche den ursprünglichen Zustand des Chaos ablöst" (Mysterium 2: 168).

As outlined above, the aim of the alchemical process was the possession of the philosopher's stone which combined opposites in a new, perfectly unified entity. The "Stein der Weisen" was often portrayed in alchemy as a hermaphroditic figure that united the contradictions of male and female: "Das vollendete Große Werk wird von dieser Gestalt symbolisiert . . . Statt ihn als eklatante sexuelle Abnormität anzusehen, erkannten die Ahnen ihn als die Summe der Vollendung" (Matthews 225-226). Priesner and Figala recount that illustrations of the hermaphrodite show "eine zweibeinige, doppelköpfige menschliche Gestalt, die je zur Hälfte weiblich und männlich erscheint" and explain that it symbolised "den entscheidenden Augenblick, in dem zwei gegensätzliche materielle Prinzipien sich zu einem vollkommenen Ganzen verbinden, was als Wiederauferstehung der Materie aus dem Chaos gedeutet wird" (172). For Jung, the philosopher's stone, as represented by the figure of the hermaphrodite, symbolised the union of the contrasexual components of the psyche (Schwartz-Salant 15), the merging into one perfect form of all elements of the personality, good and bad, conscious and unconscious, masculine and feminine, and so the culmination of the individuation process.

Jung often adverts to the dangers associated with the alchemical work, quoting the alchemical saying, "Many have perished in the work", and describing how it can lead to conflict within the ego that can create "chaotic states of mind that can endanger a person's sense of identity" (Schwartz-Salant 2). Coudert recounts that Chinese alchemists working in the loneliness of the mountains suffered panic attacks and feelings of helplessness (174). According to Jung, these fears should not be taken literally but ought to be interpreted as descriptions of the spiritual dangers on the road

to individuation. In his opinion, the place of greatest fear is the unconscious. This is the "prima materia" that the alchemists worked on. If they were lucky, they learned from their insights, and if not they joined the many who perished in the process, often described by alchemists as a torturous one (Coudert 174, 176).

In alchemy's rich, varied and often ambiguous symbolism, its dangerous, hermetic processes and challenging aims Konrad Bayer found many of his own concerns mirrored. The next section considers the significance of alchemy for his literary work.

4.4.1 Bayer and alchemy

Apart from Rühm's assertion that Bayer had an interest in the alchemists (SW 18), there is other evidence that confirms this. In the index to der kopf des vitus bering (1958-1960), Bayer quotes from Die Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosenkreutz (1616), which Hopkins describes as "an allegorical account of the inner transformation of Rosenkreutz, who undergoes a variety of hallucinatory ordeals, corresponding to the stages of the alchemical process" (108), proof also that Bayer was aware of the spiritual aspect of alchemy that was concerned with the development of the inner self.

Included in Bayer's "vaterländische liste" is the name Paracelsus, the pseudonym used by Theophrastus v. Hohenheim. Born in Switzerland in 1493 or 1494, Paracelsus moved to the Austrian province of Carinthia in 1502. He later studied medicine and in 1527 he went to Basel, where he became the first university lecturer to give lectures in German as well as in Latin. His controversial rejection of the traditional medical authorities led to conflict with Basel's medical profession and he was forced to flee that city in 1528. Paracelsus wrote on a wide range of topics – alchemy, philosophy, anthropology, astrology and theology. His version of alchemy is linked to his study of

medicine and differed from traditional alchemy in its new objectives. While not denying the possibility of the transformation of metals, Paracelsus subordinated the goal of transmutation to the production through alchemy of effective healing agents that could not only heal the patient's body, but also his/her spirit. He extolled the philosopher's stone as a panacea and sometimes claimed to be in possession of it himself. After his death in Salzburg in 1541 Paracelsus's contribution to alchemy had an enormous influence on alchemists, particularly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Priesner and Figala 267-268). Paracelsus appears in first position on Bayer's list, indicating that Bayer greatly admired this inventful medical and alchemical maverick. The next question I would like to consider is how Bayer's interest in alchemy manifests itself in his literature and, in particular, in his figure of the Lion of Belfort.

In alchemy things are attempted that defy logic. The same is true of Bayer's literature, where a battle against language is waged through language. Bayer's texts, like the processes of alchemy, represent various phases of an experiment characterised by destruction and struggle that is conducted in the hope of achieving a new, perfect entity. Just as each stage of the alchemical/individuation process brings new wisdom and insight, each of Bayer's experimental texts and figures represents a further attempt to give expression in a unique way to his own creative consciousness.

I have already referred to the parallels between alchemy and Ernst's Une semaine de bonté as outlined by Maurer, who says of Ernst: "Ernst studied the hermetic tradition of alchemy and borrowed both its symbolic and linguistic structures and its theories about the processes of combination and transmutation to describe the changes of identity that took place in his collages" (57). Alchemy's idea of combining various elements to create something new and unique is, of course, reflected in the collage

process as engaged in by Ernst and the montage technique practised by the Wiener Gruppe. Changes in identity are also common to both the figures of Ernst's collages and Bayer's dramatic texts. As is evident from the preceding section, the lion has many, often contradictory, alchemical associations. The diverse nature of Ernst's and Bayer's lion figures would, therefore, seem to originate in the animal's alchemical symbolism.

The alchemical lion's varied associations reflect the principal concern of alchemy, namely, transmutation. This, in turn, is reflected in both Ernst's and Bayer's lion figures. It became clear in the course of my examination of the Lion of Belfort that he is a figure composed of many different layers of shifting identities. In Ernst's collage novel he is at times a gentleman, a rag-and-bone man, a military officer and a member of the clergy; while in Bayer's dramatic texts he is a powerful military or naval figure, a police chief descended from gods, emperors and animals and a blubbering creature who wants to be a "stadtschüler". In der löwe zu belfort Bayer states that the "lion de belfort" appears "in seiner rolle als capitän und meerfahrer" (SW 286), which suggests that the Lion takes on numerous roles and that Bayer was deliberately creating a multi-layered figure.[110]

One of the lion's associations in alchemy is as a symbol of Christ. In Une semaine de bonté one of Ernst's collages shows the Lion in the role of a clergyman, and so as a representative of Christ (SB 13). It depicts him walking through a crowded street, being shaded by a man carrying a parasol over him. He is dressed in clerical robes and carries a monstrance, as the people around him kneel or bless themselves. Bayer's Löwe in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl claims to be the son of Heliogabalus, high

[110] This characteristic of the Lion figure further substantiates my reading of the "beilage" to der analfabet in Chapter 2, where I highlighted "veränderung", including the changing of identity, as one of Bayer's principles of text construction.

priest of the sun-god El-Gabal, and so both figures are associated with a higher, god-like power, be it Christian or pagan. Ernst's Lion remains closer to the alchemical association of the lion with Christ, however. In another of his collages (SB 28) the face of the dying Christ is depicted on the Lion's shirt as he smokes a cigar, holding on his lap a woman in underwear, who wears the Sacred Heart on a necklace. The Lion himself wears the Sacred Heart on his chest, alongside a medal bearing the words "République Française", in the collage that shows him awaiting the guillotine (SB 33). In a basket next to the guillotine is another Sacred Heart which this time is bleeding. As mentioned in the previous section, the alchemical lion is often depicted with his paws cut off. Another image of the wounded lion in alchemy is that of the green lion that lies in the Virgin's lap, bleeding from its side. Ernst's collage of the Lion awaiting the guillotine depicts him as subdued, waiting to have not his paws, but his head cut off. Bayer's Lion is only once depicted as vulnerable - in Scene 11 of der analfabet, where he is reduced to tears by the teasing of the other figures, although this image is somewhat ridiculous and is not really comparable with that of the wounded alchemical lion.

In alchemy, the lion is also a symbol of the devil. It has been illustrated that both Ernst's and Bayer's lion figures are potentially violent and murderous, and in Bayer's notes on his Lion figure, we learn that, like Lucifer, he is a fallen angel (SW 779). Thus, in the tradition of the alchemical lion, the Lion of Belfort is an ambivalent figure, with contradictory associations. He appears to be both good and evil, both

defenceless and extremely dangerous.[111] The alchemical lion is also a symbol of mercury, about which Jung makes the following remarks: "Spricht der Alchemist von Mercurius, so meint er äußerlich Quecksilber, innerlich aber den in der Materie verborgenen oder gefangenen weltschaffenden Geist . . . Er ist Metall und doch flüssig, Stoff und doch Geist, kalt und doch feurig, Gift und doch Heiltrank, *ein die Gegensätze einengendes Symbol*" (Psychologie 401-402). This description of mercury could also be applied to Bayer's Lion, in as much as he too is a composite of opposites. As with mercury, it is impossible to define the Lion's essence, as his form constantly changes and encompasses many different properties and dimensions. Bayer's Lion is at the same time animal and human, strong and weak, destructive but with healing powers, and just as in alchemy the lion is both a symbol of Christ and the devil, Bayer's Lion is both good and evil. He is thus a figure of mythological proportions. As indicated above, Jung identifies the lion with a difficult stage of the individuation process, during which opposing elements of the personality fight for superiority. As the "'Affekttier' par excellence" (Mysterium 1: 125), Jung argues that the lion is an ideal symbol for this phase of the process. Warlick maintains that the lion-man and the female figure of Une semaine de bonté represent "the masculine and feminine archetypes of the alchemical process . . . the masculine and feminine properties of the primal matter" (64-65). She explains the violence of the first chapter of the novel as follows: "When the primal matter has been found, its two opposing

[111] In The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis (first published in Great Britain in 1950), Aslan the lion is an allegory of Christ. There are some similarities with Bayer's lion figure: for example, Aslan also has a royal pedigree, he is "King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-beyond-the-Sea" (Lewis 76); he is dangerous, but good (Lewis 76), "good and terrible at the same time" (Lewis 119); he is a destructive warrior with a fierce roar, who can also be peaceful, patient and kind. Caitlín and John Matthews compare these opposing qualities to the harmless, redeeming Christ lying dead in his mother's lap on the one hand, and the dynamic Christ of the resurrection who drove the money-changers from the temple on the other (106). While Bayer may have been familiar with The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, I am not aware of any evidence that confirms that this was the case. Therefore, I do not intend to engage in a more detailed comparison of his Lion figure with Aslan.

properties must be separated and destroyed so that all impurities can be removed . . . The violence and death found in the first chapter can be interpreted as the separation and destruction of the male and female properties of primal matter" (65). Warlick points out that later in the novel these images of destruction are replaced by others that suggest the attainment of the alchemical goal in "the androgynous union of the primal couple" (68). Bayer's Lion has certainly taken on the emotional, passionate and erotic characteristics of the alchemical lion.[112] He is volatile, liable to explode at any moment and passionate to the point of violent excesses. Whether his violence, like that of Ernst's Lion of Belfort, is necessary for the achievement of the alchemical goal of the perfect unity of opposites is considered later in this section.

The previous section outlined that the alchemical process requires a starting point of primal chaos, which provides the basis from which further transformations can be achieved. It was also mentioned that Jung associates the lion with Jaldabaoth, child of chaos, who ushers in a new order that supersedes the original chaotic state. Since Bayer's violent Lion figure does not inhabit a primal chaotic space, all he can do is try to disrupt the existing order in the hope of being able to create something new from the resulting confusion, just as Bayer, as a language critic, cannot return to a world without language and therefore attempts, by innovative means, the destruction of conventional language in order to express himself in a truly original way. In one text featuring the Lion figure, a specific reference is made to the deliberate creation of confusion. As a captain and seafarer in der löwe zu belfort the Lion, on his way to conquer the North Pole, makes the following statement when informed that his ship is in danger of being attacked by four regiments of albatross: "kurs nordost, an die

[112] This eroticism is revealed in ein abenteuer des lion von belfort, where a semi-naked woman is his victim, and in the fact that in der analfabet he seems to inspire 1 and 2 to want to sacrifice their chastity.

kanonen, werft den lästigen sextant ins meer. wir wollen eine heillose verwirrung in szene setzen" (SW 287). The Lion views the sextant, the navigational instrument that enables him to steer an accurate course, as "lästig". He is more concerned with staging "eine heillose verwirrung". Two possible meanings of this expression are unholy confusion or, taking the phrase as an adaptation of the expression "sich heillos verwirren", a state of being hopelessly lost. In any case, Löwe seems almost intent on losing his course. The idea of navigating in a certain direction, following a course dictated and plotted by external forces, is irksome, perhaps because he perceives it as restrictive and wants the freedom to determine his own course.

It has already been indicated that in alchemy the lion can represent the danger of being engulfed by the subconscious.[113] In Psychologie und Alchemie Jung analyses the dreams of a young man, including one which he describes as follows: "Unter Führung der unbekannten Frau muß er unter höchster Lebensgefahr den Pol entdecken" (261). In der löwe zu belfort any impediment to the Lion and his crew conquering the North Pole is quickly dispensed with, including a man wearing spectacles who claims that he is the discoverer of the North Pole. This scene gains a new dimension when one considers Jung's comments on the dream outlined above. He describes the pole as the point around which everything revolves, and also as a symbol of the self. He then goes on to translate a quote from an original text in Latin to explain how alchemy took up this analogy:

> Der Pol ist der Punkt, um den sich alles dreht: also wiederum ein Symbol des Selbst. Die Alchemie hat diese Analogie ebenfalls aufgegriffen: "Im Pole ist das Herz des Mercurius, welcher das wahre

[113] Jung explains that in mythology the unconscious is often portrayed as a large animal, such as Leviathan (Mysterium 1: 242), a creature that Bayer names as one of the "verwandte" of his Lion figure (SW 779). Hephaistos, whom Löwe himself identifies as one of his ancestors, also has alchemical associations, as Caitlín and John Matthews explain: "Der Alchemist steht in direkter Nachfolge zu dem Schmied der einheimischen Tradition – der die ersten Werkzeuge aus dem Erzen der Erde schmiedete und voll Aberglauben als Wächter eines großen Mysteriums betrachtet wurde. Der Schmied ist der Waffenhersteller der Götter: Govannon, Wieland, Hephaistos . . ." (259). Here, the vast array of identities which Bayer weaves into his Lion figure is once again evident.

> Feuer ist. Darin ruht sein Herr. Indem er dieses große Meer befährt, bestimmt er seinen Kurs durch den Anblick des Nordsterns." Mercurius ist die Weltseele und der Pol das Herz derselben . . . Die Anschauung der "anima mundi" . . . fällt zusammen mit dem Begriff des kollektiven Unbewußten, dessen Zentrum das Selbst ist. Das Symbol des Meeres ist ein weiteres Synonym des Unbewußten. (Psychologie 261)

With this in mind, one could interpret the scene from Bayer's text as follows: if the (North) Pole symbolises the self, then the Lion is on a journey of self-discovery, or embarking on the individuation process. To arrive at his true self, he must cross the sea of the subconscious, thus getting to know his inner self. The journey, however, is one which involves great danger (the "Lebensgefahr" of the dream described by Jung) and the overcoming of obstacles. In Bayer's text it seems that the Lion will stop at nothing to reach the North Pole. He wards off an attack of albatross and has the man wearing spectacles shot, presumably because he claims to have conquered the North Pole, the self, perhaps suggesting that the Lion's self is now under the control of outside forces, something which thwarts the Lion's own attempt at self-discovery. The fact that he has the sextant thrown overboard also indicates his desire to journey towards the ultimate destination of the self unimpaired by the interference of outside forces that would impose order on him. In alchemy, the journey to the self must start from a point of primal chaos. Thus, it could be said that the "heillose verwirrung" that the Lion wants to create is an equivalent prerequisite for his embarking on the journey of self-discovery.[114] This interpretation also adds a possible alchemical dimension to the Lion's violence towards the female figure of ein abenteuer des lion von belfort and 5 in der analfabet because it does not rule out that the motivation behind this violence may be, as Warlick suggested with reference to Max Ernst's lion figure, to

[114] The Lion's desire to overthrow the existing order also illuminates Löwe's choice of Heliogabalus as one of his fathers. The imperial reign of Heliogabalus plunged Rome into chaotic anarchy for four years.

achieve the separation and destruction of the two opposing properties of the primal matter so that the alchemical process can begin. Since the motif of violence in Bayer's texts forms part of the investigations of Chapter 5, I shall refrain from further comment on it at this point.

I have already noted that Rühm points out that Bayer always had "eine schwäche für das maritime" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 194) and in Bayer's prose text der kopf des vitus bering both alchemy and the sea are thematised. In his foreword[115] to the text Bayer explains why he chose the historical figure of Vitus Bering (1680-1741), a Russian naval officer and distinguished leader of research expeditions to polar regions who, along with his crew, developed scurvy and, having been shipwrecked on an island subsequently called after him, was buried alive because he was convinced that the sand would protect his freezing body from the polar cold: "diese und ein paar ähnliche anekdoten waren für mich der anlass, bei bering ein aussergewöhnliches schicksal, ein paar eigene gedankengänge zu vermuten" (SW 532). Bayer claims that the fact that Bering was an epileptic is substantiated by biographical details and the diaries of his crew (SW 532). However, although Bering is known to have suffered fits as a consequence of scurvy, Janetzki states emphatically that he was not an epileptic and that Bayer makes him one in order to link Bering the seafarer and explorer, who was confronted on his expeditions with various shamanist cults, more directly with shamanism, which differs from epilepsy in that, unlike the shaman, the epileptic cannot wilfully induce the ecstatic trance (Alphabet und Welt 93-94). The figure of Bering has a number of things in common with the figure of the Lion of Belfort. Bering is described in Bayer's text as "ein meister der verwandlung" (SW 535). As illustrated above, the Lion is composed of various identities and is associated

[115] Rühm explains that this "vorwort" was written by Bayer for a radio recording of the text and was not meant for publication (SW 806).

in alchemy with the process of transmutation. Both figures are captains of ships in the polar regions, for whom freedom and being the master of one's own destiny is of utmost importance. Bayer writes of Bering: "das lange haar war ein zeichen des freien mannes, welches bering in einem zopf trug . . . als kommandeur eines schiffes hatte bering alle verfügungsgewalt und war sein eigener herr" (SW 551).[116]

Janetzki describes Bayer's use of shamanism and the historical figure of Bering as the "Ausgangspunkt für darüber hinausgehende Probleme" (104). He explains that the real concern of the text is the search for an identity, for which shamanism is merely a "Hilfsmotiv", just as alchemy is also one (Alphabet und Welt 104). Janetzki points out that terms like "Verbrennen", "Feuer", "Licht" which are highlighted in the text are reminiscent of the various stages of the alchemical process (Alphabet und Welt 104) and that in der kopf des vitus bering both shamanism and alchemy represent the irrational and the unknown (Alphabet und Welt 108).[117] He interprets shamanism as follows: "Schamamismus meint hier den idealtypischen Zustand der Identität" (Alphabet und Welt 104).[118] With its transcendental experiences, shamanism shares with alchemy the search for a higher, perfect state. Thus, Bayer's Vitus Bering and his Lion have in common not only their exploration of the polar regions, but also their search for the self.

Another work in which alchemy is featured is der stein der weisen, a collection of prose texts by Bayer. It becomes clear in this series of texts that the philosopher's stone that Bayer is in search of is the "ich". In the first section of the text, entitled

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[116] Vitus Bering is, perhaps, another self-referential figure. For Bayer, the writer, to be a free man entails throwing off the shackles of language: only then can he be "sein eigener herr".

[117] Bayer's introduction of shamanism into his work is again evidence of his inclination towards the irrational rather than the logical.

[118] Janetzki's interpretation is again too restrictive. By using the singular form - "*den* idealtypischen Zustand der Identität" (emphasis added) - he suggests that shamanism is the only form of existence that Bayer advocates in his texts. As I have indicated, Bayer's aim with his texts and figures is to explore as many alternatives for the individual's existence as possible. The use of the word "Zustand", which indicates a static condition, is also at odds with Bayer's principle of "veränderung".

"vorwort", "ich" is presented as a problematic concept encompassing the body and subconscious of all individuals, each of whom has a different name but still refers to himself or herself using the common "ich" (SW 520). In "lapidares museum", the sixth text of der stein der weisen, Bayer describes how a group of people referred to as "wir" march through mountain valleys and a landscape composed of a mixture of artificial and real features, populated by animals such as "künstliche vögel", "echte bären und wölfe" and "scharen grauer und weisser adler aus metall" (SW 525). The repeated references to metals in the text, along with the animals just mentioned, have alchemical resonances, as does the tin lion described in the following passage:

> ein löwe aus blech kommt uns auf einige schritte entgegen. als wir mit unseren bergstöcken nach ihm schlagen, zerspringt dem tier der leib, zwei stahlplatten schieben sich zur seite und aus dem gespaltenen brustkorb drängt sich ein blumenstrauss aus 26 blüten. jede blume ist einem der buchstaben unseres alfabets in silber nachgebildet. vergnügt schlagen wir unsere echten finger in diese tastatur und eine schriftrolle springt der bestie aus dem maul und flattert uns vor die mit blut gefüllten füsse. (SW 526)

Perhaps this lion also represents a stage in the alchemical process or search for the philosopher's stone. His destruction could symbolise the beginning of the next phase, during which those on this quest can use the letters he provides them with to advance their progress. This is, perhaps, further evidence of what I outlined in Chapter 3 as Bayer's ambivalent attitude towards language. Here again language is presented as a potentially positive force which can be of assistance to the individual in his/her search for the self. Further up the mountain, the group comes upon a small lake of bubbling liquid. On the banks of the lake hot steam rises from ice and the thundering noise of machinery fills the air. This piece of text ends with the lines: "das eis verglüht. alles wird blau. der stein der weisen ist blau" (SW 527). It would appear that the lake is the site of alchemical experiments, the aim of which is the production of the philosopher's stone. However, Bayer's "stein der weisen" is not red, but blue, another

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indication of the way in which he drew on various sources and adapted them for his own purposes.

In Bayer's index to der kopf des vitus bering various associations of the colour blue are included. A quote from der integrale yoga (1957) describes blue as "die fundamentale farbe der göttlichen wonne" and differentiates between different shades of blue: "ein tieferes blau bezeichnet gewöhnlich den höheren geist, ein blasseres blau ist der erleuchtete geist" (SW 569). Another of Bayer's sources for this index is das tibetanische totenbuch (1953), from which the following is quoted:

> das blaue licht ist die gesamtheit des in seinen urzustand aufgelösten stoffes. (der einzige zum vergleich herangezogene und dem herausgeber w. y. evanswentz zur verfügung gestandene text, der blockdruck dr. van manens, sagt hingegen: es ist die gesamtheit des bewusstseins, aufgelöst in seinen urzustand, was als blaues licht erscheint.) die weisheit des dharma-dhatu, blau an farbe leuchtend, durchsichtig, wunderbar, blendend, bricht aus dem herzen vairotschanas als vater-mutter hervor und trifft dich mit einem so blendenden licht, dass du es kaum anzusehen vermagst. (SW 569)

Bayer also refers to alchemy, which associates the "blauschwarze färbung des von den alchimisten erzielten flüssigen stoffes" with the "soul" or "essence" of the metals it tried to transform (SW 569-570). These references link the colour blue to the return of a substance or entity to its original, pure state or, on an existential level, to the arrival at a higher spiritual plane. This explains, perhaps, why Bayer's "stein der weisen" is blue. It symbolises the "ich" that has purified itself and found its true identity.

4.5 Review of Chapter 4: the significance of Bayer's Lion figure

This chapter has investigated the recurring figure of the Lion of Belfort in Bayer's dramatic texts, an investigation which necessitated looking beyond Bayer's texts to Surrealism and alchemy, in the hope of tracing the origins of this figure in order to gain a better understanding of its significance in Bayer's work. My analysis of the figure of the Lion of Belfort has illustrated Bayer's debt to preceding experimental movements. His adoption of this figure from the work of the Dadaist/Surrealist Max Ernst and his use of the literary equivalent of the collage technique to assemble the many layers of the Lion's shifting identity are evidence of an indisputable debt to Dadaism and Surrealism.

As illustrated many times in my analysis, the Lion of Belfort is a constantly evolving and mutating figure in Bayer's texts. For the most part he dominates the action of the scenes in which he appears but, at the same time, the way in which he appears and disappears in Bayer's dramatic oeuvre makes him an elusive and unstable figure. Shown at various times to be powerful, violent, erratic, weak, admired, ridiculed, evil, corrupt and murderous, he is also reputed to have healing powers. An examination of his characteristics, actions and origins proves him to be a hybrid figure, a collage of many layers, some of which I have been able to identify.

I have shown how the Lion's associations range from mythology to alchemy to Surrealism. In drawing on so many sources for the creation of this figure, Bayer piles up layer after layer of identities which are interwoven and fused into a complex, kaleidoscopic and unique entity. Associated at once with good and evil, like mercury he unites opposites within him. Bayer's Lion is infused with the same "weltschaffende[n] Geist" (Psychologie 401) that alchemists believed to be hidden in mercury. He creates his own identity when in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl he names

his own ancestors. He also seems to create his own world order, of which he is master. As "löwe, polizist" in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl he does not uphold the law but subordinates it to his own. He dispenses his own justice in that he denies Kasperl a lawyer and condemns him to death without trial. His violence and brutality go unchecked in all of Bayer's texts and while one of Ernst's collages shows his lion awaiting execution by guillotine (SB 33), the next one shows a lion-headed man holding up a human head which drips blood, with the guillotine in the background (SB 34), suggesting that the Lion has escaped. The Lion, it seems, is invincible, capable, like some of his "ancestors", of overthrowing the laws and rules of society and of taking the existing order and subjugating it to his. Just as the original statue of the lion carved into the rock face above Belfort commemorates the brave defence of that city in the face of foreign invasion, Bayer's Lion could be seen to symbolise the defence of the individual against the invasion of outside forces which threaten to corrupt his unique identity.

The Lion claims to be a descendant of Maldoror, a reference by Bayer to Lautréamont's Les Chants de Maldoror (1868-69). Oswald Wiener, in his article "Einiges über Konrad Bayer", when referring to the influence of Max Stirner's individual anarchism on himself and Bayer, mentions Maldoror as a literary example of individual freedom:

> Es gibt Maldoror, der sich von Mal zu Mal aufs Neue zusammensetzt, sobald die Interferenz von Materialien, mit denen er nichts zu schaffen hat, den Pegel überspült; sich immer wieder auflöst, wenn die Wellen zusammenbrechen, und im Moment seiner Existenz "weiß", daß er nicht beabsichtigt ist und daß ihn dieses Wissen über die Gesetzmäßigkeit stellt, die ihn hervorbringt; jedes Flackern in den Sinnesorganen, jede zu grobe Rasterung, jede Bildstörung gibt eine Hoffnung auf Unabhängigkeit; in der Unangemessenheit liegt eine Chance auf Freiheit. (43-44)

It is useful to consider Bayer's Lion figure in the context of Wiener's remarks about Maldoror. Both figures seem to be governed by the same principles. Maldoror seems

to engage in a constant process of self-reinvention: he disintegrates, only to reassemble himself in a new way. His aim in doing this is to be "nicht beabsichtigt". Therein lies his hope for independence. Only by being unpredictable, by defying reason, can he hope to be free: "in der Unangemessenheit liegt eine Chance auf Freiheit". With the figure of the Lion Bayer seems to be engaged in a similar process. Like Maldoror, the Lion is constantly changing, and not only from text to text, but within individual texts. In der analfabet, for example, he goes from being the object of others' admiration in Scenes 8 and 9 to the object of their scorn and ridicule in Scene 11, while he himself assumes in Scene 15 the role of tormentor. This has been already noted in Chapter 2, where I described him as an example of what Bayer terms in the "beilage" "die veränderungen des charakters oder auch der ganzen person" (SW 148). The Lion, like Maldoror, is constantly being reinvented.

Returning to Wiener's essay, he goes on to link the figure of Maldoror with Bayer's literary endeavours:

> Unübersehbar allerdings erscheint in der "schwarzen" Dichtung das zentrale Problem, die Wirklichkeit, immer nur als soziale Struktur, immer als Moral, Handlungsmaxime, als Theoriefundament des Verkehrs und Bewertens, als Theologie. [. . .] Aus vielen Gesprächen mit Konrad ist mir klar geworden, daß die Unabhängigkeit des individuellen Verstehens angesichts genormter Zeichensysteme zu argumentieren einen Versuch bedeutet, jenen Solipsismus mit modernen Mitteln fortzusetzen . . . Experimentelles Schreiben ist Forschung geworden, ein Versuch, Modelle des menschlichen Verstehens zu erlangen, die ohne Isomorphien von Zeichensystemen und inhaltlichen Zusammenhängen auskommen . . . ("Einiges" 44)

The above statement by Wiener describes succinctly the purpose of Bayer's literary experiments: the attainment of freedom for the individual through the creation of new forms or models of understanding which dispense with the standard sign systems. Maldoror is seen by Wiener and Bayer as an example in literature of the possibility

for the individual to subvert the symbolic order by shaking off the shackles of its "Zeichensysteme" so as to bring about a radical liberation of the self.

Bayer's Lion figure would therefore seem to be his modern equivalent of Maldoror. He is, like the texts and figures discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis, an example of Bayer's creative process. The Lion combines contradictory characteristics and is constantly changing. One description of him is undermined by another. His identity thus remains ambivalent and open and is characterised by the same resistance to interpretation that was shown in Chapter 3 to be a feature of Bayer's texts. For it is only by disintegrating and being reassembled that the Lion can defy definition and exist outside of any "Zeichensysteme". Like Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot, figures I have described as individual anarchists, the Lion of Belfort represents another experiment in Bayer's sustained search for a means of self-expression outside of the normative structures of conventional language. I have already noted Bayer's personal identification with the fool figures of Chapter 3. The index to der kopf des vitus bering includes the following quote: "der schamane besitzt ein alter ego, ein tier oder einen baum, dessen dasein mit dem seinen derart verquickt ist, dass schicksalsablauf zwischen ihnen besteht. (schamanengeschichten aus sibirien, s. o.)" (SW 572). Significantly, in his letters to Ida Szigethy Bayer signs himself as "der lion de belfort", "der schwertfeste lion zu belfort" and "eurer allzeyt gethreuer / löw zu belfort" ("Briefe" 55, 57, 59). This would seem to confirm that Bayer viewed the Lion of Belfort as an alter ego of himself.

Like Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot, the Lion of Belfort does not represent a viable existence. He is a figure assembled by Bayer, a hybrid construct composed of

various elements which could exist individually or in the symbolism of alchemy, but cannot exist as one, single entity. Indeed, he could be described as a monstrous creation, a freak of Bayer's imagination. However, he is a significant part of Bayer's "Forschung", the experimental process that he engages in in his literary work. If in literature, as in alchemy, one does not only value the result but also the process, one cannot dismiss the Lion of Belfort as an inconclusive or unsuccessful experiment, but must acknowledge him as an innovative contribution to the "Forschung" of experimental writing and a unique literary creation.

Death and destruction seem to accompany the figures of Kasperl, the analphabet, the idiot and the Lion of Belfort and they are also linked by their violent and sometimes cannibalistic tendencies. The word fields of violence and cannibalism emerged from the linguistic analysis of Chapter 2 and they form the basis of the investigations of the final chapter of this thesis.

Chapter 5

ollas mid gewoit
i dua ollas mid gewoit
weu ma des a so gfoit
duari ollas mid gewoit
(Das Gesamtwerk 43)

5.1 "ollas mid gewoit": violence and cannibalism in Bayer's dramatic texts

As illustrated in my linguistic analysis of der analfabet, the word fields of violence and cannibalism are among those with the highest frequency of terms in that text. Reading Bayer's other dramatic works and his prose texts confirms that these were themes that preoccupied the author throughout his writing career. References to violence and cannibalism can be found in many chansons and dramatic texts, in early works and later ones, making a closer examination of these themes necessary.

Chapters 2 and 3 concentrated on Bayer's attitude to language and the consequences it has for the structure and content of his dramatic texts. The aim of this chapter's investigations is to consider possible links between Bayer's "Sprachkritik", his attempts to search for alternative modes of being that allow the individual, and in particular the individual conscious of the restrictions of language, freedom of self-expression and the motifs of violence and cannibalism. In the case of each motif, I will first outline how it manifests itself in Bayer's texts and will then proceed to consider possible interpretations. As the progression of my arguments is gradual and not every aspect of these motifs can be explored in depth as it arises, I appeal to the reader's

patience and ask him/her to suspend questions that he/she may have until the later sections of the chapter.

5.2 Violence in early dramatic texts and kasperl am elektrischen stuhl

In the dramatic text entweder: verlegen noch einmal zurück oder: visage-a-visage in der strassenbahn (1954) one speaker[119] seems to accidentally spit on another and proceeds to apologise repeatedly and profusely, while attempting to wipe away the offending saliva. The other speaker gets increasingly angry and the situation threatens to erupt as the two raise their voices, and the stage directions, which are hardly distinguishable from the speakers' text, suggest the possibility of physical violence. These stage directions include the following: "drohend", "brüllt", "widerstand", "blaurot / packt ihn am kragen", "eindringen" (SW 133). At first it is only the speaker who has been spat at who is angry and the other speaker seems genuinely sorry for what he has done:

> o verzeihung
> er versucht den speichel mit dem rockärmel abzuwischen
> was WAS
> es ist mir wahnsinnig peinlich bitte aber ich weiss garnicht wie das passieren konnte plötzlich . . . (SW 133)

However, his apologies soon give way to anger:

> man wird doch noch jemanden anspucken dürfen . . .
> machen sie doch kein theater es ist ja NICHTS passiert (SW 133-134)

The text ends as follows:

> ich sehe sie wollen diese angelegenheit auf die SPITZE treiben das heisst sie versuchen es ABER JETZT VERSCHWINDEN SIE und zwar so schnell sie ihre beine tragen und BITTE
> weit stürzt oberkörper vor
> bitte bitte bitte bitte bitte bitte bitte bitte
> verschwindet in der ferne (SW 134)

With this exchange a seemingly harmless situation in an everyday setting is shown to be an occasion with potential for violence.

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[119] The speakers of this dialogue are unnamed and it is not indicated in the text who says what. As Strasser writes: "Schon in diesem ersten Stück (von 1954) ist es unmöglich, genau zu unterscheiden, ob es sich um eine dramatische oder um eine epische Fiktion handelt" (Experimentelle Literaturansätze 49).

As discussed in Chapter 4, the violence of ein abenteuer des lion von belfort (1954) is implied rather than overtly portrayed. A woman wearing undergarments, tied to a sofa and described as the Lion's "opfer" (SW 136), suddenly appears from behind a Japanese paravent which had previously concealed her.[120] The word "opfer" appears regularly in Bayer's texts to refer to those who are about to undergo some form of torture or be eaten. Having regarded his victim "mit unbewegter miene" (SW 136), the Lion then busies himself arranging flowers in a vase, before approaching the sofa again and asking for his "besteck", which Apollyon, his servant, duly brings. The text ends with the Lion at the sofa holding his "besteck" of saw, dissecting knife and sledge-hammer. One feels that only one fate awaits the woman - that of dismemberment. I noted in Chapter 4 the similarity between this scene and Scene 15 of der analfabet, in which the Lion threatens to eat the figure referred to as 5, who has also been tied up and is also referred to as "OPFER" (SW 162). In ein abenteuer des lion von belfort violence is not motivated by anger at a particular event, as was the case in entweder: verlegen . . ., but is calm, calculated and apparently normal behaviour.

Such a portrayal of violence differs from the way in which it is depicted in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, where the humour, however dark, with which the events are presented, and the way in which one is constantly reminded that this is theatre, by, for example, the interruptions of "herr a" and "herr b", two audience members, ensure that the mood is not at all as sinister as that of ein abenteuer des lion von belfort. The fascination of the general public with violent subject matter is suggested by the following comment from "herr a", one of two audience members who await the

[120] The significance of the paravent as a metaphor for how Bayer constructs his texts has been discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. Here the paravent conceals the victim, who then suddenly appears, only to disappear again when the curtain falls, just as violence comes in and out of Bayer's texts.

performance of the play, in a dialogue which also appears in Bayer's text die begabten zuschauer:

> 2 herren mit opernglas besetzen eine loge auf der bühne und schauen ins publikum.
> herr a: heute soll ein sehr schönes stück aufgeführt werden.
> herr b: wie heisst es denn?
> a: was weiss ich. irgendjemand wird hingerichtet. (SW 297)

The association of the adjective "schön" with a play in which someone will be executed indicates this fascination.

In kasperl am elektrischen stuhl the characters of "löwe, polizeichef" and "apollo, polizist" seem to thrive on violence and, as upholders of the law, use violence to arbitrarily mete out justice. Löwe's opening monologue has already been discussed in Chapter 4. A shortened version of it is quoted below:

> löwe: . . . ich bin es: der löwe von überall, herrscher über sieben weltmeere und ebensoviel erde . . . ich bin das übel, der omnipotente fürst des erdballs, ich bin der falsche schatten im finsteren haustor . . . der blutfleck auf der autobahn, chef der polizei in 27 kulturstaaten. reichtum und macht, wollust und ehre teil ich aus nach meinem belieben unter meine ergebenen diener. (SW 300)

Thus the first impression one gets of Löwe is of a self-important, power-loving, dangerous police chief.[121] His bloodthirsty assistant Apollo also introduces himself:

> der polizist apollo (mit blutigem knüppel tritt auf): ha, da freut sich mein unerschrockener heldenmut, das ist mir augensalbe, wenn ich in menschenblut kann meine augen weiden. das donnern der kommandos, das krachen der schädeldecken. das schwirren der gummiknüppel, ein kugelregen aus staatlichen pistolen ist meinen ohren noch alleweil die angenehmste musik. wenn die öffentlichen parkanlagen von toten leichen überstreut und berge von demonstranten aufgehäuft sind, fährt mir die freudenlust durch die finsteren züge. wenn ich den stumpfen knüttel mit menschenfett und knochenmark verklebt seh, das gibt eine herzkühlende lust meinem gemüte. dampf fährt aus meiner nase und feuerflammen aus meinem maul, dadurch ganze stadtteile und länder in rauch aufgehen. dir dank, o chef, der du das recht mit dem metermass deiner gnade ausmisst. (SW 300)

[121] In this context it is also significant that Löwe claims to be the son of the murderer Hugo Schenk.

Here Apollo conjures up what violence means to him, using what is for him unusually poetic language. His account has almost erotic undertones ("freudenlust", "herzkühlende lust") as he describes his love affair with violence. His final statement, addressed to Löwe, in which he attributes the violence he has been extolling to the mercy of the "polizeichef", perhaps illustrates his sheer cynicism and his dedication to violence, as well as to his superior. His next utterance, in Viennese dialect, "i muas wem daschlogn", is in sharp contrast to his earlier poetic style. An uncontrollable fit of rage comes over him - the stage direction reads as follows: "er verfällt in einen tobsuchtsanfall und wirft gegenstände vom mobiliar, erschöpft bricht er zusammen . . . " (SW 301).

This sudden violent reaction seems to stem from an involuntary urge.[122] Similar reactions by other Bayer figures are to be found in other texts. For example in die pfandleihe (1957) there is a scene in which Leonhard is accused by the pawnbroker of fabricating a story about a female giant. Although the pawnbroker does not threaten Leonhard physically in any way, the latter suddenly cries "dann müssen sie sterben!" (SW 239) and produces an axe from his suitcase. He then raises the axe against himself and says that before the end of the play he will split himself in two with it and that then it will be the pawnbroker's turn. There is a similar scene in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl in which the reporter Giselher accuses Kasperl of making false claims and suddenly produces a knife, also declaring, "dann müssen sie sterben!" (SW 314). These sudden, unexpected eruptions of violence are characteristic of Bayer's texts.

This phenomenon is referred to by Bayer himself in the stage directions of die

[122] Chapter 2's linguistic analysis of der analfabet concluded that the text's transitivity patterns suggest that its figures tend to *re*act emotionally rather than act intellectually. The high frequency of terms belonging to the text's word field of emotion confirmed this.

begabten zuschauer (1959). The following statement appears in die begabten zuschauer but not in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl: "die beiden schauspieler haben sich einer sehr gepflegten sprache zu bedienen, dürfen aber nicht vergessen, dass sie gegen das publikum spielen und nicht für dasselbe. die schauspieler müssen also imstande sein, wenn es der text verlangt, ungezwungen aggressiv zu sein" (SW 240). Here Bayer alludes to this sudden, unmotivated type of aggression, something which it is obvious he deliberately tried to create, and which he envisaged as a possible difficulty for actors, normally used to a psychologically-motivated build-up to such violent outbursts within a particular scene. In the above comment he also defines the relationship between actor and audience as one of conflict and struggle and anticipates the difficulty for actors in playing not to, but against the gallery.

The above statement confirms Bayer's wish to confront his audience by refusing to fulfil its expectations. This is also in keeping with the Vienna Group's deliberate confrontational relationship with the audiences of their literary cabarets which I referred to in Chapter 1 and which is outlined in the "waschzettel" of the first literary cabaret: "wir werden keine kritik vorzubringen haben, keinen protest niederzulegen, es sei denn die verzweigte kritik an unserem spezifischen publikum, den protest gegen seine passive art, zuschauer zu sein, gegen seine so leicht zu kontrollierenden reaktionen, die wir – und das ist vertraulich – doch mit unseren mitteln provozieren werden" (WG 419). This desire to confront and provoke the audience is similar to that of the Dadaists in their provocation-demonstrations.

The instruction from Bayer to his actors thus sheds light on Apollo's violent outburst and those of other figures who also become "ungezwungen aggressiv". Returning to Apollo, the text goes on as follows:

apollo: i muas wem daschlogn.
er verfällt in einen tobsuchtsanfall und wirft gegenstände vom mobiliar, erschöpft bricht er zusammen. keuchend und mit geweiteten augen starrt er auf seine hand. die hand zuckt scheinbar unabhängig von apollo über die bühne, er versucht vergeblich sie festzuhalten.
der sprecher: vergeblich versucht wachtmeister apollo seine hand, treuer helfer in bitterster not, faust auf manchen bettlers scheitel, donnerkeil in das zahnfleisch argumentierender bürger, sie versucht er festzuhalten, die ihn verlassen will. (SW 300-301)

Apollo fears that such behaviour on the part of his hand will land him in a mental institution and begins to search for his hand:

apollo (brüllt) : i wü ned in die aunschdoid!
er wälzt sich. plötzlich beginnt er zu suchen, hier und dort, blickt auf den boden, löwe steht auf und folgt ihm, der sprecher winkt abwehrend ab.
löwe (gibt apollo einen fusstritt) : was mochns denn do?
der sprecher: er hat die sprache verloren.
löwe: wos haast. des kenn ma scho. er wü nimma spüün. raundewu und so. fia wos griagt a zoid? wida amoi a glane obreibung gefällig. (gibt apollo einen fusstritt) (SW 301)

Apollo's loss of language seems to coincide with his violent outburst. Violence and language become inextricably linked in this passage. When Apollo's hand, the perpetrator of his violence, tries to get away from him and he tries to search for it, "der sprecher" informs Löwe that Apollo has lost language, thus substituting "sprache" for "hand". It seems that when language is lost, violence takes over.[123] The transition from language to violence occurs in stages in Apollo's case – he goes from speaking poetic language, to speaking dialect, to not being able to speak at all, and subsequently to making animal-like noises, represented in the text by "ö,ö,ö,ö" (SW 301), before finally regaining the power of speech, thanks to Löwe, who points out to him that as an actor

[123] The choice of the hand as the part of the body that is associated most closely with violence is perhaps inspired by the phrase "handgreiflich werden".

he gets paid to speak and, with a combination of grammatical terms and physical blows, he begins to beat language back into him:

> apollo richtet sich auf, versucht zu sprechen, würgt, quält sich.
> löwe: ich sage nur:
> satzgegenstand (gibt ihm eine ohrfeige)
> und
> satzaussage (gibt ihm eine ohrfeige)
> hauptsatz (schlägt ihn auf die nase)
> und
> nebensatz (schlägt ihn auf die nase)
> ich hoffe das genügt. (SW 301)

The violence of Löwe is both physical and verbal and again points to a connection between language and violence.

In die boxer[124] speaking is equated with the violent sport of boxing. The set is a boxing ring, where two young men wearing unlaced boxing gloves and suits participate in a boxing match. However, as soon as they take up their fighting positions, the two men relax and assume the stance of speakers, referred to as 1 and 2. It becomes clear from Bayer's directions at the beginning of the text that receiving the verbal blows of the opponent has physical consequences for the boxers: "während des dialogs wankt der eine oder der andere oder beide in völlig gesprächiger haltung. sie wanken deutlich wenn sie die entsprechenden sätze bekommen haben. jeder satz ist ein schlag. nicht jeder satz trifft. manche sätze können abgedeckt werden (arme)" (SW 173-174). The stage directions in the text indicate when verbal violence is to be accompanied by actual physical violence. On one occasion, 2 hits 1 on the nose twenty-three times in succession and each blow is followed by a verbal insult. In die boxer, however, a balance is maintained between verbal and physical violence, since neither form of

[124] Rühm dates the start of Bayer's work on this text to 1956 and includes in the Sämtliche Werke two versions of it - "rohfassung" and "letzte fassung (fragment)" - as well as some "chronologisch nicht erfasste abschnitte" (SW 174, 208, 202). Quotes from die boxer in this chapter are from the final version, although Rühm stresses that it is unfinished (SW 766).

violence seems to take over from the other. The fact that, in a scene very similar to the one from kasperl am elektrischen stuhl described above, 1 loses language, but is not, as is the case with Apollo, taken over by uncontrollable violence testifies to this. The relationship between language and violence will be discussed further in the next section.

5.2.1 idiot: the significance of violence in Bayer's texts

The most violent of all Bayer's texts is undoubtedly idiot (1960). So horrific are the violent actions that Bayer describes in the stage directions of the text, it is difficult to imagine how they could be represented on stage. The central figure is introduced at the very beginning of the text as follows: "ein menschenähnliches wesen wartet an einer strassenecke. halten wir es für einen mann und nennen wir ihn a. der geht auf und ab" (SW 243). Due to the use of the term "menschenähnlich" it remains unclear just how human *a* is. Most other figures who appear in this first scene are also referred to using letters of the alphabet rather than names, but it is not clear whether they too are "menschenähnlich" or not. Any attempt that *a* makes to speak to the other figures is met with either verbal or physical abuse. These attempts are clearly outlined by Bayer, as are the other figures' violent reactions to them:

> im gesicht des a kann man sehen, dass er den c was fragen möchte. da bewegen sich die muskeln! der a macht keinen schritt.
> c geht auf a zu und gibt ihm einen fusstritt. c ab.
> d und ein mädchen treten hand in hand auf. das muss ein liebespaar sein! a geht auf die beiden zu, räuspert sich, hustet und setzt zu einer rede an. das heisst er öffnet das maul.
> d gibt ihm einen kinnhaken. das mädchen tritt an den gestürzten heran und dann tritt sie dem in die niere. a krümmt sich und stöhnt. (SW 243)

Physical violence is again presented here as an alternative to verbal expression. This instance differs from that of Apollo in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl in that these

figures are not presented as resorting to violence due to a loss of language. Instead, they appear to want to beat language out of *a*, who attempts to express himself verbally.[125] *a*, however, is quick to learn and does not open his mouth to speak again in this scene. Indeed, he himself immediately joins in the violence with the first of his many violent acts:

> g kommt, nähert sich a.
> g setzt zu einer frage an. das heisst, er reisst das maul auf.
> a schlägt ihn nieder. (SW 243)

a's violent behaviour quickly escalates and includes spitting, vomiting, urinating, defecating, hitting, kicking, beating, shooting others and driving over bodies with a car and a lawnmower, before mincing and eating the flesh. This violence is casual, automatic and arbitrary. It seems to be violence for its own sake. For example, *a* kills the girl mentioned above and a policeman. Not satisfied with that, he then shoots their corpses, drives a lawnmower over them, collects the pieces of flesh in a paper bag, assembles a mincing machine, puts the contents of the paper bag through the machine, makes dumplings of the human flesh and eats it.

It seems that the mere appearance or existence of another being is enough to trigger off such violent reactions, which are often linked to the desire or intention of another to speak. After the incident I have just described, a girl passes by. She says and does nothing, but is immediately spat at by *a*, who then subjects her to a horrific attack which is described in all its gory details in the following passage:

> das mädchen heult. er haut ihr eine runter, dass es knallt, und fällt über sie her. beim erguss verzieht der keine miene und steht auch gleich in einem zug auf und verzieht keine miene und geht nicht zu langsam nicht zu schnell und vor allem völlig ausdruckslos zu dem automobil, setzt sich rein, lässt den motor an, nicht zu langsam nicht zu schnell, vor allem ausdruckslos und überfährt die.

[125] The possible reasons for this will become clearer later in this section.

> sie kommt wieder zu sich und wimmert. ein fuss ist ihr abgefahren. a geht hin und reisst ihr den fuss ab. das mädchen wimmert. da stopft er ihr den fuss in den rachen. sie kotzt; auch ihren fuss.
> ein plötzlicher anfall von raserei überkommt ihn. er tobt, presst ihr noch einmal den blutigen und jetzt angekotzten fuss zwischen die zähne, sehr schnell und heftig, und er presst mit aller kraft, seine augen glänzen, die adern treten ihm aus dem schädel, da presst er der den fuss ins maul, hilft nach mit seinem fuss, tritt rein, dann beugt er sich runter und stösst die gefaustete hand bis an den ellbogen nach, und noch einmal, immer wieder. dann steht er auf, seine augen sind ohne ausdruck, er schmiert das blut achtlos in seinen anzug und springt ihr in den bauch. er nimmt die einfüssige und stopft sie in die maschine. er dreht an der kurbel. ein roter, blutiger knödel fällt heraus. a frisst ihn, kauend und kinnladenschiebend. (SW 244-245)

The violence portrayed in the above passage is the most extreme and radical to be found in Bayer's texts. The passage goes far beyond the slapstick, "Kasperltheater"-like violence found elsewhere, making the detail, consistency and insistence with which its violence is pursued singular among Bayer's works. It is therefore idiot that should prove most useful in assessing the significance of violence in Bayer's texts.

Although in the above passage *a* is overcome by a sudden "anfall von raserei", in idiot Bayer stresses continuously the lack of emotion with which *a* carries out his violent acts.[126] He is described as being "achtlos" and "ausdruckslos" but at the same time, if necessary, spontaneous, as is evident from the following stage direction: "a wird jetzt immer ausdruckslos erscheinen, aber wenn nötig sehr spontan handeln" (SW 244). Bayer seems to want to emphasise the automatic, involuntary nature of *a*'s violence, his capacity to be, in Bayer's words about the actors in die begabten zuschauer, "ungezwungen aggressiv", and also the absence of any emotions on his part. His casual, merciless cruelty is epitomised by the following event:

> schnell aber ausdruckslos zielt a und schiesst die frau mit dem revolver aus dem fenster. das war tempo! so wie er sie gehalten, lässt a die waffe nach abzug des hahnes einfach aus der hand fallen und wendet sich

[126] This lack of emotion is in contrast with Apollo's passionate lust for violence as described above. There are, therefore, exceptions to the more casual violence found elsewhere.

anderen beschäftigungen ausdruckslos aber eifrig zu. das nimmt ihn wieder ganz gefangen.
die frau fällt langsam aus dem fenster. das strassenpflaster klatscht.
(SW 245)

Even before the dead woman has fallen from the window, *a* is busy with something else. Killing and cannibalism are, it seems, simply part of his everyday life. This brings the first scene of idiot to an end, a scene in which only two lines are spoken, those being the very first lines uttered by the text's figures:

a (zu sich): verdammt.
b (kommt vorbei): halts maul! (SW 243)

The remainder of the scene concentrates on physical violence and destruction, which it seems to offer as an alternative to verbal communication.

The next scene, entitled "2. szene scheissdreck", consists mostly of verbal violence and destruction, in that *a*, as has been mentioned in the section on idiot in Chapter 3, rejects almost everything as "scheissdreck". As one commentator has put it, this scene represents "die Umdeutung der Welt in eine 'Scheißwelt' " (Faust 147). It is significant that *a* is alone when he begins this "scheissdreck" speech. Here, when he speaks he does so not to communicate with somebody else, but to reject everything but four things which remain:

a: . . . es bleibt die gerechtigkeit
der geiz
die unabhängigkeit
und der lärm (SW 248)

All that remains in *a*'s world is justice, meanness, independence and noise. He goes on to change these nouns into adjectives and verbs which he uses to refer to himself:

der mensch richtet sich auf: bruder!
a: du sau. (schlägt ihn nieder)
(pause)
ich bin gerecht. das ist klar.
ich geize mit allem.
ich bin unabhängig.

ich bin laut.
ich bin ein idiot. idiot sein heisst für sich sein.
(SW 248-249)

The world now revolves around *a*. He has asserted his authority through violence, which enables him to subsequently destroy, at least verbally, the existing order. He now deems himself completely independent, he dispenses justice as he sees fit, he is mean with everything, even with life, if one is to judge from his treatment of others. It seems that the sound of himself is the only noise he wants to hear.[127] The speech culminates in *a* declaring himself to be "ein idiot": an idiot who, in this scene, has made the world his creation.[128] The scene does also contain some physical violence, however. *a*'s speech is interrupted by the appearance of "ein mensch". This speaker is not denoted by a letter but is simply called "ein mensch". This is presumably linked to the initial description of *a* as "ein menschenähnliches wesen". The implication is that while *a* is similar to human beings, he is somehow different. "der mensch" calls *a* "bruder" three times, and each time *a* knocks him down. He later kicks him and tears off his arms, but, interestingly, he does not kill him as he did the others.

This time *a* verbalises his objection to the mere existence of another being in a tirade of abuse against "der mensch":

a (brüllt): . . . es ist eine ungerechtigkeit, du willst mich zwingen dich zu sehen, du willst mich zwingen dich zu hören. ich muss dich sehen, ich muss dich hören, wenn du hier herumstehst und du stehst hier herum. das ist es. scheissdreck. du willst auf den lichtstrahlen mit deinen bestandteilen in meine augen galoppieren, du willst auf den schallwellen in meine ohren traben und du tust es. oh ungerechtigkeit . . . du willst, dass ich mich umbringe. mörder verbrecher schwein! (SW 249)

[127] The "lärm" which survives *a*'s "scheissdreck" speech may also refer to the pre-linguistic sounds made by humans before the advent of the alphabet, something similar to the animal-like noises made by Apollo when he temporarily loses the power of speech in kasperl. The return to a pre-linguistic state is discussed later in this chapter.
[128] The potential power of language to create an individual reality, discussed in Chapter 3, is again in evidence here.

a finds it unfair that he has to see and hear the human being and accuses him of forcing his way into his eyes and ears, and of wanting to kill him. It seems that *a* perceives the mere existence of another being as a physical invasion which he claims makes him want to kill himself. This explains his violent behaviour towards others, whom he obviously sees as a threat to his own existence. Thus, his violent tendencies would seem to be part of a desperate struggle for self-preservation. *a* sees the survival of himself, the individual, as necessitating the annihilation of others.

a's position on language was outlined in Chapter 3, where it was shown that he, along with Kasperl and the analphabet, embodies Bayer's "Sprachkritik". *a* deems communication with others to be impossible. His belief that language results in misrepresentation and misunderstanding urges him to turn to physical violence as an alternative to verbal communication: "a: . . . ich weiss nichts von dir und will von dir nichts wissen, das heisst ich kann von dir nichts wissen, denn zwischen uns ist ein unüberbrückbarer abgrund des unverständnisses . . . du kannst mich nicht verstehen. du hörst IRGENDetwas und treibst damit unfug, sau, sau, ich zertrete dich. (gibt ihm einen fusstritt)" (SW 251). As the relationship between violence and language is central to an understanding of the violence motif, it warrants closer consideration.

In kasperl am elektrischen stuhl Apollo's loss of language – "der sprecher" says of him "er hat die sprache verloren" (SW 301) – accompanies his involuntary violent outburst, referred to in the text as "tobsuchtsanfall" (SW 301). Löwe subsequently beats language back into Apollo, who recovers the power of speech along with his composure: "apollo (plötzlich charmant, hände reibend): wenn es ihnen recht ist, wollen wir sprechen" (SW 302). It seems as if loss of language is synonymous with the outbreak of violent chaos. The same is true in idiot, where the first two lines of the text are followed by silence and violent anarchy. After *b* says to *a* "halts maul!" (SW 243),

not another word is spoken for the remainder of the first scene. In Chapter 3 language was identified as an important agent of socialization, by means of which language learners are moulded into conformity with their linguistic community and thus made subordinate to the existing symbolic order. Speaking a language and adhering to its rules therefore means adherence to the community's system of order. The loss or conscious rejection of language thus signifies the loss or rejection of this order, which results in Bayer's texts in the eruption of violence, which is seen as its alternative. In idiot *a*, having asserted his authority through physical violence, regarded by him as an alternative to verbal communication, ironically returns to language and uses it, the former instrument of conformity and order, to verbally destroy this order in his "scheissdreck" speech.

However, the relationship between language and violence in Bayer's texts is more complex than this. In die boxer both language and violence are portrayed as forms of human interaction. As I mentioned above, in this text a balance is preserved between the two and language does not give way to violence. There is a period of silence in the text. However, this does not last long. 1 and 2 quickly return to speaking and boxing and seem to know no alternative to their dialogue of violence. In his notes on the text Bayer states that they are evenly-matched opponents: "nicht der eine ist der starke und der andere der schwache, nein, der langsame ist plötzlich schnell, der geizige freigebig etc. . . ." (SW 771). Indeed, the two are so evenly matched that, according to Bayer's directions at the beginning of the text, they continue to battle against one another indefinitely: "der vorhang fällt nicht. wenn der kampf zu ende ist und der letzte zuschauer den saal verlassen hat fällt der vorhang" (SW 174). These two figures who are locked in an eternal battle of physical and verbal punches reveal the violent nature of language in the following passage:

2: quälen sie mich nicht länger.
1: ärgern sie mich nicht länger.
2: missbrauchen sie mich nicht länger.
1: langweilen sie mich nicht länger.
2: (hält sich die backe): sie treffen mich empfindlich.
1: lassen sie mir ruhe.
1: sie tun mir weh! (SW 224)

These statements are not accompanied by physical blows, as is the case elsewhere in the text. It seems that, as well as turning to violence as an alternative to language, one can be violent in one's use of language which, in its own way, hurts just as much as physical violence. The violence inherent in language is also evident in the attack that Löwe carries out on Apollo, during which he beats language back into him with boxes on the ears and nose. [129]

That language is invasive is expressed in the following lines from Bayer's novel der sechste sinn:

> . . . und ehe mir was zustossen kann, benenne ich es und banne und taufe und bin überhaupt der ganz grosse magier, weiss, schwarz, mit einer kleinen höhle und da ist mein wortSCHATZ drin, alles fein eingepökelt . . . und da treff ich einen und nenne ihn und nenne es guten tag und wir atmen auf und er nennt mich und bannt mich, das heisst das was er von mir fürchtet, weil er es wahrnimmt, das ihm in die augen klatscht und ins ohr stiert und in die nase bohrt und ja das sterilisiert er gleich mit vielen namen, die er als gegengifte in seiner hirnschalkammer bereit hat. (SW 657)

In these lines, which contain phrases that echo those used by the idiot in his attack on "der mensch", for example, "du willst . . . in meine augen galoppieren, du willst . . . in meine ohren traben" (SW 248), the urge to name ("benennen", "taufen") is clearly

[129] A similar connection between violence and language is made in Handke's Kaspar. W. G. Sebald describes language as depicted in Kaspar as "das Zeughaus eines grausamen Instrumentariums" (155) and Peter Horn, who gives his essay on Kaspar the title "Vergewaltigung durch die Sprache", also refers to Kaspar's linguistic torture (34). According to Sebald, Kaspar is "die . . . Geschichte von der Domestizierung eines wilden Menschen" (152). The use of language as an instrument of socialization is exposed in Kaspar as a brutal mechanism, as the "Einsager" use it "als Mittel, ihm [Kaspar] seine ganz individuelle Unordnung, sein ganz persönliches schöpferisches Chaos auszutreiben und ihn dadurch und danach der Herde einzuverleiben" (Horn 32). The brutality of this process is perfectly expressed when the "Einsager" say to Kaspar: "du bist aufgeknackt" (Handke, Theaterstücke 146).

motivated by the threat of the other, which diminishes somewhat once the naming has taken place ("aufatmen"). An encounter with another person is presented here as a violating and invasive experience (". . . das ihm in die augen klatscht und ins ohr stiert und in die nase bohrt"). As in die boxer, language is depicted in the above quote as a means of attacking the other. For language enables the speaker to remove the threat posed by the other being by means of the naming process, which extends to the individual ("er nennt mich"). The threat of the other is removed as the individual is "sterilisert" by the "gegengifte" of language.

In idiot, *a* refuses to be named and sterilised. The motivation for *a*'s rejection of language and order in favour of violence is the creation of a self-sufficient "ich". Unlike Bayer's boxers, whose battle is a form of reciprocal interaction, the ultimate aim of *a*'s violent interaction with others is their annihilation, since, as the above quote from der sechste sinn also illustrates, their existence is a negation of the self. His victims are no match for him and mostly do not even attempt a struggle. The balance between language and violence that is maintained in die boxer tips, in the first scene of idiot, very much in favour of physical violence as the idiot defends himself against all other beings who cross his path. In Chapter 3 I argued that *a* (the idiot), the analphabet and Kasperl represent Bayer's attempts to establish alternative means of expression outside of the restrictions of normative language, an experiment that explores alternative modes of being for the individual and for the creative artist. I showed that in the idiot's case this alternative existence is based on a rejection of language, knowledge and community, in short, those things which make up the symbolic order that controls individuals and their world-view. The rejection and destruction of this existing order appears to be necessary to free individuals from its controlling influence, which forces them to conform and prevents them from achieving true self-realisation or

what Stirner calls "Eigenheit". Chapter 3 also illustrated the influence of Stirner's philosophy of individual anarchism on Bayer's efforts to create an existence for the "ich" and both Stirner and Bayer's support for the use of whatever means are necessary for the individual to become truly autonomous. I pointed in Chapter 3 to the similarity between the "Krieg Aller gegen Alle" which Stirner sees as a consequence of the egotism he proposes and the idiot's violent behaviour. Indeed, Stirner specifically advocates the use of violence as an indispensable weapon in the individual's fight for freedom: "Die Gewalt ist eine schöne Sache, und zu vielen Dingen nütze; denn 'man kommt mit einer Hand voll Gewalt weiter, als mit einem Sack voll Recht'. Ihr sehnt Euch nach der Freiheit? Ihr Thoren! Nähmet Ihr die Gewalt, so käme die Freiheit von selbst. Seht, wer die Gewalt hat, der 'steht über dem Gesetze'" (EE 196). By examining the violence of the idiot in greater detail, this section has shown that his violence is, indeed, a result of his extreme individual anarchism.[130]

The idiot wants no involvement with others, no part in any community which, with its clearly defined system of order, would force him to conform. In idiot "der mensch", with his repeated addressing of *a* as "bruder", represents such a community and such an order. He is, perhaps, *a*'s alter ego, the part of him that likes the familiarity and companionship offered by such a community and its order. This would also explain why "der mensch" survives, unlike the other victims of *a*'s violence. As already mentioned, Bayer describes *a* as "ein menschenähnliches wesen". This points to a

[130] Bayer's outline of his "einmannstaat", quoted by Rühm in his introduction to Bayer's Sämtliche Werke, confirms that Bayer condoned, at least theoretically, the use of violence in what he viewed as the war of the individual against others: "ich sitze und nähe meine fahne. ich habe erkannt, dass ich ja letztenendes (sich deklarieren, kann ich das, geheim, exilregierung.) glaubenskrieg, für eine überzeugung, ein ideal kämpfen, sollte keine frage der quantität sondern der qualität sein. also auch immer gegen alle. revolte des einzelnen, legalisiert, staat . . . bei bewaffnetem widerstand entsprechende gegenmassnahmen . . . wenn einer erkennt, dass er gegen alle steht, müsste er sich dann nicht aufmachen und es tun erschiessung der freunde!!" (SW 17)

distinct dichotomy between these two figures: the human and the "menschenähnlich". In Chapter 3 I concluded that the mode of being proposed by Bayer using the figures of Kasperl, the idiot and the analphabet is not a viable human existence. Perhaps that is why Bayer uses the term "menschenähnlich" to describe *a*, who, unlike Kasperl who chooses death, and the analphabet who does not appear at all, tries to continue to exist after his rejection of a basic tenet of being human, namely interaction with others and adherence to the order that such interaction demands. *a*'s survival in such circumstances necessitates his war against all others, against humanity, of which he can no longer be a part, and also explains why idiot is, in its extreme violence, singular among Bayer's texts. The struggle between *a* and "der mensch" also reflects Bayer's struggle within himself, his negative solipsism on the one hand, which led him, Rühm recounts, to develop the concept of an "einmannstaat" (SW 17) and, on the other hand, his desperate need for friends and his dream of an ideal world:[131]

> stirner bis zum solipsismus . . . so entwarf er einen 'einmannstaat', für sich, flüchtig auf einem notizblatt . . . dazu im gegensatz hatte er ein starkes mitteilungsbedürfnis und zeigte sich seinen engsten freunden stets verbunden. er hatte zutiefst den traum einer 'idealen' welt (sonnenstaat), da sie aber nicht zu verwirklichen ist, rief er ihre vermeintliche antithese aus. (SW 17).

a's fierce violence in defence of the self would seem to be justified when one considers the fate of Leonhard in die pfandleihe. When he threatens the pawnbroker with the axe and then turns the axe on himself in the scene described earlier in this chapter, the pawnbroker convinces him to abandon this violent course of action:

> pfandleiher: langsam leonhard, das würdest du nicht überleben. sei vernünftig.
> (geht vertraulich auf leonhard zu)
> wollen wir tauschen? (SW 238)

[131] This struggle finds a further parallel in Bayer's ambivalent attitude towards language - his "Sprachkritik" on the one hand, and his belief in the powerful potential of language to create an individual reality on the other.

The opposite to violence is presented here as "Vernunft", reason or good sense, the sense of order prevailing in any community, which demands that one does not kill others or oneself. The pawnbroker advises Leonhard that in order to survive, he should be ruled by reason and order and not by the urge to lash out with physical violence. Leonhard seems to take this advice, for he does not continue to wield his axe, but goes along with the pawnbroker's suggestion that they exchange places. The two then exchange identities in an example of the "Austauschbarkeit" that features in other Bayer texts.[132] Thus, for Leonhard, abandoning violence seems to result in the loss of his identity, his "ich". It is therefore not surprising that *a* of idiot protects his identity with such savage violence. In light of the above discussion of violence in Bayer's dramatic texts, one could characterise his unconventional approach to the writing of literary texts as violence against conventional language, which robs the individual of his/her unique identity and the creative writer of creative possibilities.

The word field of cannibalism was another to emerge from the linguistic analysis of der analfabet and it is closely linked to the word field of violence. When examining the cohesion of der analfabet I noted that certain gaps in the text undermined its coherence but also highlighted the figures' obsession with cannibalism, which seems to surface involuntarily and subconsciously in their conversations. From an analysis of the deixis of the text of der analfabet it emerged that the possessive pronoun "unser" is used only twice: once in relation to "sitten und gebräuche" (Scene 3, in the context of women eating dead women and men eating dead men) and once in relation to "erdbestattung"

[132] A variation on this idea features in Handke's Kaspar when Kaspar is joined on stage by six other Kaspars, mirror images of himself: "Kaspar ist nurmehr die Matrix seiner selbst, unbegrenzt reproduzierbar" (Sebald 156).

(Scene 14). I concluded that since these are important elements of a cultural nature, it is significant that cannibalism and death are the dominant uniting factors for the figures of der analfabet. Cannibalism, the killing and consumption of either all or part of an individual that is of the same species, is regarded in modern society as particularly abnormal and taboo. The appearance of such behaviour in Bayer's texts warrants close consideration.

5.3 Cannibalism in the dramatic texts

Already in his early dramatic texts Bayer seems fascinated with the phenomenon of cannibalism. It is overtly referred to in die erschreckliche comoedie vom braven lukas (1955), a text which consists of a "szenarium" outlining the plot of a five-act play and "bruchstücke", fragments of dialogue from Acts 1 and 2. In Act 2 the robbers from whom Lukas saves a coachload of people, turn out to be cannibals. They are described as "cannibalen" (SW 141) and they want to eat Lukas: "(sie wollen ihn fressen, er soll ihr opfer sein, im letzten augenblick erkennt er es und flieht.)" (SW 147).

Cannibalism is the main feature of der mann im mond, a dramatic text which Rühm estimates to have been written before 1957. The text opens with Georg and Friedrich, "zwei standbilder" (SW 290), eating, commenting on the food and passing the mustard. The dialogue takes an unexpected turn with the following question from Friedrich: "darf ich ihnen ein wenig von dieser hand anbieten?" (SW 290). It soon becomes obvious that the two are eating human flesh, and the process is described in the stage directions in a graphic presentation of cannibalism on stage: "georg reisst eine hand entzwei und gibt einen teil an friedrich zurück. beide nagen an den hälften und werfen sie nach einer zeit, sichtlich satt, hinter sich oder lassen sie achtlos fallen, obwohl noch viel fleisch an den knochen sitzt. die nägel der finger werden ausgespieen" (SW 291). It emerges later in the text that Georg and Friedrich are eating the flesh of Olga, the nanny, whom Georg has killed for food:

> georg: ich habe ihr die brust geöffnet und mit einem messer die fleischigen teile des körpers durchschnitten . . .
> friedrich: immer wieder die alte geschichte.
> georg: der mensch muss essen. (SW 292)

It seems that cannibalism is a necessary part of daily life for Georg and Friedrich, and they go on to talk about the days of the week and the weather in the same tone in

which they discussed their eating habits. Yet when Beate, a young girl, looks for her nanny, the two are embarrassed, and anxious to avoid discovery. This seems to contradict the idea that cannibalism is the norm, and suggests that it is abnormal, aberrant behaviour, if normal for Georg and Friedrich.[133]

Among the scenes that Rühm in Bayer's Sämtliche Werke categorises as "unbezeichnete szenische bruchstücke" is one which he dates at around 1954 and which also features cannibalism. As in der mann im mond, cannibalism in this scene is something regarded as normal and necessary among one particular group of people, but which must be hidden from others outside of that group. In the stage directions to the scene, which takes place in a village, Bayer poses questions, including the following one: "sind alle einwohner menschenfresser?" (SW 343). The plot of the scene is that Friedrich, a sailor who has a sweetheart in this village, kills her father, without knowing that he is then eaten by the villagers: "er hat den vater erschlagen. dass der vater von den dorfbewohnern inkl. polizisten und tochter verzehrt wurde, weiss er nicht. der polizist ist sehr für ordnung. und man hütet sich peinlichst, dass aussenstehende von dem geheimnis des dorfes erfahren" (SW 343-344). Here again, cannibalism is something which must be kept secret. The final line of the scene, the only one which is in the form of direct speech rather than stage directions, suggests that these villagers are forced to feed on humans to survive, as it seems they have no

[133] The title of this text seems to be linked to the end of it where, in response to Beate's question "wo ist gott?" (SW 294), Georg tells the following story: "gestern fällte gott holz. dann band er es zusammen und trug es heimwärts. unterwegs sprach ich ihn an: 'kennst du den sonntag nicht?' da entgegnete gott lachend: 'was schert mich den sonntag? sonntag auf erden oder montag im himmel, das ist mir das gleiche.' 'so sollst du', gab ich zur antwort, 'für immer dieses bündel holz auf deinem rücken tragen!' seit gestern steht er im mond mit diesem bündel holz auf seinem rücken und so wird er büssen bis zum ende der welt" (SW 294-295). The fact that Georg and Friedrich seem to be statues but are alive is perhaps a result of their need to conceal their cannibalism. However, in his editorial remarks Rühm describes the text as "fragment, in keiner endgültigen form" and states that Bayer's "überarbeitung" ends half way through it (SW 780). Perhaps the significance of the text's title and Georg and Friedrich's existence as statues would have become clearer had Bayer reworked all of the text.

other food source: "öde gegend, da wächst ja überhaupt nichts, möcht wissen, wovon die leute hier leben" (SW 344).

In contrast to this scene and der mann im mond, where cannibalism is presented as something carried out in secret by certain groups of people, in der analfabet (1956) it is clearly part of the speakers' tradition to be openly practised by all, although it seems that some of them need to be reminded of this:

2 (ruhig)	ja so ist es
1	was?
2	die frauen fressen die toten frauen und
	die männer fressen die toten männer
1	was ist das für eine gewohnheit?
2	kennst du unsere sitten und gebräuche nicht mehr?
(SW 153)	

Cannibalism is, or at least was, very much a part of the speakers' world, a world which seems to be dominated by the analphabet, who is feared by all and is described as having a "fleischmagen" (SW 160). One suspects that the meat which feeds his stomach is human flesh. Unlike der mann im mond, in which cannibalism is presented directly on stage, the text of der analfabet only alludes to it. The closest the text comes to presenting cannibalism is in Scene 15 where 5, who is tied up, appears as an "opfer" of the Lion of Belfort, who threatens to eat him when he says: "ich werde dich mit frischen salatblättern garnieren" (SW 163).

I now wish to consider the significance of the cannibalism word field in Bayer's dramatic texts. While, as we have seen, Bayer was preoccupied with cannibalism in some of his short early texts, it is in the longer texts of der analfabet and idiot that one can begin to surmise why it is such an important theme and attempt to ascertain its significance. I should point out that, as was the case with the motif of violence, the following attempted interpretations do not form a uniform reading of cannibalism in

Bayer's texts, but rather a multi-layered one. The interpretations offered should not be regarded as being mutually exclusive, but should be allowed to coexist. As has become evident in the course of this thesis, Bayer's texts do not allow the application of one single interpretation or function to their figures or motifs, but rather deliberately sabotage such interpretations in favour of a multi-layered approach that is an integral part of his creative strategy.

5.3.1 Significance of cannibalism

Despite the fact that due to lack of empirical proof ethnologists and anthropologists have doubted the actual existence of ritual cannibalism since William Arens' book The Man-Eating Myth. Anthropology and Anthropophagy (Oxford 1979) (Röckelein 15; Keck, Kording and Prochaska 221, 243, 312), as one of the few remaining taboos of modern civilization the phenomenon of cannibalism, real or imaginary, still holds a certain fascination. Traditionally ascribed to peoples removed from modern European civilization both temporally and geographically, cannibalism perhaps epitomises what is foreign and other: "Es ist kein Zufall, daß die Nachrichten über Menschenfresser immer die 'anderen' betreffen: die anderen in einem fernen Land, in einer vergangenen Zeit, insbesondere auch diejenigen, die irgendwo am Rande der Gesellschaft ein anderes Leben führen als solche, die sich selbst als 'normal' einstufen" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 257). This concept originated in the accounts of European explorers, who often depicted the people of the New World as savages and used reports of cannibalism to justify their "civilization" and colonization (Brittnacher 64-65). In recent times cannibalistic serial killers such as Jeffrey Dahmer in the United States have

fascinated the media and the public alike precisely because of the extreme nature of their strange and deviant behaviour.[134]

Thomas Kleinspehn points out the ambivalent nature of cannibalism: "Kannibalismus bedeutet zugleich Zerstörung und der Wunsch nach Verschmelzung, nach Symbiose, den anderen einzuverleiben: Fressen und sich Fressen lassen" (Röckelein 234). The desire for total identification with the other through incorporation and the complete annihilation needed to realise this desire characterise the cannibalistic act as "die ambivalente Verbindung von lebensspendendem Essen und mörderischer Menschenfresserei" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 112).

Different types of cannibalism can be identified – "Notkannibalismus", practised in times of war and famine as a last means of survival, "Endokannibalismus", the eating of a dead relative as part of the mourning process in order to guarantee that the memory of the dead and their power live on in other members of the family, and "aggressiver Kannibalismus", the consumption of the defeated enemy as an expression of complete victory (Röckelein 11, 16, 223). In the last case, the practice of cannibalism is accompanied by strict rituals and rules so that the act does not, contrary to common perception, constitute an elementary expression of aggression, but a cultural and social form of institutionalised aggression (Röckelein 224, 228). Hedwig Röckelein summarises the various associations of cannibalism as follows: "Er symbolisiert das Sich-Einverleiben eines anderen, das In-Besitz-Nehmen eines anderen, das Sich-die-Kraft-eines-anderen-Aneignen . . . um an ihr zu partizipieren. Und er steht für die

[134] For an examination of the serial killer as "Ikone der Postmoderne" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 10) see Ralph J. Poole's essay "Zerleiben und Zerschreiben. Von der nekrophagen Lustanhäufung zur seriellen Lektüresucht" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 175-202).

Angst, von einem anderen verschlungen zu werden" (14). Of course cannibalism is also not without sexual connotations and the desire to possess or be at one with one's lover is implicit in the colloquial expression, "I could eat you up" (Schuller 218).

Röckelein stresses the multi-dimensional nature of the discourse on cannibalism, which she claims goes much deeper than the consumption of human flesh: "Im Kannibalismusdiskurs werden Einstellungen zum Körper, zu Körperlichkeit und zu Körpersubstanzen vermittelt; es wird über Nahrungsgewohnheiten, über soziale Beziehungen, über Geschlechterverhältnisse, über Generationenkonflikte und politische Herrschaftsverhältnisse gesprochen. Unsere Aufgabe ist es, die Rede zu deuten, die Stereotypen, die sie bedient, zu dechiffrieren" (17). She would seem, therefore, to be in agreement with Sahlins, who maintains that cannibalism is always symbolic, even when it is real (Schuller 217). With this in mind I will now turn my attention to cannibalism in Bayer's texts.[135]

Bayer's figures reveal themselves to be cannibals through the act of eating others. The simple act of eating, even without cannibalistic undertones, is itself a process that has many associations. When one eats, one crosses the boundary between inside and outside, between self and other, but establishes by doing so the difference between the two:

> . . . Hegel, Feuerbach, Marx, and Freud . . . agree that eating is the origin of subjectivity. For it is by ingesting the external world that the subject establishes his body as his own, distinguishing its inside from its outside. If the subject is founded in gustation, though, this also means that his identity is constantly in jeopardy, because his need to incorporate the outside world exposes his fundamental incompleteness. (Ellmann 30)

[135] In an attempt to make the progression of the following discussion clearer to the reader, its individual stages are distinguished by larger spatial gaps.

Eating constitutes a certain control over what is ingested: "Was draußen ist, wird nach innen genommen, das Unbekannte wird unter Kontrolle gebracht. Das Orale ist in diesem Sinne die primitivste Form, Kontrolle über die Umwelt auszuüben" (Schuller 227). However, it also represents what Maud Ellmann terms "the primal violation of the ego" (36). Ellmann outlines Melanie Klein's psycho-analytic theory of ingestion as follows:

> . . . the infant devours all the objects of his outer world in order to install them in his world of fantasy. Since the mouth is where he has imbibed his mother's milk, it is mainly through this orifice that he partakes of his imaginary banquet. But his whole body, with all its senses and functions, participates in his incorporation of the cosmos: he drinks it with his eyes, eats it with his ears, and sucks it through his very fingertips . . . It is through this process of incorporation that the infant constructs an "inner world" in his unconscious, consisting of the "doubles" of the objects which exist outside his mind . . . Klein argues that the infant's objects are entombed "alive" in the catacombs of the unconscious, like the living corpses in the crypts of Poe . . . And just as Poe's cadavers burst out of their cerements, bringing down the houses constructed to contain them, so these phantoms ultimately overwhelm the ego in which they are entombed . . . When this happens the ego can no longer claim to be the master of its mansion, because its own incorporated objects eat it out of house and home. (40-42)

Klein's analysis of the infant could be applied in equal measure to Bayer's idiot, who perceives the outside world, particularly as embodied by "der mensch", as a violating presence that invades his every orifice:

> . . . es ist eine ungerechtigkeit, du willst mich zwingen dich zu sehen, du willst mich zwingen dich zu hören. ich muss dich sehen, ich muss dich hören, wenn du hier herumstehst und du stehst hier herum. das ist es. scheissdreck. du willst auf den lichtstrahlen mit deinen bestandteilen in meine augen galoppieren, du willst auf den schallwellen in meine ohren traben und du tust es. oh ungerechtigkeit. (SW 249)

Ellmann claims that "the notion of the self is founded on the regulation of the orifices" (105). It is evident from the above that the idiot feels that he has lost control over his ego because he cannot regulate his intake of the outside world. The threshold between

self and other is constantly violated against his will. The above extract thus illuminates the cannibalism that takes place earlier in the text. It is, perhaps, the idiot's way of taking control over what enters his self. By ingesting the outside world, he re-establishes his body as his own and keeps his ego intact. Cannibalising those around him, whom he obviously perceives as his enemies, is also a way of attempting to completely destroy them, although, just as Poe's cadavers burst out of their cerements, they are likely to come back to haunt him in some way. However, this does not diminish the urge to attempt their total annihilation. It would seem, in the case of the idiot, to be a question of devouring the other before it devours him.

In Chapter 4 I referred to Warlick's interpretation of the violence of Max Ernst's Lion of Belfort in Une semaine de bonté. Warlick argues that the Lion's violence towards women represents the first phase of the alchemical process, in which the two opposing properties (male and female) of the primal matter must be separated and destroyed, so that they can later be reunited in the perfectly harmonious androgynous state (64-65). This adds another possible interpretative layer to the Lion's cannibalism (which is, I should point out, only hinted at and never realised on stage) in Bayer's texts. By cannibalising his victims, perhaps the Lion would hope to achieve simultaneously the first and last stages of the alchemical/individuation process: the destruction of and unification with the opposing other. With regard to the figure of Lion of Belfort, I have stressed the importance of valuing the process that Bayer undertakes in his texts, rather than its results. Cannibalism could thus be interpreted as another phase of Bayer's creative experimental process. Emphasising cannibalism as part of a process also means that one does not need to consider its possible aims, for example total annihilation or complete incorporation, as ends in themselves but also as parts of a larger experiment. It also means that several interpretations of the

cannibalism motif can be allowed to coexist. This approach is true to the concept of "veränderung", which I described in my analysis of the "beilage" to der analfabet as one of the principles according to which Bayer constructs his texts, and allows the texts in which this motif features to remain open-ended, something which has also been shown to be characteristic of Bayer's texts.

When discussing cannibalism in Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Rodolphe Gasché argues that "an absolutely solitary self can only experience an other self as a cannibal" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 34). Crusoe's discovery of a man's footprint on the island that he thinks he inhabits alone therefore "raises the threat of being devoured, swallowed by an other" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 39). Gasché interprets this discovery as follows:

> With the virtual presence of another human self on the island, the unique and only self of Crusoe faces the eventuality of a competition for selfhood . . . if I am led to think that an other self has taken the place of myself, my own self has become incorporated by the alien self. One has been devoured alive, annihilated by ingestion. In principle, any alter ego to the *solus ipse* is thus a devouring other, a man-eater, a cannibal . . . (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 40)

An individual anarchist, the idiot perceives all others as a threat to his subjectivity. He fears that they will eat him and so he eats them first. Stirner also defines the relationships between the Ego and others in cannibalistic terms: "Du bist für Mich nichts als – meine Speise, gleichwohl auch Ich von Dir verspeiset und verbraucht werde. Wir haben zu einander nur Eine Beziehung, die der Brauchbarkeit, der Nutzbarkeit, des Nutzens" (EE 347). As Gasché points out with reference to Robinson Crusoe, cannibalism can be made into a "means of self-assertion, by way of which the other is ingested, and put into its place" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 52). This is certainly a possible interpretation of the idiot's cannibalism.

That Konrad Bayer was aware of the various types of cannibalism referred to at the beginning of this section can be deduced from his inclusion of the following dictionary entry in the index of der kopf des vitus bering:

> man unterscheidet profanen kannibalismus (motiv: hunger oder gier), gerichtlichen kannibalismus (der hingerichtete verbrecher oder der getötete feind wird gefressen, um ihn völlig zu vertilgen oder zu erniedrigen), magischen kannibalismus (das menschenfleisch gibt kraft für zaubereien, ermöglicht aneignung bestimmter physischer und psychischer kräfte des toten) und rituellen kannibalismus (anlässlich von götterehrungen, totenfesten, siegesfeiern, reifefeiern; hierher gehört auch die patrophagie, das kannibalische verzehren verstorbener verwandter aus pietätsgründen). (schweizer lexikon, s.o.) (SW 568)[136]

I would now like to consider which categories of cannibalism can be found in Bayer's dramatic texts.

The cannibals of die erschreckliche comoedie vom braven lukas, der mann im mond and the untitled dramatic fragment discussed in the previous section seem to be forced to eat human flesh to ensure their survival: in Georg's words, "der mensch muss essen" (SW 292). Thus their cannibalism could be categorised as "Notkannibalismus" or, to use Bayer's source, "profanen kannibalismus". The cannibalism referred to in der analfabet, since the speakers describe it as one of their customs, could be classified as "rituellen kannibalismus". Classification becomes more difficult in the case of idiot, the text in which violence and cannibalism are at their most extreme and grotesque.

The idiot seems to be the only figure who practises his cannibalism alone. In the other texts referred to cannibalism is apparently something always engaged in together by two or more people. It seems unlikely, therefore, since rituals are usually performed

[136] This evidence of Bayer's awareness of the various types of cannibalism supports my argument that cannibalism in his texts should be regarded as a deliberately multi-layered motif.

in the community, that the idiot's cannibalism belongs to the category of ritual cannibalism. It seems to me to be a combination of the other types of cannibalism described in the above extract quoted by Bayer. As discussed in the section on violence, the idiot's aggressive behaviour towards others is motivated by the threat which their existence poses to his. They, to him, are the enemy in the battle for survival. Marvin Harris recounts that cannibalism was often the result of victory in war, and that to eat the enemy was to derive strength from his annihilation (105). The way in which *a* smears the girl's blood on his suit just as he is about to eat her is an action which seems to fit into the type of behaviour described by Harris. Not only does the annihilation of others ensure the idiot's survival, the eating of their flesh also strengthens him. The idiot's cannibalism could therefore be described as "profaner kannibalismus", "gerichtlicher kannibalismus" and "magischer kannibalismus": the enemy is eaten to ensure his complete annihilation and strength is derived from this act, an act that is absolutely crucial to the idiot's survival. The ingestion of others signifies the ultimate victory for the individual, who instead of being forced to conform to the rules - linguistic and otherwise - of the community and, in a metaphorical sense, be swallowed up by it, succeeds in reversing that process by literally consuming that which previously consumed him/her. In this way, the community is made subject to the individual.[137] In this union or communion of individual and community the individual no longer yields anything of him/herself but rather affirms his/her sovereignty. Bayer's

[137] The following quote by Rühm about Bayer confirms the plausibility of such an interpretation: "konrad bayer - nach aussen ein hastiger konsument ('wenn du das heilige verzehrst, hast du's zum eigenen gemacht! verdaue die hostie und du bist sie los!' stirner, der einzige und sein eigentum), zog sich immer mehr in sich zurück" (SW 16). Rühm's choice of the above quote suggests that he thought it particularly apt with regard to Bayer. Stirner's idea that the consumption of something makes it the property of the consumer is thus taken to its extreme in the cannibalism of Bayer's texts.

representation of cannibalism in idiot thus reiterates the extreme nature of his belief in the supremacy of the individual and posits another possible means for the individual to exist outside of the limiting systems of language and community.

Not only a cannibalistic individual anarchist, the idiot, as discussed in Chapter 3, is also a language critic. Ellmann explains the close relationship between words and flesh in the context of the 1981 hunger strike in the Northern Ireland prison of Long Kesh: " . . . to make their self-starvation readable as protest . . . hunger strikers must append a text of words to the mystery of their disintegrating flesh" (18-19). Of the campaign in H-Block she writes: ". . . their arguments increased and multiplied as furiously as their bodies decomposed, as if their flesh were being eaten by their words" (Ellmann 22). Since the mouth is the place where both words and food are accommodated, Ellmann describes them as rivals: ". . . the fact that language issues from the same orifice in which nutrition is imbibed means that words and food are locked in an eternal rivalry . . . Since language must compete with food to gain the sole possession of the mouth, we must either speak and go hungry, or shut up and eat" (46). While the hunger strikers of Long Kesh refused food in order to verbalise their political protest, Bayer's idiot refuses language and engages in a silent cannibalism that replaces words with human flesh. However, as a writer Bayer seems unable to retreat into silence. The "reich des schweigens" (SW 481) that Herostrat claims to want to establish never materialises in Bayer's texts. As I observed in Chapter 3, to write was, for Bayer, to fulfil an existential need and so he cannot shut up, but must continue to speak.

The figure of the analphabet seems to represent another connection between cannibalism and language. The many references to the predatory nature of the analphabet suggest a link between that figure and cannibalism and so between "analfabetismus", which in Bayer's texts represents a conscious rejection of the alphabet and the order it imposes on the world, and an ushering-in of chaos, confusion and cannibalism. Karlheinz Braun identifies a similar link between "analfabetismus" and the chaos that pre-existed the alphabet:

> Am Anfang war das Chaos. Am Anfang war der Analfabet. Der Analfabet war mit sich selbst identisch. Die Einführung des Alfabets war die Einführung der Gesetze. Der Alfabet, ihr Abgeordneter, benutzte die 24 Buchstaben als Mittel seiner Herrschaft. Das Alfabet siegte über das Chaos, aber die Sehnsucht des alfabetisierten Analfabeten nach seiner ursprünglichen Identität war und ist nicht auszurotten. (17)

Braun claims that the advent of the alphabet meant the introduction of order, but also the loss of original identity for the alphabetised analphabet. What Braun calls "die Sehnsucht des alfabetisierten Analfabeten nach seiner ursprünglichen Identität" is the desire of Bayer's analphabet, idiot and Kasperl to free themselves from all ties in order to be able to forge and give expression to their own identity, and it is the impetus behind Bayer's whole creative process, behind his exploration of various possibilities that might enable the individual to be, once again, "mit sich selbst identisch", that is to say defined only in terms of the self and not by external forces such as an imposed language or community.

Cannibalism, as alluded to at the beginning of this section, is a phenomenon which the modern world regards as primitive, amoral and criminal. The progression away from cannibalism is seen as a victory of civilization, of culture over nature. According to Lèvi-Strauss, it is spoken language, together with the cooking of food, which distinguishes humans from animals (Leach 29). By consuming raw flesh, the idiot

seems to align himself more with the world of nature than with that of culture. By rejecting language and its inherited systems of looking at, ordering and understanding the world and the self, he seems to want to return to an earlier pre-linguistic state that does not experience the world through the alphabet. Cannibalism in Bayer's dramatic texts could therefore signify a revolt against civilization and culture and a return to primal instinct. Chapter 3 showed that both Stirner and Bayer reject civilization and culture and the rational and moral laws that govern them. With cannibalism Bayer might be exploring a possibility for self-expression that necessitates a return to the beginning, a return to chaos of a primeval, pre-alphabet nature.[138]

In Totem and Taboo Freud places cannibalism at the origin of society. His theory of the primal horde, presided over by a violent and jealous father, who granted himself exclusive rights to all the women of the community and banished, castrated or killed his adolescent sons, is based on a hypothesis of Charles Darwin's that primitive men, like the higher apes, lived in relatively small groups or hordes and that within the horde the jealousy of the oldest and strongest male prevented sexual promiscuity (Freud 130).[139] The beginning of society through the elimination of the primal father is outlined by Freud as follows:

> Eines Tages taten sich die ausgetriebenen Brüder zusammen, erschlugen und verzehrten den Vater und machten so der Vaterhorde ein Ende. Vereint wagten sie und brachten zustande, was dem einzelnen

[138] That the members of the Wiener Gruppe associated cannibalism with primitive behaviour is evident from Artmann's manifesto against Austrian rearmament in May of 1955, which includes the following statements on rearmament: "das ist neanderthal!!! das ist vorbereitung zum legalisierten menschenfressertum!!! wir rufen euch alle auf: wehrt euch gegen diese barbarei! . . . genau so wie sich der kannibalismus der urmenschen und höhlenbewohner überlebt hat muss nun endlich auch die soldatenspielerei der vergangenheit überantwortet werden!!" (WG 19). In particular the direct association of cannibalism with "urmenschen" and "höhlenbewohner" in this manifesto produced by a member of the Vienna Group and signed by Bayer among others, confirms that cannibalism as a primitive phenomenon constitutes one of the layers of Bayer's complex, multi-layered understanding of cannibalism.

[139] As Eva Horn observes: "Daß dieses anthropologische Konstrukt der 'Urhorde' eine Bibliotheksphantasie, nämlich die Charles Darwins und James G. Frazers ist, ändert nichts an der Triftigkeit des Modells" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 300).

> unmöglich geblieben wäre . . . Daß sie den Getöteten auch verzehrten, ist für den kannibalen Wilden selbstverständlich. Der gewalttätige Urvater war gewiß das beneidete und gefürchtete Vorbild eines jeden aus der Brüderschar gewesen. Nun setzten sie im Akte des Verzehrens die Identifizierung mit ihm durch, eigneten sich ein jeder ein Stück seiner Stärke an. Die Totemmahlzeit, vielleicht das erste Fest der Menschheit, wäre die Wiederholung und die Gedenkfeier dieser denkwürdigen, verbrecherischen Tat, mit welcher so vieles seinen Anfang nahm, die sozialen Organisationen, die sittlichen Einschränkungen und die Religion. (145-146)

Eva Horn describes the above passage as the "Entstehungsszene" of the subject (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 301). Each of the brothers wants to free himself from the tyranny of his father, wants to become an individual, but yet also wants to be like the father and acquire his power. Paradoxically, it is only as a group that the brothers can overcome the father and, by devouring him, they identify with him and destroy him at the same time. They are now bound together by their horrible crime which, instead of releasing them as individuals, has united them in a community. As has been discussed, Bayer's analphabet, Kasperl and idiot want to free themselves from the ties of the community. Thus the idiot and the analphabet's cannibalism could be seen as the attempt of these figures to reverse the process described by Freud above – by eating others and diminishing the community, it is perhaps their hope to regain the control, power and absolute individuality of the primal father.

If Freud is to be believed, it would seem that civilised society has spent the intervening period trying to suppress the memory of its violent and cannibalistic origin. Perhaps this is why, in Daniel Fulda's words: "Das Kannibalismustabu zählt zu den festesten Pfeilern des Abendlandes" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 115). Those who broke, or were suspected of having broken this taboo, have always been condemned as unnatural and inhuman and have been expelled from the community as outsiders. Dorothea Baudy explains that at various stages in history accusations of cannibalism

have been used against Jews, heretics and women thought to be witches in order to remove them from the community (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 261-264). By breaking the cannibalism taboo, Bayer's figures break societal norms and align themselves with such outsiders. Poole's description of the serial killers of the modern world assists in understanding the motivation behind the cannibalism of Bayer's figures, especially in view of the fact that Löwe claims the serial killer Hugo Schenk as one of his fathers:

> Die Tabubrüche, die diese Mörder begehen, werden auf der einen Seite als atavistisch, primitiv gedeutet. Das macht sie in unseren Augen zu Fremden, zu Außenseitern. Sie rufen Angst, Ablehnung und den Wunsch nach Strafe hervor. Auf der anderen Seite liegt hierin aber gerade der Reiz, der von den Tabubrechern ausgeht: Sie setzen sich über gesellschaftliche Schranken hinweg in einer Art und Weise, wie wir uns das nie trauen würden, oder wie Oates sagt: "The individual who violates taboo in so spectacular a way is perceived as *undefined* by society's restraints, unlike those who believe themselves *defined* . . ." (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 191)

By engaging in cannibalism, Bayer's figures thus succeed in placing themselves beyond societal constraints and outside of society itself. For them cannibalism is therefore the ultimate act of individualism.

Cannibalism is often used as a metaphor for political, economic and social processes (Röckelein 11)[140]: "Denn Anthropophagie spiegelt immer auch gesellschaftliche Machtverhältnisse wider . . . Wichtig ist hier festzustellen, daß gerade die orale Metapher benutzt wird, um die Unterdrückungs- und Ausbeutungsverhältnisse in der Gesellschaft auszudrücken . . . die Angst vor dem Gefressenwerden durch die Mächtigen" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 233, 236-237).

[140] Röckelein cites two examples: "Der Hamburger Bürgermeister Henning Voscherau diskreditierte kürzlich in einem Interview mit der 'Süddeutschen Zeitung' deutsche Spitzenverdiener, die sich im Ausland einen Wohnsitz suchen, um der hohen Steuerbelastung in Deutschland zu entfliehen, als Kannibalen . . . Die Bundestagsabgeordnete der Grünen, Antje Vollmer, bezeichnete den Feldzug des Literaturkritikers Marcel Reich-Ranicki gegen Günter Grass' neuen Roman 'Das weite Feld' in der ZEIT als 'reale Gewalt, mediale[n] Kannibalismus'." (10)

Both Kasperl and the idiot fear cannibalization at the hands of others: Kasperl in a metaphorical sense, for example through the institution of marriage (this being the reason why he kills his wife and chooses execution over the female spectator), and the idiot in a more literal sense through "der mensch", whose mere presence he experiences as invasive and violating. This fear could represent the fear of Konrad Bayer and other experimental artists of being "eaten" by the Austria of the Second Republic, in which those who did not conform with the state's interpretation of national culture were swallowed up by those who did. The violence of policemen Löwe and Apollo in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl could be interpreted in this context as a metaphor for the brutality of the Second Republic.

The social context of Austria in the 1950s offers another possible reading of Bayer's cannibalism. In a society obsessed with "Anstand" and "gutes Benehmen", in which teddy boys were feared partly because of the provocative physicality inherent in the music that they listened to (Jagschitz and Mulley 74, 210), the extreme and obscene violence and cannibalism of Bayer's figures would surely have been tantamount to anarchism or, at the very least, gross moral indecency.

The eating of the flesh of one's victim - the word "opfer" is often used in Bayer's texts to refer to the person about to be eaten - brings to mind communion of another kind, namely that of Christianity, which Walter Burkert dubs "eine Kannibalen-Theologie" (Keck, Kording and Prochaska 255). At Communion Christians believe that they eat and drink the body and blood of Christ, who offered himself as a victim to be sacrificed so that mankind could be saved. As Paulo Medeiros observes: "A resolution to the problem of human mortality is offered, in Christian terms, only by partaking of the flesh and blood of Christ in the consecrated Host – that is, by

engaging, even if only at the symbolical level, in the ritual cannibalization of the human body of God" (13).[141] Freud claims that Holy Communion acknowledges the guilty primeval deed "am unverhülltesten" (157) and that by consuming the flesh and blood of the son, and not the father, the company of brothers can atone for their crime against the father and obtain sanctity.

The body and blood of Christ feature in two texts by Bayer. In the first of these, a poem entitled "herbei ihr tänzer" (1953), Bayer draws attention to the broken body of Christ, to his flesh and blood:

herbei ihr tänzer und fahrenden sänger
herbei ihr gaukler und fastendiebe
mütter und töchter und jedes gesindel
seht
seht
hier liegt ein geschundener
mit einer dornenkrone
mit seinen gespaltenen fersen
und den sieben pfeilen der liebe
in seinem blutigen leib
seht
wie er sich windet
seht
wie er sich dreht (SW 45)

Bayer then reenacts the torture of Christ before his crucifixion:

kommt
und kommt
wir wollen seinen schädel spalten
sein haar verkaufen
und ein mahl an die armen verschenken
wer wirft den ersten stein?
einen groschen für sein linkes auge
und den zweiten für sein rechtes
freunde
wir wollen dieses fest nach seiner alltäglichkeit feiern
wir wollen ihn vor die stadt werfen
und unsere hunde und mädchen auf ihn hetzen

[141] Röckelein alludes to the controversy surrounding the dogma of transubstantiation in the Christian Church: "Mit der Frage, ob die Eucharistie als Theophagie, als Gott-Essen im realen oder Zeichensinn zu verstehen sei, geriet das Dogma der Transsubstantiation, das die Eucharistie überformte, zu den umstrittensten und problematischsten Lehrsätzen der christlichen Kirche" (12).

wir wollen in seinem blut waten
und unsere arme bis an die schultern bestreichen (SW 45-46)

The difference in Bayer's poem, however, is that it is not the Roman guards who mock and torture Christ but "wir". This "wir" also makes the readers of the poem participants in the death of Christ, makes them wade through his blood and smear it on their arms. For, as Christianity preaches, it is because of "us", for "us" that Christ died, and in eating and drinking the bread and wine of Communion Christians commemorate this sacrifice and celebrate their salvation. In his poem, Bayer brings this symbolism beyond the ritual of Communion and enacts it by making his readers wade through Christ's blood and smear it on their bodies. The last two lines quoted above are echoed in the following line from idiot: "er schmiert das blut achtlos in seinen anzug" (SW 245).

The body and blood of Christ also feature prominently in a short prose text by Bayer entitled "jesus (altwiener exclamation)" (1958). In this surreal text a girl's sexual encounter with Jesus, which is depicted using the vocabulary of horseriding, is interspersed with the following interjections that could equally appear in a hymnbook:

herr, dein teures fleisch & blut ist das grösste seelengut,
welches würdig zu empfangen wahre christen stets verlangen . . .
auf wunderweis zur seelenspeis gibt jesus hier sein fleisch & blut . . .
stärk uns auch mit dieser speise
endlich zu der himmelsreise . . .
hier ist jesu fleisch & blut, hier das allerhöchste gut,
keine seele geht verloren unter seiner haut . . .
o jesus, o wasche meine seele in deines herzen blut . . . (SW 388-390)

In the above lines Bayer associates Christianity directly with cannibalism. Christ's flesh and blood are described as "seelenspeis" and are regarded as the key to salvation. By eating Christ's flesh, by bathing the soul in his blood, the Christian can set out on his/her "himmelsreise".

The dramatic texts discussed above could be read as a deliberate inversion of Christian doctrine by Bayer. The "opfer" of his dramatic texts are, like Christ, the victims of violence and cannibalism, like him their flesh is eaten and their blood is drunk. According to Christian teaching, Christ's violent death ensured the salvation of Christians and signalled the sacrifice of an individual to save a community. It could be said that in Bayer's texts this is reversed, as the victims of violence and cannibalism form a community which is sacrificed in an attempt to save the individual. By eating the flesh and drinking the blood of members of the community, Bayer's idiot, for example, tries to ensure his, that is the individual's salvation.

The concepts of violence, the victim and sacrifice are examined in Andrew J. McKenna's Violence and Difference. Girard, Derrida and Deconstruction. McKenna's main concern is to link certain aspects of the anthropology of René Girard and the literary theory of Jacques Derrida. In doing so, he examines Girard's concepts of violence and the victim, which also prove useful in relation to Bayer's texts. According to McKenna, Girard regards violence, the victim and sacrifice as forming a triangle: "What first takes place, according to Girard, is violence, and what then takes its place is the sacred. Both require a victim" (69). The sacred referred to here is the sacrifice of the victim which, in turn, replaces the violence that originally gave rise to the victim. In the progression away from nature towards culture, the representation of violence through the sacrifice of the victim is preferred to that violence – to quote McKenna: "This 'practice of substitution' is representation – substituting a word for a thing, different words for different things, one word for another (metaphor), and so on – results in the fragile construct of language" (77). In line with this, McKenna explains

that Girard places the victim at the origin of culture: ". . . according to Girard . . . the victim is the issue of violence and the origin of the sacred; it comes after nature and before culture, which originates in the sacred, that is the deference paid to the victim. The victim in this conception serves to bridge the gap between nature and culture and to mark their definitive rupture" (69).

Bayer tries to reverse this process. As previously outlined, in his dramatic texts violence and cannibalism, both of which are among the earliest forms of human interaction, can be interpreted as manifestations of a regression to a more primitive state that existed before the use of language. In these texts sacrifice, the representation of violence, is replaced by violence itself, language, the system of representation, is replaced by violent action and, most importantly, the community is replaced by the individual. However, since the means by which all of this is depicted is language the whole process remains, ironically, in the realm of representation, just as Bayer's figures, victims not only of the linguistic community but of their own attempts to free themselves from it, remain in this rupture between nature and culture. They are trapped because, having been born into a civilised community, they cannot fully erase the influence of its culture and, more importantly, its language. Therefore, they can never achieve a completely successful return to nature. The idiot is not quite human, but he seems unable to free himself of all traces of humanity - he is still "menschenähnlich" and the fact that "der mensch" remains alive suggests that idiot's attainment of a primitive state is thwarted. Similarly, the Lion of Belfort would appear to be part animal, but his heritage is steeped in cultural tradition.

The motif of cannibalism also surfaces in some of Bayer's prose works. In der stein der weisen the section entitled "hermetische geografie" (SW 521-524) contains references to cannibalism in the context of descriptions of various places and the customs associated with them. There are also references to cannibalism in der kopf des vitus bering, where it is linked to Bering's experience of natives on his expeditions, the swallowing of the Host in church and to shamanistic rites. The dictionary entry on cannibalism quoted earlier in this section also appears in the index that follows the text. It is the dichotomy between "Körper" and "Bewußtsein" that emerges in the prose texts, however, that adds a further dimension to Bayer's perception of the body and so to the violence and cannibalism that it is subjected to in his dramatic texts.

This dichotomy is clearly articulated by Bayer in der stein der weisen:

> auftreten mehrere körper.
> jeder dieser mehrerer körper hat ein bewusstsein.
> diese mehrere bewusstsein sind unsichtbar . . .
> jedes dieser bewusstsein heisst ich.
> alle diese mehreren körper haben veschiedene namen . . .
> der körper ist nach jeder richtung begrenzt . . .
> die oberfläche ist die grenze des körpers.
> die oberfläche tritt auf und zeigt eigenschaften.
> der körper steht im raum. dies entspricht dem körper . . .
> der körper hat etwas heroisches.
> der körper ist da. (SW 520-521)

The physical presence of the body is opposed to the invisible nature of the consciousness. While for Bayer the consciousness represents the "ich", it is the body, and in particular the body's surface with its visible characteristics, that presents the "ich" to the outside world: "der körper ist da", but the "bewusstsein" is not, or at least not in visible form. The body also has its limitations. It is "nach jeder richtung begrenzt" and rooted firmly in the physical space of reality, whereas the consciousness presumably enjoys greater freedom.

In Chapter 2 I observed that the word field of the body is an important semantic field of der analfabet. I noted that in the stage directions in particular, the foregrounding of parts of the body results in the backgrounding of the whole human as agent and as consciousness. At times parts of the figures' bodies seem to move about outside of their conscious control, an effect created by the use of participles lacking a named subject in conjunction with parts of the body. In kasperl am elektrischen stuhl this phenomenon is illustrated clearly when Apollo's hand seems to take on a will of its own: "die hand zuckt scheinbar unabhängig von apollo über die bühne, er versucht vergeblich sie festzuhalten" (SW 301). This is an example of the separation of body and consciousness that dominates the prose texts.[142]

The figures of Bayer's novel der sechste sinn seem to have a problematic relationship with their bodies. They repeatedly ask the question, "was will mein körper von mir?", as if the body and the consciousness are two independent entities, ostensibly part of a whole (the "ich"), which have somehow become disconnected and cannot communicate or function as one. Of the two it is the consciousness that seems to be an integral part of the "ich", while the body is experienced as something separate. At the end of der sechste sinn Goldenberg, undoubtedly an autobiographical figure,[143] seems to become invisible to his friend Dobyhal: "plötzlich war goldenberg verschwunden. mitten im gespräch, mitten im satz hatte er sich in nichts aufgelöst, war vor den augen dobyhals verschwunden. er war weg, er war nirgends, einfach nicht da" (SW 664). On reading these lines, one imagines that Goldenberg has physically disappeared. However, the following lines reveal that this is not the case:

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[142] In contrast to the above examples, in diskurs über die hoffnung the "1. frau" and the "2. frau" seem to represent a rare example of the fusion of "Körper" and "Bewußtsein" in Bayer's texts: "1. frau: ich brenne / 2. frau: ich friere" (SW 270).

[143] Rühm states: "'der sechste sinn' ist zum grossteil autobiographisch . . . die figuren sind schlüsselfiguren (goldenberg ist zweifellos er selbst)" (SW 808).

> verhöhnt brach dobyhal in tränen aus.
> goldenberg hatte seinen körper mit verrutschter nase am sofa liegen lassen. zornig trat dobyhal nach diesem popanz, da schien der hampelmann mit seinen milchigen augen zu grinsen. als er die puppe schüttelte, begriff dobyhal langsam sehr langsam, was man mit ihm getan, und im gefühl seiner ohnmacht warf er die puppe vom sofa . . . . .
> . . . .
> "betrüger, verdammter betrüger", schluchzte dobyhal. (SW 664)

This extract illustrates the dichotomy between the consciousness and the body discussed above and also provides further evidence that it is the consciousness, and not the body, that is an integral part of the "ich". While Goldenberg's body is present (to quote again from der stein der weisen: "der körper ist da"), he clearly is not ("er war weg, er war nirgends, einfach nicht da"). Goldenberg has left his lifeless and useless body, described as "popanz", "hampelmann" and "puppe", behind on the sofa and he himself is now elsewhere. He seems to have severed his consciousness from his body and no longer exists as a physical entity but solely on the level of "Bewußtsein".

In der kopf des vitus bering epilepsy and shamanism seem to present a similar possibility for the consciousness to transcend the body. The index that accompanies the text contains quotations from various sources about both epilepsy and shamanism, one of which explains the difference between the two: "der einzige unterschied zwischen einem schamanen und einem epileptiker sei, dass der epileptiker die trance nicht mit dem willen hervorbringen kann" (SW 564). Other entries in the index refer to the loss of consciousness that both the epileptic and the shaman experience; there are also notes on "ekstase", which is defined as "aussersichsein" (SW 560) and "raptus" (SW 563). The following two quotations illuminate why Bayer was fascinated with shamanism, a fact also documented by Rühm (SW 18):

> in der arktischen zone ist die schamanische ekstase eine spontane und organische erscheinung, und nur in dieser zone kann man vom "grossen schamanismus" sprechen, das heisst von der zeremonie, die mit einer wirklichen kataleptischen trance endigt, während welcher die seele den

> körper verlassen und in den himmel oder in die unterwelt reisen soll. (mircea eliade, schamanismus und archaische ekstasetechnik, rascher verlag, zürich & stuttgart 1957; über: ake ohlmarks, studien zum problem des schamanismus) (SW 564-565)
>
> die schamanenreise stellt sich also in zwei sinnbildlichen vorgängen dar, einmal als auffliegen in die luft, das andre mal als untertauchen ins wasser; beide male entspricht der ortsveränderung ein aussersichgeraten, das heisst eine ekstasis. (claus victor bock, quirinus kuhlmann als dichter, basler studien zur deutschen sprache und literatur, heft 18, francke verlag, bern 1957) (SW 565)

The trance of the shaman and Goldenberg's departure from his body are experiences that amount to a separation of the body from the "ich". While these experiences are not violent and do not involve interaction with others, the way in which they devalue the body could be said to connect them to the violent dismemberment and cannibalization of the body in Bayer's dramatic texts. Although in the prose texts discussed above the body is left physically intact, it is useless without the consciousness of the "ich" and is no more than an empty shell. As a visibly present form ("der körper steht im raum . . . / der körper ist da" (SW 520-521)) the body can be seen by others and so can be defined in the language of the community, a definition that the community then extends to the "ich" that the body encases.[144] Liberated from the limitations of the body ("der körper ist nach jeder richtung begrenzt . . . / die oberfläche ist die grenze des körpers" (SW 520)), the "ich" is invisible and is therefore no longer determined by the reality to which its physical form previously bound it. With the separation of "Körper" and "Bewußtsein" Bayer would therefore seem to be engaging in yet another experiment, the aim of which is again the freedom of the self

[144] This idea is expressed in the following line from der sechste sinn quoted earlier in this chapter: "und da treff ich einen und nenne ihn und nenne es guten tag und wir atmen auf und er nennt mich und bannt mich, das heisst was er von mir fürchtet, weil er es wahrnimmt, das ihm in die augen klatscht und ins ohr stiert und in die nase bohrt und ja das sterilisiert er gleich mit vielen namen, die er als gegengifte in seiner hirnschalkammer bereit hat" (SW 657).

from all restrictions, this time even its own physical form. Perhaps this is another reason why Kasperl is so determined to be executed.

In view of this, it is hardly surprising that in Bayer's dramatic texts little respect is shown for the body and that in idiot the other figures encountered by *a* in the opening scene are reduced to "brei" (SW 245) and eaten by him. His destruction of their bodies could be interpreted as mirroring his wish to destroy his own body, thereby setting free his "Bewußtsein". The idiot's cannibalism could, therefore, also be read as a projection of his desire to transcend his own physical existence, thus adding another possible reading to the multiplicity of interpretations that the motifs of violence and cannibalism inspire.

In conclusion, the phenomena of violence and cannibalism in Bayer's texts seem to function as the physical expression of the figures' language scepticism and individual anarchism. The two phenomena are intrinsically linked, since violence of some form is necessary if one organism is to ingest another. Although the motif of cannibalism in particular can be interpreted in many ways, its principle function, in my opinion, is to reflect the desire of the individual to break free of the chains of society, language, culture and the body in order to be at one with himself. Significantly, the dismemberment of the body also mirrors the textual disintegration engaged in by Bayer and discussed in Chapter 2. Cannibalism, with its ambivalent associations of total incorporation and total annihilation, also acts as a metaphor for Konrad Bayer's personal dilemma: the desire for complete autonomy for the individual on the one hand, which ultimately necessitates the elimination of all others - this finds expression

in his outline of the "einmannstaat" as "revolte des einzelnen" and "erschiessung der freunde" (SW 17) – and on the other hand the desire to bridge the "unüberbrückbaren abgrund" referred to by the idiot (SW 251), the need for community with others that Rühm describes with reference to Bayer: "dazu hatte er ein starkes mitteilungsbedürfnis und zeigte sich seinen engsten freunden stets verbunden" (SW 17). Just like the cannibal, Bayer seems unable to find a solution to this paradoxical predicament.

The next section attempts to consider the violence and cannibalism of Bayer's dramatic texts in the broader context of both international and domestic movements. For the purpose of my analysis I have chosen Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty and the performance art of "Wiener Aktionismus".

5.4 Bayer's violence and cannibalism in a broader context

At first glance Antonin Artaud seems to share the concept of art favoured by the Vienna Group and Konrad Bayer. Anti-illusionism and the termination of the separation of life and art are aims common to all of these artists. In his writings on the Theatre of Cruelty Artaud also displays a scepticism of conventional language, advocating instead the creation of a physical and pure stage language:

> . . . theatre will never recover its own specific powers of action unless it has also recovered its own language. That is, instead of harking back to texts regarded as sacred and definitive, we must first break theatre's subjugation to the text and rediscover the idea of a kind of unique language somewhere in between gesture and thought . . . The overlapping of imagery and moves must culminate in a genuine physical language, no longer based on words but on signs formed through the combination of objects, silence, shouts and rhythms . . . One could say that the spirit of the most ancient hieroglyphics will govern the creation of this pure stage language. (68, 83)

By placing less emphasis on the word, Artaud hoped to connect with the spectator on a deeper, non-verbal and non-rational level (Hayman 85).

With regard to the cruelty of his theatre, Artaud is at pains to point out that it is not violence for the sake of violence, but that it has a specific function in terms of achieving the aim of this new theatre, namely that of "unforgettable soul therapy" (64-65). He maintains that since people think with their senses first, it is ridiculous to appeal primarily to their understanding, as is the case in psychological theatre (Artaud 65-66). The "full scale invocation of cruelty and terror", however, is capable of "confronting us with all our potential" (Artaud 65-66). Artaud stresses that his cruelty is not just bloody, but that it is, of necessity, lucid and conscious (79), since it aims to produce in the spectator "a transcendent condition . . . a kind of severe mental purity" (81), a state of increased vitality. The process is described by Günter Ahrends as follows:

> By confronting the audience with the primeval, anarchic and cruel components of their lives, it inevitably sets free the elemental, uncheckable and uncontrollable manifestations of vitality which have been entombed in the course of Western civilization . . . By releasing the full vitality and potential of the spectators in this way, Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty achieves a therapeutic effect which results in a cathartic purification . . . By laying bare the chaotic unconscious Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty launches a virtual revolt which destroys the rational systems of Western culture, offering modern man a new opportunity of communicating with life. (119, 121)

The aim of Artaud's theatre is, in Ahrend's words, to "re-examine man organically through anarchic destruction" (126) and so to force the spectator to confront his/her inner self. Artaud articulates this in his First Manifesto on the Theatre of Cruelty: "Theatre will never be itself again . . . unless it provides the audience with truthful distillations of dreams where its taste for crime, its erotic obsessions, its savageness, its fantasies, its utopian sense of life and objects, even its cannibalism, do not gush out on an illusory, make-believe, but on an inner level" (70-71). The confrontation with the inner self should, as Richard Cave outlines, ". . . effect some kind of transformation . . . bring release into some new or renewed metaphysical apprehension in which the everyday self would be transcended" (153)[145], while the observation of cruelty should also impress upon the audience "the necessity for a moral order" (169).

While a common concept of art seems to unite Antonin Artaud and Konrad Bayer on a superficial level,[146] Artaud's writings on the Theatre of Cruelty reveal that any similarities remain superficial and do not withstand closer examination. First, Artaud's language scepticism seems to concern itself principally with language as a theatrical medium, whereas Bayer's extends to all language. Both Artaud and Bayer aspire to release the individual from the prison of culture. However, Artaud advocates the

[145] Ronald Hayman characterises this process as "metamorphosis in the individual soul" (88).
[146] Artaud and Bayer also share an interest in alchemy and Artaud considered "Alchemist's Theatre" as a possible title for his new form of theatre (Cave 153).

replacement of the language of words with a language of physical signs and violent images. He aims to destroy the "dictatorship of words" in order to liberate the body. As discussed in the previous section, in some of Bayer's prose texts the body is considered superfluous to the consciousness, which seeks to liberate itself from its physical form.

Artaud promotes a total theatre with the audience at the centre. His concept of cruelty is based on an attempt to make a connection with the audience that is deeper than that achieved by the conventional theatre, because his ultimate goal is to bring the spectators to a catharsis which, in turn, will enable them to transcend their everyday selves and enter a process of metamorphosis. Although Bayer, in texts such as die begabten zuschauer and kasperl am elektrischen stuhl, tears down the veil of theatrical illusion and confounds the division between performer and spectator, with his cruelty he is not concerned so much with the metamorphosis of the audience as with the supremacy of the individual, a concept that does not feature in Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty.

Finally, Artaud emphasises that the cruelty of his theatre is lucid and conscious. As a theatre practitioner he planned and documented in manifestos and letters how his theory of cruelty was to be put into practice, listing, for example, the means of expression that he recommends, such as gestures, masks, lighting, sound, costumes, props and so on. The cruelty of Bayer's dramatic texts is far from programmatic, it is anarchic, and Bayer did not concern himself about how it was to be realised in the theatre. Instead of developing out of manifestos and statements, his cruelty seems to erupt almost involuntarily on stage, as the last means of self-defence and self-preservation available to Bayer's dramatic figures and so does not have as much in common with Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty as might first appear to be the case. While

the fundamental impulse behind both forms of cruelty is similar, the differences between them are also significant.

I now wish to examine a movement that followed the activities of the Wiener Gruppe, but which was also based in Vienna – Wiener Aktionismus – in an attempt to compare the violence that characterised some of its "Aktionen" with that of Bayer's texts.

Although, as Rüdiger Engerth points out, the group around Hermann Nitsch, Günter Brus and Otto Mühl came together at a time when the Vienna Group was already in the process of breaking up (160), there was a large degree of interaction between some members of the Group and the Viennese actionists. Between 1960 and 1964 some of the actionists frequented Café Hawelka, the Vienna Group's "Stammlokal" (Klocker 349). In 1964, on the evening when the Vienna Group made its final public appearance with the première of die kinderoper to celebrate the opening of "Chatanooga", Mühl was invited to carry out a public material action (Klocker 190). From 1967 a group of artists and friends that included Oswald Wiener, Gerhard Rühm, Mühl, Brus and Nitsch began to form. In April of that year this group organised the "Zock-Fest" in the "Grünes Tor" restaurant, an event featuring performances that recalled the Vienna Group's "literarisches cabaret" (Klocker 291-292). Engerth characterises the event as follows:

> Das 'Zock'-Fest . . . gewann durch die Mitwirkung von Oswald Wiener und Gerhard Rühm den Charakter einer vereinigten Aktion der beiden Wiener Quellen des Happenings. Die Reste der Wiener Dichtergruppe (Konrad Bayer war schon tot, Artmann lebte im Ausland, Friedrich Achleitner hatte sich von jeder Kabarett-Tätigkeit zurückgezogen) und die Gruppe um Mühl und Brus verbanden ihre Kräfte zum totalen Einsatz. (165)

Robert Fleck describes Oswald Wiener as the link between the two groups: ". . . so muß man . . . Oswald Wiener als jenem Dichter seinen Platz geben, der die Kontinuität

der Entwicklungen der österreichischen fünfziger Jahre zu den sechziger Jahren und danach klar erkannte und hintergründig orchestrierte" (Weibel and Steinle 278). Wiener also participated in the notorious "Kunst und Revolution" action, which took place in the University of Vienna on 7 June, 1968, and subsequently spent two months in police custody, before being acquitted of any wrongdoing.

Commentators have highlighted the debt that Wiener Aktionismus owes to the Vienna Group. Buddecke and Fuhrmann observe that the former movement ". . . treibt spielerische Ansätze des 'literarische[n] cabaret[s]' der 'Wiener Gruppe' (1959/59) . . . in ein brutal-aliterarisches und paratheatralisches Extrem" (198) and Schmidt-Dengler describes the Vienna Group's poetic acts as "Vorformen jener Happenings, die dann zentral für die Ereigniskultur des Wiener Aktionismus wurden" (Bruchlinien 137). Gerhard Rühm points out the fact that the actionists themselves acknowledged this debt, in particular with regard to the Wiener Gruppe's two literary cabarets: "der einfluß unserer beiden veranstaltungen . . . auf den nachfolgenden 'wiener aktionismus' wurde von seinen exponenten mehrmals bekundet" ("zu gemeinschaftsarbeiten" 203).

Both the Vienna Group and the Viennese actionists emerged in the repressive cultural climate of post-war Austria, a factor that, in Ferdinand Schmatz's opinion, made their art more subversive: "In diesem kulturellen Spannungsfeld finden jene Gruppierungen zueinander, die als Wiener Aktionismus und Wiener Gruppe zum avantgardistischen Aushängeschild jenes Staates wurden, dessen sozialer Druck sie in den fünfziger und sechziger Jahren zu zwei der subversivsten Formationen der österreichischen Kunst zusammenwachsen ließ" (9). Konrad Oberhuber also attributes the sense of desperate protest that characterised Wiener Aktionismus to the specific Austrian situation (Klocker 18) and Fleck describes their art as "einen existentiellen Aufschrei in der postfaschistischen österreichischen Konstellation der Nachkriegszeit"

(Weibel and Steinle 283), pointing out that the reaction of Wiener Aktionismus to the climate of the Second Republic was more extreme than that of the Wiener Gruppe:

> Bereits im 'Literarischen Cabaret' der 'Wiener Gruppe wurde der postfaschistische Zustand des damaligen Österreich ausdrücklich karikaturisiert. Doch erst im 'Wiener Aktionismus' der frühen sechziger Jahre erfolgte die Wendung dieses generellen, diffusen Unbehagens der Künstler gegenüber der zeitgenössischen österreichischen Gesellschaft zu einer radikalen, und teilweise brutalen Aggression.
> (Weibel and Steinle 285)

Both groups of artists shared a radical attitude towards art. Just as Artmann's "acht-punkte-proklamation des poetischen actes" advocated the liberation of poetry from the word in favour of "der wunsch, poetisch handeln zu wollen" (WG 10), the Viennese actionists wanted to liberate painting from the canvas by means of the material action. Mühl defines the material action as "über die Bildfläche hinausgewachsene Malerei" (qtd. in Engerth 161), in which a room or the human body itself becomes a canvas. According to Mühl, this process is "eine Methode, die Wirklichkeit zu erweitern, Wirklichkeit zu erzeugen und die Dimension des Erlebens auszudrücken" (Engerth 161). The central importance of the body in the material action prompts Schmatz to liken the performance art of Günter Brus to the theatre of Antonin Artaud: both artists aimed for a physical experience that was designed to appeal to the senses (15). However, while the art of the Viennese actionists was grounded in "Sinneswahrnehmung und Empfindung", Schmatz points out that the literature of the Vienna Group did not have this purely sensory basis (24).

On the face of it, the brutal excesses of Bayer's idiot would seem to find parallels in some of the works of Wiener Aktionismus. The following account by Herbert Stumpfl (Vienna Institute of Direct Art) of part of the "Kunst und Revolution" action of 1968 calls to mind the opening scene of Bayer's dramatic text, in which the idiot engages in the violent dismemberment and cannibalisation of his victims, then defecates and eats

his faeces: "Brus entkleidet sich. Mit einer Rasierklinge fügt er sich in Brust und Oberschenkel Schnitte bei. Er uriniert, trinkt seinen Urin und erbricht sich. Während er die Bundeshymne anstimmt, zeigt er den Vorgang der analen Ausscheidung. Er beschmiert seinen Körper mit Kot. Dann legt er sich nieder und beginnt zu onanieren" (Engerth 167). Similarly, the "Orgien-Mysterien Theater" of Hermann Nitsch, described briefly by Buddecke and Fuhrmann below seems, in some aspects, to echo the idiot's actions:

> Es ist Nitsch, der in dem Bestreben, das Publikum in die Aktion einzubeziehen ein "Orgien Mysterien Theater" . . . teils exekutierte, teils imaginierte. In "Aktionen" sowie in "Aktions- und Abreaktionsspielen" bis hin zur "Gesamtkonzeption des 6 tage-spiels des O. M. Theaters" und zum "Drama als existenzfest" sollen durch die Mitwirkenden 'dionysisch'-orgiastische Rituale der Enthemmung eingeübt und bis zum sadomasochistischen Exzeß des Aufbrechens und Zerreißens nicht nur von Tierkadavern, sondern auch von Menschenleichen gesteigert werden. (199)

However, a closer look at the aims of Wiener Aktionismus leads me to believe that such similarities, while emerging in the context of a common historical and social background and a common concept of art, do not point to a deeper artistic connection.

First, the exponents of Wiener Aktionismus, although critical of language and the conventional methods of representation, believed that by changing the medium, by exchanging the canvas for the "Aktion", it was possible to extend the boundaries of reality (Schmatz 29). While, as has been investigated in Chapter 3, this was true of the Vienna Group in the first phase of their language theory, it was not ultimately true of Oswald Wiener and Konrad Bayer, who later on became extremely sceptical of language as a means of representation. Second, Schmatz opposes the "Sinnlichkeit" of Wiener Aktionismus to what he terms Bayer's "Sprach-Aktionismus", claiming that in Bayer's work "eine sprachlich konstruierte Aktion" replaces "die exzessivste Materialschlacht" (26-27). Since Bayer's violence and cannibalism are encoded in

language, they do not share the direct, very physical impact of the material actions of Wiener Aktionismus.[147] Finally, as was also true for Artaud, for the Viennese actionists, and in particular with regard to Nitsch's Orgien-Mysterien Theater, violence seems to play a central role in the achievement of an artistic vision. As is evident from the following description of this theatre by Nitsch, the effect of the performance on the spectator is also very much part of the rationale behind the concept:

> Das O. M. theater (orgien-mysterien theater) stellt den versuch eines unbedingten gesamtkunstwerkes dar . . . Drama (lyrik, epik), malerei und musik vereinen sich zu einem 6 tage dauernden fest der existenzverherrlichung. Der zuschauer (= teilnehmer, mitspieler) wird einem intensiveren ästhetisch mystischen begreifen der umwelt unterworfen . . . Statt assoziieren [sic] werden aktionen eingesetzt, welche das sinnliche registrieren bis zum endpunkt der abreaktionsorgiastik steigern. (Das auswerten elementar sinnlicher aggressiv-sadistischer empfindungen, das zerreißen von rohem fleisch, das ausweiden von geschlachteten tierkadavern und das herumtrampeln auf gedärmen . . .). Es ergibt sich ein hinunterloten zu verdrängten gebieten. Es entstehen triebdurchbrüche . . . Der grundexzeß = endpunkt des abreaktionserlebnisses, sado-masochistisches ausagieren, ausbruch sowie anschaubarmachung und bewußtmachung verdrängter bereiche, katharsis. Dramatischer höhepunkt des spieles . . . Die geschehnisse, welche durch das O. M. theater gesetzt werden, werden nicht gespielt wie dies beim klassischen theater der fall ist, sondern ereignen sich tatsächlich. Der zuschauer wird in das ereignis hineingestellt. Er ereignet sich selbst, er soll zu sich SELBST, zur seinsmystik gelangen. Die aktionen des spieles bringen den zuschauer in die erkenntnis seiner eigenen existentiellen wirklichkeit. (qtd. in Weibel and Steinle 260) [148]

Just like the Theatre of Cruelty, the Orgien-Mysterien Theater aims, by activating the senses, to affect some kind of transformation in the spectator, albeit using a more hands-on approach than that of Artaud. The above extract also reveals a similar programmatic intent. Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty and the violence of Wiener

[147] I noted earlier in this chapter that it is difficult to imagine how the violent excesses of the idiot could be presented on stage. However, what Bayer suggests in idiot, if realised in material form, would be even more radical than the material actions of the Viennese actionists and Nitsch's O. M. Theater.

[148] Although Nitsch distances his theatre from the traditional theatre with the claim, "Der zuschauer wird in das ereignis hineingestellt", it should be noted that the power of the traditional theatre to involve the spectator should not be underestimated.

Aktionismus would therefore seem to have more in common with each other than with Bayer's dramatic texts, where violence and cannibalism are the instinctive and inevitable consequences of the battle for freedom of the individual anarchist and are expressed in words and therefore imagined rather than enacted.

5.5 The themes of violence and cannibalism in secondary literature on Bayer

The themes of violence and cannibalism do not, surprisingly, feature greatly in secondary literature on Bayer.[149] Wolfgang Max Faust in his 1983 article "Fleisch, Blut und Sprache. Notizen, Texte, Kritiken zum Theatralischen von Konrad Bayer" highlights the scene in idiot which portrays *a*'s attack on the girl and goes on to consider the significance of such brutality:

> Verherrlichung der Gewalt? Perverse Schönheit? Ein Weiterspinnen der satanischen Literatur (de Sade, Lautréamont, Artaud)? - Die destruktive Phantasie gerät im *idioten* ins megalomanisch Groteske. Sie überschlägt sich, brutalisiert den Schwarzen Humor, der plötzlich so ernst wird, daß wir das Grauen der Wirklichkeit gleichsam als bestimmende Denk- und Handlungsform dahinter erkennen können, vage als Lust an der Vernichtung, als Lust am Töten, als Lust am Text über das Töten, über das Vernichten . . . Anthropophagie, Skatophagie, Exitus, Koitus: All dies ist nicht zu "spielen". Die Natur des Menschen, die menschlichen Möglichkeiten der "Person" im Theater widersprechen der Phantasie. Auf der Bühne "realisiert", wird der vorgestellte Vorgang zum Zeichen, zum Emblem, zur Metapher. Nur im Leben, nur in der Imagination, schwindet das "als ob" und gelangt ins mörderische Extrem, das die Handlungen des Idioten bloß und nackt dastehen läßt: wahrgenommen, doch unverstanden. (146-147)

These comments by Faust provide an example of the way in which Bayer commentators grapple with his texts, which they often try to interpret with more questions than answers. Although he does not develop the point further, Faust is correct in describing the horror of idiot as a way of thinking and acting. With the desire, or rather need, to destroy and kill, as realised in the actions of the idiot, Bayer is not only presenting an alternative form of thinking and acting, but also, as I have already stated, an alternative form of existing which has as its ultimate aim the freedom of the individual. This first of all requires the destruction of the existing order that

[149] For an analysis of cannibalism in the works of H. C. Artmann, see Jacques Lajarrige's essay "Gründzüge der transponierten Kannibalistik. Ein Querschnitt durch das Werk Hans Carl Artmanns" in Fuchs and Wischenbart 77-109.

forces the individual to conform, to be part of a community, to speak that community's language and to belong to its culture. In his violence and his "scheissdreck" speech, which negates important cornerstones of this order, *a* attempts this destruction, but, as Faust points out, without much success: "Der *idiot* führt ein ausuferndes Panorama zerstörerischer Handlungen vor. Doch zugleich ist er statisch und tritt auf der Stelle: *es ist, wie es ist*" (149). As I have indicated elsewhere, one cannot, as Faust does here, judge Bayer's texts solely by the results achieved or not achieved in them, but must regard them as part of what was Bayer's ongoing work-in-progress and therefore as valuable creative experiments.

André Bucher is the only critic I know of to date who discusses the theme of violence in some detail. In his book Die szenischen Texte der Wiener Gruppe, he dedicates a chapter to considering cruelty in Bayer's dramatic works. The chapter is entitled "Grausamkeit", and bears the following subtitle: "Die Gewalt bei Bayer - "der analfabet" - Negativität und Affirmation - "idiot", die Unausweichlichkeit der Repräsentation".

Bucher rightly recognises the significance of violence in Bayer's texts and goes on to briefly mention examples of violent moments, including the knocking down of the audience member at the end of der analfabet, the verbal exchange of blows of die boxer, the execution of Kasperl in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl and the violent acts of idiot, all of which he calls "drastische Beispiele einer Gewalt, die nicht nur in den Texten Bayers, sondern der WG überhaupt immer wieder aufbricht" (140). Bucher stresses, however, that this violence is portrayed most directly in Bayer's texts: "Bei

Bayer bricht sie am unverhohlensten durch" (140).[150] Bucher's discussion subsequently focuses on two of Bayer's plays - der anlfabet and idiot.

Bucher's analysis of der analfabet concentrates on the structure of that text, its inconsistencies and the difficulty of interpreting it, rather than on the theme of violence, to which the title of the chapter promises to give chief consideration and which is allocated no more than a couple of paragraphs. Bucher mentions that some passages of the text stand out because of an aggressive undertone and among these he lists two references to the bestial nature of the analphabet and the passage that indicates that cannibalism is part of the speakers' tradition. He then makes the following comment: "Diese Anspielung auf den Kannibalismus wird aber sowenig fassbar wie die neunte Szene, in der sich die Äusserungen um eine Opferung drehen, oder die seltsame Regieanweisung in der fünfzehnten Szene, die die Figur 5 'als OPFER; aller wahrscheinlichkeit nach mit derben stricken gefesselt', verlangt" (144). Here Bucher evades the issue and avoids even guessing as to what such references to cannibalism could mean. He also fails to link these references to Bayer's other plays, even to idiot, the other text which he deals with in his chapter.

Bucher's examination of the theme of violence in idiot is far more thorough, however, and his conclusions about violence are similar to those which I made earlier in this chapter. He is incorrect, however, in saying that *a*'s "scheissdreck" speech is

[150] Bucher's assessment coincides with that of Kaar who, when comparing the phenomenon of violence in H. C. Artmann's dramatic texts with Bayer's depiction of it, notes: "Für Artmann scheint vielmehr eine Komik zu gelten, die Grenzen aufsucht, die das Grausame im Komischen und das Komische im Grausamen sichtbar macht" (176). Beutner similarly observes with reference to Gerhard Rühm's texts: "Die Gewalttätigkeit wird durch Ironie und Groteske entschärft, ähnlich wie in den domestizierten Menschenfresserphantasien H. C. Artmanns" (114).

initiated by "der mensch", as *a* has already launched into his verbal attack on the world before the appearance of this figure. Bucher describes the violence of idiot in the following way:

> Die Gewalt ist universell, maschinell, alle lassen sich in gleicher Weise von ihr tragen, alle sind von ihr betroffen . . . Sie ist das Mittel des Einzelnen, sich gegen den Anderen, gegen die Gemeinschaft zur Wehr zu setzen und bleibt solange vital, als es andere, Gemeinschaft, gibt . . . Die rebellische Verachtung des *a* richtet sich nicht nur gegen die Anderen und sich selbst, sondern direkt auch gegen das, wodurch diese überhaupt erst als solche konstituiert werden, gegen die symbolische Ordnung und die Institutionen, die sie garantieren. (151-152)

Here Bucher identifies violence, as I did, as the means by which individuals defend themselves against others, against the community which, with its established order, denies them freedom. With the phrase "die Institutionen, die sie garantieren", Bucher is referring to the cornerstones of symbolic order, such as art, science, philosophy, religion and politics, which are reduced by *a* to "scheissdreck", and which rely on language for their power over society, for it is through language that they are perpetuated.

Bucher also sees in "idiot sein" an untenable existential position which he links to other Bayer figures, without, however, examining the connections between them as I did in Chapter 3:

> Idiot sein, muss hier durch das Vorangehende heissen, unabhängig vom Symbolischen und seiner kategorialen Ordnung zu sein. Idiot - der letzte in der Reihe der Kaspars und Kinder, Hanswurste und Analfabeten - ist damit der Titel für eine existentielle Lage, die den Zwängen der Repräsentation weniger durch Unwissen oder Schwachsinn entkommt, als in einer solipsistischen Selbstpräsenz: reines Für-sich-sein.
>
> Ob *a* mit dieser Aussage einen momentan erreichten Zustand seiner selbst meint oder einen noch immer erstrebten, bleibt offen. Er wird jedenfalls aus seinem Für-sich-sein, sobald er es statuiert, herausgerissen durch den *menschen*, der nochmals aus der Ohnmacht erwacht . . . (152-153)

Bucher talks of "die Tragik des *a*", the "Verzweiflung, Entsetzen des kompromisslosen Anarchisten" (153) and sums up his existence as follows: ". . . die Grausamkeit besteht darin, der Repräsentation nicht entrinnen zu können, stets in der Sprache und durch sie determiniert zu sein, und das heisst stets ausser sich zu sein, nicht bei sich selbst anlangen zu können . . . Die Grausamkeit ist die Unausweichlichkeit der Repräsentation . . . Ihre Wahrheit ist tragisch" (153-154). *a*'s tragedy is that he cannot escape representation, that he is forced to be defined in and through language, for even as he denounces it, its words fall from his lips. It is significant that "der mensch" is still alive at the end of the text. It seems that even the idiot, the most extreme of Bayer's individual anarchists, cannot destroy *all* of humanity, that in spite of everything, he has some need of another being, if only to serve as something in terms of which he can define himself.

I argued in Chapter 3 that the existence put forward by Bayer with the figures of the idiot, Kasperl and the analphabet is not a viable one and here this is proven again to be the case. It is an existence whose destructive tendencies must ultimately extend to the self which it aims to protect. None of Bayer's dramatic texts would seem to offer a successful model of the form of being which his figures aim to achieve, because such an existence would demand total isolation, the creation of a real "einmannstaat" which is at odds with the very essence of the human condition – contact and interaction with other humans. However, this does not mean that the experimental process of which they are a part should be dismissed. Konrad Bayer's texts represent his own personal and artistic struggle. Like his dramatic figures, once born into the human community and instructed in its language there seemed to be no escape for him, no possibility of complete individual freedom and self-expression outside of the normative structures of language. Forced to use the very medium of which he was so critical – to work within

but yet against it – it is, perhaps, small wonder that Bayer produced such complex and sometimes violent texts which reflect his own relentless struggle. Although this thesis has shown that in many ways Bayer succeeded in subverting language and in thwarting its normative influence, his texts, characterised as they are by a drift towards death, do not seem to acknowledge this.

In the "nachtrag" to der sechste sinn, a text that he worked on until his death, Bayer writes :

> man muss sich umbringen um die hoffnung zu begraben. es gibt keine hoffnung.
> jedoch ist ein lebender mensch ein hoffender. contradictio in se.
>
> frage: worauf hoffen?
> es gibt nichts was zu erreichen wäre ausser dem tod. (SW 667)

Here hope is presented as an unavoidable part of being human. In reality there is no hope, and nothing to hope for except death, but, inexplicably, hope lives on in humans, sustaining life. That hope sustains life is evident from the following exchange in diskurs über die hoffnung:

> 4. frau: aber wozu
> 3. frau: hofft man?
> 1. frau: um nicht zu verbrennen
> 2. frau: um nicht zu erfrieren (SW 274)

If hope sustains life for the sole purpose of avoiding death, and if, as Bayer seems to believe, there is nothing to hope for except death, the question that his texts ask is: why live? It is a question which Bayer seems to have answered with his own suicide. Faust also makes this link between Bayer's dramatic texts and his personal life when he states: "Hinter jedem Nachdenken über Konrad Bayers *theatralisches* steht die Szene seines Selbstmords" (149).

5.6 Review of Chapter 5

This chapter has continued the interpretative investigations of Chapter 3 by considering links between Bayer's "Sprachkritik", his attempts to explore alternative modes of being for the individual and the motifs of violence and cannibalism.

I have illustrated in this chapter how instances of violence and cannibalism recur in Bayer's dramatic texts. Combining the textual evidence with findings which emerged from Chapter 3, I adopted a multi-layered approach to reading these motifs and presented some possible interpretations.

Concentrating first of all on the motif of violence, various aspects of this phenomenon were highlighted. I concluded that in Bayer's dramatic texts violence and language are interwoven. In die boxer, for example, physical violence and language are presented as forms of interaction that are equally brutal. Using a quote from der sechste sinn, language was shown to be a force that violates the individual, whom it tries to control, restrict and "sterilise". Other instances of violence depict it as an alternative or substitute for language. The examples of Apollo in kasperl am elektrischen stuhl and the idiot linked a loss or rejection of language to the outbreak of chaos and anarchy. The rejection of language and the symbolic order of the community that it encodes in favour of violence and anarchy was interpreted as the defence of the self against all outside forces.

Cannibalism in Bayer's texts was also shown to have many possible meanings. As an individual anarchist the idiot, Bayer's most voracious cannibal, views all other beings as a threat to his subjectivity. For him, eating others is a means of self-assertion, a way of keeping his "ich" intact. By breaking the cannibalism taboo, Bayer's figures

contravene societal norms and thereby succeed in placing themselves outside of society and its constraints. When interpreting the cannibalism motif I illustrated that it is also linked to a rejection of language that results in words being replaced by human flesh. This rejection of language can be understood as the desire for regression to a more primitive, pre-linguistic state, in which the world and the self are not experienced or expressed through language. I demonstrated how the idiot's cannibalism can be read as a reversal of Christian doctrine, in which the community is killed and eaten to ensure the salvation of the individual.

Violence and cannibalism are inextricably linked in Bayer's texts. They are the physical representation of their perpetrators' language criticism and individual anarchism and are motivated by the desire to accomplish absolute individualism. Even the employment of these extreme measures cannot, however, support this struggle of the individual. The destructive tendencies of Bayer's individual anarchists can only, it seems, culminate in self-destruction, for it is only in death that the individual seems to be able to salvage some degree of freedom.

The latter part of this chapter attempted to place the violence and cannibalism of Bayer's texts in a broader context, using the examples of Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty and the performance art of Wiener Aktionismus. My comparative investigation concluded that some similarities can be identified between Bayer's work and that of these other artists: common concept of art, scepticism of the conventional media of language or the canvas, portrayal of violence and similar repressive background (in the case of Wiener Aktionismus). However, the differences were found to be more significant. In particular, the central function of violence in the achievement of an

artistic vision that is documented in a programmatic fashion and designed to have a certain effect on the spectator was declared to be in opposition to the anarchic nature of Bayer's violence and cannibalism, which aspire to the supremacy of the individual.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have repeatedly stressed the importance of prioritising the process that Bayer engages in in his dramatic texts rather than the results of his literary experiments. Similarly, I would like to argue with regard to this thesis that its attempts to explore Bayer's texts are just as important, if not more important, than its findings. For just as most of Bayer's texts do not have, in Rühm's words, "endgültige fassungen" (SW 821), neither do they have definitive interpretations. This conclusion, therefore, will simply serve to review the findings of the preceding chapters.

Chapter 1, by identifying the Wiener Gruppe and the preceding experimental movements of Dadaism and Surrealism as important influences on Bayer's literary works, and by outlining the historical and cultural background from which his texts emerged proved, as became evident in later sections of this thesis, to be an essential preparatory phase for the subsequent engagement with Bayer's dramatic texts, because it provided points of orientation which aided the explorations of the chapters that followed it.

A close study of the text of der analfabet revealed its "beilage" as an important map for negotiating the paths of Bayer's texts, identifying as it does the principles according to which Bayer constructed them. A linguistic analysis of this dramatic text exposed the extent to which Bayer's texts depart from conventional literary texts. The analysis also highlighted linguistic devices used by Bayer to achieve defamiliarization, or "abstand", a concept shown to be central to his method of text production, the aim of which is to force readers to abandon their normal methods of processing texts, methods which are geared towards understanding. This demands that readers not only suspend their expectations of what constitutes a text, but also of what

constitutes reality. The linguistic devices employed by Bayer in der analfabet and in other texts point to a radical rejection of conventional language and methods of text production in favour of an experimental approach that results, in the case of der analfabet, in a multi-layered text that resists interpretation.

In Chapter 3 I argued that Bayer's unconventional literary style is the consequence of his language criticism. Using statements from members of the Wiener Gruppe, Bayer's own literary texts and his collaborations with Oswald Wiener, I traced the development of Bayer's "Sprachkritik", interpreting it in terms of the philosophies of Wittgenstein and Mauthner. I suggested that Bayer's language criticism necessitated an approach to text production that, if it were to provide him with a means of expressing an autonomous creative voice, would have to attempt to free literature and language from their conventional forms. Thus the process that Bayer sets in motion in his dramatic texts is one with which, by subverting language, he searches for a mode of self-expression outside of its normative structures for himself as an artist, but also for any individual who feels inhibited by those structures.

An examination of some of Bayer's texts revealed an ambivalent attitude to language. On the one hand, the texts are characterised by an extreme scepticism of language as a medium for depicting reality, for communication with others and, most importantly, for the expression and realisation of the self. On the other hand, however, language is also presented as a means by which the individual can invent his/her own reality and so assume godlike powers and make the world his/her creation. I highlighted the difficulty of interpreting these texts because of their ambivalence and the way in which they undermine themselves by offering various levels of reality in an attempt not to fall victim to the prescriptive nature of language.

By linking the figures of Kasperl, the analphabet and the idiot, I illustrated how Bayer's dramatic texts create figures that represent the relentless struggle of the individual to escape the restrictions of language. These figures' rejection of language necessitates a rejection of the community that uses it and so this struggle of the individual culminates in an individual anarchism which was shown in Chapter 3 to be akin to that of Stirner's Der Einzige und sein Eigentum. Chapter 4 examined the Lion of Belfort, a figure rich in associations with Surrealism and alchemy. The Lion was shown to represent another of Bayer's attempts to construct an alternative mode of being for the individual and was therefore linked to the figures discussed in Chapter 3. All of these figures can be regarded as the construction by Bayer of a composite figure of himself, the creative artist. They represent in literary form his efforts to come to terms with his own paradoxical position of language sceptic and author, to overcome the restrictions of an arrested language and so to establish some means of self-expression and, because as a writer this was so important to him, some form of existence for himself.

In their struggle Bayer's individual anarchists resort to extreme measures, as the recurring motifs of violence and cannibalism indicate. The consequence of their abandoning of language is a loss of order and an unleashing of chaos which can be interpreted as a regression to the primitive, pre-linguistic state of "analfabetismus", where anarchy reigns, but where the world and those who inhabit it are no longer defined by language. This state is shown in his dramatic texts to be an untenable one that seems destined to culminate in self-destruction. The fate of these figures, whose struggle seems doomed to failure, prefigures Bayer's own suicide.

Alchemists, mindful of the virtual impossibility of achieving their aims, always stressed the central importance of the *process* of the alchemical work. Likewise, the

fact that Bayer's dramatic texts represent failed attempts to provide a viable model of an alternative existence outside of the normative structures of language does not, of course, mean that they should be dismissed in literary terms, for their value lies above all in the experiments they represent. The following statement by Oswald Wiener about experimental literature is true of Bayer's dramatic texts: "Experimentelles Schreiben ist Forschung geworden, ein Versuch, Modelle des menschlichen Verstehens zu erlangen, die ohne Isomorphien von Zeichensystemen und inhaltlichen Zusammenhängen auskommen" ("Einiges" 44). Bayer's dramatic texts constitute a further contribution to this "Forschung", a contribution which, in Helmut Heißenbüttel's words about Bayer's novel der kopf des vitus bering, demanded a daring step into the dark:

> Die Frage ist, ob man Literatur machen will zur Unterhaltung, und sei es selbst für den hochgetrimmten und akademisch gebildeten Kunstverstand, oder ob man in der Literatur etwas aufweisen, Erkenntnis öffnen will, das Risiko eingehn, einen Schritt weiter zu tun, nicht vorwärts einem irrsinnig gewordenen Fortschritt nach, sondern ins Dunkel hinein, das uns alle in Wahrheit umgibt am Ende des metaphysischen Zeitalters. Konrad Bayer hat versucht, einen solchen Schritt zu tun. (n. pag.)

Bayer's step into the dark paved the way for experimental authors that succeeded him. His legacy, along with that of the Wiener Gruppe, had an enormous influence, in particular on Austrian literature of the 1960s and 1970s. Gerald Matt refers to the Vienna Group's "maßgebliche Pionierarbeit" (Achleitner and Fetz 6) and Gerhard Fuchs assesses the contribution of its members to Austrian literature as follows:

> Entwicklung und Spezifika der österreichischen Literatur der sechziger und siebziger Jahre sind kaum vorstellbar und erklärbar ohne die Innovationen der Schreib- und Denkexperimente, wie sie die "Wiener Gruppe" bereits in den fünfziger Jahren entwickelt hat . . . Die österreichische Avantgarde der fünfziger Jahre wurde, wenn überhaupt, von der Öffentlichkeit erst spät rezipiert, als sie bereits als historisch überlebt gelten konnte. Die späteren Autoren vor allem der *Grazer Gruppe* konnten bereits auf einen Fundus an erprobten literarischen Techniken und auf theoretische Vorarbeiten

> zurückgreifen, außerdem mit einer vergleichsweise doch etwas größeren Toleranz und mit einem stärkeren Interesse rechnen. (165)

In 1996 some of Bayer's dramatic texts were performed in the "Volkstheater", one of the larger state-subsidised theatres in Vienna, admittedly in the theatre's smaller space "Am Plafond". In the press release for "sprechen sie manchmal? 'Die Pfandleihe' und andere Texte von Konrad Bayer", Bayer is hailed as the father of modern Austrian drama: "Mit Bayers dem Sprachspiel gewidmeten absurden Szenen beginnt die österreichische Gegenwartsdramatik" (n. pag.). Such recognition of the contribution of Bayer's dramatic works to Austrian drama makes the fact that they have to date received so little attention all the more surprising.

This thesis constitutes the first lengthy study of Konrad Bayer's dramatic oeuvre. Since the central concern of Bayer's literature is the search for alternative modes of existence for the individual that allow him/her unrestricted realisation and expression of the self, the dramatic genre, based as it is on the principle of interaction between individuals, would seem to offer to a greater extent than prose the opportunity to observe how this individualism is to function in the context of the community. The way in which Bayer's dramatic figures clash linguistically and physically with those around them depicts the individual's struggle for self-realisation more vividly than Bayer's more introspective narrative texts. Therefore, the dramatic texts have much to contribute to an understanding of Bayer's literature and deserve the close consideration that I have attempted to give them.

In the preceding chapters I have tried to look behind the paravent that Bayer places in front of his dramatic texts. I have endeavoured to put forward various approaches to reading them, while always acknowledging that these are texts that seem intentionally designed to undermine interpretation. My attempts to read the texts have examined both form and content and have drawn on text linguistics as well as the

more conventional resources of literary criticism such as history, philosophy and psychology.

My explorations have revealed the texts to be characterised by a remarkable unity of form and content. Simply put, Bayer's texts have a complex form that acts as a vehicle for the exploration of complex issues. The fact that they are difficult to understand and are structured in such a way that undermines sense and meaning reflects their content on several levels. Bayer's abuse of conventional language and resultant highly individualistic style reflect both his language criticism and his individual anarchism. He succeeds in creating and maintaining the "abstand" he refers to in the "beilage" to der analfabet to the extent of alienating all but the most persevering of readers. The way in which his texts seem to defy meaning could also be said to mirror Bayer's ever-increasing negativism and pessimism, described by Rühm as follows: "dabei litt er immer häufiger unter der vorstellung der sinnlosigkeit von allem" (SW 19). However, as I have illustrated, Bayer's creative process is not only destructive, since, due to particular recurring figures and motifs, a certain consistency in the dramatic texts emerges.[151]

The textual disintegration that Bayer engages in finds a thematic parallel in the recurring motifs of violence and cannibalism, as the human body is dismembered and eaten on stage in an attempt to secure the supremacy of the "ich". Stranded amidst the ruins of their destruction Bayer's central figures are faced with an impossible existence that is characterised by Herostrat as follows: "und in dieser entsetzlichen kälte werde ich endlich allein sein" (SW 481). "allein sein", the ultimate aim of Bayer's individual anarchists, is perceived, after it has been achieved, as "entsetzlich"

[151] This is also perhaps due to the fact that most of Bayer's dramatic texts were written over a period of approximately eight years (1954-1962). While some of the texts are characterised by common figures and motifs, in later texts such as idiot and siebzehnter jänner 1962 Bayer's increasing frustration and pessimism is evident.

and "kalt". It is an existence that cannot be endured and seems destined to end in the coldness of death, a thought that is expressed by Bayer in one of his letters to Ida Szigethy: "allein sein ist sehr schön, großartig etc. aber auf dauer tödlich . . ." ("Briefe" 53). However, the fact that Bayer's dramatic figures live on in the fragmented linguistic reality of his texts surely lends some meaning to their desperate struggle and to his.

In this study I have attempted to illuminate the world of Konrad Bayer's dramatic texts. In deference to their multifaceted and complex nature I would like to conclude with a quote from Bayer's "beilage" to der analfabet which, while it may seem to undermine my interpretive efforts, has been the maxim according to which this thesis has been written:

> das ist eine erklärung.
> andere sind ebenfalls zutreffend.
> alle erklärungen bleiben mangelhaft; so lasse ich es bei dieser bewenden. (SW 148)

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Appendix



Fig. 1 Une semaine de bonté, "Le Lion de Belfort", plate 1

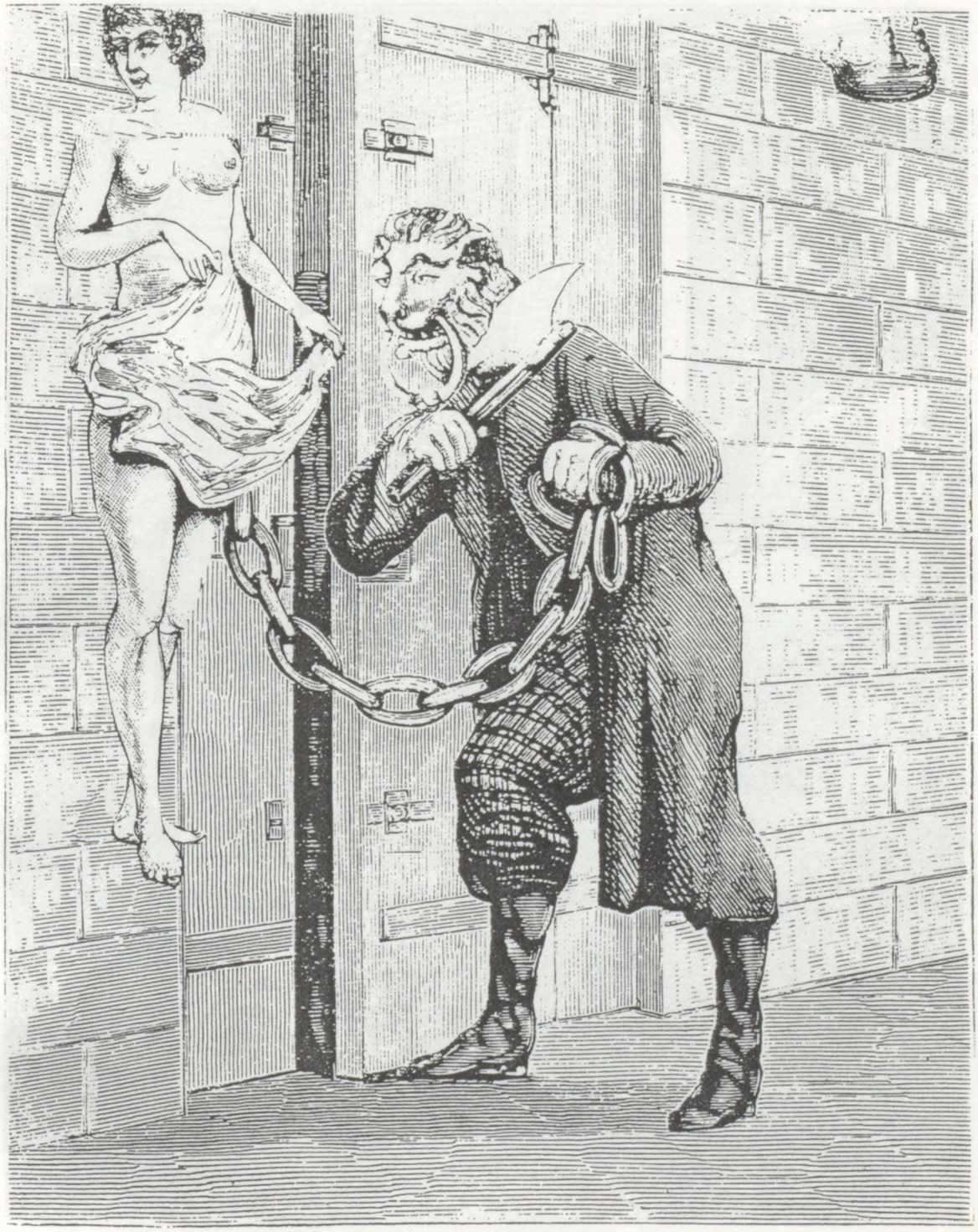


Fig. 2 "Le Lion de Belfort", plate 3



Fig. 3 "Le Lion de Belfort", plate 16



Fig. 4 "Le Lion de Belfort", plate 17



Fig. 5 "Le Lion de Belfort", plate 25



Fig. 6 "Le Lion de Belfort", plate 29