As critics of postmodernism would have it, the phenomenon consists of "random can-
nibalization of all the styles of the past, the
play of random allusion." At the end of Patrick
Süskind's novel Das Parfum, the protagonist
has himself been cannibalized, but not before
his author has demonstrated a "cannibaliza-
tion" of past styles taken to an extreme of
flamboyant virtuosity. The extraordinary allu-
siveness of Das Parfum was recognized by a
number of critics upon its first appearance; less obvious, however, was the fact that its
intertextual references are heavily concen-
trated on two literary periods, Romanticism
and Symbolism/Aestheticism. The novel's
focus on these two movements, generally
seen by literary historians as related, sug-
uggests that more is at stake here than simply
a wild appropriation of "all of the styles
of the past." I shall be arguing here that Das
Parfum is no mere exercise in postmodernist
eclecticism, no mere fashionable patchwork
of random literary allusion.

Furthermore, the story it tells is an ironic
allegory of the very process by means of which
the text has been constructed: the perfumer's
desire to imitate all existing scents parallels
his author's wide-ranging appropriations of
existing texts, and his method of doing so
raises the same questions, both aesthetic and
ethical, as does the method by which Süskind
puts together the novel itself. Indeed, the
final cannibalization scene—with its surprise
twists, multiple ambiguities and self-decon-
structing effects—is the ultimate exemplifi-
cation of the particular kind of postmodern
process that Das Parfum enacts.

Before pursuing this argument, we will
need to gain a foothold in the slippery debate
on postmodernism that has been carried out
mainly in this country but has also, more
recently, spread to the German-speaking do-
main. Many literary historians have been hesi-
tant about adopting the term at all; but
there are certain advantages to a cautious
usage that would define "postmodernism" and
distinguish it, on the one hand, from high mod-
ernism and the historical avant-garde, and
identify it, on the other, as a particular literary
trend within the wider spectrum of contempo-
rary literature as a whole. The standard work
on postmodern architecture defines its prin-
cipal characteristic as a "double coding" that
addresses both a cultural elite and the ordi-
nary person, although one might perhaps
more properly call it a "multiple coding" that
speaks on many different levels and to many
audiences at once. Applied to literary texts,
this means that postmodernism manifests a
particular kind of irony, sending out contradic-
tory ideological messages, at once conserva-
tive and revolutionary. Critics have difficulty
with postmodern texts in part because the
texts appeal to a mass audience whose judg-
ments are generally not taken seriously by
literary pundits, while engaging in a multiple
allusiveness formerly the proper domain of
criticism itself. Parody and pastiche lie at the
heart of literary postmodernism, as a number
of theorists have observed. I would suggest,
however, that it is not just the appeal to a
double audience but the peculiar status of
postmodern texts between parody and pastiche
that makes them so difficult to evaluate. Das
Parfum is a good example of this problem.

Although pastiche, because it is derivative,
is often regarded as an inferior form or at
best as a "neutral" or "blank" version of

The Problem of Pastiche:
Patrick Süskind's Das Parfum

396
parody, it is worth considering whether it might not also, under certain circumstances, function as a "positive strategy with its own comprehensive rationale." To re-evaluate pastiche in this way would be to renegotiate the border between nostalgia and critique that has laid so much postmodern literature open to attack. It would also force a revision of literary values derived from the period around 1800: notions of genius, originality, and universality that continue to dominate our idea of what a literary text is worth.

I will claim here that Patrick Süskind's novel Das Parfum not only manifests these problems, it is itself a contribution to their discussion, a text that itself begins to undertake a rethinking of traditional literary values. It forces us, furthermore, to revise our conceptions of how texts work, both in their relation to other texts and with respect to their own inner mechanisms. Other postmodern novels—notably Eco's The Name of the Rose—perform much the same function, but Das Parfum is subtler in the way it goes about its task and hence more difficult to grasp with our customary critical methodologies.

Let us look first at the problem of double or multiple coding. From the outset, Das Parfum appealed to both the mass market public and the literary elite. It rapidly climbed onto the best seller list, first in the German-speaking countries and then, upon translation, in the English-speaking world and in France. Traveling about, one saw it on all the airport bookstands. Yet students of literature immediately identified it with more esoteric traditions, and connoisseurs of style admired its linguistic tours-de-force and its bold play of fantasy. This is not to say that it did not also have its detractors, who emerged equally rapidly in the reviewing organs as in private conversations. There was something about this novel that made many feel ill at ease.

Certain features of the double coding were immediately evident, as in the case of The Name of the Rose: some readers enjoyed the quasi-detective story plot and the apparently sensationalist series of murders upon which it turns; others appreciated the literary allusiveness, which made them feel cultivated and somehow "in the know." But there was also a range of interest in between these two poles: readers who were fascinated by the detailed evocation of eighteenth-century Paris at the opening of the book; readers who responded to the perfume motif as they had to recent, often titillating social histories emphasizing clothing or other aspects of private life; readers who found a macabre delight in the perspicacies and the violence of the period and the character who represents it; readers who appreciated the language, so redolent of literary tradition; readers who saw in the novel the challenge of an allegorical puzzle; and many more. The possibility of following a single one of these tracks or of weaving several of them together made for a good part of the novel's attraction. It is easy to see that, in this sense, Das Parfum is multiply coded.

One problem that arises with this kind of text, however, is that its greatest strength—its appeal to several different classes of readers—can also work against it. Readers who privileged only one of the novel's various levels were almost bound to be disappointed: if this was a detective story, there was curiously little mystery involved; if this was a historic novel, it fell off markedly once it moved from its Paris setting to the barren mountainside of the hibernation scene. The most disturbing aspect of the book is undoubtedly its appeal to those who failed to perceive its network of literary allusion and who took its apparent high style for the expression of original creativity. Unlike the works of the historic avant-garde, which allow quotations to remain identifiable because they are marked as foreign bodies within an obviously constructed montage, Das Parfum homogenizes the elements from which it has been formed. Those would-be cultivated readers who declared the novel a masterpiece without recognizing its citational structure were surely taken in by Süskind's masterful blending technique. Others, aware of a received poetic language informing the novel's style but still not understanding its complex compositional principles, read the very same features...
of Das Parfum as signs of a derivative, hence second-rate creativity at work. Unlike The Name of the Rose, where references to semiotics and other recent literary theories alerted readers to the existence of other levels of meaning and other potential audiences, Das Parfum bears no such distinct markers of its multiple encoding. I think that this problem is less severe for the novel's intended readership than for those who read it in translation. After all, a number of the literary allusions are to stock texts of the German literary canon, texts that many of its German-speaking readers would have had to memorize during their school years. These allusions certainly did not go unnoticed; indeed, reviews of the novel characterize it by its seemingly derivative or epigonal character. To the extent that postmodernism can be defined as a kind of elaborate game-playing between text and reader, Das Parfum conducts this relationship through its implicit invitation to the reader to track down as many as possible of its multiple allusions.

On the one hand, those readers who recognize allusions to Eichendorff's "Mondnacht," Claudius's "Abendlied," or Goethe's "Willkommen und Abschied"—not to mention the more obvious references to Faust—may feel authorized to regard Siiskind as a legitimate descendant of an important poetic tradition. On the other hand, such allusions, coming thick and fast in many sections of the novel, also raise the question of whether there is anything really original about Das Parfum. The Romantic and Goethean models remain relatively close to the surface of the text, as do the poems of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Rilke as well as other products of the aestheticist movement such as Huysmans's A rebours. Some allusions are less direct; for example, the perfume Grenouille tries to distill from the bodies of young virgins is a grotesquely literal version of Novalis's "Auflosung junger Mdiiden" in Heinrich von Ofterdingen. There are many other references for those who enjoy hunting them: the Grimms' fairy tale of the Frog Prince, the Kaspar Hauser myth, Chamisso's Peter Schlemihl, the Prometheus myth, Shaftesbury's notion of the poet as a "second maker under God," the dream sequence from the conclusion of Hoffmann's Rat Krespel, the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich, Goethe's "Zauberlehrling," and Thomas Mann's Doktor Faustus, to name only a few.

More problematic for the novel's original readership, however, were not the more or less direct citations but the accomplished imitations of familiar literary styles. Süsskind's use of pastiche was in large part responsible for the novel's mixed reception in the German-speaking world. A good deal of Süsskind's language derives directly from earlier models, especially his descriptions of perfumemaking, where Baudelaire and Huysmans figure even in the choice of vocabulary. Is this an extraordinary allusive richness or a shocking literary dependency?

We are familiar with similar problems from the era of high modernism and the historical avant-garde, where montage (in the case of Döblin), pastiche (in the case of Joyce and Proust), and the outright appropriation of other writers' words (in the case of Thomas Mann) have all been the subject of intense critical debate. Informed readers have long since come to terms with these phenomena in modernist writers. In postmodern texts, however, the use of other texts seems to have become particularly problematic. In the case of D. M. Thomas, for example, the charge of plagiarism has been more persistent and harder to put to rest than in the case of Thomas Mann. Although we have come to understand how modernist montage techniques turn what appears to be plagiarism into something that is not plagiarism at all, we continue to feel unsettled by postmodernist appropriations of earlier texts. This may have to do with their peculiar kind of playfulness, which lacks the evident irony of an Alfred Döblin or the high seriousness of a Thomas Mann.

While Süsskind can hardly be accused of plagiarism, there is certainly something disturbing about his reinscriptions of familiar formulas, his evocations of past linguistic and iconographic worlds. In a work much praised
for its imaginative invention, we find ourselves continually confronted with citations, near-citations, and imitations, blended together into a new and wondrous mixture, not unlike the well-rounded perfumes that testify to the innate genius of our protagonist Grenouille. With his amphibian existence on the border between the human and the natural worlds, the stench-laden underclass and the perfumed nobility, tradition and innovation, Grenouille certainly lives up to his name. Not accidentally, the central dream scene that forms the turning point at the end of Grenouille's hibernation in a mountain cave takes place on a foggy moor where earth and water are scarcely to be separated.

Similarly amphibian is the novel's movement from pastiche to parody. Many readers fault Das Parfum for its melodramatic conclusion, and others dislike the book from the hibernation episode on. Whereas the earlier parts of the novel rely largely on subtexts by the French symbolists—poems like Baudelaire's "Le Flacon" or "Parfum exotique"—or German writers from the turn of the century—Rilke's "Der Alchimist" or certain passages from Malte Laurids Brigge come to mind—the Romantic influence becomes more apparent once Grenouille climbs up to his isolated mountaintop during the Seven Years' War. When German-speaking readers hear that the Great Grenouille "segelte ... mit weit ausgespannten Flügeln von der goldenen Wolke herab uiber das nichtliche Land seiner Seele nach Haus in sein Herz" (P163) or that his mind "benebelte sich wunderbar" (P166) or, again, that "angenehme Schauer durchrieselten ihn" (P166), they find themselves in the familiar topography, not of mountain scenery, but of the German poetry anthology. For the non-German reader the visual imagery of this episode doubtless substitutes for many a lost linguistic allusion. Our admiration for Grenouille's talent, craftsmanship, persistence, and ability to rise above his social origins—all attributes that we still admire today—yield at this point to our modern tendency to find the sublime ridiculous. Far from representing a falling-off in imaginative power, however, this second part of the novel must be understood as a parody of the Romantic tradition; the heavy-handed and often seemingly clumsy insertion of quotations from anthology pieces is a deliberate marker of its parodic status.

The conclusion of the novel is even more distinctively parodic than the scene in the mountains, which constitutes its central turning point. Grenouille's charismatic powers over the crowd, the result of his ingenious imitation of the scent of innocence, his quasi-mythological dismemberment and his cannibalization by the besotted mob seem—in their highly conscious fictionality—dramatically different from the historical narrative with which the novel opened. Yet just as we stand ready to accuse the novel of an unresolved rift in its structure, we begin to wonder whether the text might not be parodic through and through. How seriously were we meant to take the pastiche of Grenouille's early attempts at composing perfumes, how seriously indeed the evocation of eighteenth-century France at the beginning of the novel? Is not the opening paragraph the most consummate imitation of historical narrative—the narrative, paradoxically, of a figure whose particular genius forced him to leave "keine Spuren" "in der Geschichte" (P5)? Isn't a genius by definition one who leaves a mark on his/her epoch (think of the "Age of Goethe," for example), and isn't history the story of that which leaves traces? In this sense, Das Parfum leads a strange existence on the border of pastiche and parody, both of them versions of reflection on the past but both also literary rather than historical versions of such reflection.

A distinctive feature of this novel's pastiche and parody is its heavy reliance on Romantic and Symbolic or Aesthetic subtexts. Realist or Naturalist allusions are not lacking, to be sure, especially since Süsskind, in refraining from the use of modernist techniques, appears to adhere to nineteenth-century narrative methods. Nonetheless, Goethe is represented by his more Romantic side—the theories of genius and creativity, for example—and even the brief allusion to Matthias Claudius is not incompatible with the Roman-
tic spirit. Grenouille's hibernation in the mountains during the Seven Years' War is Süsskind's equivalent of Faust's regenerative sleep at the beginning of the second part of Goethe's drama. Thomas Mann is present as a latter-day continuation of Goethe (via the Faust-motif), and even Job's "sore boils," when Grenouille is afflicted with them, have a syphilitic aspect more reminiscent of Mann's Faust adaptation. The allusions to a sequence of poets beginning with Baudelaire and ending with Rilke emphasize the "alchemical" powers of the creative artist and the importance of the finest sense-impressions as elements in the creative process. This sustained evocation of the Romantic and neo-Romantic traditions is not accidental.

Even what at first appear to be evocations of a characteristic eighteenth-century French rationalism are in fact manifestations of the Romantic. Apparent representatives of enlightenment are not untainted by superstition. Pater Terrier, for example, to whom Grenouille's first wet-nurse returns the child in horror, may be determined to comat "die abergläubischen Vorstellungen des einfachen Volkes" (P19) but is himself a proto-Faustian figure not unsusceptible to fears of Satanism: "Er hatte nicht nur Theologie studiert, sondern auch die Philosophen gelesen und beschäftigt sich nebenbei mit Botanik und Alchemie" (P18). This parody of Faust's monologue in his study gives the lie to Pater Terrier's skepticism. Similarly, the Marquis de la Taillade-Espinasse, author of lengthy articles on the "fluidum letale" in the well reputed "Journal des Scavans" (P206), may be the very model of an eighteenth-century scientist, but his theories of earthiness and airiness are manifestly pre-Romantic. Even the descriptions of eighteenth-century Paris at the opening of the novel, admired by so many of its readers, owe more to Baudelaire and Rilke and their descriptions of later phases of that city's existence. Classical antiquity, when it is evoked in Das Parfum, bears less resemblance to the classical models of Goethe's Roman Elegies than to the retellings of ancient myths in Novalis's Heinrich von Ofterdingen. Grenouille's invention of a scent that charms all who smell it recalls the tale of Arion's all-compelling song told by the merchants whom Heinrich meets on his way to Augsburg. The dismemberment of Pentheus, in Euripides an act of revenge for his attempt to discredit Dionysos, is converted in Das Parfum into a quasi-bacchanalian scene in which Grenouille appears—in a thoroughly Romantic manner—to be more sublated than destroyed. The Prometheus myth—in this case, the story of the "große Grenouille" who aspires to wrest olfactory secrets from nature and thus to vie with the divine—is retold in a manner reminiscent of the Sturm und Drang Goethe. The Amor and Psyche motif, which appears on the cover in the form of a section from a picture by the eighteenth-century painter Antoine Watteau, is worked out in the plot of the novel in distinctly Hoffmannesque terms.

Above all, the presentation of the individual human subject in Das Parfum is heavily determined by post-Enlightenment conceptions. The man without a smell is reminiscent of Chamisso's man without a shadow but also of Hofmannsthal's Frau ohne Schatten and even more of Rilke's blind man, who moves through the city of Paris like a crack on a teacup. When Grenouille finally creates the perfume that lets him pass for human, "so hätte man geglaubt, es stehe da ein zweiter Mensch" (P191), we are told that if a normal person had happened to use this perfume, he would have seemed like two people "oder, schlimmer noch, wie ein monströses Doppelwesen, wie eine Gestalt, die man nicht mehr eindeutig fixieren kann, weil sie sich verschwimmend unscharf darstellt wie ein Bild vom Grund eines Sees, auf dem die Wellen zittern" (P191). It is as if the Romantic Doppelgänger motif were seen through an impressionist lens. Grenouille's attempt to distill the essence of human existence in the form of his extract of virgins is successful; but at the same time, it is countermanded by his own existence as a nonentity in every sense of the word. In this fundamental paradox the Romantic notion of essences and of an essential, if crucially split individuality is put into question by
the essence-less protagonist who moves un-
noticeably about the human world. The
Romantic divided self has been supplanted by
an aestheticist disseminated or undefinable
self. To infer from this, however, that post-
modernism "defines the subject in terms that
are rather different . . . from those of liberal
humanist individualism and human essence" would be to obliterate distinctions that this
novel in fact maintains. It is not accidental
that the cannibalistic eating of Grenouille's dis-
membered body is the last stage through
which he passes, a stage that goes decidedly
beyond the conceptions of self he has previ-
ously embodied. From his early definition as
an illegitimate nobody from the eighteenth-
century underclass, he passes through a
phase of Romantic dualism, then a phase
dissolution, and finally he
emerges as a postmodern cannibalized self.
In the contradictory signals it sends its
readers, the novel exhibits marked post-
modernist tendencies. On the one hand, Das
Parfum appropriates a large number of previ-
ous texts that it seemingly holds up for our
admiration as expressions of the quintessen-
tial genius of its protagonist. On the other
hand, the novel also warns of the dangers
attendant upon genius which, by being as-
associated with plagiarized or pastiched lan-
guage, is presented as strangely close to the
second-rate or even the illicit. Furthermore,
since the genius perfumer is at the same time
a murderer, art is represented as a version
of the criminal. This idea is certainly not new, and Süsskind basically continues in Das Parfum
a tradition of art as criminality that rests on
a posited divorce of art and social ethics. Thus
Grenouille has no understanding of abstract
language, especially moral concepts, and he
sleeps through the conflicts over European
politics fought out in the Seven Years' War.
At the same time, he embodies the revolu-
tionary notion that a member of the underclass
can rise in life and blend imperceptibly into
another social stratum (e.g., his acceptance
into society after his air-ventilated transforma-
tion at the hands of the Marquis de la Taillade-
Espinasse). His substitution of the Romantic
for the rationalist world view during and after
his hibernation in the cave parallels the re-
placement of French by English and Prussian
dominion over the European political scene at
the close of the Seven Years' War. In his very
isolation and sequester from social and
political life, he embodies the new principles
that began to take over toward the end of the
eighteenth and in the nineteenth centuries.
In working out this paradox, Süsskind gives a
particularly 1980s twist to the art-life polarity.
Even the avoidance of political involvement is
shown here to be a special, and an especially
dangerous kind of political position. And yet
the familiar artistic gestures of the Romantic
and post-Romantic tradition can be observed
throughout the whole trajectory of Gren-
ouille's apprenticeship and wanderings,
marking the familiar traces of what is com-
monly accepted as the beautiful. The final
scene, in which Grenouille is torn apart and
eaten up by the crowd, enacts the central
paradox of the novel, poised as it is on a brink
between transcendence and critique. In other
words, Süsskind extracts for us a kind of es-
sence of art, while at the same time allowing
it to evaporate into thin air. Literature is simul-
taneously "essentialized" and placed into a
more critical context: that of society for which
it functions as both a synthesis and a threat.
Cannibalism through love — this is the curi-
ous interpretation with which the narrator in-
vests this conclusion (P319). It is a far cry
from Heinrich von Ofterdingen's transforma-
tion into a stone or a resounding tree or even
from Josefine the Singer's disappearance and
sublimation in the memory of her people. Al-
though the last words of the novel have a
reassuring ring (“Sie hatten zum ersten Mal
ein wenig aus Liebe getan” [P319]), they are also
highly unsettling. This final passage moves in
two directions at once, positing caring human
values already put in doubt by the more openly
parodic paragraph that precedes it.
If we compare the uneasy effects of this
conclusion with, on the one hand, Joyce's use
of pastiche in Ulysses and, on the other, Pater's
use of pastiche in Marius the Epicurean, we
can see more readily the particular nature of
Súskind's postmodern deployment of this technique. Whereas Joyce's pastiche is distancing, Pater's aims to reveal similarities; in Joyce a gulf opens between a grand literary past and the more ordinary present, in Pater a transhistorical aestheticism shines through from the past into the narrator's own day; in Joyce pastiche is essentially parodic, in Pater it has a heightening and valorizing effect. Súskind's technique is different from either of these extremes. By evoking canonical literature that sees the poet as a quasi-divine figure and his works as autonomous imaginative constructs, Das Parfum shows how close we still are to the values represented by this canon. But by positioning these reminiscences of a still-revered literary past in such a way that they are robbed of their originality, defiled as it were by the impure mixture into which they are incorporated, the novel puts into question our use of these fragments as humanistic touchstones in the present day. The pastiche technique of Das Parfum is a deliberate strategy that has important ideological implications, especially in the German-speaking countries where the canon it both resurrects and his works as autonomous imaginative constructions, Das Parfum shows how close we still are to the values represented by this canon. But by positioning these reminiscences of a still-revered literary past in such a way that they are robbed of their originality, defiled as it were by the impure mixture into which they are incorporated, the novel puts into question our use of these fragments as humanistic touchstones in the present day. The pastiche technique of Das Parfum is a deliberate strategy that has important ideological implications, especially in the German-speaking countries where the canon it both resurrects and criticizes has still not been subjected to the kind of searching analysis that has been taking place on this side of the Atlantic.

Notes


3 Charles Jencks, The Language of Post-Modern Architecture (London: Academy, 1977). Since much of the debate on postmodern literature originated in the debate on postmodern architecture, Jencks's study has become a staple in the debate on literary postmodernism.


5 Linda Hutcheon, A Poetics of Postmodernism. History, Theory, Fiction (New York, London: Routledge, 1988) 129. Hanns-Josef Ortheil attempts a very different definition of literary postmodernism in his article “Das Lesen—eine Spiel. Postmoderne Literatur? Die Literatur der Zukunft!” Die Zeit 17 April 1987: Feuilleton 59. His conception, according to which postmodern literature is a special kind of game-playing between author and reader in the cybernetic age, is less complex than that of Linda Hutcheon. Andreas Huyssen is more inclusive than either Hutcheon or Ortheil, regarding as postmodernist a number of texts that, in my view, are simply belated examples of modernism (After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986)). Brian McHale separates modernism from postmodernism by a shift from epistemological to ontological interests (Postmodernist Fiction [New York: Methuen, 1987] 10).

6 See especially Hutcheon 192 and passim.

7 Jameson 65. Linda Hutcheon's discussion of pastiche essentially adopts Jameson's definition (A Poetics of Postmodernism 26); in her earlier study, A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms (London, New York: Methuen, 1985), she describes parody, following Genette, as “transformational,” pastiche as “imitative” (38). Margaret Rose, who gives an excellent systematic account of parody in her book Parody/Meta-Fiction. An Analysis of Parody as a Critical Mirror to the Writing and Reception of Fiction (London: Croom Helm, 1979), has unfortunately little to say about pastiche.


9 Hanns-Josef Ortheil accepts The Name of the Rose but rejects Das Parfum as a postmodern novel (59).


11 Another symbolist text, popular during the late nineteenth century but now relatively eclipsed, may also play a role as a subtext here: Georges Rodenbach's Bruges-la-morte (Paisley, Scotland: Wifton, 1892), the story of a man obsessed with a woman who resembles his dead wife and whom he murders with a strand of her hair.

12 The word “Alambic,” referring to the recipient in which perfume is distilled, occurs in Baudelaire's poetry; the word “Alambic,” referring to the recipient in which perfume is distilled, occurs in Baudelaire's poetry; the use of the now outdated term “Sensationen” for sensory impressions can be traced back to Huysmans and to the philosophers and psychologists of his day.


14 See, for example, Rainer Maria Rilke, Sämtliche Werke (Frankfurt a.M.: Insel, 1966), VI: 750-91.

15 The abbreviation “P” refers to Patrick Súskind, Das Parfum. Die Geschichte eines Mörders (Zürich: Diogenes, 1989); arabic numerals refer to page numbers in this edition.
“Andächtig fast” (P218) is the cue word with which Süskind makes the connection (cf. “festlich fast,” Rilke, *Sämtliche Werke* [Frankfurt a.M.: Insel, 1966], I: 591).

Hutcheon 189.

Cf. Hoffmann’s *Des Fräulein von Scuderi* and Thomas Mann’s *Felix Krull*, among other texts that work out this theme.

I use this term from Matthew Arnold deliberately, since it is precisely the kind of tradition his “touchstones” aimed to identify that is invoked and criticized in this kind of postmodern text.


“Es war ihnen, wenngleich im Magen etwas schwer, im Herzen durchaus leicht zumute. . . . Und auf ihren Gesichtern lag ein mädchenhafter, zarter Glanz von Glück” (P319).