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European Literature

MAN'S KNOWLEDGE of nature has made greater advances since the nineteenth century than in all preceding epochs. Indeed, compared with earlier advances, they may be called incommensurable. They have changed the forms of existence and they open new possibilities whose range cannot be estimated. Less well known, because less perceptible, are the advances in historical knowledge. These alter, not the forms of life, but the forms of thought of those who share in them. They lead to a widening and a clarification of consciousness. In time, the operation of this process can be of significance in the solution of humanity's practical problems too. For the greatest enemy of moral and social advance is dullness and narrowness of consciousness, to which antisocial feelings of every kind contribute as powerfully as does indolence of thought, that is, the principle of the least possible expenditure of energy (*vis inertiae*). The advances in our knowledge of nature are verifiable. There are no differences of opinion concerning the periodicity of the chemical elements. The advance of historical knowledge, on the other hand, can be enjoyed only through voluntary participation. It has no useful economic effect, no calculably useful social effect. Hence it encounters indifference or even resistance from the interested egoism embodied in powerful agencies.[1] The protagonists of progress in historical understanding are always isolated individuals, who are led by such historical convulsions as wars and revolutions to put new questions. Thucydides was induced to

[1] It is perhaps not untimely to refer to a warning which dates from 1926. "The expansion of democracy," wrote Max Scheler, "once the ally of free scholarship and philosophy against the supremacy of the ecclesiastically restricted mind, is slowly becoming the greatest danger to intellectual freedom. The type of democracy which condemned Socrates and Anaxagoras in Athens is slowly reappearing in the West and perhaps in North America too. Only the struggling, predominantly liberal democracy of relatively 'small elites'—so the facts already teach us—is an ally of science and philosophy. The democracy now dominant, and finally extended to women and half-children, is not the friend but rather the enemy of reason and science." (Max Scheler, *Die Wissensformen und die Gesellschaft* [1926], 89).

undertake his history because he regarded the Peloponnesian War as the greatest war of all times. Augustine wrote his *City of God* under the impact of Alaric's conquest of Rome. Machiavelli's political and historical writings are his reaction to the French expeditions into Italy. The revolution of 1789 and the Napoleonic wars provoked Hegel's Philosophy of History. Upon the defeat of 1871 followed Taine's revision of French history, upon the establishment of the Hohenzollern empire, Nietzsche's "unseasonable" essay on the "Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life"—a precursor of the modern discussions of "historism." The end of the first World War was responsible for the resonance Spengler's *Decline of the West* found in Germany. Deeper in intent and saturated with the entire yield of German philosophy, theology, and history was Ernst Troeltsch's unfinished work, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme* (1922). Here the evolution of the modern historical consciousness and its present problems are developed in a manner still unsurpassed. The historization of all traditional values had gone further in Germany than in other countries. In Ranke it was connected with the pleasure of aesthetic contemplation (*Mitwissenschaft des Alls*). It is also alive in Burckhardt, but corrected by an awareness of the deep shadows in the picture. The awareness inspired him with prophetic warnings of the abuses of the omnipotent state—warnings which were verified in the twentieth century.

Through publication of sources and the excavations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries an immense amount of material accrued to history. From the caves of Périgord rose the culture of the paleolithic period, from the sands of Egypt the papyri. The Minoan and Hittite past of the Mediterranean basin, the remotest age of Egypt and Mesopotamia, together with exotic cultures such as those of the Mayas or of ancient India, became tangible. European culture stood in contrast to all these as an "intelligible unit" of unique cast, and Troeltsch's discussion of historism became a defining of the essence of "Europeanism." If in many quarters historism was deplored as an enervating relativism, or was skeptically tolerated, Troeltsch gave it the positive sign of a great task whose accomplishment will take generations: "The principle of construction is to go beyond history through history and clear the ground for new creations."

The first World War had made the crisis of European culture obvious. How do cultures, and the historical entities which are their media, arise, grow, and decay? Only a comparative morphology of cultures with exact procedures can hope to answer these questions. It was Arnold J. Toynbee who undertook the task. His historical method can signify, for all the historical sciences, a revision of bases and an expansion of horizons which has its analogy in atomic physics. It differs from all earlier philosophies of history by breadth of view and by an empiricism which is in the best English tradition. It is free from dogmatic hypotheses deduced from a principle. What are the ultimate units of the course of history, upon which the historian must train his vision in order to obtain "intelligible

fields of study"? They are not states, but more comprehensive historical entities, which Toynbee calls "societies" and which we may call cultures. How many of them are there? Twenty-one—neither more nor less. A very small number, then—which, however, makes comparisons possible. Each of these historical entities, through its physical and historical environment and through its inner development, is faced with problems of which it must stand the test. They are challenges, in which it grows or fails. Whether and how it responds to them decides its destiny. In Europe, the old Greek city-states during the period from *ca.* 725 to *ca.* 325 afford examples of how different members of the same historical entity can behave in the face of the same situation. Their common problem was an increasing inadequacy of the food supply as a result of population growth. Certain states—such as Corinth and Chalcis—take the step of overseas colonization. Sparta satisfies her land hunger by conquering the neighboring state of Messene. She is thus forced into a total militarization of her forms of life, the consequence of which is cultural paralysis. Athens specializes her agriculture and her industrial products (pottery) for export and makes new political arrangements to give a share in power to the classes called into being by the new economic system. What challenges had Rome to undergo? The decisive one was the century-long struggle with Carthage. After the First Punic War Carthage conquers Spain, intending to make that country's natural resources compensate for her losses in the war. Rome opposes her here, which leads to the Second Punic War. After a hard-won victory, Rome is obliged not only to take possession of Spain but also to secure land communication thither, which finally results in Caesar's conquest of Gaul. Why do the Romans stop at the Rhine, instead of pressing on to the Vistula or the Dnieper? Because in the Augustan Age their vitality was exhausted by two centuries of wars and revolutions. The economic and social revolutions after the Second Punic War had obliged Rome to import great hordes of slaves from the East. These form an "inner proletariat," bring in Oriental religions, and provide the basis on which Christianity, in the form of a "universal church," will make its way into the organism of the Roman universal state. When after the "interregnum" of the barbarian migrations, the Greco-Roman historical entity, in which the Germanic peoples form an "outer proletariat," is replaced by the new Western historical entity, the latter crystallizes along the line Rome–northern Gaul, which had been drawn by Caesar. But the Germanic "barbarians" fall prey to the church, which had survived the universal-state end phase of antique culture. They thereby forego the possibility of bringing a positive intellectual contribution to the new historical entity. They fail in the situation which had gained the northern emigrants into the Balkan peninsula the victory over the Creto-Mycenaean culture. The "Achaeans" forced their Greek tongue upon the conquered territory, whereas the Germans learned Latin. More precisely: The Franks gave up their language on the soil of Romanized Gaul.

These indications may perhaps give an impression of the fruitfulness of

Toynbee's point of view. They contain some of its basic concepts. We shall say only what is strictly necessary for an understanding of these. According to Toynbee, the life curves of cultures do not follow a fatally predetermined course, as they do according to Spengler. Though their courses are analogous, every culture is unique because it has freedom of choice between different ways of behaving. Individual cultural movements may be independent of one another (for example, the Mayan and Minoan cultures), but they may also be connected genealogically, so that one is the daughter culture of another. Antiquity and the West stand in this relationship, as do the Old Syriac and Arabic cultures and so on. The individual cultural movements take their place in a general movement, which is not to be conceived as progress but as ascent. The cultural entities and their members are seen in the likeness of men climbing a steep cliff—some remain behind, others mount higher and higher. This ascent from the depths of subman and of stationary primitive man is a rhythm in the cosmic pulse beat of life. Within each culture there are guiding minorities who, by attraction and radiation, move the majorities to accompany them. If the creative vitality of these minorities is crippled, they lose their magic power over the uncreative masses. The creative minority then remains only a ruling minority. This condition leads to a *secessio plebis*, that is, to the rise of an inner and outer proletariat and thus to loss of social unity.

These selected and isolated details cannot give even a remote idea of the richness and illuminating power of Toynbee's work—still less of the intellectual strictness of its structure and of the precise controls to which the material presented is subjected. I feel this objection. I can only offer in reply that it is better to give even an inadequate indication of the greatest intellectual accomplishment in the field of history in our day than to pass it over in silence. Such a silence in the face of a scientific discovery represents a concession to scientific intellectual inertia—the evasion, that is, of a "challenge" which breaks unseasonably into the routine of leisurely scholastic occupations. Toynbee's work represents such a challenge to our contemporary historical methods.

But I have had another reason for referring to it: A historical concept of Europe is a presupposition for our investigation. Europe is merely a name, a "geographical term" (as Metternich said of Italy), if it is not a historical entity in our perception. But the old-fashioned history of our textbooks cannot be that. General European history does not exist for it; it sees merely a coexistence of unconnected histories of peoples and states. The history of today's or yesterday's "great powers" is taught in artificial isolation, from the standpoint of national myths and ideologies. Thus Europe is dismembered into geographical fragments. By the current division into Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Modern Period, it is also dismembered into chronological fragments. On pedagogical grounds, this twofold dismemberment is necessary to a certain extent (usually exceeded in practice). But it is equally necessary on pedagogical grounds to offset it by superimposing a general

view upon it. To comprehend this, we need only glance at the curricula of our schools. The historical picture in the schools always faithfully mirrors academic teaching of history. But from 1864 history in Germany was under the influence of Bismarck and the Hohenzollern empire. All the electors of Brandenburg had to be learned by heart. Did the Weimar Republic drop them? I do not know. But on the basis of the Republic's curricula, I do know how medieval history (919–1517) was parceled out to the eleventh grade. First, sixteen hours of Imperial history (four for the Saxons, five for the Salians, seven for the Hohenstaufen). Then four hours for the Crusades, and the same for "inner development and intellectual life of Germany." German history of the later Middle Ages (1254–1517) got eleven hours. For the whole history of the Middle Ages outside of Germany, there remained nine hours: one for France (987–1515); one for England (871–1485); one for Spain (711–1516); two for the Discoveries; four for the Italian Renaissance. In England and France the proportions were doubtless the same. But Germany had gone through a defeat and a revolution. It could have profited by them and reformed the teaching of history. . . . Is that being done today? Europeanization of the historical picture has today become a political necessity, and not only for Germany.

The twentieth century's new knowledge of nature and new knowledge of history do not work against each other, as was the case in the era of the mechanistic view of the universe. The concept of freedom is making its way into natural science, and science is once again open to the questionings of religion (Max Planck). History, for its part, turns its attention to the problem of the rise of culture. It extends its view backwards to the prehistoric cultures. It measures the duration of the history we are able to survey by the age of humanity, and thence derives clues to the number of human cultures yet to be expected. Further, by comparing cultures, it attains to a typology of the myths which historical humanity has engendered, and interprets them as symbols of cosmic events. It opens its eyes to nature and religion.

The convergence of our knowledge of nature and our knowledge of history into a new, "open" picture of the universe is the scientific aspect of our time. At the close of his *Historismus* Troeltsch outlines the task of a concentration, simplification, and deepening of the intellectual and cultural content which the history of the West has given us and which must emerge from the crucible of historism in a new completeness and coherence: "Most effectual would be a great artistic symbol, such as the *Divina Commedia* once was, and later *Faust*. . . ." It is remarkable that in Toynbee too—even though in an entirely different sense—poetic form appears as the extreme concept of historism. His train of thought is as follows: The present state of our knowledge, which takes in barely six millenniums of historical development, is adequately served by a comparative method of investigation which attains to the establishment of laws by the road of induction. But if one imagines the stretch of history to be ten times or a hundred times

as long, the employment of a scientific technique becomes impossible. It must yield to a poetic form of presentation: "It will eventually become patently impossible to employ any technique except that of 'fiction.'"

Our survey of the modern historical method has led us to the concept of poetry in the sense of a narrative produced by the imagination ("fiction"). This is an elastic formula which comprehends the antique epic, the drama, and the novel of ancient and modern times. But Greek mythology falls within it too. For, as Herodotus says, Homer and Hesiod created their gods for the Greeks. The creative imagination which makes myths, stories, poems, is a primary function of mankind. Is it a final fact, which cannot be analyzed further? Or can philosophic thought resolve it and integrate it into our comprehension of the world? Among the numerous autarchic philosophies of contemporary Germany I see none capable of doing so. They are far too occupied with themselves and with the problems of "existence," and hence have little to give to one who thinks historically. The only philosopher who attacked the problem was Henri Bergson (1859–1941). In 1907 (*L'Évolution créatrice*) he had interpreted the cosmic process under the image of an "élan vital." Nature seeks to realize in matter a life which attains to consciousness. By various roads (many of which are blind alleys) life ascends to ever higher forms. In the world of insects it drives on to social forms among the ants and bees. They work perfectly, because they are guided by instinct. But for the same reason they are unchangeable, and no development lies before them. Only in man is consciousness realized. The imaginative power which attests itself in the whole realm of life by the creation of new species has found means only in humanity to continue itself in individuals who are vouchsafed intelligence and with it initiative, self-determination, and freedom. Man creates tools with which to work matter. Hence his intellect is adapted to the world of solid bodies and is most successful in the sphere of mechanics. But just as life is safe under the guidance of instinct, so it is endangered in the sphere of the intellect.[2] If intellect encounters no resistance, it can threaten the existence both of the individual and of society. It bows only to facts, i.e., to perceptions. If "Nature" wished to take precautions against the perils of the intellect, she would have to produce fictitious perceptions and facts. They have the effect of hallucinations, i.e., they appear to the mind to be real beings and can influence conduct. This explains the simultaneous existence of intelligence and superstition. "Only intelligent beings are superstitious." The fiction-making function ("fonction fabulatrice") has become necessary to life. It is nourished by the residuum of instinct which surrounds the intellect like an aura. Instinct cannot directly intervene to protect life. Since the intellect reacts only to perceived images, instinct creates "imaginary" perceptions.[3] They may first appear as the undefined consciousness of an "operative presence" (the *numen* of the

[2] The following after *Les Deux Sources de la morale et de la religion* (1933).

[3] This mechanism appears from time to time today, as Bergson (p. 125) shows by an example.

Romans), then as spirits, and, not until very late, as gods. Mythology is a late product, and the road to polytheism is a cultural advance. The imagination, maker of fiction and myths, has the function of "fabricating" spirits and gods.

We shall not here trace how Bergson's metaphysics of religion culminates in its meeting with mysticism. Let it suffice to point out that Toynbee too (like Planck) confesses himself a Christian. The advance of natural and historical knowledge, like that of philosophy—upon which we have cast an all too hasty glance—also converges upon the affirmation of Christianity.

For our study, Bergson's discovery of the "fabulatory function" is of basic importance. For thereby the much-debated relations between poetry and religion are for the first time cleared up conceptually and integrated into a comprehensive scientific picture of the universe. Whoever rejects Bergson's theory must replace it by a better. It appears to me to require amplification only in one point. Bergson derives intelligence and the fabulatory function biologically. They are apparatuses brought forth by "Life" or "Nature" or the "creative drive" which underlies both. But it is a general law "that mechanisms of human nature which originally served the biological preservation of the species are in the course of evolution employed for extra-biological and superbiological ends as well" (Scheler). Eyes and ears originally served as protection in the struggle for existence. In the visual arts and music they have become organs of nonpurposeful ideal creation. The intelligence of the tool-forging *homo faber* has risen to a cognitive contemplation of the universe. The fabulatory function has risen from producing fictions for biological ends to creating gods and myths, and has finally freed itself entirely from the world of religion to become a free play. It is "the ability to create persons whose stories we tell to ourselves."

It shaped the Gilgamesh epic and the myth of the snake in Paradise, the *Iliad* and the saga of Oedipus, Dante's divine and Balzac's human comedy. It is the root and inexhaustible spring of all great literature. Great in this sense is the poetry which survives through centuries and millenniums. It is such poetry which is the farthest horizon, the background, of the complex of European literature.

Now, turning to this subject, we shall understand Europe not in the geographical but in the historical sense. The "Europeanization of the historical picture" which is to be promoted today must also be applied to literature. If Europe is an entity which participates in two cultures, the Antique-Mediterreanean and the Modern-Western, this is also true of its literature. That literature can be understood as a whole only if its two components are united in one view. But for current literary history modern Europe does not begin until about 1500. This is as intelligent as if one were to promise a description of the Rhine, but only provided the section from Mainz to Cologne. To be sure, there is a "medieval" literary history

too. It begins about 1000—that is, to pursue the metaphor, as far downstream as Strassburg. But where is the period from 400 to 1000? For that one would have to start at Basel. . . . This stretch is passed over in silence —for a very simple reason: the literature of those centuries, with infinitesimal exceptions, is in Latin. Why? Because the Germanic peoples, as we have indicated, allowed themselves to be assimilated by Rome in the form of the Roman Church. And we must go further back. The literature of "modern" Europe is as intermingled with that of the Mediterranean as if the Rhine had received the waters of the Tiber. The last great poet of Rhenish-Franconian descent, Stefan George, felt that he belonged by a secret elective affinity to Roman Germania and the Frankish intermediate kingdom of Lotharingia, from which his ancestors stemmed. In six cryptic gnomic poems on the Rhine he has as in a dream conjured the memory of that kingdom into the future. It will throw off the dominion of East and West, Germany and France:

Ein fürstlich paar geschwister hielt in frone
Bisher des weiten Innenreiches mitte.
Bald wacht aus dem jahrhundertschlaf das dritte
Auch echte Kind und hebt im Rhein die Krone.

(In vassalage a princely pair of brothers
Has held the center of the wide Inner Kingdom.
Soon from centennial sleep shall wake the third
Legitimate Child and raise the Crown in the Rhine.)

He who has ties with the Rhine may let the poet's myth sound within him. Four cities are named: the "First City" (Basel), the "Silver City" (Argentoratum, Strassburg), the "Golden City" (Mainz), and "holy" Cologne. The risen river speaks:

Den eklen schutt von rötel kalk und teer
Spei ich hinaus ins reinigende meer.

(The loathsome rubble of reddle, chalk, and tar
I spew into the purifying sea.)

A reader pointed out to the poet that "reddle, chalk, and tar" corresponded to the national colors of imperial Germany. He smilingly accepted the interpretation. The last gnome of the Rhine runs:

Sprecht von des Festes von des Reiches nähe—
Sprecht erst vom neuen wein in neuen schlauch:
Wenn ganz durch eure seelen dumpf und zähe
Mein feurig blut sich regt, mein römischer hauch.

(Speak of the Festival's nearness, of the Kingdom's—
Of new wine in new skin: but speak it not
Until through all your dull and toughened souls
Shall run my fiery blood, my Roman breath.)

The lines are from *Der siebente Ring* (1907). Beside them I set the testimony of the Rhenish-Franconian Goethe. Sulpiz Boisserée reports, under date of August 11, 1815: "The subject of Goethe's predilection for things Roman came up. He said that he certainly must once have lived under Hadrian. That everything Roman instinctively attracted him. That that great reasonableness, that order in everything, were congenial to him, whereas things Greek were not." I cite these testimonies because they document a tie between Germany, which once formed part of the Roman Empire, and Rome—a tie which is not sentimental reflection, but participation in substance. In such consciousness history enters the present. Here we become aware of Europe.

We spoke of the twofold dismemberment of Europe in our historical curriculum. If we turn to literary history, the question is no longer one of dismemberment but one of a total deficiency. In history courses the schoolboy still hears something of Marathon and Cannae, of Pericles, Caesar, and Augustus, before he is conducted from Charlemagne to the present. But what does he learn of European literature? Let us disregard the schools and ask: Is there a science of European literature, and is it cultivated at the universities? For half a century, at any rate, there has been a *Literaturwissenschaft*.[4] It undertakes to be something other and better than literary history (the relation of *Kunstwissenschaft* to art history is analogous). It is not well disposed to philology. Hence it seeks support in other disciplines: philosophy (Dilthey, Bergson), sociology, psychoanalysis, and, above all, art history (Wölfflin). Philosophizing *Literaturwissenschaft* examines literature for metaphysical and ethical problems (e.g., death and love). It wishes to be *Geistesgeschichte*. The trend which finds its support in art history operates on the extremely questionable principle of "mutual illumination of the arts" and thus begets a dilettante beclouding of facts. It then proceeds to transfer to literature the art-historical system of periodization by successive styles. Thus we get literary Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, etc., down to Im- and Expressionism. Then, by the process of "essence-intuition," each stylistic period is endowed with an "essence" and peopled with a special "man." The "Gothic man" (to whom Huizinga has added a "pre-Gothic" comrade) has become the most popular, but "Baroque man" cannot be far behind him.[5] Concerning the "es-

[4] Officially introduced, as far as I know, by the *Prinzipien der Literaturwissenschaft* of the Germanist Ernst Elster (1897).—The relations between *Literaturwissenschaft* and comparative literature have not been elucidated. A *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte* was founded in 1885 by Max Koch (1855–1931). I mention also H. M. Posnett, *Comparative Literature* (New York, 1886).—W. Wetz, *Shakespeare vom Standpunkt der vergleichenden Literaturgeschichte* (1890). —L. P. Betz, *La Littérature comparée* (1900).—For criticism: Gröber, *Grundriss der romanischen Philologie*, Vol. I (2nd ed., 1904–06), 181.—F. Baldensperger, "Littérature comparée. Le mot et la chose" (*Revue de littérature comparée*, I [1921], 1–29).

[5] René Wellek, "The Concept of Baroque in Literary Scholarship," in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, V (1946), 77 ff.

sence" of Gothic, of Baroque, etc., there are profound views, which to be sure are partly contradictory. Is Shakespeare Renaissance or Baroque? Is Baudelaire Impressionist, George Expressionist? Much intellectual energy is expended upon such problems. In addition to stylistic periods there are Wölfflin's art-historical "basic concepts." Here we find "open" and "closed" form. Is Goethe's *Faust* in the last analysis open, Valéry's closed? An anxious question! Is there even, as Karl Joël, with much acumen and much historical knowledge, attempted to show,[6] a regular succession of "binding" and "loosing" centuries (each equipped with its own "secular spirit")? In the Modern Period the even centuries are "loosing" (the 14th, 16th, 18th; and to all appearances the 20th too), the uneven "binding" (the 13th, 15th, 17th, 19th), and so on *ad infinitum*. Joël was a philosopher. Usually, those who cultivate *Literaturwissenschaft* are Germanists. Now, of all so-called national literatures, German literature is the most unsuitable as the field of departure and field of observation for European literature, as will appear. Is this perhaps a reason for the strong need of outside support exhibited by Germanistic *Literaturwissenschaft*? But it shares with all the modern trends of *Literaturwissenschaft* the characteristic that at best it makes literature begin about 1100—because the Romanesque architectural style flowered then. But art history is as little a superdiscipline as geography or sociology. Troeltsch was already making fun of the "all-knowing art historian." [7] Modern *Literaturwissenschaft*—i.e., that of the last fifty years—is largely a phantom. It is incompetent as a discipline for the investigation of European literature for two reasons: deliberate narrowing of the field of observation and failure to recognize the autonomous structure of literature.

European literature is coextensive in time with European culture, therefore embraces a period of some twenty-six centuries (reckoning from Homer to Goethe). Anyone who knows only six or seven of these from his own observation and has to rely on manuals and reference books for the others is like a traveler who knows Italy only from the Alps to the Arno and gets the rest from Baedeker. Anyone who knows only the Middle Ages and the Modern Period does not even understand these two. For in his small field of observation he encounters phenomena such as "epic," "Classicism," "Baroque" (i.e., Mannerism), and many others, whose history and significance are to be understood only from the earlier periods of European literature. To see European literature as a whole is possible only after one has acquired citizenship in every period from Homer to Goethe. This cannot be got from a textbook, even if such a textbook existed. One acquires the rights of citizenship in the country of European literature only when one has spent many years in each of its provinces and has frequently moved about from one to another. One is a European when one has become a *civis Romanus*. The division of European literature among a number of unconnected philologies almost completely prevents this. Though "classi-

[6] Karl Joël, *Wandlungen der Weltanschauung. Eine Philosophiegeschichte als Geschichtsphilosophie* (1928).

[7] *Der Historismus*, p. 734.—Cf. *infra*, n. 11.

cal" philology goes beyond Augustan literature in research, it seldom does so in teaching. The "modern" philologies are oriented toward the modern "national literatures"—a concept which was first established after the awakening of nationalities under the pressure of the Napoleonic superstate, which is therefore highly time-conditioned and hence still more obstructive of any view of the whole. And yet the work of philologists in the last four or five generations has created such a quantity of aids that it is precisely their wrongly decried specialization which has made it possible for one to find one's way about each of the principal European literatures with some linguistic equipment. Specialization has thus opened the way to a new universalization. But the fact is still unknown, and little use is made of it.

As we have already indicated, no stretch of European literary history is so little known and frequented as the Latin literature of the early and high Middle Ages. And yet the historical view of Europe makes it clear that precisely this stretch occupies a key situation as the connecting link between declining Antiquity and the Western world which was so very slowly taking shape. But it is cultivated—under the name of "medieval Latin philology"—by a very small number of specialists. In Europe there might be a dozen of them. For the rest, the Middle Ages is divided between the Catholic philosophers (i.e., the representatives of the history of dogma in faculties of Catholic theology) and the representatives of medieval history at our universities. Both groups have to deal with manuscript sources and texts—hence with literature. The medieval Latinists, the historians of Scholasticism, and the political historians, however, have little contact with one another. The same is true of the modern philologists. These also work on the Middle Ages, but they usually remain as aloof from medieval Latin philology as they do from general literary, political, and cultural history. Thus the Middle Ages is dismembered into specialties which have no contact. There is no general discipline of the Middle Ages—a further impediment to the study of European literature. Troeltsch could rightly say in 1922: "The culture of the Middle Ages still awaits presentation" (*Der Historismus*, 767). That is still true today. The culture of the Middle Ages cannot yet be presented, because its Latin literature has as yet been incompletely studied. In this sense the Middle Ages is still as dark today as it—wrongly—appeared to the Italian Humanists. For that very reason a historical consideration of European literature must begin at this darkest point. The present study is therefore entitled *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, and we hope that this title will justify its purport with increasing evidence from chapter to chapter.

Are we not, however, setting up an unrealizable program? The assertion will certainly be made by the "guardians of Zion"—so Aby Warburg used to call the proprietors and boundary guards of the specialties. They have inherited rights and interests to preserve—*Los Intereses creados*, as Jacinto Benavente, Nobel prize winner in 1922, entitled one of his comedies. Their objection means little. The problem of the broadening of our humanistic

disciplines is real, pressing, general—and solvable. Toynbee proves it. Bergson discusses it, using metaphysics as his example: "Here is a philosophical problem. We did not choose it, we encountered it. It closes our road. Nothing remains except to remove the obstacle or else to cease philosophizing. The difficulty must be solved, the problem analyzed in its elements. Where will this lead us? No one knows. No one can even say what science is competent for the new problem. It may be a science to which one is wholly a stranger. What am I saying? It will not suffice to become acquainted with it or even to obtain a profound knowledge of it. We shall sometimes be obliged to revise certain procedures, certain habits, certain theories, to conform with precisely the facts and the grounds which raised new questions. Very good; we will study the science that we did not know, we will go into it deeply, if need be we will revise it. And if that takes months or years? Then we will spend whatever time it takes. And if one life is not long enough? Then several lives will accomplish it; no philosopher today is obliged to build up the whole of philosophy. So we shall talk to the philosopher. Such is the method we propose to him. It demands that, however old he may be, he is ready to become a student again." [8] He who would study European literature has an easier task than Bergson's philosopher. He has only to familiarize himself with the methods and subjects of classical, medieval Latin, and modern philology. He will "spend whatever time it takes." And in the process he will learn enough to make him see the modern national literatures with different eyes.

He will learn that European literature is an "intelligible unit," which disappears from view when it is cut into pieces. He will recognize that it has an autonomous structure, which is essentially different from that of the visual arts.[9] Simply because, all else aside, literature is the medium of ideas, art not. But literature also has different forms of movement, of growth, of continuity, from art. It possesses a freedom which is denied to art. For literature, all the past is present, or can become so. Homer is brought to us anew in a new translation, and Rudolf Alexander Schröder's Homer is different from Voss's. I can take up Homer or Plato at any hour, I "have" him then, and have him wholly. He exists in innumerable copies. The Parthenon and St. Peter's exist only once, I can make them visible to me by photographs only partially and shadowily. But their photographs give me no marble, I cannot touch them, cannot walk about in them, as I can in the *Odyssey* or the *Divina Commedia*. In the book, the poem is really present. I do not "have" a Titian either in a photograph or in the most nearly perfect copy, even if the latter were available for a few dollars. With the literature of all times and peoples I can have a direct, intimate, and engrossing vital relationship, with art not. Works of art I have to contemplate in museums. The book is more real by far than the picture. Here we have a truly ontological relationship and real participation in an intellectual entity. But

[8] Henri Bergson, *La Pensée et le mouvant* (1934), 84 f.

[9] Lessing discussed "the boundaries between painting and poetry" as early as 1766.

a book, apart from everything else, is a "text." One understands it or one does not understand it. Perhaps it contains "difficult" passages. One needs a technique to unravel them. Its name is philology. Since *Literaturwissenschaft* has to deal with texts, it is helpless without philology. No intuition and "essence-intuition" can supply the want of it. So-called *Kunstwissenschaft* [10] has an easier time. It works with pictures—and photographic slides. Here there is nothing intelligible. To understand Pindar's poems requires severe mental effort—to understand the Parthenon frieze does not. The same relation obtains between Dante and the cathedrals, and so on. Knowing pictures is easy compared with knowing books. Now, if it is possible to learn the "essence of Gothic" from the cathedrals, one need no longer read Dante. On the contrary! Literary history (and that repellent thing philology!) needs to learn from art history! In all this, one thing is forgotten—namely that, as we pointed out, there are essential differences between the book and the picture. The possibility of having Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe at any time and "wholly" shows that literature has a different mode of existence from art. But from this it follows that literary creation is subject to other laws than artistic creation. The "timeless present" which is an essential characteristic of literature means that the literature of the past can always be active in that of the present. So Homer in Virgil, Virgil in Dante, Plutarch and Seneca in Shakespeare, Shakespeare in Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen*, Euripides in Racine's *Iphigenia* and Goethe's. Or in our day: The *Thousand and One Nights* and Calderón in Hofmannsthal; the *Odyssey* in Joyce; Aeschylus, Petronius, Dante, Tristan Corbière, Spanish mysticism in T. S. Eliot. There is here an inexhaustible wealth of possible interrelations. Furthermore, there is the garden of literary forms—be they the genres (which Croce is forced by his philosophical system to declare unreal!) or metrical and stanzaic forms; be they set formulas or narrative motifs or linguistic devices. It is a boundless realm. Finally, there is the wealth of figures which literature has formed and which can forever pass into new bodies: Achilles, Oedipus, Semiramis, Faust, Don Juan. André Gide's last and ripest work is a *Theseus* (1946).

Just as European literature can only be seen as a whole, so the study of it can only proceed historically. Not in the form of literary history! A narrative and enumerative history never yields anything but a cataloguelike knowledge of facts. The material itself it leaves in whatever form it found it. But historical investigation has to unravel it and penetrate it. It has to develop analytical methods, that is, methods which will "decompose" the material (after the fashion of chemistry with its reagents) and make its structures visible. The necessary point of view can only be gained from a comparative perusal of literatures, that is, can only be discovered empirically. Only a literary discipline which proceeds historically and philologically can do justice to the task.

[10] I distinguish it from the historical discipline of art history.

Such a "science of European literature" has no place in the pigeonholes of our universities and can have none. Academic organization of philological and literary studies corresponds to the intellectual picture in 1850. Seen from 1950, that picture is as obsolete as the railroads of 1850. We have modernized the railroads, but not our system of transmitting tradition. How that would have to be done cannot be discussed here. But one thing may be said: Without a modernized study of European literature there can be no cultivation of the European tradition.

The founding hero (*heros ktistes*) of European literature is Homer. Its last universal author is Goethe. What Goethe means for Germany Hofmannsthal has put in two statements: "Goethe as the basis of an education can replace an entire culture." And: "We have no modern literature. We have Goethe and beginnings." A heavy judgment upon German literature since Goethe's death. But Valéry too says cuttingly: "Le moderne se contente de peu." European literature of the nineteenth and the twentieth century has not yet been sifted, what is dead has not yet been separated from what is alive. It can furnish subjects for dissertations. But the final word upon it belongs not to literary history but to literary criticism. For that in Germany we have Friedrich Schlegel—and beginnings.[11]

[11] The above chapter was published in advance of the book, in 1947, in a journal. Objection was expressed from the art-historical side. Offense was taken at the statement that literature was the medium of ideas, art not. I therefore clarify: Were Plato's writings lost, we could not reconstruct them from Greek plastic art. The Logos can express itself only in words.

2

The Latin Middle Ages

1. *Dante and the Antique Poets* / 2. *Antique and Modern Worlds*
3. *The Middle Ages* / 4. *The Latin Middle Ages*
5. *Romania*

1. *Dante and the Antique Poets*

As Dante, following in Virgil's footsteps, begins his journey through Limbo, there looms out of the darkness a region of light, in which dwell the poets and philosophers of the antique world. Four noble shades advance to meet Virgil, with the greeting:

Onorate l'altissimo poeta;
L'ombra sua torna, ch' era dipartita.

(All honor be unto the highest poet!
His shade returns to us, that was departed.)

Virgil explains the scene to his pupil:

Mira colui con quella spada in mano,
Che vien dinanzi ai tre sì come sire.
Quelli è Omero poeta sovrano;
L'altro è Orazio satiro che viene;
Ovidio è il terzo, e l'ultimo Lucano.

(See him who holds that sword there in his hand,
Walking before the rest, as he were their lord:
Homer is he, sovereign among all poets.
Who comes the next is Horace, satirist;
Ovid the third; and Lucan there the last.)

Then the antique poets turn to the modern poet with gestures of greeting:

E più d' onore ancor assai mi fenno,
Ch' ei sì mi fecer de la loro schiera,
Sì ch' io fui sesto tra cotanto senno.

(And greatly more besides they honored me,
For of their troop they made me, so that I
Became a sixth amid such might of mind.) [1]

[1] *Inferno*, IV, 78 ff.

In the *Purgatorio*, Virgil and Dante are joined by the late Roman poet Statius. Dante's last guide and patron in his journey through the other world is Bernard of Clairvaux. Bernard's prayer to the Virgin Mary brings Dante the vision of God which is the final note of the *Paradiso*. For his introductory chord, however, Dante needed his meeting with the antique poets and his reception into their circle. They must legitimize his poetical mission. The six poets (including Statius in the number) are brought together into an ideal company: a "fair school" (*la bella scuola*) of timeless authority, whose members hold equal rank. Homer is only *primus inter pares*. The six writers represent a selection from the antique Parnassus. Dante's bringing them together to form a "school" epitomizes the medieval idea of Antiquity. Homer, the illustrious progenitor, was hardly more than a great name to the Middle Ages. For medieval Antiquity is Latin Antiquity. But the name had to be named. Without Homer, there would have been no *Aeneid;* without Odysseus' descent into Hades, no Virgilian journey through the other world; without the latter, no *Divina Commedia*. To the whole of late Antiquity, as to the whole of the Middle Ages, Virgil is what he is for Dante: "l'altissimo poeta." Next to him stands Horace, as the representative of Roman satire. This the Middle Ages regarded as wholesome sermonizing on manners and morals, and it found many imitators from the twelfth century onwards. Whatever else it may be, Dante's *Commedia* is also a denunciation of his times. Ovid, however, wore a different face for the Middle Ages than he does for us. In the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, the twelfth century found a cosmogony and cosmology which were in harmony with contemporary Platonism (see *infra*, p. 106). But the *Metamorphoses* were also a repertory of mythology as exciting as a romance. Who was Phaeton? Lycaon? Procne? Arachne? Ovid was the *Who's Who* for a thousand such questions. One had to know the *Metamorphoses;* otherwise one could not understand Latin poetry. Furthermore, all these mythological stories had an allegorical meaning. So Ovid was also a treasury of morality. Dante embellishes episodes of the *Inferno* with transformations intended to outdo Ovid, as he outdoes Lucan's *terribilità*. Lucan was the virtuoso of horror and a turgid pathos, but he was also versed in the underworld and its witchcraft. In addition he was the source book for the Roman Civil War, the panegyrist of the austere Cato of Utica, whom Dante places as guardian at the foot of the Mount of Purgatory. Statius, finally, was the bard of the fratricidal Theban War, and his epic closes with homage to the divine *Aeneid*. The "Tale of Thebes" was a favorite book in the Middle Ages, as popular as the Arthurian romances. It contained dramatic episodes, arresting characters. Oedipus, Amphiaraus, Capaneus, Hypsipyle, the infant Archemorus—the dramatis personae of the *Thebais* are constantly referred to in the *Commedia*.

Dante's meeting with the *bella scuola* seals the reception of the Latin epic into the Christian cosmological poem. This embraces an ideal space, in which a niche is left free for Homer, but in which all the great figures of

the West are likewise assembled: the Emperors (Augustus, Trajan, Justinian); the Church Fathers; the masters of the seven liberal arts; the luminaries of philosophy; the founders of monastic orders; the mystics. But the realm of these founders, organizers, teachers, and saints was to be found only in one historical complex of European culture: in the Latin Middle Ages. There lie the roots of the *Divine Comedy*. The Latin Middle Ages is the crumbling Roman road from the antique to the modern world.

2. *Antique and Modern Worlds*

The antique world—that is, the whole of Antiquity from Homer to the tribal migrations, not what is known as "classical" Antiquity. The latter is a creation of the eighteenth century. It is the product of a theory of art which itself has to be understood historically. Historiography has long since freed itself from the narrowness of the classicistic concept. Literary history, here as elsewhere, is still behindhand. What the later Roman period had preserved of nonclassical Antiquity, the Middle Ages took over and transformed. We have drawings by Villard de Honnecourt after antique bronzes which are preserved in the Louvre today. The drawings show a Gothic feeling for form. One does not realize that they are reproductions until one studies them side by side with photographs of their originals.[2] The artist produces "medieval Antiquity." Which means Antiquity as the Middle Ages saw it. The concept is as valid for literature as it is for the visual arts. Antiquity has a twofold life in the Middle Ages: reception and transformation. This transformation can take very various forms. It can mean impoverishment, degeneration, devitalization, misunderstanding;[3] but it can also mean critical collecting (the encyclopedias of Isidore and Raban Maur), schoolboyish copying, skillful imitation of formal patterns, assimilation of cultural values, enthusiastic empathy. All stages and forms of accomplishment are represented. Toward the end of the twelfth century they culminate in freedom to compete with respected prototypes. Maturity is reached.

Today the relation between the antique and the modern world can no longer be conceived as "survival," "continuation," or "legacy." We adopt Ernst Troeltsch's universal-historical view. According to him,[4] our European world is based "not upon a reception of Antiquity nor upon a severance from it, but upon a thorough and at the same time conscious coalescence with it. The European world is composed of the antique and the modern, of the old world which has passed through all stages from primitivism to cultural overripeness and disintegration, and of the new world which begins with the Romanic-Germanic peoples in the time of Charlemagne and which also passes through its stages." But at the same time "these two

[2] Jean Adhémar, *Influences antiques dans l'art du moyen âge français* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1939).

[3] For misunderstanding as a category of changes in form, see Excursus I, *infra*.

[4] *Der Historismus*, 716 f.

worlds, so widely sundered in their mentality and their historical development, are so intertwined, so coalescent in a conscious historical memory and continuity, that the modern world, despite the fact that it has a spirit which is wholly new and wholly its own, is intimately penetrated and conditioned at every point by antique culture, tradition, legal and political forms, language, philosophy, and art. It is this alone which gives the European world its depth, its fullness, its complexity, and its movement, as well as its bent toward historical thinking and historical self-analysis . . ."

Charlemagne looms from afar as the first representative of the modern world. But his work only crowns a development which begins with the fall of the Frankish monarchy about 650. The Austrasian mayor of the palace, Pepin II, obtained control of the entire empire by the battle of Tertry in 687. This decided the rise of the Pepinids, or Carolingian dynasty. The beginning of the "modern" world is to be set about 675. It is "widely sundered" from the antique world, yet at the same time "coalescent" with it "in a conscious historical memory and continuity." A continuity, then (that is, a homogeneous and living connection), which spans a profound separation. How is such a relationship to be understood? Here Toynbee's comparative historical method can help us. According to Toynbee, the Roman Empire is the universal-state end phase of the Hellenic civilization. This is followed, from 375 to 675, by an "interregnum," then by "the Western civilization." The latter stands to the Hellenic civilization in the relation of "affiliation," is its daughter civilization. In this way the facts established by Troeltsch are defined by a more precise chronology and terminology. The dependent relationship of "affiliation" implies the same thing as Troeltsch's concept of "thorough coalescence" and "continuity." Whether one is to distinguish "renaissances" within this process is a question of expedience. They must be tested individually. What is fundamental is the concept that the substance of antique culture was never destroyed. The fallow period of decline which extended from 425 to 775 affected only the Frankish kingdom and was later made good. A new period of decline begins in the nineteenth century and reaches the dimensions of catastrophe in the twentieth. This is not the place to discuss its significance.

3. *The Middle Ages*

Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Modern Period are names for three epochs of European history—names which are scientifically "preposterous" (Alfred Dove) but indispensable for mutual comprehension on the practical level. The most meaningless of them is the concept of the Middle Ages—a coinage of the Italian Humanists and only comprehensible from their point of view. Concerning the limits of these periods, and the problem of periodization in general, there has been much controversy. The discussion has been fruitful insofar as it has cast a clearer light on certain less well-explored epochs.

For the beginning of the Middle Ages—and, by the same token, for the end of Antiquity—various dates have been proposed, ranging from the third to the seventh century. Michael Rostovtzeff carries his *History of the Ancient World* down to Constantine. Ernst Kornemann divides the Roman Empire into three epochs: Principate (27 B.C.–A.D. 305), period of the Renewal of the Empire by Constantine (306–337), and Dominate (337–641). But this takes us far into Byzantine history. The Western Empire had been shaken to its foundations as early as the fifth century. Though Justinian (527–565) was able to reconquer Africa, Italy, Sicily, and a part of the Spanish seaboard, the price of the accomplishment was not only complete financial exhaustion of the Empire but also neglect of the East, into which Slavs and Bulgars poured. "So the nuclear territories of the Empire were laid waste; while the Byzantine military forces celebrated victory in the distant West." [5] Justinian's work of restoration ended in a collapse. The Western Empire was finally lost, the Eastern Empire entered into serious crises, from which it did not emerge until the time of Heraclius (610–641), whose praises have been sung by Corneille and Calderón. With him begins Byzantine history proper—the history of the Medieval Greek Empire. Externally, Heraclius had to defend the Empire against the Neo-Persians (Sassanidae, 226–641). He achieved brilliant successes, but even in his lifetime the Arab incursions began. A few years after the death of Mohammed (632), the Arabs conquer Persia, Syria, Egypt (636–641), then all of Roman Africa, finally Spain (711). The Arabs are now masters of the Mediterranean. This represents an economic revolution. Maritime commerce, which supplied the West with eastern commodities, decreases steadily from 650 on. But that commerce was the Merovingians' source of wealth. All customs dues flowed into their treasury. The decline in commerce especially affected Neustria, where the commercial cities were situated. The political center of gravity shifts toward Austrasia, and from the king to the great landowning nobility. From this nobility arise the Pippinids, to establish a new political power no longer based on the Mediterranean, where Islam rules. "With the Carolingians, Europe at last sets out upon a new road. Until their time, it has still subsisted upon the life of Antiquity. But Islam has abolished this inherited state of affairs. The Carolingians see themselves facing a new situation, which they did not bring about but found already in existence and which they so employ that a new age now begins. Their role is comprehensible only in the light of the fact that Islam has shifted the center of gravity of the world." Thus Pirenne.[6] When he sees the dividing line between Antiquity and the Middle Ages in the economic and political effect of the Arab incursion, he coincides

[5] Georg Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates* (1940), 44.—Ostrogorsky distinguishes three periods in Byzantine history: (1) 324–610 Early Byzantine; (2) 610–1025 Middle Byzantine; (3) 1025–1453 Late Byzantine (*HZ*, CLXI [1941], 229 ff.).

[6] H. Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne* (1937).—For a criticism of Pirenne's views, see R. S. Lopez in *Speculum* (1943), pp. 14–38, and D. C. Dennett in *Speculum* (1948), pp. 165–190.

with Toynbee's date of 675 as that which marks the division between the two epochs.

Toynbee makes the breaking up of the end phase of Antiquity begin about 375. The year of the death of the Emperor Theodosius (395) has also been put forth, on good grounds, as the dividing year.[7] Under Theodosius, Britain, Gaul, and Spain still formed part of the Empire. Twenty years after his death, Germanic kingdoms had come into existence in all three of these countries. The Empire now comprised a twofold existence—Roman and Germanic. In another respect too, Theodosius' reign forms a conclusion. It consummates Constantine's religious policy by raising Christianity to the position of the state religion (381). Henceforth adherence to paganism is a political offense. In 384 the altar of Victory, the refuge of old Roman tradition, is removed from the Senate. At the same time the assault on the temples begins in the East. Hordes of monks travel through the land, laying waste sanctuaries, destroying works of art. They are followed by troops of vagabonds hungry for booty, eager to plunder villages suspected of impiety.[8] But the same period embraces the work of the greatest of the Western Church Fathers, Augustine (354–430). North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor are bulwarks of the Church. Leo I (d. 461) represents the end of papal history within the antique *orbis Romanus*.

The period from Theodosius to Charlemagne is of the utmost importance to the European tradition. Among its writers are the great personalities whom the American scholar E. K. Rand has called the "founders of the Middle Ages."[9] Not only Jerome and Augustine, but also the first great Christian poet, Prudentius, and the first Christian general historian, Orosius, live on into the fifth century. About 400 Macrobius and Servius lay the foundations for medieval Virgilian exegesis, and Martianus Capella produces a handbook of the seven liberal arts which the Middle Ages accepts as authoritative. The years 450 to 480 see the voluminous work in prose and verse of the Gaul Sidonius, who greatly influenced the Middle Ages. Of the sixth century, W. P. Ker has said: "Almost everything that is common to the Middle Ages, and much that lasts beyond the Renaissance, is to be found in the authors of the sixth century."[10] Boethius belongs to the sixth century (d. 524). Through his translation of some of Aristotle's logical treatises he furnished the West with material for an intellectual training which was a preparation for Scholasticism. His *Consolatio philosophiae*, written in prison, is a book which has refreshed innumerable minds, even down to our own day—the only work of late Roman Antiquity which has been translated into German in the twentieth century. In the sixth century too falls the foundation of Western monasticism by St. Benedict. Then comes the extensive literary activity of Cassiodorus (490–583), whose principal works are links in the medieval chain of tradition. The dividing line between the sixth and seventh centuries was reached or crossed by Venantius Fortunatus, who has been called the last Roman poet; by Pope Gregory the Great, influential through his didactic and ethical writings; by Isidore of Seville, whose encyclopedia served the entire Middle Ages as a basic book. He transmits the sum of late antique knowledge to posterity, as Fortunatus transmits models for courtly epideictic and panegyrical poetry and for the hagiographic epic. Contemporary with these three is Gregory of Tours (d. 594), the historian of the Franks. In the seventh century the intellectual life of the Continent declines. But in Ireland, which was never a part of the Empire, there arises an original monastic culture, which under Columban (d. 615) reaches out to the mainland. Bobbio and St. Gall are Irish foundations. An emissary of Gregory the Great, Augustine, lands in Kent in 597 and begins the conversion of England. From the Synod of Whitby (664) Roman Christianity wins the day over Celtic Christianity; and, in Aldhelm (d. 709) and Bede (d. 735), develops to a religious and intellectual flowering which bestows apostles (Boniface, d. 754) and a reform in education (Alcuin, d. 804) upon the mainland.

[7] H. St. L. B. Moss, *The Birth of the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1935).

[8] Otto Seeck, *Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, V, 220.—Oration of Libanius (314–*ca.* 393) *pro templis* (ed. Förster, III, *or.* 30; translated by R. van Looy in *Byzantion*, VIII [1933], 7 ff.).

[9] E. K. Rand, *Founders of the Middle Ages* (1928).

[10] Ker, *The Dark Ages* (1904), 101 f.—The sixth century is the subject of Eleanor Shipley Duckett's useful book, *The Gateway to the Middle Ages* (New York, 1938).

We have now named the most important men of the "Dark Ages" (they will frequently reappear in the following chapters) and, with the age of Charlemagne, have entered better-known historical territory. If we now return to the problem of delimiting historical periods, the first question that arises is: When did the Middle Ages end? When did the Modern Period actually begin? Answers differ, according to whether they are based upon power history or intellectual history. From 1492 onwards the modern national states appear in Europe as new historical entities. Italy sets the beginning of the Modern Period at the Renaissance, Germany at the Reformation. Both countries achieved national unification only in the nineteenth century. But to assume that a period begins shortly before or shortly after 1500 depends upon also admitting, at least tacitly, that the Modern Period, up to 1914, was a realization of progress—in the direction of enlightenment and democracy (England and France) and in the direction of the national state (Germany and Italy). This belief in progress, and the naive Europeanism which is concomitant with it, was refuted by the world wars of the twentieth century. But the concept "Modern Period" has become obsolete for another reason too. The decisive change that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have brought about in the world was accomplished through industry and technique—both of which were at first hailed as "progress" but are now manifestly powers of destruction as well. Historians in times to come will presumably set our age down as the "Period of Technique." Its beginnings can be traced as far back as the eighteenth century. There, consequently, a period must be begun. This conclusion was

first reached by the English historian G. M. Trevelyan. He sets forth [11] that the medieval period does not end until the eighteenth century; it was supplanted by the "Industrial Revolution," which changed human life more than did the Renaissance and the Reformation. We shall be able to show that a break with the more than millennial European literary tradition also makes its appearance in England about 1750. But does it make sense to call the period from 400 to 1750 the "Middle Ages"? Obviously not. However, this is not the place to draw terminological conclusions from the fact. If human history continues for a few more millenniums or tens of millenniums, historians will find themselves under the necessity of designating its epochs by numerals, as the archeologists now do for ancient Crete—Minoan I, II, III, each with three subdivisions. Toynbee has already drawn this conclusion. He distinguishes four epochs in the course of Western culture: 1. *ca.* 675–1075; 2. *ca.* 1075–1475; 3. *ca.* 1475–1875; 4. *ca.* 1875–x (A *Study of History*, I, 171).

4. *The Latin Middle Ages*

The irruptions of the Germanic peoples [12] and the Arabs into the world of late Antiquity are parallel processes—with a basic difference: the Germanic peoples assimilate, the Arabs do not. The Arab incursion had a far greater impetus than the Germanic. It is comparable only to the forward thrust of the Huns under Attila and of the Mongols under Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. But their period of dominion was as brief as Islam's was lasting. "Compared with that incursion, what are the attacks of the Germanic peoples, so long resisted and so lacking in force that for centuries they succeeded in entering only the outermost zone of Romania! . . . While the Germanic peoples had nothing to oppose to the Christianity of the Roman Empire, the Arabs burned with the fire of a new faith. That, and that alone, made them unassimilable.[13] For, in other respects, they had no more prejudices against the culture of the peoples they subdued than had the Germanic peoples. On the contrary, they adopted it with astonishing rapidity. For science they go to school to the Greeks, for art to the Greeks and the Persians. They are not even fanatical, at least not at first, and they do not seek to convert their subjects. But they seek to force them into submission to the one God Allah, to his prophet Mohammed, and, since Mohammed was an Arab, to Arabia. Their world religion is at the same time a national faith. They are servants of God. . . . The Germanic invader, entering the Roman Empire, was romanized; the Roman, on the other hand, became an Arab the moment the Arab conquest reached him." [14]

[11] In his *English Social History* (1944), 96.

[12] See Pierre Courcelle, *Histoire littéraire des grandes invasions germaniques* (1948).

[13] It is wrong, then, to reproach Pirenne with basing his views essentially upon economic and administrative history.

[14] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, 143–46.

The Germanic peoples not only brought no new ideas with them, they also, with the exception of the Anglo-Saxons, allowed the Latin language to remain as the only means of communication wherever they settled. Here, as in all other spheres, they assimiliated . . . As soon as their kings had gained a firm footing, they surrounded themselves with rhetoricians, jurists, and poets." [15] They have their laws, their chancellery records and documents, and their letters composed in Latin. The tribal migrations did not change the essential characteristics of intellectual life in the western Mediterranean area.[16] Until the Anglo-Saxon influence became effective in the eighth century no new traits appear. The Germanic kingdoms also continue the previous state of affairs in that their rulers have only laymen as ministers and officials. This indicates the survival into the eighth century of a class of educated laymen. The Latin of daily life is corrupt, but it is Latin. "No source shows us—as is the case in the ninth century—that the people in church no longer understand the priest. The language lives on, and through it the unity of Romania is preserved into the eighth century."

The closing of the western Mediterranean by Islam threw Carolingian culture back to an agricultural level. The ability to read and write disappeared among laymen. The Carolingians can now find educated men only among the clergy, they need the collaboration of the Church. "A new characteristic of the Middle Ages appears: a priestly caste, which imposed its influence on the state." Latin now becomes a learned language, and remains so throughout the Middle Ages. The "Carolingian Renaissance" is at once a resumption of antique tradition and a break with the wreck of Roman culture. The new culture becomes Roman-Germanic, "though, to be sure, it is borne upon the shoulders of the Church." According to the current view, the Germanic contribution consists above all in feudalism—that is, in the legal and political structure of the medieval world.[17] This was the inevitable result of the centrifugal trend inherent in the system of landholding and barter. To preserve the royal or imperial power, in the face of these trends, as an "administrative state" (Alfred Weber), and to integrate the feudal system with the latter, cost struggles which every page of medieval history recounts. The stamp of feudalism was set upon all institutions and all human relations. As a further Germanic contribution the northern cities are usually cited. But let us bear in mind that "Germanic" in this sense is a difficult and not at all homogeneous concept. Charlemagne's realm included and mingled Celts, Romans, Franks, and Saxons. The strongest Germanic element is represented by the Vikings who settled in France and were civilized during the tenth century. It was their absorption which finally completed the formation of the French people. As early as the eleventh century they reach out for England and Sicily. They carry French culture over the sea. Germany was not touched by this influx. Germanic assimilation of the language and church of Rome made Antiq-

[15] *Ibid.*, 112.

[16] *Ibid.*, 116.

[17] For a contrary view, cf. J. Calmette, *Le Monde féodal* (1934), 197.

uity for the Middle Ages "an authoritative traditional stock by which it was possible to orient oneself" (A. Weber).

The flowering of the vernacular literatures from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries onward in no sense signifies a defeat or retreat of Latin literature. Indeed, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are a culminating point of Latin poetry and learning. At that period the Latin language and Latin literature extend "from Central and Southern Europe and the North on into Iceland, Scandinavia, Finland, and, southwestward, into Palestine." [18] The common man knows as well as the educated man that there are two languages: the language of the people and the language of the learned (*clerici, litterati*). The learned language, Latin, is also called *grammatica*, and to Dante—as to the Roman Varro before him—it is an art language, devised by sages and unalterable. Vernacular compositions are even translated into Latin.[19] For centuries longer, Latin remained alive as the language of education, of science, of government, of law, of diplomacy. In France it was not abolished as the language of law until 1539, at the instigation of Francis I. But as a literary language too, Latin long survived the end of the Middle Ages. Jacob Burckhardt, in his *Kultur der Renaissance*, devotes several chapters to the general latinization of culture. Among them is one on the Latin poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in which he shows "how close it was to decisive victory." In France, England, Holland, and Germany it also had brilliant representatives in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1817 Goethe, in *Kunst und Altertum*, wrote: "It would be of great advantage to a more liberal view of the world, which the German is on the way to losing, if a young and intelligent scholar should undertake to evaluate the genuinely poetical gains which German poets writing in Latin for the last three centuries have to show . . . At the same time he would note how other cultured nations too, in the period when Latin was the universal language, composed in it and were able to understand one another in a manner now lost to us." These humanistic compositions are rightly distinguished from Middle Latin as "Neo-

[18] P. Lehmann in *Corona quernea*, 307.

[19] The Italian jurist Guido delle Colonne translates a French Troy romance for those "who read Latin" (*qui grammaticam legunt*); Griffin's edition of Guido's *Historia destructionis Troiae* (1936), 4.—Other translations of vernacular works into Latin: Wolfram's *Willehalm* (fragment of a metrical translation; Lachmann, pp. cliii f.); *Herzog Ernst* (two versions; see Paul Lehmann, *Gesta ducis Ernesti* [1927]); two Latin adaptations of Hartmann's *Gregor* (Ehrismann, *LG*, II, 2, 1, 187). Conrad of Würzburg's *Goldene Schmiede* was rehandled in Latin by Franco of Meschede *ca.* 1330 (*Aurea fabrica*). The *Carmen de prodicione Guenonis* (13th cent.) is a condensed version of the *Chanson de Roland* (*ZRPh* [1942], 492–509); the *Historia septem sapientum* (*ca.* 1330) goes back to a prose redaction of the *Roman des sept sages*. Of Benedeit's *Voyage of St. Brendan*, we have two Latin versions, one in prose, the other in rhymed stanzas. Nicole Bozon's *Contes moralisés* (14th cent.) were also translated into Latin. So, even toward the middle of the sixteenth century, were Jorge Manrique's (d. 1479) celebrated stanzas on the death of his father.—Goethe enjoyed reading *Hermann und Dorothea* in Latin (to Eckermann, Jan. 18, 1825).

Latin." [20] But for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such a separation cannot yet be made. Petrarch and Boccaccio are still affected by the heritage of the Latin Middle Ages. As late as 1551 an Italian Humanist feels himself obliged to be on his guard against the "bad poets" of the twelfth century.[21] So they were still being read! This is to be explained by the pedagogical practice of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—and by the invention of printing. In those centuries the student had set before him the so-called *Auctores octo*,[22] the cloudy lees of the medieval curriculum of study and reading. But the great Latin writers of the twelfth century too still found eager readers even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as the new editions show.[23] Beside, within, and beneath the great movements of the dawning Modern Period—Humanism, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation—the influence of medieval Latin literature persisted, especially in the country which was hardly touched by the Reformation and not essentially touched by Humanism and the Renaissance: in Spain. Hofmannsthal's characterization of Baroque as the rejuvenated form "of that older world which we call the Middle Ages," is especially applicable to Spanish literature in its period of florescence.

We have rapidly traversed a long period of time. Freedom to shift from country to country and period to period is necessary to our enterprise. Strict chronology is our prop, not our guide.

Let us return to the early Middle Ages. It was through Charlemagne that the historical entity which I call "the Latin Middle Ages" was first fully constituted. This concept is not usual in historiography. For our purposes, however, it is indispensable. I use the term to designate the share of Rome, of the Roman idea of the state, of the Roman church, and of Roman culture, in the physiognomy of the Middle Ages in general—a far more inclusive phenomenon, then, than the mere survival of the Latin language and literature. In the course of many centuries Rome had learned to conceive of her political existence as a universal mission. Virgil already expresses the

[20] Georg Ellinger, *Geschichte der neulateinischen Literatur Deutschlands im 16. Jahrhundert* (1929–33). Vol. I treats of "Italy and German Humanism in the Neo-Latin Lyric."—Anthologies appeared early, for example the *Deliciae poetarum Italorum* (Frankfort, 1608, 2 vols.), which Burckhardt frequently cites. It was followed by *Deliciae poetarum Gallorum* (*ibid.*, 1609, 3 vols.), *Germanorum* (*ibid.*, 1612, 6 vols.), and *Belgicorum* (*ibid.*, 1614, 4 vols.).—On Neo-Latin artistic prose, see O. Kluge in *Glotta* (1935), 18 ff.

[21] Cinthius Gregorius Gyraldus (= G. B. Giraldi Cinthio), *De poetis nostrorum temporum*, ed. K. Wotke (1894), 47.

[22] For its dissemination in print before 1500, see the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* (1925 ff.). The *Auctores octo* appeared in twenty-five editions between 1490 and 1500. Of these, none is German.—Ridicule of this and similar schoolbooks in Rabelais, *Gargantua*, ch. 14.

[23] The proportion of late Antique and medieval Latin literature among printed books up to 1600 is surprisingly large. Cf. Jean Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods* (Bollingen Series XXXVIII; New York, 1953), p. 225.—See also P. Goldschmidt, *Medieval Texts and Their First Appearance in Print* (London, 1943).

idea in a famous passage of the *Aeneid*. From the time of Ovid (*Ars. am.*, I, 174) the equation *orbis* (the world) and *urbs* (Rome) develops and spreads; in the time of Constantine it becomes an inscription on coins (that is, official propaganda);[24] it lives to this day in the formula of the Papal Curia, "urbi et orbi." Through the elevation of Christianity to the position of the state religion, Rome's universalism acquired a twofold aspect. To the universal claim of the state was added that of the church. The conviction of the Middle Ages that it was the continuer of Rome had yet another source—in Augustine's philosophy of history. Here three ideas are fused. The course of human history is harmonized with that of the six days of creation and that of the six periods of human life (*PL*, XXXIV, 190 ff.; XXXVII, 1182; XL, 43 ff.). To this is added a division according to the four world empires—derived from the allegorical interpretation of the prophecies of the Book of Daniel (2:31 ff. and 7:3 ff.;[25] *De civitate Dei*, XX.23 and XVIII.2). The last of these empires is the Roman. It corresponds to the period of "old age" and will continue until the end of temporal existence, which is replaced by the heavenly sabbath. That the end of the world was near at hand was assured by the words of the Apostle "nos, in quos finis saeculorum devenit" (I Cor. 10:11[26]). The early Christian expectation of the last days was thus incorporated into medieval thinking. Medieval authors quote the phrase (without mentioning its source, as is the case with almost all medieval citations), or refer to it, times without number. These references, however, are often not recognized by modern historians of culture; instead, they are understood as a self-expression of the Middle Ages. If, in a seventh-century chronicle, we find the statement, "The world is in gray old age,"[27] we must not make the psychological inference that the period "has a feeling of advancing age" but see a reference to Augustine's parallel between the (Roman) end phase of world history and human old age. Dante, in his vision of Paradise (*Par.*, XXX, 131), learns that but few places in the heavenly rose are still unoccupied. He too lives in expectation of the last days (cf. also *Conv.*, II, 14, 13).

The Bible furnished medieval historical thought with yet another theological substantiation for the replacement of one empire by another: "Regnum a gente in gentem transfertur propter injustitias et injurias et contumelias et diversos dolos" (Ecclesiasticus 10:8). "Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches got by deceit, the kingdom is transferred from one people to another." The word *transfertur* ("is transferred") gives rise to the concept of *translatio* (transference) which is basic for medieval historical theory. The renewal of the Empire by Charlemagne could be regarded as a transferal of the Roman *imperium* to another people. This is implied in the formula *translatio imperii*, with which the *translatio studii*[28] (transferal of learning from Athens or Rome to Paris) was later co-ordinated. The medieval Empire took over from Rome the idea of world empire; thus it had a universal, not a national, character. No less universal is the claim of the Roman church. *Sacerdotium* and *imperium* are the supreme earthly administrative offices. The co-operation of the two powers remains the normal state of things into the eleventh century. It remains the ideal even in the fierce conflicts of the following period. Even at the beginning of the fourteenth century it is still the center around which Dante's thought revolves. The idea of *translatio* permeates the propaganda of Barbarossa,[29] who consciously went back to Charlemagne. From the time of Charlemagne and for centuries thereafter German history is bound up with the idea of the renewal of Rome.[30] But Germany's political and dynastic poetry too during the Hohenstaufen period is for the most part in Latin. The most brilliant stanzas on Barbarossa are written not in German but in Latin—the work of the "Archpoet" of Cologne. The acquisition of the Sicilian crown brought the Hohenstaufen court into even closer relation to Latin poetry. The works of Godfrey of Viterbo are dedicated to Henry VI. It was in Frederick II's Sicilian kingdom that the first school of Italian poets arose; but at the same time the Emperor delighted in the Latin comedies that his jurists composed, and received Latin panegyrical poems from Englishmen.[31]

Meanwhile, let us not forget that the "Latin Middle Ages" is nowise limited to the idea of Rome in the sense of a glorification of Rome or of an effort to renew it. The concept of *translatio*, indeed, implies that the transference of dominion from one empire to another is the result of a sinful misuse of that dominion. The Christian Rome of the fourth century had already seen the development of the concept of a "penitent Rome," which, "like a guilt-laden man, after remorse for the outpoured blood of the Re-

[24] Cf. J. Vogt, *Orbis Romanus* (1929), 17.

[25] First in the Greek commentary on Daniel composed *ca.* 204 by Bishop Hippolytus of Rome; Jerome adopted it in his commentary on Daniel and gave it general currency.

[26] The wording is Augustine's (*PL*, XL, 43). The Vulgate has: ". . . ad correptionem nostram, in quos fines saeculorum devenerunt."

[27] Fredegar (ed. Krusch) in *MGH, Scriptores rer. Merov.*, II, 123. Fredegar's complaint "ne quisquam potest huius tempore nec presumit oratoribus precedentes esse consimilis" (*ibid.*) is to be judged in the same way as the corresponding passage in Gregory of Tours (*infra*, p. 149).

[28] The "model concept" was furnished by Horace (*Epi.*, II, 1, 156): "Graecia . . . artes / Intulit agresti Latio."—I find the concept of the *translatio studii* for the first time in Heiric's epistle to Charles the Bald (*Poetae*, III, 429, 23).—Cf. E. Gilson, *Les Idées et les lettres*, 183 ff.

[29] Thus Otto of Freising. In the contemporary historical epic *Ligurinus*, by an unknown writer, which appeared 1186–87, we are told that Charles liberated the empire and then transferred it to himself. The Rhine now rules the Tiber (I, 249 ff.; III, 543 ff. and 565 ff.).

[30] Very different ideals meet in this concept. Cf. P. E. Schramm, *Kaiser, Rom und Renovatio* (1929).—E. Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich II., Ergänzungsband* (1931), 176.—For the differing aspects of the Carolingian and Ottonian idea of empire, cf. Carl Erdmann in *Dt. Arch.*, VI (1943), 412 ff.—Fedor Schneider's fine book *Rom und Romgedanke im Mittelalter* (1926) undertakes to investigate "the intellectual foundations of the Renaissance."

[31] Ernst Kantorowicz, *op. cit.*, 132. Gives detailed references for Latin literature at the Emperor's court.

deemer, after doing penance and professing Christ, can be allowed to return to the fold of salvation." [32] Jerome, Ambrose, and Prudentius proclaim this idea. Then Augustine voices a yet more startling reversal. The widely celebrated Roman virtues are, from the Christian point of view, faults. The Christian's gaze must turn from the earthly Rome, whose history partakes of the *civitas terrena*, the Kingdom of Evil, to the *civitas Dei*, the superterrestrial Kingdom of God. Dante tacitly combated this idea of Augustine's. He connects the Rome of Virgil and Augustus with the Rome of Peter and his successors. German *Kaisertum* and Roman *imperium*, heathen and Christian, Augustinian and Dantean historical thought—these are but a few of the tensions contained in the idea of Rome. But they all originated and ran their course in the language of Rome, which was also the language of the Bible, of the Fathers, of the church, of the canonized Roman *auctores*, and, finally, of medieval learning. All these are part of the image of the "Latin Middle Ages," and they give it its exuberant fullness.

5. *Romania*

In contemporary scholarly usage "Romania" is taken to mean the sum total of the countries in which Romance languages were spoken. These languages developed on the soil of the Roman Empire—from the Black Sea to the Atlantic. If we begin in the East, they succeed one another in the following order: Romanian, Italian, French, Provençal, Catalan, Spanish, Portuguese. That there was a kinship between the languages of the Iberian Peninsula, France, and Italy was already known to the Middle Ages. Dante's treatise *De vulgari eloquentia* is the classic proof of the fact. The scholars of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries (Pasquier, Voltaire, Marmontel) conceived Provençal—"le langage roman ou roumain corrompu" —to be the mother language of the others, and also referred to it as *roman rustique*, which goes back to the expression *lingua romana rustica* which will be discussed below. This view was adopted by François Raynouard (1761–1836). He was from Provence, and he taught that Provençal—which he called "langue romane"—had been dominant throughout the whole of France from the sixth to the ninth century, and that all the other Romance languages had developed from it. His contemporary, the French archeologist Arcisse de Caumont, transferred this idea, and with it the word *roman* (Romance, Romanesque), to the artistic style which was supposed to have been dominant from the end of Antiquity to the twelfth century. Raynouard's researches marked a considerable advance in the study of troubadour poetry. But his philological thesis was untenable. The founder of Romance philology, Friedrich Diez (1794–1876), rejected Raynouard's idea of the primacy of Provençal and taught that all the Romance languages were independent developments of Latin.

The words "Romance," "Romania," have, however, a much older and to-

[32] F. Klingner, *Römische Geisteswelt* (1943), 449.

day half-forgotten history, with which we must begin in order to obtain correct perspective. *Romania* is a derivative of *romanus*, as the latter is of *Roma*; as *latinus* ("Latin") is of *Latium*. The heritage of Rome was shared between the words *latinus* and *romanus*. Among the languages of Latium, the "Latin" dialects, the primacy necessarily went to that which was spoken in Rome. In the Roman Empire the designation "Romans," *Romani*, was long reserved only to the ruling upper stratum. The conquered peoples retained their own national names (Gauls, Iberians, Greeks, etc.). It was not until 212 that Roman citizenship was bestowed on all free inhabitants of the Empire by an edict of Caracalla's. Thenceforth all citizens of the Empire could be called *Romani*. From this extension of the Roman polity it was only a step to the coining of a new designation for the whole immense territory inhabited by "Romans." The need for such a new, brief, and expressive word for *Imperium Romanum* or *orbis Romanus* must have become even more pressing since barbarian peoples had settled within the boundaries of the Empire. In this time of crisis, the name *Romania* appears in Latin and Greek texts, for the first time under Constantine.[33] The word was used down to Merovingian times, and even later. In a poem in praise of King Charibert, Fortunatus says (ed. Leo, p. 131, 7):

Hinc cui Barbaries, illinc Romania plaudit:
Diversis linguis laus sonat una viri.[34]

In the Ottonian period the meaning of Romania changes. It now means the Roman portion of the empire—Italy. Finally it is restricted to the Italian province of Romagna, that is, the old Exarchate of Ravenna.

Romania in its original, late-antique sense is replaced after the seventh and eighth centuries by new historical entities; but the allied words *romanus* and *romanicus* remain alive. When the Latin of everyday intercourse (Popular Latin, Vulgar Latin) had so far diverged from literary Latin that it was necessary to find a name for the former, the old polarity Roma-Latium reappears in a new form. A distinction is drawn between *lingua latina* and *lingua romana* (also with the addition *rustica*). To these, a third term is added: *lingua barbara*, i.e., German. It is characteristic that Isidore, writing in fully Romanized Spain *ca.* 600, is not yet aware of this coexistence of three current languages.

"Romance" is the name that the early Middle Ages itself gave to the new Latin vernaculars, precisely in conscious contrast to the language of the learned, Latin. The words derived from *romanicus* and the adverb *romanice* (in French, Provençal, Spanish, Italian, Rhaeto-Romanic) are never used as national names (there were other words for the purpose), but as the

[33] Cf. Gaston Paris in *Romania*, 1 (1872), 1 ff.—More recent literature in Pirenne, *op cit.*, 289, n. 1.—Between 330 and 432 the name *Romania* appears in nine Latin texts (Zeiller in *Revue des études latines* [1929], 196). But Athanasius too (*Historia Arianorum*) designates Rome as μητρόπολις τῆς 'ρωμαίας.

[34] "To the man whom both Barbariandom and Romania celebrate, there rises a single voice of praise in different tongues."

names of those languages—in the same sense, then, as the Italian *volgare*. The Old French *romanz*, the Spanish *romance*, the Italian *romanzo* are such derivatives. They were coined by the Latin-educated class and signify *all* Romance languages. These were regarded as a unity in contrast to Latin. *Enromancier, romançar, romanzare* mean: to translate or compose books in the vernacular. Such books could themselves then be called *romanz, romant, roman, romance, romanzo*—all derivatives from *romanice*. In Old French, *romant, roman* means the "courtly romance in verse," literally "popular book." In a retranslation into Latin, such a book could be called *romanticus* (supply *liber*).[85] The words *romance* and *romantic*[86] are therefore closely connected. In English and German eighteenth-century usage, "romantic" still means something "that could happen in a romance."[87] The Italian word corresponding to the Old French *roman* is *romanzo* ("the romance"). In this sense the word is already used by Dante.

Thus, in French and Italian, *romanice* gives the name of a literary genre. A similar development occurs in Spain. There too *romance* first means "vernacular," then also a composition in the same, but at first without any limitation to a single genre. The phrase *romançar libros* = "translate" is found (Garcilaso, Juan de Valdés), but also such formulas as "los romancistas o vulgares" (Marqués de Santillana). Then, toward the beginning of the fifteenth century, *romance* appears as the designation for the poetical genre which still bears that name today, and which, since the sixteenth century, has been collected in *romanceros*. The Spanish romance or novel is named from the Italian loan-word *novella* (as in English).

In the Middle Ages Romania has a community of culture which extends across language boundaries. Numerous Italians write poetry in Provençal (as, on the other hand, in the *Commedia* Dante has a great Provençal poet speak his mother tongue). Dante's master, Brunetto Latini, writes his great work in French. A poem by the troubadour Raimbaut of Vaqueiras (*ca.* 1200) is significant in this connection: its five stanzas are composed successively in Provençal, Italian, Northern French, Gascon, and Portuguese.[88] These are the languages which the Romance lyric of the period currently employed. That it was possible to alternate between them shows that there was a living consciousness of a unified Romania. In Spain such alternation is occasionally found as an artistic device in sonnets by Lope and Góngora. From about 1300 on, Romania differentiates more and more in language and culture. Yet the Romance nations remain connected through their historical development and their still living relation to Latin. In this looser

[85] Thus in a fifteenth-century example cited in Grimm's dictionary: "Ex lectione quorundam romanticorum, id est librorum compositorum in gallico sermone poeticorum de gestis militaribus quorum maxima pars fabulosa est."

[86] We owe the fundamental research into the word "romantic" to the Rousseau scholar Alexis François: in *Annales Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, V (1909), 237 ff. and in *Mélanges Baldensperger*, I (1930), 321.

[87] In French the corresponding word is "romanesque."

[88] Similar compositions are listed by V. Crescini, *Románica Fragmenta* (1932), 523.

sense one can continue to speak of a Romania which constitutes a unity in opposition to the Germanic peoples and literatures.

The oldest surviving specimen of a Romance language is the Strasbourg Oaths of 842, but it is a document, not a work of literature. The chain of French literature begins only with the eleventh century.[89] Spanish literature begins at the end of the twelfth century;[40] Italian not until about 1220, with St. Francis' *Hymn to the Sun* and the Sicilian art lyric. The late start of Spain and Italy is to be explained by the predominant position of France; the early appearance of Germanic literary works (in England about 700, in Germany about 750), on the other hand, by the intrinsic foreignness of "Germanic" in comparison with Romance. The Strassburg Oaths illustrate my meaning. In the Romance version they begin: "Pro deo amor et christian poblo et nostro comun salvament." That is still very close to Latin. Compare the Old High German: "In godes minna ind in thes christianes folches ind unser bedhero gehaltnissi . . ." That is an entirely different linguistic world. The Romanian could still get along for a considerable time with a more or less barbarized Latin, could start from there to acquire correct Latin. The Germanic has to learn Latin from the ground up—and he learns it very well. An amazingly pure Latin is written in England about 700, at a time when corruption is the rule in France. But even highly educated Italians could overlook grammatical blunders which set German monks laughing. The experience befell Gunzo of Novara, who came to Germany in 965 in the retinue of Otto I, and who used a wrong case in conversation with monks at St. Gall. He justified himself in a letter, in which he says that he was wrongly accused of grammatical ignorance, "although I am often handicapped by the use of our popular language, which is close to Latin."

The closeness of the vulgar languages to Latin subsists throughout the entire history of Romance. It is manifested in many different ways. All Romance languages in all periods can borrow from Latin. The old French *Song of Roland* (*ca.* 1100) begins:

Carles li reis, nostre emperere magnes.[41]

Now the word *magnus* had already been displaced in late Latin by *grandis*, and in the Romance languages only *grandis* lives on—with the single exception of *Charlemagne*.[42] Hence philologists explain that *magnes* in the line quoted is a "Latinism." They merely forget that all the great literary monuments of the Romance languages are riddled with Latinisms and indeed employ them consciously, as a rhetorical ornament. An outstanding example of this is Dante's *Commedia*. There—as one example among hundreds—we find the Latin *vir* (man) as *viro*, because Dante needed a rhyme in *-iro*. But when French in the twentieth century, need-

[89] The *Song of St. Eulalia* (end of 9th cent.) is without parallels and without successors.

[40] See *infra*, p. 386, n. 14a.

[41] "Charles the King, our great Emperor."

[42] The Spanish *tamaño* has no congeners.

ing a word for "flying machine," forms *avion* (from Lat. *avis* "bird"), the same process is exemplified. Borrowings from Latin in Romance languages do not give the impression of being "foreign words" as they do in German. Latin remains the common and inexhaustible reserve for all Romance languages.

The Romance literatures hold the lead in the West from the Crusades to the French Revolution, one succeeding another. Only from within Romania does one obtain a true picture of the course of modern literature. From 1100 to 1275—from the *Song of Roland* to *The Romance of the Rose*—French literature and intellectual culture are the model for the other nations. Middle High German literature takes over almost all the themes of French poetry, and even the *Nibelungenlied* turns out, according to Friedrich Panzer's researches,[43] to be partly derived from French sources. The courtly culture of France radiates to Norway and across the Pyrenees. *The Romance of the Rose* is adapted in Italy even in Dante's time, as it is later by Chaucer in England. French epic and romance literature flows in a full stream into Italy, to be reshaped by Boiardo and Ariosto in the brilliant art forms of the Renaissance. But the literary primacy had passed to Italy from 1300 onwards: Dante, Petrarch, the High Renaissance. This reacted upon France, England, Spain, as "Italianism."[44] With the beginning of the sixteenth century, Spain's "golden age" commences, in turn, to dominate European literature for more than a century. A knowledge of Spanish and of Spanish literature is as important for a "European" literary historiography as is a knowledge of Spanish painting for art history. It is not until the beginning of the seventeenth century that France finally emancipates herself from Italian and Spanish domination, whereupon she assumes a primacy which remains unshaken until about 1780. Meanwhile, since 1590 England has developed a great literature of her own, which however receives scant attention on the Continent until the eighteenth century. Germany was never able to compete with the literary world-powers of Romania. Her hour does not come until the Age of Goethe. Until then, though she receives influences from without, she radiates none.

England's relation to Romania is of a special kind. England was a part of the Empire for barely four hundred years. The Roman troops withdrew in 410, but Augustine's mission (from 597) meant a second Romanization or, as an English historian expresses it, "the return of Britain to Europe and to her past."[45] Roman monuments survived the Germanic immigrations. They stimulated the Northumbrian sculpture of the seventh century and were pointed out with pride.[46] Through the Norman conquest and her

[43] *Studien zum Nibelungenliede* (Frankfurt a. M., 1945).

[44] The concept that Spain, France, Germany, and so on, experienced "Renaissances" is to be rejected. It is true, however, that these countries had one or more waves of "Italianism"—which was the export form of the Italian Renaissance.

[45] C. Dawson, *The Making of Europe* (1929), 209.

[46] F. Saxl in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, VI (1943), 18 and n. 4.—For cultural relations between England and Italy in the seventh century, cf. W. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (1946), 142.

Angevin kings, England was for centuries an annex to French culture. French was the language of literature and government, Latin that of higher education. Paris is the literary capital of England. Englishmen and Welshmen performed brilliantly in the Latin Renaissance of the twelfth century. It was not until 1340 that Englishmen of French and Saxon descent were put on a footing of legal equality.[47] It was only during the course of the fourteenth century that the two races and languages were fused into unity. To this century belongs Chaucer, the first representative English poet. France and Italy provide the matter of his poetry. He dies in 1400. A year earlier, English, which had been the language of school instruction from 1350, and the language of law from 1362, was for the first time used by a King in Parliament. Medieval England belongs to Romania. But "at the Reformation the English, grown to manhood, dismissed their Latin tutors, without reacting into close contact with the Scandinavian and Teuton world. Britain had become a world by itself."[48]

The English language is a Germanic dialect transformed by Romance and Latin. English national characteristics and forms of life are neither Romance nor Germanic—they are English. They represent a happy blend of social conformity and personal nonconformity, such as no other people has produced. The relation of England to Romania—which means to the European tradition—is a problem which keeps reappearing in English literature. In the eighteenth century (Pope, Gibbon) the Latin cultures exercise a strong attraction, in the nineteenth, Germany. In the twentieth century all phases of the Roman tradition are again emphasized—an interesting phenomenon, which we can here only touch upon. G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc ardently sounded the call to battle. Of greater importance is the literary criticism and literary policy that T. S. Eliot has represented since 1920: "Three or four great novelists do not make a literature, though *War and Peace* is a very great novel indeed. If everything derived from Rome were withdrawn—everything we have from Norman-French society, from the Church, from Humanism, from every channel direct and indirect, what would be left? A few Teutonic roots and husks. England is a 'Latin' country, and we ought not to have to go to France for our Latinity."[49]

Through Romania and its influences the West received its Latin schooling. The forms and the fruits of that schooling are now to be considered. That is, we must now proceed from generalities to the concrete wealth of the substance of history. We must now go into details. But, as Aby Warburg used to say to his students, "God is in detail."

[47] J. J. Jusserand, *A Literary History of the English People*, I (1895), 236.

[48] G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England* (1947), xxi.

[49] *The Criterion* (Oct., 1923), 104.