Narrative representation in Goethe's Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre

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NARRATIVE REPRESENTATION IN GOETHE'S WILHELM MEISTERS LEHRJAHRE

ABSTRACT

This study aims to address a number of issues. What type of novel is *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*? How modern or forward-looking is Goethe's novel? What methods does Goethe use for presenting the events and characters of his novel? An approach from the point of view of narrative technique is adopted to provide answers to these questions. Taking the theories of Wayne Booth, Percy Lubbock, Gerard Genette, Eberhard Lämmert and Michael Toolan, I examine *showing* (modern) and *telling* (archaic) as a question both of voice and of detail, and then look at direct methods of presenting 'thought' in the text (i.e. commentary and sententiousness) in comparison with indirect methods (implication, motif and indirection).

Applying these concepts to *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the novel opens in a scene - the action and dialogue emerge from this scene. This forward-looking opening establishes a norm of situation-bound dialogue and episodic chapters. The modern novel's obsession with the depiction of external features and surface details is shunned. The degree of reference to the existing genre is underlined by the widespread use of sententious discourse by both narrator and characters. However, by comparison, Goethe's use of sententious discourse is complex. The treatment of central themes ('Bildung' and 'Heilung') and central characters (Mignon, Philine and the Turmgesellschaft) is examined as a study of Goethe's techniques of implication. The conventional presentation of Philine (she is defined) is contrasted with the way in which Mignon is never summarised or even commented upon.

In conclusion, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* is compared with the earlier *Geschichte des Agathon* (Wieland) and the later *Effi Briest* (Fontane). In terms of the degree of scene, the external presentation of Mignon and the implicating process used in the treatment of key themes, Goethe's novel anticipates the realistic novel. Nevertheless, in its use of sententiousness and its cursory scene-setting, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* does look back to *Agathon*.

NARRATIVE REPRESENTATION IN GOETHE'S

WILHELM MEISTERS LEHRJAHRE

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by Howard Wyn Hopkins

I declare that none of the material contained in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER:
A Theoretical Background

1.1 The term "narrative representation" could be taken to include virtually all narrative techniques, since 'narrative' and 'narration' have to go hand-in-hand with the idea of 'representation'. To narrow down the field, I should like to examine the narrative techniques identified by the Anglo-American theorists Percy Lubbock [1], Wayne Booth [2] and Michael Toolan [3] and to discuss their relationship with the European Critics Gérard Genette [4] and Eberhard Lämmert [5], as well as Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan [6], (who is heavily influenced by Genette), in order to establish a theoretical platform for my study. In particular, I should like to discuss the concepts of '*showing*' and '*telling*' as a means of narrative representation. As we shall see, this opposition will serve as an umbrella term for the other oppositions commentary/implication and scene/summary.

The *showing/telling* opposition is certainly not a new concept; indeed recognition of its existence and its problematic can be traced back as far as Plato [7]. Discussion of the concepts within the framework of the modern novel really began with Lubbock's The Craft of Fiction (1921). Wayne Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction was first published in 1961 (although I shall be referring to the second revised edition of 1983) and Lämmert's Bauformen des Erzählens came out in 1955. All this may appear outmoded, given the ever-changing world of narratology and literary theory. However, the basic concepts initiated in these works have been built upon by Genette in 1972, who influenced Rimmon-Kenan in 1983, whose work is in turn extended by Michael J. Toolan in 1988. One might regard this approach, then, as a valuable survival from the older theory. Despite its relative longevity it has

not outlived its use. It is one which I believe will bear fruit when applied to Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre (henceforth referred to as WML).

1.2 *Showing/Telling*

In the earliest of our theoretical texts, Lubbock makes no explicit mention of the terms *showing* and *telling* [8]. What Lubbock does do, however, is to outline the analogous concepts of *scene* and *panorama*. We shall see, however, that these are slightly divorced from the question of *showing* and *telling*. The basic problem with Lubbock's and Booth's analyses is that neither asserts with great conviction where the border between *showing* and *telling* lies. Does *showing* mean pure dialogue as in drama (i.e. Plato's *mimesis*), excluding narratorial 'stage- directions', or is it to include scene-setting by the narrator? Conversely, what is 'told' (Plato's *diegesis*) need not exclusively be in the narrator's idiom, according to Booth, for "everything he shows will serve to tell; the line between showing and telling is always to some degree an arbitrary one" [9]. A further distinction is necessary to make the terms sufficient for discriminating use.

1.3 *Showing/Telling* as a Question of Voice

Lubbock's study takes the form of detailed analyses of various novelists' techniques. The most striking juxtaposition in the *Craft of Fiction* is that of Thackeray and Henry James, who represent the poles of *panoramic* novelist and *dramatic* novelist respectively. Lubbock sums up Thackeray's panoramic method thus:

> Every novel of his takes the form of a discursive soliloquy, in which he gradually gathers the long train of experience that he has in his mind [10].

Most of a Thackeray novel is taken up by narratorial discussion, that is to say the prime voice in the text is the narrator's. *Telling* (or the *panoramic* method) may therefore be synonymous with the narrative voice. Conversely,

Henry James' *dramatic* method is characterized by the very lack of narratorial intervention:

> To bring his [Strether's in The Ambassadors] mind into view at different moments, one after another when it is brushed by new experience - to make a little scene of it, without breeching into its hidden depths where the change of purpose is proceeding - to multiply these glimpses until the silent change is apparent though no word has actually been said of it: that is Henry James' way [11].

James, in his *dramatic method* allows the characters' voice the upper hand, inasmuch as he is at pains to let dialogues or free indirect style dominate. That *showing* and *telling* is in part a question of voice would find much sympathy with Booth:

> Since Flaubert, many authors and critics have been convinced that 'objective' or 'impersonal' or 'dramatic' modes of narration are superior to any mode that allows for direct appearances by the author or his reliable spokesperson [12].

1.4 *Showing* and *telling* as a question of duration or detail

> All narrators and observers, whether in the first or the third person, can relay their tales to us primarily as scene [...], primarily as summary or what Lubbock called 'picture' [...], or, most commonly, as a combination of the two [13].

Booth's equation of *scene* and *summary* with *showing* and *telling* is correct. However, I feel that the distinction between *showing* and *telling* as a question of voice and *showing* and *telling* as one of duration is not made explicitly enough. This is where we can look for help to Genette, Rimmon-Kenan and Toolan, who deal with the opposition in terms of duration. Genette stresses the idea that texts have a duration and that there is a relationship between the

length of time it takes to read a text and the length of time the events in the text are supposed to last. In a play, the time the dialogues take to unfold is identical to the time the audience takes to receive them. As Rimmon-Kenan puts it, in a novel "[...] a dialogue can give the impression of reporting everything that was said in fact or in fiction, adding nothing to it, but even then it is incapable of rendering the rate at which the sentences were uttered or the length of the sentences" [14].

Here, Rimmon-Kenan shows the influence of Genette. What Genette tries to show is that texts vary in pace, which is a temporal/spatial relationship that is to be gauged by how much space a particular narrative event, of a certain temporal duration, takes up within the narrative. Events can be accelerated by summary - ellipsis being the maximum speed - or decelerated by detailed description of setting or physical appearance. In scene (that is to say, containing both dialogue and 'zeitdeckendes Erzählen'[15]), story-duration and text-duration are conventionally considered identical (although this, too, is likely to be something of an illusion!). Summary, as less time is spent on it, could be taken as indicating that a certain event is of less importance than one which is shown scenically, for the simple reason summary is less detailed and therefore less vivid for the reader. Indeed, the notion of duration needs to be supplemented by that of relative detail, as Genette indicates in the above quotation.

Michael J. Toolan, whilst basically concurring with Genette's idea that scene and summary are to be considered both in terms of duration and detail, feels that Genette's norm of pace "[...] is very often far more mechanical than texts actually are " [16]. He takes issue with Genette's intra-textual approach, whereby one should compare certain passages within one text in order to establish a norm of pace within that text, preferring the undertaking of "supratextual comparisons" [17]. This would involve a comparison of the pace of certain sections of a given text with the pace of a similar section from a similar novel or a novel of a similar period. How one assesses the

similarities between certain sections of different novels is another matter! With regard to WML, such an approach might be considered impossible and perhaps unnecessary: firstly for the reason that the novel is made up of many texts and narratives in itself; and secondly for the reason that the novel does not fit easily into one particular period, especially as it is written in two distinct parts and periods.

Toolan does provide us with a most eloquent resumé of the basic effect of scene and summary:

> When the reader encounters relative acceleration or deceleration of presentation, she will often interpret the shift in pace as an authorial or narratorial indication of the marginality (on the one hand) or the centrality and importance (on the other) of what is being presented [18].

Eberhard Lämmert, writing in 1955, produces a systematic account of the properties of scene and summary (which he terms *"Raffung": "Sukzessive Raffung"* - the idea of temporal compression (e.g. "dann ... und dann..."); "Sprung-raffung" (veni, vidi, vici"); and *"iterativ-durative Raffung"* (iterative: "immer wieder in dieser Zeit..."; durative: "Die ganze Zeit hindurch..."). Summary can be temporal, spatial or thematic. Lämmert enumerates the various elementary components of the narrative: "Beschreibung, Bericht, Darstellung, Betrachtung and Erörterung, ferner das Gespräch". What is of greatest interest to us, though, is his anticipation of Genette's affirmation that scene (*"szenische Darstellung"*) and dialogue are separate entities. "Szenische Darstellung" is synonymous with the descriptions in the narrator's idiom within a scene in which dialogue, however, takes up the majority of the space [20]. For the purposes of my study, I shall follow this lead and use the term "scene-setting" to describe the idea of the narrator's voice within a scene. In recognizing the problematic of scenic representation, Lämmert is unconsciously highlighting the fact that *showing* essentially depends on two

factors, namely that of voice and that of duration/detail. This is expanded by Genette:

"Finally, therefore, we will have to mark the contrast between mimetic and diegetic by a formula such as: information + informer = C, which implies that the quantity of information and the presence of the informer are in inverse ratio, mimesis being defined by a maximum of information and a minimum of the informer, diegesis by the opposite relationship" [21]. Genette goes on to state that this "sends us back to a temporal determination - narrative speed - since it goes without saying that the quantity of information is solidly in inverse ratio to the speed of the narrative; and on the other hand it sends us to a datum of voice - the degree to which the narrating instance is present" [22].

Showing/telling falls into two categories, which overlap for the very reason that the narrator's voice is present in scene (or can be!). This link is inextricable. Indeed, Genette defines scene as "detailed narrative", which does not necessarily mean that characters' speech has to be present, whereas the other side of 'showing' (the question of voice) would depend upon the presence of dialogue by the characters.

1.5 The *Showing/Telling* Opposition as a Question of Implication/Commentary.

A third distinction under the wider heading of *showing* and *telling* is that of commentary and implication. We have already seen the matter of implied methods being raised above in Lubbock's remarks on Henry James' The Ambassadors [24]; Lubbock praises James for letting the reader draw his own conclusions. Generally speaking, direct narratorial comment is a clear-cut example of *telling*, since it is the narrator's viewpoint which is being voiced. As we shall see later on in this study, there is a grey area in this matter where characters make direct comments on their own or others' situation. If these, admittedly 'mimetic', statements are a vehicle for conveying authorial meaning (and this is what we are talking about in discussing the methods of

commentary and implication), then should not they be subject to the same criteria as apply to the *diegetic* narrative?

Returning to the narrator's discourse, Lämmert states that "Betrachtung" and "Erörterung" are greater indicators of narratorial intervention than description and "Sentenz" [25]. Michael Toolan, who follows Rimmon-Kenan, who follows Genette, would agree only partially with this assertion. Toolan enumerates a typology of narrators in an order of their intrusiveness (number one is least and number six is most intrusive):

1. Descriptions of settings
2. Identification of characters
3. Temporal summaries
4. Definition of characters
5. Reports of what characters did not think or say
6. Commentary-interpretation, judgement, generalization [26]

The later critics would therefore appear to disagree with Lämmert, arguing that "Sentenz" is very much an example of commentary. Commentary is the strongest indicator of the narrator's presence in the text and it is therefore important to analyse commentary both from the point of view of the content of what is said (i.e. for meaning) and also to gauge the degree of the narrator's intrusion into the text.

Commentary involves a direct statement by either the narrator or possibly also by a character who attains some sort of authority from the narrator. It can take the form of a summary, a description, an interpretation or a piece of sententiousness. Implication is a more difficult concept to pin down. It can basically be understood as what the reader can interpret from a text: it is any method of conveying meaning in a text other than by direct statement (commentary). It can therefore emerge from *showing* and *telling* (i.e. what one reads into the characters' or narrator's words). Booth, in his

introduction, looks to Madame Bovary for an example of implication being conveyed through scene. Booth cites the incident where Emma Bovary's father bids farewell to his daughter and Charles and remembers "[...] his own wedding, his own earlier day... He, too, had been very happy. He felt dismal, like a stripped and empty house". Through scene, that is to say through the detailed presentation of a character's thoughts, we are provided "[...] with an indirect evaluation of the marriage and a sense of what is to come" [27]. The reader is later to divine the full meanings of this passage and its implication for the future. The essence of implication is that it involves the reader in making the connection, whereas commentary presents the meaning to the reader without involving a process of connection or inference.

1.6 Structural Implication: Closure

The endings of chapters or other divisions are potentially of great importance, as the narrator can lay stress on a particular facet of his narrative by closing a section in a certain way. Genette points out that the convention of the nineteenth century was for a unit of narrative to begin and end with a summary [28]. The middle of the chapter would be devoted to a scene. Any departure from this could be for a reason important for the reception of the narrative. If, for example, a chapter ends mid-air, as it were, without being satisfactorily resolved, then there must be a reason for this and an implication can be inferred from this. A chapter can end in scene, if all the business of the chapter has been completed - which is to say if everything which has been set out at the beginning has been resolved. By ending a chapter in scene, in a detailed fashion, the author can lay particular stress on the contents of the scene or the meaning to be inferred from it [29].

1.7 The Theory and Textual Analysis

The *showing/telling* opposition is an umbrella concept covering three quite different aspects of the narrative: duration, voice, and commentary as opposed to implication. As far as textual analysis is concerned, we shall see how far

we can take the *showing/telling* concepts in terms of their aspects of duration and voice when applying them to a text. We shall see in the next chapter that the mileage to be gained from this is limited and that we can take the concepts of 'commentary' and 'implication' several stages further in order to find out the type of text we are dealing with in WML.

Footnotes to Chapter One

1. Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction, London 1921
2. Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction, London 1961 (2nd Edition, Harmondsworth, 1983)
3. Michael J. Toolan, Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction, London 1988
4. Gérard Genette, Narrative Discourse, trans. by Jane E. Lewin, Oxford 1980
5. Eberhard Lämmert: Bauformen des Erzählens, Stuttgart 1955
6. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, Narrative Fiction, London 1983
7. Genette points out that the *showing/telling* opposition is linked to the problematic of *mimesis/diegesis*. This debate commenced historically with Plato's rewriting of the Iliad in Book VII of the Republic (see Genette, op. cit. p. 162 ff).
8. Although, as we shall see, scene is a subdivision of *showing*.
9. Booth, op. cit., p.20
10. Lubbock, op. cit., p.97
11. op. cit., p.164
12. Booth, op. cit., p.8
13. op. cit., p.154
14. Rimmon-Kenan, op. cit., p.52
15. Lämmert, op. cit., p.84
16. Toolan, op. cit., p.56
17. op. cit., p.61
18. op. cit., p.58

19. Lämmert, op. cit., p.86
20. "So strebt sie [szenische Darstellung] idealiter nach Zeitdeckung, und deshalb hat auch die direkte Rede an ihr allgemein großen Anteil". op. cit., p.87
21. Genette, op. cit., p.166
22. ibid.
23. Genette, op. cit., p.166
24. Lubbock, op. cit., p.164
25. Lämmert, op. cit., pp.87-88
26. Toolan, op. cit., p.82
27. Booth, op. cit., p.17
28. Genette, op. cit., p.131
29. See G. Prince, Narratology, Berlin, New York, Amsterdam, 1982. Chapter on "Wholeness" p. 150 ff.

CHAPTER TWO:

A Typology of the Means of Narrative Representation used in Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre.

2.1 In this chapter, my aim will be to establish the type of novel Goethe's WML is. This will be achieved by highlighting how it typically uses the available modes of narrative representation. Having outlined the theoretical basis of this study in the previous chapter, I shall endeavour to examine the degree to which the narrative representation in the novel can be understood using the terms introduced there without necessarily coming to any conclusions about the meaning(s) of the novel. Here I am primarily concerned to describe the discursive norm the novel establishes for itself.

Before looking at a typology of showing and telling in the novel, it would be useful to examine the narrative in terms of its outward appearance, that is to say as regards the manner in which it is divided up into chapters and books in the first instance and secondly the way in which secondary narratives are interpolated into the main one. If the modes of narrative representation outlined in the preceding chapter are, as it were, the 'deep grammar' of narrative discourse, then these external features are historically contingent elements of narrative structure. One cannot examine the former without taking some account of the latter as well.

2.2 Book and Chapter Divisions

An interesting question is who is responsible for book and chapter divisions. There could be a case for arguing that it is not the narrator, but the author whose responsibility it is to provide a title for the work and for dividing up the narrative into chapters and books for the benefit of the reader, whereas the narrator would provide the words on the page.

The division of the text into eight books provides an outer framework. Each book division comes at an important stage in the unravelling of Wilhelm's

experiences. The division between the first and second books comes about at a turning point, namely the termination of Wilhelm's relationship with Mariane; the division between the second and third books marks the tightening of his relationship with Mignon; the third book ends with the termination of his relationship with the Gräfin; the fourth book ends with the encounter with Aurelie where she pricks him, and marks the division between a long episode involving Wilhelm, Serlo and Aurelie and a section of the text where the narrator focuses on Felix, beginning to examine Wilhelm's motives in the form of his letter to Werner and Werner's letter to Wilhelm. The sixth book might seem to be an exception since it is a different narrative entirely - a first person narrative by a woman who is a member of a previous generation. It is lengthy enough to merit taking up a whole book. In addition, however, it is inserted into the novel at a convenient juncture in the novel's events just prior to the events which lead up to Wilhelm's being accepted into the 'Turmgesellschaft'. Therefore, the interpolation of this narrative between two books as a book in its own right is justified on two counts. The division of the seventh and eighth books is precipitated by the Abbé's proclamation at the end of the seventh book that Wilhelm's apprenticeship is over. The beginning of the eighth book marks a realization on Wilhelm's part of the reality of his situation, a stepping back from the illusion precipitated by the ceremony of the previous book. It marks a return to the perception of reality through the father-son bond between Wilhelm and Felix. The break might therefore be said to be a logical one. Each book seems to constitute an important stage in Wilhelm's experiences. The book divisions themselves help to make this apparent and, this being so, give the text a structure.

Having established that the books structure the text, one should now logically ask whether the chapters fulfil a similar role within each book. Looking at the number of chapters in each book, it is clear that there is no uniformity in the amount of chapters per book, which ranges from twenty in the fourth book to just nine in the seventh (one must exclude the sixth book from this reckoning). It is true to say that the chapters of the last two books are longer

than those of the books prior to "Die Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele" (although it should be remembered that this is the shortest book in the novel). Indeed, there are fewer chapters in the last two books put together than in the fourth book. What does this say about the chapters in the last books? Does it mean that there is necessarily more 'action' to hold the reader's attention for a longer time? There are several possible reasons for a chapter break: one could be to mark the end of one episode and the beginning of another; another could be the passage of time; more banally, another could be simply to give the reader a break. The reason therefore that the chapters are lengthier in the last two books may be that the episodes are longer (or more of them are shown). One should also bear the genesis of the novel in mind. The final two books were written much later, whereas the earlier books are taken over from the earlier Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung, where the novel is characterised by short chapters which are episodic in nature.

The first book of the novel concerns itself with Wilhelm's relationship with Mariane and its demise. However, it should be remembered that much space is taken up by Wilhelm's narration of his childhood love of the puppet theatre. Indeed, the episode which is his narration is spread over six chapters (from Book One, Chapter Three to Book One, Chapter Eight). The first two chapters of the novel are episodic, the first one especially so, as Joachim von der Thüsen points out:

> Das erste Kapitel in den "Lehrjahren" stellt eine Art in sich geschlossener Szene dar [1].

Indeed, the first chapter really does not involve the main character, Wilhelm, and perhaps it might be said that it has little connection with what follows, inasmuch as it presents the 'action' from a different viewpoint. It is rare in the text that we get a narration which does not involve Wilhelm. What follows does centre around the character of Wilhelm, especially as the narrator shows Wilhelm's protracted narration of his childhood experiences. As

mentioned above, this narration is extended over several chapters. In contrast to the episodic chapter division of the first two chapters, one episode is spread over several chapters.

Are the divisions really justified from a point of view of structure? The banal reason for the chapter divisions here is to give the reader a break in what is (as the narrator, for one, feels) a very protracted and long-winded account of Wilhelm's childhood. The chapter divisions do come, however, at logical points in Wilhelm's narration. For example, the divisions between the fourth and fifth and the sixth and seventh chapters come at a convenient juncture in the process of Wilhelm's narration - the beginning of the fifth and seventh chapters have one thing in common, namely Wilhelm's sententious rhetoric ("Die Kinder haben [...] in wohlgerichteten und geordneten Häusern eine Empfindung, wie ungefähr Ratten und Mäuse haben mögen [...]" (Chapter Five [3]); "Die Zerstreuungen der Jugend, da meine Gespannschaft sich zu vermehren anfing, taten dem einsamen, stillen Vergnügen Eintrag". (Chapter Seven, p.26). In each case, Wilhelm, narrating, is imposing himself as a narrator on the story of his youth. He is seen to be ordering it both sententiously and structurally. What is more, the chapters of Wilhelm's narration reflect the pattern of the chapter divisions of the main narrative in Book One. The third chapter begins, for instance, with narratorial sententiousness, much in the same way as Wilhelm is sententious at the beginning of the fifth chapter. One might say then that Wilhelm's narration obeys the same conventions as the main narrative with regard to chapter division and its rhythmic coincidence with sententious reflection.

The remainder of the first book is divided into chapters episodically, each chapter having a particular subject or purpose behind it. For instance, the eleventh chapter is essentially to do with Wilhelm's and Werner's fathers and the thirteenth with the introduction of the Melinas. Other chapters in the first book deal with specific developments in Wilhelm's feelings for Mariane. Indeed, this episodic form of chapter division sets a pattern for the rest of the

novel. In the main, the chapter divisions are based around the end and beginning of episodes. The ends and beginnings of episodes may not be as clear-cut as, for example, in the case of the division between Book Five, Chapters Twelve and Thirteen, where the narrator commences the new chapter by stating that it is a different day; the change in episode may be a shift from a presentation of events to Wilhelm's reaction to and feelings about them (i.e. from externalization to internalization), or a shift in focus. One such case is the portrayal of the aftermath of the fire caused by the Harfner in Book Five. The division between the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters appears to arise through a shift in emphasis from the effect of the Harfner's actions upon himself (Chapter Fourteen) to their effect on Wilhelm (Chapter Fifteen). The break between Book Four, Chapters Eleven and Twelve is a good example of a chapter division marking the shift between narration of an event and its effect on Wilhelm. At the end of the eleventh chapter, Mignon's singing is narrated as it outwardly appears. The chapter division marks the internalization of the effect, as the narrator describes the effect of Mignon's singing upon Wilhelm. One might question the logic of this chapter break, since there is apparent continuation between the two chapters ("Die sanften Lockungen des lieben Schutzgeistes [...]" [WML, p.241] [beginning of Chapter Twelve]). There are other such instances, where the narrator marks a move from narration of events to narration of a character's cogitation with a chapter or even a book division (a notable example would be the division between the final chapter of the first book and the first chapter of the second).

There are exceptions to this convention of episodic chapter division, apart from the case of Wilhelm's narration of his childhood in Book One. The conversation between Wilhelm, Serlo and Aurelie in Book Four is a good example of an episode which extends over more than one chapter. The *showing* of this chapter is unbroken despite the division imposed by the break for Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen. It seems that the conversation could have quite happily continued without the chapter division. The only reasons for the chapter break could be either to maintain the pattern (as it were, the musical

'beat') established up to this point, or to give weight to Serlo's words at the close of the fifteenth chapter. However, one might argue that the narrator could have made this episode a single chapter and this might have been advantageous, since Book Four has more chapter breaks than any other book - in the final book, he would surely not have split up this episode into two chapters? However, there is evidence that the narrator does exactly this in the final books - it is just that the chapters are longer. For example, the fourth chapter of the seventh book is only distinct from the previous chapter by virtue of the entrance of the Arzt and there is no significant temporal division between the fourth and fifth chapters, which comes about simply because Wilhelm is led into another room. These chapter divisions determined by entrances of new characters are akin to scenes in a play, where the entrance of a new character means the beginning of a new scene.

The chapter divisions thus have the effect of providing a structure for each book by dividing up the episodes within the book. However, as we have seen, there are examples of where the episode stretches beyond the chapter divisions, which could simply mark a pause for the convenience of the reader or serve to highlight specific aspects of the episode (i.e. where the chapter ends, a certain part of that episode can be highlighted) [4].

It has been mentioned above that, in the last two books, the chapters become markedly longer. This could mean two things: the episodes are being shown in greater detail or more episodes are being combined within the chapter. It would be wrong to suggest that one or the other is exclusively the case. On the whole, the episodes themselves are longer in the final two books, but there are examples of where chapters feature two or more episodes. One such instance comes in Book Seven, Chapter Four. There is both a temporal and thematic break where the subject of discussion switches from the 'Harfenspieler' on one day, to Lydie on the next and this in one chapter [WML, pp. 136 - 137]. This demonstrates that chapters are no longer episodic, as they largely were prior to the "Bekenntnisse". One might even

go as far as to suggest that the chapter divisions are arbitrary in the final two books. They have more to do with providing the reader with a break from the process of reading rather than marking significant stages in the progression of the plot.

2.3 The Primary Narration and Interpolated Narrations

The novel presents itself to us in the form of a primary narration into which the narrator interpolates several narratives from other characters. Eberhard Bahr enumerates these narratives in his note on the "Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele" (which although not given in the list below, obviously belongs to that list!):

1. Wilhelms Geschichte von Puppentheater (I, 2-7);
2. Aurelies Erzählung von Lotharios Untreue (IV, 15f; V,16);
3. Thereses Lebensgeschichte (VII,6);
4. Lotharios Abenteuer mit der Pächtertochter (VII, 7);
5. Die Erzählung des Marchese (VIII, p) [5]

There are instances of narratives or documents by other characters finding their way into the text. Wilhelm's and Werner's letters at the beginning of Book Five are texts by other narrators, but we would be hard pressed to place them in the same category as the narratives enumerated by Bahr for reasons of their brevity. A stronger case could be put forward for the inclusion of the following narratives which are absent from this list: Natalie's narration of the deterioration of Mignon (Book Eight, Chapter Two); the Arzt's narration of the change in the Harfner (Book Eight, Chapter Ten) and Barbara's narration of Mariane's end (Book Seven, Chapter Eight). There are other pieces of narration, letters, such as the 'Billetten' written by Mariane to Wilhelm, where she tries to make her feelings known to Wilhelm (Book Seven, Chapter Eight). Other interpolated 'documents' are the many songs and poems, which may be seen as narratives in their own right, especially as it is only through

her songs that Mignon is able to convey to the characters and the reader alike her origin, albeit in a veiled manner.

How do these 'documents' fit in with the rest of the narrative? They are of course subordinate to the main narrative, since it is a matter for the main narrator to provide the framework for them. When looked at from the point of view of the main narrative, the 'documents' are examples of *showing*. However, they are to be regarded in terms of *telling* in their own right and their narrators can be examined in the same way as the main narrator of the text. There is no immediate pattern to the insertion of such narratives into the text, although it should be noted that "Die Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele" do come at a critical time in Wilhelm's life and indeed, they might be said to be a pivot in the presentation of the story. What should be recognized is that the majority of the narrations come after "die Bekenntnisse", which may come about because, following these confessions and perhaps his satisfaction with the first person type of narration, the main narrator is more willing to insert more first person narratives into his text, but perhaps more likely, the increased presence of the 'Turmgesellschaft' means a greater emphasis on the character's self-narration. I say this because of the emphasis the Society places on the act of narrating (indeed the Society tells its own story in the form of Jarno's narration of the history of the 'Turmgesellschaft'). Moreover, it is the Society which writes the history of Wilhelms' 'Lehrjahre' - although it is not clear whether the 'Lehrjahre' with which the reader is presented is the one which the Society conceives.

Most of these 'documents' arise out of scene and their inclusion is motivated by the narrator. In the case of the 'Bekenntnisse', their appearance in the particular position within the text does not bear a relation to the events which have just been narrated. The scene where Wilhelm reads the 'Bekenntnisse' is not used to motivate their presentation to the reader. Rather, as with Mignon's "Kennst du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn [...]?" at the opening of the third book, they are taken out of their context as scene and are given

"as they are". The same can also be said of Mignon's song "Heiß mich nicht reden, heiß mich schweigen" which is shown immediately prior to the presentation of the 'Bekenntnisse'. Another interesting feature with respect to the aforementioned songs and also the 'Bekenntnisse' reveals itself and that is the fact that they are not bracketed with quotation marks. This is interesting inasmuch as it appears quite arbitrary whether Goethe actually inserts quotation marks or not when quoting a song. There are instances where they are 'correctly' punctuated.

2.4 Showing and Telling in the Novel: A Typology

(i) Kinds of Narratorial discourse:

In my introductory chapter, I argued that the overall distinction of *showing* and *telling* is either a question of voice or a question of detail. In this subsection I shall attempt to look at *telling* in terms of voice in WML and that, of course, necessarily means that I shall be examining the nature of the narrator's discourse in the text.

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, Michael Toolan enumerates the degrees of narratorial presence in any given text. The first indicator of narratorial presence is the 'description of settings' [6]. The amount of space devoted to descriptive narration of settings is very small. We actually get very little topographical information in the novel. The examples are so few that they can easily be accommodated in the following list: the beginning of Book Two, Chapter Three ("Überhängende Felsen, rauschende Wasserbäche, bewachsene Wände, tiefe Gründe sah er hier zum erstenmal [...][WML, p.87]); we have the very sketchy topographical description of Book Two, Chapter Thirteen ("Man wies ihn, als er nach dem Manne fragte, an ein schlechtes Wirtshaus in einem entfernten Winkel des Städtchens und in demselben die Treppe hinauf bis auf den Boden, wo ihm der süße Harfenklang aus einer Kammer entgegenschallte"[WML, p.136].); the description of the weather at the beginning of Book Seven ("Der Frühling war in seiner völligen Herrlichkeit erschienen; ein frühzeitiges Gewitter, das den ganzen Tag

gedrohet hatte, ging stürmisch an den Bergen nieder, der Regen zog nach dem Lande, die Sonne trat wieder in ihrem Glanze hervor, und auf dem grauen Grunde erschien der herrliche Bogen" [WML, p.421]; and the description, the lengthiest one by far, of the "Saal der Vergangenheit" in Book Eight, Chapter Five ("Sie führte ihn durch einen geräumigen Gang auf eine Türe zu, vor der zwei Sphinxe von Granit lagen. Die Türe selbst war auf ägyptische Weise oben ein wenig enger als unten, und ihre ehernen Flügel bereiteten zu einem ernsthaften, ja zu einen schauerlichen Anblick vor. [WML, pp.539 - 540]).

A greater proportion of narrative space is taken up by 'stage directions' or pieces of narration which help to make up a scene. These are common throughout the novel, describing actions, movements, gestures (especially in the case of Mignon). It is interesting to note that Toolan does not include such constituents of narrative discourse in his list. This omission implies that they are fairly neutral pieces of narration and they therefore tell us very little about the type of narrator which narrates the story. Such narration, however, does contribute to the scenic quality of the text. Instances of 'stage directions' are too numerous to list here, but an example of such narratorial discourse selected almost at random from the text can be found in Book Two, Chapter Four: "Laertes begleitete sogleich seinen neuen Bekannten zu Philines Türe, wo er ihn einen Augenblick stehen ließ, um in einem benachbarten Laden Zuckerwerk zu holen" [WML, p.93].

This is narration of actions which, as part of a scene, has the same role as stage directions have in the theatre. Such narration is common in WML, since there is a high scene content to the narrative.

I mentioned above that description of setting formed a small part of the narrator's discourse. There are, however, examples of other types of description, such as physical description and detailed description of movement. In Book Two, Chapter Four, Mignon's appearance is described:

> [...] ihr Körper war gut gebaut, nur daß ihre Glieder einen stärkern Wuchs versprachen oder einen zurückgehaltenen ankündigten. Ihre Bildung war nicht regelmäßig, aber auffallend; ihre Stirne geheimnisvoll, ihre Nase außerordentlich schön, und der Mund, ob er schon für ihr Alter zu sehr geschlossen schien, und sie manchmal mit den Lippen nach einer Seite zuckte, noch immer treuherzig und reizend genug. Ihre bräunliche Gesichtsfarbe konnte man durch die Schminke kaum erkennen [WML, pp. 98 - 99].

This is by far the most detailed physical description in the main narrative. Indeed, the reader can only guess at the appearance of the other characters. The descriptions which we do receive of them are invariably cursory; 'schön'. 'klein'. 'wohlgebildet'. Indeed, we are never informed directly by the narrator of Wilhelm's appearance. One of the few other physical descriptions of a character comes in Book Seven, Chapter Five, with the description of Therese:

> Wohlgebaut, ohne groß zu sein, bewegte sie sich mit viel Lebhaftigkeit, und ihren hellen, blauen, offnen Augen schien nichts verborgen zu bleiben, was vorging [WML, pp.441 - 442].

An example of description of movement and actions would be the portrayal of Mignon's singing "Kennst du das Land [...]?" at the beginning of the third book. This description could be said to contain elements of summary, but I should argue that it is more a descriptive scene. As mentioned above, descriptions are few and far between in the main narrative. In many of the cases which do occur, the narrator does describe as if wishing to impart the effect of the detail upon Wilhelm (which is important in itself). The lengthy descriptions of Mignon and of the "Saal der Vergangenheit" are given to help the reader to understand the effect that these experiences have on Wilhelm, which the narrator, in fact, explicitly states following his description of Mignon. "Diese Gestalt prägte sich Wilhelm sehr tief ein[...]"[WML, p.99].

This gives justification for the lengthy narration of Mignon's appearance, a description which is not in keeping at all with the nature of the narrator's discourse so far. Yet this method is used consistently - information is imparted to the reader through Wilhelm's eyes, as it were.

This technique is perhaps tied in with another one, namely 'psycho-narration' [7], where the narrator narrates the thoughts of a character in his own rather than the character's idiom. One instance of this comes in the opening of the novel where the narrator tells us what Barbara is thinking and thereby goes into her consciousness:

> Mit welcher Neigung, welcher Dankbarbeit erinnerte sie sich des abwesenden Norbergs! Wie lebhaft nahm sie sich vor, auch bei Marianen seiner im besten zu gedenken, sie zu erinnern, was sie ihm schuldig sei und was er von ihrer Treue hoffen und erwarten müsse [WML, p.9].

This is an example of 'psycho-narration', which can be described as a form of description of a character's thoughts. This instance of the narrator's narrating from a point of view other than Wilhelm's is unique.

The narrator consistently informs the reader of what is going on in Wilhelm's mind. Psycho-narration counterpoints Wilhelm's narrated experiences. Periodically, we are told of Wilhelm's train of thought, of his opinions and of his preoccupations. These are mainly concerned with images of his former love, Mariane, and of his future wife - the 'Amazone'. The preoccupation with Mariane can be seen in chapters nine and ten of the second book. The former opens with the narrator's summary of a dream Wilhelm has the previous night:

"Nach einer unruhigen Nacht, die unser Freund teils wachend, teils von schweren Träumen geängstigt zubrachte, in denen er Marianen bald in aller Schönheit, bald in kümmerlicher Gestalt, jetzt mit einem Kinde auf dem Arm,

bald desselben beraubt sah, war der Morgen kaum angebrochen, als Mignon schon mit einem Schneider hereintrat" [WML, p.117]. There then follow several scenes and summaries until almost the middle of the next chapter where we get another piece of 'psycho-narration' which concerns Wilhelm's realization of the sensual attraction of Philine:

> Seitdem ihn jene grausame Entdeckung von der Seite Marianens gerissen hatte, war er dem Gelübde treu geblieben, sich vor der zusammenschlagenden Falle einer weiblichen Umarmung zu hüten, das treulose Geschlecht zu meiden, seine Schmerzen, seine Neigung, seine süßen Wünsche in seinem Busen zu verschließen. Die Gewissenhaftigkeit, womit er dies Gelübde beobachtete, gab seinem ganzen Wesen eine geheime Nahrung, und da sein Herz nicht ohne Teilnehmung bleiben konnte, so ward eine liebevolle Mitteilung nun zum Bedürfnisse. Er ging wieder wie von dem ersten Jugendnebel begleitet umher, seine Augen faßten jeden reizenden Gegenstand mit Freuden auf, und nie war sein Urteil über eine liebenswürdige Gestalt schonender gewesen [WML, p.124].

The narration of Wilhelm's thoughts is a very important constituent of the narrator's discourse and indeed crucial to the psychological portrayal of the central character. A common subject of the 'psycho-narration' is the confusion of various images of womanhood - the recurring images of the 'Kranker Königssohn' and the 'Amazone', especially in the last two books. Memories of his childhood merge into visions of future happiness:

> Wilhelms Augen schweiften auf unzählige Bilder umher. Vom ersten frohen Triebe der Kindheit, jedes Glied im Spiele nur zu brauchen und zu üben, bis zum ruhigen, abgeschiedenen Ernste des Weisen konnte man in schöner, lebendiger Folge sehen, wie der Mensch keine angeborne Neigung und Fähigkeit besitzt, ohne sie zu brauchen und zu nutzen [WML, p.541].

One can argue that 'psycho-narration' is merely a form of summary, since it would be possible to show what is going on in Wilhelm's mind in interior monologue. The subsection below will deal with the other types of summary and I shall deal extensively with the nature of commentary and sententiousness in the chapters below devoted to the particular areas.

The final area of narratorial discourse with which I wish to deal is the narrator's direct addresses to the reader or references to the process of narration. This can be seen most readily where the narrator chooses to edit or omit a piece of information. We see this where events have taken such a hold that the narrator is 'compelled' to give Mignon's song at the chapter in the case of Book Five, Chapter Sixteen and spends a little time explaining this to the reader:

> Und so lassen wir unsern Freund unter tausend Gedanken und Empfindungen seine Reise antreten und zeichnen hier noch zum Schlusse ein Gedicht auf, das Mignon mit großem Ausdruck einigemal rezitiert hatte und das wir früher mitzuteilen durch den Drang so mancher sonderbaren Ereignisse verhindert wurden [WML, p.356].

Indicators of such discourse are the use of the first person pronoun and the present tense. One should not confuse this use of the present tense with its usage in sententious discourse, where, as we shall see in the chapter below, the present is used without any real temporal reference. The use of the first person is indicative of the fact that the narrator has become 'dramatized' and in this sense, this type of discourse is what we can properly call discourse coming from the narrator as character [8].

Where such comments are habitual, the narrator tends towards the type of the loquacious *raisonneur*. This is not what one can call the narrator of WML. There are, it has to be said, examples of his using "wir", of talking in the present tense, of being sententious (which is another example of

loquaciousness, as is commentary). The examples of this type of discourse are few (with the exception of sententiousness - see Chapter Four). It is usually prompted by the narrator moving quickly on from one event to another, when the former becomes too drawn-out, as is the case in Book Five, Chapter Nine:

> Wir lassen uns hierauf nicht weiter ein, sondern legen vielleicht künftig die neue Bearbeitung 'Hamlets' selbst demjenigen Teile unsrer Leser vor, der sich etwa dafür interessieren könnte [WML, p.315].

There are two main types of narratorial discourse in the novel, namely 'stage-directions' (description of events or actions) and temporal summaries. Commentaries, as we shall see below, are not that common; sententiousness to a larger degree takes over.

(ii) Types of Dialogue

I have already discussed one type of discourse by the characters, namely the narratives of 'documents' produced by these characters. It is necessary now to look at other types of dialogue present in the text.

The first type of dialogue which I should like to examine is the dialogue which emerges from the particular scene. A good example of this would be the conversation between Mariane and Barbara in the first chapter of the novel. By 'dialogue emerging from a scene' I mean dialogue which is essentially to do with the immediate situation of the characters. In Book One, Chapter One, the dialogue would appear to be of that type. We have Mariane and Barbara conversing about the situation in which the former finds herself. This type of dialogue carries the plot, indirectly imparting information to the reader and conveying emotions of the characters concerned. It deals with these in a predominantly conversational, if not realistic form, which is to be seen perfectly in Book One, Chapter One; Book One, Chapter Twelve (WML, pp.45 - 46); Book Two, Chapter Four; Book Three, Chapter Ten (Philine and

the Gräfin); Book Five, Chapter Ten; Book Seven, Chapter Eight, as just a few examples.

This type of dialogue is almost the rule in the early books of the novel. Indeed, one could say that Schiller's comments on receipt of third book of the novel reflect not only the general subject matter, but also the style of the narrative and the dialogue:

> Ich kann Ihnen nicht ausdrücken, wie peinlich mir das Gefühl oft ist, von einem Produkt dieser Art in das philosophische Wesen hineinzusehen. Dort ist alles so heiter, so lebendig, so harmonisch aufgelöst und so menschlich wahr, hier alles so strenge, so rigid und abstrakt und so höchst unnatürlich, weil alle Natur nur Synthesis und alle Philosophie Antithesis ist [9].

Schiller juxtaposes philosophical presentation with one which is "so harmonisch aufgelöst", where, among other things, everyday life, dialogue, reflection go hand in hand. However, the novel is not totally devoid of philosophical dialogue by any means. One has only to think of Wilhelm's initial encounters with the emissaries of the 'Turmgesellschaft' (in Book One, Chapter Seventeen and Book Two, Chapter Nine). The meeting with the "Landgeistlicher" in Book Two, Chapter Nine is a philosophical discussion thinly disguised as realistic dialogue by the fact that the dialogue is given a scene - the boat trip. Yet it must count as philosophical, since subjects such as Fate and Chance are broached in an abstract manner. Early examples of abstract dialogue are not confined to the involvement of members of the 'Turmgesellschaft'. In the second chapter of the second book, it is Wilhelm who is speaking philosophically 'at' Werner and in Book Four, Chapter Sixteen, Wilhelm, Serlo and Aurelie discuss Shakespeare at length. However it is true to say that this type of dialogue becomes more common the more the 'Turmgesellschaft' comes into the text (e.g. Book Seven, Chapter One; Book Seven, Chapter Three; Book Eight, Chapter Five; Book Eight, Chapter

Seven).

Abstraction characterizes this kind of dialogue. It also, however, involves a degree of directness of information-giving, even didacticism. In the more conversational kind of dialogue, characters' views on certain issues are brought out implicitly, whereas it is often the case with discursive dialogue that characters give their views directly. This question will be examined in greater depth in the chapters below (see Chapters Three and Five).

The dialogue becomes less realistic in the last two books. This can, as intimated above, be attributed to the growing involvement of the 'Turmgesellschaft' both in Wilhelm's life and in the text as a whole. The Society's dialogue tends to be of an analytical nature. Much of their dialogue concerns itself with informing Wilhelm (and the reader) about the Society. For example, in Book Eight, Chapter Three, the first part of the dialogue conveys information rather than displaying any particular emotions - it does not appear realistic (pp. 520 - 522). The dialogue later, however, does become more conversational in layout and form (p. 523) where Wilhelm quizzes the "Arzt" about the identity of his "Nachtbesucher(in)".

Tied in with this is rehearsed, 'staged', or memorized dialogue - which similarly does not have a 'realistic' effect. The most striking example of this is the sung dialogue of Mignon's funeral. The various songs which punctuate the novel may also fall into the category of unspontaneous dialogue. These songs are significant enough in number to merit being a group of their own - they form a type of dialogue in their own right. Inherent in the form of the song is the notion of repeatability. Mignon's songs, positioned at the beginnings and ends of Books, do highlight the importance of the use of song in the novel, as well as highlighting the contents of what is being delivered.

Whether Mignon's songs or those of the 'Harfner' are in fact unspontaneous and infinitely repeatable is an interesting question. They do, in the context,

appear to be impromptus, arising from a specific occasion. Indeed this is suggested in the text in Book Two, Chapter Thirteen, where the 'Harfner' first is described as rhapsodizing and improvizing, and then sings a song which seems to respond exactly to a comment made by Wilhelm ("Wer sich der Einsamkeit ergibt?"). Another example is "Kennst du das Land..." (Book Three, Chapter One): who but Wilhelm might the 'Geliebter' 'Beschützer', the 'Vater' be whose help is being implored?

Although I have noted the presence in the text of such types of dialogue as discursive, unspontaneous and lyric dialogue, it must be said that the rule is conversational dialogue. One interesting use of this type of dialogue is to convey meaning through a mere snippet of conversation. This is demonstrated in Book Two, Chapter Ten, with the conversation between Philine and Laertes which is tagged on at the end of the conversation involving Wilhelm:

> 'Und doch könntet ihr euch,' sagte Philine, 'darin wirklich irren. Dieser Mann hat eigentlich mir das falsche Ansehen eines Bekannten, weil er aussieht wie ein Mensch und nicht wie Hans oder Kunz.'
> 'Was soll das heißen?' sagte Laertes. 'Sehen wir nicht auch aus wie Menschen?'
> 'Ich weiß, was ich sage', versetzte Philine, 'und wenn ihr mich nicht begreift, so laßt's gut sein. Ich werde nicht am Ende noch gar meine Worte auslegen sollen.' [WML, p.123].

This section of dialogue is important, since it reveals a function in even the smallest section of conversation. This is a seemingly inconsequential piece of banter - quite humorous, but nothing more. But nonetheless, it has a deeper significance, since it introduces the distinction between a fully-rounded "Mensch" and someone who is not "gebildet". It could therefore be said to be a harmless piece of banter with a hidden didactic purpose: a pioneering use of obliqueness in Goethe's novel.

(iii) Types of Summary

The most common type of summary in WML is temporal summary. It may be used to describe something in a more fleeting way than would have otherwise been the case. In Book Two, Chapter Ten, we have a good example of a summary for reasons of time:

> Philine saß kaum im Wagen, als sie artige Lieder zu singen und das Gespräch auf Geschichten zu lenken wußte, von denen sie behauptete, daß sie mit Glück dramatisch behandelt werden könnten. Durch diese kluge Wendung hatte sie gar bald ihren jungen Freund in seine beste Laune gesetzt, und er komponierte aus dem Reichtum seines lebendigen Bildervorrats sogleich ein ganzes Schauspiel mit allen seinen Akten, Szenen, Charakteren und Verwicklungen. Man fand für gut, einige Arien und Gesänge einzuflechten; man dichtete sie, und Philine, die in alles einging, paßte ihnen gleich bekannte Melodien an und sang sie aus dem Stegreife [WML, pp.123 - 124].

Here, by summarizing Philine's songs, the narrator is declining to offer a scene. There are other examples of what one could call ' the offer of scene declined'. On one occasion, the narrator explicitly comments on this: he declines to show a conversation between Lothario and Jarno, in the final chapter:

> Lothario und Jarno saßen am andern Ende des Zimmers und führten ein sehr bedeutendes Gespräch, das wir gern, wenn uns die Begebenheiten nicht zu sehr drängten, unsern Lesern hier mitteilen würden [WML, pp. 602 - 603].

The narrator uses 'reasons of time' as a pretext - an ostensible reason for declining the 'offer' of same. In reality, in the novel, a certain alternation of summary and scene is simply a kind of background norm, a rhythm.

Summary can therefore be used to link episodes or chapters. It can round off one episode and introduce another - which can be seen in some chapter divisions: In the division between chapters two and three of Book Five, for example, a short summary rounds off the episode in the second chapter:

> Von diesem Augenblicke an ward unser Freund im Hause, als gehöre er zur Familie, behandelt [WML, p.429].

The next chapter opens with a summary which shifts the focus from Wilhelm on to Lothario:

> Man hatte einigemal dem Kranken vorgelesen; Wilhelm leistete diesen kleinen Dienst mit Freuden [...] [WML, p.430].

The linking of different scenes through summary is a very common practice in the novel. Another form of summary and one which has been mentioned above is 'psycho-narration'. Indeed, one of the forms of 'psycho-narration' is iteration (see Chapter One [10]). Iteration is something which is not easily shown, summary being the preferred medium. Psychological pre-occupation is an example of iteration : "Seitdem ihn jene grausame Entdeckung von der Seite Marianens gerissen hatte, war er dem Gelübde treu geblieben [...]" [WML, p.124].

Some summaries are executed with a certain purpose in mind. Two such are the summary of the "Ritterstück" in Book Two, Chapter Ten, and the summary of troupe's debate in Book Five, Chapter Seven. In the latter case, the summary is the chosen method for presenting the material because the narrator wishes to show the findings of the troupe's discussion in a salient manner. The summary is partly temporal and partly comes out of considerations of clarity ("Sie sprachen viel herüber und hinüber, und endlich war folgendes ungefähr das Resultat ihrer Unterhaltung [...]" [WML, p.307]).

The summary of Wilhelm's reading of the "Ritterstück" makes sense for pragmatic reasons: it would be implausible to show the play at length. But by reducing this particular play to a type, and juxtaposing the account given of it with the description of the troupe's increasingly drunken revelry, including such details as Madame Melina's declared desire to have children called Germanic names like "Adelbert oder Mechtild", the narrator manages to satirize the genre. Summary here becomes one tool of the satirist.

(iv) Types of Scene

I mentioned in the section above concerning chapter divisions that the episodes of the novel generally become longer as the novel progresses. The same can be said consequently of the scenes which are markedly longer in the final two books than in the first five, generally speaking. There are, of course, notable exceptions to this - the lengthy scene between Aurelie, Serlo and Wilhelm, as well as Wilhelm's extended narration of his childhood in the first book. A typology of 'scene' is very difficult, since it is very problematic to come up with any yardsticks which would allow one to measure differences of degree - something is either a scenic presentation or it is not, one might argue. One could look, however, at the amount of dialogue or narratorial discourse ('stage direction') constituting a particular scene for a typology. Out of this, one could ask oneself whether the scene is made up of simply dialogue, a mixture of dialogue and descriptive narration, or merely descriptive narration. The conversation between the 'Landgeistlicher' and Wilhelm in Book Two, Chapter Nine, for example is notable for the absence of 'stage-directions' - it is just speech. At the other end of the spectrum, the incident where Jarno is embraced by the unknown soldier in Book Three, Chapter Eleven, is an instance of descriptive narration taking precedence over dialogue:

> Jarno stand einen Augenblick still und sagte: 'Bedenken Sie meinen Vorschlag, entschließen Sie sich, geben Sie mir in einigen Tagen Antwort und schenken Sie mir Ihr Vertrauen. Ich versichre Sie, es ist mir bisher unbegreiflich gewesen, wie Sie sich mit solchem Volke

haben gemein machen können. Ich hab' es oft mit Ekel und Verdruß gesehen, wie Sie, um nur einigermaßen leben zu können, Ihr Herz an einen herumziehenden Bänkelsänger und an ein albernes, zwitterhaftes Geschöpf hängen mußten'.

Er hatte noch nicht ausgeredet, als ein Offizier zu Pferde eilends herankam, dem ein Reitknecht mit einem Handpferd folgte. Jarno rief ihm einen lebhaften Gruß zu. Der Offizier sprang vom Pferde, beide umarmten sich und unterhielten sich miteinander, indem Wilhelm, bestürzt über die letzten Worte seines kriegerischen Freundes, in sich gekehrt an der Seite stand. [WML, p.193].

It should not be forgotten that the determining factor in the distinction of scene and summary is detail. It may well be that dialogue on its own can constitute scene, but so can detailed narration. In practice, Goethe avoids both extremes, preferring a combination of dialogue and narration in varying proportions.

What is of greater importance is the use of scene instead of summary or vice versa, as well as the alternation of scene and summary. Genette asserts that prior to Proust most novels had a structure in which chapters opened with a summary, moved into scene, where the main action was played out, and then were rounded off by a summary [11]. This pattern is never so straightforward in WML, for chapters do not centre themselves around one scene or action, but several, thus rendering the narrative as a whole quite complex. For example, the tenth chapter of the third book starts 'conventionally' enough with the summary:

Philine wußte sich nun täglich besser bei den Damen einzuschmeicheln [WML, p.187].

There follows an iterative summary of how Philine usually behaves, which is quite detailed. This summary is essentially a summary of how Philine acts.

There then follows a more precise delination ("Eines Tages [...]" [WML, p.188]) with which a scene begins (albeit a narrated scene). The narratorial scene-setting is broken by a piece of sententiousness:

Wilhelm war über diese Rede betroffen. Er hatte zu wenig Kenntnis der Welt, um zu wissen, daß eben ganz leichtsinnige und der Besserung unfähige Menschen sich oft am lebhaftesten anklagen [...]" [WML, p.188]. This is followed by another narrated scene and another piece of 'psycho-narration' which interrupts the scene. Finally, in the last page of the chapter, we actually get some dialogue. The chapter is rounded off by a piece of summary. So one can see that, although a chapter may begin and end in summary, that which is sandwiched in the middle may not be scene pure and simple. Moreover, there are chapters which do not include any scene - for example the first chapter of the second book. The purpose of this chapter is to depict the psychological state of Wilhelm. What we have in this chapter is iterative summary ("Tage des lauten, ewig wiederkehrenden und mit Vorsatz erneuerten Schmerzens folgten darauf [...]" [WML, p.76]), sententiousness ("[...] die schnell heilende Kraft der Jugend" [WML, p.77]) and 'psycho-narration'. Here, however, Genette's rule is reaffirmed on a higher level of organization: now it is a whole Book which starts with a summary, rather than an individual chapter.

There are instances where chapters begin and end in scene. These cases are an indication that in WML the 'convention', as Genette sees it, of chapters beginning and ending in summary has not established itself consistently. True, there are chapters which do conform to this 'convention', but even when there is less summary 'in toto', as in the last book, many of these chapters are often not rounded off in summary.

2.5 Conclusions

So what sort of novel are we dealing with in WML in terms of narratorial presentation of events? Most novels will have a mixture of forms of narrative representation. Consistency lies in the way they are combined. As we have seen above, the norm, in Genette's eyes, lies in alternation of scenes and summaries, narrator's and characters' discourse. In the last two books of the novels, this rhythm is more pronounced than earlier. They look forward to later developments in narratorial techniques in the nineteenth century, on which Genette bases his ideas.

However, in the body of the narratorial discourse, there is only a small amount of description of scene, movements and characters. In this respect, the narrative is backward-looking to the more abstract and philosophical narratives of the eighteenth century, such as Wieland's Geschichte des Agathon. What does distinguish the novel from such earlier examples of the genre is the type of dialogue which tips the balance towards 'realistic' conversation, in the sense of situation-bound and 'casual' exchanges, as opposed to philosophical and abstract reasoning.

WML therefore presents itself as a novel which looks forward to 'realistic', situation-bound, dialogue, establishing in the last two books a *rhythm* of alternation of summary and scene. On the other hand, there is nothing of the modern novel's obsession with the depiction of external features, surface details, and the specifics of individual occasions.

Footnotes to Chapter Two

1. Joachim von der Thüsen: Der Romananfang in WML, in DVjs 43 (1969) p.623
2. By segmenting Wilhelm's narration with several chapter breaks, the narrator conveys the impression that it is long and drawn out.
3. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre, in Goethe's Werke, volume 7, edited by Erich Trunz (Hamburger Ausgabe), Munich: (C.H. Beck Verlag), 1981, p.19.
4. Similar examples are Book 4, Ch. 12, and Book 5, Ch. 7
5. Eberhard Bahr, Erläuterungen und Dokumente zu Goethes WML, Stuttgart: Reclam, 1982
6. Michael Toolan, Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction (London 1988), p.82
7. Dorritt Cohn: Transparent Minds (Princeton 1978), pp.21 - 57
8. See Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Harmondsworth, 1982): "In a sense even the most reticent narrator has been dramatised as soon as he refers to himself as 'I' (...)". p.152
9. Schiller to Goethe 7/1/1795 in Goethe's Werke, op.cit. p.623
10. See Chapter One, pp.9 - 10
11. Gérard Genette: Narrative Discourse (Oxford, 1980), p.131

CHAPTER THREE:

The Narrator's Use of Commentary in Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre

3.1 The problematic of the commentary/implication distinction has been mentioned in the opening chapter of this study. We saw there that the reader is faced with the difficulty in distinguishing whether a piece of 'meaning' the reader may have gleaned from the text is implied or comes about as a result of direct commentary. If something is strongly implied by the narrator, then there must come a point where one has to deem it commentary, as the reader's viewpoint is swayed to such an extent that only one interpretation is possible. Certainly, as we shall see in this and the following chapters, the distinction between implication and commentary is by no means an easy one to make in certain circumstances.

3.2 Commentary as a Means of Exploring the *Showing/Telling* Distinction

As I argued in my introductory chapter, the commentary/implication distinction cuts across higher showing/telling opposition. Insofar as the higher distinction is one of voice, both implication and commentary can belong to either *showing* or *telling*, since they can be effected in both the characters' and the narrator's discourses. Moreover, the dividing-line between the two is not as definite as it might appear at first sight.

As mentioned above, something which is strongly implied can possibly be viewed as commentary, since one is left in little doubt as to what is intended, or indeed one is conscious of the fact that the narrator is assuredly imparting a meaning through the veil of implication. Irony is something which falls into the grey area; and irony itself can be more or less oblique. Certain narratorial interventions may also carry implications. Cases where material is edited or omitted and the editing or omission is made explicit, are relevant instances.

A suitable approach might therefore be to examine instances of direct comment, implication, irony and omission as a bridge to the study of the

showing/telling opposition within the narrative. In this chapter, I should like to examine the elements of commentary within the novel, and look at how strong these comments are. I shall endeavour to establish whether there is any pattern to the comments by the main narrator of the text, as well as looking at the role played by commentary in the conveying of meaning.

3.3 Intensity of Commentary

In the section of my introductory chapter on commentary/implication, I quoted Michael Toolan's list of the indicators of narratorial presence in the text [1]. Although Toolan sees generalization as a part of commentary, a separate chapter will be dedicated to the subject of generalization [2]. What I shall be looking at here is the most intense form of narratorial presence, namely commentary. This can be defined as interpretation and judgement by the narrator, as a means of gauging the degree of narratorial presence and thereby drawing some conclusions on the role of *telling* in the text.

(i) Book One

To assess the workings of the implication/commentary distinction, a discussion of the first book of the novel is of use, as Michael Beddow points out:
"In the first phase of Wilhelm's experiences, conveyed in book one of the novel, Wilhelm is shown to be supremely confident and self-assured; the narrative presentation, however, insists that this confidence is wholly unfounded" [3].

This being the case, the question which must now be raised is to what extent this negative view of Wilhelm comes through commentary and to what extent through implication. In approaching this question, it is necessary to examine the means the narrator employs for dealing with Wilhelm's action in this book.

The first book is primarily concerned with establishing Wilhelm's background, with Wilhelm's relationship with Mariane and his leaving her. As Beddow

points out, the narrator, in this book at least, takes a critical stance towards Wilhelm and his chief method for effecting this is irony [4]. As we touched upon above, irony is a difficult property to pin down. Leaving irony aside for the time being, however, I should like to explore the possibility that the narrator uses direct commentary as a means of criticism of Wilhelm's actions. On first consideration, the instances of this type of explicit commentary (the narrator never says for example "Wilhelm acted wrongly") seem scarcer. Referring to Toolan's list of features indicating degrees of narratorial presence, we see that not only is 'interpretation' a manifestation of commentary, but 'judgement' as well. This affords one a quite broad scope for finding examples of commentary in the narrative. In Rhetoric of Fiction, Wayne Booth, in his chapter on 'Telling' and 'Showing', looks at Homer's Odyssey, arguing that despite a lack of direct comment, "[...] Homer intrudes deliberately and obviously to ensure that our judgement of the 'heroic', 'resourceful', 'admirable', 'wise' Odysseus will be sufficiently favourable" [5]. On occasion, no more than a single word may be necessary to impart a comment as a particular action. Applying this to WML, the narrator's choice of words at the opening of the third chapter is noteworthy:
"Auf den Flügeln der Einbildungskraft hatte sich Wilhelm's Begierde zu dem reizenden Mädchen erhoben" [WML, p.14].

At first glance, this might appear a quite neutral comment on the wonder of Wilhelm's love for Mariane. However, it assumes a critical force when one considers that it is imagination which causes much of Wilhelm's grief: it is his imagining that Mariane is unfaithful to him, or rather that she prefers her rich(er) suitor Norberg to himself, which prompts him to leave her in the lurch. In the context of the whole novel (the level on which authorial meaning is established), imagination may be said to be a negative property and one might say therefore that the narrator is using it consciously to undermine the impression of Wilhelm's love for Mariane in the eyes of the reader. One might take the argument further and say that the phrase "auf den Flügeln der Einbildungskraft" is used with a conscious irony - since it might appear, taken

at its face value to be a positive description of their love, yet in the context it can only be negative for the reasons mentioned above.

We see in the above example that irony is triggered by a narratorial judgement. There is another instance in the eighth chapter of the first book. In the last paragraph, the narrator rounds off Wilhelm's narration of his childhood with a summary of events during and after he has finished his narration:

> Durch den Druck seines Armes, durch die Lebhaftigkeit seiner erhöhten Stimme war Mariane erwacht und verbarg durch Liebkosungen ihre Verlegenheit; denn sie hatte auch nicht ein Wort von dem letzten Teile seiner Erzählung vernommen, und es ist zu wünschen, daß unser Held für seine Lieblingsgeschichten aufmerksamere Zuhörer künftig finden möge [WML, p.33].

Irony is produced here with the narrator's first making a comment, namely that Wilhelm deserves a better audience than he is getting - the irony lies in the fact that the presentation of his drawn-out narration of his childhood is hardly likely to entice an interested audience.

This is of course typical of the way irony works: the narrator's explicit words make the opposite judgement to the one implied. He is putting across his opinion on the events through irony rather than stating it directly. Irony, in the context of WML, might therefore be said to incorporate a process of commentary and implication, since the reader is given one view directly by the narrator when the events prompt the reader to tend towards the opposite (hence by implication). By using irony rather than a more direct form of commentary (and irony in this case might be described as a form of commentary), the narrator is slightly less obtrusive than had he chosen a more direct form of commentary.

Like Homer, Goethe does not provide us with a narrator who 'vanishes' completely (that is to say, the narrator who provides no commentary at all). Throughout the novel, the narrator consistently uses minor qualifications and judgements. Such judgements can have the effect of colouring the reader's view of events, as is the case in Book One, Chapter Seventeen, where Wilhelm meets the 'Freunde':

"[...] sie waren in einem ganz interessanten Gespräche begriffen,als sie am Tore des Wirtshauses ankamen"[WML, p.68]. This judgement (namely that the conversation is interesting) has the effect of highlighting further what is about to be shown - which heightens its importance in the eyes of the reader. The narrator makes the same judgement later on when Wilhelm encounters the 'Landgeistlicher' (in Book Two, Chapter Nine):

> [...] und Wilhelm geriet mit dem Geistlichen, wie wir ihm, seinem Aussehn und seiner Rolle nach, nennen wollen, auf dem Spaziergange bald in ein interessantes Gespräch [WML, p.119].

What this heightening effect achieves is to establish the importance of these two conversations in the reader's mind, especially as the narrator so rarely passes direct judgement on what he is showing. This is important because the narrator does not state directly (using superior knowledge) that Wilhelm is encountering two members of the 'Turmgesellschaft'. So as to take in the conversations, the reader has to be alerted to their importance. This is achieved partly by showing them and partly by their introduction through the narrator's commentary as being "interessant" [6].

Although the narrator recounts the events of Wilhelm's life very much in chronological order, there is evidence that he does try to impose an order on them. By this, I mean that the narrator has in his mind a path which he believes that Wilhelm's life should follow. This reflects itself in his (initial) positive stances towards the 'Turmgesellschaft' [7], as well as the various comments he makes which imply that Wilhelm's path is a typical one or

follows a typical pattern [8]. This first emerges in Book Two, Chapter One. Wilhelm has just made the decision to leave Mariane, thereby renouncing his first love. The narrator makes a comment on the initial stage of Wilhelm's 'Gemüt' which has the effect of giving Wilhelm's condition a certain generality and universality:

> In einem so neuen, ganzen, lieblichen Gemüte war viel zu zerreißen, zu zerstören, zu ertöten, und die schnell heilende Kraft der Jugend gab selbst der Gewalt des Schmerzens neue Nahrung und Heftigkeit [WML, p.77].

In the course of this summary, the narrator conveys the fact that Wilhelm's situation is made all the worse by the stage at which he currently is in his life. This can be seen as a clever way of avoiding sententiousness when trying to point out something which is universal (i.e. "Kraft der Jugend").

In Book Two, Chapter Three, the narrator begins with a judgement on Wilhelm's behaviour in the last part of the previous chapter - where he bursts into tears in front of Werner in a fit of despair:

> Nach solchen Rückfällen pflegte Wilhelm meist nur desto eifriger sich den Geschäften und der Tätigkeit zu widmen, und es war der beste Weg, dem Labyrinthe, das ihn wieder anzulocken suchte, zu entfliehen [WML, p.86].

That his behaviour in the previous chapter is described as a "Rückfall" means that it gains a negative quality - it is possible that a Romantic might view Wilhelm's bursting into tears positively as an expression of his emotion. This judgement, I should say, is as strong as any in the narrative, since it recasts the reader's interpretation of the events, carrying on, it must be said, from the previous chapter where the narrator points out, albeit less directly, that "Werner stand in der größten Verlegenheit dabei" when Wilhelm was actually

shedding his tears. However, it should be underlined that this judgement has a positive connotation, inasmuch as the narrator goes on to argue that Wilhelm tries to improve himself after such "Rückfälle". Moreover, the word "solch" is of importance as it typifies the judgement and indeed the summary, pointing to a pattern which Wilhelm's life is taking in the narrator's perception. Even in despair, the narrator hints at the positive upshot of Wilhelm's life and at the fact that this despair will bring something positive.

The linkage of a sententious proposition into the rest of the narrative is a feature which will be dealt with at length in the next chapter. Sententiousness, it is worth mentioning here, does have the effect of generalizing or rather universalizing the narrative. In Book Two, Chapter Fourteen, there is an instance of where a piece of sententiousness is followed by a narratorial judgement:

> Nichts ist rührender, als wenn eine Liebe, die sich im stillen genährt, eine Treue, die sich im Verborgenen befestigt hat, endlich dem, der ihrer bisher nicht wert gewesen, zur rechten Stunde nahe kommt und ihm offenbar wird. Die lange und streng verschlossene Knospe war reif, und Wilhelms Herz konnte nicht empfänglicher sein [WML, p.142].

The love which is being discussed is that of Wilhelm for Mignon. Looking at the paragraph from a purely technical point of view, one sees that the overall effect is of generalization - the reference of Wilhelm's feelings to the universal - and it is the juxtaposition of the sententious statement and the narrator's interpretation of Wilhelm's state of mind which achieves this. Through 'Sentenz' and commentary, the narrator thus succeeds in generalizing Wilhelm's condition, at the same time referring to an underlying pattern behind existence which the use of sententiousness and the narrator's commentary alludes to. In addition, the piece of commentary underlines Wilhelm's potential for the achievement of his own personal worth. In the

previous example, we notice that the narrator was almost at pains to present an optimistic front on Wilhelm's behalf even when he was emotionally fragile. Here again, the narrator will demonstrate this, using the image of the ripened bud for the receptiveness of Wilhelm's heart. The natural image suggests Wilhelm's development is a natural process.

There are very few instances of the narrator's taking an explicitly negative view of Wilhelm's actions. Possibly the most notable example of criticism is where Wilhelm signs Serlo's contract in Book Five, Chapter Three:

> So schrieb er seinen Namen nur mechanisch hin, ohne zu wissen, was er tat (...) [WML, p.293].

One might argue a case here for implication rather than commentary. However, an interpretation of Wilhelm's actions is involved. Wilhelm has been daydreaming about his rescue by the 'Amazone'; the narrator describes the image emerging "durch eine unerklärliche Verknüpfung von Ideen" [ibid]. The narrator might have been content to juxtapose the fact that Wilhelm had to sign the contract and the information that Wilhelm's attention was not focused on the matter in hand. Instead, he interprets the manner in which he signs and there suggests a commentary which is critical. This criticism might seem to be based on the facts we are shown. In general terms, the criticism which the narrator does make of Wilhelm tends to be of an interpretive nature - he gives opinions on events, often supplementing the implication. Much is still left for the reader to interpret from the events which the narrator presents.

3.4 Omission/editing out of information:

There are several instances of the editing out of scenes and pieces of information by the narrator. On a few occasions, the narrator uses the pretext of decency for the non-presentation of information. One such example comes in Book Two, Chapter Eleven, where Philine's bawdy song is not shown:

> Der Alte begann die Melodie, und sie sang ein Lied, das wir unsern Lesern nicht mitteilen können, weil sie es vielleicht abgeschmackt oder wohl gar unanständig finden könnten [WML, p.130].

Previously in this chapter, the narrator has quoted (and thus *shown*) the 'Harfner' 's song at length and he consistently quotes songs which the characters sing. Here, however, the song is not shown, not are the contents even summarized, but omitted, the narrator passing judgement on it. The narrator is anxious to preserve a certain tone in his text. This is to be seen again in the fifth book with the omission of the 'Harfner' 's conversation with Wilhelm, the former having apparently caused the fire which has nearly killed Felix:

> Wilhelm gab nicht nach und drängte ihm endlich halb mit Gewalt ins Gartenhaus, schloß sich daselbst mit ihm ein und führte ein wunderbares Gespräch mit ihm, das wir aber, um unsere Leser nicht mit unzusammenhängenden Ideen und bänglichen Empfindungen zu quälen, lieber verschweigen als ausführlich mitteilen [WML, p.335].

Conversations and ideas which offend decency or which threaten to compromise the tone of the narrative are omitted. Here, as before, the narrator is keen to preserve an even tenor of civilized discourse.

The other reason for omission of information is that of time and narrative space. Such an instance could come about when the narrator wishes to move onto another subject or when the narrator believes that an elaboration would arrest the 'flow' of events. Such an example comes in the fifth book when the narrator does not wish to elaborate any further on Wilhelm's reworking of *Hamlet*:

> Wir lassen uns hierauf nicht weiter ein, sondern legen vielleicht künftig die neue Bearbeitung 'Hamlets' selbst demjenigen Teile unsrer

Leser vor, der sich etwa dafür interessieren könnte [WML, p.315].

We see something similar in Book Eight, Chapter Three where Natalie's narration is broken by the narrator:

> Einen unständlichern Bericht, wie Natalie mit ihren Kindern verfuhr, versparen wir auf eine andere Gelegenheit [WML, p.528].

In both cases, the narrator mentions the possibility that he will tell us at a later date when was actually said. He does not fulfil this promise - which both emphasizes the lack of importance he places on what he has omitted, and also the fact that he is showing distinct signs of being a loquacious narrator, insofar as he is mentioning events, but then chooses not to show them. One has to ask oneself why he bothers to mention them at all; perhaps only to demonstrate his presence. Another reason could be to mark the boundary between novelistic and discursive prose, and to demonstrate his awareness of having reached it. It is clear from such omissions that the narrator will only deal with events and conversations which have a reference to the main plot and which he deems of interest to the reader - i.e. with subjects that belong to the area of narrative, rather than philosophy or criticism.

3.5 Definition of Character

An examination of this feature of *telling* is justified as part of this discussion of commentary, as it does indicate a greater degree of narratorial presence [9]. What is meant by 'definition of a character' is demonstrated in Book One, Chapter Fifteen by the narrator's introduction of Werner:

> Werner war einer von den geprüften, in ihrem Dasein bestimmten Leuten, die man gewöhnlich kalte Leute zu nennen pflegt, weil sie bei Anlässen weder schnell noch sichtlich auflodern [WML, pp.60 - 61].

Yet again, a piece of narrative commentary is packaged with a sententious

proposition, which conveys the impression of generality and perhaps also neutrality on the part of the narrator. This definition of Werner's character is one which does display an element of judgement and comment by the narrator, taking the form of a summary. However, the view given appears to come less from interpretation and more from a summary of the features of his character (which we are then also shown). The summary definition is borne out by what one sees of Werner throughout the novel - especially his coldness which comes out when he sees Felix for the first time ("Was ist das für ein Wurm!" [WML, p.501]).

Another instance of this is Friedrich, whom the narrator describes as "der ausgelassene Mensch" in the last chapter of the novel; [WML, p.605] yet it is of note that the narrator never tries to define Wilhelm's character, since such a definition should only emerge through implication from the novel as a whole. In the third chapter of the second book, the narrator does proffer some information which could be seen as a definition in part, at any rate, of Wilhelm's character:

> Seine gute Art, sich gegen Fremde zu betragen, seine Leichtigkeit, fast in allen lebenden Sprachen Korrespondenz zu führen, gaben seinem Vater und dessen Handelsfreunde immer mehr Hoffnung [...] [WML, p.86].

Unlike the definition of Werner's whole character, this would only seem to be a description of one feature of Wilhelm's character, namely his suitability for business. What the narrator is doing in the novel is to show Wilhelm's character through the events, so that it emerges rather than being stated explicitly.

It is interesting to note the narrator's use of the word 'Art' in this instance, since it must be said that the narrator quite often speaks of 'Art'. With reference to the main characters, the narrator uses 'Art' in a particular sense:

Wilhelm's "Gute Art" in the above case refers solely to his way of dealing with people. As far as other characters are concerned, the word has a more all-embracing sense. In Book Three, Chapter Three, Wilhelm's sentiments are dealt with in some detail, whereas the other characters' are lumped together:

> Die übrigen gebärdeten sich jeder nach seiner Art [WML, p.160].

One receives no detailed information as to how each individual reacted; one is left to form an opinion on the basis of one's existing knowledge of the characters. Another example of this comes in the last book when Jarno is described as having "nach seiner Art den größten Spaß, wenn er den alten Herrn mitunter irremachen konnte" [WML, p.599]. One is not told what this 'Art' is, but one infers it from the events and the avoidance of direct definition of characters reduces the level of presence of the narrating instance.

Wilhelm and Mignon, as we shall discuss at greater length in a later chapter, are characters who are purely shown. As with members of the 'Turmgesellschaft', the narrator does not make definitions of their characters. It is interesting that he does neatly package some of the more minor characters, so that one could say that they are fixed types. We have already seen this with Werner, as we shall see it with Philine. What we see is characters playing out their roles - roles given to them in the narrative. This we see in the second paragraph of the novel: "Barbara war als alte Dienerin, Vertraute, Ratgeberin, Unterhändlerin und Haushälterin im Besitz des Rechtes, die Siegel zu eröffnen [...]" [WML, p.9].

There is a gradation between these fixed types and the fluidity of Wilhelm, who is in no place defined. The other characters are seemingly stuck within their roles - something which brings the novel close to a drama: Wilhelm is the hero, the purpose of the other characters is to serve his development. Even the members of the 'Turmgesellschaft' are intended to serve this

purpose. The 'Arzt', for instance, is there to 'cure' Wilhelm and also acts as a vehicle for the symbol of healing which underlies the text [10].

Serlo is one such character whose role would be to serve as a catalyst for Wilhelm's disillusionment with a life in the theatre. He, unlike many of the minor characters, has his life story presented, in a very interesting form, as I shall discuss below.

3.6 Serlo's Life Story

The presentation of Serlo's life story towards the end of the fourth book raises some very interesting questions as regards commentary/implication and showing/telling. Serlo's life story is presented indirectly through the narrator and this is the only instance of a life story being presented in this way in the novel. The narrator justifies this:

> [...] denn es war nicht die Art dieses seltnen Mannes, vertraulich zu sein und über irgend etwas im Zusammenhange zu sprechen [WML, p.268].

What follows is the summary of Serlo's narration of his childhood. The question which has to be raised is this: who is responsible for the judgements made in the course of this narration - is it the narrator or is it Serlo? It might seem plausible that Serlo would describe himself as clever:
"Er war klug genug, einzusehen, daß die gekrönten Häupter sein freches Unternehmen nicht wohl vermerken würden" [WML, p.270], but would he himself speak of the "innerliche Kälte seines Gemütes"?

I would tend towards the opinion that it is the narrator who is interpreting Serlo's words (the fact that he has not 'allowed' Serlo to narrate may be an implication that he considers Serlo incapable of narrating in a satisfactory style to be presented in the novel). Serlo's life story would therefore seem to be one of the most interesting instances of *telling* in the novel. Firstly, the

narrator defines his character ("[...] dann es war nicht die Art dieses seltnen Mannes"); secondly he summarizes Serlo's narrative and finally, he provides judgements in addition to Serlo's own.

3.7 Conclusion

I have argued above with the help of Toolan's enumeration of narratorial presence that commentary is the most extreme manifestation of *telling*. I have attempted to show in this chapter the different types and intensities of commentary in order to gauge the presence of the narrator. Having only touched the surface of sententiousness, I shall devote the next chapter to an examination of this type of discourse.

Footnotes to Chapter Three

1. "1.1 Description
   1.2 Identification of characters
   1.3 Temporal summaries
   1.4 Definition of characters
   1.5 Reports of what characters did not think
   1.6. Commentary; interpretation; judgement; generalization"; Michael Toolan, Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction (London 1988) p.82
2. See the chapter on sententiousness (Chapter Four)
3. Michael Beddow, Fiction of Humanity, (Cambridge 1982) p.85
4. ibid.: "In the first book, the narrative irony is predominantly critical: it is designed to pass judgement on Wilhelm's beliefs and expectations and to find them severely wanting".
5. Wayne Booth, Rhetoric of Fiction, (London 1983) p.5
6. More on the subject of the narrator's relationship to the 'Turmgesellschaft' will be offered in the chapter on the presentation of specific characters (Chapter Six, pp.119 - 122). Other examples of the narrator's judging

members of the 'Turmgesellschaft' include his description of Lothario's conversation as "ernsthaft und gefällig", p.463.

7. Although this stance does change, see chapter on 'Turmgesellschaft' (Chapter Six, pp.101 - 104).

8. This is also reflected in the use of sententiousness (see Chapter Four on sententious discourse, p.66)

9. See Note 1

10. See Chapter Five of this study, pp.84 - 86

CHAPTER FOUR:

Sententiousness in Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre

4.1 Sententiousness as Subdivision of Telling

In the opening chapter, we have touched upon what hitherto has been referred to as 'Sentenz' in terms of its relationship to the *showing/telling* distinction. We have seen that sententiousness represents a high degree of narratorial presence [1]. I have argued that the sententious proposition is on the same level as comment as far as the presence of the narratorial instance is concerned. My aim below will be to show the difference between sententiousness and comment as far as the degree of narratorial intervention is concerned, as well as to discuss the essential properties of sententiousness and to discover whether there is any scheme to the sententious propositions of the narrator in WML.

4.2 Sententiousness within Characters' discourse

If my aim set out above was to look at the sententious propositions of the main narrator, then I wish also in this chapter to examine the relation between the sententiousness in this discourse with that in the characters' discourse. In doing this, I shall hope to establish whether the narrator's use of 'Sentenz' complements or contradicts that of the characters and this may lead us to draw conclusions about the position of sententiousness in the novel as well as about its usefulness as a means of articulation of ideas and its appropriateness as a facet of narratorial representation.

4.3 What is Sententiousness?

In approaching this question, I am indebted to Geoffrey Bennington's excellent study on the question of sententiousness in the French novel [2]. That the sententious proposition is a general statement, propounding a seemingly timeless idea would find few dissenters as a definition. What Bennington does, however, in his opening chapter is to examine the sententious proposition's relationship with the rest of the narrator's discourse (*diegesis*),

in addition to laying out a typology of sententiousness. One has to be careful when reading Bennington, as when reading Genette, to remember that the analysis of the study refers to certain French texts. Much of relevance, however, is to be gleaned from both these works.

Bennington begins by outlining the complexity of the relationship between the sententious sentence and what he terms the 'narrative-descriptive' sentence [3] The sententious statement is easily recognizable by its tense - the present - which stands out amidst the proliferation of the past tense which makes up narrative. Bennington argues that this is not really the present tense, rather it is what he terms the 'unmarked' tense [4] and this because of its very essence of generality and timelessness. According to Bennington, the temporal aloofness of the sententious proposition reflects the fact that it does "not contribute to the diegesis and (seems) to stand aloof from it" [5].

Sententiousness, by dint of its isolation from the rest of the narrative, might therefore seem rather superfluous. This thesis arises probably out of the assumption that properties of the narrative which are extraneous to the plot (i.e. that are not vehicles of the plot) are mere bolstering and covertly didactic [6]. Bennington rightly asserts that a series of sententious propositions could not possibly constitute a novel, whereas the opposite is true for narrative/ descriptive discourse. Bennington goes on to make the point that this is brought about because, for the reader, the sententious proposition smacks of factuality - it is by its very nature a 'truth' - in the context of the novel. However, precisely because the context is that of a novel, the factuality of the sententious proposition is cast into doubt. The sententious proposition is uttered by a character in fiction, be it the main narrator or another character, and is a reflection of the fictional world which the particular character inhabits. Nevertheless, sententious propositions do have a 'resistance' [7] to fictionality, for the very reason that they represent certain 'truths'. That sententious discourse in a novel does seem to contain a higher degree of factuality than narrative-descriptive discourse gives the former a positive

advantage over the latter, as Bennington remarks:

> [...] sententiousness inevitably exceeds its situation in novels, not only cutting across generic boundaries, but challenging the distinction between true and false sentences on the one hand, and fictional sentences on the other. By disqualifying the predicate 'fictional', the sententious proposition accords itself a privilege with respect to 'truth' to which no narrative-descriptive sentence can pretend [8].

Where Bennington's analysis is lacking is in the fact that the sententiousness of a novel does have a context from which that sententiousness is drawn, for, as mentioned above, the narrator or character making the sententious proposition does live in that fictional world. One can only say with certainty that the 'truths' to be found in the body of a fictional work are 'truths' belonging to the particular fictional world of that work and are not necessarily particular to the 'real' world of the reader. The sententious content of a work, particularly in the narratorial discourse, pertains to the work itself and thereby one can construct a sententious framework for that particular work, rather as we can construct a semantic framework for the work. When Rodegen states that sententious formulations imply a judgement grounded in social norms and that they convey a cultural heritage and are thus inherently conservative, one has to add that these social norms and this cultural heritage are those underlying the fictional world of the text [9].

Bennington rightly argues that all forms of sententious discourse imply an "always and everywhere", which in turn implies a generality and universality inherent in sententiousness [10]. This universality and generality are the result of a prior discourse, which, in the eyes of the quoter, has attained a certainly universal validity. It is a question of who actually assigns the universal validity to the sententious proposition - something which is not dealt with in great depth by Bennington. In this respect, I should proffer the suggestion that it is the utterer of the particular piece of sententious discourse who

subjectively decides that a certain statement is of universal validity and sententiousness, far from being neutral, is a highly subjective matter.

4.4 Types of Sententiousness

In the opening chapter of his study, Bennington outlines several types of sententious discourse. The first type he deals with is the proverb [11]. An example of a proverb would be "Too many cooks spoil the broth", which to attain a universality has to be understood metaphorically and this requires what Bennington terms as a "cultural competence" [12] so that it may be recognized as a proverb. By dint of the very fact that it has to be a set form, recognized by all belonging to a particular culture or language group, the proverb may be also said to be more of a quotation than other types of sententious proposition, for the above proverb would lose greatly if it were misquoted as "a surfeit of chefs spoil the soup", which, although using synonymous words, lacks the universality of the original proverb, simply because it is a misquotation.

The proverb has a "versatility with respect to its situation of utterance" [13] and therefore can be applied wherever it is to be seen as appropriate to the situation. Bennington, however, goes on to discuss the sociological implications of the use of proverb:

> Insofar as the novel is to be regarded a 'bourgeois' form, it is therefore to be expected that the occurrence of proverbs will be linked to this type of labelling, and subject to ironic distancing [14].

From a narratological standpoint, the proverb can have the effect of connecting sententiousness with the narrative/descriptive discourse of the rest of the narrative. Bennington argues that with regard to the above proverb "something like an explanatory story of why too many cooks spoil (or once spoiled) the broth seems to be implied" [15]. Therefore, the distance between sententiousness (essentially a result of a previous discourse or of many

discourses) and narrative discourse is reduced. This question of distance between sententiousness and narrative/ descriptive discourse is one which will emerge and re-emerge throughout this chapter.

The second type of sententiousness and one of which Bennington makes great play is the law - sententiousness has the effect of 'laying down the law' [16]. The type of 'law' Bennington is referring to is scientific law, which he argues becomes a "source of authority" [17], and a "ground for exclusions and repressions" [18]. Closely linked with scientific laws are other types of law, which Bennington terms as 'rules', but they also involve a 'laying down of the law'. The 'rules' which Bennington refers to are very much those of social etiquette and the example of a 'rule' which he gives is very much in keeping with this:
"In polite society one does not wipe one's fingers on the tablecloth" [19].

The nature of this piece of sententiousness is very much prescriptive. The proverb has a metaphorical basis. The 'rule' very much relates to the laws of the type of the society in which it is uttered and is thus less general than the proverb. In relation to the proverb, we discussed the relationship between the quotation and the sententious proposition. Whereas the proverb is to be seen as a quotation, the 'rule' is not so easy to categorize in such terms. Looking at this matter quite crudely, one could say that it would be possible to change certain words within the above sententious discourse; one could use 'smear' instead of 'wipe' for instance. However, the 'Sentenz' retains the appearance of being a quotation - perhaps the verbalization of a rule from the unspoken reservoir of social rules. It is clear that Bennington is right when he asserts: "This type of sentence is difficult to locate in terms of polarity between 'invented' statements on the one hand, and 'quotations' on the other. It would be distinctly odd to claim that I have 'invented' this sentence, but strange to present it as a quotation" [20].

This type of sentence does have a prescriptive force, as mentioned above.

Bennington argues that this comes above all for purposes of 'initiation' or 'therapy' [21] and is keen to propound the idea that this contributes to the 'closure' (not to be confused with the narratological term!) of the society of the novel - prescriptive sententiousness protects from invasion from without. In the context of a novel, if the intention of the novelist is to give this type of sententiousness a prescriptive force, the "actualisation of such (...) implies a pragmatic 'scene' which I shall call a 'scene of education'" [22].

As the fourth type of sententious discourse, Bennington cites the maxim. The examples of maxims given by Bennington are all taken from works including the word 'maxim' in their title which predetermines them as sententious propositions. They are thus quotations. However, whether all maxims have to be such direct quotations is another matter. As mentioned above, many forms of sententious discourse do have the semblance of being a quotation. Meleuc [23] argues that the maxim and the dictionary definition share certain features, for a definition, as is the case with sententious discourse, has the tendency to "rigidify and arrest meaning" [24]. Bennington pursues the maxim and has recourse to Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding, where the philosopher, in the chapter entitled 'Of Maxims', reduces the maxim to pedagogical use. Indeed, this is a most interesting feature of the maxim that it often has a merely educational objective in mind, be it the narrator's trying to 'elucidate' the reader' informing him of certain 'truths', or one character's trying to educate another (and perhaps the reader as well!).

4.5 The Narrator's Use of Sententious Discourse in Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre

The sententious proposition, as we have seen, stands out from 'ordinary' narrative by the fact that it is in the present tense, whereas the latter is in the past. This might lead to the assumption that the 'Sentenz' is easy to pick out from the rest. It is, however, not the only discourse written in the present tense. A loquacious narrator, for instance, will often use the present tense when discussing the processes of his narration. A good example of the use of the present tense by the narrator of WML (who, it must be said, is not the

most loquacious of eighteenth century narrators) comes in Book Five, Chapter Sixteen, where Mignon's song has been bracketed and positioned at the close of the chapter:

> Und so lassen wir unsern Freund unter tausend Gedanken und Empfindungen seine Reise antreten und zeichnen hier noch zum Schlusse ein Gedicht auf, das Mignon mit großem Ausdruck einigemal rezitiert hatte, und das wir früher mitzuteilen durch den Drang so mancher sonderbaren Ereignisse verhindert wurden [WML, p.356].

This serves as a good example of present tense in the body of a past-tense narration, but which is not to be adjudged sententious discourse. Deceptive here is also the narrator's use of 'wir', so often a part of 'Sentenz'. The form might therefore be said to be that of sententiousness; the semantics of the sentence, however, deny the sentence a universality and it thus cannot be termed sententious.

The narrator's first use of the sententious proposition is a very self-conscious one:

> Wenn die erste Liebe, wie ich allgemein behaupten höre, das Schönste ist, was ein Herz früher oder später empfinden kann, so müssen wir unsern Helden dreifach glücklich preisen, daß ihm gegönnt ward, die Wonne dieser einzigen Augenblicke in ihrem ganzen Umfange zu genießen [WML, p.14].

I use the term self-conscious, since the narrator stresses the fact that what he is saying is generally the case ("wie ich allgemein behaupten höre [...] "). This has the effect of heightening the sententious nature of the 'Sentenz', as well as creating the impression that the narrator is merely conveying that which he has heard and that which is generally accepted as being the case. This piece of sententiousness is doubly of interest, inasmuch as the narrator

uses it as part of a comparative sentence and links it with the 'pastness' of the rest of the narrative ("daß ihm gegönnt ward"). What is more, the narrator links the sententiousness with the 'Held' directly, by including him in the equation of the comparative sentence. This sententious discourse is thereby brought closer to the body of the rest of the narrative, which perhaps reduces its aloofness as sententiousness.

The narrator's next piece of sententiousness follows on directly from the last:

> Nur wenig Menschen werden so vorzüglich begünstigt, indes die meisten von ihren frühern Empfindungen nur durch eine harte Schule geführt werden, in welcher sie, nach einem kümmerlichen Genuß, gezwungen sind, ihren besten Wünschen entsagen und das, was ihnen als höchste Glückseligkeit vorschwebte, für immer entbehren zu lernen [ibid].

This lengthy sententious proposition seemingly dilutes the effect of the one previous in the paragraph. It is a very interesting effect, as the narrator holds up one seemingly general 'truth' and then proceeds to undercut it with another. One can infer from the fact that the narrator at first claims (or rather reports) that the first love is generally the most beautiful and then undercuts it with the fact that this love brings merely a "kümmerlichen Genuß" and is one which one should learn to get over, that the whole process of being sententious is brought into question. The first general maxim, qualified by the "wie ich allgemein behaupten höre", could be said to be the product of a different discourse from the one which produces the second piece of sententiousness which apparently qualifies it.

One might go further and say that the processes made universal in the second piece of sententiousness in this paragraph are actually elaborated and borne out by what actually takes place in the novel. Indeed, for much of the novel, Wilhelm is preoccupied by the denial of his love for Mariane, his first love,

as again and again, the narrator reveals Wilhelm's longing to recover his former first love. One might even go as far as to argue that much of the novel is about how Wilhelm gets over his first love and indeed that the only element of learning to be articulated in the novel is Mariane "entbehren zu lernen" and it is only with Natalie that he manages to finally detach himself from his first love - yet the reminder of it remains in the form of Felix.

What the juxtaposition of the two sententious propositions shows is how sententious discourse can differ. The first maxim is quite a simple one, whereas the second is characterized by its length and complexity. One might argue that, by bearing out the 'truths' set down by the second sententious proposition, the novel in fact serves as championing of a more involved dialectic within the 'Sentenz' rather than the over simple and rather cursory "Die erste Liebe ist das Schönste", which seems to be the case for much of the novel, but is undermined by the fact that Wilhelm has to surmount it in order to marry Natalie. Thus, the implication is that the whole nature of the simple maxim has to be questioned, since it is simply too cursory. Life (that is to say the fictional life of Wilhelm Meister and those characters belonging to the fictional world of WML) is too complex to be summed up so axiomatically by a short, pithy maxim [25]. The narrator would therefore seem to be promoting a new kind of complex sententious discourse where one generality is pitted against the other.

This sort of juxtaposition becomes apparent when one looks at the second lengthy example of sententious discourse by the narrator. As in the example dealt with above, the fifteenth chapter of the first book commences with a sententious paragraph:

> Glückliche Jugend! Glückliche Zeiten des ersten Liebesbedürfnisses! Der Mensch ist dann wie ein Kind, das sich am Echo stundenlang ergötzt, die Unkosten des Gespräches allein trägt und mit der Unterhaltung wohl zufrieden ist, wenn der unsichtbare Gegenpart auch

nur die letzten Silben der ausgerufenen Worte wiederholt [WML, p.57].

Although the first two exclamations do not contain a verb in the present tense, this represents wholly a "Kapiteleinsatz mit Gemeinplatz" [26]. Once again, we see that the narrator is putting forward two pieces of sententious discourse - the first very simple ("Glückliche Jugend! Glückliche Zeiten des ersten Liebesbedürfnisses!"), so simple in fact that it does not even involve a verb, yet so simple that it leaves itself open to ironization. There then follows the second, more drawn-out component of the juxtaposition and the effect is the same as in the first case. The first piece of sententiousness is undercut by the more complex second piece of sententiousness, in that the latter represents a questioning of the former; again the nature of all-too-general generalizations is called into question.

At the beginning of the chapter, I asked the reader to consider the question of where sententiousness lay in relation to commentary. In the two examples I have considered so far of the narrator's use of sententiousness, one might believe that the sententious propositions offered in each do indeed represent a comment on the nature of Wilhelm's first love. This impression is compounded by the fact that in each case, the narrator is at pains to mention Wilhelm in relation to the sententious proposition. In the third chapter of book one, for instance, we see the words "unsern Helden" sandwiched between the two pieces of sententiousness and in the fifteenth, the sententious paragraph is followed by a paragraph starting with the words "so war Wilhelm [...]". However, if one believes there to be, as I have suggested, a criticism exercised of over-simplified sententiousness, which may even be termed clichés, then the effect of the juxtaposition of two types of sententiousness must then come about by implication, since the reader has to infer from this juxtaposition what the narrator is intending.

These first two examples of narrative sententiousness establish a pattern for

the narrator's sententious discourse throughout the novel. As we shall see from now on in the novel, the narrator has rejected the 'simple' type of maxim, which he has undercut in the two above examples, preferring a more complex type, mirroring the complexity of existence itself.

This question is linked with that of factuality and fictionality which we have broached in the introductory sections to this chapter. Bennington argued that sententiousness is largely seen in the reader's eyes as more 'factual' than narrative/ descriptive discourse, simply because it emerges as the result of some sort of consensus. However, the fact that the narrator of WML implicitly calls into question one kind of sententious discourse, preferring another more complex variety, must consequently have some bearing on the question of truth and falsehood of various kinds of narrative representation. That a fictional character can have a preference for the type of sententious discourse he uses exposes the subjective quality of sententiousness, as well as its fictionality (as I suggested above, sententious discourse within a novel can be reduced to the result of a prior discourse). In undermining one sort of sententiousness, the fictionality of all sententiousness within the novel is exposed.

Having determined the type of sententiousness the narrator will employ, the question which must now occupy us is the positioning of sententious discourse in the novel. In the second chapter of the second book, there is a proliferation of sententious propositions. Within the space of two pages, there are two lengthy examples of narrative sententious discourse:

1. Denn gewöhnlich wehrt sich der Mensch so lange, als er kann, den Toren, den er im Busen hegt, zu verabschieden, einen Hauptirrtum zu bekennen und eine Wahrheit einzugestehen, die ihn zur Verzweiflung bringt [WML, p.80].

2. Denn wir merken erst, wie traurig und unangenehm ein trüber Tag ist,

wenn ein einziger durchdringender Sonnenblick uns den aufmunternden Glanz einer heitern Stunde darstellt [ibid].

Again, we have two examples of prolonged sententious discourse. Each time, there is the attempt to link the 'Sentenz' into the rest of the narrative with the linking conjunction "denn" which gives the sententious proposition the impression of being an example of what the rest of the narrative has been dealing with. This kind of application we have seen in the first two examples of sententiousness which were dealt with above as well as at the beginning of the second book (" Die Pest oder ein böses Fieber rasen in einem gesunden, vollsaftigen Körper, den sie anfallen, schneller und heftiger, und so ward der arme Wilhelm unvermutet von einem unglücklichen Schicksale überwältigt, daß in einem Augenblicke sein ganzes Wesen zerrüttet war") [WML, p.76]. Already, a pattern must be emerging of where the narrator chooses to be sententious. Examples of sententiousness are rarely isolated, the beginning of the second book produces at least three examples of sententious discourse (p.76, p.80). It seems beyond a coincidence that the narrator uses such an amount of sententiousness at a time when Wilhelm has just made the decision to leave Mariane. As demonstrated by the first two examples of sententious discourse above, the purpose of the 'Sentenz' is to highlight the fact that the first love of one's life will not be an enduring one, a 'fact' which is borne out by the events. What is to be remarked upon is that at the highest point of Wilhelms's "Genuß", the narrator is underlining the fact that this is only a temporary state of affairs by the use of 'Sentenz'. The narrator would thus seem to be intervening at a critical point in Wilhelm's life with a piece of sententiousness. This is again to be seen at the beginning of Book Two, where Wilhelm has made the decision to leave Mariane. It is a time of high emotion for Wilhelm who has renounced his first love. This piece of sententiousness comes at a difficult time in the life of the main character. The sententiousness at the beginning of Book Two is not really uttered with any clear didactic purposes in mind, rather it serves as an explanation of Wilhelm's state of mind and feelings. There is no real element within the

discourse of the narrator's admonishing Wilhelm through sententiousness, by stating, for example, "this is the rule, but Wilhelm acted differently". Instead, Wilhelm's feelings serve as an example and an elaboration of the piece of sententiousness which the narrator sets down, or rather the sententiousness endows Wilhelm's plight a certain universality with the effect of making Wilhelm's case a more general one than might otherwise have been the case. For example, by stating in the third chapter of book one that it is a perfectly normal state of affairs for one to renounce one's first love, the narrator could be said to be excusing Wilhelm for his leaving Mariane, which could be said, in the context of the novel, to be a great mistake. Alternatively, one could argue that the narrator is as much at fault as is Wilhelm by recognizing that leaving Mariane is the best course of action, which, as it turns out, is one of the most callous acts of Wilhelm's life.

A similar proliferation of sententiousness by the narrator occurs in the eighth chapter of the third book, when Wilhelm is falling in love. Here again, the narrator is engaging in 'Sentenz' at a time of high emotion in Wilhelm's life; Wilhelm is falling in love with the Gräfin - his next love-affair after the Mariane episode. If the narrator in the latter affair sought to explain it but also excuse Wilhelm's behaviour in his separation from Mariane, he now assumes a more moralizing tone:

> Wie über einen Fluß hinüber, der sie scheidet, zwei feindliche Vorposten sich ruhig und lustig zusammen besprechen, ohne an den Krieg zu denken, in welchem ihre beiderseitigen Parteien begriffen sind, so wechselte die Gräfin mit Wilhelm bedeutende Blicke über die ungeheure Kluft der Geburt und des Standes hinüber, und jedes glaubte an seiner Seite, sicher seinen Empfindungen nachhängen zu dürfen [WML, p.177].

Although couched within the structure of the narrative/descriptive discourse in the form of a comparison (and thereby incorporating it into the body of the

narrative), the sententious content of this sentence is undoubtedly critical of Wilhelm's relationship with the 'Gräfin'. Later in the same chapter, the narrator is perhaps more excusing of Wilhelm's behaviour:

> Der Mensch kommt manchmal, indem er sich einer Entwicklung seiner Kräfte, Fähigkeiten und Begriffe nähert, in eine Verlegenheit, aus der ihm ein guter Freund leicht helfen könnte. Er gleicht einem Wanderer, der nicht weit von der Herberge ins Wasser fällt; griffe jemand sogleich zu, risse ihn ans Land, so wäre es um einmal naß werden getan, anstatt daß er sich auch wohl selbst, aber am jenseitigen Ufer, heraushilft und einen beschwerlichen weiten Umweg nach seinem bestimmten Ziele zu machen hat [WML, p.180].

By generalizing or rather universalizing faults, the narrator is perhaps excusing him - his mistakes are a result of human nature, or here the lack of someone to confide in and help him. Therefore, far from teaching Wilhelm a lesson, or 'laying down the law' [27] to him, the narrator wishes to explain his behaviour, perhaps so that the reader may learn about the pattern of human life. Indeed, what the narrator appears to be doing in this last piece of sententiousness is using a parable - a metaphorical elaboration of a maxim - to demonstrate his point. The narrator's sententiousness is becoming so prolonged that it is entering the realm of the parable. The story of the 'Wanderer' who falls in the water is a parable - perhaps one too obviously articulated or too short to be thus immediately recognizable. This has the effect of making this piece of sententiousness all the more universal, as well as giving it the appearance of being a quotation.

The narrator uses sententiousness at other crucial moments in Wilhelm's life. When the theatrical troupe is facing disintegration, the narrator uses sententious discourse to explain that this is 'the way of the world':

> Überhaupt ist es leider der Fall, daß alles, was durch mehrere

> zusammentreffende Menschen und Umstände hervorgebracht werden soll, keine lange Zeit sich vollkommen erhalten kann [WML, p.343].

The narrator again shows that he wishes not to comment directly on these important events in Wilhelm's life, rather he wishes to appear neutral, putting them down to the 'way of the world' - it is external circumstances which explain Wilhelm's behaviour. In the same chapter, the narrator is more specific about the general nature of the disintegration of the troupe:

> Das Publikum hat eine eigene Art, gegen öffentliche Menschen von anerkanntem Verdienste zu verfahren; es fängt nach und nach an, gleichgültig gegen sie zu werden, und begünstigt viel geringere, aber neu erscheinende Talente [...] [WML, p.344 - 345].

The drift of the narrator's sententious discourse is to put Wilhelm's failure to sustain a career as an actor down to the general forces which control an actor's career - namely the goodwill of the audience [28].

The beginning of the final book is another example of where the narrator employs sententiousness at a crucial time in Wilhelm's life. Wilhelm has, of course, just read the 'Lehrbrief', which we shall discuss below. In this first chapter, the narrator steps in where Wilhelm is unsure of his status now that his 'apprenticeship' has been proclaimed to be "vorüber" [WML, p.497].

> Es ist eine schauderhafte Empfindung, wenn ein edler Mensch mit Bewußtsein auf dem Punkte steht, wo er über sich selbst aufgeklärt werden soll. Alle Übergänge sind Krisen, und ist eine Krise nicht Krankheit? Wie ungern tritt man nach einer Krankheit vor den Spiegel! Die Besserung fühlt man, und man sieht nur die Wirkung des vergangenen Übels [WML, pp.504 - 505].

The sententious is again not really didactic, more it serves as a comment,

albeit general, on Wilhelm's current 'progress'. Much truth is to be found in this proposition: all changes and transitions have shown themselves to be crises in Wilhelm's existence. Moreover, the theme of Wilhelm's being 'healed' and the image of the 'kranker Königssohn' is a general one in the text, so that the depiction of a crisis as an illness comes as no surprise. The last piece of the sententious proposition, namely the implication that one can only feel the benefit of suffering when one is faced with the effect of past ills, has been borne out by the text when Barbara tells Wilhelm of the fate of Mariane. The 'Wirkung' of the ill (i.e. Wilhelm's relationship with her and his leaving her in the lurch) is thrust before Wilhelm in a tangible form - Felix - and he is the obvious symbol of Wilhelm's former self which will outlast him [29].

4.6 Conclusions about the Narrator's Sententious Discourse

We have seen that the narrator, far from being overly didactic vis-à-vis Wilhelm in his use of sententiousness, employs this mode of discourse as a means in itself in order to give Wilhelm's life and thereby the text as a whole a degree of universality. The sententious discourse by the narrator does not have the same effect as direct commentary. It does not provide evidence of whether an event is particularly positive or negative, merely it serves to explain it in terms of common experience. Neither is the very nature of sententiousness simple. By juxtaposing initially the simple maxim with the complex sententious statement, the narrator rejects as superficial too general analyses of the world and its ways, preferring a more complex form of analysis.

The narrator remains consistent in his use of sententious discourse. It seems to be prompted by moments of high emotion or by turning points in Wilhelm's life. Indeed, there is little evidence to suggest that the instances of sententiousness become fewer as the novel progresses. If at a certain point in the novel there is an absence of narratorial sententiousness, then this comes about because none is necessary.

4.7 The Formulation of Sententious Discourse

I have argued above that sententious discourse comes very much as a result of a prior discourse. Having established this, I wish now to consider the seventh chapter of the fifth book. This chapter, especially the opening to it, takes the form of a reported discussion of the generic distinctions of the novel and the play and which is to be preferred. What emerges, however, is a definition of both genres. As we have seen, Meleuc [30] argues that the maxim and the definition are roughly equivalent to each other. As what is presented by the narrator (from "Im Roman wie im Drama sehen wir menschliche Natur und Handlung [...]" to "[...] das Schicksal hingegen müsse immer fürchterlich sein und werde im höchsten Sinne tragisch, wenn es schuldige und unschuldige, voneinander unabhängige Taten in eine unglückliche Verknüpfung bringt" [WML, pp.307 - 308] takes the form of a definition of the two genres, one could argue that what is being presented in the text is a maxim and therefore a piece of sententiousness. This view is compounded when one considers that it is presented in the present tense and impersonally -what is shown is "ungefähr das Resultat ihrer Unterhaltung" [WML, p.307]. This is very much therefore a result of a prior discourse and presented generally. The only question one must have in one's mind is whether the fact that one knows the identities of those responsible for the prior discourse should have any bearing on the sententious discourse. This is indeed an interesting question and one which must be asked. One might argue that by presenting the dialogue in such a way, an implicit criticism of the objectivity of sententious discourse emerges. I have made the point that sententious discourse is rooted in the fictional world from which it comes. Goethe here could be demonstrating the very same point of view. Moreover, the type of sententiousness in this chapter is very much descriptive and not prescriptive, which is in keeping with the narrator's use of sententiousness. Whatever one might think about this, it appears that sententiousness is merely a representation of a consensus of a prior discourse - which is exactly what is displayed in this chapter.

4.8 The Use of Sententious Discourse by the Characters in the Novel

(i) Wilhelm

In the first chapter of book five, the narrator is critical of Wilhelm for his approach to sententiousness when writing a letter to Werner in that he "blieb viel zu lange an einer Idee, ja man möchte sagen an einer Sentenz hängen, und verließ dabei seine natürlich Denk- und Handelsweise, indem er oft fremden Lichtern als Leitsternen folgte" [WML, p.285] . When one is shown the letter in the next chapter, one can see that Wilhelm's reliance on sententious discourse is heavy. This criticism by the narrator is indeed interesting, for one might argue that it is contradictory for a narrator who himself uses this form of discourse to criticize Wilhelm for using it. However, the narrator uses sententiousness to universalize Wilhelm's actions, rather than as something which he should base his own life upon, which is something quite different. Moreover, the narrator, as we have seen previously in the chapter, remains sceptical of certain types of sententious discourse. In the first book, for instance, especially in his conversations with Mariane, Wilhelm uses sententious discourse extensively. His reason for using it is clear - so that he may appear the intellectual superior of Mariane. He says such things as:

> Es ist so angenehm, selbstzufrieden sich mancher Hindernisse zu erinnern, die wir oft mit einem peinlichen Gefühle für unüberwindlich hielten, und dasjenige, was wir jetzt entwickelt, *sind*, mit dem zu vergleichen, was wir damals unentwickelt, *waren* [WML, p.17].

The narrator's criticism from the fifth book could also be said to apply to him here, namely that he is too preoccupied with being sententious. Moreover, the important thing here is that he seems to have accepted that just because he has reached adulthood all obstacles are overcome and he is developed. He does not seem to realize that many obstacles are to be overcome, if he is to achieve happiness. What is demonstrated by this is that Wilhelm's sententious discourse has really very little relevance for his situation. He is merely

repeating some second-hand idea that he feels might be appropriate to his situation. Wilhelm's narration of his childhood is on such a general level as to appear banal. He tries to impose an order on his childhood which did not really exist at the time and this appearance of order is heightened by his use of sententiousness. He tends to make sweeping statements about childhood, which are so banal that they could be termed clichés:

> Ich war in den glücklichen Jahren, wo uns noch alles gefällt, wo wir in der Menge und Abwechslung unsre Befriedigung finden [...]. Kinder wissen beim Spiele aus allem alles zu machen [WML, p.30].

Such generalization might be said to be unavoidable when looking back as an adult to one's childhood could appear as 'realistic'. Certainly, "sententiousness tends to make general the narrative itself, to make exemplary in a strong sense: a string of sententious propositions can form a sort of 'ideal' narrative" [31]. This is the effect of the order Wilhelm imposes on his childhood, so that the presentation of that childhood becomes an ideal one.

In the ninth chapter of the second book, we see a further example of Wilhelm's being sententious and this comes about in his dialogue with the stranger. Their discussion about fate, role-playing and acting contains several examples of sententious discourse. Indeed, one might argue that this is competing sententious discourse, again providing further evidence that there are various kinds of sententious discourse. The difference, however, between the types of sententious propositions is that again Wilhelm's is very much in the domain of 'received ideas' ("[...] jeder Mensch ist beschränkt genug, den andern zu seinem Ebenbild erziehen zu wollen." [WML, p.121]), which are not borne out by the text, whereas the "wohlgebildeter Mann"'s assumptions are justified by what happens in the novel ("Das meiste, was in der Welt begegnet, rechtfertigt meine Meinung" [WML, p.121]). The idea of "Erziehung" and "Bildung" is one on which Wilhelm likes to dwell in his sententious discourse. We see in the example above, that he has some

assumptions about education which are simply not borne out by the text; if the 'Turmgesellschaft' does indeed represent a pedagogical society, then the loose band of its members, who do have their differences, are hardly examples of people who become the clones of those who have educated them.

In the third chapter of the fifth book, it is again Wilhelm who likes to discuss the concept of education, hardly mentioned by anyone else in the novel hitherto. In his letter to Werner, he makes the assertion that "Auf den Brettern erscheint der gebildete Mensch so gut persönlich in seinem Glanz als in den obern Klassen" [WML, p.292]. This time, the sententious proposition may be actually based on what experience he has of acting. However, his application of this somehow to his development as a quasi-nobleman must be seen as erroneous in the context of the novel, as are his ideas about the relationship of the nobleman and the "Bürger" in society: [Der Edelmann] darf überall vorwärtsdringen, anstatt daß dem Bürger nichts besser ansteht als das reine, stille Gefühl der Grenzlinie, die ihm gezogen ist [WML, p.291]. This assertion disregards the 'wohlgebildeter Mann' 's argument " 'Ich würde mich immer lieber an die Vernunft eines menschlichen Meisters halten'" [WML, p.121] and indeed contradicts the outcome of the novel. Wilhelm's adoration of the nobleman is very much based upon an old body of sententious wisdom, which is challenged by the new ideas and rules of the new age as embodied by the 'Turmgesellschaft' [32].

(ii) The 'Turmgesellschaft' 's Use of Sententious Discourse

The role of sententiousness in the 'Turmegesellschaft' 's activities cannot be underplayed. Indeed, one of the indicators of a character's belonging to the society is his use of sententious discourse. This is what characterizes Wilhelm's 'chance' meetings with the 'Geistlicher' and also Jarno in the earlier stages of the novel. Wilhelm becomes involved in sententious discussions with these characters, which might be said to be an indication of his future suitability for membership of the society.

Apart from isolated meetings with the 'Geistlicher' and Jarno, it is not really until the seventh book that the 'Turmgesellschaft' comes into the text with its sententious discourse. In the first chapter of that seventh book, we encounter the 'Landgeseitlicher' who provides us with some sententious dialogue: 'Das Sichereste bleibt immer, nur das Nächste zu tun, was vor uns liegt [...]' [WML, p.422].

This quite simple piece of sententiousness might seem to go against the narrator's preference for more complex sententious discourse. It paves the way, however, for the extensive 'Sentenz' of the next two books. The dialogue between Jarno and Lothario in the third chapter of the seventh book is characteristic of the sententious discourse of the 'Turmgesellschaft'. What occurs in this discussion is essentially an examination and expansion on the sententiousness of Jarno and Lothario:

> 'Ein verständiger Mensch ist viel für sich, aber fürs Ganze ist er wenig.'
> 'Wir wollen', sagte Jarno, 'dem Verstande nicht zu nahe treten und bekennen, daß das Außerordentliche, was geschieht, meistens töricht ist.'
> 'Ja, und zwar eben deswegen, weil die Menschen das Außerordentliche außer der Ordnung tun' [WML, p.432].

What is more, each uses examples to support their sententious assertions; as Lothario argues: " 'Man verliert nicht immer, wenn man entbehrt. Nutze ich nicht meine Güter weit besser als mein Vater?' " [WML, p.430].

We see here that Lothario is connecting his sententious discourse to his experience of reality or, more precisely, to his experience of what he considers to be the general truth. Perhaps, he is doing something similar to the narrator in universalizing his own experience. The sententious propositions of Jarno and Lothario appear to be less complex than the

formulations of the narrator. One might argue, however, that they are less well integrated into the body of the rest of their discourse than the narrator's sententiousness. This has the effect of endowing Jarno's and Lothario's discourse with a higher degree of '*factuality*'. Another result of this 'purer' sententiousness is to heighten its effect as a maxim, which as we have seen has a pedagogical purpose.

The purest example of sententious discourse (which has overtly pedagogical aims) is the 'Lehrbrief'. This is a quite remarkable document, which consists entirely of sententious discourse. Moreover, no effort is made to apply any logical narrative onto it. What we have is a list of different sententious propositions which has the sole aim of 'educating' Wilhelm. Whether they have the desired effect is a question which I shall deal with in the case study on the 'Turmgesellschaft'. However, when one compares this time of sententiousness to that of the narrator, who makes every effort to give his sententious discourse an immediate context, one has to question the validity of such an enumeration of ideas. Bearing in mind, also, that the narrator has criticized Wilhelm for dwelling too long on sententiousness in his letter to Werner, one has to question whether these 'Sentenzen' will have any positive effect upon him. These maxims may be very useful for Wilhelm but they will only be so when he has appropriate experience to compare them with - this is, I feel, the implication of the narrator.

In the third chapter of the eighth book, the history of the society is recounted. The importance of 'Sentenz' in the very being of the society is underlined by the very fact that what is common to the members is their sententiousness. That sententiousness is passed on from the Abbé and used by the younger members, as exemplified by Natalie's using the Abbés seminal sententious propositions for similar purposes:

> Er behauptete: das erste und letzte am Menschen sei Tätigkeit, und man könnte nichts tun, ohne die Anlage dazu zu haben, ohne den

Instinkt, der uns dazu treibe. [WML, p.520]

Natalie then goes on to quote the Abbé's earlier sententious discourse. 'Sentenz' would therefore appear to be something which can be passed on and inherited, rather in the same way as a work of art can be inherited. Looking at this symbolically, the worth of sententiousness is something, which one realises, rather in the same way as Wilhelm realizes the inheritance of his grandfather [33]. What is of interest in Natalie's *showing* of the Abbé's sententious discourse is the fact that she finds it necessary to assign that sententiousness specifically to him. This must, again, call into question the impersonality of sententious discourse - if sententiousness represents a general truth, why does one need to assign it directly to the Abbé - the one who has merely reported a prior discourse? One might as well assign the results of the troupe's discussion on the nature of the theatre and the novel to the narrator of the text. Sententiousness merely provides one with an illusion of generality and universality.

4.9 Conclusions

In the form of the 'Turmgesellschaft', we have witnessed the prescriptive use of sententiousness. Their sententiousness would appear, however, to be constantly modified (in the form of debate). The 'Lehrbrief' might therefore appear to be a rather clumsy way of 'educating' Wilhelm, but it probably does represent the results of what the various members of the society have found to be true in their experience. The effect of the 'Lehrbrief' could be to make Wilhelm aware of the value of sententiousness, but only when that sententiousness has experience as its basis. This being so, the 'message' of the 'Lehrbrief' would appear to be contradictory, since it suggests that "Das Beste wird nicht deutlich durch Worte" [WML, p.496], whereas it is composed of generalities, words to explain the general 'way of things' in the world. It has the appearance of being disjointed, simply because it is the result of a legion of prior discourses such as Lothario's and Jarno's. The effect of the 'Lehrbrief' will be dealt with at length in the sub-section on the

narrative representation of the 'Turmgesellschaft'. The 'Lehrbrief' does represent very much the '*closure*' [34] of a particular society - such a '*closure*' as Wilhelm is not really prepared for, as the opening of Book Eight demonstrates.

Footnotes to Chapter Four

1. See Chapter 1, p.8
2. Geoffrey Bennington Sententiousness and the Novel, Cambridge, 1985
3. op. cit., p.4
4. ibid.
5. ibid.
6. This attitude emerges possibly from the post-Jamesian novel, where the narrator appears to fade into the background.
7. Bennington, p.7
8. op. cit., p.8
9. F. Rodegem: Un problème de terminologie: les locutions sentencieuses: Cahiers de L'Institut de Linguistique de l'Université Catholique de Louvain; 5 (1972) pp.677 - 703.
10. Bennington, p.11
11. op. cit., p.16
12. ibid.
13. ibid.
14. op. cit., p.17
15. ibid.
16. op. cit., p.19
17. ibid.
18. ibid.
19. op. cit., p.15
20. op cit., p.19

21. ibid.
22. ibid.
23. Meleuc, Serge, Structure de la Maxime, Langages 13, (1969) p.77
24. See Bennington's footnote on Meleuc (op. cit.) p.215
25. See Goethe's conversation with Eckermann 25/12/1825: "Den anscheinenden Geringfügigkeiten des Wilhelm Meister liegt immer etwas Höheres zum Grunde, und es konnt bloß darauf du, daß man Augen, Weltkenntnis und Übersicht genug besitze, um im Kleinen das Größere wahrzunehmen" in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe Sämtliche Werke nach Epochen seines Schaffens (Münchner Ausgabe) ed. by Karl Richter, Herbert G. Göpfert, Norbert Miller and Gerhard Sauder, Munich (Hanser) 1986, p.151
26. Eberhard Bahr, Erläuterungen und Dokumente zu Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre, Stuttgart, 1982, p.28
27. See Bennington. op. cit., p.18 ff
28. Cf. Jarno's reasoning for Wilhelm's failure as an actor. Book 8, Chapter 5!
29. See later piece of sententiousness: "[...] man bekennt sich zwar nicht zu allen Zügen [..]" p.505
30. Meleuc op. cit. p.77
31. Bennington, op. cit., p.110
32. Wilhelm is keen to underplay his own personal wealth "Nur uns Armen, die wir wenig oder nichts besitzen [...]" (WML p.212), whereas the truth is that he comes from a wealthy middle class family.
33. See M.R. Minden, The Place of Inheritance in the Bildungsroman DVjs 57(1) 1983, pp.33 - 63
34. See Bennington, op. cit., p.19

CHAPTER FIVE:

The Role of Implication in WML

5.1 Introduction

When addressing the question of implication, one confronts the problem that implication necessarily involves a process of subjective readership which commentary avoids. The reader has to interpret a piece of information or infer something from a given piece of information for the process of implication to come into being. This leads to a rather difficult situation, since a vast number of points could be discussed under the heading of implication. The scope of this question could therefore encompass anything or everything critics have said about the novel or the conclusion they have arrived at through implication. A novel which consisted purely of commentary, if such a thing were possible, would demand a lower level of critical response than one where implication played a role, since when faced with commentary, one can choose to do one of two things: either to agree with it or reject it. Implication involves a more complex process of association and interpretation. Having said this, the scope of implication is far wider, since the reader's beliefs are under less control, and the reader is free to interpret a text in a number of ways [1]. This being the case, if one attempted to say something coherent or logical about implication, then this would be the same as trying to say something coherent and logical about the totality of interpretations critics have made about the novel, which would be at best difficult, if not totally impossible. The approach I shall take in this chapter, therefore, will be based around the examination of the way in which a key theme of the novel is presented. The theme on which I wish to concentrate in this chapter is the question of 'Bildung', along with the motif of healing. One might question why this specific theme should be chosen. The answer is pragmatic: for reasons of economy I have chosen this key theme about which critics have arrived at something of a consensus - demonstrated by the great debate over the labelling of WML as a 'Bildungsroman'.

In the third chapter of my study, I encountered on several occasions a grey area in which there existed some doubt as to whether certain means of imparting authorial meaning were in fact due to direct commentary by the narrator - or due to implication (which is defined as by any other means than commentary - i.e. by implicit means rather than by explicit statements) [2]. In this chapter, I endeavoured to address the question of the degree of narratorial presence necessary for determining whether a particular means of imparting information should be deemed 'commentary'. Distinguishing between commentary and implication is frequently a matter of debate, except in the most vehement comment by the narrator. For instance, if the narrator supplies enough information so as to render the reader's interpretation of an event totally unambiguous, is this commentary or implication? On the one hand, if the narrator has consciously guided the reader's beliefs towards one particular view, then this could be said to be commentary; on the other, as there is a process of interpretation involved on the part of the reader, one could put forward a good case for its being deemed implication. The most difficult distinction often occurs when a single word provides or triggers a particular meaning. How should one approach this? One might argue that a single word cannot provide a commentary, since by definition a word does not amount to a proposition which is the form commentary must take. On the other side of the coin, one might still say that one word can be fully representative of the narrator's opinion [3], since the single adjective 'good' or 'bad', for instance, can reveal an opinion about a subject. It is very much a case of looking at the particular instance and then deciding whether the meaning is stated or brought out implicitly, and, if the latter, with what relative directness or indirection.

Another area which is perhaps worth mentioning is that of the interpretation of the narrator's use of scene and summary. One can ask oneself, when considering a particular event, whether there is any particular reason for the narrator's choosing scene instead of summary or vice versa. Scenic representation can have the effect of foregrounding certain events. It would,

however, be easy to overestimate the importance of this. The real reason for making the choice between scene and summary may be for purely aesthetic reasons, or simply because it is the period style; i.e. the choices are not connected to semantics.

We have to remind ourselves that the *showing/telling*, scene/summary and implication/commentary oppositions are not the same distinctions and it would be wrong to treat them thus. This means, for instance, that there will be little profit derived from the discussion of implication merely as a function of scene/summary techniques, although there may be an overlap. Implication is a much wider area than that and cannot confine itself to implicit meanings which may arise from the narrator's preference for summary over scene or telling over showing and vice versa. It will therefore be a case of showing how Goethe implants his implied meanings into the text, which may or may not be connected with the two other subsidiary distinctions.

5.2 The Presentation of 'Bildung' as a Concept in WML

The debate about the extent to which 'Bildung' plays a part in WML has raged ever since Morgenstern argued for the presence of the concept in Goethe's novel and in other 'Bildungsromane' [4]. Latter-day critics have tended to argue against any such 'Bildungsstruktur' [5] in the novel, making the point that it is a matter of doubt whether Wilhelm Meister actually develops in the true course of the novel [6]. It is nonetheless likely that 'Bildung' has a role to play in the text - in the meanings implanted implicitly at any rate - since so many critics have agreed that it does exist in the text and indeed because the assumption that 'Bildung' was the central idea in the text held sway for so long. Kurt May, for example, points to Wilhelm's letter to Werner at the beginning of the fifth book (Book Five, Chapter Three) [7]. Wilhelm writes:

> 'Daß ich Dir's mit *einem* Worte sage: mich selbst, ganz wie ich da bin, auszubilden, das war dunkel von Jugend auf mein Wunsch und

meine Absicht'. [WML, p.290]

Wilhelm goes on at length to describe how he hopes that he can achieve a 'Gebildetsein' through his acting by being able to imitate the aristocracy. How one should take Wilhelm's arguments is something which will be discussed below, but his letter to Werner does seem to provide evidence that the concept of 'Bildung' does have some basis in the text. Indeed, this is the first mention of 'Bildung', in the abstract sense at least, in the novel. The letter serves as a detailed insight into Wilhelm's current state of mind at the time of writing. It could be viewed positively, as Kurt May does, or negatively; and this because of the fact that it is shown in detail by the narrator, which could lead to an ambiguous interpretation: either the narrator wishes to highlight the importance of the letter (as May believes), or lay it bare for the criticism of the reader. Certainly, one might argue that it is unclear at first how one should interpret the letter. There might indeed be said to be something rather seductive in what Wilhelm says, if one takes the letter abstractly:

> 'Auf den Brettern erscheint der gebildete Mensch so gut persönlich in seinem Glanz als in den obern Klassen' [...] [WML, p.292].

Indeed, one might argue that there is little to criticize in this piece of sententiousness. From what one has seen so far, Wilhelm's theatrical activities have led him to command some respect from the 'Graf' and the 'Gräfin', with whom it appears he has achieved a certain amount of parity. Certainly his aim to develop himself socially if not also spiritually seems a wholly noble one from what we have seen so far. Why should one be critical of Wilhelm in this letter, since it would appear advantageous for him to try to achieve some sort of 'Gebildetsein'? The advantages to be reaped from achieving this state of 'Gebildetsein' are voiced later (in the last chapter) by Lothario:

'Unglaublich ist es, was ein gebildeter Mensch für sich und andere tun kann, wenn er, ohne herrschen zu wollen, das Gemüt hat, Vormund von vielen zu sein, sie leitet, dasjenige zur rechten Zeit zu tun, was sie doch alle gerne tun möchten, und sie zu ihren Zwecken führt, die sie meist recht gut im Auge haben und nur die Wege dazu verfehlen'. [WML, p.608]

Wilhelm's aims therefore seem totally worthy (if perhaps rather selfish compared with Lothario's view of 'Bildung'). The way one is supposed to interpret Wilhelm's words in this letter to Werner is crucial to an understanding of 'Bildung' as a concept in the text. The question really hinges upon the degree of sincerity of the narratorial presentation of Wilhelm's letter. That the narrator decides to show Wilhelm's letter in detail might lead one to think that it will be through implication that the reader will form an opinion. This is not necessarily the case - and as I stated above, showing is not necessarily synonymous with implication - for the reason that if we are presented with certain information through the eyes of an authoritative character (that is to say one who has gained some sort of authority from the narrator for the conveying of meaning), then this is virtually tantamount to commentary, especially if it is given directly. The length of the passage is also a factor here, since the longer the passage goes on, the more we forget the main narrator of the novel, and the more his authority is assumed by the character in question. The matter of sententious discourse is not divorced from this issue, since if a particular character's sententious discourse gains some sort of authority from the narrator, then this sententious discourse approximates to the narrator's. Something similar could be said in the case of commentary and implication. If a character in a position of authority states his opinion on a certain event directly, is this any different from the narrator's doing likewise? In answer to this question, one has to say that such a character (i.e. one who has become a mouthpiece for authorial meaning) is as much at odds with Lubbock's *dramatic* method as a commentating narrator.

The question is whether Wilhelm does actually become a character of this kind. Kurt May appears to believe that he does, but I should argue that Wilhelm does not in fact take on the narrator's authority. The key to this question is the way in which the narrator presents him and his letter prior to actually quoting it.

The word 'Bildung' is actually mentioned by the narrator in the body of the narrative just before he quotes Wilhelm's letter. The narrator seems to summarize the contents of the letter (or perhaps the thinking behind it) at the end of the chapter prior to the third chapter of the fifth book:

> [Wilhelm] überzeugte sich, daß er nur auf dem Theater die Bildung, die er sich zu geben wünschte, vollenden könne, und schien in seinem Entschlusse nur desto mehr bestärkt zu werden, je lebhafter Werner, ohne es zu wissen, sein Gegner geworden war. [WML, p.289]

There is nothing really explicit in this statement by the narrator. However, one can read much into it. To start with, there is an implicit qualification, on the narrator's part, insofar as he seems sceptical about the assertion that Wilhelm will be able to give himself an education on the stage. This is hinted at through the use of 'sich überzeugen' rather than, say, 'einsehen'. The fact that Werner is not actually aware of being Wilhelm's opponent reinforces the notion that the latter's 'lively' conviction is self-generated. One has to emphasize here that the narrator points to psychological factors which affect Wilhelm's decision, rather than anything which is based on fact.

Another device of implicit meaning in this evaluation of Wilhelm's approach to the concept of 'Bildung' is the use of the word 'sich' twice in the space of a few words. The implication is that 'Bildung' for Wilhelm is a one-way process ("[...] die Bildung, die er sich zu geben wünschte [...]") which can be achieved by him alone.

There is then a double qualification - on the one hand, a qualification of his mental state (i.e. one conditioned by his unfettered imagination) and, on the other, of the type of 'Bildung' which he wishes to achieve. The dual implicit criticism is continued after the letter has been presented by the narrator. When he signs the contract with Serlo, Wilhelm is in an erratic reverie which reveals to us that the 'official' reasons he gives us for becoming an actor (i.e. 'Bildung') are not the only ones. They are coloured by the confused images of reality and apparent illusion - namely the reality of Philine and the image of the 'Amazone'. Thereby Wilhelm's desire to pursue a career in acting as a means to achieving and realizing his notion of 'Bildung' appear insincere, since what is brought out by implication is a Wilhelm driven by sexual desires and the more complex yearning for the 'Amazone'. When one links this presentation of Wilhelm with the direct criticism of the way in which he writes the letter in Book Five, Chapter One [8], then one can hardly say that Wilhelm is in a position of authority, rather his ideas, so seductive to Kurt May, are ironized through the depiction of the state of his mind when he conceives them.

On a higher (or lower!) level, one might say that it is the yearning for the 'Amazone' which is truly 'bildend' in Wilhelm's life, since he realizes his goals at the close by obtaining Natalie. If Wilhelm does reach a 'Gebildetsein' at the close it is due to his finding Natalie's love and his paternal responsibility for Felix rather than any conscious effort by himself or the programmatic effort of the 'Turmgesellschaft'. The narrator describes Wilhelm's self-realization on discovering his paternal instincts towards Felix:

> Wilhelm sah die Natur durch ein neues Organ, und die Neugierde, die Wißbegierde des Kindes ließen ihn erst fühlen, welch ein schwaches Interesse er an den Dingen außer sich genommen hatte, wie wenig er kannte und wußte. An diesem Tage, dem vergnügtesten seines Lebens, schien auch seine eigne Bildung erst anzufangen; er fühlte die Notwendigkeit, sich zu belehren, indem er zu lehren aufgefordert ward

[WML, p.498]

Here, at the beginning of the eighth book, Wilhelm recognizes the need to look outside of himself in order to learn about the world and to achieve a state of 'Gebildetsein'. Previously, his conception of 'Bildung' is bound too tightly to his imagination.

After the conclusion to Wilhelm's affair with the 'Gräfin', the narrator summarizes what Wilhelm has achieved in terms of development:

> Der gute Zustand seiner Kasse, der Erwerb, den er seinem Talent schuldig war, die Gunst der Großen, die Neigung der Frauen, die Bekanntschaft in einem weiten Kreise, die Ausbildung seiner körperlichen und geistigen Anlagen, die Hoffnung für die Zukunft bildeten ein solches wunderliches Luftgemälde, daß Fata Morgana selbst es nicht seltsamer hätte durcheinander wirken können. [WML, pp.206 - 207].

The implicit criticism of Wilhelm's longing for a 'Gebildetsein' is supported by the narrator's direct comment here to the same effect. What is going on in Wilhelm's mind is a confusion of many different problems and preoccupations (for instance, his activity on the stage could be said to have become confused with his desire of 'Bildung' in his letter to Werner).

We have seen mention above of 'Bildung' in Wilhelm's letter and once in the narrator's discourse. However, it is not merely here that we find instances of the word, but also notably in the discourse of the members of 'Turmgesellschaft'. Indeed, Lothario's notion of 'Bildung' has already been shown above. Jarno explains the 'Turmgesellschaft's' overall view of the concept, when recounting the history of the Society to Wilhelm:

> Der Abbé kam uns zu Hülfe und lehrte uns, daß man die Menschen

nicht beobachten müsse, ohne sich für ihre Bildung zu interessieren, und daß man sich selbst eigentlich nur in der Tätigkeit zu beobachten und zu erlauschen imstande sei. [WML, p.549].

The text presents differing views on the nature of the word 'Bildung' and these views do not come across directly in the narrator's discourse. On the one hand, Wilhelm's initial view on the nature of 'Bildung' is conditioned by a desire to appear socially more elevated than he actually is. The 'Turmgesellschaft', on the other hand, believe, on a more personal level, that 'Bildung' has more to do with formation of character, which tends to strip the concept of the social implications which Wilhelm attaches to it. Thus no unequivocal view of what 'Bildung' actually is and whether it actually exists ever really emerges. What is presented is a variety of different types of 'Bildung' emerging from the implicit structure [9]. The narrator does seem to adopt a slightly sceptical stance towards 'Bildung' and this view comes through the implication that he never tries to discuss what 'Bildung' is in his narrative - and such a discussion might not be out of place given the style of his narrative. The narrator does use 'Bildung' and 'bilden' in a purely physical, external sense. He describes Philine in Book Two as "ein wohlgebildetes Frauenzimmer" [WML, p.90] and Mignon saying "[...] ihre Bildung war nicht regelmäßig, aber auffallend [...]". [WML, p.98]. The 'Landgeistlicher', in Book Two, Chapter Nine, is denoted as "ein wohgebildeter Mann" [WML, p.119] and Wilhelm's conversation with Serlo on the subject of the aesthetics of Hamlet is described in the eighth chapter of book five as contributing "zur Bildung seines Geschmacks" [WML, p.311]. The first three examples are taking the word 'Bildung' and using it to describe physique rather than mental or spiritual attributes and the last use of the word is in the sense of 'formation' plain and simple. It appears that the narrator is using the word 'Bildung' in its most unproblematical senses, which could be taken as to imply that the whole question of 'Bildung' in the wider sense is so problematical that it is best not even broached by the narrator. A possible reason for this trepidation is that even the 'Turmgesellschaft' find themselves

in some difficulty when trying to put their rhetoric into action in the case of Wilhelm - the last chapter, which is to a large degree unresolved, is evidence of the shakiness of the Society's claim to have brought Wilhelm to a state of 'Gebildetsein'.

5.3 'Heilung'

Recent critics [10] have put forward the view that Wilhelm is 'healed' in the course of the story, rather than educated. This seems an attractive alternative, especially in the light of the end of the novel. Moreover, this argument could be said to have a firmer basis in the text, since it is the narrator who introduced it in his discourse in the form of a summary in Book Two, Chapter One:

> In einem so neuen, ganzen, lieblichen Gemüte war viel zu zerreißen, zu zerstören, zu ertöten, und die schnellheilende Kraft der Jugend gab selbst der Gewalt des Schmerzens neue Nahrung und Heftigkeit. [WML, P.77]

On an implied level, Wilhelm's sickness could be described as an over-reliance on his imagination and a confusion of his desires brought about by his imagination. This idea does have some basis in the text, since the narrator talks about Wilhelm's trying to find a single piece of substance to his life, a certain direction, if one will, remarking at the beginning of the fifth book:

> So entfernte sich Wilhelm, indem er mit sich selbst einig zu werden strebte, immer mehr von der heilsamen Einheit, und bei dieser Verwirrung ward es seinen Leidenschaften um so leichter, alle Zurüstungen zu ihrem Vorteil zu gebrauchen und ihn über das, was er zu tun hatte, nur noch mehr zu verwirren. [WML, p.285]

The connection between (mental) health and a unity of existence as opposed to the confusion conditioned by the workings of his imagination is thus

brought out in the narrator's discourse.

The ideas of 'Krankheit' and 'Heilung'are also brought out through the use of a *Leitmotif* - the picture of the 'Kranker Königssohn'. In the discussion with the stranger in Book One, Chapter Seventeen, we learn that this was Wilhelm's favourite picture in his grandfather's collection. The picture becomes the centre of a complex web of connotations which can be interpreted in a variety of ways. M.R. Minden, for instance, argues that WML is a novel of inheritance and that the picture acts as a symbol of his grandfather's legacy, which is inextricably bound to the 'Turmgesellschaft' [11]. The actual contents of the picture are noteworthy for their symbolic value - especially for the image of Antiochus' being 'cured' not by the doctor, but by his love for Stratonike - a love which leads him astray (she is his stepmother), but one which fulfils him. It is not in the scope of this study to analyse the symbolism of the picture, but rather to highlight it as one of the ways through which Goethe insinuates the ideal of 'healing' into the text. The reader is left to associate the image of the picture with Wilhelm's situation, guided by Wilhelm's own associations:

> Alle seine Jugendträume knüpften sich an dieses Bild. Er glaubte nunmehr die edle, heldenmütige Chlorinde mit eignen Augen gesehen zu haben: ihm fiel der kranke Königssohn wieder ein, an dessen Lager die schöne, teilnehmende Prinzessin mit stiller Bescheidenheit herantritt. [WML, p.235]

Here, in Book Four, Chapter Nine, there is a confusion of images in Wilhelm's mind - an indication that he is not entirely sure as to the true path his life should take. Chlorinde was an image of his former childhood aspirations. The implication here is that the goal towards which he should be heading is connected with the symbolism suggested by the painting - namely being cured by a Stratonike-figure. The idea of 'healing' is here still conveyed on a symbolic level, that is to say through implication. However,

as the novel progresses, the idea becomes more explicit. It is perhaps no surprise that the 'Turmgesellschaft' is the forum for its articulation.

It is the 'Turmgesellschaft' who verbalize the connection between Wilhelm and the 'Kranker Königssohn' (Book Seven, Chapter Nine):
" 'Wo mag der kranke Königssohn wohl jetzo schmachten?' " [WML, p.494].
Jarno, in Book Eight, Chapter Seven, states directly the Society's aim to cure Wilhelm, thus bringing this concept directly to the reader's attention, the Society taking on the role of healer:

> 'Lesen Sie nichts!' sagte Wilhelm, 'ich bitte Sie inständig, sprechen Sie fort, erzählen Sie mir, klären Sie mich auf! Und so hat also der Abbé mir zum Hamlet geholfen, indem er einen Geist herbeischaffte?' - 'Ja, denn er versicherte, daß er der einzige Weg sei, Sie zu heilen, wenn Sie heilbar wären'. [WML, p.551].

The Society both point out the symbolism between Wilhelm and the 'Kranker Königssohn' and make it plain that they have the curing of Wilhelm as part of their agenda. The ending of the novel (in the light of the contents of the painting) would seem to suggest that their claims to have cured Wilhelm rather than led him to a state of 'Gebildetsein' have more substance.

The reader would grasp this only through implication, however, juxtaposing the 'Kranker Königssohn' with events such as Wilhelm's physical cure from his injuries sustained in the ambush and with Natalie's spiritual effect on him, and drawing the appropriate conclusions from their union at the end. What is certain is that the theme of healing runs as a subtext throughout, although the narrator does mention the concept and indeed perhaps introduces it in Book Two, Chapter One [WML, p.77].

5.4 Concluding Statements

I have leaned toward the view that Wilhelm undergoes a process of healing

rather than 'Bildung', but it is not the primary purpose of my argument to adjudicate on this point. It is the narrator's involvement which is of prime interest to us. I have argued above that the narrator does not embrace the notion that Wilhelm has achieved a state of 'Gebildetsein'. The extensive use of the 'Kranker Königssohn' motif and the symbolic structure in general is part of the implicating process. A greater emphasis, therefore, is placed on indirect, covert methods of conveying of meaning, which contrasts with the direct assumptions and interpretations made by the Abbé and Jarno in the form of their extensive sententious dialogues on 'Bildung'. Jarno does also directly refer to healing, and to the painting, and this more explicit reference may prompt the reader to bring together and reflect on the more implicit ones. Thus it would seem that comment and implication can work together in subtle ways.

The main meaning of the text is implanted with subtlety and Goethe requires the reader to look beyond the more prominent discourse of 'Bildung'. In addition, this is made suspect at certain junctures by the turn of events - most notably at the beginning of Book Eight and at the end of the novel. Goethe would therefore seem to be using indirect methods when treating the themes of 'Bildung' and 'Heilung', that is to say to knock down the credibility of 'Bildung', surplanting it with the idea of 'healing'.

In this chapter, we have examined Goethe's methods of presenting themes. In the next, I shall be turning my attention to the way in which certain characters are presented, in order to establish whether this is in keeping with the tendencies we have been seeing thus far in my study: namely a greater stress on scene and covert methods than direct methods of implanting meaning, sententiousness excepted.

Footnotes to Chapter Five:

1. Although the reader's beliefs can be controlled through implication - we have

already encountered the question of control of implication by the narrator as being tantamout to commentary in Chapter III - see p.36

2. ibid.

3. cf. Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Harmondsworth, 1987), pp.45 ff.

4. Karl Morgenstern in 1821 - although Dilthey really started the debate - see Fritz Martini: Der Bildungsroman: Zur Geschichte des Wortes und der Theorie in DVjs (1961), pp.44 - 63

5. Rolf Selbmann, Der deutsche Bildungsroman, (Stuttgart, 1984), p.38.

6. Heinz Schlaffer argues that traditional readings of the end of the novel neglect to take account of the true nature of the 'Turmgesellschaft': "Daß im gewöhnlichen Verständnis der Turm als Ort der vollendeten Harmonie, als philosophisches Ideal, als Utopie der Humantät fungiert, ist ein eklatantes Zeichen für die Fühllosigkeit der tradierten Goethe Lektüre". Exoterik und Esoterik in Goethes Romanen in Goethe - Jahrbuch 95 (1978), p.219

7. Kurt May, WML - Ein Bildungsroman?, in DVjs 31 (1957), pp.18 ff.

8. "Er schrieb daher fremde und eigene Meinungen und Ideen, ja ganze Gespräche, die ihm interessant waren, auf und hielt leider auf diese Weise das Falsche so gut als das Wahre fest, blieb viel zu lange an einer Idee, ja man möchte sagen an einer Sentenz hängen, und verließ dabei seine natürliche Denk-und Handelsweise, indem er oft fremden Lichtern als Leitsternen folgte". WML, p.285

9. The 'Schöne Seele' makes hints towards the idea of 'Bildung', using the motif of Agathon:

   "Ich sah mit unbeschreiblicher Wehmut einen Agathon, der, in den Hainen von Delphi erzogen, das Lehrgeld noch schuldig war [...]", op. cit., p.392

10. For treatment of the concept of 'Heilung' see H-J Schings in Goethe in Kontext: Kunst und Humanität, Naturwissenschaft und Politik von der Aufklärung bis zur Restauration: Ein Symposium, edited by Wolfgang Wittkowski (Tübingen, 1984), pp.42 - 88

11. M. R. Minden, The Place of Inheritance in the Bildungsroman: DVjs, 1983 Mar 57(i), p.52

CHAPTER SIX:

Narratorial Representation of Mignon, Philine and 'Turmgesellschaft'

6.1 Introduction

The treatment of certain characters can show much about the general treatment of the subject-matter of the rest of the novel. In the preceding chapters on the nature of narrative commentary and implication, I took a general view of these questions. It is now my intention to examine Mignon, Philine and the 'Turmgesellschaft' in terms of their narratorial treatment. Others, equally deserving, could, of course, have been chosen. Wilhelm I have left out, because to discuss him would be to discuss the whole novel. WML is essentially a presentation of his character, tracing the experiences which affect his character. Moreover, much has been said about the representation of Wilhelm above. The 'Harfner' and Natalie would have been the other obvious candidates. However, what goes for Mignon to some extent goes for the 'Harfner', while Natalie can perhaps - though somewhat more questionably - be subsumed under the 'Turmgesellschaft'. In any case, though, the point is not to say something about every interesting character, but to study a few representative examples.

In each case, it will be necessary to examine the way in which the narrator deals with each character in terms of commentary and implication. In addition, it will be useful to look at the extent to which the narrator 'defines' the character, since, as Toolan argues, this can be indicative of the degree of narrative presence [1].

6.2 Mignon

The character of Mignon has intrigued commentators since the novel's publication and she has been the subject of much enquiry in secondary literature. Much of this criticism has tried to grapple with the symbolic import of her character - Helmut Ammerlahn, for one, stresses her symbolic function:

> Die scheinbar unauflösliche Charakterkompliziertheit Mignons mit allen ihren Widersprüchen entschlüsselt sich aber als ein bis ins letzte Detail durchgeführter, vielschichtiger, tiefgreifender, Ehrfurcht und Staunen hervorrufender Bild und Bedeutungszusammenhang, wenn man Mignon betrachtet als das, was sie ist: ein Symbol im Romangefüge [2].

Ammerlahn's argumentation continues by outlining Mignon's symbolic significance as lying in her connection with Mariane. She becomes symbolic of the memory of Mariane. Walter Wagner takes the more general view that she is a symbol of art itself, which is plausible by virtue of her songs and, as Wagner points out, because her death represents an artistic transfiguration, culminating in the embalming process:

> Und damit erst wird Mignon erlöst, indem ihr Körper der Bestimmung nicht mehr entgegensteht; denn in dem ewigen Bereich der Kunst, in den Mignon Wilhelm führen wollte, in ihm geht sie auf, ihr Körper, nun im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes ein Werk der Kunst, bleibt noch im Tode Schein [3].

The symbolic import of Mignon, as is her own character, is a matter of great complexity and uncertainty, as Ammerlahn suggests and something which cannot be dealt with by narrative analysis alone. Yet narrative analysis can contribute to an understanding of her character.

6.3 The Narrator's Presentation of Mignon

The comparison between Mignon's first appearance in the Lehrjahre and the Theatralische Sendung is one which is worth bringing out - which Ammerlahn indeed does [4]. In the earlier version, Mignon appears in a mode which is, perhaps, more typical of her character than our first encounter with her in the Lehrjahre; that is to say, her first words are uttered in song in the Sendung:

'Heiß mich nicht reden, heiß mich schweigen
Denn mein Geheimnis ist mir Pflicht;
Ich möchte dir mein ganzes Innre zeigen,
Allein das Schicksal will es nicht' [5].

Let us now compare this with her first dialogue with Wilhelm in the Lehrjahre, which comes in Book Two, Chapter Four:

'Wie nennest du dich?' fragte er. - 'Sie heißen mich Mignon' - 'Wieviel Jahre hast du?' - 'Es hat sie niemand gezählt' - 'Wer war dein Vater?' - 'Der große Teufel ist tot'. [WML, p.98].

In the Sendung, we are presented with perhaps the essence of Mignon at the outset - she is bound by Fate to be secretive and this is presented in song, a medium through which she best expresses herself, precisely because it conceals as much as it reveals. In the Lehrjahre, the reader has to wait until a later stage in the progression of the novel to discover that it is Fate (embodied in the memory of her mother) which prevents her from revealing her inner nature. At first, this information has to be inferred in the Lehrjahre. What the song says explicitly is merely implied here: it is the obliqueness of her responses that tells us that there is something reticent and clandestine about her. It is of course true even in the Sendung that we learn very little about Mignon, but in the Lehrjahre, Goethe has taken this mysteriousness a stage further, as evidenced by the more indirect initial presentation of her.

In many ways, the presentation of the character of Mignon represents an examination of the techniques which are part of the whole concept of *showing*. She embodies a dichotomy, as far as the narrator is concerned, since, on the one hand, she is inarticulate in speech and, on the other, her songs demonstrate an ability to express her feelings in a most graceful way. The presentation of Mignon in each of these modes is therefore of very great interest.

In Book Two, Chapter Four, we are presented with Mignon trying to articulate herself through speech:

> Man fragte sie noch einiges; sie brachte ihre Antworten in einem gebrochenen Deutsch und mit einer sonderbar feierlichen Art vor; dabei legte sie jedesmal die Hände an Brust und Haupt und neigte sich tief. [WML, p.98].

Interesting here is that the reader is not given the contents of her speech - of more concern is the manner in which she speaks. This is partly summary, inasmuch as the "sonderbar feierlichen Art" is not expanded upon, but on the other hand it is *showing*, inasmuch an external presentation of the character is given, a description without narratorial comment or explanation. Indeed, the impression with which one comes away following this first encounter with Mignon is one very much of impenetrability, insofar as we are presented with Wilhelm's attempting to find out exactly who she is and where she comes from, with the repetition of "fragen", with the implication that this "fragen" bears no fruit - we are not actually given any information as to the actual contents of what she has said. We are later informed by the narrator of the difficulty people have understanding what she is saying (Book Five, Chapter Thirteen). There, the 'Harfner' has burned down a building following the opening night of Hamlet and it is up to Mignon to report to Wilhelm what has taken place. Although we get one sentence of her dialogue (" 'Meister! wir sind einer großen Gefahr entronnen, dein Felix war am Tode' " [WML, p.331]), the remainder of the dialogue with Wilhelm is summarized:

> Durch viele Fragen erfuhr endlich Wilhelm, daß der Harfenspieler, als sie in das Gewölbe gekommen, ihr das Licht aus der Hand gerissen und das Stroh sogleich angezündet habe. [WML, pp.331- 332].

The length of this process is emphasized and the difficulty which Wilhelm has in extracting the relevant information from Mignon. The narrator need not

have summarized, reducing in the *telling* a large number of questions and answers to a single statement, in order to make the point about Mignon, but this summary does serve the same purpose as would a section of *showing* have done and the narrator does put it more eloquently in his telling than would have Mignon, were the conversation shown.

This impenetrability is reflected in the facet of the narratorial representation of Mignon which is perhaps of the most interest to us, namely the level of character definition. There are several occasions where her speech is shown directly by the narrator [6]. What this showing does, despite or because of the relative uncouthness of her speech, is to suggest a hidden quality about Mignon. One might say that this is heightened when one juxtaposes her spoken utterances with her singing and is prompted to ask oneself how such an eloquent singer can be so inarticulate in her everyday speech? This increases the overall effect of her mysteriousness. The narrator, moreover, chooses not to 'go beneath the surface' of Mignon to convey her thoughts, something which would no doubt serve to enlighten the reader. The narrator does not attempt to define her character either, as for instance he defines Werner's character [7]. The nearest the narrator comes to providing a definition of her character is in the description of her physical movements, with which he continues rather cursory sketches of an overall view of her behaviour:

> Indessen war ihm Mignons Gestalt und Wesen immer reizender geworden. In allen seinem Tun und Lassen hatte das Kind etwas Sonderbares. Es ging die Treppe weder auf noch ab, sondern sprang; [...] Manche Tage war sie ganz stumm, zuzeiten antwortete sie mehr auf verschiedene Fragen, immer sonderbar, doch so, daß man nicht unterscheiden konnte, ob es Witz oder Unkenntnis der Sprache war, indem sie ein gebrochnes, mit Französisch und Italienisch durchflochtenes Deutsch sprach. [WML, pp.109 - 110].

This lengthy summary is an attempt through telling to present the character of

Mignon to the reader. However, in a narrow sense it is wholly unsatisfactory as such. First of all, the reader is told the effect she has upon Wilhelm; secondly, we receive the rather imprecise judgement of her activities as "sonderbar" and then the purely external description of the way in which she climbs the stairs. The final part of this quotation (which again is a summary) again reveals Mignon as providing rather unclear and mysterious ("sonderbar"!) answers to questions posed. It is interesting that the narrator displays and even admits to his ignorance as regards her inner thoughts, as he states that he does not know whether she speaks in the way she does because she is particularly intelligent or out of ignorance. Whereas much of the novel constitutes a representation of Wilhelm's inner motivation and development, we get virtually no direct information about the internal activity of Mignon's mind. From the narrator's presentation of Mignon's character, one does not get a picture of her motivation, since he appears to be in the same state of bafflement as the reader. He never penetrates her mind to show her motivation. The reader is instead left to infer from her speech and her song (perhaps more readily!) Mignon's situation and the reasons for her unstated yearning. With Mignon, we get either direct speech of a rather abrupt and stilted kind, as indirect speech, or songs. Externally, the narrator presents her physical movements in quite detailed descriptions. Indeed, the narrator describes her movements in greater detail than the movements of any other character - almost as if for lack of any other 'hold' on her character.

Her songs, as intimated above, are really the only means through which one can get an insight into her mind. Moreover, her songs have a positive effect on the whole of the novel which has been said to contain some of Goethe's finest lyric poetry [8]. That the majority of these are sung by Mignon is an indication of the great divide between Mignon the singer and Mignon when she is not in this mode. The narrator takes every opportunity to show her songs.

At the beginning of Book Three, the song "Kennst du das Land, wo die

Zitronen blühn [...]?" receives very interesting treatment by the narrator, insofar as it is bracketed out of the course of events; that is to say its position at the chapter is not consistent with its chronological position. Eberhard Bahr outlines the effect of this:

> Der lyrische Einsatz des Kapitels ist umso auffälliger, als er sich zunächst nicht aus dem Handlungszusammenhang ergibt. Erst im zweiten Absatz, 'Nach Verlauf einigen Stunden [...]', wird erklärt, daß das Lied, das der Erzähler am Anfang des Kapitels 'aufgezeichnet' hat, jetzt gesungen wird [9].

Although this is not primarly a study of the order as such of Goethe's novel, it should be recognized that the positioning of Mignon's song at the beginning of the book not only emphasizes the lyrical turn which the novel appears to take, but also heightens the importance of the song *per se* and indeed the importance of song as a means of expression for the character of Mignon: "Kennst du das Land [...]?" represents the expression of Mignon's yearning for a return to her homeland, Italy. Its positioning at the beginning of the book foregrounds its importance as one of the few means by which the reader is able to understand the true nature of Mignon's longing, which is an undercurrent of her whole existence.

The narrator follows on from this with a detailed description of the process of Mignon's singing - a process which involves a presentation not only of the text of the song, but an attempt to convey the manner in which she performs it:

> Sie fing jeden Vers feierlich und prächtig an, als ob sie auf etwas Sonderbares aufmerksam machen, als ob sie etwas Wichtiges vortragen wollte. Bei der dritten Zeile ward der Gesang dumpfer und düsterer; das 'Kennst du es wohl?' drückte sie geheimnisvoll und bedächtig aus; in dem *'Dahin! Dahin!'* lag eine unwiderstehliche Sehnsucht, und ihr

> *'Laß uns ziehn!'* wußte sie bei jeder Wiederholung dergestalt zu modifizieren, daß es bald bittend und dringend, bald treibend und vielversprechened war. [WML, p.146].

The narrator attempts to present Mignon's performance of the song using written language to represent the inflections of her singing. Whether he succeeds is a matter of contention. What can be said with greater certainty is that the narrator acts very much as an external observer - there is no attempt to enter Mignon's mind to portray to the reader what she is intending. Instead, it is left to the reader to infer both from the song and the narrator's presentation of her performance, which constitutes a *scene*, what she is trying to say.

The same process of repositioning of one of Mignon's songs is also to be seen at the end of the fifth book. The poem "Heiß mich nicht reden, heiß mich schweigen" [WML, p.356] is placed right at the close of the book:

> Und so lassen wir unsern Freund unter tausend Gedanken und Empfindungen seine Reise antreten und zeichnen hier noch zum Schlusse ein Gedicht auf, das Mignon mit großem Ausdruck einigemal rezitiert hatte, und das wir früher mitzuteilen durch den Drang so mancher sonderbaren Ereignisse verhindert wurden. [WML, p.356].

This could be said to be indicative of Mignon's portrayal throughout the novel: she seems to stand apart from the main activity of the novel. True, one might suspect that Goethe, having revised the scene in which Mignon is introduced, merely did not want to cut the poem "Heiß mich nicht reden, heiß mich schweigen [...]" entirely, and so tacked it on here. Nonetheless, the effect is to emphasize both her intrinsic interest and her marginality in the story (the 'Ereignisse'). Mignon remains very much on the sidelines throughout the work - it is interesting to note that there is not one chapter which deals solely with her. The narrator appears unable to sum her character

up, to fit her into a particular pattern which can be described using the medium of written language. He is forced to *show* her speeches and her songs if she is to be portrayed at all. Mignon is a purely shown character and it is through her poens and songs that we gain any insight into her character and situation. We learn more about the nature of Mignon's plight from the poems and the songs she recites and sings than we do from the narrator's descriptions of her. From "Kennst du das Land [...]?" we learn that her longing is for an exotic homeland; in "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt [...]" (Book Four, Chapter Eleven), Mignon and the 'Harfner' elaborate on their sense of longing, connecting the longing for the homeland with a yearning for the people who understand and love them; from "Heiß mich nicht reden, heiß mich schweigen [...]", we are told that she is guarding a secret which Fate does not allow her to divulge. Her songs and poems therefore convey a direct, yet veiled message about her situation and tell us more about her than the narrator ever seems able to do. One might say, therefore, that the character of Mignon constitutes an extreme example of *showing* in that as the narrator never narrates what is going on in her mind: it is left to the character to portray herself.

Mignon is presented from a purely external point of view and we receive no succinct summary of her character. This perhaps gives her character a greater importance and certainly makes her stand out, since the convention for a minor figure is to give a potted definition of their character. This external presentation heightens the mystery surrounding Mignon and certainly sets her apart from the other minor characters. She stands apart from the main action of the plot - i.e. the story of Wilhelm's development - and quite apart from the rest of the narrative. We never know her motives; the narrator not once tells us what is going on in her mind. This creates the impression that she has a hidden quality - we never can hear how she really speaks and we can never fully know her - we remain on the outside. The only means we have of assessing her is by looking at what is shown, by evaluating her song, words and appearance. Hence the opening of her final poem, "So laßt mich

scheinen, bis ich werde [...]" [WML, pp.515 - 516] is very apt, since it is only through her appearance that we are able to form a picture of her existence.

6.4 Philine

We discussed in the previous section about Mignon the fact that it is the convention that minor characters are summed up by the narrator, fitted into neat packages. We saw that Mignon went against this convention. Philine, another female character who moves more and more to the periphery of events, demonstrates the convention of character portrayal, inasmuch as the narrator finds her relatively easy to sum up:

> Diese junge Frau war nicht ohne Bildung, doch fehlte es ihr gänzlich an Geist und Seele. Sie deklamierte nicht übel, und wollte immer deklamieren; allein man merkte bald, daß es nur eine Wortdeklamation war, die auf einzelnen Stellen lastete und die Empfindung des Ganzen nicht ausdrückte. Bei diesem allen war sie nicht leicht jemanden, besonders Männern, unangenehm. Vielmehr schrieben ihr diejenigen, die mit ihr umgingen, gewöhnlich einen schönen Verstand zu: denn sie war, was ich mit einem Worte eine Anempfinderin nennen möchte; sie wußte einem Freunde, um dessen Achtung ihr zu tun war, mit einer besondern Aufmerksamkeit zu schmeicheln, in seine Ideen so lange als möglich einzugehen, sobald sie aber ganz über ihren Horizont waren, mit Ekstase eine solche neue Erscheinung aufzunehmen. Sie verstand zu sprechen und zu schweigen und, ob sie gleich kein tückisches Gemüt hatte, mit großer Vorsicht aufzupassen, wo des andern schwache Seite sein möchte. [WML, p.108].

This summary shows the narrator partly describing the effects of Philine externally, which is to say the way she affects other people and also her inner motivation as well as the limitations of her mental abilities ("Sie verstand zu sprechen und zu schweigen, ob sie gleich kein tückisches Gemüt hatte [...]").

Indeed, the narrator explicitly states that he is summarizing and defining her character, using one word to sum her up - "eine Anempfinderin". From this, one can see that there is a very different approach to the character of Philine from the narrator's presentation of Mignon, insofar as he uses a higher degree of *telling* in the case of the former as compared with the latter.

The narrator's portrayal of Philine is certainly more positive than Wilhelm's perception of her, something which Michael Beddow alludes to:

> Neither here nor later can Wilhelm bring himself to do justice to Philine. There is more to his response to her than a purely sexual interest. Her strong appeal lies not so much in her uninhibited sexuality itself as in the basic quality of her existence, of which her approach to sexual relations is just one aspect. She advocates and practises spontaneous living for the moment, unperturbed by respect for convention or worries about the past or the future [10].

The portrait of Philine's character is constructed as a contrast between agreeable appearance and less impressive reality. The narrator, however, is at pains to point out her more positive qualities and is on the whole "fairer to her than Wilhelm ever manages to be" [11]. Wilhelm is perturbed by Philine's sensuality and does not know quite what to make of her coquettishness. As mentioned above, the narrator is able to sum her up as an "Anempfinderin". The shown events do display that she does have some degree of perception. For example, following their meeting with the 'Landgeistlicher' it is she who articulates why the man is so striking, namely "[...] weil er aussieht wie ein Mensch, und nicht wie Hans oder Kunz" [WML, p.123], thereby introducing a key distinction into the text, namely between a full-rounded 'Mensch' (i.e. 'ein gebildeter Mann') and someone who has not gone through the process of 'Bildung'. Although it is not clear that she understands the full import of the remark herself, one might say that she has at least managed to put into words the reason for their admiration of

the 'Landgeistlicher'.

Her activities in the 'Grafenschloß' illustrate that she is not merely thoughtlessly shallow. She displays a certain deviousness and cunning, as the narrator penetrates her mind:

> Philine wußte sich nun täglich besser bei den Damen einzuschmeicheln. [WML, p.187].

Philine certainly has more about her than the coquette she might be taken for. There is a scheming and devious side to her, which is reflected in the way she ingratiates herself with the 'Gräfin' in Book Three, Chapter Twelve:

> 'Ach!' rief Philine aus, 'so viel Schmuck hab' ich wohl schon gesehen, aber noch nie eine Dame, so würdig, ihn zu tragen. Welche Armbänder! aber auch welche Hand! Welcher Halsschmuck! aber auch welche Brust!'. [WML, p.200].

The reader is both told and shown the reality of Philine's existence - a reality which Wilhelm fails to fully grasp. The character of Philine is important for this very reason. She is indicative of Wilhelm's false perceptions about life, as she challenges his straight-laced notions of love. In order to bring this out, the narrator has to give an unequivocal presentation of her, using both *showing* and *telling*, in the form of a character definition, thereby reducing any uncertainties about her character. In terms of presentation, Philine is typical of the treatment of secondary characters: character portrait plus actions (dialogue and *scene*) which illustrate the basic character. In comparison with Mignon, one might say that the presentation of Philine is conventional. The former is a purely *shown* character; a character whom the narrator cannot, or dare not summarize.

6.5 The 'Turmgesellschaft'

Much has been said already about the 'Turmgesellschaft' in Chapter Four on the nature of sententiousness in WML. In this chapter, I wish to consider the way in which the narrator presents the Society as a whole, as well as the presentation of the individual characters who make up the 'Turmgesellschaft'.

In the cases of Mignon and Philine, I have contrasted the presentation of their characters in terms of the degree of character definition, finding that the latter conforms to the traditional presentation of a minor character, whereas Mignon remains a mystery since the narrator can never sum her up.

Before proceeding with an analysis, it would be worth stating exactly whom I wish to include under the term 'Turmgesellschaft' for the purposes of this study. Rosemarie Haas points out that "In den Lehrjahren werden als Mitglieder der Sozietät der Abbé, Lothario, Jarno und - am Rande - der alte Arzt genannt" [12]. This being so, one can exclude female characters such as Therese and Natalie who appear attached to the society through the male characters, although Natalie could be said to be one of the emissaries of the society when she appears as the 'Amazone', for it is the image of the 'Amazone' which leads Wilhelm to his final integration into the society (initially, at least!).

On the edge of the society, there is evidence that the narrator does provide character definition, inasmuch as he gives a descriptive summary of the 'Arzt', effecting a judgement on him at the beginning of the Seventh Book: "Der Medikus kam; es war der gute, alte, kleine Arzt, den wir schon kennen und dem wir die Mitteilung des interessanten Manuskripts verdanken". [WML, p.436].

To argue that this is anything more than a passing, even superficial, comment on his character would hardly be plausible. The narrator makes a similar comment on Lothario, a character much closer to the nucleus of the society,

in Book Seven, Chapter Seven:

> Sein Gespräch war ernsthaft und gefällig, seine Unterhaltung belehrend und erquickend; oft bemerkte man Spuren einer zarten Fühlbarkeit, ob er sie gleich zu verbergen suchte und, wenn sie sich wider seinen Willen zeigte, beinahe zu mißbilligen schien. [WML, p.463].

The use of "scheinen" is an obeisance to the convention that the character-sketch is based on observation of externals. Yet point of view is in fact much less significant here than the effect of summary; it does not really impede the straightforward *telling* of character by the narrator. Moreover, the characters belonging to the Society are uniformally articulate about themselves. Thus the narrator can step back and allow them to present themselves with no loss of insight, whereas with Mignon, he appears unable to give value judgements or summarize her, either out of incomprehension or out of choice.

The withdrawal of the narrating voice, therefore, does not necessarily mean we come away with the same impression of the 'Turmgesellschaft' as we do with Mignon. In her case, the pieces of showing did not clarify her situation, rather adding to her mystique. The members of the society tend to be lucid about its existence and about their own existence (e.g. Lothario's tale of his affair (Book Seven, Chapter Seven)).

The final two books are noteworthy in that as each ends without a narratorial summary to round them off. The seventh ends with the Abbé's proclaiming Wilhelm's apprenticeship to be over. This might be seen as ironic, but it is certainly a dramatic way of ending the book. The reader only here becomes aware that Wilhelm might be on the right route towards some sort of self-fulfilment - and one reads on to discover how and why. This possibility is not given, however, in the last four pages of the novel, where again the narrator is notably absent. As a result, the novel is left somewhat in mid-air. Indeed, the only descriptive comment the narrator does make is hardly the most

optimistic:

> Wilhelm war in der schrecklichsten Lage. [WML, p.606].

Wilhelm is shown to be on the verge of departing ("'Er schwärmt', sagte Wilhelm, 'und ich gehe'" [WML, p.608]) ; a mere two pages from the close of the novel. Between this proclamation of doubt and the end, Wilhelm has, it seems, found his grail:

> 'Ich kenne den Wert eines Königreichs nicht', versetzte Wilhem, 'aber ich weiß, daß ich ein Glück erlangt habe, das ich nicht verdiene und das ich mit nichts in der Welt vertauschen möchte'. [WML, p.610].

The novel ends pleasingly with a piece of showing, a scene, and therefore does not conform to the nineteenth century blueprint according to Genette [13]. However, there is nevertheless a sense of wholeness at its closure [14]. This is not only because Natalie has long been the goal of Wilhelm's desires. It is also because of Friedrich's image of questing and finding. It is a character's speech which thus provides a sense of rounding-off. As in much of the final two books, therefore, and culminating with the close of the novel, the characters are responsible for providing the satisfactions we normally expect from the narrator. As far as the element of *voice* goes, the narration appears to retreat into *showing* in much of the last two books; the dialogues among the 'Turmgesellshaft' are quoted extensively, for instance. But the appearance is deceptive. Their dialogue is, in other respects, heavily laced with elements of 'telling': summary and commentary (often sententious). The narrator steps back here only because the characters assume some of his functions.

Notes to Chapter Six

1. 'Definition of Character': M. J. Toolan, Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction (London, 1988), p.82
2. H. Ammerlahn, Wilhelm Meisters Mignon - ein offenbares Rätsel. Name, Gestalt, Symbol, Wesen und Werden. In DVjs 42 (1968), p.90
3. W. Wagner, Goethes Mignon: In GRM 2I (1933), p.415
4. Ammerlahn, op. cit., p.90
5. Wilhelm Meisters Theatralische Sendung, Book 3, Chapter 12, p.161 (Insel Edition).
6. e.g. WML, p.106 and p.116
7. op. cit., pp.60 - 61: "Werner war einer von den geprüften, in ihrem Dasein bestimmten Leuten, die von gewöhnlich kalte Leute zu vernennen pflegt [...]"
8. Henry Garland, The Oxford Companion to German Literature (Oxford, 1986, 2nd Ed) p.987
9. E. Bahr, Erläuterungen und Dokumente zu WML (Stuttgart, 1982) p.66
10. Michael Beddow, The Fiction of Humanity (Cambridge, 1982), p.92
11. ibid.
12. Rosemarie Haas, Die Turmgesellschaft in WML (Bern, 1975) p.57
13. Gérard Genette, Narrative Fiction (Oxford, 1980) p.131
14. See G. Prince, Narratology (Berlin, 1982) on 'Wholeness', pp.150 - 154

CHAPTER SEVEN:

The Position of WML in the development of techniques of narratorial representation.

7.1 Introduction

As a starting-point for my analysis, I should like to take Lubbock's [1] general assertion that the development of narratorial techniques was one characterized by a movement away from telling, summary and commentary to showing, scene and implication, that is to say the development marked a shift away from the intrusive narrator, the emphasis being placed on the characters to present themselves. This is of course a rather cursory sketch of the evolution of the novel, since an element of *showing* has always been part of narrative fiction, and conversely, few modern novels are without some measure of *summary* and *telling*.

For the purposes of this study, I feel it necessary to take certain texts as examples of the novel at the particular time in which they were written. This, it might be said, is a dangerous approach, since to call one particular text 'typical' does discount other texts which may show different traits - one has to recognize that individual authors have their own preferred techniques of narratorial presentation. But the eighteenth century did see a convergence of styles in the German novel, the establishment of a loosely recognized convention which would justify it as a genre in the face of 'competition' from verse epics, the drama and the lyric poem. One might say that Wieland's Geschichte des Agathon contains some features of narrative presentation which are typical of the convention.

The general movement towards realism in the nineteenth century touched the German novel. Fontane was very much an example of the development of the novel as a whole, deeply influenced by what was happening in the French novel, especially by Flaubert. Fontane is representative inasmuch as he perfected and exemplified the current tendencies in novel writing.

It is my intention to examine Goethe's WML in this chapter in terms of its position in the evolution from the intrusive to the unobtrusive narrator by comparing Goethe's use of techniques of narrative presentation, which have been set out in previous chapters of my study, with Wieland's use of them in Geschichte des Agathon (an example of the intrusive narrator) as a novel first conceived just prior to Wilhelm Meister [2] and the use of these techniques in the novels of Fontane, the most celebrated German exponent of nineteenth century realism. It is not within the scope of this study to provide in-depth analyses of Wieland's and Fontane's texts, but rather to compare their techniques of narrative presentations with those in WML, to discover to what extent Goethe was relying on traditional narrative techniques and how far he was anticipating the tendencies towards realism of the nineteenth century.

7.2 Similarities between Narrative Presentation in WML and in Geschichte des Agathon

Although Wieland commenced his work on Agathon earlier (1766) than Goethe on the Wilhelm Meister theme (1777), both author's work on each was to continue in the re-working and revising stages for the best part of three decades. Parts of WML will have been written only ten or so years after the first version of Agathon which I shall utilize here. That they were included in the later version of Wilhelm Meister (1795) does show that Goethe considered them appropriate for the needs of his narrative. It is the amount of sententious narrative discourse in both Agathon and WML that shows that the latter does owe something to the former's method, or rather to the method of the time in which the first version of Agathon was written. As an example of Wieland's use of sententious discourse, the second chapter of the first book begins:

> Wenn es seine Richtigkeit hat, daß alle Dinge in der Welt in der genauesten Beziehung auf einander stehen, so ist nicht minder gewiß, daß diese Verbindung unter einzelnen Dingen oft ganz unmerklich ist; und daher scheint es zu kommen, daß die Geschichte zuweilen viel

seltsamere Begebenheiten erzählt, als ein Roman-Schreiber zu dichten wagen dürfte. Dasjenige, was unserm Helden in dieser Nacht begegnete, gibt mir neue Bekräftigung dieser Beobachtung ab [3].

As we have seen in Chapter Four, such chapter openings are a feature of the first book of WML [4]. Indeed, the third chapter of the first book of Goethe's novel commences in similar vein with a piece of discursive sententiousness:

> Wenn die erste Liebe, wie ich allgemein behaupten höre, das Schönste ist, was ein Herz früher oder später empfinden kann, so müssen wir unsern Helden dreifach glücklich preisen, daß ihm gegönnt ward, die Wonne dieser einzigen Augenblicke in ihrem ganzen Umfange zu genießen. [WML, p.14].

Both these quotations present qualified forms of sententiousness (both are introduced in the conditional) and both link the sententious discourse with narrative discourse relating to the hero. Moreover, the events which follow in the chapter serve as an elaboration of the sententious proposition at the beginning. These chapter beginnings show that both Goethe and Wieland start from a general or universal position and then relate this to the main character's life. From this, one can see to what degree the character's life conforms to the universal norm. This might therefore be described as a means of passing comment on the character's situation by stating that what is generally true also applies to the specific character's life. The use of a maxim at the opening of chapters is a feature apparent in both Agathon and WML (most especially in Book One!). In both cases, the implication is that there is a pattern behind existence. The narrator impresses this upon the reader through his use of sententious discourse.

In previous chapters, I argued that the narrator's presence reaches its extreme when the narrator makes a direct comment. Sententiousness can be seen as

tantamount to commentary. In this respect, Wieland's narrator shows a similar degree of presence to Goethe's. The use of sententious discourse in WML in the manner described above does not confine itself to the first book. Indeed, one could say that Book Two, Chapter One of WML is characteristic of a Wieland narrative. The whole chapter is in the narrator's voice. It consists of a description of Wilhelm's general state, characterized by the use of iterative narration of Wilhelm's thoughts (e.g. "Er verachtete sein eigen Herz und sehnte sich nach dem Labsal des Jammers und der Tränen" [WML, p.78]), and sententiousness ("[...] die schnell heilende Kraft der Jugend [...]" [WML, p.77]. A comparable chapter in Agathon would be Book Eight, Chapter Five which takes stock of Agathon's situation, although there is no iterative psychological narration. It is a general evaluation of Agathon's state by the narrator, with the narrator's voice predominant; indeed the narrator makes direct judgements on Agathon's situation:

> Doch, wir wollen billig sein; eine Danae verdiente wohl, daß ihn der Entschluß sie zu verlassen, mehr als einen flüchtigen Seufzer kostete [...] [5].

Discursive treatment of the material by the narrator is the rule in Agathon, as it is in the first chapter of the second book in WML. Whether this is the rule throughout Goethe's novel, we shall discuss later.

A feature which also emerges from the excerpts of text we have looked at so far is that the narrator uses the first person with some frequency. The narrator could then be said to have 'dramatized' himself [6]. This is also an indicator of the degree of narratorial intrusion into the text, insofar as the narrator almost becomes a character. One can say with confidence that WML's narrator never approaches the degree of characterization of the 'editor' [7] of Agathon, as he calls himself, who consistently makes references to the act of narration.

In terms of *showing*, there are similarities between the two novels. In one respect, both narrators are keen to show (i.e. quote extensively) discussions on philosophical issues. In Agathon, we have the famous discussion between Agathon and Hippias in Book Two, Chapter Six, in which the narrator steps back totally to let the characters debate - there are not even any of the usual *phrases* to attribute the speeches to each particular character, and instead the scene is presented as if it were a drama, with just the character's name appearing above the particular piece of dialogue. Similarly, the narrator of WML seems at pains to show Wilhelm's dialogues with emissaries from the 'Turmgesellschaft' which do involve philosophical debate (e.g. Book Two, Chapter Nine). Both novels take in subordinate narratives, notably the 'Ich-Erzählungen' in which the eponymous heroes recount their life - Wilhelm in Book One and Agathon in Book Seven. However, there are more cases of this particular type of scenic presentation in WML than in Agathon. It is true that the narrator of the WML does tell the story of Serlo's life for him (although it does appear to be in indirect speech) but on every other occasion, the characters are allowed to tell their own story (Aurelie, Therese, the 'Schöne Seele', the 'Turmgesellschaft'). The "Geschichte der schönen Danae" in Book Four, Chapter Three of Agathon is not told from her viewpoint, as is Serlo's story, but almost objectively ("Die allgemeine Meinung zu Smyrna war, daß sie eine Tochter der berühmten Aspasia von Milet sei [...]" [8]). The effect of this is quite interesting, inasmuch as the narrator of Agathon assumes control of the way her story is presented; there is no room for the diverse point of view we see in WML. In the diversity of viewpoints, although this is not really in the ambit of this study, WML would appear to point to later developments; on the other hand the use of interpolated narratives to bring in these viewpoints belongs firmly to the techniques of eighteenth century and earlier fiction.

7.3 The Shift of Emphasis from *Telling* to *Showing*

To compare the openings of the two novels is to observe the development in techniques of scenic presentation in Goethe's novel. The beginning of WML

is very strikingly *in medias res*:

> Das Schauspiel dauerte sehr lange. Die alte Barbara trat einigemal ans Fenster und horchte, ob die Kutschen nicht rasseln wollten. [WML, p.9].

Joachim von der Thüsen outlines the effect of this opening upon the rest of the novel:

> Dem Romananfang fällt dabei die Rolle zu, beides, Erzählsituation und mimetische Eigenart eines Werkes, zum ersten Mal zu bestimmen [9].

What follows is the piecing together of the world viewed through the narrator's eyes. In terms of voice, it is *telling*, but *telling* which contents itself with constructing a setting in which the events and conversation which are shown can display themselves [10]. Whether the first chapter sets the tone for the presentation of the events of the novel as a whole is more doubtful; it is significant that von der Thüsen calls it "eine Art in sich geschlossene Szene" [11]. The first chapter does create a mimetic impression, which perhaps is broken by Wilhelm's lengthy narration and by the lack of detailed scene-setting for later chapters. Indeed, the opening dialogue between Mariane and Barbara establishes expectations that the novel's dialogue may be similarly realistic throughout - the similarities between their language and the situation is not at all unlike those to be found in a 'bürgerliches Trauerspiel', which would have been perceived realistic in their context. It is the language of conflict and hence drama, spawned by Mariane's love for Wilhelm and Barbara's preference for Norberg.

If we now consider the beginning of Agathon, we are faced with the problem of which is actually the beginning: the 'Vorbericht' or the first chapter of the first book? WML does not have a preface. This is more interesting from the point of view of the contextual history of the novel rather than from a

narrative angle. I mentioned above that until the mid-1770's, the novel in Germany faced real competition from other forms such as verse epics and lyric poetry. The 'Vorbericht' of Agathon represents a justification for the presentation of the material in the form of a novel - an analogue to Blankenburg's Versuch Über den Roman (1774). WML's opening is presented without apology, suggesting that the novel had gained a degree of acceptance.

From a stylistic point of view, the 'Vorbericht' is important in that it, too, is a starting-point for the tenor of the narrative presentation - the intrusive narrator announces his presence. In the 'Vorbericht', we have a discussion of the actual nature of the text. What we are presented with is pure telling - a discussion of the origin of the work, of its factuality or fictionality; as well as an introduction of the main character with a commentary on how we should view the events which make up the novel. Special weight is attached to Agathon's acquaintance with Hippias. The narrator, moreover, identifies the themes which should be looked for in the novel, especially the key themes of 'Enthusiasmus' and 'Tugend'. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the narrator in Agathon explicitly mentions the concept of healing, as one of the most important upshots of Agathon's discussion with Hippias was "von seinem liebenswürdigen und tugendhaften Enthusiasmus zu heilen [...] " [12]. In Chapter Five, we saw how the theme of 'heilen' emerges from an accumulation of events and motifs in WML [13] whereas here, in Agathon, the narrator explicitly mentions it from the beginning.

One might argue with justification that we should be comparing Book One, Chapter One of Agathon with Book One, Chapter One of WML, as a preface is bound to contain judgements and commentary. The first chapter commences with description which sets a scene: it is approaching sunset and Agathon is wandering, attempting to climb a mountain through some woods. The opening chapter again does not really set the tone for the rest of the novel, for one could hardly describe Agathon as being full of scenic

description such as this. Indeed, this scene is broken by a piece of sententious discourse and is short-lasting as a consequence. The opening chapter then takes a more general turn which is characteristic of the novel. In this respect it is very far from the opening of WML. The narrator of Agathon then returns to the description he had been pursuing in the opening paragraph. However, the effect of the interruption by a piece of *telling* can hardly be described as mimetic.

In Chapter Five, we saw how the central themes and concepts of the novel emerge over its course in WML, whereas in Agathon 'Enthusiasmus', 'Tugend' and 'Einbildungskraft' are broached by the narrator in the 'Vorbericht'. It is true that the characters in Agathon do themselves examine these concepts later on (most notably in the Hippias/Agathon debate in Book Two, Chapter Six) and that what is shown in the subsequent narrative serves to underline the narrator's discourse, but this is precisely the point: the 'action' shown emerges as an illustration of what is being discussed by the narrator. Indeed, one might say that the chapter headings (there are none in WML) and the 'Vorbericht' act as a framework for what is shown, in a sense bracketing the shown events with commentary. This obtrusive framework has receded in WML.

There are certain similarities between the use of sententiousness in the two novels. I argued in the previous subsection that, in both novels, there was evidence that chapters developed out of sententious propositions by the narrator at the opening of the chapter. What needs to be stressed here is that this is far more common in Agathon than in WML, where it might be said to be a trait of the first and part of the second books only. The narrator of Agathon uses this type of structuring for his chapter throughout his narrative (e.g. Book Four, Chapter Four; Book Five, Chapter Two; Book Five, Chapter Five; Book Five, Chapter Nine; Book Five, Chapter Ten; Book Seven, Chapter Four; Book Eight, Chapter Three; Book Eight, Chapter Six). Book Seven, Chapter Four is a very good example of this kind of sententious

chapter, the narrator introducing the chapter with lengthy sententious proposition:

> Es ist eine alte Bemerkung, daß man einer schönen Dame die Zeit nur schlecht vertreibt, wenn man sie von den Eindrücken, die eine andre auf unser Herz gemacht hat, unterhält. Je mehr Feuer, je mehr Wahrheit, je mehr Beredsamkeit wir in einem solchen Falle zeigen, je reizender unsre Schilderungen, je schöner unsre Bilder, je beseelter unser Ausdruck ist, desto gewisser dürfen wir uns versprechen, unsre Zuhörerin einzuschläfern [14].

The narrator then becomes slightly more specific ("Diese Beobachtung sollten sich besonders diejenigen empfohlen sein lassen, welche eine würklich im Besitz stehende Geliebte mit der Geschichte ihrer ehemaligen verliebten Abenteuer unterhalten" [15]) and then he refers it directly to Agathon's particular circumstances, stating that Agathon has completely lost sight of this particular "Regel". The implications of this are more prescriptive than the type of sententious proposition which the narrator of WML would make [16]. What follows acts as a demonstration of the fact that Agathon has lost sight of the rule and thereby as an amplification of the narrator's initial statement. This type of chapter opening is to be found in WML, as we discussed in the previous subsection [17], but there is nothing like the depth of narratorial discussion and neither is such a direct link made between the sententious proposition and the narrative discourse which follows it.

I touched above on the role of chapter headings in the framework of the narrative in Agathon. These chapter headings have a function in the framework of sententious discourse. The purpose of the chapter is summarized in these chapter headings. In some cases, these in fact represent sententious propositions, indicating that the purpose of the particular chapter will be to demonstrate the applicability of the piece of sententiousness to Agathon's case. Such an example would be the second chapter of the tenth

book, the title of which is "Beispiele, daß nicht alles, was gleißt, Gold ist". In WML, there are no chapter headings, and thus another area which could have been used to place sententious discourse has been vacated. It may well be that the reader of WML can infer a clear purpose in a chapter, but it is crucial to recognize that this comes through implication rather than through direct narratorial statement.

It is clear from the argumentation above that what we are tending to see in WML is the shift away from *telling* towards *showing*. It might well be of use to examine the types of *showing* which are present in Agathon and Goethe's novel. In the second chapter of my study, I examined the types of dialogue present in WML and argued that the amount of realistic/conversational dialogue outweighed more discursive dialogue. Turning towards Wieland's novel, Agathon is not totally devoid of elements of conversational dialogue. Moreover, Wieland does make some concessions to scenic representation. Even in the most openly discursive piece of dialogue in the text, namely that between Hippias and Agathon in Book Two, Chapter Six, the initial words of the two characters do seem to attempt to create a scene:

> Hippias: Du scheinst in Gedanken vertieft, Callias?
> Agathon: Ich glaubte allein zu sein [18].

However, this can only be described as a scant concession to scenic representation. Even at its most discursive, in WML, the shown dialogue does emerge from a scene. In Book Two, Chapter Nine, for example, the discussion between the 'Landgeistlicher' and Wilhelm arises out of a chance meeting when the theatrical troupe is out on a day's boat outing. In contrast, the dialogue between Hippias and Agathon takes place almost as if in a void - the reader cannot be in a position to envisage where their conversation is taking place. In WML, one does have a vague idea at least of the setting. This would suggest that what is more important for Wieland is the discussion of philosophy rather than any scenic representation. This is not to suggest

that the philosophical discussion in Wilhelm's meeting with this stranger is of little importance - the themes of 'Schicksal' and 'Zufall' are very important for the novel as a whole. In many ways, the two dialogues are very similar in themselves: they both deal with abstract notions about life; there is a pedagogic figure and a pupil; both are central to the meaning of the novel and the main character's eventual outcome. However, it is interesting that abstract debate between Wilhelm and the 'Landgeistlicher' is not the sole vehicle for the articulation of thought in the chapter. Of equal importance is the idea of role-playing which emerges from the scenic representation of the troupe's light-hearted play-acting prior to their encountering the 'Landgeistlicher' [19].

In Agathon, much of the dialogue necessarily follows on from the narrator's discourse and in many ways serves as a qualification of that discourse. Even one of the most emotional speeches has a philosophical basis (and the philosophy is that which has been the subject of an on-going debate in the narrative). Agathon's realization that Hippias may have been right all along, in Book Ten, Chapter Five, is a combination of high emotion and philosophy:

> O! gewiß Hippias, deine Begriffe und Maximen, deine Moral, deine Staatskunst, gründen sich auf die Erfahrung aller Zeiten. Wann sind die Menschen jemals anders gewesen? Wann haben sie jemals die Tugend hochgeschätzt, als wenn sie ihrer Dienste benötigt waren; und wann ist sie ihnen nicht verhaßt gewesen, so bald sie ihren Leidenschaften im Lichte stund? [20].

In previous chapters, I talked of the possibility that dialogue could be every bit as direct as direct commentary by the narrator. In Agathon, one might say that the dialogue is more of this type than dialogue in WML. Even dialogue, as one can see above, that is apparently uttered in moments of high emotion, is of a discursive nature. Therefore, one can state with some certainty that a larger proportion of the 'thought' in the text is expressed directly than is the case in WML, where key themes tend to emerge implicitly.

7.4 WML as an Anticipation of Future Developments in Narrative Representation

Lubbock maintained that the general progression in techniques of narrative presentation was from *telling* to *showing*, from direct commentary to implication, both by the narrator and the characters [21]. It would be wrong to suggest that the narrator ever 'disappeared' totally in nineteenth century novels - Flaubert's Madame Bovary is unusual for the narrator's self-effacement (the narrator appears briefly as a character and not as a 'räsonnierender Erzähler' of the traditional type). Booth says as much while acknowledging the general progression from telling to showing:

> Direct and authoritative rhetoric of the kind we have seen in Job and Homer's works have never completely disappeared from fiction. But as we all know, it is not what we are likely to find if we turn to a typical modern novel or short story [22].

Booth is saying that it has become the convention for narratorial comment to be reduced and summary to become a mere vehicle for the linkage of scenes.

How far does Goethe anticipate this convention in WML, a convention which only really established itself with 'realistic' methods of representation which can be seen in Fontane? Another question which perhaps should be discussed, prior to looking at the ways in which WML uses forward-looking techniques of narrative presentation, is to what extent the novel makes a conscious effort to depart from recognized methods of presentation.

The similarities between Goethe's novel and later developments in narrative techniques are to be most easily seen in the sections of text which are presented in scene, for the very reason that the tendency was towards scene and away from discursive narratorial summary. The first chapter of WML, as mentioned above, is a particularly good example of these developments. In its very concept, the opening of WML is both dramatic and convincing in terms of mimesis of reality. We do not have a narrator telling us through his

consciousness the particular events of the first chapter - it is through Barbara's consciousness that we view the present situation. After the brief scene-setting by the narrator there follows a dialogue between Barbara and Mariane through which the current state of affairs becomes apparent. Information is conveyed indirectly - there is no piece of dialogue in this first chapter which states a piece of information directly without motivation or prompting with the purpose of informing the reader as to the opinion of the character or about the text itself: the dialogue emerges from the requirements of the scene. How typical is this first chapter of the rest of the novel? WML is a patchwork of different methods of representation and bearing this in mind, there are few other scenes or chapters which approach this opening chapter in terms of realistic speech. Other kinds of dialogue are more typical. In the final two books, the discussions between Wilhelm and Jarno are abstract and philosophical, not really emerging from the particular scene. Somewhere in between is the conversation in Book Two, Chapter Nine, between Wilhelm and the 'Landgeistlicher', a passage we have already looked at. It is interesting here that the discussion does grow out of a conversation regarding the events which have just been played out in scene, and that therefore discussion is not as abstract as it could perhaps have been.

What should be remarked upon is that Goethe is making at least a concession to realistic speech in this first chapter and it is certainly more realistic than anything we get in Agathon. The type of dialogue we see in the first chapter of WML does have much in common with the type of dialogue in Fontane, without going as far as to mimic dialect which Fontane does do. It would be of little worth, however, doggedly to compare such dialogues. Rather, I shall take specific examples of certain interesting techniques common to both Goethe and Fontane.

Although Fontane mainly adheres to the convention set out by Genette that chapters begin and end with summaries which 'set the scene' and round off the chapter, thus bracketing the main business which is carried out in scene,

there are instances where Fontane departs from this convention by leaving the chapter to end with a piece of pure scene. This can be seen at the close of the Fourteenth and Twenty Third chapters of Effi Briest which end in showing to create a particular effect. There are equivalent chapter endings in WML: the fourth book ends with Aurelie's silencing Wilhelm and the whole novel ends with Wilhelm's realization that he has apparently attained a state of happiness. The effect both in Effi Briest and WML may be to emphasize what is being said at the end of the chapter and this therefore becomes a means of implying a certain meaning. Nonetheless, the effect of such a chapter ending is dramatic, since it appears to be left in the balance in the absence of the narrator's voice to round off the chapter in summary. This is especially so at the end of WML, as the reader is left in some doubt as to the credibility of Wilhelm's exclamation that he has attained ultimate happiness. From a literary-historical point of view, the effect of this type of ending is to say 'Look! how modern', as it represents a token shift away from telling to showing, as the author is relying on the strength of his shown action to convey his meaning.

In my second chapter, I argued that one vehicle for the articulation of meaning and thought in the text of WML was the use of seemingly secondary dialogue by minor characters, Philine and Laertes, which is 'tagged on' at the end of a seemingly more important piece of dialogue involving the central character. This type of dialogue is a means of introducing key concepts into the text implicitly, as well as providing different views on topics which are of perhaps secondary importance, such as the difference between the sexes. This method anticipates future developments in implicit methods of implanting meaning into the text. Demetz discusses Fontane's use of such techniques which he terms "die Auffächerung der Nachgespräche" [23]; Demetz states that such techniques "[...] werden so entfaltet, so in eine synchrone Konstellation miteinander verknüpfter Elemente aufgelöst, daß ihnen zuletzt mehr an charakterisierender Bedeutung zukommt als den reflektierten Ereignissen selbst" [24]. According to Demetz, this type of technique is exemplified in

Fontane's L'Adultera (1882) where three conversations, seemingly of a minor nature, have an effect when juxtaposed against one another. Demetz sums up the effect of this:

> Der eigentliche Stoff hat jede Schwere und Bedeutung eingebüßt; an seine Stelle tritt das gänzlich Unstoffliche der wiederholten Spiegelung, das luftige Echo, ja der immaterielle Reflex des Widerhalls [25].

The overall effect may be different from Goethe's, inasmuch as Fontane juxtaposes three minor conversations to produce meaning, whereas Goethe uses a single minor conversation to produce meaning. However, it seems undeniable that Goethe's use of snatches of conversation to convey meaning anticipates later developments. Demetz interestingly points out that Jane Austen makes use of a similar technique [26], so one might argue that it had its roots in the development of scenic presentation at the turn of the nineteenth century.

7.5 Concluding Statements

WML is part of a trend towards more scenic techniques of narration. However, it is necessary to recognize that the narrative method does owe much to the style of narration common in the eighteenth century. I am thinking here of the sententiousness not only of the narrator, but also of the characters, and most notably of the 'Turmgesellschaft'. That the narrator distances himself from certain types of sententious discourse is not in itself particularly forward-looking. The juxtaposition of one piece of sententious dialogue with another is something also done by Jane Austen in Pride and Prejudice in 1813 [27].

Moreover, Goethe's novel involves a process of characterization which is perhaps rooted in the eighteenth century. Apart from the notable exception of Mignon, the minor characters of the novel are defined by the narrator, which indicates a certain degree of narratorial presence.

which indicates a certain degree of narratorial presence.

Although there is evidence of a trend towards scenic presentation, there is really no established pattern created by the alternation of summary and scene. Chapters do tend to be episodic, however, and most chapters do open and close with summary. These summaries do not set a scene, with the notable exception of the first chapter of the novel. In terms of 'realistic' (realism always being relative), there is little evidence of a detailed impression of the setting for the events.

Despite these reservations, I should point to the question of commentary versus implication. As we saw in the previous chapter, key concepts such as 'Bildung' and 'Heilung' are conveyed through implicit methods such as symbolism, juxtaposition and inference, rather than through direct statement by the narrator. Moreover, the style of dialogue is notably less stylized than, say, in Agathon and the novel itself is set in contemporary Germany. Couple these features with the psychological treatment of Wilhelm, what emerges from the patchwork of styles which could be said to make up the novel, WML looks ahead to the 'realistic' developments in the novel in the nineteenth century. That Goethe recognized this realistic trait is something which emerges from the correspondence between Goethe and Schiller on the subject of WML. In his letter of 7 January 1795, Schiller argues that up to the third book, at least, represents a natural presentation of events because it is so "harmonisch aufgelöst" [28], which opposed a more philosophical approach (as embodied by the first version of Wieland's Agathon). Goethe, himself, recognized that he was moving towards a more realistic style of presentation in a letter of 9 July 1796 to Schiller:

> Der Fehler, den Sie mit Recht bemerken, kommt aus meiner innersten Natur, aus einem gewissen realistischen Tick, durch den ich meine Existenz, meine Handlungen, meine Schriften den Menschen aus den Augen zu rücken behaglich finde [29].

The discussion arose out of Goethe's revealing to Schiller that he only gives part of the 'Lehrbrief', but one might say that the general movement to a more realistic treatment is characteristic of the narrative presentation of WML. The benefits of such an approach are articulated by Schiller in the reply to Goethe's letter cited above:

> Dem Leser würde es freilich bequemer sein, wenn Sie selbst ihm die Momente worauf es ankommt, blank und bar zuzählten, daß er sie nur in Empfang zu nehmen brauchte; sicherlich aber hält es ihn bei dem Buche fester und führt ihn öfter zu demselben zurück, wenn er sich selber helfen muß. Haben Sie also nur dafür gesorgt, daß er gewiß findet, wenn er mit gutem Willen und hellen Augen sucht, so ersparen Sie ihm ja das Suchen nicht. Das Resultat eines solchen Ganzen muß immer die eigene, freie, nur nicht willkürliche Produktion des Lesers sein, es muß eine Art von Belohnung bleiben, die nur dem Würdigen zu teil wird, indem sie dem Unwürdigen sich entziehet [30].

Notes to Chapter Seven

1. Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (London, 1921)
2. It must be remembered that WML was based around Wilhelm Meisters Theatralische Sendung whose composition extended from 1777 to 1785. The first edition of Agathon was published 1766 - 67
3. Christoph Martin Wieland, Geschichte des Agathon - [Erste Fassung] in Werke (Vol 1) ed. by F. Martini and H.W. Seifert (Munich 1964), p.385
4. See Chapter Four, pp.59 - 61
5. Agathon, p.667
6. Wayne C. Booth: The Rhetoric of Fiction (Harmondsworth, 1982 2nd Ed.) pp.151 ff.
7. Agathon, p.375
8. Agathon, p.477

9. Joachim von der Thüsen, Der Romananfang in WML in DVjs 43 (1969), p.622.
10. op. cit., pp. 622 - 63: Von der Thüsen emphasizes the fact that it is told: "Die dichterische Intelligenz ist es denn auch, die im Romananfang durch Sprache die dargestellte Welt langsam aufbaut".
11. op. cit., p.623
12. Agathon, p.378
13. Chapter Five, pp. 84 - 87
14. Agathon, p.572
15. ibid.
16. Thereby it is perhaps closer to the type of sententious discourse used by the 'Turmgesellschaft'.
17. See Note 4
18. Agathon, p.417
19. For the importance of role-playing see Gert Ueding, Klassik und Romantik: Deutsche Literatur im Zeitalter der Französischen Revolution 1781 - 1815 (Vol. 1) (Munich 1988) pp.436 - 451
20. Agathon, p. 816
21. See Note 1
22. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (London, 1982), p.6
23. Demetz, Formen des Realismus: Theodor Fontane (Munich, 1964), p.143
24. op. cit., pp.143 - 144
25. op. cit., p.144
26. ibid.
27. Jane Austen, Pride & Prejudice (Ware, 1992 - Wordsworth Classics) p.1
28. Briefwecksel Goethe - Schiller in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Goethes Werke, Vol. 7, edited by Erich Trunz (Hamburger Ausgabe), Munich, 1981, p.623
29. Goethe to Schiller dated 8/7/1796, op.cit., p.643
30. op. cit., p. 645

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Abbreviations

DVjs: Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte

GRM: Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift

JdDSG: Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft

PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America

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