

# Analysen und Dokumente

Beiträge zur Neueren Literatur

50

Reinhold Grimm

## Fielding's *Tom Jones* and the European Novel since Antiquity



PETER LANG

Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften

## ANALYSEN UND DOKUMENTE

### Beiträge zur Neueren Literatur

Begründet von Norbert Altenhofer †  
Herausgegeben von Leonhard M. Fiedler

- Band 1 Heinz Lunzer: Hofmannsthals politische Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1914-1917. 1981.
- Band 2 Ingrid Eggers: Veränderungen des Literaturbegriffs im Werk von Hans Magnus Enzensberger. 1981.
- Band 3 Dieter Mank: Erich Kästner im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland. 1933-1945: Zeit ohne Werk? 1981.
- Band 4 Eberhard Fahlke: Die 'Wirklichkeit' der Mutmaßungen. Eine politische Lesart der *Mutmassungen über Jakob* von Uwe Johnson. 1982.
- Band 5 Brigitte Bender: Ästhetische Strukturen der literarischen Landschaftsbeschreibung in den Reisewerken des Fürsten Pückler-Muskau. 1982.
- Band 6 Alois Münch: Bertolt Brechts Faschismustheorie und ihre theatralische Konkretisierung in den *Rundköpfen und Spitzköpfen*. 1982.
- Band 7 Werner Kurzawa: Analytische Aspekte der literarischen Wertung. Zur Werturteilsfrage in der philosophischen, sozialwissenschaftlichen und literaturwissenschaftlichen Diskussion. 1982.
- Band 8 Peter Christian Lang: Literarischer Unsinn im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert. Systematische Begründung und historische Rekonstruktion. 1982.
- Band 9 Robert Weninger: Arno Schmidts Joyce-Rezeption 1957-1970. Ein Beitrag zur Poetik Arno Schmidts. 1982.
- Band 10 Hildegard Hummel: Rudolf Borchardt. Interpretationen zu seiner Lyrik. 1983.
- Band 11 Bernd Willim: Urbild und Rekonstruktion. Zur Bedeutung von Schleiermachers Konzept der Literatúrauslegung in der aktuellen Diskussion um eine materiale Hermeneutik. 1983.
- Band 12 Herbert Gutjahr: Zwischen Affinität und Kritik. Heinrich Heine und die Romantik. 1984.
- Band 13 Hendrik Balonier: Schriftsteller in der konservativen Tradition. Thomas Mann 1914-1924. 1983.
- Band 14 Gerhard A. Schulz: Literaturkritik als Form der ästhetischen Erfahrung. Eine Untersuchung am Beispiel der literaturkritischen Versuche von Samuel Taylor Coleridge und August Wilhelm Schlegel über das Shakespeare-Drama *Romeo und Julia*. 1984.
- Band 15 Winfried Happ: Nietzsches *Zarathustra* als moderne Tragödie. 1984.
- Band 16 Michèle Pauget: L'interrogation sur l'art dans l'oeuvre essayistique de Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Analyse de configurations. 1984.
- Band 17 Bernhard Uske: Geschichte und ästhetisches Verhalten. Das Werk Wolfgang Koeppens. 1984.
- Band 18 Abdo Abboud: Deutsche Romane im arabischen Orient: Eine komparatistische Untersuchung zur Rezeption von Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse und Franz Kafka. Mit einem Überblick über die Rezeption der deutschen Literatur in der arabischen 'Welt'. 1984.
- Band 19 Lynne Tatlock: Willibald Alexis' *Zeitroman Das Haus Dusterweg* and the *Vormärz*. 1984.
- Band 20 Ehrhard Marz: Goethes Rahmenerzählungen (1794-1821). Untersuchungen zur Goetheschen Erzählkunst. 1985.

- Band 21 Manfred Steinbrenner: "Flucht aus der Zeit"? Anarchismus, Kulturkritik und christliche Mystik – Hugo Balls "Konversionen". 1985.
- Band 22 Bettina Dessau: Nathans Rückkehr. Studien zur Rezeptionsgeschichte seit 1945. 1986.
- Band 23 Bärbel Kuehn: Kindergeschichte, Spiel und Parabel. Untersuchungen zu kurzen Prosatexten um 1970. 1987.
- Band 24 Yoriko Sakurai: Mythos und Gewalt. – Über Hugo von Hofmannsthals Trauerspiel "Der Turm" –. 1988.
- Band 25 Gabi Ziegler-Happ: Das Spiel des Stils. Interpretation von Goethes Stilbegriff vor dem Hintergrund von Schillers Spieltheorie. 1988.
- Band 26 Gabriele Metzger: Liebe als Rollen-"Spiel". Eine Motivuntersuchung. 1990.
- Band 27 Anne Barbara Gerken: Die sprachtheoretische Differenz zwischen Gottsched und Gellert. 1990.
- Band 28 Thomas Lindner: Die Modellierung des Faktischen. Heinar Kipphardts *Bruder Eichmann* im Kontext seines dokumentarischen Theaters. 1990.
- Band 29 Marina Stadler: Rollenbewußtsein und Subjektivität. Eine literartypologische Untersuchung politischer Memoiren am Beispiel von Otto von Bismarcks "Erinnerung und Gedanke". 1991.
- Band 30 Norbert Altenhofer: "Die Ironie der Dinge". Zum späten Hofmannsthal. 1995.
- Band 31 Karin Wolgast: Die Commedia dell'arte im Wiener Drama um 1900. 1993.
- Band 32 Jörg Bong: "Die Auflösung der Disharmonien". Zur Vermittlung von Gesellschaft, Natur und Ästhetik in den Schriften Karl Philipp Moritz'. 1993.
- Band 33 Severin Perrig: Hugo von Hofmannsthal und die Zwanziger Jahre. Eine Studie zur späten Orientierungskrise. 1994.
- Band 34 Kerstin Schönfeld: Königtum im Blickpunkt. Der multiperspektivische Ansatz in Shakespeares Historienspielen *Richard II* und *Henry IV*. 1996.
- Band 35 Joëlle Stoupy: *Maître de l'heure*. Die Rezeption Paul Bourget's in der deutschsprachigen Literatur. Hermann Bahr, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Leopold von Andrian, Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann und Friedrich Nietzsche. 1996.
- Band 36 Sylvia Brandt: BRAVO! & BUM BUM! Neue Produktions- und Rezeptionsformen im Theater der historischen Avantgarde: Futurismus, Dada und Surrealismus. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung. 1995.
- Band 37 Ulrich Hackenbruch: Sachliche Intensitäten. Walter Serners "erotische Kriminalgeschichten" in ihrer Epoche. 1996.
- Band 38 Jürgen Sandhop: Die Seele und ihr Bild. Studien zum Frühwerk Hugo von Hofmannsthals. 1998.
- Band 39 Karin Hartleb-Monnet: Zwischen Literatur und Politik. Die Wochenzeitung *Vendredi* 1935-1938. 1999.
- Band 40 Bond Johnson: The Mode of Parody. An Essay at Definition and Six Studies. 2000.
- Band 41 Peter Queckbömer: "Zwischen Irrsinn und Verzweiflung". Zum erweiterten Kulturbegriff der Zeitschrift *Die Schaubühne/Die Weltbühne* im Ersten Weltkrieg. 2000.
- Band 42 Karin Ceballos Betancur: Egon Erwin Kisch in Mexiko. Die Reportage als Literaturform im Exil. 2000.

- Band 43 Jeang-Yean Goak: Die Ich-Problematik in E.T.A. Hoffmanns *Die Elixiere des Teufels*. Eine psychoanalytische Untersuchung in Auseinandersetzung mit der deutschen idealistischen Philosophie. 2000.
- Band 44 Marlene Lohner: Goethes Caravanen. Verkörperungen der Phantasie im Spätwerk. 2001.
- Band 45 Roswitha M. Kant: Visualität in Rainer Maria Rilkes *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge*. Eine Untersuchung zum psychoanalytischen Symbolbegriff. 2002.
- Band 46 Rainer Brändle: *Am wilden Zeitenpaß*. Motive und Themen im Werk des deutsch-jüdischen Dichters Ernst Lissauer. Mit einem Vorwort von Guy Stern. 2002.
- Band 47 Gerold Schipper: Identität und Entfremdung. Zum Konzept des Dichterischen bei Keats und Hofmannsthal. 2004.
- Band 48 Yeon-Hong Kim: Goethes Naturbegriff und die *Wahlverwandschaften*. Symbolische Ordnung und Ironie. 2002.
- Band 49 Guy Stern: Fielding, Wieland, Goethe and the Rise of the Novel. 2003.
- Band 50 Reinhold Grimm: Fielding's *Tom Jones* and the European Novel since Antiquity. Fielding's *Tom Jones* as a Final Joinder. 2005.

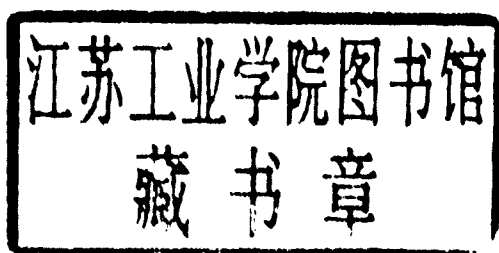
[www.peterlang.de](http://www.peterlang.de)

# Analysen und Dokumente

## Beiträge zur Neueren Literatur

Begründet von Norbert Altenhofer †  
Herausgegeben von Leonhard M. Fiedler

Band 50



PETER LANG

Frankfurt am Main · Berlin · Bern · Bruxelles · New York · Oxford · Wien

Fielding's *Tom Jones* and the European Novel since Antiquity

Reinhold Grimm

Fielding's *Tom Jones*  
and the European Novel  
since Antiquity

Fielding's *Tom Jones*  
as a Final Joinder



PETER LANG  
Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften

**Bibliographic Information published by Die Deutsche  
Bibliothek**

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche  
Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available in  
the internet at <<http://dnb.ddb.de>>.

Cover illustration:  
Henry Fielding.

Engraving by James Basire,  
after a sketch by William Hogarth (1762).

ISSN 0721-2925  
ISBN 3-631-53772-7  
US-ISBN 0-8204-7707-9

© Peter Lang GmbH  
Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften  
Frankfurt am Main 2005  
All rights reserved.

All parts of this publication are protected by copyright. Any  
utilisation outside the strict limits of the copyright law, without  
the permission of the publisher, is forbidden and liable to  
prosecution. This applies in particular to reproductions,  
translations, microfilming, and storage and processing in  
electronic retrieval systems.

Printed in Germany 1 2 3 4 5 7

[www.peterlang.de](http://www.peterlang.de)



## Prefatory Note

An Anglicist's – not a Germanist's, let alone a comparatist's – title and text such as, say, *The Rise of the Novel* (thus Ian Watt's well-known book of 1957, subtitled “Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding”) might be prone to raise false expectations or even apprehensions. As if the genre of the novel had originated in England, and as late as the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to boot! In truth, however, the novel has been present in Europe ever since Greek and Roman antiquity. From the mid-15<sup>th</sup> and mid-16<sup>th</sup> centuries onward, when the two ancient masterworks – by Apuleius and Heliodorus, respectively – were printed, edited, and subsequently translated into vernacular languages, this rich novelistic heritage has been received, indeed devoured, by the intellectual European community, both men and women as well as writers and critics alike, upon all of whom it came to exert an enormous influence. Only with Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, in mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, did that dual process of reception culminate, and attain its final joinder (from which it further continued, now a genuine “rise” indeed, as the German *bildungsroman*, or novel of formation and education [cf. n. 197 below]). Hence, in view of so sweeping and uninterrupted a development, it is recommended to read the disquisition at hand in one sitting, as it were. A division into chapters or subchapters has, at any rate, duly been omitted.

R.G.



The origins, mainly neglected nowadays, of the European – or, for that matter, Western – novel are to be found in late antiquity, in the respective works of Apuleius and Heliodorus.<sup>1</sup> These are markedly different from each other both in style and, above all, content and structure, yet they coincide most remarkably, indeed uniquely, in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* of 1749, which signals their final joiner. Such, at any rate, is my modest proposal that I shall try to substantiate, as well as substantially enlarge by way of adding other sources and models, in the pages following.

Lucius Apuleius was born around 123/24 A.D. at Madaura (or Madauros, the modern Algerian Mdauruch) in North Africa or, to be more precise, Numidia; he died around 180 A.D., after services in Rome and in his homeland. Apuleius, who had studied grammar and rhetoric in Carthage and Athens, and had traveled widely, also authored various minor works such as his apologia *Pro se de magia libri II*, where he defended himself against the accusation of sorcery, and his *Florida*, a florilegium from his speeches, as well as philosophical writings on Plato and Socrates. His style, indeed his entire oeuvre, has been said to be as contradictory as the times in which he lived: now bombastic and sanctimonious, now ingenious and witty, and of a garrulous lasciviousness to boot.

About Heliodorus, on the other hand, very little is known except that he hailed from Emesa (the modern Homs) in Syria, and that he lived in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.; he even claimed that he was a Phoenician. Anyway, his novel, which proved to be so influential over the centuries, was written in Greek, whereas that of Apuleius, hardly less influential, was composed in Latin. Both constitute, as

stated before, the roots of the early novel in terms of a serious and weighty genre in Europe as it sprang up in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and extended at least to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and beyond. But while Apuleius and his work and what it engendered were almost totally ignored by contemporaneous theorists, Heliodorus and his work and its impact were virtually canonized, so to speak, as early as 1670 by the learned Frenchman Pierre Daniel Huet (1630 - 1721) who later on was appointed bishop of Avranches. Apuleius, it is true, does make an appearance in Huet's treatise; however, he is referred to only in passing, and his novel, far from being considered a model, is but fleetingly interpreted so as to conform to, at the very least, one of Huet's favorite concepts. That which prevails, and in an all-embracing manner at that, is the Heliodorian novel, praised for its exemplary purity of style as well as for its equally exemplary virtuousness.

What are the salient features of the Apuleian novel in question, which originated in 175 A.D. or shortly thereafter – in any case, not before 166 - 177 A.D. – and which is so aptly titled *Metamorphoses* or *Asinus aureus*? (It should be noted, incidentally, that this "Golden Ass" was based on an older Greek text Apuleius adapted, and that no less a worthy than the church father Augustine alluded to it repeatedly.)<sup>2</sup> What then, to iterate, are those features?

Apuleius's work – which was first published in 1469, and translated into Spanish in 1513, a rendition reissued three times during the 16<sup>th</sup> century alone – demonstrably influenced the composition of the first picaresque novel ever: the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* of 1554. I shall come back to that; but let me emphasize from the outset that this decisive influence was recognized as early as the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, notably in French criticism, and that it continued, unabated, way into the 18<sup>th</sup> century, manifesting itself especially in *Gil Blas de Santillane*, the famous French picaresque novel by Lesage (1668 - 1747) which dates from 1715/35. Still, this is merely one aspect of the worldwide repercussions of the *Asinus*

*aureus*, the other being its formative impact on the European novella, i.e., on Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, etc. (even Cervantes, and not only the author of the *Novelas ejemplares*, can be shown to be indebted to Apuleius). Namely, the main structural characteristic of Apuleius's *Metamorphoses* is a significant combination: on the one hand, of the story of Lucius, the 'hero', and his transformation into an ass, the various, often highly hilarious stations of his animal career, and his ultimate retransformation into his original human shape, and, on the other hand, of a veritable plethora of inserted novellas or shortstories, of hoaxes and tricks, jokes, jests and pranks that he either experiences himself or overhears when they are being told. One of them, the facetious though, at the same time, also somewhat solemn tale, indeed fairy tale, of "Amor et Psyche" is so momentous as nearly to amount to a work – a literary entity – of its own; at all events, it has frequently been printed separately, and analyzed and discussed as an independent story.

The overall plot of the *Asinus aureus* runs as follows: Young Lucius, traveling in Thessaly in the northern parts of Greece, has a (rather carnal) love affair with a maid, or servant girl, whose lady happens to be a witch. One fine night, they watch her as she applies the appropriate ointment – stark naked, of course – and transforms herself into a huge owl. After she has flown away, Lucius, whose curiosity proves insatiable from the very beginning, wants to give it a try himself. Photis, the maid, fetches the ointment from her lady's room, which is dark, and liberally applies it to Lucius's skin. But, alas, she had grabbed the wrong box, and poor Lucius, instead of growing feathers and wings and becoming a bird, develops hooves and long ears (and a sizable penis to boot) and turns into an ass. The subsequent "books" – with the exception of the last, the eleventh – constitute a motley series, or concatenation, of adventures experienced and/or tales overheard, as already indicated: Lucius the ass passes from the hands of one master to those of the next in a

near endless succession, and, in most instances, is treated, or rather maltreated, miserably. He has to serve a band of robbers, an abducted girl, an old hag, a band of lewd and lecherous priests, a cook, a baker, a miller, and so on and so forth – until, finally, he ends up as the lover (in the most literal and drastic sense of the word) of an elegant if lustful, indeed ruttish, Greek lady who takes a liking for his enormous phallus. When the magistrate get wind of this, and order Lucius the ass to perform publicly in the circus, he feels that such a demand is too much even for an animal, and manages to escape. Book XI, at long last, contains his sudden and instantly effective conversion to the cult of the goddess Isis, who also instructs him how to regain his former human shape: to wit, by eating fresh rosebuds from the hands of her priests during their procession.

Thus, as a result, the structure of the whole work forms a loose sequence, both in terms of the adventures Lucius encounters, and in terms of the stories that are, more or less independently, interspersed and, somehow or other, interwoven and connected with the main plot. Crime – murder, adultery, witchcraft – and sex dominate throughout in either of them; there is, as might be expected, no dearth of obscenities (and this pertains not only to the sodomy committed by the ruttish lady) nor is there any dearth of bluntly scatological elements: that is to say, of unabashed shitting and pissing. And as for Apuleius's style, it corresponds, to repeat, exactly to the general mixture permeating his work, for it is equally motley, equally multifarious and variegated, mixing outlandish figures of speech and rhetorical *tours de force* with everyday colloquialisms and even coarse slang. It reveals itself, in short, as a decidedly manneristic style as opposed to the pure and decidedly classical style of Heliodorus.

Let me summarize, in a preliminary conclusion, the remaining features of the *Asinus aureus* as they can be gleaned and extricated from its text. Significantly, in lieu of a dramatic, almost tragic

scene replete with action, and with the ensuing tension and suspense, as we find it at the start (see below) of Heliodorus's novel, we hit upon a plain and direct story told by an uncomplicated character full of comic vanity and, in particular, curiosity. The narrative, simply enough, begins at the beginning: i.e., we are here faced – to use Horace's famous dicta – with the opening *ab ovo*, whereas the Heliodorian novel virtually wallows in the opening *in medias res*. In other words, the *Metamorphoses* consists of a chronological sequence of successive, or consecutive, occurrences, starting off with the protagonist's ancestors and family, birth and birthplace, education and business, and then proceeding accordingly. However, that does not mean that the work is devoid of subtler, more complex structural devices. For example, there obtains an obvious relationship between Lucius's fate and the seemingly isolated fairy tale about Cupid and Psyche: both the 'hero' of the principal story and the heroine of the inserted one indulge in excessive, unrestrained curiosity, and both are drastically or grievously punished for it until they are, wondrously and luckily, redeemed at the very end. The two narrations are, quite clearly, in agreement with each other; they reflect and comment on each other mutually. But – and that is very revealing – while "Amor et Psyche" is being narrated, the main action does not proceed any further but has come to a standstill, whereas, conversely, the main action in Heliodorus's novel keeps on moving during the flashback which relates the events that have taken place before the entire narrative started so vehemently and dramatically. Hence, one might well be inclined to label Apuleius's work as paratactical structurally, that of Heliodorus, however, as hypotactical.

Besides, the *Asinus aureus* presents itself as a first-person narrative, which is to say that the narrator and the protagonist, or 'hero', are identical (though not necessarily the actual author, too) and that this "I", or *ego*, relates his life or considerable portions thereof in the fictional form of an autobiography, or pseudo-autobiography.

Since there is only one protagonist – as opposed to the two protagonists of Heliodorus, as we shall see – it follows that there is only one narrative strand, or thread, the numerous interspersed stories notwithstanding. From the outset, this narrator and protagonist is immediately present with his specific individuality marked (and marred) by vanity and curiosity; his is a lively narrative voice, a thoroughly personal speech, engaging the reader or listener in a continued dialogue, as it were. The author Heliodorus, for all his indisputable presence, is far less intimate; his is, in contrast to the author, or narrator, of the *Metamorphoses*, a stately attitude and a lofty style. Needless to stress, the latter's 'hero' is of an exceedingly lowly, indeed abject, station: he is, or becomes, not just a servant or slave, like so many picaros centuries later, but an animal, even a beast of burden ... and worse yet, for the ass, especially in Apuleius's days, was held to be a notoriously stupid brute typifying lust, cruelty, and wickedness, that is to say, the very opposite of what we can gather from Heliodorus's novel, where nobility and chastity reign supreme.

Concerning the weltanschauung that transpires in the *Asinus aureus*, or the message implied and propagated in it, we are again confronted with an odd and curious mixture of sorts. On the one hand, the supernatural power which rules and dominates nearly throughout the novel is anything but Divine Providence as manifesting itself in Heliodorus's work; rather, it is the "most cruel Fortune" (*Fortuna saevissima*),<sup>3</sup> the goddess of constant change – I employ this oxymoron advisedly – or, less pointedly put, the goddess of changeability and instability of all things and beings under the moon. On the other hand, however, Fortune's whimsical reign is superseded for good by Lucius's conversion to the goddess Isis, who saves and redeems him, and actually makes him not merely a disciple but a downright priest of hers. At any rate, he is safely initiated into her mysteries. Still, these two contrasting worldviews are



in no way mediated with each other: the former vanishes and disappears as quickly as the latter comes to the fore and takes over.

In consequence of the traveling and wandering of the protagonist as an ass and of the variety of people he meets and the adventures he experiences or, more often than not, has to endure, as well as of the many stories he either witnesses or overhears, a vast and varicolored canvas of the entire world is being unfolded: all walks of life, that is, are being depicted and, in most cases, criticized and satirized in the *Metamorphoses*. To phrase it briefly and summarily: Apuleius's pseudo-autobiography of a lowly 'hero' reveals itself, at one and the same time, as a rich and multifaceted picture, or even grotesque caricature, of contemporaneous society at large; it forms, in a word, an exemplar of the so-called "satire of estates" as we know it from the late Middle Ages in particular. Both traditions, the pseudo-autobiographical one and the sociocritical one, converge – a truism, I trust – in the picaresque novel as it flourished from mid-16<sup>th</sup> century onward; however, they are, without fail, already unmistakably present in the *Asinus aureus*. And in that societal respect, too, i.e., as a complete if critico-satirical depiction of the world, of society and life as a whole, Apuleius's novel can be shown to achieve aesthetic unity despite its looseness of structure and apparently odd or arbitrary accumulation and combination of sundry occurrences and accidents. Indeed, even the lengthy inserted story of Cupid and Psyche, which comprises several "books", as well as the concluding Book XI in its entirety, devoted as it is to the cult and worship of Isis, reveal themselves as integral parts of the work: namely, insofar as they portray the realm of the gods, doing so either seriously, as in the latter instance, or semi-seriously at best and even, in truth, to a wide extent facetiously, in the former. (Cupid's mother Venus, for example, proves to be a 'typical', i.e., notorious, mother-in-law in "Amor et Psyche": she is jealous, overbearing and domineering, scheming and revengeful, and what have you.) Solely Isis and her mysteries are treated reverently and with awe by Apu-