

## L

### LAIENSPIEL

Dramatic performance by people who are not professional actors.

### LANDESTHEATER

Theatre subsidized and administered by a federal state (*Bundesland*) In some states it is called a →STAATSTHEATER. An important function of the *Landestheater* is to take productions to regions which do not have an established theatre.

### LANGVERS= Langzeile

Metrical line of 4 x 4/4 metre; xxxx xxxx xxxx xxxx. The first half of the line is referred to as the →ANVERS, the second as the →ABVERS. The *Langvers* is the most common metrical line of Germanic heroic and MHG epic poetry. →KURZVERS.

### LANGZEILE →LANGVERS

### LATEINSCHRIFT

Roman script as opposed to →KURRENTSCHRIFT. Both terms refer to handwriting only. →ANTIQUA, →FRAKTUR.

### LATINISMUS

Literal translation of a Latin idiom into another language.

### LAUT

The single sound as opposed to →KLANG, the overall acoustic impression.

### LAUTSCHRIFT (phonetic script)

Script in which each character represents a single unit of sound. →BILDERSCHRIFT, →SILBENSCHRIFT.

### LEBENDES TABLEAU →TABLEAU VIVANT

### LEDERAUSGABE (leather-bound edition) →AUSGABE

### LEGENDE = Heiligenleben

Like the English 'legend', the German term *Legende* used in ordinary speech can mean 'untrue story'.

When referring to a literary genre, however, the German term is more restricted and more specific than the English. *Legende* in this context means a narrative of the life of a saint, a prophet, a holy person, a martyr etc. or an event in such a person's life, usually a miracle. Although most med. collections contain *Legenden* of Christian saints (e.g. *Legenda aurea* c.1270), there are also *Legenden* of oriental and Buddhist holy persons. The *Legende* has itself become the source for other literary works and traces of it can be found in plays, narratives and lyric poetry throughout history. (e.g. Goethe, *Der Gott und die Bajadere*, 1797; Keller, *Sieben Legenden*, 1872). In the 20th century the *Legende* is treated psychologically (e.g. Hesse, *Siddhartha*, 1922)

and ironically (e.g. Thomas Mann, *Der Erwählte*, 1951). →EINFACHE FORMEN,  
→HEILIGENLEBEN.

A.O.

### **LEHRDICHTUNG, LEHRGEDICHT, LEHRSTÜCK** = Didaktik

Didactic or informative works intended in antiquity for non-literate audiences, in modern times to inculcate moral or political standpoints. Formerly it was not considered to be 'true' literature because it was not purely imaginative, but this view is now less accepted. Traditionally in verse, it has also included legend, fable, satire, epigram and drama. In classical antiquity written in hexameters, *Lehrdichtung* described subjects like agriculture (Hesiod, c.7th century B.C., Virgil, 70-19 B.C.), science (Lucretius, c.99-55 B.C.) and poetics (Horace, 65-8 B.C.). Med. and Reformation writers used *Lehrdichtung* for religious exposition and social criticism (Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, c.1307-1321; Freidank, *Bescheidenheit*, c.1215-1230; Brant, *Das Narrenschiff*, 1494); while 17th and 18th century Neoclassicism revived witty, urbane *Lehrdichtung* in Boileau and Pope. The German Enlightenment (→AUFKLÄRUNG) enjoyed both moralizing and educational *Lehr-dichtung* (Brockes, *Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott*, 1721-1748; Haller, *Die Alpen*, 1732; Gellert, *Fabeln*, 1746-1748). Rare in classical and Romantic German writing (an exception is Goethe's *Metamorphose der Pflanzen*, 1790), *Lehrdichtung* has since been used for political purposes, as in Heine's *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen* (1844) or Brecht's *Lehrstücke* (1929-1934). In recent years it has manifested itself in protest songs or the works of Socialist Realism (→SOZIALISTISCHER REALISMUS).

M.St.

### **LEICH** (lay)

Med. lyric poem of varying length and with free verse; *Leich* can also refer to a melody without a text.

### **LEINENAUSGABE**

Book which is bound in cloth. →AUSGABE.

### **LEITARTIKEL** (editorial, leader)

Leading article in a newspaper or journal, usually written by the editor.

### **LEITFADEN** (textbook, guide, manual)

Book which explains the basic principles of a subject in a concise and easily comprehensive manner.

### **LEITMOTIV** (leitmotiv)

Originally a musical term, later applied to literature also. In opera, particularly the 'music drama' of Richard Wagner (1813-1883), a *Leitmotiv* is a short recognizable musical theme which is identified in that drama with a particular person, object, situation, or feeling. The *Leitmotiv* has three main functions within the musical drama. First, it enhances the text being sung, in its simplest form occurring in the orchestra when the singer alludes to the person or object with which it is associated. Secondly, it can remind the audience of events which occurred earlier in the opera: it can revive memories and past emotions. Thirdly, it provides, by skilful juxtaposition of *Leitmotiv* and text, an orchestral commentary on the action on the stage. It can give the thoughts of the characters on the stage, and, perhaps more importantly, it can give the audience

information of which the characters are unaware, thus providing a powerful means to achieve dramatic irony. The *Leitmotiv* technique in opera was further developed by Richard Strauss and Humperdinck, among others.

In literature, particularly in the works of Thomas Mann (1875-1955), the *Leitmotiv* involves verbal repetition - the repetition of words, phrases or whole sentences in different contexts, thus attaining various associations. In his writing there is a development from the repetition of characterizing phrases, as in the earlier works, to the repetition of whole scenes with slight variations. *The Leitmotiv* in literature is essentially a structural device which enables parts of a larger work to be linked through association, resulting in a more thoroughly integrated whole. Although Mann was an ardent admirer of Wagner's music and had a thorough knowledge of the thematic structure of his music dramas, one must not assume that his use of the *Leitmotiv* is due solely to his love of opera. Many authors before and since have used a similar technique, perhaps the most notable being Fontane (1819-1898), and Mann himself claims that the use of the *literary Leitmotiv* can be traced back as far as Homer. →MOTIV.

J.N.-B.

### **LEITWORT** = Reizwort

Central evocative word, especially in a poem, which through the connotations it summons, leads the reader's thoughts in a particular direction. →SCHLÜSSELWORT.

### **LEKTOR**

1. University teacher engaged to teach introductory and practical courses in a subject; e.g. a person who teaches his or her native language at a foreign university.
2. Reader: literary editor employed by a publishing house who reads and assesses works offered for publication and works in close collaboration with the authors.

### **LEMMA**

In textual criticism (→TEXTKRITIK) the headings in the critical apparatus (→APPARAT) giving references to the relevant passages in the author's work.

### **LESART** (variant) = Variante

Different version of a text or part of it arising either from conscious revision by the author or from contamination by copyists or printers. →TEXTKRITIK.

### **LESEBUCH**

Book featuring textual arrangements of works of literature for educational purposes; may be in the form of an anthology, or a reader made up of selected works by given authors.

### **LESEFRÜCHTE**

1. Information or knowledge acquired through reading.
2. Florilegia: selections of passages from various authors; quotations.

### **LESER**

The function of the reader in the literary process has become an important object of study with the reaction against criticism which regarded the text as existing apart from both author and reader, and against study of the text as the product of the author

alone. Justification of literature and its study as necessary parts of a social system could be given by anchoring the works in a historical sequence of recipients (readers). The shifts in attitude and interest in the sequence could form a more proper basis for literary history and for aesthetic judgement than that provided for by the concepts of *timelessness* and *classicism* which arose from earlier schools, and which did not include the modern reader/critic in the historical sequence.

Such a swing from the aesthetics of production (i.e. from the author) to those of reception necessarily gives rise to questions of distribution of books, of psychology and of social history, which are beyond the scope of the literary scholar. His field remains the literary text, and many theories have arisen which attempt to account for the text-reader relationship. The *implied reader* (term coined by Wolfgang Iser, *Der implizite Leser*, 1972), gives a place to both author and reader: the author can use all the means of literary expression to give a series of shifting perspectives to the happenings and persons of the work, and to challenge the reader's own attitudes and experiences in relation to them. The imagination of the reader is further activated by indefiniteness, *empty spots* in the structure of the text. The resultant *actualisation* or *concretion* is also worthy of study (demoscopic research). No reader ever fully realizes all the possibilities extant in the text structure. Other constructs (contemporary reader, ideal reader, intended, imaginary or conceptual reader) are theoretical attempts to assess reader function in and influence on, the text. They are means to particular critical ends.

The persona of the reader (i.e. 'dear reader') is one of the means of directing the imagination of the real reader. This is a frequent device in 18th century novels, but more modern authors tend to discard the persona as a distinct entity in favour of a strategy of perspective linked to characters within the plot.

Literature, although written by an author in a particular period, can outlive both the author and the period, but only because of the imaginative activity of the reader, recreating the structures of word and form given by the text. →REZEPTION.

E.P.

**LESERING** (book club) →**BUCHGEMEINSCHAFT**

### **LIED**

Originally, a form of lyric poetry consisting of regular rhymed verses. Because of this regularity, the *Lied* lent itself to musical composition, with the result that the term has come to mean a poem set to music, and intended to be sung.

### **LIEDERBUCH** (songbook)

A collection of songs in book form.

### **LIEDERHANDSCHRIFT** = Sammelhandschrift

Collection of med. manuscripts of poetry, often extensively illustrated and illuminated. →MINIATUR.

**LITERARHISTORIE** →**LITERATURGESCHICHTE**

**LITERARISCHE FÄLSCHUNGEN** →**FÄLSCHUNGEN**

### **LITERAT**

Frequently pejorative term for a writer.

## LITERATUR

1. In the widest sense of the term, *Literatur*, like its English equivalent, means everything in 'letters', i.e. everything written (=Schrifttum). This very general meaning does not observe possible distinctions between different types of written material, and is therefore inadequate for the purpose of defining literature as the subject-matter of literary studies.

2. In a more specific sense, *Literatur* refers to that body of texts which is primarily composed of language operating at the level of connotation; that is to say language as employed in a work of literature does not just use words and phrases in their lexical meaning (denotation) directly referring to external phenomena (e.g. the statement 'beware of falling rocks' refers directly to the impending danger of falling rocks and becomes totally redundant if there is no danger of falling rocks) but rather creates a world of its own. In such a text words and phrases are interdependent in more than just the normal grammatical sense; through the full use of aesthetic and stylistic possibilities they derive their actual meaning from their context.

This is why, in the ballad *Der Fischer* by Goethe (1749-1832), in the line "Das Wasser rauscht, das Wasser schwoll", it is impossible to replace the word 'Wasser' by the chemical symbol H<sub>2</sub>O, because this symbol functions on the level of denotation only. H<sub>2</sub>O may sometimes be substituted for the word 'water' but only when this word is used in its lexical meaning i.e. if it is required to communicate "a colourless transparent tasteless odourless compound of oxygen and hydrogen in liquid state". In Goethe's poem, however, *Wasser* is the dangerous dark element, from which life originated, the element of mermaids, a symbol of danger and constant temptation to man.

Within this body of texts there is a wide variety in quality ranging from artistically inferior texts (→TRIVIALLITERATUR) to those which are the most satisfying aesthetically (→DICHTUNG).

*Literatur* therefore does not imply a value judgement, it merely distinguishes those texts making use of a specific function of language from all other texts. →FIKTION, →WIRKLICHKEIT.

A.O.

## LITERATURARCHIV → ARCHIV

### LITERATURFEHDEN (literary controversies)

### LITERATURGESCHICHTE (literary history, history of literature) = Literarhistorie

Historians of literature gather and describe a given corpus of literary works. Their histories of literature present an ordered and full account of the preserved writings of a nation or of an age. Besides the facts of literature, a synoptic view of the origins, scope and transformations of the writings within that corpus is often included in such literary histories.

The historian of literature may proceed from clearly defined criteria, such as:  
chronological consideration (e.g. Which works are written when?)  
national character (e.g. How does nationality determine the character of the works of literature?)  
historical and social change (e.g. How did the Industrial Revolution affect the production of literature?)

Change of styles and the development of the literary genres may also be recorded by the historian of literature, as well as the biographical data of the writers and poets.

Modern literary histories arose with the Italian Renaissance. However, not until the second half of the 19th century, and with the advent of positivism, (→POSITIVISMUS) did the historians of literature (Wilhelm Scherer being the most notable among German scholars) show the determining force of heredity, environment and ascertainable physical causes upon the production of literature. Historical, bibliographical and biographical research and the objective description of a corpus of literature are a non-critical (i.e. non-aesthetic) scholarly task. →LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT.

Works of literature of an age or of a particular language are not merely a collection of the disparate writings of individuals; the historian of literature tries to discern and establish the place of individual works within an overall development.

R.P.

### **LITERATURKALENDER**

Literary almanac which provides bibliographical and biographical information about living authors. →ALMANACH, →KALENDERGESCHICHTE.

### **LITERATURKRITIK →KRITIK**

#### **LITERATURPSYCHOLOGIE** (psychology of literature)

Literary scholarship makes use of psychological knowledge and techniques and subordinates these to its own methods. Most literary theories emphasize the independent nature of the literary work and stress the limitations of the author's intention and of his conscious insight into the essence of his work. Psychoanalysis, however, offers methods which go beyond the accepted limitations of the conscious mind and reveal certain associations in the unconscious mind. The most important problem areas of literary scholarship in which psychological insights and methods can be utilized are: author biography; the literary creative process; psychological analysis of the work: that is, psychology as it relates to the psychological difficulties or development of the literary figures, language, style, symbolism; the psychology of reading and of the public, which is significant for the reception of literature. The question of authors' abnormal states of mind, resulting from drugs, neurosis, etc. - as in the case of Trakl (1887-1914), Kafka (1883-1924) and pop-artists - may also belong to the realm of literary psychology. →LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT.

L.Z.W.

#### **LITERATURSOZIOLOGIE** (sociology of literature)

Sociology of literature is, in the strictest sense of the word, a branch of sociology concerned with empirical investigations of the social conditions underlying the production and distribution of literature, as well as its measurable impact on the development of social groups. It involves examination of the social position of writers, readers, printers, publishers and booksellers, the mechanisms governing the book market, printing techniques, literary institutions, censorship, etc. This branch of *Literatursoziologie* is not highly developed in Germany; elements of it are now incorporated in →EMPIRISCHE LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT (S. J. Schmidt). *Literatursoziologie* also means the investigation of literature as a social phenomenon from a theoretical point of view, closely related to aesthetics and the sociology of knowledge (*Wissenssoziologie*). It looks at the writer and historian as representative

of a certain social class, layer or group in a given historical period, as a basis for the understanding of the work of literature, and also uses the work of literature to gain a deeper understanding of the problems of a social system. This method has been developed mainly in Marxist literary criticism: its beginnings are found in the works of Mehring (1846-1919), and its most important representative, as far as German literature is concerned, is Lukács (1885-1971). The term was basically used in this context in the GDR. In the 1960s the theorists of the Frankfurt School and especially Adorno's interpretation of the autonomous work of art as a protest against the inhumanity and injustice of society have had a very great impact in West Germany. In its broadest sense the term tends to confound 'social' and 'sociological' and is generally used to denote any approach that looks at literature primarily in its social and historical context in opposition to →WERKIMMANENT, or structuralist approaches (→STRUKTURALISMUS). This usage has always been widespread in the FRG, rather disparagingly in the post-war period and with approval over the last decades as a result of the strong demand of the student generation of the late sixties for a more 'socially relevant' treatment of literature. →LITERATUWISSENSCHAFT.

L.B.

### **LITERATURSPRACHE →SCHRIFTSPRACHE**

#### **LITERATURWISSENSCHAFT**

A collective term for a number of highly diversified and specialized academic disciplines which concern themselves with the study of literature in all its aspects. As distinct from the more subjective *Literaturkritik* (→KRITIK), *Literaturwissenschaft* has to fulfil the requirements of a *Wissenschaft*, i.e. it has to provide means and methods for a systematic and objective inquiry into its subject. The development of a theory of literature and new methods and also the constant critical analysis of existing methods and approaches are part of *Literaturwissenschaft*. But it also encompasses more practical aspects of the scholarly pursuit of literature such as →INTERPRETATION, →LITERATURGESCHICHTE, →LITERATURPSYCOLOGIE, →LITERATURSOZIOLOGIE, →METRIK, →REZEPTION, →STILISTIK, →TEXTKRITIK, etc.

A.O.

#### **LITOTES (litotes)**

Ironical understatement: a figure of speech which emphasises by denying the opposite e.g.: nicht unbekannt = sehr bekannt, berühmt. →MEIOSIS.

### **LITTERATURE ENGAGEE →ENGAGIERTE LITERATUR**

#### **LIZENZAUSGABE**

Edition of a work printed under licence to another publisher. →AUSGABE.

#### **LOBGEDICHT**

Lyric or epic poem written in praise of a person or object; a verse eulogy.

#### **LOCUS AMOENUS (Lat. = lovely place, pleasance)**

One of the →TOPOI isolated by E.R. Curtius in *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (1948). Coming from Greek and Latin bucolic or pastoral

poetry (→HIRTENDICHTUNG) (Horace, Ovid, Virgil) to medieval literature (→MINNESANG, →EPIK), Barock (Arcadian poetry) and later eras (e.g. Kleist, 1777-1811), it denotes a beautiful shady landscape containing various archetypal elements such as trees, a spring, meadows, flowers, and birds. In Christian terms it is often used as the landscape of paradise.

M.A.S.

**LOCUS COMMUNIS** (commonplace) = Gemeinplatz  
Platitude, trite remark.

**LÖSUNG** (dénouement)

The conclusion and solution of a dramatic conflict. →KATASTROPHE.

**LÜGENDICHTUNG**

Popular literary genre originated by Lucian (c.120-180) which relates fantastic, improbable, or highly exaggerated events. A recurring feature is the character of the braggart (e.g. miles gloriosus, Bramarbas, Baron von Münchhausen, Cyrano de Bergerac). →MÜNCHHAUSENIADE.

**LUSTIGE PERSON →KOMISCHE FIGUR**

**LUSTSPIEL**

Term originally coined to replace the Greek derived →KOMÖDIE, like →SCHAUSPIEL for →DRAMA, and *Trauerspiel* for TRAGÖDIE. Later attempts were made to differentiate these pairs. While either *Lustspiel* or *Komödie* is used to refer to comic drama as a genre, *Lustspiel* in its narrow sense denotes plays informed by →HUMOR rather than →KOMIK, i.e. *Lustspiele* accept the world as it is and display a serene understanding of human frailty. Their milieu is usually bourgeois or upper-class, therefore the term *Konversationslustspiel* is often used. The distinction between *Lustspiel* and *Komödie*, neat in theory, is problematic in practice. Few plays belong to one genre alone, e.g. Grillparzer's *Lustspiel*, *Weh' dem, der lügt* (1840), has elements of low comedy (the half-witted Teuton Galomir). Other languages have no equivalent distinction, nor do all German scholars recognize the above categories or agree on which plays should be assigned to each. Scholars generally speak of Shakespeare's *Lustspiele* and Molière's *Komödien*, but both *romantische Komödie* or *romantisches Lustspiel* can be found referring to the same plays. While the *Lustspiel* is considered the superior achievement, a number of superficial plays e.g. those of Bauernfeld (1802-1890), or Kotzebue (1761-1819) would also belong to this category. *Lustspiel* is thus best used for a group of subdued comedies, treating philosophical and moral questions, e.g. Lessing, *Minna von Barnhelm* (1767), Hofmannsthal, *Der Schwierige* (1921). →WEINERLICHES LUSTSPIEL.

F.W.

**LYRIK** (lyric poetry)

Term of Greek origin: 'what can be sung to the *lyra*'. Broadly speaking, poetry as against mere verse. No neat definition can be given, particularly as the attempt, made above all in German criticism, to base such a definition on what Staiger had termed →LYRISCH, has now generally been abandoned. Following Benn's *Probleme der Lyrik* (1951), the intellectual element and calculated craftsmanship have been seen as



equally legitimate aspects of *Lyrik*.

The term would then include (a) poetry of emotive subjectivity, spontaneity, immediacy and musicality (Staiger's *lyrisch*), as well as (b) *Gesellschaftslyrik* composed for and in accordance with the rules prevalent in a given society such as that of the Minnesingers or of the Baroque court poets, (c) →GEDANKENLYRIK, which reflects on philosophical, theological and aesthetic problems such as the vindication of God e.g. Haller (1708-1777), the concept of Beauty or of the Ideal e.g. Schiller (1759-1805), and (d) the mannerist, *l'art pour l'art* and hermetic traditions e.g. Kuhlmann (1651-1689), George (1868-1933), Celan (1920-1970).

Characteristic features common to all forms of *Lyrik* are verse, rhythm and imagery - but not necessarily stanza division and rhyme - as well as brevity, concentration on the essential, contraction of complex thought to a point of density, which purposely suggests a variety of associations and hence interpretations. The latter has become a prominent characteristic of modern *Lyrik* which uses special techniques (→CHIFFRE) to create it. →GATTUNGEN.

A.V.

### LYRISCH

In Emil Staiger's definition (*Grundbegriffe der Poetik*, 1946), a state of momentary fusion (of Erinnerung) in the sense of 'being within or taking inside' of the self with the world around, which can be present in poetry, drama or narrative, but in German literature, it finds its purest expression in the poetry of Goethe (1749-1832) and of the Romantics. Its immediacy of feeling manifests itself in a heightened musicality, the identity of word and →KLANG, at the expense of reflection and logical development or argument. Hence the predominance of short paratactic phrases, simple language, the modulation of rhythm according to mood rather than metre and the frequent use of the present tense. The *lyrische* element is often concentrated in the refrain which serves to strike again the same note of intimacy, while the remainder of the poem may be more reflective or descriptive. Staiger observes a similar change from *lyrisch* to reflective in the last line of Goethe's *Wandrer's Nachtlid II* (1780). →DRAMATISCH, →EPISCH.

A.V.

### LYRISCHES ICH (lyrical I, persona)

The persona who speaks as 'I' in a lyric poem but is not identical with the poet (empirical I).