

Romantische Poesie

Richard Hurd and
Friedrich Schlegel

This essay presents and explores a profound relationship between Richard Hurd and Friedrich Schlegel, one essential to understanding Schlegel's theory of *romantische Poesie* and one essential to grasping the bond, recognized explicitly by Schlegel himself, between English critical writing and the birth of German Romanticism.

The only previous clue of this possibility, other than in Schlegel's own writings, is lodged in Raimund Belgardt's 1969 study, where, however, a footnote simply cites the connection between Richard Hurd, Bishop Percy, Thomas Warton, and Johann Gottfried Herder, rather than directly between Schlegel and any of the three English critics.¹ Belgardt notes that Herder lists this trio of Englishmen as sources for his 1778 *Preisschrift* "Über die Wirkung der Dichtkunst auf die Sitten der Völker in alten und neuen Zeiten" [Concerning the Impact of Poetry on National Customs in Antiquity and Recent Times]. Aside from quoting Herder's summary citation (Herder actually quotes and cites Hurd a number of times throughout his collected works), Belgardt does not follow the lead with regard either to Herder or Schlegel, who, of course, read Herder and drew part of his critical foundation from him.

Except for a juxtaposed reference to Hurd, Schlegel, and "romantische Poesie" in Herbert Mainusch's *Romantische Ästhetik* (1969), no link of Hurd to Schlegel has been posited or suggested—except, again, in Schlegel's own criticism. This is not so surprising, since no critic or scholar of Schlegel has evinced any direct or detailed knowledge of Hurd; and no scholar of Hurd—an endangered species, with Hoyt Trowbridge and one recent German study by Dieter A. Berger fending off extinction—has ever indicated interest in Hurd's connection with any German writer.²

But Hurd—and to a lesser extent, Warton and Percy—are instrumental to the development of German Romanticism. The relationship of two of Hurd's treatises to Schlegel's idea of *romantische Poesie* is deep, direct, and in ways as important, if not more so, than Schlegel's relationship to the critical writings of Friedrich Schiller and Herder, or to the philosophy of Johann Gottlieb Fichte. The two works of Hurd are "On the Idea of Universal Poetry" (1765) and *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762).

A main point of Schlegel's theory is that *romantische Poesie* is confined to neither poetry (verse) or prose but comprehends and mixes the two and is related to the *Roman*. In his then well-known *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, Hurd advances the claim that the romantic or Gothic literature he discusses is written in either prose or verse. So does Thomas Warton, in his dissertation "Of the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe," prefixed to his 1774 *History of English Literature*. A. O. Lovejoy separated Schlegel's use of *Roman* and *romantisch*, but Hans Eichner has shown how, for Schlegel, the two are used together and both described as *romantische*. This is precisely Hurd's point in discussing the "old romances," whatever genre or form they take.

From Schlegel's "Athenäum Fragment No. 116," we have the familiar statement: "Romantic poetry is a progressive, universal poetry. Its aim isn't merely to reunite all the separate species of poetry and put poetry in touch with philosophy and rhetoric. It tries to and should mix and fuse poetry and prose . . . the poetry of art and the poetry of nature. . . . It embraces everything that is purely poetic, from the greatest systems of art, containing within themselves still further systems, to the sigh, the kiss that the poetizing child breathes forth in artless song."³

In his essay "On the Idea of Universal Poetry" (1765), Hurd insists on much the same qualities in what he calls "universal poetry" or "poesie." As he notes about the quality of the poet's mind, "When the received system of manners or religion in any country, happens to be so constituted as to suit itself in some degree to this extravagant turn of the human mind, we may expect that poetry will seize it with avidity, will dilate upon it with pleasure, and take a pride to erect its specious wonders on so proper and convenient a ground." The "true poet," attracted in turn to "*pagan fable*, and *Gothic romance*," will "ever adventure, in some sort, to supply their place with others of his own invention; that is, he will mould every system, and convert every subject, into the most amazing and miraculous form." Universal poetry "assembles, combines, or connects its ideas, at pleasure." It is progressive in that poetry first flatters our "restless and aspiring disposition," a striving anchored not in nature but in the mind of man. Universal poetry is

for Hurd always becoming, "restless and aspiring," and its power is located in a progressive—could we say transcendental?—power of the mind. It prefers "the agreeable, and the graceful, but, as occasion calls upon her, the vast, the incredible, I had almost said, the impossible, to the obvious truth and nature of things."⁴

In *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, Hurd asks, "may there not be something in the Gothic Romance peculiarly suited to the views of a genius, and to the ends of poetry?"⁵ In the *Works* of 1811, Hurd approvingly adds a passage quoted from a correspondent who read the first edition; that correspondent speaks of "the Romancers, whether in prose or verse."⁶ Hurd in 1762 states that the "circumstances" in these fictions and manners uniquely "are proper to the ends of poetry," that is, they above all belong to the ends of poetry, they most truly characterize all poetry.⁷ Here we have the true nature of all poetry, the poetry of poetry, whether in verse or prose, for Hurd speaks of verse, fairy tales, and old stories alike. In Schlegel's words, "The romantic kind of poetry is the only one that is more than a kind, that is, as it were, poetry itself: for in a certain sense all poetry is or should be romantic."⁸

Hurd takes a cue from Francis Bacon, that poetry is not strictly mimetic, but as "Lord Bacon should speak of *poesy as a part of learning*," Bacon also says "that the essence of poetry consisted in *submitting the shews of things to the desires of the mind*." And that "these *shews of things* could only be exhibited to the mind through the *medium of words*." Here is recognition that the source of poetry resides in the interplay of the external world with the individual mind, and in putting to constant test "the shews of things" by submitting them "to the desires of the mind."⁹ This bears on what Schlegel says: "It alone can become, like the epic, a mirror of the whole circumambient world, an image of the age. And it can also—more than any other form—hover at the midpoint between the portrayed and the portrayer, free of all real and ideal self-interest, on the wings of poetic reflection, and can raise that reflection again and again to a higher power, can multiply it in an endless succession."¹⁰ For Hurd, this interface of the world and the mind is where poetic activity takes place endlessly also, and, borrowing Bacon's words, he describes it as "*submitting the shews of things to the desires of the mind . . . through its power, or faculty of imagination*."¹¹

Herder and, after him, Schlegel clearly note the historical origin of *romantische Poesie*; for Schlegel it comes from the age of adventures, from knights, the age of chivalry, from fairy tales; for Herder, it is characterized by adventures. As Herder states about the *Roman*: "the novel is defined by adventure and it is a combination of the most wonderful ingredients."¹² For Schlegel, "the source of the romantic is found among the moderns, in the writings of William Shakespeare, Miguel de

Cervantes, in Italian poetry, in the age of knights, of love and fairy tales. This is the origin of the concept and the term 'romantic' itself."¹³

These are familiar words about *romantische Poesie*. The following are less so, but equally explicit, though more than thirty years earlier: "What," asks Hurd, at the start of the *Letters*, "is more remarkable than the Gothic CHIVALRY? or than the spirit of ROMANCE, which took its rise from that singular institution?" Moreover, Hurd, like Schlegel later, identifies the historical origin as the older moderns, and that while chivalry as a practice itself faded, the spirit of romance lasted. "The spirit of Chivalry, was a fire which soon spent itself: But that of *Romance*, which was kindled at it, burnt long, and continued its light and heat even to the politer ages." The sense of historical origin and continuation are the same in Hurd and Schlegel. As Hurd says, "Don't you begin to favour this conjecture, as whimsical as it may seem, of *the rise and genius* of knight-errantry?"¹⁴ "This . . . *feudal* service soon introduced," Hurd expands in his later edition, "what may be truly called *romantic*, the *going in quest of adventures*."¹⁵

What about fairy tales, as Schlegel claims? Consciously drawing on Dryden's notion of "*the Faery way of writing*," an important critical term revived and handed down by Joseph Addison, whom Hurd quotes, Hurd draws an explicit equation: "For *Faery Court* means the *reign of Chivalry*" and hence the source of the fictions in question. In fact, Hurd openly speaks of Edmund Spenser's "*Faery tales*," not perhaps the usage of "fairy tale" uppermost in our minds today, but the one we should keep in view when dealing with Hurd's and Schlegel's claim that romantic fictions or *romantische Poesie* originate in fairy tales from the age of chivalry.¹⁶

Hans Eichner, in his article on Schlegel's *romantische Poesie*, concentrates on three qualities that Schlegel, in his *Notebooks*, records as essential to that type of writing. It must be *fantastisch*, *sentimental*, and *mimisch*—that is, fantastical, sentimental with the theme of love, and yet—for all its fantasticalness—with something of the mimetic mixed in as well, some basis in truth or reality. It is these three qualities—the fantastic, the sentimental or love, and the mimetic—that are explicitly identified and repeatedly underscored by Hurd in his study of the romantic fictions.

Eichner states that probably in the fall of 1797 Schlegel's latest thinking about the romantic means a "new classification," which "implies therefore that the *Roman* should be *fantastisch*, *sentimental* and *mimisch*," and that Schlegel applied this tripartite formula not only to the *Roman* but also to romantic poetry and the ideal of all poetry. Eichner elucidates these three qualities, noting that at one point, "In the 'Brief über den Roman' [Letter on the Novel], Schlegel suggests that romantic poetry Copyrighted Material

Eichner says, a work that is romantic would then "reflect real life to a certain extent."¹⁷ But all three qualities—*fantastisch*, *sentimental*, *mimisch*—are to be co-present. Since his *Studiumaufsatz*, Schlegel recognized the *fantastisch* as a feature of postclassical poetry; and in the *Gespräch über die Poesie* [Dialogue on Poetry], he asks, "What then is the sentimental? That while it is dominated by feeling, it is not in fact a sensual, but a spiritual feeling that characterizes the sentimental. The source and soul of all of this stimulation is love, and the spirit of love must hover over romantic poetry in such a manner that it is invisibly visible."¹⁸

Putting aside for the moment that Schiller is a strong presence for Schlegel when it comes to the sentimental, what is the case for Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*? The same triple characterization emerges. The passages that could be cited are numerous, so I select a sample. At the beginning of the *Letters*, speaking of the age of chivalry and its spirit of romance, Hurd addresses their fantastic yet also their mimetic qualities and says, "The modes and fashions of different times may appear, at first sight, fantastic and unaccountable. But they, who look nearly into them, discover some latent cause of their production." Part of Hurd's purpose is to show that however fantastic the romances seem, they are not fully so. At one time, he claims, the world was "familiarized to this Prodigy, which we now start at." He speaks of "all the excesses of military fanaticism, which are painted so strongly, but scarcely exaggerated in the old Romances." And so Spenser, argues Hurd, considers ways to seek the mimetic, that is "to give an air of probability to his *Faery tales*." The romancers "think it enough if they can but bring you to imagine the possibility of them."¹⁹ Hurd in a later edition warns those skeptics who would not see and balance the mimetic with the fantastical by saying, "the *extravagance* of these fictions . . . is frequently, I believe, much less than these laughers apprehend." After a specific example, he then states, "But if the profane will not be kept within this decent reserve, we may give them to understand, that this fancy, as wild as it appears, had some foundation in *truth*."²⁰ These statements emphasize claims made in the first edition of 1762.

For the category of the sentimental, Hurd provides ample emphasis also. At one level he traces "The free commerce of the ladies," and says, "We are even told, that *the love of God and of the ladies* went hand in hand, in the duties and ritual of Chivalry"; or, more specifically, while the classical writings keep alive the "boisterous passions," the romantic does not ignore those, but "together with these, the gentler and more humane affections are awakened in us by the most interesting displays of love and friendship; of love, elevated to its noblest heights."²¹ This mixing of all passions with its ultimate emphasis on the gentler sentiments and on love that is elevated to its noblest—love that is spiritual

and not sensual—says Hurd, gives the romantic “a vast advantage” over the classical. The romantic poet seeks generosity and gallantry. The knight is devoted to the other sex far more than was the classical hero.²² Romantic fictions, he notes in a letter inserted in a later edition, display “the courtesy of elegant love, but of a wild and fanatic species.”²³

Hurd's parallels with Schlegel's *fantastisch*, *sentimental*, and *mimisch* are evident—they saturate the *Letters*—and, without stretching a point, clearly anticipate these salient features of *romantische Poesie*.

Schlegel considers William Shakespeare the true center and kernel of the romantic imagination.²⁴ Herder had already identified Shakespeare as the great postclassical writer whose plays themselves are *Romane*. Eichner carries out this focus on Shakespeare from Herder through Schlegel, connecting it with the “tendency” of Shakespeare toward *romantische Poesie*, even though he wrote plays. Eichner speaks in this context of such Shakespearean art being open to the “divinatory criticism” of which Schlegel speaks in “Athenäum Fragment No. 116”: “It can be exhausted by no theory and only a divinatory criticism would dare try to characterize its ideal.”²⁵

Hurd sees Shakespeare—even though he wrote plays, not old romances as such—as the greatest example of romance and romantic poetry. In “On the Idea of Universal Poetry,” Hurd quotes the lines from *A Midsummer Nights Dream* to characterize “the magic virtue of poetry.”²⁶

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

(Act V, Scene I, ll. 12–17.)

And of this kind of poetry, requiring for Schlegel a “divinatory criticism,” Hurd closes one of his *Letters* this way: “I say nothing of Shakespeare, because the sublimity (the divinity, let it be, if nothing else will serve) of his genius kept no certain rout.” Hurd laments at the end of his book that “*Earth-born* critics” blaspheme the charmed spirit of fairy Spenser, but that the gods are “ravish'd with delight.”²⁷

There is something more unusual and specific in Schlegel's and Hurd's assessment of Shakespeare. In Schlegel's emphasis on *romantische Poesie* as a *mischgedicht*, as a type of poetry that mixes genres and modes, he sees Shakespeare as a prime example. Shakespeare mixes, melds, and fuses all. As Eichner points out, for Schlegel, the plays of Shakespeare

are for this reason "*romantisch* rather than *dramatisch*." From Schlegel's *Notebooks*: "Shakespeare's tragedies are synthesized from classical tragedy and the novel." And: "In Shakespeare everything is synthesized romantically; we can discern no definite tendency apart from this."²⁸

Now, according to Hurd, "Shakespeare . . . kept no certain rout, but rambled at hazard into all the regions of human life and manners. So that we can hardly say what he preferred, or what he rejected, on full deliberation. Yet, one thing is clear, that even he is greater when he uses Gothic manners and machinery, than when he employs classical."²⁹ "But, if you require a comparison," adds Hurd after the first edition, "I can tell you where it is to be made, with much ease, and to great advantage. I mean, in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, where you will find (as his best critic observes [William Warburton?]) 'the *Danish* or *Northern*, intermixed with the *Greek* and *Roman* enchantments; and all these worked up together with a sufficient quantity of our own country's superstitions . . . where the ingredients are gathered from every thing shocking in the *natural* world; as here, from every thing absurd in the *moral*.'" The Gothic or romantic "system" is for Hurd a mixed "aggregate" and not a "single system."³⁰ So, for Schlegel, "One of the essential functions of the novel is the synthesis and interweaving of heterogenous components, including the combination of all mythologies. Only in the novel can an obsolete or antiquated mythology receive adequate treatment. Also, the synthesis or connection of several mythologies is possible only in the novel."³¹

We can recall that *romantische Poesie*, as a progressive universal poetry that has not yet achieved its end, mixes and unifies all kinds of genres.³² And, not dissimilarly for Hurd, in discussing his ideal of universal poetry, while recognizing that kinds of literature do exist, he states, "We may, indeed, mix and confound them, if we will (for there is a sort of literary luxury, which would engross all pleasures at once, even such as are contradictory to each other)."³³ Throughout their respective discussions, Hurd and then Schlegel use the same terms—*Poesie*/poesie or poetry; *Geist*/spirit; *Genius*/genius—to describe the universalizing spirit of genius that effects the romantic mandate of mixing and fusing all materials and kinds of writing.

Both Hurd and Schlegel differentiate how an author represents wonders in romantic fiction and how an author represents them on the romantic stage; that is, Hurd and Schlegel both contrast romantic narrative and romantic drama: "The drama should also be romantic, like all poesie; but a novel is such, except under certain restrictions."³⁴ Now, Hurd previously makes a similar distinction, where "That, which passes in *representation* [on the stage], and challenges, as it were, the scrutiny of the eye, must be truth itself, or something very nearly approaching to it. But what passes in *narration*, even on the stage, is

admitted without much difficulty." That is, as long as you tell about something in the drama, it can be as fantastical as anything in narrative, but if you act it out on the stage, restrictions apply. The dramatic mode is more circumscribed, while the pure narrator can enlarge "his impostures at pleasure, in proportion to the easiness and comprehension" of the imagination.³⁵

Schlegel posits a difference between the classical and the romantic, but sees the *romantische* in the classical. *Romantische poesie* is an element of all poetry, it is "the poetry of poetry." Hurd could not be clearer in this conviction, too. For Schlegel, "The romantic poetic genre is the only one that is more than a genre or category, that is, as it were, poetry itself: for in a certain sense all poetry is or should be romantic." It is "Poesie der Poesie."³⁶ Or, in the *Gespräch über die Poesie*, "only with this difference, that the romantic is both a genre and an element of poesie, which is alternately strongly present or recedes into the background, but is never completely absent."³⁷ Later, in the *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur* [*The History of Ancient and Modern Literature*], Schlegel makes a similar statement and cites a specific case: "Indeed the romantic is not in conflict with antiquity in its most authentic form. The legend of Troy and the Homeric songs are thoroughly romantic."³⁸ Schlegel is extrapolating Herder's statement, "Homers Gedichte selbst sind Romane in ihrer Art" [Homer's poems are themselves novels in their way].³⁹

For Hurd, the same is true, as he explains at length, with some help from a treatise in the *Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres* (vol. 20). First, he notes, "That there is a remarkable correspondency between the manners of the old heroic times, as painted by their great romancer, Homer, and those which are represented to us in books of modern knight-errantry." Hurd says, "the resemblance between the heroic and Gothic ages is very great."⁴⁰ In the collected works he adds, "so great it did not escape the old Romancers themselves, with whom, as an ingenious critic observes, *the siege of THEBES and TROJAN war were favourite stories; the characters and incidents of which they were mixing perpetually with their Romances.*"⁴¹ But, like Schlegel, from the first he has no doubt about which mode, the ancient or the romantic, is superior and found everywhere: Spenser affords Hurd "the point, I principally insist upon, I mean, *The preeminence of the Gothic manners and fictions, as adopted to the ends of poetry, above the classic.*"⁴²

Schlegel distinguishes the *Romantische* from the *Moderne* as well as from the classical or ancient: "However, I implore you not to assume that the romantic and the modern are identical."⁴³ Hurd, too, distinguishes the romantic not only from the classical, as we have seen, but from the "modern." Several places in the *Letters* he alludes to the

current spirit of the "modern." Hurd objects to "the philosophic moderns" who may "have gone too far, in their perpetual ridicule and contempt" of the Gothic and romantic fictions. He identifies the "fastidious modern" as one too bound by a sense of definite reality and verisimilitude.⁴⁴

Another way to see that Schlegel and Hurd share views here is to recall their attitude toward the contemporary novel exemplified by Samuel Richardson and others. For Schlegel, this kind of novel centers on *Wirklichkeit* (reality) and what is *alltglich* (ordinary).⁴⁵ As Eichner notes, Schlegel speaks of this kind of novel with a certain irony and lack of full-blooded enthusiasm: "The prose narratives in the manner of the English novelists—'der Roman . . . , insofern er eine besondre Gattung seyn will' [the novel . . . , insofar as it is a special genre] or 'die sogenannten Romane' [the so-called novels] of Richardson and his imitators—are but minor and undesirable variants."⁴⁶ In "On the Ideal of Universal Poetry," Hurd asks, "what are we to think of those *novels* or *romances*, as they are called, that is, fables constructed on some private and familiar subject?" Hurd speaks of some of these novels as appealing to a "sickly imagination," "a sure prognostic of expiring Letters."⁴⁷ There are other passing but interesting similarities on topics of mutual interest to Hurd and Schlegel: on gardening in the romantic style, and on Spanish romances.⁴⁸

What are the specific authors and examples of *romantische Poesie*, aside from Shakespeare, that both Hurd and Schlegel are fond of citing? Camillo Guarini, Cervantes, Ludovico Ariosto, Torquato Tasso, Spanish romances and, above all, the Italian poets, especially the ones mentioned here, and *Jerusalemme liberata*.⁴⁹ Hurd's greatest example, however, is Spenser. We do not find Spenser mentioned by Schlegel until we look ahead to the *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur* in the early nineteenth century. There Schlegel praises the *Faerie Queene*—as "*lyrisch*" (lyrical) and "*idyllisch*" (idyllic)—in terms almost precisely those of Hurd's, down to the remark that Spenser's poem, otherwise so excellent, contains a flaw in design.⁵⁰ We can also observe that Hurd sees an affinity between the romantic tendencies of Britain and of Germany. He says that feudal institutions spread to these two areas at the same time; and that the refined gallantry of romantic fiction was "laid in the ancient manners of the German nations."⁵¹ For Schlegel, the connection is stronger yet. In his *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur*, he says about Hurd's favorite poet, "Spenser is, as far as his use of the language goes, the most German or Germanic of all English poets." And, for Hurd's other great exemplar, "Shakespeare's poetry is more closely related to the German spirit than the work of any other foreigner, so much so that he will be accepted by the Germans just like a poet writing in their native tongue."⁵²

Many elements of Friedrich Schlegel's famous theory of *romantische Poesie*—as well as many of its specific exemplifications and characteristics—Richard Hurd states some thirty years earlier in *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* and in his essay "On the Idea of Universal Poetry." Did Schlegel find any of them there? Three specific things indicate Schlegel's knowledge and valuation of Hurd.

First, Herder cites Hurd explicitly, as we have noted, and Schlegel read Herder's citation, which also includes Warton and Percy. Hurd's work is chronologically first.

Second, during years vital for the evolution of his theory of *romantische Poesie*, 1795–1797, Schlegel actually quotes Hurd in his *Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie* [On the Study of Greek Poetry].⁵³ Here he disagrees with Hurd, but the disagreement is itself instructive. What he quotes from Hurd's work on the ancient Greek poets is this: "The ancients were masters of composition; it is therefore the case that in their writings we find this quality developed to the highest degree." To this direct quotation from Hurd, Schlegel adds, "Nothing less! The Greek taste was already completely decadent, even as the theory was in its infancy."⁵⁴ The quoted material is, incidentally, not dissimilar to Hurd's comment in the *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* about "the ablest writers of Greece," that their works were "master-pieces of composition" (104). But here, Schlegel, still in his classical period, cannot agree and in fact violently disagrees. What are we to make of this? Oskar Walzel shrewdly remarks that soon after this point in Schlegel's career, his "mania for objectivity vanished immediately and, after the publication of his treatise *Über das Studium der griechischen Poesie*, he joined at once and unreservedly the ranks of . . . the Romanticists." Walzel continues to explain: "The bitter words which Friedrich Schlegel heaped upon the moderns in his study grew merely out of disguised affection. He treated them so badly because spiritually they were so close to him."⁵⁵ And so, too, with this violent spat with Hurd—it comes out of Schlegel's disguised affection, which he later articulates, as we shall now examine.

Third, in 1812 (published in 1814), in his *Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur*, Schlegel specifically cites a short list of the criticism of the English, and a few of their writings on poetry, "Die Kritik der Engländer und einige ihrer Schriften über Poesie," the influence of which on German literature has been singularly strong and positive: "Actually, only under the influence of English critics such as James Harris, Hurd, and Warton did German critics themselves develop in a thoroughly independent direction, more perhaps than any other branch of our literature." These critics, says Schlegel, were more learned and

acute than the French, and thus the English critics, "entsprachen daher dem deutschen Geiste mehr" [correspond more closely to the German mind].⁵⁶ Perhaps Schlegel first ran across Hurd through Herder's citation; at any rate, he later quotes Hurd's work and lists him as one of a select few English critics exerting unprecedented impact on the development of German literature.

We could interject that ideas of romance and chivalry became common enough. But Hurd, however descriptive rather than theoretical his work, remains a first and major impetus for those ideas in German and European literature and literary criticism. With regard to *romantische Poesie*, the confluence of qualities and examples—and the direct correspondences—between Hurd and Schlegel are unmatched by other English or German critics. Furthermore, the idea of universal poetry or *Universalpoesie*—and the existence of that particular term, probably by analogy with universal history—was not common in English or German criticism. It was rare and, as far as I can tell, Hurd presents it first.

Any mention or invocation of Schlegel's theory of *romantische Poesie* should now recognize the importance of Hurd, whose work provides an original and recurring touchstone. Any grasp of Schlegel or of German Romanticism may reach out to include not only the role played by Herder and of course Schiller, but also the role played by Hurd and the English critics. Comparative studies involving Schlegel's *romantische Poesie* should embrace this connection. It is part of a larger comparative map of English criticism and German Romanticism, a map whose intricate territories remain relatively uncharted by Germanists and virtual *terra incognita* for readers of English literature who, if acquainted with German developments, consider Warton, Percy, and especially—and ironically—Hurd to be minor or merely antiquarian. Fritz Strich, in his *Deutsche Klassik und Romantik*, makes this keen remark: "In England the German Romantics found an entirely different situation. In this Germanic nation the first romantic feeling for nature and a romantic affinity for the historical past were first felt in Europe, and this was not without influence over the origin of German Romanticism."⁵⁷

What did Schlegel think of the English? His verdict is clear: "In the eighteenth century the English surpassed all other Europeans and were the dominant nation in the literary world." The French story, he says, points to other issues, so that "Germany, by contrast, received the first intimation of the new literary movement in the middle of the eighteenth century through contact with English poetry and criticism."⁵⁸ In this regard, Richard Hurd, as Friedrich Schlegel himself recognizes and acknowledges, is of primary importance.

NOTES

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by Gregory Maertz.

1. Raimund Belgardt, *Romantische Poesie: Begriff und Bedeutung bei Friedrich Schlegel* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1969), p. 39n.

2. Dieter A. Berger, *Imitationstheorie und Gattungsdenken in der Literaturkritik Richard Hurds* (Frankfurt: Athenäum Verlag, 1972).

3. Friedrich Schlegel, "Athenäum Fragment No. 116," *Kritische Ausgabe*, II: 182–83: "Die romantische Poesie ist eine progressive Universalpoesie. Ihre Bestimmung ist nicht bloß, alle getrennte Gattungen der Poesie wieder zu vereinigen, und die Poesie mit der Philosophie und Rhetorik in Berührung zu setzen. Sie will, und soll auch Poesie und Prosa . . . Kunstpoesie und Naturpoesie bald mischen, bald verschmelzen. . . . Sie umfaßt alles, was nur poetisch ist, von größten wieder mehrere Systeme in sich entfaltenden Systeme der Kunst, bis zu dem Seufzer, dem Kuß, den das dichtende Kind aushaucht in kunstlosen Gesang." English translation: Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, translated by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 31.

4. Richard Hurd, "On the Idea of Universal Poetry," *The Works of Richard Hurd*, D. D., 8 vols. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1811), I: 10, 9, 8.

5. Richard Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (London and Cambridge: A. Millar and W. Thurlbourn and J. Woodyer, 1762), p. 4.

6. Hurd, *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 259. Cited hereafter as 1811.

7. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, p. 5.

8. Schlegel, "Athenäum Fragment No. 116": "Die romantische Dichtart ist die einzige, die mehr als Art, und gleichsam die Dichtkunst selbst ist: denn in einem gewissen Sinn ist oder soll alle Poesie romantisch sein." Translation by Firchow, *Philosophical Fragments*, p. 32.

9. Hurd, "On the Idea of Universal Poetry," p. 17.

10. Schlegel, "Athenäum Fragment No. 116": "Nur sie kann gleich dem Epos ein Spiegel der ganzen umgebenden Welt, ein Bild des Zeitalters werden. Und doch kann auch sie am meisten zwischen dem Dargestellten und dem Darstellenden, frei von allem realen und idealen Interesse auf den Flügeln der poetischen Reflexion in der Mitte schweben, diese Reflexion immer wieder potenzieren und wie in einer endlosen Reihe von Spiegeln vervielfachen." Translation by Firchow, *Philosophical Fragments*, p. 32.

11. Hurd, "On the Idea of Universal Poetry," p. 17.

12. Quoted by Hans Eichner, "Schlegel's Theory of Romantic Poetry," *PMLA* 71, 5 (December 1956): 1020. From Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, edited by B. Suphan, 18, 59f: "Er heißt *Abentheuer*, *Roman*; ein Inbegriff des wunderbarsten, vermischtesten Stoffs . . ."

13. Friedrich Schlegel, *Gespräch über die Poesie*, *Kritische Ausgabe*, II: 335: "Da suche und finde ich das Romantische, bei den alten Modernen, bei Shakespeare, Cervantes, in der italiänsche Poesie, in jenem Zeitalter der Ritter, der Liebe und der Märchen, aus welchem die Sache und das Wort selbst herstammt."

14. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 3–4, 23.

15. Hurd, *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 246.

16. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 91, 17, 31.

17. Hans Eichner, "Schlegel's Theory of Romantic Poetry," 1024, 1025n, 1034.

18. Quoted in Eichner, 1025: "Was ist denn nun dieses Sentimentale? Das was uns anspricht, wo das Gefühl herrscht, und zwar nicht ein sinnliches, sondern das geistige. Die Quelle und Seele aller dieser Regungen ist die Liebe, und der Geist der Liebe muß in der romantischen Poesie überall unsichtbar sichtbar schweben."

19. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 2, 3, 12, 31, 89.

20. Hurd, *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 317, 320.

21. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 17, 19, 47.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 22-23, 40.

23. Hurd, *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 256.

24. Schlegel, *Gespräch über die Poesie, Kritische Ausgabe*, II: 335: ". . . und erinnern sich dann an Shakespeare, in den ich das eigentliche Zentrum, den Kern der romantische Fantasie setzen möchte."

25. Quoted in Eichner, 1020: "Sie kann durch keine Theorie erschöpft werden, und nur eine divinatorische Kritik dürfte es wagen, ihr Ideal charakterisieren zu wollen." Translation by Firchow, *Philosophical Fragments*, p. 32.

26. Hurd, "On the Idea of Universal Poetry," pp. 9-10. There may be a connection here, too, with Schlegel's *Magie*; in the *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* Hurd says, "Shakspear [*sic*] . . . gives us another idea of the *rough magic*, as he calls it, of fairy enchantment" (50).

27. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 60, 120. For a thorough discussion of *Magie*, of the religious implications of Schlegel's theory of *Universalpoesie*, and its intimate ties with German idealism, see Ernst Behler, "Friedrich Schlegels Theorie der Universalpoesie," in *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, edited by Fritz Martini, Herbert Stubenrauch, and Bernhard Zeller (Stuttgart: Alfred Kroner Verlag, 1957), pp. 211-52.

28. Quoted in Eichner, 1030: "Shakespeares Trauerspiele sind gemischt aus der classischen Tragödie und dem Roman." And "Im Shakespeare ist *alles* Romantische gemischt . . . er hat gar keine bestimmte Tendenz."

29. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, p. 60.

30. Hurd, *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 286-87.

31. From the *Notebooks*, quoted by Eichner, 1027: "Die Vermischung und Verflechtung sehr heterogener Bestandtheile und selbst *aller* Mythologien ist eine nothwendige Aufgabe des Romans. Eine *antiquirte* Mythologie kann nur im Roman behandelt werden.—Auch die Verbindung *mehrere* Mythologien ist nur im Roman möglich."

32. Schlegel, "Athenäum Fragment No. 116": "Ihre Bestimmung ist nicht bloß, alle getrennte Gattungen der Poesie wieder zu vereinigen . . ."

33. Hurd, "On the Idea of Universal Poetry," p. 19.

34. From the *Jugendschriften*, II: 373, quoted by Eichner, 1029n: "Das Hauspiel soll auch romantisch seyn, wie alle Dichtkunst; aber ein Roman ist unter gewissen Einschränkungen, ein angewandter Roman."

35. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 96, 96–97.
36. Schlegel, "Athenäum Fragment No. 116," 238: "Die romantische Dichtart ist die einzige, die mehr als Art, und gleichsam die Dichtkunst selbst ist: denn in einem gewissen Sinn ist oder soll alle Poesie romantisch sein."
37. Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, II: 335: "Nur mit dem Unterschiede, daß das Romantische nicht sowohl eine Gattung ist als ein Element der Poesie, daß mehr oder minder herrschen und zurücktreten, aber nie ganz fehlen darf."
38. Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI: 285: "In der Tat streitet auch das Romantische an sich mit dem Alten und wahrhaft Antiken nicht. Die Sage von Troja und die Homerischen Gesänge sind durchaus romantisch . . ."
39. Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, 19, p. 110.
40. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 26, 38.
41. Hurd, *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 272.
42. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, p. 76.
43. Schlegel, *Gespräch über die Poesie*, *Kritische Ausgabe*, II: 335: "Indessen bitte ich Sie doch, nun nicht sogleich anzunehmend, daß mir das Romantische und das Moderne völlig gleich gelte." For this distinction and its evolution in Schlegel's thought, see Eichner, 1040.
44. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 4, 2–3.
45. See Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI: 277, 331.
46. Eichner, 1034, quoting *Jugendschriften*, II, 374f; see also Eichner, 1025n.
47. Hurd, "On the Idea of Universal Poetry," pp. 19, 20.
48. Belgardt, *Romantische Poesie: Begriff und Bedeutung bei Friedrich Schlegel*, pp. 35–39; *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 300–1; *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI: 285; *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 252.
49. Eichner, 1024; *Gespräch über die Poesie*, *Kritische Ausgabe*, II: 335; *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, IV: 315, 239, 279, 280, 309, 328, 328; sections devoted to Italian poetry in Letter X.
50. Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI: 290–94; *The Works of Richard Hurd*, 1811, Vol. IV, Letter 12.
51. Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, pp. 10, 19; see also p. 34.
52. Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI: 291: "Spenser ist in der Sprache unter allen englischen Dichtern am meisten deutsch oder germanisch . . ." And p. 293: "Shakespeares Poesie ist dem deutschen Geiste sehr verwandt, und er wird von den Deutschen mehr, als jeder andere fremde und ganz wie ein einheimischer Dichter empfunden."
53. Eichner, 1039.
54. Both quotations are from Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, I: 350: "Die Alten sind Meister in der Komposition; es müssen daher diejenigen unter ihren Schriften, welche zur Ausübung dieser Kunst Anleitung geben, von dem höchsten Werte sein." And: "Nichts weniger! Die Griechische Geschmack war schon völlig entartet, als die Theorie noch in der Wiege lag."
55. Oskar Walzel, *German Romanticism*, translated by Alma Elise Lussky (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1932; Reprint, Capricorn Books, 1940), p. 40.
56. Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI, 336: "Doch hat die deutsche Kritik nur die erste Veranlassung von den Engländern Harris, Hurd, Warton genommen,

und sich bald durchaus selbständig entwickelt, mehr vielleicht als irgendein anderer Zweig unsrer Literatur."

57. Fritz Strich, *Deutsche Klassik und Romantik*, Fünfte Auflage (Bern and Munich: Francke Verlag, 1962), p. 354: "In England fand die deutsche Romantik eine andere Situation vor. In diesem germanischen Volk war ein romantisches Naturgefühl und ein romantischer Drang in die historische Vergangenheit ja zuerst in Europa erwacht und war nicht ohne Einfluß auf den Ursprung der deutschen Romantik geblieben."

58. Schlegel, *Kritische Ausgabe*, VI: 319: "Im achtzehnten Jahrhundert waren die Engländer überhaupt vor allen andern Europäern, das herrschende Volk auch in der literarische Welt." And "in Deutschland dagegen hat der neue Aufschwung der Literatur in der Mitte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts zunächst durch die Poesie und Kritik der Engländer den ersten Anstoß und seine herrschende Richtung erhalten."