

# Staging News: The Theater of Politics and Passions in Eberhard Happel's *Deß Engelländischen Eduards* (1690/91)

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## Abstract

This paper addresses several of the structural and interpretive challenges posed by the early modern “endless novels”, specifically the *Engelländische Eduard*. In the foreword to this 1690 novel, Eberhard Werner Happel (1647-1690) spells out his vision of the world and his mission as a writer. He presents his world as a theater (*Theatrum*), a stage where people and events come and go affirming life's mutability and the transitory nature of all things. Happel examines the facts reported by contemporary media, along with histories and geographies; he embeds these facts in his novel for the entertainment of the fictional characters and the factual reader. He offers his audience news from and about the real world on the basis of information gleaned from *Zeitungen*, *Avisen*, and *Relationen* which he offers alongside engaging ephemeral fictions that are intertwined with the comings and goings of the novels' characters. We will see how these news items affect the movements of his fictional characters as they meander along their lives' convoluted paths toward the happy conclusions of their travels.

Der Aufsatz beschäftigt sich mit Eberhard Werner Happels (1647-1690) historischem Roman *Deß Engelländischen Eduards* (1690). Hier skizziert Happel seine Weltanschauung und sein auktorielles Selbstverständnis, nämlich, dass die Welt einem Theater gleicht, auf dem die Menschen und die Ereignisse kommen und gehen, Zeugen der Wandelbarkeit und Vergänglichkeit aller Dinge. In seinen Romanen präsentiert Happel Fakten, Historien und Geographien, wie sie in den zeitgenössischen Medien, in *Zeitungen*, *Relationen* und *Avisen* gesammelt und als bevorzugtes Lesematerial den Zeitgenossen verkauft wurden. Anhand des *Engelländischen Eduard* lässt sich zeigen, welche Neuigkeiten Happel zu der Konstruktion seiner Romane verwendet, wie er sie in seiner Handlung einsetzt, wie die Charaktere und die fiktionalen Leser auf diese Nachrichten reagieren und wie die Handlung davon beeinflusst wird.

## Introduction

“Die Welt ist und bleibt ein Allgemeines *Theatrum* und Schauplatz aller Welt=Händeln / auf welchem Jahr auß / Jahr ein / den Aufmerckamen und Wissen=Begierigen das Jenige / was da und dorten sich zuträget / [...] von Neuem / [...] vorgestellet wird.”

In foreword to his historical novel *Deß Engelländischen Eduards* (1690), Eberhard Werner Happel (1647-1690) spells out his vision of the world and his

mission as a writer.<sup>1</sup> He articulates a view widely shared among his contemporaries, who habitually refer to the world as a theater or a stage where people and events come and go, affirming life's mutability and the transitory nature of all things. Happel likens his novels to a mirror held up to the world, where each reader finds reflected what s/he wishes to see.<sup>2</sup> In this, Happel echoes the famous Frankfurt engraver, editor, and printer Matthaeus Merian (1593-1660), excerpts from whose *Theatrum Europaeum* (1618-1718) Happel put to good use in many of his writings.<sup>3</sup> Like Merian, Happel considers himself a neutral ("unpartheyisch") teller of tales who writes for a reader fully capable of distinguishing between fiction and fact, or, as he puts it, "romanische Außzierungen" and "eigentliche Geschichte" (Happel 1690:III, Vorrede). We, the modern reader, enter the novel, this "history written in the present tense", through multiple refractions (Tannenhaus 2007:11-13). Happel examines the facts conveyed by contemporary history media, along with histories and geographies; he embeds these facts in the novel for the entertainment of the fictional characters and the factual reader. Like us, these readers eagerly consume much disparate information along with contemporary opinions, judgments, and prejudices. The reader's interest is further captivated by the unseemly sexual desires of older men for young women, by married women pining for attractive strangers, and by confusion over gender and social identities leading to destructive passions and, sometimes, unhappy endings.

The stories that fill the stage that is Happel's world are presented as historical romances (*Geschicht=Romane*). Happel offers his audience, alongside engaging ephemeral fictions and intertwined with the comings and goings of the novels' characters, news from and about the real world, information gleaned from many sources, specifically from newspapers variously identified as *Zeitungen*, *Avisen*, and *Relationen*. He confidently and diligently gathers such news items, using them to fashion a frame into which he places the mix of fact and fiction

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<sup>1</sup> He calls it a "Europäische Geschicht=Roman": Happel, Eduard Werner (1690): *Deß Engellaendischen Eduards / oder so Genanten Europaeischen Geschicht-Romans, auf das 1690. Jahr*, 4 vols., Ulm; Tatlock 1990:105-130; Tatlock 1995:307-337.

<sup>2</sup> Happel 1690:III, Vorrede: "In Summa / einen rechten Welt=Spiegel / worinnen ein Jeder sich spiegeln / und zu einer Lehre oder Nachricht etwas finden / und sehen kan."

<sup>3</sup> "Weil dann nicht weniger von Jugend auff ich mir vorgenommen haben / in diesem THEATRO oder Schaw Platz der Geschichten der Welt mich zu üben [ . . . ]." (Matthaeus Merian in the first volume of his *Theatrum Europaeum*, cit. Happel 1690: I, Vorrede).

that makes up his novels. There are reports about countries near and far, about peoples familiar and strange, and about noteworthy, often wondrous events and phenomena.

To put it another way: as we, the contemporary reader, engage with these rather lengthy novels, we soon realize that, far from merely constructing tales about frivolous romantic and familial complications, Happel inserts his pleasant, albeit convoluted, novelistic stories (“allerhand annehmlichen *Romanisirungen*” [Vorrede]) into the “hard news” of the day, the news we encounter in the popular press of the time. Eagerly pursuing the tortured paths of loves lost and found, mistaken identities, sex in various locales and with frequently changing partners, the reader follows the characters through many pages that deal in great detail with politics, wars, economics, science, international treaties, royal and imperial weddings, births, and deaths; with preternatural wonders; and with the simple life, rude manners, and lax morals of the lower classes. In the novels’ at times confusing structure, fact and fiction intertwine and romance unfolds before the panorama of history.

My paper will address several of the structural and interpretive challenges posed by these early modern “endless novels”, specifically the *Engelländischen Eduard*. First, in an effort to isolate specific news sources, I will identify the different kinds of news presented in this novel. Secondly, I will endeavor to highlight thematic threads that might be recognizable in the news included in the narrative. Does Happel treat certain topics in greater detail and more frequently than others? Of what kind are those and why are they of interest to him? Does the news occasion comments from the characters, the fictional readers themselves, and does it affect their actions? To avoid potential confusion brought about by the comings and goings of many characters, we will limit ourselves, for the most part, to taking a closer look at the interaction of politics and passion in the lives of the novel’s leading characters, Eduard and Edmunda.

### **The Types of News Presented**

Referring to his previously published works, Happel announces the *Engelländischen Eduard* as dealing primarily with the events up to 1690, the year preceding the publication date of 1691. Following the fictional meanderings of the English Eduard and the novel’s male and female

characters across European land- and cityscapes, the reader becomes immersed as much in *realpolitik* as in the seventeenth-century culture of romance. The novel's panorama grows expansive when fictional readers contextualize the daily news about the reality of the numerous pan-European conflicts and enhance it with reports on the geography, economy, and ethnology of England, France, the German Empire, Russia, and the Turkish Empire. Although Happel is generally less than forthcoming about the provenance of his sources, the experienced reader will recognize without much difficulty the presence of the voluminous geo-histories produced by Matthaeus Merian, among others (Wuethrich 1993). Furthermore, the reader familiar with the *Theatrum Europaeum* or the writings of Leipzig polymath Johannes Praetorius (1630-1680) does not have to search long to find that their reports also appear in Happel's publications.<sup>4</sup> However, ever the practical writer living by his craft, Happel alerts his public to the fact that he is mindful of his readers' pocketbooks and, for that reason, makes his publications available at a reasonable price ("deß geringen Geldes"). In this, he again emulates, though he does not name, Johannes Praetorius, who also mentions the modest size of his news publications as especially attractive to the thrifty shopper.<sup>5</sup> Praetorius, and presumably Happel, set off their work against Merian's highly successful yet also hugely expensive *Theatrum Europaeum*. Still, cheap or not, Happel copies from Praetorius's work as well as from the *Theatrum* and comparable news sources (Schock 2008).<sup>6</sup> For example, all three

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<sup>4</sup> For general information about the use of news sources in Praetorius and about truth in the *Theatrum Europaeum*, see Williams (2006:343-373); Williams (2006a).

<sup>5</sup> Praetorius, *Adunatus Cometologus*, S. 3: "[D]u wirst leichtlich vermuthen / [...] was für eine kostbare Menge der Tractaten heraußgekommen sey / von denen neulichsten Feuer-Ruthen: als davon nunmehr alle Buchladen angefüllet seynd / und ihre Käuffer erwarten: welche aber wegen der grossen Curiosität kaum alles an einem Ort antreffen: oder wenn sie es jo angetroffen haben / schwerlich bezahlen können: [...] Sintemal die Anzahl der Stücke leichtlich ein par ziembliche Quart / Bünde machen / und schier etliche Wochen zum durchlesen erfordern solten. Aber wo ist die *patientz* darzu? Ich halte viel von der *concentration*, und Sumerischen Berichte eines weitschweiffenden Wercks" [You will easily guess what a large number of precious tracts has been published on the most recent comets: all bookstores are now full of them awaiting their buyers, who, however, on account of the importance and strangeness of the news, can hardly find all the information in the same place, or, if they find them, they will be unable to pay for them. Especially since the number of volumes come to a huge number and in quarto format, and would take weeks to read; but who would have the patience for that. I think much of concentration, of summary reports of lengthy tomes].

<sup>6</sup> I thank Flemming Schock for allowing me to read this essay before publication.

publications give news about the Great Fire of London (1666); about the giant's tooth found in Krems, Austria, in 1645 by the Swedes who were fortifying the battlements; about procreation between animals and humans; and about the effect of bleeding corpses on the murderer (Williams 2006a:74-75). Although he references Adam Olearius and Konrad Gessner when writing about human sexual intercourse with animals, Happel is generally much more reticent than Praetorius about identifying the news sources from which he liberally borrows for his novels (Happel 1690:III, 346). The suggestion that this oversight might be dictated by the the genre of the novel is undercut by Schock's observation that in his straight news reporting, the *Relationes Curiosae*, Happel is equally acquisitive and equally little given to disclosure (Schock 2008:1-3). On the whole, Happel refers generically, rather than specifically, to the ubiquitous print media that he makes use of. His characters routinely mention news as having come from *Zeitungen*, *Avisen*, and *Relationen* that have recently arrived from somewhere else. Playing on the *theatrum* metaphor and stressing the staged quality of these novels, newspapers are announced, expected, brought into a room, or received with welcoming comments by the characters as part of the narrative ambiance. They appear as important props affecting the characters' movement and actions. During an especially trying period in his life, Eduard expresses his displeasure with the unrelenting stream of bad news about England's battles with the Dutch by refusing to read the newspapers altogether (Happel 1690:III, 187-188). Elsewhere he seeks delivery from Roxane, the predatory wife of a Tartar governor, by reading the papers that have just been delivered, which keep him posted on the goings on in England, France, and Ireland (Happel 1690:III, 386). News awaits travelers upon their arrival in a new town or country, no matter how distant or remote, suggesting that the novel's characters, locales, and events are interconnected by vast and reliable information networks, prominent among them being the imperial postal system (Behringer 2003). Happel contextualizes the news by supplementing the information with many lengthy and detailed reports on the culture, history, and geography of a given locale. In keeping with the staged quality of this novel, the reports are usually delivered by a character from that locale upon the urging of others in the group who are eager to hear what he knows. When he is finished with his description (and it is always a man who is telling), the hearers compliment and applaud the teller on his knowledge and his skill at telling.

The news items filling this novel's pages are varied, wide ranging, and far-reaching. Center stage is occupied by the ongoing conflicts between France and England, England and Ireland, France and Germany. The struggle of the Eastern Europeans with the Turk, which roiled seventeenth-century Europe, also provides much of the news read and commented on by the novel's characters. Furthermore, we hear about money and taxation, about scandals that lead to soldiers plundering because they have not been paid, about Jews who diminish the value of gold coins (Bauer 1985:649-677), and about science and wonders. News reaches the characters wherever they roam in their search for adventure, as they demonstrate their prowess in battle or in bed, are forced to flee predatory parents or relatives, or find themselves diverted from their travel routes by violent storms, unscrupulous pirates, and the ubiquitous robbers.

Especially stimulating to the seventeenth-century news junkie are the big cities where news from all corners of the globe is collected and disseminated. According to the landlord of a Dutch guesthouse where Eduard and his friends briefly lodge, news is nowhere more industriously gathered than in Amsterdam, the bustling and wealthy Dutch merchant city. Here reports from all across Europe, Africa, and the East and West Indies find eager distributors and consumers.<sup>7</sup> *Gazetten* and *Avisen* arrive daily (*täglich*) to delight (*ergötzen*) a public that is markedly astute about the variety and veracity of news.<sup>8</sup> Clearly a seasoned consumer of news, the Dutch landlord distinguishes, as does protagonist Eduard, between the hunger for amazing and salacious news and the wish and need to be properly and reliably informed about important events (Happel 1690:I, 208). In view of such readerly discernment, it is obvious that not all news media are created equal: *Gazetten* (also called *Gassenzeitungen*) which gratify the reader's thirst for sensational news, are distinguished from "rechtschaffenen und wichtigen Kriegs= und Staats=Sachen", published for noblemen who insist on reliable information ("Zweifels=frey von allem guten Bescheid geben") (Happel 1690:I, 209). Another comment on the sometimes questionable truth value of some

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<sup>7</sup> "[W]ie er [der Wirt] dann eben diesen Nachmittag mit unterschiedlichen Avisen seine Gäste versah" (Happel 1690:I, 280).

<sup>8</sup> "Aus Rom / Türckey / Ungarn und Preussen lauffen allerhand Zeitungen ein" (Happel 1690:I, 293).

newspaper reporting comes from Eduard's German friend Siegfried, who, as he crosses the Channel, converses with his several upstanding companions from different countries about weather phenomena, specifically the reports about wondrous rains that fill seventeenth-century news reports (Happel 1690:III, 34). The companions review reports of such events at length, reaching the conclusion that most of them are lies.<sup>9</sup> Such discrimination indicates that the news is not only consumed but also critically assessed for content and veracity. In this, Happel follows the media theorizing of his contemporary Kaspar Stieler (1695), who offers the following much quoted definition:

“Das Wort: Zeitungen kommt von der Zeit / darinnen man lebet / her und kan beschrieben werden / daß sie Benachrichtigungen seyn / von den Händeln / welche zu unserer gegenwärtigen Zeit in der Welt vorgehen / dahero sie auch Avisen / als gleichsam Anweisungen genannet werden. [...] Gedruckte Erzehlungen [...] ohne gewisse Ordnung und Beurteilung: zu ersättigen des Lesenden Neugierigkeit.”<sup>10</sup>

Stieler highlights and confirms the important position attained by this new medium in the context of the early modern communication networks since its first appearance in Germany early in the seventeenth century. The prominent role of news production and consumption in European politics and culture suggests that by the end of the century newspapers were reaching an extended readership that had come to insist on a regular and reliable supply of information about noteworthy events from places near and far away. The new medium brought things worth reading about (*Leßwürdigkeiten*; Happel 1690:III, 394) in line with things worth seeing or remembering (*Sehenswürdigkeiten* and *Denckwürdigkeiten*; Happel 1690:III, Vorrede) as important stimuli that broadened the mental horizon of the reader, who, as is the case in this novel, was also the traveler.<sup>11</sup> In fact, travel, either voluntary or involuntary, is often

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<sup>9</sup> “Gleichwie aber an vielen betrüglischen Zeitungen von dergleichen Wunder=Regen / so da und dorten sich sollen ereignet haben / kein Mangel” (Happel 1690:III, 41).

<sup>10</sup> “The word ‘newspaper’ hails from ‘news’ of the times in which we live, and it can be described as a publication that brings the news of events that take place in our time. Therefore they are also called *Avisen*, that is, information. [These are also] printed stories presented without any formal order or judgment meant to satisfy the reader’s curiosity [thirst for news].” Strassner (1997:2).

<sup>11</sup> “[N]eben den großen Unkosten / auch einer gefährlichen Rayse dahin / überheben / wann er uns dieselbe [...] durch eine Beschreibung gleichsam vor Augen stellet” (Happel 1690:III, 223).

prompted by reading about events in faraway places. News also encourages male characters to enlist in the various wars, where they occasionally change allegiances in favor of a general they admire or in response to a change in the fortunes of any given conflict. Their choice of travel destinations often appears quite serendipitous, as they read about this or that exciting town or court and decide to check it out.

The female characters generally travel for pleasure, or to escape unwanted male attention. Travel represents adjustment to changes in their personal lives that compel them to move to a different locale, occasionally disguised as a male. Such travel is made less disturbing or threatening by the comforting presence of newspapers available in most of the places where our characters show up. In fact, the trauma of being shipwrecked, as several of the characters are, is made especially distressing not because they must cope with unfamiliar surroundings and potentially hostile people, but because they have to do so without a newspaper at hand. To have no news is truly to be nowhere!

Conversely, the comfort level of the novel's characters is assured by the reality that the increasingly tightly knit communications network, the imperial postal system, made it possible for news to be available in most places. By mid-century, the extensive gathering and wide distribution of news significantly depended on the postal routes and postal centers that had been established, first in the German Empire and then all over Europe.<sup>12</sup> An instructive example of the importance of this cultural reality for the novel's characters appears in the first volume of *Eduard*. Here we find, quoted in full, the articles released on the occasion of Emperor Joseph's (I) election. Listed under item 34 are detailed instructions on how the office of the imperial postmaster (*General Erb=Reichs=Postmeister*) is to be administered and who will be appointed to this office (I, 264). While the instructions mostly concern wording which ensures the unimpeded transport of letters and packages across the German Empire, they also affirm that the imperial post office and all its local stations and representatives are to remain unencumbered by any pressure from local authorities ("daß Unser General =Obrist=Reichs = Postamt in seinem effect erhalten / und zu dessen Schmäherung nicht vorgenommen / verwilliget / oder nachgesehen") (Happel 1690:I, 264).

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<sup>12</sup> Behringer (1999:39-81). On the history and role of the postal service in early modern Europe, see Behringer (2003).

## Staging the Media

From the outset, Happel underlines several themes which determine the interaction of news media, history, and fiction in the novel. The first, which he repeatedly highlights and explores critically, concerns the duality of *Romanisirung* (making fiction) and history (fact) (Happel 1690:III, Vorrede).<sup>13</sup> He subdivides the category “history” into the “descriptions of many kingdoms and countries, and [...] the most memorable events that took place in Europe [...] in 1690, the year just past” (Happel 1690:I, Vorrede). To the duality of fact and fiction Happel adds that of memory and history, much to the reader’s advantage, as he sees it (“zu ihrem sonderbaren Vorthail”; Happel 1690:I, Vorrede). Moreover, supporting the claim to truthfulness on the part of the author/*Historico*, he insists that nothing even remotely untrue could have slipped into his narrative; rather, he relates only “what is taken from reports generally considered authentic and publicly available” (Happel 1690:III, Vorrede). As for the *Romanische Außziehung*, he leaves it to the reader’s intelligence to separate those from the facts, that is, from history.<sup>14</sup> The lengthy list of current events, past histories, science, superstition, and sensational news presented to the reader is itemized in the Vorrede (I). It resembles the outline of a series of history and culture essays that are intermittently brought up to date by news reports about all manner of current events.<sup>15</sup> Where Happel does not trust the reader to be able to distinguish between fact and fiction, the character who is telling a story identifies which is which. Amusing his friends with the story of Pamphilus and Lais, Eduard instructs his listeners and thus the readers to take that tale for a *Roman* and not for history (“eigentliche Historie”; Happel 1690:II, 294).

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<sup>13</sup> “Es bleibet aber der Author nich nur bey der blossen *Romanisirung*; sondern ist bemühet / unter diesem Liebes= und Helden=Gedicht / auch die vornehmste Handlung und Verrichtungen so wol in Kriegs= als auch in andern Sachen [...] ohne Zusatz / oder Jemanden Nachtheil / wie es einem *Historico* geziement / Unpartheyisch [...] mit einzuflechten” (Happel 1690:III, Vorrede).

<sup>14</sup> “[S]ondern denen sonst für *Authentisch* gehaltenen Berichten und *publiquen* Schrifften zumessen” (Happel 1690:III, Vorrede).

<sup>15</sup> “[N]eben einer kurtzen / jedoch accuraten Beschreibung deß Königreichs Groß=Brittannien / allerhand andere wichtige Sachen / von grossen Verräthereyen / mächtigen Kriegs=Verfassungen / grausamen Feld= und See=Schlachten / namhafften Eroberungen / Neue Verbündnissen / Königl. Heyraten / hohen Todes=Fällen / wunderlichen Geschichten / seltsam verwickelten Liebes=Intrigues / [...] neben vielen Merck= und Leßwürdigkeiten” (Happel 1690:I, Vorrede).

We began by asking whether Happel treated certain topics in greater detail and more frequently than others. The answer is affirmative. Happel diligently and at length reproduces treaties and documents relating to the administration and foreign policies of the Holy Roman Empire. These include detailed reviews of the often tense relationship between Germany and France and between Germany and the Roman Curia. We also read comprehensive reports about coronations, weddings, and the deaths and subsequent funerals of members of the imperial family or the nobility.<sup>16</sup> In addition, Happel entertains the reader with in-depth reports on Great Britain's history and culture, including prescient reviews of the political, military, and religious tensions that will impact the relationship between Ireland and England centuries into the future. Recurring comments on cultural and military conflicts and hostilities between France and Germany highlight the novel's openly anti-French bias. Rheinwald, one of Eduard's valiant German friends, affirms the often-repeated conviction that the French hold the Germans in deep contempt, ridiculing them as stupid, uncultured, and incompetent. Rejecting such notions and defending the German character, Eduard and his friend Rheinwald agree that the French are "eine freche Nation / nichts als prahlerisches Aufschneiden" (Happel 1690:III,189). Worse than a Frenchman is only the German-French Louis, the would-be fashion fool, the *Teutsch-Frantzösische Eysen=Beysser*, who pretends to be brave but brings shame to both nations. He provokes Rheinwald into a duel after he offends Rheinwald's idea of Germanness. The duel ends ingloriously for Louis, who almost falls off his horse after getting tangled up in his stirrups (Happel 1690:III, 259, 275).<sup>17</sup>

Descriptions of the wars between Russia and the Tartars and the perennial Turkish threat at the eastern borders of the Empire open the narrative and extend the characters' travel routes toward the East and, to a limited degree, the Middle East, specifically Constantinople. Finally, following the familiar structure of contemporary news publications and his own *Relationes curiosae*, Happel dedicates significant narrative space to reports and discussions about

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<sup>16</sup> Happel (1690:I, book V): Imperial diet in Ausburg; IX: coronation of the emperor; the privileges of the crown; XII: the relationship between the emperor and the electors; XVIII: the Golden Bull ; II, VIII: death of the Herzog of Lothringen; III: XXIII: death of Friedrich, Herzog of Schomberg.

<sup>17</sup> "Monsieur, ein redlicher Teutscher thut niemahlen / was wider seiner Nation und Vatterlandes Nutzen und Ehre lauffet [...]." (Happel 1690:III, 259) .

weather and astronomical phenomena, wondrous occurrences like bloody rains, and beliefs in the occult healing properties of weapons' salve and magical protective shirts. We hear about the witch phenomena and the biological likelihood that sexual intercourse between animals and humans could result in humanoid offspring. He considers it his duty as a writer to supply his reader with such ephemera, for fear that if he did not, they would be all too quickly forgotten. As noted, these topics recall similar reports in the *Theatrum Europaeum* and in Praetorius' chronicles, wonder books, and cometological tracts, which makes us suspect either direct copying or common sources.

Happel employs regional or national histories as he does newspapers, namely very much as props placed on the world's stage. History and fiction are intertwined in the actions of the characters, who are frequently asked to relate stories about where they have been, countries or towns they have visited, and, addressing the novelistic subtext, amorous adventures they have encountered or avoided. In fact, the movements of the novel's actors across familiar and foreign land- and cityscapes transform the European continent into an expansive geographical and political matrix where boundaries are crossed and recrossed, sometimes easily and for pleasure, other times fraught with dangerous complications. It is worth noting that one of the potential impediments to the characters' voluntary or involuntary travel, real language barriers, is mentioned only rarely, even though the characters move not only among English-, German-, and French-language areas, but among Tartars, Russians, Turks, and Scandinavian-speaking peoples. We hear about the foreign-language challenge only once, when we meet the Russian Stenko, whose language skills help Eduard escape the unwanted attention of Sophia, the wife of the Czar of Russia, in whose service he had fought against the Tartars (Happel 1690:III, 341). Moreover, significant foreign-language fluency is ascribed to the Herzog of Schomberg.<sup>18</sup> Stressing the importance of long-distance news distribution and the monopoly over news production, which clearly presupposes a language monopoly, the novel's characters receive newspapers pretty much everywhere they show up presumably in a language they are able to read. Even at the European periphery, in Archangel, Eduard

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<sup>18</sup> "Der Herzog von Schomberg wurde in den Sprachen so fertig / daß man schwerlich davon seine Mutter=Sprach unterscheiden konte" (Happel 1690:III, 359).

and Richard read newspapers that catch them up on the news about French-English hostilities; English progress in Ireland and against the Scottish rebels; Rome's displeasure with the French selection of Cardinal Fourbin; and Rome's efforts as the power center of Europe ("[d]er Römischen Hof gleichsam vor das Centrum in Europa geachtet wird") to bring an end to the incessant European hostilities (Happel 1690:III, 386).

### **Politics and Passions**

It is challenging for the contemporary reader to follow the vagaries of the novel's characters through the many episodes that intertwine politics, history, romance, fact, and fiction. Still, the countless variations on the theme of separation, misfortune, and disguises such as cross-dressing are presented with imaginative verve and narrative energy. The fictional aspects, what Happel calls his *Romanisirungen*, conjoined with the facts, news, and history and the impact of both on the actions and movements of the characters, direct the novel's narrative evolution and resolution.

The story unfolds around the two main characters, Eduard and Edmunda. Members of noble families, they grew up together and seem destined for each other. But life, as confused and convoluted as only a seventeenth-century novel can present it, repeatedly gets in the way of the expected happy ending. Three constants govern the lives of Edmunda, Eduard, and the friends and foes they encounter on their paths to ultimate marital happiness: they are avid consumers of newspapers; they rely on the news to determine their actions; and they follow the clues provided by news stories and histories to the novel's, and their lives', conclusion. The world, Europe, appears like a challenging, amusing, and occasionally dangerous expanse that is open to their curiosity and their compulsion to travel.

The most important narrative strategy, the characters' voluntary or involuntary travel, opens the novel's first book, introducing us to beautiful Celinde and her page James. The two are lost in the Scottish woods not far from their destination, the city of Edinburgh. Searching for the road to Edinburgh, Celinde and James happen upon the nobleman Sylvian, his wife, and their two adult sons, who offer shelter and momentary respite from the hardship of the road. The sons fall in love with the beautiful stranger, as does, inappropriately, their father, Sylvian. Night falls, but sleep flees Sylvian ("ein in Liebes=Händel

nicht unerfahrener Cavallier”), who obsesses over the possibility of seducing the beautiful stranger right under his roof, in her very bed. Though his passion does not cool, he must abandon his wanton desire for fear of his wife’s wrath.<sup>19</sup>

Meanwhile, equally overcome with their infatuation for Celinde, the two sons disguise themselves as robbers and attack her as she takes her leave from her hosts to continue her travel toward Edinburgh. Surprisingly deft in the use of sword and pistol, Celinde vigorously defends herself (her page takes flight!) and mortally wounds one of the sons. Rushing to defend Celinde against the robbers and would-be rapists and foolishly hoping that his bravery would make Celinde beholden to him, Sylvian unknowingly kills the other son, whom he does not recognize. Removing his son’s disguise and horrified by what he has done, Sylvian violently denounces his fate and commits suicide (Happel 1690:I, 31). This family drama, brought about by three men lusting after a woman sets the tone for what will keep the reader engaged across the ensuing four books.

The altercation between Celinde, the would-be robbers and rapists, and Sylvian provides a first clue that Celinde is a special kind of “woman.” Surprisingly well practiced in the handling of sword and pistol, she proves fully capable of resisting and overcoming her attackers. Another potential assault is averted with the help of a noble stranger, the Scotsman Ethelred, who accompanies her to Edinburgh. Shortly after her arrival, we find confirmed what we suspected, that Celinde is a man. She abandons her disguise and first becomes Aimir and shortly thereafter he reveals his true identity, he is an English nobleman named Eduard. This second revelation gives us the man, but not yet the story that brought him to this point. He is beautiful, valiant, gentle, and very well educated, a fact that is not lost on the men and women he meets, who immediately declare their deep affection and friendship for him. When Albela, Sylvian’s widow, ignorant of what led to the death of her sons and husband, accuses Celinde/Aimir/Eduard of murder, Harald, a Swedish nobleman defends his new-found friend with great passion, insisting that he holds Aimir/Eduard in such a deep affection that he would never

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<sup>19</sup> “[W]urde auch eltiche mahl Sinnes aufzustehen / vnd sie in khrem Bethe zu besuchen / hätte es auch ohne Zweifel gethan / wann ar sich nichtyt vor der Albela scheuen müssen / mit Gewalt sich etwas unterstehen / war nicht rathsam” (Happel 1690:I, 20).

want to be without him (Happel 1690:I, 115). While the reasons for Aimir's/Eduard's cross-dressing, subsequent disguise, and final acknowledgment of his "real" persona remain a mystery until quite a ways into the novel, the action itself is not in any way censored, merely acknowledged. Women accomplished in the practice of sword and pistol are clearly an acceptable phenomenon in well-bred social circles. Accordingly, Edmunda, Eduard's beloved, explains her skill at the sword by her innate fearlessness, in which she differed from other women.<sup>20</sup> The same is not true for King Jacob of Scotland, who reportedly fled from prison in "Weiberkleidern", presumably not to great acclaim (Happel 1690:I, 130), women's clothing being equated here with cowardice.

Celine/Eduard's tale of adventure, disguise, and discovery extends over several chapters. It is embedded in extensive reports gleaned from the current newspapers ("neueste eingeloffene Avisen") (Happel 1690:I, 174) that s/he and the other actors read along the way and that keep them informed about numerous European affairs, such as the Spanish bride of the king of England, papal elections, and the dealings of the pope with the Roman emperor. Obviously well informed, Eduard, when still disguised as a woman, comments knowledgeably on the suggestion relating to the papal election, that the Jesuits would love to get their hands on St. Peter's key. Disguised or not, s/he is equally at home with the extensive reports on the imperial diet in Augsburg and with proclamations about war.

Placing the Celine/Aimirs/Eduard episode at the very beginning of this novel effectively introduces Happel's narrative pattern. His fictional characters, male and female, navigate the challenges posed by global and local geographies and events with remarkable equanimity and flexibility, if not with (to the reader) immediately obvious explanation. While it is clear that the most taxing obstacles to their happiness tend to result from romantic mix-ups, it is also clear that these mix-ups compel the characters ever deeper into even more exciting action. Driven by their curiosity or forced to avoid the unwanted attention of others, they disguise their genders and social identities and go on

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<sup>20</sup> "Weil ich nun mit tapffern jungen Leuthen täglich umgienge / und den Degen ein wenig verstunde / kriegte ich nach und nach auch eine mehere Courage und Hertzhaftigkeit / daß ich mich nicht leichtlich für etwas entsetzete / noch / nach Weiblicher Blödigkeit / eine Gefahr groß achtete" (Happel 1690:IV, 338).

voluntary and involuntary journeys far from home, while eagerly consuming news of all kinds conveyed by the ubiquitous *Avisen*. They roam the European continent visiting foreign cities and strange lands to prove their valor, satisfy their thirst for novelty, test their loyalty, and seek out others equally peripatetic.

Following his principle of partial and thus scintillating disclosure, Happel waits until the second book to tell us of Eduard's need for disguises. It turns out that his fortitude is sorely tested by Hardiknut, his inexplicably hostile father, who drives away from court because he favors the younger son, the unprincipled bully Canut. By contrast, courageous and daring Eduard endears himself to those around him with his sweet disposition, his patience, his moral fortitude, and his ability to forgo personal pleasures for the benefit of those he loves. Toward the end of the narrative, Eduard inadvertently kills Canut during a nocturnal romantic muddle involving Eduard, his friend Richard, Richard's sister Adeliza, Lincoln (Eduard's rival for the affection of beautiful Edmunda), and a disguised Canut, who becomes the victim of mistaken identity (Happel 1690:IV, 156-70). Horrified at his deed, Eduard flees to Scotland, fearing that, in accordance with an ancient belief, Canut's bleeding corpse might identify him as the murderer if he stayed (Happel 1690:IV, 156). When Richard kills his beloved Chrysantha in another accidental encounter, he is equally apprehensive about Chrysantha's corpse. A lengthy discussion ensues about the "bleeding corpse" phenomenon, assigning it to the realm of old wives' tales ("alter Weiber Märlein") rejecting the idea that it could be supported by science (Happel 1690:IV, 171). In the towns he passes through on his flight, Eduard seeks to distract himself by sightseeing and reading news reports about the death of the elector of the Palatinate and the choice of his successor, the Turkish siege of Weissenburg, and the aggression of the French against the Swiss.

Just as Celinde/Eduard had to flee the advances of the lecherous Sylvian (Happel 1690:I, 19), Eduard's beloved Edmunda is forced to flee from the ill-placed affection of Eduard's father Hardiknut by disguising herself as a man (Emedund).<sup>21</sup> However, far from providing the desired protection, her cross-

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<sup>21</sup> "[W]eil er eine nicht geringe Liebes=Flamme (*ungeachtet er schon wol bey Jahren*) in seinem Herzen gegen sie hegete / und / um solcher Ursach willen seinen Sohn Eduard, (dessen gegen Edmunden tragende Liebe ihme nicht allerdings unbekandt/) desto gehässiger ware" (Happel 1690:III, 133).

dressing simply changes the beautiful woman into a beautiful man (“schönen Mann”) attracting much equally unwelcome attention. Shipwrecked, he is pulled from the frigid waters of the Baltic Sea by a fisherman who hopes to extract money from what seems to be a well-to-do gentleman. Emedund/Edmunda’s apparent good fortune quickly turns into a challenge to his very survival when he finds himself thrown into the world of uncouth and potentially violent fishermen and peasants. Fearing for his life because of the rapacious fisherman’s threats of extortion, Emedund/Edmunda throws him overboard and, when he tries to get back into the boat, cuts off several of his fingers, leaving him to swim to shore. The miserably cold and bleeding fisherman returns home to find Emedund/Edmunda in his house in the company of his wife and daughter. The daughter, smitten with the stranger, helps Emedund/Edmunda escape from the “uncouth and wild mob” (Happel 1690:IV, 11). But this rescue comes at a price. Kissing him passionately, the girl urges Emedund/Edmunda not to forget her once she is safe. Deeply discomfited by the girl’s unseemly affection, but unable to flee without her help, Emedund/Edmunda is compelled to return her kiss. However, the peasants catch up with Emedund/Edmunda and, in spite of his valiant defense, take him prisoner. He might have fared very badly had a local nobleman name Stilpo, much impressed by the stranger’s courage, not stopped to ask the reason for all the commotion. Chiding the peasants for attacking a stranger and a nobleman, and threatening consequences should there be further hostilities, Stilpo takes Emedund/Edmunda into custody, promising a swift inquiry and trial if warranted (Happel 1690:IV, 26).

Having escaped his entanglement with the fisherman’s daughter, Emedund/Edmunda finds himself the object of Stilpo’s wife, Serena’s, unchaste affection. (Happel 1690:IV, 270-71). Cornered in his bedroom, desperately trying to escape from Serena’s aggressive advances, Emedund/Edmunda tears open his shirt to reveal his – (or rather, her) “white breasts” to the stunned Serena. Only then does the lovesick wife regain her senses, moving swiftly from passionate lust for Emedund to equally fervent friendship for Edmunda. The two women fall asleep in each other’s arms on Edmunda’s bed, where Stilpo, directed by a gossiping maid, finds them. Enraged, he wants to kill Emedund/Edmunda. When all is cleared up, Stilpo

has to apologize and the maid has to take her leave. Serena's guilt remains hidden and thus unpunished.<sup>22</sup>

Hardiknut, whose intransigence started the whole drama, is not so fortunate. He dies suddenly after being confronted with the truth about Eduard and Edmund, which is that Eduard is not his son, but Edmunda is his daughter, making his desire for her incestuous. Fear, horror, hate, fury, vengeance, and anger throw him into a paroxysm, and he falls down dead. The novel ends with three weddings, and, as we would expect, the couples entertain themselves with "allerhand Zeitungen und Gesprächen", reports from Germany, about the sea battle between the Dutch and the English, and about yet another victory of the Turk over the Germans (Happel 1690:IV, 399-400). The reader leaves the happy couples in their fictional bliss and returns to the news of the real world.

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<sup>22</sup> "Ob schon Serena an ihrem Gemahl sich ziemlich vergriffen / so muste desto weniger Stilpo Sünder seyn [. . .] und bey seyner Serena sich außsöhnen lassen / [...] Weil Serena sich nit zu streng erweisen darffte [. . .] Albela und Ethelred nicht ohne Argwohn waren [...] solches aber klüglich verbargen. Das Kammer=Mensch aber / [...] muste / wiewol in gewisser Maß / unschuldig das Bad aussauffen / und in höchster Ungnad ihren Dienst quittieren [...] so stünde auch noch dahin / ob einem in Diensten Stehenden zukommen könne / seiner Herrschafft Beginnen außzuspähen / und an den Tag zu bringen" (Happel 1690:IV, 333).

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