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# Thackeray as a “Germanizer”: A Perspective on his “German Discourse”

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Although Thackeray describes in some detail many aspects of Germany in the German section of *Vanity Fair*, his role as an introducer of German culture has received little attention.<sup>1</sup> For example, in her introduction to Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*, Mrs. Humphry Ward refers to Thomas Carlyle when she explains how “the ‘Germanism’ of the thirties [1830s] and forties [1840s] (Ward xxvi)” in Britain influenced Emily’s writings. And in her book entitled *The German Idea: Four English Writers and the Reception of German Thought, 1800-1860*, Rosemary Ashton studies S. T. Coleridge, Carlyle, George Eliot and G. H. Lewes as the four English writers who, she considers, contributed most to the introduction of German literature and thought in Britain.

The scholars who considered the German scene in *Vanity Fair* or Thackeray’s experiences in Germany also have not examined the reason why Thackeray is less conspicuous as a presenter of German culture than other Germanists of his period.<sup>2</sup> In 1997, however, Siegbert S. Praver shed light on this rather neglected aspect of Thackeray; he investigated almost all Thackeray’s references to German culture in his writings and published his study of them in a weighty book entitled *Breeches and Metaphysics: Thackeray’s German Discourse*. Praver’s book is indeed very useful for understanding Thackeray’s view of Germany and how it changes from his first trip to Weimar in 1830 to his last years. His study also

makes clear the origin of the German characters and objects described in Thackeray's works, and how he made use of them. But unfortunately, Praver hardly makes reference to the historical background of the reception of German culture in Thackeray's lifetime, which can be thought to have influenced significantly Thackeray's description of Germany. So I think that Thackeray's German discourse should be considered by paying more attention to its historical context.

In the preface of her book mentioned above, Ashton gives a comprehensive outline of how German culture was reviewed in Britain. According to her, the history of the British exposure to German literary culture started with Goethe's *Leiden des jungen Werthers* (*The Sorrows of Young Werther*, 1774) and the German dramas such as Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) and Schiller's *Die Räuber* (1781, translated in 1792), in which British readers took a great deal of interest between the 1770s and 1790s. But by the end of the eighteenth century, a time roughly coinciding with the French Revolution, English people had begun to identify German literature with Jacobinism mainly because of its contents or their uncertain knowledge of the author and the translator. It is said that it was Coleridge who actually first studied German literature and philosophy and made an attempt to introduce them into Britain through his writings. But this attempt made the Jacobinical connection even stronger in the minds of many British readers because his name was also associated with Jacobinism in his period. Thus, his translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein* in 1800 was not a success, though he left behind a legacy of very important articles and statements connecting German literature and philosophy, to which posterity, especially the Victorians, is much indebted.

It was Carlyle, however, who began to defend and eventually

free German literature from the Anti-Jacobin complaints about the absurdity and immorality of the literature. His long article entitled "The State of German Literature", which was contributed to *Edinburgh Review* in 1827, revolutionized not only the predominant attitudes to German literature but also the two chief errors of the British view of German culture, that is, "bad taste" and "mysticism". As for German philosophy, "though his [Carlyle's] understanding of the German philosophers was deficient compared to Coleridge's, his authoritative championship of them in his *Edinburgh Review* essays was better able to excite his generation..." (Ashton, *GI* 19).

Further, the Carlyleans, who were attracted to German literature and philosophy by Carlyle's articles and by *Sartor Resartus* (1833-34), also began to tackle the task of dispelling the negative ideas associated with German culture. They started to translate German works of literature and philosophy in order to introduce them to a wider reading public, and asserted merits in them with their admiration. Sarah Austin translated biographical memoirs of Goethe in 1833<sup>3</sup> and Goethe's *Faust* was also translated by at least five British translators in the 1830s.<sup>4</sup>

Thanks to the Germanists in this generation, "by 1840 German literature was on the whole both acceptable to British taste and accessible to those who knew no German" (Ashton, *GI* 22). The 1840s also were Thackeray's most productive years. He submitted a lot of works to magazines such as *Fraser's Magazines* and *Punch*, and published his most important works such as *Vanity Fair* (1847-48) and *Pendennis* (1848-50) in this period. While he contributed *The Snobs of England* (1846-47) to *Punch* in serial form, George Eliot published her translation *The Life of Jesus* (1846) from the German of David Friedrich Strauss, through which she took her place among

the ranks of the "Germanists".

The decade of the 1850s can be seen as the last stage of importance for the reception of German culture and for Thackeray's literary life. In this period, Thackeray wrote *Henry Esmond* (1852) and *The Newcomes* (1853-55), which are representative of this final period. In the meantime, Lewes took an active part in the introduction of German thought and literature along with Eliot. He published *A Life of Goethe* in 1855 by his translation and provided his articles on Hegel.

Taking into account these historical contexts above, it is clear that Thackeray's literary career roughly corresponds with the importation of German culture, which progressed most rapidly in Britain. Thackeray's role as a cultural importer seems to have gone unnoticed behind his predecessors' and contemporaries' great achievements. This is, perhaps, one of the answers to the question posed at the beginning.

But Thackeray did introduce many aspects of German culture into Victorian society through his writings as Praver studies. Among them, the German section of *Vanity Fair*, on whose title page the name of "W.M. Thackeray" was firstly put, could have established the strongest association between its author's name and his Germanist persona. But it was only his name as a novelist that had become well known afterwards. Taking these facts into consideration, the German scene in the novel can be a proper object of consideration for elucidating some causes to have made obscure Thackeray's Germanist persona in Britain.

The purpose of this study is to elucidate some major causes to make unremarkable Thackeray's persona as a Germanist by considering the German section of *Vanity Fair* and his biographical circumstances behind it. If the four English writers (Coleridge, Carlyle, Eliot and Lewes), whom Ashton studied in

her book, can be considered as “Germanizers”, why can not Thackeray?

### I “The German Sketch Book”

The descriptions of the scenery in the German city called “Pumpnickel” in chapter sixty-three of *Vanity Fair* remind us of those of Thackeray’s travel notes:

Pumpnickel stands in the midst way of a happy valley, through which sparkles—to mingle with the Rhine somewhere, but I have not the map at hand to say exactly at what point—the fertilising stream of the Pump. In some places the river is big enough to support a ferryboat, in others to turn a mill. (VF 607)

In fact, when Thackeray visited Germany for the first time in 1830, he described his impressions of the German landscape in letters to his mother and kept a commonplace book, in which he jotted down attempts at translations from the German.<sup>5</sup> But it is regrettable that Thackeray did not gather such translations and his writings on Germany, including his sketches, into one volume. If he had published such a book, he could have given the impression of his Germanist persona on future generations as well as his contemporaries. Thackeray’s writings relevant to Germany, however, with the exception of two novels set in Germany, *Legend of the Rhine* (1845) and *The Kickleburys on the Rhine* (1850), were so dispersed throughout his works that we had to wait for Prawer to collect what Thackeray did not. In spite of this fact, Thackeray already had it in mind to publish one book about Germany since his first visit to Weimar. On February, 25 1831 he wrote to his mother from Weimar:

Some day when I have nothing better to do—I will return

to Germany & take a survey of the woods and country of it wh. are little known—I think with a sketchbook and a note book & I fear still a Dictionary I could manage to concoct a book wh. would pay me for my trouble, & wh. would be a novelty in England. (*LPP* 1:147)

But it is clear from this letter that Thackeray did not collect enough material for the book on Germany at that time. And from that failure he would learn he had to go to the Continent along with his sketchbook and notebook. When Thackeray decided to publish *The Paris Sketch Book* and *The Irish Sketch Book*, he did have ample material. Collecting his articles on French culture, his adaptations from the French, and his writings based on his experiences during his travels through Ireland, he was able to put them into print in 1840 and 1843 respectively under his pseudonym "Michael Angelo Titmarsh". Thackeray's trip to Ireland was specially planned to get an impression of Ireland, and accounts of what occurred there were collected into *The Irish* by the publisher, "Chapman and Hall". Thackeray did have a strong desire, or, rather ambition to write a "German" Sketch Book, for he wrote to the same publisher on August 3, 1843:

I wish I could persuade you to think that Titmarsh in Germany devoting himself to the consideration of the fine arts there, and with a score or two of ballads to decorate the volumes, and plenty of etchings and a great deal of fantastical humour and much nurture of the poetical and the ludicrous—I say I wish you would think such a book popular, and offer me the same terms for it as the Irish book. People (as I hope and trust) have only to become better acquainted with Titmarsh to like him more and the success of a German Sketch Book would help off very

likely the few remaining copies of the Irish one. (*LPPS* 1: 132)

Despite this correspondence, which is permeated with his eagerness not only to write "The German Sketch Book" but also to visit in Germany again, "Chapman and Hall" did not grant his wish. Bearing this fact in mind, I consider it is possible that his suppressed impulse to write about German subjects at that time had ever evoked his German associations even when he was engaged with totally different work, which consequently scattered his references to them all over his writings from then on.

But it is pointed out that even if he had written "The German Sketch Book", the strong association between the name of "W. M. Thackeray" and his persona as an introducer of German culture probably would not have developed. There are two reasons for this. The first is concerned with Thackeray's pseudonyms. In order not to have to worry about the consequences of satirizing, Thackeray contributed his articles and novels to magazines or published his novels under pseudonyms like Théophile Wagstaff, Ikey Solomons, Esq., Junior and George Savage Fitz-Boodle. Accordingly, even if Thackeray had published "The German Sketch Book", his pseudonym, under which the book would have been written, would surely have prevented his readers from identifying him as a presenter of German culture. But in his dedication of *The Irish* to Charles Lever, the editor of the "Dublin University Magazine", dated April 27, 1843, Thackeray revealed in the last sentence and his signature that the true begetter of the account of travels through Ireland was Thackeray himself:

Laying aside for a moment the traveling-title of Mr. Titmarsh, let me acknowledge these favours in my own



name, and subscribe myself, my dear Lever,

Most sincerely and gratefully yours,

W. M. Thackeray. (*The Irish* vii)

This fact suggests that if Thackeray had published "The German Sketch Book" and dedicated it to someone (he would be very likely to do it because he had some acquaintances in Germany), he might have put his own name on its dedication like *The Irish*, and subsequently his role as an introducer of German culture would have appeared to some extent.

The second reason will be ascribed to Thackeray's elusive personae and his versatility. It is not too much to say that the number of his pseudonyms is nearly equal to those of his personae; besides a novelist, he was a translator, a contributor, an illustrator, a lecturer and a cultural importer among others. Of these personae, it is his novelist persona that both his contemporaries and those who came after could barely grasp. In *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*, George Sampson comments on Thackeray:

The versatility of Thackeray's invention as novelist, essayist, humorist, rhymester and draughtsman makes him less easy to judge than more homogeneous writers. . . . His protean changes of pseudonym had obscured the real man. . . . Much of the work that Thackeray had produced during the ten years preceding *Vanity Fair* was purely fugitive, and even flat and poor in quality. (Sampson 760-62)

It is natural that his positive aspect of novelist has shaded all of his other negative aspects. One can argue, therefore, that in the same way as *The Paris* and *The Irish* were ignored, even if Thackeray had published "The German Sketch Book", little attention would have been paid to his role as a cultural importer or an introducer of German culture. But, here, the

historical background must be remembered. As I already mentioned, in the 1830s and 1840s newly imported German culture had gradually stimulated and satisfied the curiosity of the British. So it is likely that if Thackeray had brought out "The German Sketch Book", the book would have been received by an enthusiastic reading public. In other words, the condition of receptivity and readers' response would have been, if the book had been published, very different from the reception given to *The Paris* and *The Irish*. That is why, I suggest, Thackeray would have wanted to write "The German Sketch Book" and should have guaranteed sales of it in his correspondence with "Chapman and Hall". In the letter to his mother referred above, Thackeray wrote:

There are plenty of dry description of public buildings, pictures views armories & so forth – but the People of Germany are not known in England, & the more I learn of them the more interesting they appear to me – Customs, & costumes – and National Songs, stories &c with wh. the country abounds, & wh. I would be glad to learn, & the 'British Public' also I think. (*LPP* 1:147-48)

"The German Sketch Book", had it been collected and issued, would not only have gratified the curiosity of "the 'British Public'" in its period, but also highlighted Thackeray's role as an introducer of German culture.

## II Thackeray and German Philosophy

Although Thackeray presented a lot of aspects of Germany in the German scene in *Vanity Fair*, he did not make the narrator allude to German thought. German philosophy or metaphysics, which Thackeray scarcely understood and, accordingly, could hardly explain to his fellow countrymen,

must be a great difference between him and Ashton's four "Germanizers". Thackeray made no attempt to educate the British public by adopting German philosophy like Coleridge and Carlyle, and hardly contributed to the introduction of German thought into Britain like Eliot and Lewes.

It is a pity that Thackeray had little inclination to learn German thought and instead was more interested in German literature and music. But he could realize to some extent the development of the Germans in intellectual fields through their literary works, as his letter shows:

... as yet I have only read poetry & plays in the language [German], but for any deeper subjects — Metaphysics or Theology for instance, the German modern literature affords resources much greater than that of any other language. ... (*LPPS* 1:7)

Although Thackeray had little interest in German philosophy itself, he seems to have been attracted to spiritual merit inherent in German literature. But even if he had been able to comprehend German philosophy, he would have been unwilling to introduce it. That is because Thackeray would be aware that insisting on respectability of German philosophy with all its difficult terms was likely to be associated with his lip service. Thackeray could not do that because of his well-known hatred of cant. To this reason based on his disposition, another reason can add in terms of biographical context.

With the exception of Coleridge, Carlyle and a few others, it was very rare for anyone to grasp Kantian philosophy. Thackeray was no exception. But Ashton illustrates that even Coleridge and Carlyle did not completely comprehend the philosophy; "Carlyle's knowledge of Kant was slight" (Ashton, *GI* 92), she said. As for Thackeray, what blunted his interest in

Kantian philosophy seems to have been not only the abstruseness of the philosophy itself but also Carlyle's style of introducing and explaining it. Thackeray, like many of his British contemporaries, had to rely mainly on Carlyle's translations and essays to broaden his understanding of German culture, especially German philosophy. When he reviewed Carlyle's *The French Revolution* (1837) in *The Times*, in spite of a favorable review as a whole, he wrote:

There are, however, a happy few of Mr. Carlyle's critics and readers to whom these very obscurities and mysticisms of style are welcome and almost intelligible; the initiated in metaphysics, the sages who have passed the veil of Kantian philosophy, and discovered that the 'critique of pure reason' is really that which it purports to be, and not the critique of pure nonsense, as it seems to worldly men: to these the present book has charms unknown to us, who can merely receive it as a history of stirring time, and a skilful record of men's worldly thoughts and doings. (OT 1:68)

Here Thackeray implies that the "very obscurities and mysticisms of [Carlyle's] style" must derive from his study of German thought. So it may be thought that Thackeray found himself unable to understand German philosophy and metaphysics unless he could completely grasp the meanings of Carlyle's words, and vice versa. But Thackeray's particular mention of Carlyle's crabbed style in this review seems to stem partly from his impatience with it and his distrustfulness of Carlyle's understanding of Kantian philosophy. In other words, Thackeray might have thought that even if one had comprehended Kantian philosophy or German metaphysics clearly, Carlyle's own phraseology would have obscured his

understanding of its principles. And it can be considered that Thackeray's insight into Carlyle's style was based on his suspicion of Carlyle's descriptions of Goethe.

Why, then, was Thackeray suspicious of Carlyle's Goethe? It is no exaggeration to say that Thackeray knew Goethe better than Carlyle. That is to say, he had an opportunity to know what Goethe actually looked like. In his first visit to Weimar in 1830, Thackeray met Goethe while Carlyle only corresponded with him. On this event in Thackeray's life, Praver comments:

Through Otilie [Goethe's daughter-in-law] he was granted an interview with 'the great lion of Weimar', about whose morals and financial dealings there were unfavourable rumours in Weimar which Thackeray absorbed. ... (Praver, *BM* 18)

Before Thackeray wrote his review of Carlyle's *The French* in 1837, Thackeray had had ample opportunity to read Carlyle's articles on Goethe, for example his eulogy "Death of Goethe", which appeared in the *New Monthly Magazines* in June 1832. In his diary of 1832 Thackeray had actually written his impressions of Goethe's novel, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1796), which had been translated by Carlyle in 1824. Thackeray's casual reading of Carlyle's descriptions of Goethe must have sown the seeds of his suspicion of Carlyle's understanding of him. And Thackeray was not alone in his skepticism; most of those who came to know Goethe first through Carlyle's articles realized sooner or later that they were to some extent inaccurate, as Ashton illustrates:

Carlyle's descriptions of Goethe for the education of British readers are too strenuous to be accurate. ... Matthew Arnold, for one, criticised Carlyle's 'infatuation' with

Goethe. 'On looking back at Carlyle', he wrote in 1837, 'one sees how much of *engouement* there was in his criticism of Goethe, and how little of it will stand. That is the thing — to write what will *stand*.'

Mill also objected to Carlyle's vagueness and the rhapsodic tone he adopted in discussing Goethe. He felt that the essays did not carry their own evidence. (Ashton, *GI* 90)

Like Arnold and Mill, Thackeray, I suppose, also did not trust Carlyle's descriptions of Goethe, and this surely would have led to his suspicion of Carlyle's grasp of German philosophy and metaphysics, especially Kantian philosophy. Thackeray significantly concludes his review of Carlyle's *The French* that "it [Carlyle's *The French*] has no CANT. It seems with sound, hearty philosophy (besides certain transcendentalisms which we do not pretend to understand), it possesses genius, if a book ever did" (*OT* 1:77). It seems that Carlyle's ardent advocacy of German thought would not only be one of the reasons why Thackeray's lost interest in it, but also would have made him only a moderate proponent of respect for German culture through his writings.

It is possible that Carlyle's way of introducing German literature and thought also has an influence on Thackeray's style of presenting German subjects. Although Thackeray had considered Carlyle the most important interpreter of intellectual progress in Germany, when he realized that Carlyle's ardent advocacy of German thought, as Ashton says, was "too strenuous to be accurate", he could have become more prudent in insisting on respectability of German culture so as not to fall into the same trap as Carlyle.

### III The German Section of *Vanity Fair*

Thackeray's discretion in describing Germany can be one of the reasons why the German section of *Vanity Fair* failed to highlight Thackeray's persona as a Germanist. Finding Carlyle's style of advocating German literature and thought less accurate than he would have wanted, Thackeray would not allow himself to insist on the respectable aspects of Germany. Rather, he was determined to devote himself to being an acute observer of Germany, as he was of Britain. Subsequently, this must have led to a relatively moderate and objective view point, which Thackeray adopted in depicting Germany. The narrator of *Vanity Fair* accounts for the political aspect of Pumpernickel as follows: "That there were feuds in the place, no one can deny. Politics ran very high at Pumpernickel, and parties were very bitter. There was the Strumpff faction and the Lederlung party..." (VF 610). Thackeray did not neglect to point out the dark aspect of politics in Pumpernickel. The same applies to his portrayal of the character of the Germans. "The German ladies, never particularly squeamish as regards morals, especially in English people, were delighted with the cleverness and wit of Mrs Osborne's charming friend [Becky]..." (VF 651). This comment of the narrator would seemingly feature the merit of "the German ladies". But bearing in mind that Becky is, to use Dobbin's word, "devil", this comment can also be interpreted as Thackeray's irony, as Praver asserts that "Although, however, satire on English narrowness and philistinism is undoubtedly present in the 'Pumpernickel' portions of *Vanity Fair*, the moral outlook and social gullibility of Pumpernickel society is satirized as well" (Praver, *Thackeray's Goethe*, 15). Pumpernickel constructed on Thackeray's views of Germany makes little difference to any other society. In his article, "More on the German

Sections of *Vanity Fair*", George J. Worth insists:

Though Thackeray is indeed concerned, as Professor Mathison reminds us, with "the defects of English middle-class society," the novelist seems to be saying, too, that wherever human beings agglomerate into "civilized" societies similar defects are likely to show themselves. (Worth 402)

Thus, although Thackeray's objectivity brought accurate descriptions of Germany, his way of presenting German culture would hardly capture readers' interest and attract little attention.

But even Thackeray, who kept his mind on impartiality, can not help describing the intellectual progress of the Germans in the German section of *Vanity Fair*, which he had understood mainly by reading German books. As I have already mentioned, however, Thackeray was not able to recount German thought itself because he, as Praver says, "found early on that he had no taste for German metaphysics, and steered away from a study towards which Coleridge tried to orientate his contemporaries..." (Praver, *BM* 29). That is why Thackeray was not qualified to be a "Germanizer". Therefore Thackeray depicts the character of German ladies by referring to the two famous novels of Goethe; *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and *Elective Affinities*:

When it became known that...her husband [Becky's husband, Rawdon Crawley,] was a Colonel of the Guard,... only separated from his lady by one of the trifling differences which are little account in a country where "Werther" is still read, and "Whalverwandtschaften" of Goethe is considered an edifying moral book; nobody thought of refusing to receive her.... Love and Liberty are



interpreted by those simple Germans in a way which honest folks in Yorkshire and Somersetshire little understand; and a lady might, in some philosophic and civilised towns, be divorced ever so many times from her respective husbands. . . . (VF 651)

Here Thackeray implies not only the "gullibility" of German ladies, as Praver points out, but also their rational way of thinking about sexual relationships, which he would construe as the intellectual progress of the Germans deriving from German philosophy and metaphysics he had hardly understood. But in fact, the narrator's comments in the passage above seem to have a lot to do with historical background. Compared with Germany, the judgment of sexual matters in Thackeray's period was very strict in Britain. The cultural gap on sexual matters between English and German societies was the cause of the perplexed state of the refugees and travelers from Germany, as Ashton shows in her book *Little Germany* (Ashton, LG. 52-3). But Ashton also says, "Many an Englishman, too, wrote feelingly on both the laws on divorce and the social pressure prevalent in England. Dickens, Linton, . . . among others, all of whom had unhappy marriages they wished to dissolve, wrote publicly on the subject" (Ashton, LG. 53). Thackeray must be one of the Englishmen Ashton mentioned because he had an unhappy marriage and an insane wife at the time of writing *Vanity Fair*, from whom he could or would not get a divorce. At any rate, Thackeray, who was acutely aware of his own problems regarding marital relationships, would be interested in the views on sexual relationships in both German and British societies. But I suppose that it was the rational way of thinking of the Germans without prejudice and the strict traditional custom that Thackeray particularly describe. Without his discretion in depicting German subjects and his lifelong

hatred of preaching, he would surely have appealed it to the British people. Thackeray, however, did gently admonish his readers and contemporaries to follow the respectable point of German thought in his inconspicuous but skillful way.

In the German scene of *Vanity Fair*, Dobbin and Amelia experience some change in their state of mind. By judging Amelia accurately, Dobbin, who has blindly fallen in love with Amelia, comes to understand that he has loved her in vain for fifteen years. He gives her up by telling her that:

I know what your heart is capable of: it can cling to faithfully to a recollection, and cherish a fancy; but it can't feel such an attachment as mine deserves to mate with, and such as I would have won from a woman more generous than you. No, you are not worthy of the love which I have devoted to you. (*VF* 647)

Then, Amelia, who, as Dobbin says, has clung "to faithfully to a recollection" of her deceased husband George, is persuaded to marry Dobbin by Becky. When Amelia has understood that her husband was in fact a scoundrel from Becky, she makes up her mind to be a wife of Dobbin. Without Becky's persuasion, Amelia could not realize that George was not her ideal husband at all. So she is not to judge her departed husband rightly by her own insight. But I consider that it is by her own rational way of thinking that she comes to notice how Dobbin is a worthy gentleman and that it is proper for her to marry him. That is because she has already determined to wed him and written to Dobbin before Becky's inducement:

At last she took great resolution — made the great plunge. She wrote off a letter to a friend whom she had on the other side of the water; a letter about which she did not speak a word to anybody, which she carried herself to the post

under her shawl, nor was any remark made about it....  
(VF 657)

Thus, Amelia can obtain a spiritual divorce from George. Although Thackeray did not warmly advocate the respectable point of German thought for the education of the British public, he did inculcate it on them by describing the mental growth of the two British characters in the German section of *Vanity Fair*. His way of presenting the merit of German culture is elaborate. And it seems to correspond to his mode of initiating a moral lesson. John K. Mathison, who studies German musical works described in *Pumpnickel*, especially Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, concludes his article:

The wide spread admiration of German intellect and culture among thoughtful Englishmen of the nineteenth century is well enough known; the importance of Thackeray's allusions to German masterpieces in that climate of opinion is not always allowed for. Seán O'Faoláin asserts that ... he[Thackeray] slapped smug English morality in the face. True, he did it so gently they hardly noticed...." The allusions in the German sections illustrate both Thackeray's "slap" and his "gentleness." (Mathison 246)

The reasons why the German section of *Vanity Fair* fail to give prominence to Thackeray's role as a Germanist are closely related to his experiences as an introducer of German culture until he writes *Vanity Fair*. I think that the German scene in the novel not only epitomizes Thackeray's career as a Germanist but also represents his way of presenting Germany. Thackeray did not contribute substantially to the introduction of German culture. But with due consideration, he can be qualified as one of the "Germanizers".

## NOTES

1. As for the representation and meaning of Germany in *Vanity Fair*, I have already discussed in my article, "From Vanity to Geist: The Meaning of 'German Society' in *Vanity Fair*", *Osaka Literary Review* *XLI*, 7-25.
2. Except the studies I refer to in the text, I can cite W. Vulpius's "Thackeray in Weimar" in 1897 and V. S. Vakhrushev's "Germany in Thackeray's early works" in 1981.
3. Sarah Austin (1793-1867) translated Johannes Falk's *Goethe, aus näherem persönlichen Umgange dargestellt* (Characteristics of Goethe) in 1833. Thackeray wrote a favorable review of Austin's translation for *National Standard* in the same year.
4. Abraham Hayward translated Goethe's *Faust* in 1833, John Stuart Blackie in 1834, David Syme in 1834, John Anster in 1835, and Hon. Robert Talbot in 1835 respectively.
5. According to Prawer, the commonplace book "now reposes in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, where its catalogue number is MA 471" (Prawer, *BM* 32).

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