

## “Poetry in Fiction”: A Range of Options<sup>\*</sup>

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“Poetry in Fiction,” the title of a special section in this and the following issues of *Connotations*, is deliberately ambiguous.<sup>1</sup> It may denote the fact that works of fiction occasionally include poems or that poems are referred to within the narrative, and it may mean that fiction can be or comprise poetry, that we may note and discover poetry in the fictional prose text. We may realize its “poeticity.”<sup>2</sup> Our suggestion is that these meanings of “Poetry in Fiction” belong together, even though they may not all be present in the same work. What I hope to do in these introductory remarks is to suggest some of the dimensions or perspectives in which this link can be seen but also to draw attention to some of the conceptual and terminological problems involved. We all know, more or less, what fiction is and what poetry is. But joining the terms makes us realize that we are by no means always sure what we are talking about.

The difficulties begin when we consider the kind of terms we are combining. In one perspective, they refer to genres. Analogous titles would thus be: drama in fiction; or: sonnets in tragedy. But it is hard to delimit these combinations to genre. Only think of: comedy in fiction—this will not only, or it will even only rarely, refer to actual comedies within fiction. “Comedy” in this context rather refers to what Alastair Fowler has called a “mode” (i.e. comprising a more limited set of representative features, such as a specific kind of dénouement and *anagnorisis*; he gives the example of *Emma* being a “comic novel” and says that “modal terms tend to adjectival”; 106).

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\*For debates inspired by this article, please check the *Connotations* website at <<http://www.connotations.de/debbauer0232.htm>>.

"Poetry" (or rather "poetic") can be such a mode, too, even though there has been an ongoing debate about its constitutive elements. New genres can develop by the mixing of modes. Plato in the *Politeia* anticipates this when he speaks of "epic poetry" in which the mixing of *mimesis* and *diegesis* contributes to the epic mode being present in poetry (392D-394D). One of the early definitions of the novel also refers to such a mixture: When Henry Fielding describes *Joseph Andrews* as a "kind of Writing," which he does "not remember to have been hitherto attempted in our Language," he famously calls this novel, this new kind of writing, a "comic Epic-Poem in Prose" (49). If fiction is epic poetry in prose, however, the very notion of "poetry in fiction" will draw our attention to the fact that we are not only considering genres and modes but also the way in which something is written. "Poetry in fiction" may also mean "verse in prose." For even though "poetry" in this more general sense of a mode may be written in prose, we tend to think of poetry as something being written in verse.

The terminological confusion that may arise is a familiar one. Several contemporary writers about prose, such as Simon Goodhill in *The Invention of Prose* (on ancient Greece), and Wlad Godzich and Jeffrey Kittay in *The Emergence of Prose* (on medieval French literature), begin by citing the *bourgeois* in Molière's comedy *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*. In this play, M. Jourdain hires a *maitre de philosophie* who is to instruct him in the art of writing a love letter to a lady of quality (2.4). The teacher asks him if he wants to write it in verse, which the bourgeois denies. But when he is asked if he wants it to be written in prose, he denies this too, which causes the teacher to explain to him that it must be either the one or the other: "Everything that is not prose is verse, and everything that is not verse is prose" (Godzich and Kittay ix). M. Jourdain is proud of having discovered the competence of speaking prose, an ability he never knew of, and goes on to impart his newly acquired knowledge to his wife. Unfortunately, however, in repeating his teacher's statement to her he somehow gets it wrong; what he says is: "Everything that is prose is not verse; and everything that is not

verse is not prose" (x). Godzich and Kittay suspect Molière's bourgeois, while he is the butt of his author's ridicule, to have stated a deeper truth (cf. x). They remain a bit vague about what that truth might exactly be but point out that M. Jourdain's statement could perhaps teach us that prose and verse are by no means as mutually exclusive as his teacher thinks. I agree with them, but I also believe that the deeper joke (or wisdom) derives from the fact that prose only comes into its own when it participates in certain qualities which are commonly attributed to verse. Prose and verse are contrastive categories but, at the same time, especially when it comes to qualities associated with them, the one (especially prose) cannot do without taking a share in the other.

Accordingly, when we think of the ways in which poetry may be related to prose narrative, it appears to me that we can distinguish three basic kinds of their relationship which are not schematic categories but are closely linked to each other and may overlap. In each case, we may consider poetry as a broad generic term, we may consider it as a mode (certain features belonging to poetry can be found in fiction and drama and elsewhere), and we may regard it as a form of speaking and writing, i.e. as verse. "Fiction," in this context, could be paraphrased as literary prose narrative.

In the first place, we can think of poetry in fiction as motivated by a principle of difference and even contrast. Even when difference is stressed, however, the two modes of expression etc. may nevertheless supplement each other and together form a whole. We may secondly see that, whenever certain qualities are assigned to either prose or poetry, the one may take precedence over the other. Poetry, for example, may be the genre, mode, or form which represents an intensification, enhancement, or concentration of the matter and style that has been presented in the prose narrative. The relation is thus a teleological or hierarchical one rather than being (merely) contrastive or complementary. In a third perspective, poetry and prose are not really different from each other, and the presence of both in one and the same text may serve to make us realize this very fact.

## Difference and Contrast

Generic, modal, and/or formal distinctions can be used within the same text to stress difference. If we may switch over to drama for a moment, the analogous case of prose and verse in Shakespeare's plays will help us see this most clearly. When we think of the two couples in *Much Ado About Nothing*, for example, who are contrasted with each other, Benedick and Beatrice are always speaking prose, whereas Claudio, when it comes to his love and wooing of Hero, speaks verse. Only at the end, when Benedick and Beatrice recognize each other and their love (5.4.72-90), do they switch into poetry for a moment. This has been anticipated in 3.1 when Beatrice, in her rhymed soliloquy, has admitted her love for Benedick to herself. Prose is predominant in this play; thus we find poetry *in* prose. Certain expectations going together with verse (or "poetry") as the language of love are recognizable here, which Shakespeare uses for a sort of chiaroscuro effect; this is not invalidated by our realization that Claudio's love is not as constant as it at first appeared.

Likewise, the use of poetry in a nondramatic prose context may be based on a principle of difference and contrast. Michal Peled Ginsburg, for example, proposes such a contrast for Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* and Godwin's *Caleb Williams* in this issue of *Connotations*. Another case in point is Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, which is composed of "John Shades's" poem and "Charles Kinbote's" seemingly unrelated prose annotations. Even though we may then go on to discover a close relationship between the two, this is based on their apparent contrast. The principle is also borne out by the fact that Nabokov's work, strictly speaking, is not really an example of "Poetry in Fiction" but of a prose introduction and commentary added to poetry, which together establish a fictional text. It is fictional in the sense of being invented, but it is not fiction in the sense of prose narrative. The poem, which provides the title to the whole, is far too predominant in *Pale Fire* to be regarded merely as being "in" fiction.

This takes me to a genre-related observation. In order to think of poetry and narrative prose as contrasting elements of a literary work, each of them must have sufficient weight to influence our perception of the whole. From a historical perspective, this will bring up the genre of *prosimetrum* which, according to the *Princeton Encyclopedia*, is "a text composed in alternating segments of prose and verse" (Brogan 1115). We are reminded that *satura*, satire (the word meaning "medley"), is among the earliest examples of the *prosimetrum*; in particular, the works of Menippus (which are lost) consisted of such a mixture of prose and verse, and we may say that the principle of contrast which forms the basis of ridicule in satire (not just of the Menippean kind) fits in well with this generic mixture. Perhaps the most influential example of *prosimetrum* in Western literature, however, is of a quite different kind, namely Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* (c. 524). The importance of the alternation between prose and poetry in the Latin original of this work may have escaped those who read Alfred's and Chaucer's English translations, which are entirely in prose, but it was frequently commented upon throughout the Middle Ages and has given rise to a number of poetological considerations (cf. Dronke 3, 38-52).

Medieval commentators on this and other cases of *prosimetrum* (e.g. Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis philologiae et mercurii* on the wedding of learning and eloquence) stress the function of the combination (see Pabst 1: 204-307). In the first place, it serves the rhetorical and aesthetic principle of *variatio*, which makes the work as a whole more attractive to readers: this is a psychological purpose and effect, in that the alternation helps to avoid fatigue. The brevity of verse<sup>3</sup> and its sound patterns enhances our ability to remember the text. Alongside with this goes the interpretation of the prose-poetry combination as a linking of rhetoric and music, which is seen by medieval commentators to be analogous to Horace's combination of *prodesse* and *delectare*, the usefulness being aligned with prose, and the delightful sweetness with poetry. At first, this appears to be divorced from content; utility and delight entirely depend on the mode or form of speech.<sup>4</sup> In par-

ticular, the soul of the reader is addressed in different ways: in Boethius's work, for example, the consolation is understood to be rational and argumentative in the prose parts and affective and even narcotic in and through the poetry.<sup>5</sup> Here we see, however, that prose and verse not only correspond to the different kinds of effect upon the reader but also to the matter presented. Thus Lady Philosophy, in Book 4 of the *Consolation*, tells the prisoner, i.e. the first-person narrator: "But now I see thè burnded with waight of question, & wearied with length of reasoning, to expect the sweetness of som verse. Take therfore a draught wherby refreshed thou mayst trye strong further to go" (Boethius 96). The quotation is from Queen Elizabeth I's translation of Boethius's work, which not only maintains the alteration of prose and verse but also imitates the variety of metrical forms that can be found in the Latin original.

The passage just quoted is an example of immanent poetics, in so far as the nature and effect of the text is the subject of the communication *within* the text. Poetry and prose have their different effects, but they also correspond to different kinds of content. The latter aspect, however, is less frequently emphasized than the former, as shows the tradition of turning verse texts into prose and vice versa (the *dérimages* of late twelfth- and thirteenth-century France, for example; cf. Godzich and Kittay xv), which evinces a belief in the adaptability of the same subject matter. At the same time, the evaluation of prose and verse has always gone along with certain kinds of content and with the importance assigned to them. As we have seen, reasoning is considered by Boethius to be better suited to prose, probably because the metre restricts the rendering of complex subject matter (cf. Pabst 1: 303-04). As we read in Elizabeth's Boethius (in the 6th Prose of Bk. IV), "For if thou delyte in a musicall song, thou must differ [i.e. defer] a little thy delyte, while I doo tune in order the Reasons knyt togither" (91). Prose is seen as a tuning which is to lead up to a song, but it is also described as an ordering of reasons which cannot be replaced by the delight of the song.<sup>6</sup>

I would like to mention one further classic example of poetry with prose, in which poetry and prose are both contrasted and complementary. This is Dante's *Vita Nuova*, which is, among other things, a key text in the development of autobiography. Peter Dronke, who discusses it in the context of other medieval texts based on the mixed form for the account of a first-person protagonist, has suggested (using a distinction made by Leo Spitzer) that we can distinguish "between the *empirical 'I'* of a poet—that is, the specific personality revealed in the writing—and the *poetic 'I,'* which can stand for 'the human soul as such,' and which enables the author to speak representatively, on behalf of humanity" (83-84). Dronke stresses that, in Dante's work, "[t]he poems always remain very deliberately detached from the surrounding prose," with the prose primarily "supplying a background of purported inner autobiography," whereas the poetry establishes "a certain objectivity and exemplary force" (111-12), in this case the role of Beatrice as a heavenly being.

### Transformation and Intensification

Historically speaking, the qualities assigned to verse and prose, and the kinds of subject matter, attitudes, emotions etc. best presented by them, are subject to change. So is their relationship. In fifth-century Greece, for example, "unmetered *logoi* challenged and over time largely supplanted traditional poetic forms as the privileged expression of the culture" (Graff 304). Accordingly, there was no word for prose, as it was defined in entirely negative terms as non-poetry. Thus, even though prose may have taken precedence over poetry, or, as Simon Godhill puts it, even though "prose becomes [...] the expression of power" (5) in the classical period of Greek writing, it is still a relational term, and neither formally nor with regard to subject matter and function can the one really do without the other. That is to say, the one is more powerful in relation to the other, or the rational discourse associated with the one is more important than the emotional dis-

course associated with the other, etc. Godzich and Kittay describe the medieval French change of emphasis from verse to prose as the consequence of a shift in authority as regards the claim of truth. They cite Nicholas de Senlis's statement that "No rhymed tale is true" (xv); i.e. prose as the language of legal documents was (or became) a far more trustworthy guarantee of truth than poetry or verse with its formal restrictions.

But of course you also get the opposite view. In some ways, the more objective presentation of Beatrice in the poems of the *Vita Nuova* is an example of this. Referring to a completely different context, Emerson, in his essay on "Heroism," writes about "the heroic cast of character and dialogue" in Beaumont and Fletcher's tragicomedies, "wherein the speaker is so earnest and cordial, and on such deep grounds of character, that the dialogue, on the slightest additional incident in the plot, rises naturally into poetry" (245). This is reminiscent of the example from *Much Ado About Nothing*: especially when poetry occurs together with prose, the relational meaning of each mode or form of writing becomes obvious, but the relation can be seen dynamically as an enhancement. In Emerson's view, poetry is related to prose in terms of elevation, a rising which has to do with depth of character and sincerity of feeling ("earnest and cordial"). This notion of poetry as something special and intensified (compare the popular etymology of the German word *Dichtung* as *Verdichtung*)<sup>7</sup> is based on an implicit relation to prose and has made its way even into the *OED*, "poetry" *n.* 2.a.: "Composition in verse or some comparable patterned arrangement of language in which the expression of feelings and ideas is given intensity by the use of distinctive style and rhythm; the art of such a composition. Traditionally associated with explicit formal departure from the patterns of ordinary speech or prose, e.g. in the use of elevated diction, figurative language, and syntactical reordering." We notice the implied evaluation, and even though we have seen that the very opposite ranking may be true, too (you turn to prose for a more rational, truthful argument), I guess that in most of the texts which consist of poetry and prose (or poetry in fiction) po-

etry is used in order to bring about such an intensification. Poetry, though marked by formal restrictions, thus helps to overcome the limitations of prose.<sup>8</sup>

How ingrained this evaluation is with regard to poetry and prose can be seen by a conspicuous (not to say infamous) case of misapprehension, i.e. Henry James's review of Walt Whitman's *Drum-Taps* of 1865, which he regarded as an utter failure. This is relevant to us not so much for the appropriateness of James's criticism but for the criteria and standards he uses. Whitman's book of poetry, according to Henry James, "exhibits the effort of an essentially prosaic mind to lift itself, by a prolonged muscular strain, into poetry" (1). James's vituperation is an example of how the generally evaluative meaning of a word ("prosaic") goes together with the criticism of style. Prose and poetry become qualities of the mind, and it is of course the master of prose, Henry James, who is sceptical of a poetry that looks like prose. "He pursues these objects through a hundred pages of matter which remind us irresistibly of the story of the college professor who, on a venturesome youth's bringing him a theme done in blank verse, reminded him that it was not customary in writing prose to begin each line with a capital. The frequent capitals are the only marks of verse in Mr. Whitman's writing" (2). To Henry James, the imperfection of poetry as a form of writing is not remedied by poetry as a mode; to him this is neither poetry nor poetry in prose but prose dressed up as poetry: "As we have said, it begins for all the world like verse and turns out to be arrant prose. It is more like Mr. Tupper's proverbs than anything we have met. But what if, in form, it *is* prose? it may be asked. Very good poetry has come out of prose before this. To this we would reply that it must first have gone into it. Prose, in order to be good poetry, must first be good prose" (3). James regards Whitman's form of free-verse writing as pretentious rather than as the result of a painstaking process of poeticizing prose. What James addresses is the relationship of prose and verse as forms of writing and as qualities (modes; states of mind, even) that need not correspond to them. "Poetry in fiction" may thus mean that a mind elevated to

poetry finds expression in prose narrative. There is a hierarchy of modes but not of ways of writing. Still, in James's utterances there is the latent insistence that we should be able to see this in the form, the style.

## Similarity and Identity

Henry James's statement about Whitman leads up to the third point, and will take us back once more to Molière. We have noted that M. Jourdain's garbled-up definition ("Everything that is prose is not verse; and everything that is not verse is not prose") implies that prose and verse are not necessarily strict alternatives, they are not mutually exclusive. If prose is to be defined positively, i.e. not just negatively as "unmarked" speech or "as having no deliberate metrical structure" (*OED* "prose" *n.* 1.a.), it must have certain qualities that make us see the similarity to verse rather than merely the difference.

With respect to developments in ancient Greece, Graff has pointed out that "the basic distinction between poetic and appropriately prosaic language is extremely tenuous" (306). He shows this in particular with regard to tragedy, which is not only poetry but also "approximates the style of ordinary spoken language" (331). This concerns both rhythm and diction, the point of convergence being the fact that, in Aristotle's view, the iambic trimeter used in tragedy "has the rhythm of speech [and] an indication of this is that we speak many iambs in conversation with each other" (*Poetics* 4, 1449a23-26; quoted from Graff 330). If another historical leap may be permitted, we may notice an analogous prose-poetry continuum with the rise of the novel in the early eighteenth century; as Gabrielle Starr reminds us, "novelists consistently used patterns taken from the amatory lyric, lament, epithalamium, elegy, and Pindaric ode as primary models for constructing shared emotional experience between characters and from character to reader" (Starr 7-8). In this case, poetry in narrative prose does not (or not primarily) refer to form or to the poetic mode in

general but to specific features of poetic sub-genres. Still, neither the form of language (prose/verse) nor the genre (poetry/fiction) can be established on the basis of a strict difference or separation. We are reminded once more of Fielding's "comic epic poem *in prose*" with its ambiguous "in."

If we wish to describe this continuum systematically, we should first realize that poetry and prose may differ metrically, formally and stylistically, but may both be "poetical"—or, for that matter, "prosaic." The latter case is exemplified by Wordsworth, who, in his "Preface to Lyrical Ballads," not only defines the poet as "a man speaking to men" (71)<sup>9</sup> but also, as a concomitant of his emphasis on the ordinary human nature of the poet, maintains that "some of the most interesting parts of the best Poems will be found to be strictly the language of Prose, when Prose is well written" (67).<sup>10</sup> The former case, however, is the more frequent one. In this version, "poetry in fiction" could mean that a text is completely written in prose but nevertheless belongs to the mode of poetry or includes that mode. We can again distinguish different kinds in this first variant, namely the prose narrative comprising certain poetic modes (e.g. an elegiac mode), or the prose narrative being poetry in the sense of evincing a general quality; poetry could be seen as a general term (cf. German "Dichtung") which still designates certain common features.

Both kinds are covered by Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*, in which we read that "the greatest part of poets have apparelled their poetical inventions in that numbrous kind of writing which is called verse—indeed but appareled, verse being but an ornament and no cause to Poetry, since there have been many most excellent poets that never versified, and now swarm many versifiers that need never answer to the name of poets" (87). An even more radical version of this view can be found in Joseph Wharton's *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope* which goes back to a test devised in Horace's *Satires I.iv*: "Nothing can be more judicious than the method he prescribes, of trying whether any composition be essentially poetical or not; which is, to drop entirely the measures and numbers, and transpose and invert the order

of the words: and in this unadorned manner to peruse the passage. If there be really in it a true poetical spirit, all your inversion and transpositions will not disguise and extinguish it; but it will retain its lustre, like a diamond, unset [...]” (vii-viii).<sup>11</sup> The “poetical spirit” here seems to be something not related to genre or mode but a quality located outside the text (probably the genius of the author). This kind of “poetry” is hard to grasp. Sidney is more specific when he says that “it is that feigning notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by” (87); it is fiction (“feigning”), the presentation of archetypal qualities and the fusion of teaching and delight that account for poetry. “Poetry in fiction” is thus almost tautological.

But Sidney, though an idealist, does not leave out form and style altogether. Poetry is not just “matter” but also “manner,” namely: “not speaking [...] words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peizing [weighing] each syllable of each word by just proportion according to the dignity of the subject” (87). The criteria of musicality (“just proportion”) and appropriateness (the *aptum* or *decorum*) loom large. In this perspective, “poetry in fiction” will mean that the work is true because it is invented. Being independent of historical contingency, it will give evidence to its *ratio* (101) through its harmonious ordering of language. John Donne puts it similarly in a Sermon preached at Lincoln’s Inn (1618) on Psalm 38:2: “God gives us [...] our instruction in cheerfull forms, not in a sowre, and sullen, and angry, and unacceptable way, but cheerfully, in *Psalms* [...]; Not in an *Oration*, not in *Prose*, but in *Psalms*; [...]. Therefore is Gods will delivered to us in *Psalms*, that we might have it the more cheerfully, and that we might have it the more certainly, because where all the words are numbred, and measured, and weighed, the whole work is lesse sub-ject to falsification, either by subtraction or addition” (2: 49-50).

Where does this leave us, finally, with our subject? Our starting point has been the ambiguity of our title, “Poetry in Fiction”: there is something in prose, inserted poems or even just a reference to a poem, or a noticeable change of irregular language into a harmonic and

rhythrical form that will distinguish these texts from others which do not make us consider poetry at all. Whether we regard this presence of poetry as contrastive, dialogic and complementary, or whether we see a transformation and perhaps elevation into poetry, or whether this arrangement makes us realize that there is actually no prose without poetry (and vice versa)—in each case the coexistence of prose and verse, of poetry and narrative fiction will have a metapoetic dimension, showing us literature aware of all its options to extend its reach.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>The articles in this section are derived from papers presented at the 12th International *Connotations* Symposium, "Poetry in Fiction: Poetic Insertions, Allusions, and Rhythms in Narrative Texts," which took place from 28 July to 1 August 2013 at Mülheim an der Ruhr. The editors of *Connotations* are grateful to Sven Wagner for suggesting the topic and instigating our talks and discussion. I would like to thank both him and Burkhard Niederhoff for organizing an inspiring and productive conference. Furthermore, I am grateful to the participants of the symposium, and in particular my co-editors Burkhard Niederhoff and Angelika Zirker, for helpful feedback and suggestions.

<sup>2</sup>On this notion, see Fishelov in this issue of *Connotations*.

<sup>3</sup>In this respect, there is a link to the topic of the previous *Connotations* symposium, "Poetic Economy."

See <<http://www.connotations.uni-tuebingen.de/topics.htm#poeticeconomy>>.

<sup>4</sup>Their combination creates a kind of effect which is not unlike the "epigraph effect" described by Kronshage below (247, following Genette 160), which is independent of what is the actual content, and indicates (e.g.) highbrow cultural aspirations of the writer. Analogously, the mixture of poetry and prose may serve to indicate a comprehensive claim of the text, comprising both (e.g.) instruction and delight. Furthermore, the *prosimetrum* being a genre particularly popular throughout the Middle Ages, its imitation may be part of a strategy to evoke connotations of medievalism. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Ring* seems a likely candidate. On the poetic insertions in Tolkien, see Kullmann in this issue.

<sup>5</sup>See Dronke 41-45 for the function of poetry in the *Consolatio*. He cites (42) Thomas F. Curley III for the view that “Verse in the *Consolatio* functions as a ‘pharmakon,’ that is, as a potent substance of mysterious, almost magical, properties, which can either cure or kill” (Curley 245-46).

<sup>6</sup>An analogous example is Edgar Allan Poe’s reserving the function of beauty to poetry and truth to prose. As Anastasaki shows, Poe, even though he does not condone the mixing of the two in his theoretical writings, actually does so in his own tales—as part of “a strategy in favour of poetry’s supremacy” (209). The contrast thus serves the transformation of the one into the other (my second kind).

<sup>7</sup>See the beginning of ch. 4 of Ezra Pound’s *ABC of Reading*: “‘Great literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree.’ Dichten = condensare” (36).

<sup>8</sup>See Ginsburg and Nandrea, who discuss Hegel’s use of the expression “the prose of the world” in his *Aesthetics*: “for Hegel, this phrase indicts all the external factors that limit an individual’s freedom and independence, hindering ‘the higher aims of spirit’” (244, citing Hegel 149). Prose, as the “new” form, is thus also the mark of a loss. They point out that the positive (e.g. Bakhtinian) evaluation of prose as “‘new’ in the sense of unpredictable, free, and infinitely open [...] has not become the dominant one” (247). Michel Foucault’s discussion of the “Prose of the World,” by contrast, is not premised on the distinction of prose and verse or poetry. Neither does he identify “poetry” with an older worldview or state of society which is replaced by a new social and ideological order that could be characterized by “prose.” To him, the expression rather denotes a world that is characterized by similarity and analogy and in which things are signs. In his view, this world dissolves at the end of the sixteenth century, as can be seen in Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*: “[...] writing has ceased to be the prose of the world; [...] similitudes have become deceptive and verge upon the visionary or madness” (47). Ginsburg (below 202), aligns Foucault with a change of episteme that can be marked by a change from poetry to prose, even though, as Ginsburg and Nandrea (255) point out, “prose” marks the earlier stage in Foucault.

<sup>9</sup>The passages are quoted from the 1802 version but were already included in the 1800 preface.

<sup>10</sup>Marks is bewildered by this statement, especially in the light of Wordsworth’s emphasis on metre: “When [...] it is given the efficacy ascribed to it by Wordsworth, it is difficult to conceive how an otherwise stylistic conflation of prose and verse can be tenable, or even what it could mean” (119). It seems not unlikely that “language of prose,” as a modal feature, is meant to denote that very humanity of discourse of which, according to Wordsworth, poetry must partake.

<sup>11</sup>The passage is partly cited by Starr (9), without reference to its origin in Horace.

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