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Title:	Original Compiler: Notation as Textual Practice in Theodor Fontane
Authors:	Spies, Petra (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Spies%2C+Petra)
Advisors:	Wegmann, Nikolaus (/jspui/browse?type=advisor&value=Wegmann%2C+Nikolaus)
Contributors:	German Department
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Abstract:	Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) was one of Germany's first freelance authors to make a living by his pen under the conditions of early mass media. A tireless producer of texts in a variety of genres, from novels and novellas to newspaper and journal articles, he found success through writings that had popular appeal and yet were of high literary quality. This study reconstructs the material and technological foundation on which Fontane's multifaceted authorship rests. Examining his unpublished notebooks and other "paper tools," it provides an explanation for the versatility and the unique aesthetic profile of his production. The study argues that specific textual practices and media of notation enabled Fontane to interact with the mass-medial marketplace at every moment in the productive process. Rather than "suffering" from mass media, Fontane embraced them with his working methods and even built creative momentum from challenging communicative conditions. The study thus not only suggests a new approach to the textual practices and poetics of a German classic, but it also inquires into the forms of literary innovation that arise when communication with the marketplace enters the creative process. On the basis of Fontane's notebooks, folders, and other archival objects, the study identifies the complex medial apparatus underlying Fontane's text production as the source of his innovativeness. This apparatus enabled him to work not as a writer filling blank pages, but as a compiler who closely observed the media market, absorbed circulating materials from highbrow and lowbrow registers, recombined them skillfully in his own texts, and sent these texts back into circulation. Breaking the compilatory process into a series of motions, the apparatus made text production at once more mechanical and more flexible. It assisted Fontane in customizing his output for different places of publication according to a poetics of calculated aesthetic effects. In this study, Fontane ceases to be a mere "realist" who produced other writings on the side. Rather, he emerges as a virtuosic compiler with media-poetic intelligence whose textual practices infect our understanding of the relationship between poetics, literary communication, and creativity.
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