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Clayton Koelb and Eric Downing

CAMDEN HOUSE

Between Sentimentality and Phantasmagoria: German Lyric Poetry, 1830–1890

Thomas Pfau

Während sich nun diese [romantische] Schule ihrem Ableben näherte, veränderte sich mehr und mehr die Physiognomie der Zeit. Die Revolution, der Liberalismus, die Technik, die materiellen Tendenzen, die Cultur, die Alles beleckt, die Philosophie, die den letzten Rest des Unmittelbaren in die Vermittlung des Denkens hereinzuziehen systematisch fortfuhr, der Geschäftsdrang, der uns von Morgen bis Abend an den Arbeitsstuhl fesselt und der zehnten Muse, der langen Weile, ihr bischen Lebenslust vollends zu erdrücken droht: Alles dieß verschwor sich gegen die poëtische Stimmung und stellte vor die letzte Wiese, auf der ein Dichter schlendern mochte, den Schlagbaum der Sorge. (Theodor Vischer)¹

[As the Romantic school was nearing its end, the overall profile of the era seemed increasingly altered. Revolution; liberalism; technology; the material orientation of culture whose influence extends everywhere; a philosophy continually striving to storm the last bastions of immediacy with the mediations of systematic thought; and the pressure of an economic life that fetters us to our desks and threatens to throttle the last bit of pleasurable life out of the tenth muse — boredom: all these tendencies conspired against the poetic mood by erecting a gate of anxious concern in front of the pasture in which a poet might wish to roam one last time.]

Supplement or Impediment of Cognition: Emotion and Lyric Form after Hegel

WERE ONE PRESSED to name a single overarching and dominant feature of German lyric poetry after 1830, it would probably have to be the genre's enduring uncertainty as to its own social legitimacy and efficacy. The most comprehensive study of the *Biedermeier* period, by Friedrich Sengle, remarks on the uncertain cultural authority of the lyric in the post-Romantic era, in part because the genre appeared to lack a coherent poetic theory, and also because the poetics of the Jena Romantics had proposed

the novel rather than the lyric as a new super-genre capable of amalgamating *Poesie* and *Kritik* in an infinite and universalizing progression. By contrast, traditional lyric forms appeared psychologically and formally ephemeral, something underscored by Goethe's at times casual approach to lyric and epigrammatic writing in his late years.² The bourgeois Revolution in Paris (July 1830) and Goethe's death (1832) appeared to signal not only the demise of Romantic aesthetics but also the emergence of an ideological constellation that posited art and aesthetics as prime movers of social change. In spite of these shifts, a number of prominent poets still mentioned today as among the most accomplished of their time (Eichendorff, Heine, Mörike, Storm) responded to the lyric's apparently declining authority by employing the lyric image and form to reflect on the waning authority of Romantic programs of literature. With its subdued, reticent, and often miniaturist emotionalism, the major lyric poetry after 1830 remembers and partially surrenders the prophetic or redemptive utopias of high Romanticism and comes to reflect on the causes for their collapse. Even at the end of the Romantic era, Heine's 1827 letters to his publisher Julius Campe, on the occasion of negotiating the first edition of his *Buch der Lieder*, reveal the young writer waxing self-conscious about the exhausted state of the lyric: "Das 'Buch der Lieder' ist nichts als eine Gesamtausgabe meiner bekannten Gedichte. . . . Es ist wunderschön ausgerüstet und wird wie ein harmloses Kauffartheschiff unter dem Schutze des 2ten Reisebilderbandes ruhig ins Meer der Vergessenheit hinabsegeln" ("The 'Book of Songs' is nothing but a complete edition of my familiar poems. . . . It is beautifully equipped, and like a harmless trade-vessel it is destined to sail peacefully into the sea of oblivion under the protection of vol. 2 of my *Reisebilder* [Images of Travel]").³

In depicting the development of art as a dialectical progression from a symbolic via a classical toward a Romantic aesthetic, and consequently from a sensuous toward a progressively more abstract concept of representation, Hegel's Berlin *Vorlesungen zur Ästhetik* (*Lectures on Fine Art*, 1821–29) had posited Romantic poetry as the apotheosis of a more than two-thousand year long process in which the dialectical progression of *Geist* toward full self-awareness — ultimately bent on grasping the history of its own becoming — had continually availed itself of some sensuous, material scaffolding or other. To advance what Hegel's philosophy identifies as the core objective of *Geist* (spirit, intellect), lyric poetry had to "sublate" (*aufheben*) its primary focus on a subjective emotion and thus purify it from the theological stigmata of self-importance (*superbia*), melancholy (*acedia*), or narcissism (*vanitas*) that had long adhered to it:

Indem nun aber dies Aussprechen, um nicht der zufällige Ausdruck des Subjektes als solchen seinem unmittelbaren Empfinden und Vorstellen nach zu bleiben, zur Sprache des *poetischen* Inneren wird, so müssen die

Anschaungen und Empfindungen, wie sehr sie auch dem Dichter als einzelнем Individuum eigentümlich angehören und er sie als die seinigen schildert, dennoch eine allgemeine Gültigkeit enthalten.

[But in order that this expression may not remain a merely casual expression of an individual's own immediate feelings and ideas, it becomes the language of the *poetic* inner life, and therefore *however intimately* the insights and feelings which the poet describes as his own belong to him as a single individual, they must nevertheless possess a universal validity.⁴]

Already in his 1817 *Enzyklopädie*, Hegel had identified as a salient goal of philosophy the ability to dialectically absolve emotions, like all other particulars, from their idiosyncratic, contingent, and indeterminate nature. "Die Form der selbstischen Einzelheit" (the form of self-absorbed singularity), which spirit maintains in feeling, "proves the lowest and most inferior; in it, spirit exists not as something free, as infinite universality but, on the contrary, holds its substance and content as something purely accidental, subjective, and particular."⁵ Emotion here is posited as but a transitional step within an incomplete progression toward self-conscious universality. It is, in Hegel's characteristic parlance, "noch geistlos" (as yet devoid of spirit).⁶ Later writers, such as the enormously successful Emanuel Geibel (1815–1884) or Friedrich Hebbel (1813–1863), would approach the lyric as a formal strategy for distilling the intellectual content from a supposedly amorphous feeling. For Geibel this meant that "der Dichter beichtet in Gesängen / Sich rein von Leidenschaft und Schmerz" ("The poet confesses [in the religious sense] and so purifies / Himself of all passion and pain"). By contrast, Theodor Storm's approach to lyric writing in the age of bourgeois realism aims at sculpting poetic form into a precise objective correlative for an equally unique and distinctive feeling:

Poeta laureatus:

Es sei die Form ein Goldgefäß,
In das man goldnen Inhalt gießt

Ein anderer:

Die Form ist nichts als der Kontur,
Der den lebend'gen Leib beschließt.⁷

[Poet Laureate:

Let the form be a golden vase
Into which a golden content we pour.⁷

A different view:

Form is nothing but the contour
That a living body shall encase.]

The programmatic title (*Lyrische Form*) and didactic form shows Storm rejecting the excessively "golden" poetry of *poeta laureatus* Geibel (at

whose sumptuous state-funeral a copy of the 100th edition of his poems was placed inside his coffin) as little more than an eloquent affirmation of the bourgeois-industrial society under King Maximilian II of Bavaria and, later, Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany. The “universality” of Geibel’s lyric images is but a rehashing of average and often complacent beliefs and feelings endemic to the socially dominant strata during the post-1848 era. While ultimately staying clear of political poetry, Storm distrusts the leveling impulse behind Geibel’s quintessentially affirmative bourgeois style — with its eclectic deployment of traditional forms and nationalist, even jingoist overtones after 1871 — because such poetry preemptively insists on the purity and communicability of emotions that, as a result, appear generic and average.⁸ More ambitiously than Geibel, Friedrich Hebbel approaches the lyric through an exacting psycho-epistemological framework that is to guide the writer in forging the passage from a contingent emotion to reflection to self-conscious thought: “Ein lyrisches Gedicht ist da, so wie das Gefühl sich durch den Gedanken im Bewußtsein scharf abgrenzt” (A lyric poem obtains as soon as feeling has been sharply delimited by conscious thought).⁹ Focused on the same issue, though more circumspect in his position, Theodor Vischer (1807–87) remarks that poetry’s innate tendency toward naïveté — that is, its longing for a “Zustand relativer Bewußtlosigkeit” (a state of relative unself-consciousness) — is accompanied by consciousness threatening “in diejenige Bewußtheit überzugehen, welche die Naïvität zerstört und die Poësie in Prosa auflöst” (to destroy the naïveté in question and to dissolve poetry into prose).¹⁰

While the task of intellectualizing or “socializing” contingent emotions had appeared a principal objective of Hegelian thought and had clearly shaped the early work of writers such as Hebbel, Geibel or Theodor Vischer, Hegel’s concept of feeling actually proves rather more intricate. For it is another, frequently ignored systematic imperative of Hegelian thought that any given disposition of mind, however deficient vis-à-vis the teleological objectives of philosophical thought, must contain within it fuel that will keep the dialectical machine running. Feeling, in other words, cannot be reduced to a simple, self-identical (quasi-narcissistic) state and hence amounts to more than the static opposite of self-conscious thought. For it contains within itself, however obliquely, a formal impetus toward self-reflection and externalization (*Entäußerung*). A latent measure of perceptual acuity or “Aufmerksamkeit” (attentiveness) must be contained within even the most ephemeral, hermetic, and seemingly oblique emotive state. For it is only out of such speculative seeds that speculative thought can acquire its energy and direction. To make that observation is to concede a peculiar, as it were, retroactive dependency of speculative thinking on supposedly contingent and inferior particularities, a dependency that speculative thinking itself can neither deny nor fully assimilate. Far from being an “immediate” and unreflective expression of feeling, lyric poetry

according to Hegel presents itself as the medium most suited to extracting the intentionality and lucidity that supposedly lies dormant in a given feeling without simply discarding the emotive quality whereby such a different kind of knowledge attains phenomenal distinctness.

Perhaps most accomplished in developing a unique “Stimmung” (mood) toward objective clarity by meticulous prosodic and rhetorical means is the lyric oeuvre of Eduard Mörike (1804–75). His famous opening poem of *Gedichte* (1838) brilliantly correlates the transitional logic of conscious life, here captured as awakening “An einem Wintermorgen, vor Sonnenaufgang” (On a Winter-Morning, before Sunrise). Staying clear of expressive conventions and a hackneyed emotionalism that mars much of *Biedermeier* poetry, affect here is not the opposite of conscious existence but, rather, allows consciousness to grasp its own intrinsic dynamic in concrete form. Mörike captures such reflexivity in a meticulously sculpted image of the lyric self capturing and — with great phonetic, rhythmic, and lexical specificity — expressing its sensual “pleasure in being” as a moment of crystalline clarity:

O fläumenleichte Zeit der dunkeln Frühe!
Welch neue Welt bewegest du in mir?
Was ist’s, daß ich auf einmal nun in dir
Von sanfter Wollust meines Daseins glühe.

Einem Kristall gleicht meine Seele nun,
Den noch kein falscher Strahl des Lichts getroffen;
Zu fluten scheint mein Geist, er scheint zu ruhn,
Dem Eindruck naher Wunderkräfte offen,
Die aus dem klaren Gürtel blauer Luft
Zuletzt ein Zauberwort vor meine Sinne ruft.¹¹

[O feathery light time of the dark dawn,
What new world have you brought to life in me?
What can this mean, so suddenly to be
Aglow in you with joy to have been born.

My soul is like a crystal in this moment,
That no false ray of light as yet has stricken;
My spirit seems to flow, and to be pent,
Then to the touch of wondrous powers quicken
Thronging before my senses, summoned there
By magic out of the clear blue belt of air.]

Captured as an oceanic (“zu fluten scheint”), tranquil expectancy (“er scheint zu ruhn”), spirit manifests itself as an emotional potentiality, one not merely indulged as subjective pathos but, rather, scrupulously observed and formally captured by the simile of a crystal “den noch kein falscher Strahl

des Lichts getroffen" (as yet undistorted by the spurious illumination of consciousness). With its ingenious alternation of phonetic values and its subtly lilting metrics, Mörike's lyric offers a formal analogue for its central epistemological claim: namely, that self-consciousness is not the other of emotion but can only be *felt* in its subtle dynamic. Not only does self-awareness originate in feeling but, as an ever-transitional "awakening," it constitutes a distinct "feeling," a momentary convergence of visual, tactile, and auditory impulses into a discreetly sensual emotion whose evanescence Mörike's neologism "flaumenleicht" conveys so incomparably. Knowledge thus inheres not in some abstract propositional content but, in the subject's feeling of its own faintly stirring transformation by the irreducibly particular manner in which the greatest of all abstractions, time, announces itself. Rather than succumbing to the alternate predicament of an abstract intellectualism or a regression into inconsequential private sentimentality, Mörike's poetry shrewdly balances fleeting emotion against a conscious existence subject to the vagaries of time. At the level of its specific images, as Kenneth Calhoun has so thoughtfully put it, Mörike's poetry "is photo- and phonographic in its manner of arresting the ephemeral — of at once defying and underscoring the impermanence that, more and more, defines the age."¹² Whereas philosophical thought can treat emotions only in a prosaic form (and medium) that denies them their essential qualities, lyric poetry is capable of grasping feeling *as* feeling. Fully cognizant of this key distinction, Hegel himself had specified that lyric poetry "[leibt] [d]iesem erfüllten Innern, um sich als Innerlichkeit auszudrücken, Worte und Sprache" (gives words and language to this enriched inner life so that *as inner life* it may find expression).¹³

Another lyric, only six lines long, shows Mörike's unrivaled skill in concentrating this awakening to what Rousseau had called "le sentiment de l'existence" through a single, meticulously chiseled objective image. Composed in 1827, "Septembermorgen" revives Goethe's early lyric idiom from the period at Sesenheim (1771-72), such as we find it in "Mailied."

In Nebel ruhet noch die Welt,
Noch träumen Wald und Wiesen:
Bald siehst du, wenn der Schleier fällt
Den blauen Himmel unverstellt,
Herbstkräftig die gedämpfte Welt
In warmem Golde fließen.¹⁴

[Sleeps the world still
In folds of mist.
Meadow and woodland
Still are dreaming.
Soon when the veil
Down has slid,

You shall see
Blue sky manifest
And autumn-vivid
The calm world amid
A warm gold streaming.]

Small-scale epiphanies here reestablish the image as the objective medium *through* (rather than *beyond*) which inwardness can achieve clarity. Without succumbing to allegorical, conceptually driven analogues for an otherwise diffuse emotion, Mörike achieves a classicist balance between the independent cogency of the image-as-object. Presaging the constructivist aesthetic of high modernism, Mörike's images not only undergo microscopic and quasi cubist exfoliation but, in their concreteness, also crystalize an otherwise formless subjective disposition. The luminous closing image, its Olympian confidence prepared by the rugged "herbstkräftig" ("autumn-vivid" — one of Mörike's countless innovative compounds) reflects what Adorno has called his "unwägbar feines, kaum definierbares, antikes odenhaftes Element" (inestimably subtle, scarcely definable *classical*, ode-like element). Facing that, in response to a "prosaic" life vitiated by innumerable "competing interests" and a consequently denuded notion of the human, "[d]er Begriff des Menschen, wie der Klassizismus ihn gewonnen hatte, zog darum in die private, einzelmenschliche Existenz und ihre Bilder sich zurück. . . . Die gesellschaftliche Kraft im Ingenium Mörikes jedoch besteht darin, daß er beide Erfahrungen, die des klassizistischen hohen Stils und der romantischen privaten Miniatur verband, und daß er dabei mit unvergleichlichen Takt der Grenzen beider Möglichkeiten inne ward und sie gegeneinander ausglich" (classicism's concept of the human being withdrew into private, individual existence and its images. . . . The social force of Mörike's genius, however, consists in the fact that he combined . . . the classicistic elevated style and that of the romantic private miniature, . . . and in doing so he recognized the limits of both possibilities and balanced them against one another with incomparable tact).¹⁵ Inwardness in lyric form is not mired in its particulars but, through the quasi-providential operations of lyric (figural) language, has progressed toward expressing the perception of values and conflicts encrypted in emotional life, albeit without denying that this, their truth, is being experienced *as emotion*. Hence, in Hegel's precise diction, the lyric's task is

den Geist nicht *von* der Empfindung, sondern *in* derselben zu befreien. Das blinde Warten der Leidenschaft liegt in der bewußtseinslosen dumpfen Einheit derselben mit dem ganzen Gemüte, das nicht as sich heraus zur Vorstellung und zum Aussprechen seiner gelangen kann. Die Poesie erlöst nun das Herz zwar von dieser Befangenheit, insofern sie dasselbe sich gegenständlich werden läßt, aber sie bleibt nicht bei dem

bloßen Hinauswerfen des Inhalts aus seiner unmittelbaren Einigung mit dem Subjekte stehen, sondern macht daraus ein von jeder Zufälligkeit der Stimmungen gereinigtes Objekt.¹⁶

[to liberate the spirit not *from* but *in* feeling. The blind dominion of passion lies in an unconscious and dull unity between itself and the entirety of a heart that cannot rise out of itself into ideas and self-expression. Poetry does deliver the heart from this slavery to passion by making it see itself, but it does not stop at merely extricating this felt passion from its immediate unity with the heart but makes it an object purified from all accidental moods.]

Poetry marks a unique phase in the evolution of philosophical self-consciousness, one potentially inimical to Hegel's overarching systematic view of art as but a dress-rehearsal for the ultimate telos of the idea of freedom as it is to be instantiated in "the prose of the world." And yet, in lyric poetry the kaleidoscope of social knowledge that lies dormant in emotional life is expressively reconstituted without simply "suspending" the emotional quality of that knowledge. It achieves this by embodying emotions in a language that is aware of its on its own medial character *as language*. Long before Roman Jakobson's conception of the "poetic function" as one principally focused on language as a medium, Hegel's theory of the lyric asserts poetry's reflexive relationship to its own, constitutive linguistic and rhetorical underpinnings.¹⁷ Precisely because of its sustained reflexivity, poetry is capable of articulating the exemplary knowledge encrypted in what would otherwise remain nothing but contingent and transient emotional states of an individual. Building on Herder's postulate that "poetry is the perfected expression of a sentiment or intuition," Hegel's *Aesthetics* thus posits lyric as an intensely self-focused form of "late" art, one that hastens the demise of art as a medium within which the "Arbeit des Begriffs" (labor of the concept) has achieved all it can.¹⁸

Whereas Mörike largely regarded philosophical speculation about the dialectical mission of emotions and their objective mediation in the lyric image as a separate, even alien concern, other nineteenth-century writers often struggle with what they came to view as the lyric's dependence on sensory particulars. The titles of many poems by Friedrich Hebbel (1813–63) reveal this apologetic tendency for the transient and philosophically underdeveloped nature of the aesthetic, for example, "Die Sprache" (Language), "Welt und Ich" (World and Self) "Das Heiligste" (The Holiest), "Der Mensch und die Geschichte" (Man and History), "Unsere Zeit" (Our Times), and so on. Still, Hebbel's searching and imaginative diaries show him engaged in sustained reflection on the aporia of an intellectually consistent and conclusive poetry. If, as he dogmatically states, "der Mensch ist was er denkt" (man is what he thinks), poetry, including Hebbel's own, will suffer for it: "Meine Poesien aus der

ersten Zeit sind unter allem Begriff schlecht, doch enthielten sie — was mich damals ordentlich plagte, da ich daraus den Schluß zog, daß es mir an Phantasie fehle, keinen Unsinn" (My earliest poetic efforts prove inconceivably bad, though they do not contain any nonsense — something that vexed me greatly at the time, since I concluded that I was lacking in imagination).¹⁹ If Hebbel's quest for a poetry wholly accountable to and ideally determined by "thought" reveals a particular version of mid-nineteenth-century German philistinism — one might now call it "philosophical correctness" — his diaries and, at times, also his lyrics ponder the cost at which such an ascendancy of thought over emotions has been purchased. Reminiscent of Fichtean Idealism, Hebbel posits time and again that consciousness achieves distinctness *per se* only by reifying all otherness as "its" thought, with the consequence being that nothing primordially "Other" exists outside of it, ". . . daß es überall nichts Ursprüngliches für uns giebt, d.h., daß wir den Gedanken in dem Augenblick, wo wir uns seiner bewußt werden, schon zu Etwas gemacht haben" (" . . . that nowhere there is anything primordial for us, i.e., that at the very moment when we become conscious of a thought as ours, we have already made it into a thing").²⁰ Applied to the insistent obliquity of emotions, Hebbel's view leads to a Stoicism bent on the intellectual containment of emotions and, hence, on stripping them of their sensory, particular force. With its opening image of pain as emotion reaching the lyric self only through the mediation of thought, Hebbel's long poetic meditation "Dem Schmerz sein Recht" (Giving Pain its Due) exemplifies this dilemma:

Ewiger, der du in Tiefen wohnest,
Die der jüngst geborene Gedanke,
Der, weil du allein Gedanken sendest,
Kam den Weg von dir zu mir durchmessen,
Wenn er rückwärts blickt, nur schwindelnd nachmißt,
Ewiger, vernimm in dieser Stunde
Meines bang bewegten Herzens Flehen!

. . .
Ja, ein Weh giebt's, das man nicht ertrüge,
Wenn es nicht sein eig'nes Maaß zerbräche,
Und, wie einer abgeschmackten Lüge,
Der Erinnerung selber widerspräche.
Dann, vergessend in der innern Öde,
Daß einst frisch das Herz geschlagen habe,
Ist ein Mensch er Nessel gleich, die schnöde
Wuchert über seinem eig'nen Grabe.²¹

[Eternal one, who dwells in depths that
The latest-born reflection — which, because you

Alone can assign thought its mission — could
 Gauge only with dizziness when looking back:
 Eternal one, learn in this hour
 Of my anxious, heartfelt petition.

...
 Yes, there is a pain that we could not bear
 If it did not shatter its own measure and,
 As in a jaded lie would
 Contradict memory itself. Then,
 Dwelling in the desert of the self and oblivious
 Of its former, quickened pulse
 Man resembles a nettle growing rancorously
 Over his own grave.]

At once startlingly abstract and exacting, Hebbel's poem gauges the temporal distance between an enigmatic, though insistently painful emotion and the discipline of conscious thought that has sprung into existence only as a strategy for sheltering the self from a dizzying welter of feeling. In so establishing its authority by having shattered the sole authentic "Maß" ("measure") of subjectivity — that is, the emotion of pain — thought has acquired clarity at the expense of a barren, poisonous, and denatured quality here figured as a "Nessel" (nettle). The metaphor of the plant no longer stands in the service of an organic poetics but, on the contrary, heightens the reader's awareness of the discontinuity between thought and emotion.²² Hebbel's conscious self cannot escape self-awareness as an agency atrophied beyond recognition by conceptual thought. Perched between Hegel and Freud, lyric form appears to know of its intrinsically repressive logic vis-à-vis affective contents *from* which and in reaction *against* which it had dialectically acquired its concrete form. Hebbel's lyrics formally enact how the thinking subject becomes reflexively aware of (and tacitly mourns) its own constitutive belatedness.

Echo or Evasion: Lyric Emotion and Social Conflict in the Biedermeier and Vormärz

During the decades after 1830, several diverse, at times competing implications of Hegel's theory of the lyric as a uniquely transitional art form were to resonate in numerous writers and literary schools.²³ The first and, arguably most conspicuous involved drawing out the implication that, in jettisoning both its dependency on a material scaffolding and gradually

overcoming its earlier absorption in pre-reflective emotive states, lyric poetry of the present age constituted the decisive factor in art's ongoing quest for self-transcendence. First published in 1835, Hegel's *Aesthetics* prove less the cause of this startling conception than that they offer a canny summation of tendencies readable in the dialectical evolution of art itself. Although the effects of his position for the nineteenth-century lyric and its aesthetic comprehension proved considerable, numerous writers of lyric poetry coming of age during the 1830s abandon the narrative and hence strictly transitional function that feeling had held in Idealist philosophy. Among this generation, typically grouped under the name of *Biedermeier* or the poets of *Weltschmerz* and *Zerrissenheit* (affliction), several secured a broad reading audience in their time — August von Platen, Justinus Kerner, Nikolaus Lenau, Emanuel Geibel, and Friedrich Rückert. In their lyric oeuvre, emotions appear less as encrypted meanings destined for philosophical comprehension than as psychological fetishes incessantly revisited and reworked by a voice whose subjective stance often appears overly mannered and generic. In the following passages from poems by Kerner, Lenau, and Rückert, we thus find the *Biedermeier* period's vast array of lyric writing, as well as its encyclopedic collecting and microscopic studying of lyric forms, to be centered around the core axiom of emotion:

[Kerner]

Könnst' ich mit meinem Gram
 Mich in mich selbst versenken,
 An was der Tod mir nahm,
 Mit stiller Sehnsucht denken!

Könnst' in Waldeinsamkeit
 Ich ein Einsiedler fliehen,
 Dann würd' das herbe Leid
 Mich minder heiß durchglühen.

...
 Doch tiefer brennt die Glut
 Indes mir still im Herzen.
 Nicht schmerzlicher was tut,
 Als ein verhaltenes Schmerzen.²⁴

[Could I descend into my inner depths,
 Holding close to my pain
 And with quiet longing thin
 Of what death had taken from me.

Could I flee, a hermit
 Into a leafy solitude.

Even then the acrid pain
Should glow in me, undiminished.

...
Yet deeper still my heart
Remains quietly aglow.
No greater pain
Than a pain contained.]

[Lenau]

Sie ließ sich überraschen
Von diesem Trauerwort,
Und ihre Thränen waschen
Die rothe Schminke fort.

Das Leben täuscht uns lange,
Du zeigst der Schminke baar,
Des Lebens welke Wange,
O Schmerz; wie bist du wahr!²⁵

[She was surprised
By this one word of grief
And now her tears
Cleanse her cheeks' false bloom.

Life long has deceived us,
And now you lay bare of painted bloom
Life's faded cheeks,
O Pain, how true thou art!]

[Rückert]

Der Himmel hat eine Träne geweint,
Die hat sich ins Meer verlieren gemeint.
Die Muschel kam und schloß sie ein:
Du sollst nun meine Perle sein.
Du sollst nicht vor den Wogen zagen,
Ich will hindurch dich ruhig tragen.
O du mein Schmerz, du meine Lust,
Du Himmelsträn' in meiner Brust!
Gib, Himmel, daß ich in reinem Gemüte
Den reinsten deiner Tropfen hüte.²⁶

[The heavens wept a tear
It was resigned to lose itself in the sea.
An oyster came and encased the tear
Henceforth thou shalt be my pearl.
Thou shalt not fear the lashing waves
But tranquil shall I bear thee.
O thou my pain, thou my joy.
Thou heavenly tear in my very own bosom!
Heaven grant that I in spirit pure
Shall keep this purest of thy tears.]

Entitled "*Verhaltenes Schmerzen*" (Suppressed Pain), Kerner's lyric meditates on the posthumous life of a pain or grief for which conventional society offers no outlet. Prescient of Freud's eventual analyses of repression and censorship, the lyric itself ruminates the psychological and social cost of a grief persistently attenuated or stifled only to emerge, with its palpable emotional reticence, as the very instrument of such prevarication. Though cherished with narcissistic intensity, the pain indexed in this lyric noticeably lacks all specific content and, consequently, any definitive causal explanation. Similar to Hegel's concept of the lyric form as the medium into which emotion *qua* emotion is sublated and so preserved, Kerner's titular *verhalten* (prevaricated) implies both, an attitude of prevarication and containment / preservation. In marked contrast to the far superior poetry of Eduard Mörike or Theodor Storm (1817–88), however, these lyrics exhaust themselves in coveting and holding fast to feeling as a merely *putative* meaning, that is, without any sustained attempt at infusing the affective state with a clarity and specificity that can only be effected by its transfiguration into a formal-rhetorical object construct.

Similarly, if in more compact form, Lenau's short lyric entitled "Schmerz" shows emotion as a symptomatic force slumbering in the word of mourning that, like Eichendorff's famous *Zauberwort*, possesses the magical power of unraveling the false painted bloom of the public persona. Containing with subtle but unmistakably misogynistic overtones, the (once generic) emotion of pain here strips the human subject down to its existential, temporal plight: as the painted face and the carefully composed social persona is stripped down to reveal the actual, "faded" countenance beneath, the core emotion of grief and melancholy (arguably Lenau's most recurrent topic) comes to be associated with experience, with life and the passage of time. The same enjambment of a vindictive and a possessive outlook on the emotion of pain also resonates in Rückert. A compulsive writer if ever there was one — he produced over 12,000 poems during his career — Rückert's lyric further develops the narcissistic dimensions of the Biedermeier lyric by converting it into a prized collector's item, a miniature, a pearl / tear contained within a "Muschel" ("shell") safely carried around by the lyric "I."

The pathos of the collector, even in the figural sense given to it by Rückert's poetry — groupings of which are often decoratively titled "Strauß" (bouquets) — constitutes, as Benjamin put it, "an attempt to overcome the wholly irrational character of the object's mere presence . . . through its integration into a new, expressly devised historical system: the collection." Rückert's poetry very plausibly aligns itself with Walter Benjamin's analysis of collecting as a type of "practical memory" whose "most deeply hidden motive" involves "a struggle against dispersion." What is collected and thus possessed in serial lyric form is emotion itself — with its volatile, external historical implications now defused. Like the porcelain cups and saucers of Wilhelm III, commented upon (via Max von Boehn) by Benjamin as vessels preserving "the memory of the most important events, the most precious hours, of his life," lyric writing of the kind Rückert, Lenau, Kerner and other epigones produce during the *Vormärz* period decontextualizes emotion by distilling it into "things [that] allow no mediating construction out of 'large contexts.'" ²⁷ Pain beheld becomes pain held, possessed, and eventually coveted ("O du mein Schmerz, du meine Lust"). In their own way, each of these lesser-known writers — all of whom achieved more fame at the hand of composers setting their lyrics to music (Schumann, Brahms, Wolf, Mahler) — throw into relief a dead-end in the development of the lyric, a loss of the dialectical and speculative momentum which, according to Hegel, rendered the subjective, specifically emotive focus of lyric poetry a transitional stage toward a more prosaic and discursive self-knowledge. Instead of sublating emotion into something universal, each of the writers prizes it as an inalienable possession to be preserved in lyric, self-consciously formalized speech that resembles one of its miniature images (Rückert's "Muschel," for example).

Overall, the poetry of the 1830s and 1840s — except when committed to overtly political concerns — tends to agonize under the aura of its own belatedness, a predicament from which the lyric often retreats by fixating on precious, small-scale emotional states. Rückert's logic of poetic accumulation invariably renders emotions interchangeable and generic, constructs whose schematic imprecision ultimately deprives them of both, personal *and* universal significance. Yet in some of the best poets of the period (Eichendorff, Mörike, Heine, Storm), the lyric's intrinsic belatedness is itself converted into an explicit thematic concern and as a new formal-rhetorical possibility. Thus, when Heine laments the end of the "Nachtigallenwahnsinn" (nightingale madness) that had once given such delusive momentum to the Romantic movement, we quickly recognize his distinctive rhetorical pose. Commenting on the untimely position of the post-Romantic lyric in his late *Geständnisse* (*Confessions*) of 1854, Heine makes a point of figuring centrally in his equivocal farewell to Romantic lyric poetry: "Ich bin ihr letzter Dichter: mit mir ist die alte lyrische Schule der Deutschen geschlossen, während zugleich die neue Schule, die

moderne deutsche Lyrik, von mir eröffnet ward" (I am the last poet [of the Romantic school]. With me, the old lyric school of the Germans has come to a close, just as with me the new school of modern German lyricism was being inaugurated).²⁸ To some extent, Heine's later poetry compensates for the lyric's seemingly anachronistic status by its commitment to longer narrative and often aggressively satiric modes: *Atta Troll* (1841–42), *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen* (1843), and the sub-set of poems entitled *Zeitgedichte* in Heine's *Neue Gedichte* (1844), for example.

And yet, the very perception that an imaginative and affective investment in poetry is no longer timely because no longer generative of new psychological or cultural meanings paradoxically also emerges as a dominant thematic and formal proposition in Heine's lyric poetry. With the end of the "Kunstperiode" (art-period) repeatedly pronounced by Heine after 1833, lyric writing recognizes itself as a pursuit both generically and historically over-determined. The modern writer, particularly of lyric poetry, appears burdened by an excess of knowledge; he is the epigone *par excellence*, "born too late" as Heine puts it when referring to his own generation as "wir Spätergeborenen."²⁹ Far from being an exclusive insight of Hegel's theory of Romantic art — presented in its second installment during Heine's 1823 residence in Berlin — the notion of the *Biedermeier* as a self-consciously belated historical phase reverberates in countless lyric poets after 1830. Oppressed by the abundance of aesthetic models generated since the age of Lessing and distressed by evident inadequacy of such models for the present age, the writers of the Restoration and *Biedermeier* era (1815–1848) struggle with a new adversary: the idea of culture as a monolithic and over-determined heritage. As Martin Greiner puts it, "Epigonen, das sind Reiche, die im Überfluß darben" and "Epigonentum ist das Kennzeichen einer Bildungskrise, das seelische Darben in einem problematisch gewordenen geistigen Reichtum" (the epigone is a wealthy subject starved by an excess of riches, [and] his is a psychological struggle with culture as heritage).³⁰ The point largely echoes Karl Immermann (1796–1840), author of the expansive novel *Die Epigonen* (1836), for whom literature resembles political life, since the middle-aged generation of the 1830s was compelled to compare "nur die unbedingten Erwartungen einer vollen und großen Nationalität, welche ihre Jugend beflügelte hatten, mit der bedingteren und mäßigeren Erfüllung" (the unconditional expectations of a plentiful, grand Nationalism that had inspired its youth [during the wars of liberation 1813–15] with the far more limited and modest fulfillment of those expectations).

Wir sind, um in einem Worte das ganze Elend auszusprechen, Epigonen und tragen an der Last, die jeder Erb- und Nachgeborenschaft anzukleben pflegt. Die große Bewegung im Reiche des Geistes, welche unsre Väter von ihren Hütten und Hüttchen aus unternahmen, hat uns eine Menge von Schätzen zugeführt, welche nun auf allen Markttischen ausliegen.

[We are, to put all the misery into one word, epigones and thus struggle with the burden that weighs down all those latter-born and to a rich bequest. The great intellectual movements which our fathers launched from their dwellings has brought us a cornucopia of treasures that now are strewn about on any variety of market-tables.]

Hence there prevails “eine gewisse Halbheit, ein Gespaltenes und Doppeltes im Bewußtsein von den öffentlichen Dingen, in den Begriffen von Recht, Eigentum und Besitz” (. . . a certain half-heartedness, something fragmented and doubled about our consciousness of public issues).³¹ Immermann’s dispiriting portrayal of Romanticism’s cultural and intellectual achievements now being remaindered at market-stands everywhere is borne out by an unprecedented profusion of lyric writing and publishing during the 1830s, even as attempts at formal-aesthetic and socio-cultural definitions of lyric poetry seem to falter. Collections of poetry abound: Rückert, *Haus- und Jahrslieder* (1832–38); Platen, *Frühlingslieder* (1835); Eichendorff, *Gedichte* (1837); Mörike, *Gedichte* (1838); the crucially successful second and subsequent editions of Heine’s *Buch der Lieder* (1837, 1839, 1844); Geibel, *Gedichte*, 1840; Lenau, *Polenlieder* (1832–35) and *Waldlieder* (1843); Heibel, *Gedichte* (1842); Droste-Hülshoff, *Gedichte* (1844); Uhland, *Gedichte* (5th–9th edition, 1831–1835).³² Likewise, the institution of the almanac presented a wide-ranging, often bewildering array of lyric forms and themes. Examples might include Nikolaus Lenau’s *Frühlingsalmanach* (1835–36), the *Deutscher Musenalmanach*, edited by Gustav Schwab, Adalbert von Chamisso, and Franz von Gaudy between 1833–39, Friedrich Rückert’s *Erlanger Musenalmanach* (1838), the Jung-Hegelian *Deutscher Musenalmanach* (1840–41) edited by Arnold Ruge and Theodor Echtermeyer, or O. L. B. Wolff’s *Poetischer Hausschatz* (1843). The sheer profusion of lyric writing, printing, and publishing was materially reinforced by the increased efficiency of the printing process brought about by Koenig and Bauer’s 1811 cylinder-based approach to printing (first applied by the London *Times* in 1814), their 1818 design of a “double cylinder press” for swift two-sided printing (further perfected by William Church in 1824), subsequently enhanced by Bullock’s 1865 roll-fed rotary press, and Ottmar Mergenthaler’s 1866 invention of the linotype machine. Such innovations reinforce Immermann’s (and our own) sense of monotony within a literary genre confronting the loss of its “aura” as a unique instance of autographic expression. With a fatigue that presages the rise of major technological advances in the mechanical reproduction of text — and the book’s consequent loss of its formerly sacred aura — readers of the Biedermeier era already agonized, as Christoph Herin has put it, under “. . . immer wieder . . . dieselben Bilder, dieselben Vergleiche, derselbe Tonfall, dieselbe Reime. . . . Die Variationen der gebräuchlichsten

Formeln ist so gering, daß der ermüdete Leser überall nur noch erstarrte Konvention findet” (the same metaphors, the same similes, the same tone, the same rhymes. So minor is the variation of the most widely used formulas that the fatigued reader encounters nothing but calcified, meaningless convention).³³ Reflecting the Biedermeier era’s preoccupation with the collecting and inventory-taking of cultural artifacts, a number of poets (Platen, Lenau, Geibel, Rückert) explore a broad array of classical, modern, and experimental forms by scrupulously apprenticing themselves in a vast array of forms (Ghazel, terza rima, sestina, epigrammatic poetry, sonnet, alexandrine, ottava rima, canzone, ballad, ode, hymn) and then refining their prosodic possibilities.³⁴ Doing so could ensure lasting popularity, particularly in the case of Rückert and Geibel, with the latter’s unfailingly conformist poetry earning him a lifetime of financial security and political approval.³⁵ However mediocre many of their lyric productions, writers such as Platen, Rückert, Schwab, Lenau, Kerner, Chamisso, Holtei, and Geibel secured a broad and enduring audience for lyric poetry well into the period of Realism and Naturalism.

At the same time, the implicit demand of so many emotively focused lyric poems, namely, as Adorno puts it, “die des jungfräulichen Wesens . . . impliziert den Protest gegen einen gesellschaftlichen Zustand, den jeder Einzelne als sich feindlich, fremd, kalt, bedrückend erfährt, und negative prägt der Zustand dem Gebilde sich ein” (that the lyric word be virginal, is itself social in nature . . . implies a protest against a social situation that every individual experiences as hostile, alien, cold, oppressive, and this situation is imprinted in reverse on the poetic work). A salient example of Adorno’s thesis about lyric poetry’s dialectical implication in complex historical forces — and hence, in Adorno’s famous formulation, the lyric’s inadvertent role as a “geschichtsphilosophische Sonnenuhr” (philosophical sundial telling the time of history) — can be found in the lyric oeuvre of Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857).³⁶ His extensive lyric corpus, much of which was first scattered throughout his novels, novellas, plays or occasional almanacs, only reached a broader audience with the publication of his collected poems (*Gedichte*) in 1837. By then the prophetic or utopian tone of Jena and Heidelberg Romanticism appeared but a distant, almost otherworldly memory. Yet Gutzkow’s characteristic remark that “Eichendorff hat nur den Fehler, daß er zu spät kommt” (Eichendorff’s only mistake is that he comes too late”) fails to notice how persistently this very belatedness shapes the meditative structure of Eichendorff’s lyric oeuvre and, indeed, constitutes its dominant affect.³⁷ As the memories and promises of his student days and subsequent involvement “Anfall von Patriotismus”³⁸ (in “a patriotic fit”) with Lützow’s patriotic effort against Napoleon (1813–14) receded, Eichendorff’s lyrics condense history into a rich, albeit bewildering texture of affective states. A poem dating back to his participation in

Lützow's *Freikorps* (1814) attests to the phantasmagorical character of historical experience. Keeping watch, the lyric voice peers into the void, baffled by a landscape at once tantalizingly opaque and terminally uneventful:

Mein Gewehr im Arme steh ich
Hier verloren auf der Wacht,
Still nach jener Gegend seh ich,
Hab so oft dahin gedacht!

Fernher Abendglocken klingen
Durch die schöne Einsamkeit;
So, wenn wir zusammen gingen,
Hört ich's oft in alter Zeit.

Wolken da wie Türme prangen,
Als sah ich im Dunst mein Wien,
Und die Donau hell ergangen
Zwischen Burgen durch das Grün.

Doch wie fern sind Strom und Türme!
Wer da wohnt, denkt mein noch kaum,
Herbstlich rauschen schon die Stürme,
Und ich stehe wie im Traum.³⁹

[Weapon in arm, I stand
Lost here at the guard,
Quietly I gaze toward that region,
Where my thoughts have often tended!

Distant evening bells are sounding
Through the beautiful solitude;
Thus, when we jointly walked,
I often heard it in old times.

Clouds gleam like towers there,
As if through mists I beheld my Vienna,
And the Danube serenely wanders
Amongst castles through the green.

Yet how distant are the river and towers!
Whoever lives there scarcely thinks of me,
Autumnal storms already rustle,
And I am suspended as in a dream.]

Eagerly sought after by the subject's gaze, history always appears to have already occurred elsewhere. As the soldier's vigilance is becalmed by distant church bells and inscrutable cloud formations, history bypasses

the modern subject whose earnest watchfulness stands in ironic contrast to its quintessentially "lost" position. Above all, "Auf der Feldwacht" intimates the growing intuition that, rather than being constituted as a sequence of momentous events, history unfolds subterraneously, thus leaving the modern subject marooned in a purely imaginary zone where watchtowers and cloud formations seem fully interchangeable ("Wolken da wie Türme prangen").⁴⁰ Here, the similarity of the stony "watch tower" inhabited by the calcified representatives of the old *Herrschaft* ("Auf einer Burg") and the imaginary towering clouds brought into focus by the futile watchfulness of the young student turned anti-Napoleonic patriot works to richly ironic effect. Conceived as a missed and therefore "unclaimed experience," as Cathy Caruth's refers to it in her eponymous study on trauma, the enigma of history not only reaffirms the completed demise of feudal *Herrschaft*, but it also conceives of the ossified representatives of that order as equivalent to the alienated, hallucinatory condition of the modern subject: "Und ich stehe wie im Traum."⁴¹ Eichendorff's poem thus attests to a basic asymmetry between views of history as a subterranean, deep-structural transformation and an older, defunct model of history conceived as a series of conspicuous and heroic individual actions. Grouped among the subsection "Zeitlieder," Eichendorff's poem confirms a principal thesis of Hegel's aesthetics, namely, that contrary to epic poetry, "der lyrische Erguß steht zu der Zeit, als äußerem Elemente der Mitteilung, in einem viel näheren Verhältnis als das epische Erzählen, . . . [da] die Lyrik . . . die verschiedenartige zeitliche Bewegung selbst künstlerisch zu gestalten hat" (the lyric effusion stands in much greater proximity to *time* as an external frame for expression . . . because the lyric poet articulates the present).⁴² Far from constituting an ephemeral, wholly subjective state, emotion here is imbued with a strong *representative* tendency. As an inadvertent (perhaps serendipitous) reflex of historical forces extending toward and shaping the present, Eichendorff's post-Romantic lyricism quietly fuses the didactic and incidental objectives that until the end of the eighteenth century had still existed in separate forms (*Lehrdichtung*, *Gelegenheitsdichtung*, *Anakreontik*). In Eichendorff's self-consciously belated lyric productions, a central "feeling" or dominant, psycho-rhetorical *Stimmung* encrypts a deep-seated historical dissonance (*Verstimmung*). In so mediating feeling *qua* poetic writing, the seemingly incidental particulars of the here-and-now — such as Eichendorff's futile vigilance while on guard duty as a Lützow irregular, or the calcified knight sitting "eingeschlafen auf der Lauer" in the window of a medieval ruin (*Auf einer Burg*) — introduce their audience to a radically new conception of both, history *and* lyric poetry. It now turns out, that the lyric voice's belatedness vis-à-vis the present is neither accidental nor reversible. Rather, the belatedness of a feeling and, consequently, of its

embodiment in lyric form brings about a new kind of historical knowledge as a belated, often traumatic recognition whose acquisition is no longer convertible into remedial action.⁴³

Lyric poetry of the Restoration and *Biedermeier* era does not constitute an imaginary refuge for a middle class alienated by its apparent stagnation and political irrelevance; rather, literary practice turned out to be co-originary with these very frustrations. In its hermetic, quasi-monastic formal presentation, lyric poetry seems so appropriate to articulate a disillusionment that Eichendorff, along with his ambitious reform-bureaucrat and superior, Theodor von Schön, felt after watching the defeat of administrative reformers driven by Romantic and late-Enlightenment ideals (*Reformbeamtentum*) at the hands of Prussian career bureaucrats.

Zwischen Akten, dunkeln Wänden
Bannt mich, Freiheitbegehrenden,
Nun des Lebens strenge Pflicht,
Und aus Schränken, Aktenschichten
Lachen mir die beleidigten
Musen in das Amtsgesicht.

...
Als der letzte Balkentreter
Steh ich armer Enterbeter
In des Staates Symphonie,
Ach, in diesem Schwall von Tönen
Wo fänd ich da des eigenen
Herzens süße Melodie?

Ein Gedicht soll ich euch spenden:
Nun, so geht mit dem Leidenden
Nicht zu strenge ins Gericht!
Nehmt den Willen für Gewährung,
Kühnen Reim für Begeisterung,
Diesen Unsinn als Gedicht!⁴⁴

[Amongst ledgers, dark walls
I, longing for freedom, am now confined
By life's strict sense of duty.
And the muses, offended, mock my bureaucratic face
Out of every cabinet and heap of files.

...
As the last cog in the wheel
I, impecunious and disinherited
Have joined the symphony of the state
O! where in this deluge of sound

Would I find my own
Heart's sweet melody?

A poem I shall dedicate to you
Well then, do not deal too harshly
With the suffering bureaucrat!
Take resolve for achievement
Bold rhyme for enthusiasm
And this nonsense for a poem!]

Presaging Kafka's tormented protagonists, the claustrophobic space of the bureaucratic nation-state ("framing ledgers and dark walls") sets up the closing critique of the poem as a form whose political irrelevance aptly mirrors the speaking subject's political abjection. Such diffident, almost Stoic speech also counters the utopian longing of a wide array of political poetry written during the 1830s that would further intensify after 1840. Yet well beyond Eichendorff's model of an expressivity disillusioned with its cultural environment and hence with its limited formal possibilities, the next generation employed lyric poetry in a far more instrumental and overtly referential sense to indict a static and repressive political order. Among the first, Anastasius Grün (né Anton Alexander Graf von Auersperg, 1808–76) chose his pseudonym to express hopes for renewal in his widely read and acclaimed *Spaziergänge eines Wiener Poeten* (Strolls of a Viennese Poet, 1831). Often programmatically entitled ("Warum" and "Unsere Zeit"), Grün's alternately satiric and combative indictment of the Metternich regime eventually prompted the political police to establish his identity. The Austrian chancellor in 1838 offered him the choice of exile or cessation of all publishing efforts. Although Grün would choose the latter, he was able to establish for himself a significant political role in Austro-German politics, particularly after 1848. His promising career as a writer of lyric poetry, however, was cut short by Metternich's early intervention. Here, as in the more prominent cases of Georg Herwegh (1817–75), Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810–76), and Franz Dingelstedt (1814–81), the latter's pronouncement that "Herwegh hat eine Zukunft wenn es in Deutschland eine Revolution gibt, sonst nicht" (Herwegh has a future if Germany undergoes a revolution, otherwise not)⁴⁵ turned out to be prescient. For political poetry after 1840 ultimately hankers after a political utopia whose attainment would render poetry, political or otherwise, wholly redundant. Such a model of literature abandons the Kantian claim to art's universality (*Allgemeinheitsanspruch*) — qualified by its non-conceptual and strictly hypothetical necessity — in favor of a model that enlists literature as a quotidian tool of representative speech by a prototypical, liberal and enlightened individual.

Arguably the most controversial poet of his time, Georg Herwegh (1817–75) predicated his political poetry on the emotional pathos of

the *Freiheitslied* form that had risen to short-lived popularity during the 1813-15 patriotic insurgence against Napoleon. Yet in the absence of any external enemy, and with the political form of monarchy and rampant censorship and surveillance now the antagonist, Herwegh's strident calls for action lack any political framework or program. Rejecting Dingelstedt's argument that poetry must never be a matter of partisanship alone (*Der Dichter steht auf einer höhern Warte / Als auf den Zinnen der Partei*), Herwegh's poem, "Die Partei" (1843) seems uncompromising:

*Partei! Partei! Wer sollte sie nicht nehmen,
Die noch die Mutter aller Siege war!
Wie mag ein Dichter solch ein Wort verfehlen,
Ein Wort, das alles Herrliche gebahr?*

...
Sieh hin! dein Volk will neue Bahnen wandeln,
Nur des Signales hart ein stattlich Heer;
Die Fürsten träumen, laßt die Dichter handeln!
Spielt Saul die Harfe, werfen *wir* den Speer!
Den Panzer um — geöffnet sind die Schranken,
Brecht immer euer Saitenspiel entzwei,
Und führt ein Fähnlein ewiger Gedanken
Zur starken, stolzen Fahne der *Partei!*⁴⁶

[Party! Who would not take sides
With partisanship, the source of all victory
How can poets impugn such a word
A word that has given birth to all things glorious?

...
Behold! Your people wants to forge new paths
The splendid legion only awaits the signal
As the nobility dreams, let poets act!
While Saul plays the harp, let *us* wield the spear!
Gird the armor — the barriers have come down
Break the lyre
And merge a banner of eternal thoughts
With the strong, proud flag of the *Party!*]

Notwithstanding the poem's urgent rhetoric, Herwegh's politics remain oddly amorphous, buried beneath traditional allegorical and classical references and an ardent plea on behalf of divisive, adversarial politics whose concrete constitutional and civil-libertarian issues he is unable to integrate into the poetry. Not surprisingly, the conservative Friedrich Sengle dismisses Herwegh's poetry in particularly harsh terms: "Kein Wunder, daß Herwegh schon nach 1848 begraben wurde und die übrigen Lyriker,

die sich mit Politik abgegeben hatten, gleich mit ins Grab geworfen wurden" (small wonder that Herwegh was consigned to oblivion after 1848, and along with him the other lyric poets who had embraced partisan politics in their work).⁴⁷ Arguably, Herwegh's confrontational conduct as writer and politician, often blamed for a reinforcement of censorship practices following his *Einundzwanzig Bogen aus der Schweiz* (1843), constitutes a low-point in the cooptation of lyric poetry for strictly political ends. As early as 1839, Theodor Vischer remarks on an enforced "political correctness" beginning to compromise the imaginative range of poetic writing:

Man rief [den Dichter] an: halt! nicht so schnell! du mußt dich erst ausweisen, ob du auch die Fragen der Gegenwart, die großen speciellen Probleme in dein Gedicht aufgenommen hast. . . . und man übersah, daß es sich nicht darum handelt *ob* der Dichter die Zeitfragen, sondern *wie*, ob er sie auf poetische Weise in sein Werk aufgenommen, ob er sie in ästhetischen Körper gewandelt hat.⁴⁸

[Poets were stopped in their tracks: "hold it; not so fast! You must first offer proof that you have incorporated into your poetry the questions of the present, its great and particular issues. . . . Yet in so doing, the most pivotal matter was being overlooked: namely, that it is not a question of *whether* but *how* the poet incorporates these issues into his oeuvre, and whether he has transfigured them into an aesthetic object.]

Heine's comments about Freiligrath — "Er gebraucht Hammer und Meißel und verarbeitet die Sprache wie einen Stein . . . Alles kann er machen, nur kein Lied" (he takes hammer and chisel to language as though it was a piece of rock. . . . He can make anything — except a poem) — would find their most witty and extensive articulation in *Atta Troll*.⁴⁹ They strike the mark far better for Herwegh. Generally critical of the co-optation of lyric forms for political ends, Heine's critique of Herwegh ("die eiserne Lerche" [the iron lark]) and his radical cohorts often assumes viciously satiric and mocking character, as can be seen in his "An einen politischen Dichter," occasioned by the 1841 publication of *Unpolitische Lieder* by Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798-1874):

Du singst, wie einst Tyrtäus sang,
Von Heldenmut beselet,
Doch hast du schlecht dein Publikum
Und deine Zeit gewählet.

Beifällig horchen sie dir zwar,
Und loben, schier begeistert:
Wie edel dein Gedankenflug,
Wie du die Form bemeistert.

Sie pflegen auch beim Glase Wein
 Ein Vivat dir zu bringen
 Und manchen Schlachtgesang von dir
 Lautbrüllend nachzusingen.

Der Knecht singt gern ein Freiheitslied
 Des Abends in der Schenke:
 Das fördert die Verdauungskraft,
 Und würzet die Getränke.⁵⁰

[You sing as formerly Tyrtäus had
 Intoxicated by heroic spirits;
 Yet you have chosen poorly
 Both your audience and your times.

Though they listen approvingly
 And seemingly praise
 How noble you marshal your thoughts
 And command the form.

Also, they enjoy toasting you
 With a glass of wine
 And to recite, hoarse-roaring
 Various battle-songs of yours.

The servant gladly recites a song of liberty
 At night in his pub
 For doing so enhances his digestive tract
 And spices up his drink.]

As Nietzsche would later observe, reading Heine means following an invitation into the countless alleys and byways of *ressentiment*, and Heine's writings do indeed lay bare poetry's deeply antagonistic intellectual coordinates in an era of political repression (under Metternich after 1819) and one of bourgeois dissipation and insincerity (under Louis Philippe after 1830).⁵¹ The prime casualty is that of emotive authenticity. To stress that fact, Heine's poetry often incorporates the numbing inanity, judgmental arrogance, and brazen self-interest that informs the world of colloquial speech and printed discourse. And yet, once woven as subtly into the texture of Heine's lyric-satiric mode, such "Betrügen, Lüge, Schein" (deceit, lies, and semblance) cannot be isolated as the simple antithesis to an otherwise intact and authentic bourgeois subjectivity. Rather, Heine's "göttliche Bosheit" (divine malice), to recall Nietzsche's laudatory expression, generates a strange beauty all its own, a peculiarly urbane type of pleasure rooted in the bourgeois subject's tacit acquiescence in all things corrupt, deracinated, mendacious, or otherwise inauthentic. Of all the German nineteenth-century poets, many of whom stress their

regional rather than national, let alone cosmopolitan moorings (Kerner, Droste-Hülshoff, Mörike, Lenau, Storm), the Jewish-born Heine is the most obviously European figure. Self-described as "der inkarnierte Kosmopolitismus" (cosmopolitanism incarnate), Heine can indeed be read as the most significant transitional poet between Goethe's emotionally and philosophically capacious poetry and Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*, the ur-text of high Modernism published in the year after Heine's death.⁵² The point emerges with full force in the very first line of the following short poem:

In den Küssen welche Lüge!
 Welche Wonne in dem Schein!
 Ach, wie süß ist das Betrügen,
 Süßer das Betrogensein!

Liebchen, wie du dich auch wehrest,
 Weiß ich doch, was du erlaubst;
 Glauben will ich, was du schwörest,
 Schwören will ich, was du glaubst.⁵³

[Ah, what lies are told by kisses!
 Bliss in false illusions, child!
 Sweet are beguiling artifices;
 Sweeter yet, to be beguiled!

Your resistance I perceive, dear,
 Yet I know what you'll allow.
 I shall avow whatever you'll believe, dear,
 I shall believe whatever you'll avow.]

Besides startling us with its harsh affective dissonance, the opening line also produces a textual *déjà vu* effect of sorts, in that it offers a parodic citation of the opening line from Goethe's "Willkommen und Abschied" ("In Deinen Küssen, welche Wonne"). From here on, all the way to the closing lines' chiasmic precision, this short incidental poem at once asserts and formally exemplifies the homology of affect and illusion, interiority and self-manipulation, sentimentality and *ressentiment* in Heine: "Believe I shall, whatever you'll swear, / Swear I shall whatever you'll believe." At its most extreme, Heine's style offers a deliberately grotesque amalgam of melodrama, sentimentality, and brazenly satiric indictment — designed, it seems, to sow confusion within an oppressively settled cultural landscape. Time and again, it confounds the declarative with the figural, the referential with the performative, and the vivid illustration of facts with the mocking recitation of sentiment.⁵⁴ To write and read literature after Goethe often induces in its subjects a vertiginous state of self-consciousness, not only because of the aristocratic,

larger-than-life presence so scrupulously cultivated by the *Dichterstürst* himself, but because the epigone's ironic self-awareness is beyond stabilization. Gone is Goethe's unbridled, exuberant, and supremely self-assured dramatization of *eros*, as well as its underlying faith in the text's ability to reclaim the "source" of its inspiration. There is nothing gratuitous about contrasting the post-lapsarian and nervously self-conscious melancholy of the writer's persona in Heine with the statuesque charisma of Goethe's voice in his *Sesenheimer Lieder* (1771) or his hexametric expansiveness in *Römische Elegien* (1788). What makes Heine such a complex and intriguing transitional figure between Romanticism and Realism are characteristics that also link him to a Modernist aesthetic whose incipience can also, albeit in different form, be traced in the lyrics of Eichendorff, Mörike, Droste-Hülshoff, and C. F. Meyer. For Heine, the writer's identity is intrinsically hybrid. Half creator, half journalist, his lyric voices continually look back over their shoulder toward the aesthetic monuments of Germany's recent past, at once overwhelming and unhelpful and hence leaving no choice but to undo the untimely and oppressively "geläufige Zeichen der codierten lyrischen Rede der Romantik" (familiar inventory of Romanticism's lyric code).⁵⁵ Precisely this abrupt flourish of *ressentiment*, often found in epigrammatic form in the closing couplet of Heine's lyrics (including the one just quoted), is also a prompt to the reader to re-read and -evaluate the entire poem again and to gain distance on the delusive, at times narcissistic set of Romantic longings and identifications that he / she likely brought to a first reading of it. It is the dialectical nature of Heine's writing that such a revisionary reading can neither be avoided nor anticipated during a first "tour." For at first, Heine's dream-like images seduce readers into identifying with the melancholic surfaces of his idiom. Only as the reading process advances or, more likely, during a second reading, does the reader begin to grasp the language of *Empfindsamkeit* as one of stylistic artifice and, by extension, confronts the embarrassment of his or her earlier identification with that idiom. It is this confounding of affective dispositions previously held fundamental and inalienable for all beings — the ideological fantasy of a humanity untrammled by divisions of class, education, religion, language — which Heine's lyrics fleetingly conjure and then dismantle. Yet to do so not only throws into disarray an empathetic mode of reading but, by extension, also the aesthetic foundations of these historically specific (Romantic) reading practices. Wolfgang Preisendanz rightly points out that the challenge issued by Heine's oeuvre involves less a formal accounting for his fracturing of lyric pathos by ironic means. For the more fundamental and pressing question concerns "how it is possible to speak of such an aesthetic borderline phenomena where the claims of aesthetics — as a philosophical and scientific theory of art and the beautiful — has already been shaken or proven irrelevant,

along with its self-image as a historical phenomenon." The truly "agonizing" issue concerns the "historicity of aesthetics and its specific kind of competency."⁵⁶ Throughout Heine's poetic oeuvre, feeling no longer constitutes an unimpeachable origin or source for an expressive model of writing but a spurious imposition and fraud perpetrated simultaneously at the level of psychology and ideology. Heine perceives (and exposes) such delusive dream worlds to be intimately entwined with a Romantic paradigm of literature as authentic and deeply meaningful transposition of affect from the personal into the social realm. In recasting the lyric, as Georg Lukács put it, as "eine besondere Form . . . in der die Widersprüche sich lebendig bewegen können" (a particular form in which contradictions may unfold dynamically), Heine exposes not only the genre's "erdichteten und erlogenen Harmonie" (fictitious and false harmony) but, on a larger scale, the deep-seated and unwholesome complicity between formal and social values which, to him, was the very hallmark of Romantic aesthetics.⁵⁷ In this manner, Heine's poetry shows the historical categories of literature and aesthetics growing acutely distrustful of themselves and on the verge of suspecting their own, intrinsic otherness. Through its deliberate formal *mésalliance* with the journalistic feuilleton, poetry in his view had begun to reveal its ideological "impurity."

The Idyll Transformed: Lyric Poetry and Modernity in the Age of Realism and Naturalism

Following the failed 1848 revolution, lyric poetry in Germany evolved in somewhat disparate ways. On the one hand, a number of writers seemed unable to continue work in the genre at all. Their poetic efforts thus abandon the shorter form of the lyric in favor of the ballad or other narrative verse forms of usually explicit historical content. Never entirely comfortable with lyric poetry, a genre he abandoned by 1847, Theodor Fontane wrote extensive historical verse narratives, mostly drawn from Prussian, British and Scottish history, to which his occupation as a Prussian press attaché in London (1852, 1855–59) had further exposed him. With its ideological spectrum ranging from Marx to Burckhardt, Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, Ranke, and Treitschke, historicism had engendered a new empirical methodology. Beyond that — as demonstrated in ballad collection such as Fontane's *Männer und Helden* (Man and Heroes, 1850), historical verse narratives by the Swiss writer C. F. Meyer (1825–98) and the lesser, though immensely popular oeuvre of Felix Dahn — the historicist movement, combined with the lasting European resonance of Sir Walter

Scott's historical novels after 1814, was also effecting a new amalgamation of poetry and history.⁵⁸ The aesthetically more successful instances of historical verse, such as C. F. Meyer's epic poem, *Huttens Letzte Tage* (Hutten's Last Days, 1871), describing the end in 1523 of Ulrich von Hutten, German humanist and supporter of the Reformation, rarely abide within a strictly empirical frame of reference; thus Meyer's poem derives much of its force from the *genius loci* of the island of Ufenau on Lake Constance, where the historical figure of Jakob Hutten had spent his final days in 1523 and where Meyer was to find inspiration for many of his own works some 350 years later. A fine example of the shorter lyric in the age of *Realismus*, Meyer's "Hohe Station" (Summit Station) shows how, rather than holding the lyric imagination to strictly empirical and inherently prosaic limits, the currents of contemporary history and the psyche of the educated middle-class individual at the margins of central European bourgeois society both reveal an otherworldly hue:

Hoch an der Windung des Passes bewohn ich ein niedriges Berghaus —
Heut ist vorüber die Post, heut bin ich oben allein.

Lehnend am Fenster belausch ich die Stille des dämmernden Abends,
Rings kein Laut! Nur der Specht hämmert im harzigen Tann!

Leicht aus dem Wald in den Wald hüpf't über die Matte das Eichhorn,
Spielend auf offenem Plan; denn es ist Herr im Bezirk.

Jammer! Was hör ich? Ein schrilles Gesurre: "Gemordet ist Garfield!"
"Bismarck zürnt im Gezelt!" "Väterlich segnet der Papst!"

Schwirrt in der Luft ein Gerücht? Was gewahr ich? Ein schwärzliches
Glöcklein!

Unter dem Fenstergesims bebt der elektrische Draht,
Der, wie die Schläge des Pulses beseelend den Körper der Menschheit,
Durch das entlegenste Tal trägt die Gebärde der Zeit.⁵⁹

[High up at the winding mountain pass I dwell in a low-set chalet —
The mail has come and gone, and in solitude I find myself today.
Leaning on the windowsill I eavesdrop on the silence at dusk.
No sound anywhere except for the woodpecker hammering in the thicket
With sprightly motion, out of the forest and back across the moss, leaps
the squirrel

Playing in the open, for it rules this demesne.

O grief! What shrill sounds reach my ear? "Garfield murdered!"
"Bismarck wrathful at his encampment!" "Papal blessing graciously
bestowed!"

Does the air run wild with rumor? What do I behold? A blackened tiny
bell!

Under my windowsill the electric wire trembles
As it carries, like the pulsations animating humanity's body,
The temper of history through the remotest of valleys.]

The disruption of a self-contained literary idyll by the static of history — faintly but insistently audible as it pulsates through telegraph wires — reproduces the aesthetic program of *Realismus* as a single, concise topos. Thus, it is with an unmistakable tone of satisfaction that Maximilian Bern's preface to his influential 1877 anthology, *Deutsche Lyrik seit Goethes Tode* notes "daß alle Errungenschaften der letzten Jahre auch an der Poesie nicht spurlos vorübergegangen sind. Manchem schönen Gedichte merkt man es an, daß es zu einer Zeit entstanden, in welcher der Dichter am Waldrande außer dem uralten Geflüster der Bäume auch das geheimnißvolle Klingen windbewegter Telegraphendrähte vernimmt" (. . . that all attainments of recent years have left their traces in poetry too. In many beautiful lyrics we sense that they originated in a time when, aside from the ancient rustling of trees, poets at the edge of the forest would also pick up on the furtive tinkle of telegraph wires swaying in the breeze).⁶⁰ And yet, in his focused and inquisitive auditory "belauschen" (scanning) of the silent mountain world, the speaker of Meyer's lyric poem betrays the dialectical bond between the Romantic *locus amoenus* and the hectic, inchoate, and often brutal convulsions of the historical world below. For what disrupts this idyll is the specter of an unintelligible history against which the idyll in the mountains sought to defend its authorial (and reading) subject. Cumulatively, the references to a political assassination in the United States, a papal blessing sought by worldly power (an apparent reference to Spanish king, Alfonso XII, soliciting such benediction by telegraphic communication with the Vatican in January 1875), and Bismarck's latest outbursts do not so much anchor (and hence justify) lyric writing within real material processes. Rather, the stenographic, coded refraction of historical processes serendipitously captured during its telegraphic transmission reinforces history's cryptic and inchoate nature and, in so doing, highlights the disorientation of the educated, middle-class individual caught up in that world.

Where the lyric resists notions of "political correctness" often harshly enforced by left-Hegelians, such as Arnold Ruge and Theodor Echtermeyer in their *Hallesche Jahrbücher* (1838-41), it startles its audience — both before and after 1848 — with its proto-Modernist, symbolist tendencies, even where it engages ostensibly "real-historical" subjects. With its incipient Modernism, Meyer's lyric oeuvre jettisons an older quasi-confessional model of "feeling" in favor of one grounded in an objective, constructivist aesthetics. Doing so, however, also exposed Meyer to the charge of mannerism, "excessive" craftsmanship. Keller's oft-quoted critical view of Meyer — "er hat ein merkwürdiges schönes Talent, aber keine rechte Seele; denn er ziselirt und feilt schon vor dem Gusse" (his is a talent of enigmatic beauty, yet he does not have soul, for he fine-tunes and files away even before pouring the cast) — was even more emphatically echoed by its epistolary addressee, Theodor Storm. Neither Keller nor Storm, who had ever held fast to the confessional and expressivist

paradigm of *Gefühl* as the only legitimate ground for lyric writing, can quite fathom that “feeling” has become a simulacrum, the effect (rather than cause) of meticulously crafted lyric utterances.

There is no doubt that our receptivity to high-Modernist features stirring to life within certain strains of nineteenth-century poetry has been significantly shaped by the formalist agendas of high Modernism. One only need to think of the both poetic and critical impact of Gertrude Stein or T. S. Eliot on poetry in English, or that of Rilke in Germany, idioms subsequently developed further in the expressionist “Wortkunst” (verbal art) of Georg Heym, Richard Dehmel, Georg Trakl, and the Stefan George circle, as well as in new critical directions charted by Herwarth Walden, Karl Kraus, and Friedrich Gundolf, though these writers fall outside the period under consideration here.⁶¹ The at times emphatic de-contextualizing view of the lyric poem advocated by symbolist and expressionist writers can also be seen as anticipating the eventual rise of the politically neutralized interpretive model of New Critical exegesis. As a result of the latter’s once powerful, now much weakened role in the contemporary academy, the broadly discursive and at times prolix balladic and other narrative poetry (*Verserzählungen*) of Theodor Fontane, C. F. Meyer, or Gottfried Keller today commands far less attention than the oeuvre of Mörike, Eichendorff, or Droste-Hülshoff, which in often startling ways presages the compact, post-confessional expressiveness of the lyric in Rilke, Trakl, and George. Lest the Realist and Naturalist developments of lyric poetry after 1848 be dismissed as a temporary (and putatively naïve) aberration, it ought to be stressed that even here — particularly in the work of C. F. Meyer (in “*Schwarzschattende Kastanie*” [black-shadowing chestnut tree]) — strong “modernist” features are already in evidence. Therefore, any static juxtaposition of a “real” (because narrative) poetry first championed by Vischer — and subsequently reinforced in the naturalist *Großstadtlyrik* of Holz, Bleibtreu, and Hartleben — with the ostensibly esoteric poetics of high Modernism will prove misleading. It is rather the case that a tendency toward what Hugo Friedrich termed the “Entgegenständlichung” (dematerialization) of the empirical and historical world, as well as Friedrich’s notion of the “Entpersönlichung” (“de-personalization”) of Romantic interiority unfolding concurrently, constitutes a steadily intensifying *Leitmotif* of the entire nineteenth-century lyric.

A few short examples may help illustrate the extent to which lyric poetry, almost before the onset of the *Realismus* period actually presages, perhaps even more acutely than contemporary prose fiction, the symbolist aesthetics of “*Verfremdung*” (“ostranenie”) that the Russian formalists were to develop into a full-fledged theory of literature two generations later.⁶² A late poem by Eichendorff, written in 1843 and entitled “*Nachts in Danzig*” (Nights in Danzig, 1842) shows the lyric’s capacity for

exposing the specious, phantasmagorical coherence of the empirical world and, in further consequence, the dystopic psyche bound up with that world.⁶³ Eichendorff, who was to die in the same year, 1857, that was to see the publication of literary Modernism’s ur-text, Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du Mal*, subtly throws into relief the phantasmagoric status of the bourgeois individual, politically abject, entangled in a web of irresolvable antagonisms of social mobility checked, notions of faith palpably out of sync with industrial and scientific modernization, and liberal-political hopes dashed by Frederick William’s 1840 ascent to the Prussian throne. Though formally remote from Heine’s viciously satiric political exposé of Germany’s repressive and superannuated political and cultural landscape in *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen*, Eichendorff’s lyric proves its contemporaneity with his far more notorious fellow poet. Its opening quatrains suspend life in pre-1848 Germany between the seductive, albeit apparitional quality of a fairy-tale world and a vision of wholly denatured life, an ominous cityscape whose material architectural features emerge only in proto-Cubist bits and pieces from the ideological haze that had settled over the Prussia of Frederick Wilhelm IV. and over Germany in general. Between the disjointed shapes of darkened gables and Gothic windows (*hohe Fenster*) pale statues loiter. Are we to read them as literal statues or as lethargic *Bürger*, the politically “undead” representatives of a developmentally stunted society?

Dunkle Giebel, hohe Fenster,
Türme tief aus Nebeln sehn,
Bleiche Statuen wie Gespenster
Lautlos an den Türen stehen.

Träumerisch der Mond drauf scheint,
Dem die Stadt gar wohl gefällt,
Als läg’ zauberhaft versteinet
Drunten eine Märchenwelt.⁶⁴

[Dark Gables, arch windows,
Towers protruding from deep fog,
Pale statues, ghostlike
Standing silently in doorways.

Dreamily the moon shines down,
Well pleased with the townscape
As if, magically transmuted into stone,
There lies below an enchanted world.]

Given the poem’s ominous, apparitional and fragmented opening, its second stanza cannot be read as a straightforward transfiguration or idealization. For the closing subjunctive construction — strikingly reminiscent

of the one that suffuses Eichendorff's famous poem "Mondnacht" with an aura of mourning — the moon's gaze on sublunar "Danzig in 1842" suspends referential and symbolic readings of the lyric alike. Thus the closing image neither indexes an empirical, living and breathing city, nor does it symbolize a visionary idyll. Instead, the pale moonlight and the baroque emblem of the stone (*versteinet*) recast urban space as a scene where social ideals and political progress stymied by the course of pre-1848 history are being mourned;⁶⁵ any more naïve reading of the "fairytale" world of the city is contravened by Eichendorff's shrewd use of the subjunctive (*als läge*). A similarly phantasmagoric diction — again prescient of a Modernist aesthetic — also prevails in many of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff's later poems, such as "Neujahrnacht" (New Year's Eve, 1841-42):

Im grauen Schneegestöber blassen
Die Formen, es zerfließt der Raum,
Laternen schwimmen durch die Gassen,
Und leise knistert es im Flaum;
Schon naht des Jahres letzte Stunde,
Und drüben, wo der matte Schein
Haucht aus den Fenstern der Rotunde,
Dort ziehn die frommen Beter ein.
...
Ich sehe unter meinem Fenster
Sie gleiten durch den Nebelrauch,
Verhüllt und lautlos wie Gespenster,
Vor ihrer Lippe flirrt der Hauch;
Ein blasser Kreis zu ihren Füßen
Zieht über den verschneiten Grund . . .⁶⁶

[In gray flurries of snow forms
Grow pale, space dissolves,
Lanterns afloat in alleyways,
The feathery white softly crunching;
Already the year's final hour arrives,
And yonder, where dull light
Streams from the rotunda's windows,
Pious pilgrims make their entrance.

...
Below my window they pass
Gliding through smoky mists
Robed and inaudible as ghosts,
Exhalations flitting from their lips;
A faded halo surrounding their feet
Motions across the snow-covered earth.]

The modernity of such writing is rooted in Droste-Hülshoff's ability to unfold a seemingly realist scenario by connecting its imagistic components into a complex texture where the referential, the emblematic (*Bildchiffren*) and the emotive dimension of images are kept in careful balance. The opening proto-impressionist image of forms dissolving into snow thus betokens, like tropes of the desert (in "Am achten Sonntag nach Pfingsten" [On the Eighth Sunday After Pentecost], written 1839, published 1851) or of her native heath-landscape near Münster (in *Heidebilder*), a state of spiritual disorientation, even abjection. Her slightly later poem "Durchwachte Nacht" (Sleepless Night, 1845:) sharpens the dematerialization of the empirical world and, in consequence, the dissolving of clear boundaries between a reflexive consciousness and a self suspended in a meditative idiom that delicately balances textures of sensation against those of emotion:

O wunderliches Schlummerwachen, bist
Der zartren Nerve Fluch du oder Segen? —
's ist eine Nacht vom Taue wach geküßt,
Das Dunkel fühl ich kühl wie feinen Regen
An meine Wange gleiten, das Gerüst
Des Vorhangs scheint sich schaukelnd zu bewegen,
Und dort das Wappen an der Decke Gips
Schwimmt sachte mit dem Schlangeln des Polyps.

...
Und drunten das Gewölke rollt und klimmt;
Gleich einer Lampe aus dem Hünenmale
Hervor des Mondes Silbergondel schwimmt,
Verzitternd auf der Gasse blauem Stahle,
An jedem Fliederblatt ein Fünkchen glimmt,
Und hell gezeichnet von dem blassen Strahle
Legt auf mein Lager sich des Fensters Bild,
Vom schwanken Laubgewimmel überhüllt.⁶⁷

[O strange somnambulism, do you spell
Blight or blessing for the delicate soul? —
'tis a night awakened by the kiss of dews,
Like rainy spray I feel the dark
Sliding along my cheeks; the fastenings
Of the curtain seems in swaying motion
On the stucco ceiling armorial ensigns
Gently glide swim with the kraken's mazy motion.

...
And below the cloudy mass seethes and rises;
Like a lamp issuing from pagan monument

The moon's silvery gondola swims into sight,
 Trembling away in the steel-blue alley
 On every elderleaf a sparkle glimmers,
 And brightly drawn by the pale ray of light
 The window's image reposes on my bed
 Encased by a swaying confusion of leaves.]

If Droste-Hülshoff, like Eichendorff, was committed to a renewal of Catholicism in a predominantly secular age, such a seemingly conservative project gradually came to shape a poetics far more advanced than that of her politically "progressive" contemporaries (Freiligrath, Herwegh, Dingelstedt) or post-1848 realists such as Keller and Fontane. Drawing on her native province of Westphalia, now under Prussian administration, Droste-Hülshoff often integrated into her poems images, regional expressions, as well as cultural and religious practices characteristic of that region; as for the Lake Poets in England, the autochthonous is mobilized as a place uncorrupted by the capitalist and administrative abstractions of the modern nation and its anonymous subjects. Yet beyond that, the hallucinatory power of her images above (and more can be found in "Spiegelbild," "Doppelgänger," "Hünenstein," "Die Mergelgrube") makes it clear that a Catholic renewal *qua* poetry does not entail some simplistic fusion of religious dogma and aesthetics. Rather, it involves staging a defining confrontation of the self with a mystical, boundless region — a moment where, in ways later unfolded by Martin Buber — the self experiences and embraces its own otherness: "Wo eine Rechte . . . das Herz vom eignen Herzen nimmt, / Um freudig an das fremde es zu legen" (Where the right . . . takes the heart away from its own / So as joyfully to lay it alongside a foreign one).⁶⁸ Such a confrontation can only be imagined in a language committed to breaking down the reification and empirical distinctness of self and world that had been a premise shared by the political poets of the *Vormärz* era and by some realists after 1848 (Hebbel, Keller, Fontane, Dahn). As in Eichendorff, her image of the moon's "silver gondola swimming / And trembling away on the steel-blue alleyway" notably anticipates Trakl's spectral and faintly animated urban spaces.⁶⁹

German lyric poetry between 1830 and 1890 exhibits a sustained, if diversely articulated struggle with the "Entgrenzung des Ichs" (delimitation of the self) that unfolds in the experience of emotion. Whereas Hegelians like Hebbel and Vischer, at times more emphatically than their philosophical progenitor, insist on the mastery of contingent emotions by thought and clearly delimited and decodable referential language, the more experimental writers of the period (Eichendorff, Heine, Mörike, Droste-Hülshoff, and at times C. F. Meyer) do not posit emotion as something to be remedied by reflexive consciousness. Rather, emotion is to be captured and developed in a proto-Modernist, constructivist aesthetic in

which the lyric image functions as the central and most powerful echo of mystic experiences constantly threatened with extinction by the capitalist and spiritual bureaucracies that consolidated and entrenched themselves from the *Vormärz* era on into the *Gründerzeit* of Wilhelm II. Such vestigial and often disparaged mystic experience involves a voice staging the confrontation between a stable bourgeois self and its own, intrinsic otherness (contingent feelings, perceptions, phantasmagoric shifts of mood and proto-Freudian irruptions of the unconscious). Such a confrontation can only be mediated in a language open to the volatile and continually shifting boundaries between referential, symbolic, and outright irrational linguistic meanings. For that reason writers of such dissimilar character as Eichendorff, Heine, Mörike, Droste-Hülshoff, and Meyer ultimately agree on the need to jettison — be it by satiric or other means — the late-Romantic cliché of a confessional or sentimentalized emotionalism that prevails in epigones like Rückert, Lenau, Kerner, and Geibel. Because the latter remain largely content with a conventional model of affect, one grounded in a socially and culturally normative and largely fixed model of masculine, middle-class, and decorously melancholic subjectivity, they also, however inadvertently, precipitated a crisis of legitimacy in Romantic poetry. The most powerful lyric writers of the mid and late nineteenth century respond to that crisis by groping, in imagery and aesthetic theory, toward a conception of literariness whose lyric and critical articulation would only reach its point of culmination after 1890.

Notes

¹ Review of Eduard Mörike's poems, first published in *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*, vol. 2, no. 14–17, column 108–36 (1839). Reprinted in *Eduard Mörike: Wege der Forschung*, ed. Victor G. Doerksen (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1975), 5–6.

² Friedrich Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1972), vol. 2, 467–71.

³ Heinrich Heine, *Briefe*, ed. Friedrich Hirth (Mainz: Florian Kupferberg, 1950), vol. 1, 329.

⁴ Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über Aesthetik*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Markus Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1993), vol. 3, 416. *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 1111.

⁵ *Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, in Hegel, *Theorie Werkausgabe* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), vol. 3, 247.

⁶ *Enzyklopädie* 3, 249.

⁷ Theodor Storm, *Storms Werke*, ed. Theodor Böhme (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, n.d.), vol. 1, 217. See also Storm's assertion that "jeder Ausdruck muß seine Wurzel im Gefühl oder der Phantasie des Dichters haben. Beispiel des Gegenteils:

Geibel." Quoted in Ludwig Völker, "Bürgerlicher Realismus," in *Geschichte der deutschen Lyrik*, ed. Walter Hinderer (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 354. (Every expression must be rooted in a feeling or in the poet's imagination. For a contrary example, see Geibel). The Naturalist writer Arno Holz was the first of many to comment on Geibel's apparent and complete lack of development as a poet. "Eine totale Null in der Entwicklung" (A complete zero as regards artistic development), *ibid.* 355.

⁸ For Storm's views on the relation between lyric form and political debate, see his short poem, "Antwort," which declines to comment on Prussia's successful retaking of his native province of Schleswig-Holstein, a development that for professional and emotive purposes proved very welcome to him: "Nun ist geworden, was du wolltest; / Warum denn schweigest du jetzt? / — Berichten mag es die Geschichte; / Doch keines Dichters froher Mund." *Storms Werke*, vol. 1, 189. (English translation: Now has come to pass what you wanted; / Why then do you now keep silent? / — History may report on it; a poet's serene voice cannot.)

⁹ Friedrich Hebbel, *Tagebücher*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Richard Maria Werner (Berlin: Behr, 1905), part II, vol. 2, 58.

¹⁰ Theodor Vischer, "Gedichte von Eduard Mörike," in *Eduard Mörike*, 3.

¹¹ Eduard Mörike, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Helmut Koopmann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), vol. 1, 665. *Friedrich Hölderlin, Eduard Mörike: Selected Poems*, trans. and ed. Christopher Middleton (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1972), 131.

¹² Kenneth Calhoun, "Reading and the Art of Leisure in Mörike's 'Wald-Idylle'." *MLN* 116 (2001): 536–50; quote from 543.

¹³ Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 1111; German: *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, vol. 3, 416.

¹⁴ Mörike, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1, 743. *Friedrich Hölderlin, Eduard Mörike: Selected Poems*, trans. and ed. Christopher Middleton (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1972), 143.

¹⁵ Theodor Adorno, "Rede über Lyrik und Gesellschaft" in *Noten zur Literatur*, vol. 11 in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), 61, 62, 63. English translation from *Notes to Literature*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia UP, 1991), vol. 1, 49.

¹⁶ Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 1111–12; German: *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, vol. 3, 417.

¹⁷ See Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics," in *Language and Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1987).

¹⁸ J. G. Herder, *Werke*, ed. B. Suphan (Berlin: Weidmann, 1977–1913), vol. 27, 171.

¹⁹ Friedrich Hebbel, *Tagebücher*, part II, vol. 1, 26, 38.

²⁰ Hebbel, *Tagebücher*, vol. 1, 144.

²¹ Hebbel, *Werke*, Part I, vol. 6, 287; 290.

²² On the concept of emotion, see Martha Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2000), 19–88; Rei Terada, *Feeling in Theory: Emotion after the Death of the Subject* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2001); Philip Fisher, *The Vehement Passions* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001).

See also my *Romantic Moods: Paranoia, Trauma, and Melancholy, 1780–1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, forthcoming). For a superb introduction on the concept of *Stimmung*, see David Welbery, "Stimmung," in *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe*, ed. Barck, Fontius, Schlenstedt, Steinwachs, Wolfzettel (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003), vol. 5, 703–33.

²³ It bears remembering that the first edition of Hegel's *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik oder Philosophie der Kunst* appeared in H. G. Hotho's 1835 edition of the philosopher's works. A second, improved edition was to follow in 1842.

²⁴ Justinus Kerner, *Kerners Werke*, part I (Berlin: Deutsches Verlagshaus, n.d.), 191.

²⁵ Nikolaus Lenau, *Werke und Briefe*, ed. Antal Mádl (Vienna: Deuticke, Klett-Cotta, 1995), vol. 2, 139.

²⁶ Friedrich Rückert, *Poetische Werke*, 12 vols. (Frankfurt: Sauerländer, 1868), vol. 1, 371.

²⁷ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. and ed. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1999), 205, 211, 206. See also Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of The Miniature, The Gigantic, The Souvenir, The Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1993).

²⁸ *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 6: I, 447. See also one of his posthumous poems: "Der Sangesvogel, der ist todt, / Du wirst ihn nicht erwecken! / Du kannst Dir ruhig in den Steiß / Die golden Feder stecken."

²⁹ Heine, *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 3, 425.

³⁰ Martin Greiner, *Zwischen Biedermeier und Bourgeoisie: Ein Kapitel deutscher Literaturgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), 79–80; see also Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit*, vol. 1, 93–98.

³¹ Karl Immermann, *Werke* (Leipzig and Vienna: Bibliographisches Institut, n.d.), vol. 3, 136 and vol. 5, 290.

³² Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866) is an extreme example, as he wrote more than 10,000 poems over nearly six decades.

³³ Christoph Herin, "Biedermeier" in *Geschichte der deutschen Lyrik*, ed. Walter Hinderer (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 283.

³⁴ See Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit*, vol. 2, 549–625, and Christoph Herin, "Biedermeier," 287–90.

³⁵ Following his first collection of poems, *Gedichte* (1840), Franz Emanuel Geibel received a life-long pension of 300 Taler from Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia, followed by an even more lucrative appointment as honorary chair of German literature and poetics at Munich under Maximilian II. Following the Austro-Prussian conflict, the ardent nationalist Geibel relinquished the position in favor of a permanent sinecure of 1000 Taler by Wilhelm I. in 1868. On Geibel, see Walter Hinck, "Epigonendichtung und Nationalidee" in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 85, 267–84 and Jürgen Link and Wulf Wülfing, eds. *Nationale Mythen und Stereotypen in der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1989). For a recent reevaluation of Rückert's oeuvre, see Max-Rainer Uhrig, ed., *Gestörte Idylle* (Würzburg: Ergon, 1995).

³⁶ Adorno, "Rede über Lyrik und Gesellschaft," in *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 11, 52 and 60. English translation by Shierry Weber Nicholsen in Adorno, *Notes to Literature*, vol. 1, 39 and 46.

³⁷ Gutzkow, *Schriften*, vol. 2, 867. Echoing Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, where the poet's punctual birth at the stroke of noon under a "genial planetary constellation" is recorded at the opening of chapter 1, Eichendorff recounts how "an event of great importance for me, namely, my birth" was elaborately orchestrated to take place precisely at midnight. A band is assembled in the freezing courtyard, fireworks have been prepared, and the midwife is to wave a white cloth at the appointed moment. Yet by a series of minute deviations and errors the ritual comes off "a minute and a half too late" and the ideal "constellation [of stars] had been missed" (*HKA*, 40). The baroque fascination with the constellation of the planets during the moment of one's birth serves here to highlight the protagonist's fall into a thoroughly historical world. No amount of feudal privilege and planning can restore the subject of modernity to the imaginary (maternal) shelter of a purely metaphysical order.

³⁸ Letter to Veit, *Briefe*, 14.

³⁹ Joseph von Eichendorff, *Werke*, ed. Ansgar Hillach (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1996), vol. 1, 163–64.

⁴⁰ See Eichendorff's letter to Otto H. von Loeben (4 August 1814), in which he remarks on the frustration of his military career. Having, in effect, "missed" the momentous departure of Lützow's troops for a front that was itself continually shifting, Eichendorff grew increasingly frustrated by the fact that military "action" continued to elude him. Before long, an armistice was declared and "in this abyss of inaction and boredom we soon began to ponder and brood about our fate" (*Briefe*, 28–29).

⁴¹ On trauma, see Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996), 1–9; on Eichendorff's lyric oeuvre, see Richard Alewyn, "Ein Wort über Eichendorff" in Paul Stöcklein, ed. *Eichendorff Heute* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966); David Wellbery, "Verzauberung: Das Simulakrum in der romantischen Lyrik," in *Mimesis und Simulation*, ed. Andreas Kablitz and Gerhard Neumann (Freiburg: Rombach, 1998), 451–77; and Thomas Pfau, "Conjuring History: Lyric Cliché, Conservative Fantasy, and Traumatic Awakening in German Romanticism" in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102:1 (2003): 53–91.

⁴² Hegel, *Vorlesungen zur Ästhetik*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, 447–48; English translation in Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 1136.

⁴³ On reading habits in relation to the concept of *Bildung*, see Sheehan, 157–60, Nipperdey, 35–44.

⁴⁴ Eichendorff, *Werke*, vol. 1, 91–92. See also "Der Isegrim," "Der Unverbesserliche," or his "Mandelkerngedicht." On the political struggles between reform-minded and politically opportunist sectors of the Prussian bureaucracy, particularly after the 1816 defeat of reforms launched by von Stein and continued under von Hardenberg, see James Sheehan (35–36, 252) who emphasizes how the narrow material base of this bureaucracy constrained its members to compromise their ambitions. See also Reinhart Koselleck, ed., *Bildungsbürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart:

Klett-Cotta, 1990). On Eichendorff's increasingly frustrating career as a member of the *Bildungsbeamtentum*, see the detailed account by Wolfgang Frühwald, "Der Regierungsrat Joseph von Eichendorff," in *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der Deutschen Literatur* (1979), vol. 4, 37–67.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Bayerdörfer, "Vormärz," in Hinderer, ed., *Geschichte der deutschen Lyrik vom Mittelalter zur Gegenwart* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 327.

⁴⁶ Georg Herwegh, *Werke*, part I (Berlin, Leipzig, Vienna: Deutsches Verlagshaus Bong & Co, n.d.), 121; In the "Preface" to his 1844 collection of poems, entitled "Ein Glaubensbekenntnis" (Credo), Dingelstedt was to reverse himself and confess to having descended down to the "ramparts of partisanship" (*Zinnen der Partei*) after all. *Freiligraths Werke*, ed. Julius Schwering (Berlin: Deutsches Verlagshaus, n.d.), Part 2, 10.

⁴⁷ Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit*, vol. 2, 543.

⁴⁸ Vischer, review of Eduard Mörike's poems in *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*, reprinted in *Eduard Mörike: Wege der Forschung*, 6. Other poets, such as Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, share Vischer's misgivings. See influential opening grouping of poems, titled *Zeitgedichte*, in her 1844 volume *Gedichte*, where politically current topics such as the "Kölner Wirren" (Cologne Quarrels) regarding the status of Catholics in the Prussian and Protestant-dominated German Federation are being taken up in careful avoidance of outright political propaganda.

⁴⁹ See especially the *Vorrede* to *Atta Troll*: "Die Musen bekamen die strenge Weisung, sich hinfüro nicht mehr müßig umherzutreiben, sondern in vaterländischen Dienst zu treten, etwa als Marketenderinnen der Freiheit oder als Wächterinnen der christlich-germanischen Nationalität. Es erhob sich im deutschen Bardenhain ganz besonders jener vage, unfruchtbare Pathos, jener nutzlose Enthusiasmusdunst, der sich mit Todesverachtung in einen Ozean von Allgemeinheiten stürzte . . ." *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. Klaus Briegleb (Munich: dtv, 1997), vol. 4, 494. (English translation: The muses received strict instructions that they were no longer to ramble about indolently but to enter into patriotic service, e.g. as sutlers of freedom or as a female honor-guard of the Christian-German nation. From the groves of German poetry there rose a peculiarly vague, sterile, and useless haze of enthusiasm that, without fear for life and limb, hurled itself headlong into an ocean of generalities.)

⁵⁰ Heine, *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 4, 485. See also Heine's letter of February 1842 to Julius Campe, who at that point had been saddled with *Betriebsverbot* by the Prussian authorities because of his publication of Dingelstedt's *Lieder eines kosmopolitischen Nachwächters*.

⁵¹ "Den höchsten Begriff vom Lyriker hat mir Heinrich Heine gegeben. . . . Er besass jene göttliche Bosheit, ohne die ich mir das Vollkommene nicht zu denken vermag." Friedrich Nietzsche, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Munich: dtv, 1980), vol. 6, 286. (Translation: "The highest concept of the lyrical poet was given to me by Heinrich Heine. . . . He possessed that divine malice without which I cannot imagine perfection." Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals & Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Vintage, 1967), 245.

⁵² Heine, *Briefe*, vol. 2, 38.

⁵³ Heine, *Sämtliche Schriften*, vol. 1, 239; *Complete Poems*, trans. Hal Draper (Boston: Suhrkamp / Insel, 1982) 175, translation modified.

⁵⁴ As to the writing of this short lyric, an acquaintance of Heine's, Johann Peter Lyser (1803–1870) recalls how, at Heine's request during a meeting in 1830, he had written a short frivolous song. In reading it, Heine remarked that Lyser's closing couplet enjoining the beloved: "Lüge dreist — ich will's d'rauf wagen, / Weil ich Dich schon lieben muß" (Lie brazenly — I'll take my chances / For I am constrained to love you) — was too reminiscent of Goethe's style and sounded too innocent. In response, Heine then proceeded to write the lyric quoted above. Lyser's account is reprinted in *Begegnungen mit Heine: Berichte der Zeitgenossen*, ed. Michael Werner (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1973), vol. 1, 196–99. On Heine's infusion of a proto-Nietzschean *ressentiment* into lyric poetry, see also my own "Nachtigallenwahnsinn and Rabbinismus: Heine's Literary Provocation to German-Jewish Cultural Identity," in *Romantic Poetry: Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages*, ed. Angela Esterhammer (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002), 427–44.

⁵⁵ Peter von Matt, *Die verdächtige Pracht* (Munich: Hanser, 1998), 205.

⁵⁶ Wolfgang Preisendanz, *Heinrich Heine: Werkstrukturen und Epochenbezüge* (Munich: Fink, 1973), 68.

⁵⁷ Georg Lukács, *Deutsche Realisten des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1952), 130. English translation in Lukács, *German Realists in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Jeremy Gaines and Paul Keast, ed. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 139.

⁵⁸ "Scott, in dem ich täglich lese, interessiert mich wieder aufs höchste" (Scott, whom I am reading daily, once again absorbs my attention to the utmost), Theodor Fontane, *Sämtliche Romane, Erzählungen, Gedichte, Nachgelassenes*, vol. 6, 1014n.

⁵⁹ C. F. Meyer, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 2, 64.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Ludwig Völker, "Bürgerlicher Realismus," in *Geschichte der deutschen Lyrik*, 342.

⁶¹ On the George Circle, see Edward Norton's magisterial *Secret Germany: Stefan George and his Circle* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2002).

⁶² See Viktor Sklovskij, "Kunst als Verfahren," in Jurij Striedter, ed., *Russischer Formalismus* (Munich: Fink, 1971), 5–35. On the concept of *ostranenie* or *Verfremdung*, see also Juri Striedter, "Transparenz und Verfremdung: Zur Theorie des Poetischen Bildes in der Russischen Moderne," in *Immanente Ästhetik, Ästhetische Reflexion: Lyrik als Paradigma der Moderne*, ed. Wolfgang Iser (Munich: Fink, 1966), 263–96.

⁶³ The word "phantasmagoria" only arises at the beginning of the nineteenth century, with early mentions in the Britain 1802 *Gentlemen's Magazine* and in the 1803 *European Magazine* and in essays by William Hazlitt. Though initially coined to describe optical illusions created by magic lanterns on display in London beginning in 1802 (OED), the term soon emerges as a descriptor for the operation of ideological fantasy. See Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Representation* (1819): "Solche deutliche Erkenntniß und ruhige, besonnene Darstellung dieser traumartigen

Beschaffenheit der ganzen Welt ist eigentlich die Basis der ganzen Kantischen Philosophie, ist ihre Seele und ihr allergrößtes Verdienst. Er brachte dieselbe dadurch zu Stande, daß er die ganze Maschinerie unsers Erkenntnisvermögens, mittelst welcher die Phantasmagorie der objektiven Welt zu Stande kommt, auseinandergelegt und stückweise vorzeigte, mit bewunderungswerther Besonnenheit und Geschicklichkeit. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), vol. 1, 567. (English translation from *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. J. Payne [New York: Dover, 1969, 419–20]: "Such clear knowledge and calm, deliberate presentation of this dreamlike quality of the whole world is really the basis of the whole Kantian philosophy; it is its soul and its greatest merit. He achieved it by taking to pieces the whole machinery of our cognitive faculty, by means of which the phantasmagoria of the objective world is brought about, and presenting it piecemeal with marvelous insight and ability.") Hegel's review article of 1828 (*Rezensionen aus den Jahrbüchern für wissenschaftliche Kritik*), and Marx's critique of St. Max [Stirner] in the *German Ideology* (1845–46). Marx's argument particularly attends to the conjunction of de-personalization (*Entpersönlichung*) and de-materialization (*Entgegenständlichung*) that Hugo Friedrich, in his *Struktur der modernen Lyrik*, posited as central to mid-nineteenth-century symbolism; as Marx puts it: "First comes the moral injunction to seek and, moreover, to seek oneself. This is defined in the sense that man should become something that so far is not, namely, an egoist, and this egoist is defined as being an 'all-powerful ego,' in whom the peculiar ability has become resolved from actual ability into the ego, into omnipotence, into the fantastic idea of ability. To seek oneself means, therefore, to become something different from what one is and, indeed, to become an all powerful, i.e., nothing, a non-thing, a phantasmagoria" (Marx, *The German Ideology* [Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998], 285; for the German text, see Karl Marx, *Werke*, 6 vols., ed. Hans-Joachim Lieber and Peter Furth [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990], vol. 2, 316–17). See also Theodor Adorno, whose study of Richard Wagner nicely summarizes the relevant aspects of the term: "Where the dream is at its most exalted, the commodity is closest to hand. The phantasmagoria tends towards dream not merely as deluded wish-fulfillment of would-be buyers, but chiefly to conceal the labor that has gone into making it. It mirrors subjectivity by confronting the subject with the product of its own labor, but in such a way that the labor that has gone into it is no longer identifiable. The dreamer encounters his own image impotently, as if it were a miracle, and is held fast in the inexorable circle of his own labor, as if it would last forever." Theodor Adorno, *In Search of Wagner* (New York: Verso, 1981), 91; for the German text, see Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1998), vol. 13, 87.

⁶⁴ Joseph von Eichendorff, *Werke* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1953), 166; the new critical edition of Eichendorff produces a slightly different reading text, with the version printed here still supported by the manuscript. See Joseph von Eichendorff, *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1997), vol. 1,3, 230 and vol. 1,4, 415–17. For a reading of the poem, with just emphasis on its "never congruent perspectives," see Heinz Schlaffer, *Lyrik im Realismus* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1966), 14–16.

⁶⁵ On Baroque emblemata and the unsettling power of lyric cliché in Eichendorff, see my "Conjuring History."

⁶⁶ Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Bodo Plachta and Winfrid Woestler (Frankfurt: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1998), vol. 1, 148–49.

⁶⁷ Droste-Hülshoff, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1, 329–30.

⁶⁸ Droste-Hülshoff, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1, 300.

⁶⁹ See a line such as “Ein kalter Glanz huscht über Straßen” (“Melancholie des Abends”), in Georg Trakl, *Das dichterische Werk*, ed. Walter Killy (Munich: dtv, 1972) 13; or “Zitternd flattern Glockenklänge” (“Die schöne Stadt”), 15, as well as Trakl’s recurrent use of color adjectives to close in on otherwise ineffable emotive states; e.g., “Kleines Konzert,” 25. On Trakl’s modernity, see Wolfgang Preisendanz, “Auflösung und Verdinglichung bei Trakl” in *Immanente Ästhetik, Ästhetische Reflexion: Lyrik als Paradigma der Moderne*, ed. Wolfgang Iser (Munich: Fink, 1966), 227–61, esp. his claim that in Trakl “we no longer encounter images signifying something else but strictly self-referential ones” (“sich selbst meinende Bilder”) 241.