

TRANSPORTS OF IMAGINATION:  
POETRY AND THE REHABILITATION OF EXPERIENCE, 1830–1860

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## ABSTRACT

Martin Dawson: *Transports of Imagination:  
Poetry and the Rehabilitation of Experience, 1830-1860*  
(Under the direction of Gabriel Trop)

This dissertation examines how poets of the German late romantic and restoration periods between 1830 and 1860 disrupt the systematizing drive of technological, cultural, and industrial advancements during the nineteenth century in Germany by establishing connections with the past: both a large-scale geological past and discrete historical moments. My dissertation focuses on the lyric works of Joseph von Eichendorff, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, and Eduard Mörike. Often read as nostalgic, quietist, or political conservatives, I argue that their works enact in their readers an experiential, temporal expansion in contact with modes of "pastness" that can in turn serve as a normative standpoint of critique and explore alternative forms of experience.

The first chapter examines how Eichendorff's transformative poetic practice that at once emphasizes the disruptive and connective potential of acts of "transcription." Transcription involves writing that crosses boundaries: from nature to text (in lyric); from life to text (in autobiography); or from text to text (in translation). In these different domains, I show how Eichendorff creates texts that at once transcend the life and context of their creator and bear his unmistakable character. The second chapter locates in Droste-Hülshoff's lyric works what I call uncanny animation, an imaginative strangeness that repurposes the contemporaneous technical advancements of the daguerreotype and the railway in order to disrupt their respective logics of reproducibility and temporal acceleration. In her lyric works, Droste-Hülshoff disrupts the tight fit between subject and technology to reincorporate the reader into a more imaginatively

expansive world. She performs an analogous operation in lyric works that focus on more abject aspects of nature—dust, earth, and bones, for example—which are animated in order to challenge dominant patterns of intelligibility. In the final chapter, I show how Mörike mobilizes play as an aesthetic operation responding to the temporally inflected traumas of modernity that prioritize the present's relentless drive to produce a future. I argue that Mörike develops a concept of poetic play with forms in which the past is conserved—such as the fossil and the elegy—to loosen potentially constraining frameworks of time, space, and genre associated with industrialization and modernization.

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## INTRODUCTION:

*Lateness therefore is a kind of self-imposed exile from what is generally acceptable, coming after it, and surviving beyond it. [...]*

*Late style is **in**, but oddly **apart** from the present. [...]*

*Late style does not admit the definitive cadences of death, instead death appears in a refracted mode, as irony [...] the irony is how often lateness as theme and as style keeps reminding us of death.<sup>1</sup>*

Edward Said, *On Late Style*

This dissertation, and consequently my interest in the nineteenth-century authors Joseph von Eichendorff, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, and Eduard Mörike has at its center a preoccupation with dislocation. As Edward Said draws out in his final essay collection, *On Late Style*, lateness entails a curious temporal dislocation. The term “lateness” suggests a confusion of time; one has failed (accidentally or intentionally) to keep pace in transitioning into the next moment; one falls out of step. Said calls this lateness both an exile from the present and a position squarely situated within the present. As such, lateness simultaneously produces distance and contact. To exist in “lateness” is to maintain contact with both the present and the past while never fully occupying either position. Where Said’s essays deal with late period of work of composers like Ludwig van Beethoven, Richard Strauss, and Benjamin Britten, this dissertation expands Said’s conception of lateness to look at authors whose entire style exhibits this quality.

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<sup>1</sup> Edward W. Said, *On Late Style: Music and Literature Against the Grain*, Reprint edition (Vintage, 2007), 26, 32–33.

The period from 1830 and 1860 saw great political, technological, industrial, and scientific advancements. The development of biology, paleontology and ecology as disciplines, the growing interest in genealogical studies, the increasing importance of national identity, and the invention of the steam engine and photography contributed to increasingly teleological formulations of “progress” along with temporal modes of experience that favor momentum and acceleration at the expense of contemplative and exploratory ways of being in the world. I argue, that in the wake of such totalizing projects and rapid developments, the works of Joseph von Eichendorff, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, and Eduard Mörike exhibit a form of “lateness” similar to Said’s conception, and through this “lateness” they enact in their readers an experiential, temporal dilation that can serve as a normative standpoint of critique and explore alternative forms of experience.

This particular period was especially productive for Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike. Eichendorff had published his first poetry collection in 1838 and the first completed collection of his poems in 1841; Droste-Hülshoff’s first collection of poems also appeared in 1838, with an expanded collection following in 1844; and finally, Mörike published a poetry collection in 1838 with an expanded second edition in 1848. In their poetry collections and closely-related prose works, Droste-Hülshoff, Eichendorff, and Mörike gesture toward various imaginative poetic operations that emphasize a connection with the past. At first glance, these authors appear preoccupied with different themes and interests; however, in their texts, they address the problems of experience that appear concomitant with radical acceleration. They all strongly identify with their geographical region; their works are infused with a feeling of epigonism; and they all view the past as a space of imagination, and have thus often been characterized as provincial, traditional, innocuous, or apolitical. Much of these characterizations



are due in part to the position of these authors in literary histories, namely, within a historiographical construct of German literature not commonly associated with a progressive agenda: the late romantic and restoration (or Biedermeier) periods.

The historiography of both late romantic and Biedermeier style has emphasized a reductive, narrowing, or tame quality within their historical and ideological boundaries. These styles overlap historically, while also taking up a critical position vis-à-vis the literary projects of the early nineteenth century, which has also received measurably greater scholarly attention. The works of the late romantic style have often raised the suspicion that authors of this period pursued a more reactionary political agenda, adopted a regressive perspective on the world, and generally diluted the aesthetic program of their predecessors, according to Wolfgang Bunzel.<sup>2</sup> Bunzel also notes that late romantic works include a good degree of introspection and raise doubts concerning the full autonomy of literature in the aftermath of revolution and political conflict. In many estimations, the late romantic period signals the reintroduction of the very same boundaries to the aesthetic that the early romantics sought to disrupt. Hans-Wolf Jäger characterizes the shift from early to late romanticism as a movement from more dynamic aesthetic techniques to more static and ordered ones.<sup>3</sup> Narrative perspective moves from emphatic intrusion to more steady, pleasing commentary; sublime or magical experiences are subject to rationalization through their explanation as dreams, symptoms of sickness or drunkenness; and finally, characterizations of the past transform a distant, knightly mythic zone into an orderly and quotable collection of verifiable facts.

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<sup>2</sup> Wolfgang Bunzel, *Romantik Epoche - Autoren - Werke* (Darmstadt: WBG (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft), 2010), 42–49.

<sup>3</sup> Hans-Wolf Jäger, *Vorlesungen Zur Deutschen Literaturgeschichte; Romantik*, ed. Holger Böning, vol. 6 (Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2018), 16–17.

These characteristic shifts of the late romantic period, according to such accounts, reach a culminating point in the works of the Restoration period, above all in the style called the Biedermeier style. Here the tendency toward commentary in the late romantic transforms into didacticism, especially with the expansion of book production and the reading public. In addition to the late romantic interest in a more ordered and quotable past, the Restoration period exhibits a renewed interest in the cyclical temporal structures of the past (the seasons, the calendar year, and even the elements), often as an allegory for the human life.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the most characteristic attributes of this period come from its nomenclature. The term “Biedermeier” comes from an early parody of the work of Samuel Friedrich Sautter by Ludwig Eichrodt and Adolf Kußmaul in the form of “Gedichte des Schwäbischen Schullehrers Gottlieb Biedermeier und seines Freundes Horatius Treuherz.” This caricature would form the basis for later descriptions of the period as one of tradition, interiority, domesticity, and apolitical tendencies.<sup>5</sup> Even before Friedrich Sengle’s characterization of the Biedermeier period as defined by naïveté, this period came to be known as a period restricted to the interior of the family.<sup>6</sup> In both cases, restoration and late romantic works were seemingly defined by restriction and an orientation toward the past. It is under the constraints of these characterizations and the comparison to contemporary, more politically active literary movements that both restoration and the late romantic periods suffered until more recent scholarship sought to rehabilitate these works.

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<sup>4</sup> Hans-Wolf Jäger, *Vorlesungen Zur Deutschen Literaturgeschichte: Band VII, Biedermeier/Vormärz*, ed. Holger Böning (Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2018), 9–11; Jäger, *Vorlesungen Zur Deutschen Literaturgeschichte; Romantik*, 6:16.

<sup>5</sup> Jäger, *Vorlesungen Zur Deutschen Literaturgeschichte: Band VII, Biedermeier/Vormärz*, 9–15.

<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit: Allgemeine Voraussetzung, Richtungen, Darstellungsmittel*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999), 155.

The authors Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike have often appeared together as examples of authors whose aesthetics, political positions (or lack thereof), and lives themselves existed in isolation from their historical moment. Gert Sautermeister identified in these authors a search for, and eventual failure to obtain, relative autonomy as authors and an “Unabhängigkeit von einem regelrechten Brotberuf.”<sup>7</sup> According to Sautermeister, these three authors experienced varying forms of “Außenseitertum;” which comes forth in Eichendorff’s *Taugenichts*, Droste-Hülshoff’s anonymity in publishing her poems and chronic sickness, and Mörike’s occupation as “Miniaturprofessor für Literatur.”<sup>8</sup> In part informed by this outsider perspective, Droste-Hülshoff, Mörike, and Eichendorff share a “sovereignty” in opposition to their *Zeitgeist*, according to Sautermeister.<sup>9</sup>

According to Stefan Scherer, Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike all exhibit a particular lateness, in that their works exhibit an increase in complexity within the paradigms already established by Goethe, rather than herald in a new, revolutionary approach, like their contemporary Heinrich Heine. Scherer, and Claudia Leibrand in the case of Droste-Hülshoff, identify in this persistence in older forms, that these three authors overextend these paradigms to the point of “perforation.”<sup>10</sup> In James Rolleston’s *Narratives of Ecstasy*, Eichendorff, Mörike, and Droste-Hülshoff have similar approaches to time. For Rolleston, Eichendorff, Droste-

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<sup>7</sup> Gert Sautermeister, “Lyrik und literarisches Leben,” in *Zwischen Restauration und Revolution 1815-1848* (München: C. Hanser, 1998), 459.

<sup>8</sup> Sautermeister, 460.

<sup>9</sup> Sautermeister, 477.

<sup>10</sup> Stefan Scherer, “Mehrfachbelichtungen. Der form- und funktionsgeschichtliche Ort von Eichendorffs Trauerspielen ‘um 1830,’” in *Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und ihre Poetologien*, 2020. Edition (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2019), 31–32; Claudia Liebrand and Thomas Wortmann, eds., *Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und ihre Poetologien*, 2020. Edition (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2019), 11.

Hülshoff, and Mörike approach the chaotic openness of time through their lyric in order to create a continuum out of the contingency of their historical moment.<sup>11</sup>

Both Droste-Hülshoff and Mörike were avid collectors, which in some cases has intensified the perception of their belonging to the Biedermeier. Claudia Liebrand summarizes the connotations of this interest in her analysis of collection in Droste-Hülshoff's texts: "Das Bestreben, die Dinge der Welt zusammenzutragen, zu ordnen, strukturiert und kategorisiert aufzubewahren, könnte geradezu als *Syndrom* des Biedermeier beschrieben werden: Angesichts einer mit Macht heranstürmenden Moderne, der Zumutungen von Industrialisierung, beschleunigter Zeit, des Verlustes an Traditionen und überkommenen Ordnungszusammenhängen, versuchen die Sammelnden auf ihre Weise die Ordnung der in Unordnung geratenen Welt wiederherzustellen."<sup>12</sup> Susanne Fliegner similarly highlights the role of collection in Mörike, drawing out its particularly close connection to dilettantism, which for Goethe and Schiller serves as the plausible origin of all collection. Goethe specifically highlights the connection between dilettantism and collecting in his essay "Der Sammler und die Seinigen": "Man trifft viele Dilettanten mit großen Sammlungen an, ja man könnte behaupten, alle große Sammlungen sind vom Dilettantismus entstanden."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> James Rolleston, *Narratives of Ecstasy: Romantic Temporality in Modern German Poetry* (Wayne State University Press, 1987), 59–60.

<sup>12</sup> Claudia Liebrand, "Aufsammeln Und Archivieren: Arrangements in Drostes Texten," in *Archiv/Fiktionen: Verfahren Des Archivierens in Literatur Und Kultur Des Langen 19. Jahrhunderts*, 1. Auflage, Rombach Wissenschaften : [...], Reihe Litterae, Band 217 (Freiburg i.Br. Berlin Wien: Rombach Verlag, 2016), 173.

<sup>13</sup> Susanne Fliegner, *Der Dichter und die Dilettanten: Eduard Mörike und die bürgerliche Gesellschaftskultur des 19. Jahrhunderts. Germanistische Abhandlungen* (Springer-Verlag, 2016), 163; Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Werke. Weimarer Ausgabe. Nachträge 1768 - 1832. Goethes Briefe I.*, vol. 47 (München: Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag, 1992), 302.

More recent efforts have sought to reverse the valuations of authors such as Mörike, Eichendorff, and Droste-Hülshoff, either by uncovering latent modern elements in their writing, contrasting their seemingly conservative sentiments with contemporary sentiments to draw their progressive qualities into relief, or supplementing their relatively apolitical oeuvre with the political contents of their letters.<sup>14</sup>

Claudia Liebrand and Thomas Wortmann acknowledge in the opening to their collection of essays on Eichendorff, that the scholarly interest in the author has notably waned in recent years, especially with the loss of the Eichendorff-Gesellschaft's *Aurora. Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und Ihre Poetologien* itself is the first collection of its kind to appear on Eichendorff in over ten years (Nielaba, "Du kritische Seele"; Szewczyka, *Eichendorff heute lesen*). Current work on Eichendorff has concentrated itself on reevaluating this late-romantic author. Stefan Scherer reevaluates Eichendorff's status as dramatist, and seeks to reestablish his work within its literary and historical period, rather than in opposition against it.<sup>15</sup>

In some cases, this results in a reevaluation of the political context of Eichendorff's texts. Ursula Regner examines Eichendorff's use of repetitive structures. Reformulating this facet of Eichendorff's lyric, Regner highlights a rhizomatic structure in his poetics that allows a clearer

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<sup>14</sup> Michael Kessler and Helmut Koopmann, *Eichendorffs Modernität : Akten Des Internationalen, Interdisziplinären Eichendorff-Symposiums, 6.-8. Oktober 1988, Akademie Der Diözese Rottenburg-Stuttgart*, Stauffenburg Colloquium, Bd 9 (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1989); Ulrich Hötzer and Eva Bannmüller, *Mörikes heimliche Modernität* (Tübingen [Germany]: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2015); Günter Niggel, *Zeitbilder Studien und Vorträge zur deutschen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005); Franz Xaver Ries, *Zeitkritik bei Joseph von Eichendorff*, Schriften zur Literaturwissenschaft 11 (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Scherer, "Mehrfachbelichtungen. Der form- und funktionsgeschichtliche Ort von Eichendorffs Trauerspielen 'um 1830,'" 31.

image of the political relevance of the lyric to emerge.<sup>16</sup> Claudia Liebrand and Vanessa Höving examine *Das Schloß Dürande* to draw out its historical and political tensions. Liebrand complicates Eichendorff's reputation as conservative critic to draw out the author's nuanced approach to the topic of revolution in this text. Höving examines the role of the fire starter [Brandstifter] in *Das Schloß*, *Die Entführung* and *Die Meerfahrt*, to draw out the revolutionary potential of such figures especially as they relate to the body in the context of colonialism and gender.<sup>17</sup> In some cases, Eichendorff's historical and political works appear in isolation from his lyrical works. Zygmunt Mielczarek, for example, examines Eichendorff's more theoretical writing to craft an image of the author as intimately bound up in the conflicts of his time, rather than a conservative author clinging to the artifacts of the past.<sup>18</sup>

Unlike Eichendorff, research on Droste-Hülshoff is not stagnant. The production of the Handbook on Droste-Hülshoff under Cornelia Blasberg and Jochen Grywatsch indicates the current interest in this author. Blasberg and Grywatsch themselves identify in Droste-Hülshoff's work a facet common to all three authors considered in this dissertation: "Weder verfasste sie programmatische Schriften zugunsten der einen oder anderen literarischen Partei noch Beitrittserklärungen zu literarisch tonangebenden Gruppen, weder erregte sie Skandale noch zog

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<sup>16</sup> Ursula Regener, "Eichendorffs Rhizome. Romanzen eines 'letzten Romantikers,'" in *Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und ihre Poetologien*, 2020. Edition (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2019), 125.

<sup>17</sup> Claudia Liebrand, "Signaturen des Uneindeutigen. Eichendorffs Schloß Dürande," in *Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und ihre Poetologien*, 2020. Edition (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2019), 157–58, 175–76; Vanessa Höving, "Eichendorffs Brandstifter. Anschlag und Attentat im Schloß Dürande, der Meerfahrt und der Entführung," in *Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und ihre Poetologien*, 2020. Edition (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2019), 179–80, 201–2.

<sup>18</sup> Zygmunt Mielczarek, "Das Geistliche Und Weltliche in Eichendorffs Staatspolitischer Reflexion – Am Beispiel Einer Theoretischen Schrift," in *Eichendorff Heute Lesen* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2009), 138–39, 148–49.

sie Zensurverbote auf sich.”<sup>19</sup> For many scholars, Droste-Hülshoff’s work engages the same questions that will appear in works of the twentieth century. Jochen Grywatsch locates in Droste-Hülshoff’s lyric works a modern interrogation of the subject, which he calls a “verunsicherte[s] Ich”, which facilitates a disruption of the subject-object binary. Thomas Pittroff traces the modern aspects of Droste-Hülshoff’s lyric, specifically her poem “Die Mergelgrube.” In this poem, Pittroff finds an experience of modern existence a connection between contemporary questions of paleontology and T.S. Eliot’s “Waste Land.”<sup>20</sup>

Scholarship has also drawn attention to the materiality of Droste-Hülshoff’s work. For example, Heinrich Detering identifies in Droste-Hülshoff’s *Naturlyrik* a threefold function of nature as symbol, experience, and matter, drawing together Romantic *Waldeinsamkeit* with more modern attention to material detail.<sup>21</sup> This attention to materiality and detail has also led scholars like Liebrand and Ulrich Fülleborn to speak of a *Detailrealismus* or a *Frührealismus* in Droste-Hülshoff’s lyric, paving the way for the Realist works of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Martha B. Helfer similarly approaches Droste-Hülshoff as a forward-thinking poet. Drawing out the early Romantic influences of Droste-Hülshoff’s poetry, Helfer highlights how Droste-Hülshoff’s approach to the subject diverges from Romantic subjectivity, decentering and reconsidering the subject.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Handbuch, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Handbuch* (De Gruyter, 2018), 52–53.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Pittroff, “‘Bertuchs Naturgeschichte’; Les’t Ihr Das? Annette von Droste-Hülshoff: ‘Die Mergelgrube’. Naturgeschichte, Poesie, Apokalypse.” *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch*, no. 42 (2001): 145, 172.

<sup>21</sup> Heinrich Detering, “Versteinter Äther, Aschenmeer. Metaphysische Landschaften in Der Lyrik Der Annette von Droste-Hülshoff,” *Droste-Jahrbuch*, no. 7 (2009): 61.

<sup>22</sup> M.B. Helfer, “‘Ein Heimlich Ding’: The Self as Object in Annette von Droste-Hülshoff,” 2012, 285.

Mörike's work receives similar treatment in recent scholarship. In their monograph, *Der politische Mörike*, Ulrich Gaier and Monika Küble set about correcting the view of Mörike as a daydreaming village pastor by situating the author within a network of radical friends and family in order to reread his works for hidden political reference.<sup>23</sup> Fredy Meyer similarly addresses Mörike's reputation as an apolitical author. Examining Mörike's well-known works such as "Feuerreiter," *Der alte Turmhahn*, and *Maler Nolten*, Meyer uncovers the political connections of these works to Mörike's support for constitutional traditions of Württemberg and for contemporary liberal and national movements.<sup>24</sup>

Similar to recent work on Eichendorff, scholarship has rediscovered neglected works by Mörike. Ray Ockenden returns to Mörike's *Idylle vom Bodensee*, linking the work to the darker themes of Mörike's novel, *Maler Nolten*.<sup>25</sup> Some recent scholarship has sought to reincorporate Mörike's work into a societal network. Angel V. Angelov takes a different approach in his examination of one of Mörike's most famous poems, "Auf eine Lampe." Angelov uncovers the instability of the object's classical form in order to uncover the ideological function of such an

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<sup>23</sup> Ulrich Gaier and Monika Küble, *Der politische Mörike und seine radikalen Freunde* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag GmbH, 2019), 7–8.

<sup>24</sup> Fredy Meyer, "Eduard Mörike Als Politischer Dichter," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift Für Literaturwissenschaft Und Geistesgeschichte* 75, no. 3 (2001): 387.

<sup>25</sup> Ray Ockenden, "Some Neo-Classical and Classical Eddies in Mörike's *Idylle Vom Bodensee*," *Publications of the English Goethe Society* 89, no. 1 (January 2, 2020): 1–16.



artwork.<sup>26</sup> Sarah Ruppe has likewise emphasized the role of objects in Mörike's lyrical works, grouping these works together with Rilke's *Dinggedichte*.<sup>27</sup>

My work on Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike draws on these recent contributions; however, where many of these scholars draw out their connections to the political and societal shifts of this period, and highlight connections between these authors and those that follow in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this dissertation investigates their very designation as past-focused and isolated authors that has formed the understanding of these authors since their very first publications. Rather than undo the association with the past and with isolation, the following chapters work to redefine this relationship. My work draws out the imaginative potential of the past in their works, instead of the restorative approach to the past and to isolation highlighted in previous characterizations of these authors.

Like Scherer's investigation of Eichendorff's dramas as a less recognized portion of Eichendorff's oeuvre, and Liebrand's, Hniilica's, and Höving's investigation of less studied novellas, this dissertation examines Eichendorff's autobiographical texts, and the even less often considered translations from Spanish. In these texts, Eichendorff addresses the transformation of text over time, which provides context for the author's lyrical works. While current scholarship constantly revisits less studied areas of Eichendorff's oeuvre, I examine these autobiographical and translational texts in tandem with Eichendorff's lyrical works to highlight an emphasis on cross-temporal contact that undergirds each of these types of texts in Eichendorff's

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<sup>26</sup> Angel V. Angelov, "„Auf Eine Lampe“ von Eduard Mörike. Autonomie Und Heterogenität Der „klassischen“ Form," *Arcadia - International Journal for Literary Studies* 46, no. 1 (January 2011): 74, 89–94.

<sup>27</sup> Sarah Ruppe, "»Das Ist Auch Wohl Poesie!« Dinge Sammeln Und Gedichte Schreiben Bei Eduard Mörike," in *Jahrbuch Der Deutschen Schiller-Gesellschaft*, vol. 63 (De Gruyter, 2019), 279, 310–11.

oeuvre. Similarly, in Mörike, I am interested in reevaluating texts like *Idylle vom Bodensee*, which previously received scant attention; however, it is in context with his poetry and shorter prose works that I hope to draw out their particular contribution to discussions of temporal experience during this period.

My work on Droste-Hülshoff and Mörike builds on the authors' engagement with objects, as highlighted by Helfer, Liebrand, Ruppe, and Duttlinger; however, I focus my attention on how these objects also connect to an imaginative past. Examining their interest in fossil collecting, and their subsequent poetic renderings of the occupation, I draw out how this interest moves beyond the attempt to negate the traumatic disorder of modernity, offering instead points of contact with their immediate societal networks, and with disparate temporal zones.

In short, this dissertation contributes to the current scholarship on these authors by returning to the very criticism of their work that spurred renewed interest in their texts: the isolated "sovereignty" Sautermeister identified as a common facet of Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike. Rather than wholly discredit the argument that these authors were isolated from a broader social context, apolitical in their writing, or conservatively bound up in the past, I examine how the "lateness" of their style and their designation as *Außenseiter* comes through in their works to form alternative connections. In other words, I argue that the works of these authors offer a lateral move out of their temporal frame in order to find connection through the past to imaginative temporal zones beyond this frame.

In order to better draw out the imaginative potential of these authors' lateness, I focus on their handling of objects that themselves foreground temporal disruption similar to this lateness. Physical objects like fossils, graves, ruins, as well as the daguerreotype and textual objects like the autobiography and the translation foreground the temporal disruption of the present through a

rediscovery of the past. Like Said's conception of the late style, these objects also conjure up a potentially sublime imagined future defined by our own death or extinction. My dissertation approaches the imaginative work done by these authors in order to call into question a linear narrative about the "progress" of modernity in part by examining the eco-critical and techno-critical dimensions of their works. At a moment of rapid technological change and industrial development, these authors often personalize and generate intimate connections to these objects that are otherwise associated with progress and scientific objectivity in the case of photography and the discovery of fossils—which also functioned as preservations of the past and as markers of our finitude, of our own eventual demise. In the works of the authors that form the focus of this study, however, these objects neither represent a restorative relationship to the past nor a potentially traumatic encounter with death and our own insignificance. Instead, these authors approach these nostalgic or anxiety-inducing objects as potential sites of cross-temporal connection.

### **Chapter Overview**

The first chapter examines how Eichendorff crafts a poetic practice that at once emphasizes the disruptive and connective potential of transformation. This occurs through an expanded conception of translations, which I call transformative transcription. Eichendorff's lyric emphasizes the transformative potential of words. Eichendorff's lyric works have often been characterized as formulaic, or repetitive: natural features like forests, daybreaks, and birds as well as the more infamous rustling (*rauschen*) appear with such regularity in many of his texts as to evoke a folk-song like quality. This poetic practice at once transforms the words themselves, just as it transforms the texts into authorless points of connection between differing times. As such, his texts appear imbedded in a mythical, romantic past, while also evoking the

“untimeliness” [*das Unzeitgemäße*] Theodor Adorno identifies in his essay “Zum Gedächtnis Eichendorffs.” Eichendorff’s style at once erases an authorial particularity in that it aspires to become a communal artifact, which paradoxically remains characteristically Eichendorffian.

The beginning of the nineteenth century also saw a rise in and transformation of the genres of autobiography and the production of translations. The translation work of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Ludwig Tieck, among others defined and influenced translation work even into our current moment, while Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s and Goethe’s autobiographical works contributed to the emergence of modern subjectivity during this period. In the wake of these generic touchstones, Eichendorff’s contributions to these genres are often lost.

In these three paradigms (the lyric, the autobiography, and the translation) Eichendorff approaches writing as a process of both transformation and transcription. The texts produced at once transcribe processes of transformation (from imagination to text, from lived experience to text, or from one language to another) while transforming the texts themselves.

In this chapter, I examine Eichendorff’s lyrical, autobiographical, and translational works, and while these operations differ in their respective goals, I show how a notion of text as transformation guides Eichendorff’s practice to create texts that at once transcend the life and context of their creator and bear his unmistakable character. I begin by examining a collection of Eichendorff’s more self-reflexive poetic texts in which Eichendorff examines the power of the poetic text to transcend boundaries. From here, I move on to consider Eichendorff’s approach to autobiography, especially in contrast to Goethe’s *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Finally, I examine selections from Eichendorff’s Spanish translations, specifically of Spanish *siglo de oro* poetry of the sixteenth century, and Pedro Calderón de la Barca’s *autos sacramentales*. In each of these

sections, I show how Eichendorff creates disruptive cross-temporal contact through a transformational approach to text that at once originates from an author and has the ability to transcend the author. Through such a transformational process, Eichendorff's works present a potential connection to the past and the future that disrupts the continuity of the present.

The second chapter of the project finds in Droste-Hülshoff's lyric works the possibility of disrupting teleological progress in her engagement with technologies of transportation and photography. Droste-Hülshoff lyrically repurposes the contemporaneous technical advancements of the daguerreotype and the railway in order to disrupt their respective logics of reproducibility and temporal acceleration. Both technologies bind and unify subjects within the totalizing systems of a vast, ever-growing network; the daguerreotype establishes a system of reproducibility, while the railway system plots the world along a continuum, diminishing differences between interconnected spaces. In her lyric works, Droste-Hülshoff disrupts the tight fit between subject and technology to reincorporate the reader into a more imaginatively expansive world.

This chapter splits into two sections: one focused on the daguerreotype image, and the other on the imaginative potential of the ground. These two sections are bound together by a particular approach in Droste-Hülshoff's poetic works, which I call uncanny animation. The "uncanny" in uncanny animation, draws on Schelling's conception of the uncanny: "unheimlich nennt man alles, was im Geheimniß, im Verborgnen, in der Latenz bleiben sollte und hervorgetreten ist."<sup>28</sup> In Schelling the monstrous, the dark, and the foreign are not evil, but rather sources of the uncanny, and therefore source of another truth. The term "animation" comes

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<sup>28</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke: Philosophie der Mythologie* (Cotta, 1857), 649.

from Ernst Jentsch's definition of the uncanny, drawn from ETA Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann*. For Jentsch, the uncanny results from the oscillation across a boundary between the lifelike and the lifeless.

In this chapter, the boundary between life and death, and its transgression leads to another uncanny experience in the works of Droste-Hülshoff. Just as Droste-Hülshoff's work itself plays with boundaries, her engagement with early photography in the form of the daguerreotype and the ground entails the imaginative, and magical, transgression of boundaries, often the physical boundaries of the photographic frame and those of the ground in the form of graves and pits. In the following two sections, I will draw out how Droste-Hülshoff animates the uncanny qualities of these objects to generate closeness to these potentially traumatic objects, rather than fear, through a reimagining of the worlds they represent.

The first half of the chapter focuses on the daguerreotype and the reproducible image in Droste-Hülshoff's works "das Spiegelbild," "An Elise in der Ferne mit meinem Dageurreotyp," and "das Bild." I begin this chapter with an examination of the mirror image and its relationship to the self. I argue that Droste-Hülshoff breaks down the reflective relationship between self and reflection to explore a more imaginative construction of the image. In the poem "An Elise," Droste-Hülshoff further develops this imaginative approach to the image, reconceiving the daguerreotype as an enchanted, explorative medium, rather than a retentive, technical one. Finally, in "das Bild," we encounter yet another image: one dispersed throughout the poetic medium itself, rather than contained within a frame. Droste-Hülshoff's poetic image in "Das Bild" provokes reflection on the photographic medium's shortcomings and provides direction for an alternative frame-less image.

In the second half of this chapter, I examine Droste-Hülshoff's imaginative approach to the ground as both a site of buried treasures of the past and of imaginative possibilities of the future. In this section, I examine representations of the ground in the poems "der Hünenstein," "Die Mergelgrube," and "Im Grase." In these texts, the ground appears as both grave, crypt, and refuge, in which Droste-Hülshoff's lyric persona finds remnants of the past (prehistoric stones, fossils, insects, etc.) and an escape from the repetitive structure of the present. Once there, Droste-Hülshoff's texts draw out the strangeness of these objects, a strangeness that in turn transforms the lyric persona. Instead of evoking aversion or antipathy, strangeness draws the onlooker deeper into the object through, rather than away from, technologies of image reproduction and transportation. For Droste-Hülshoff, the ground harbors a disruptive potential, and is able to blur distinctions between living and dead, mineral and biological, past, present, and future.

In the final chapter, I show how Mörike mobilizes play as an aesthetic operation and as a mode of being responding to the temporally inflected traumas of modernity that prioritize the present's relentless drive to produce a future. On the surface, the playfulness associated with Mörike's oeuvre may appear as a lack of seriousness. However, Mörike develops a concept of poetic play with forms in which the past is conserved—such as the fossil and the elegy—to loosen potentially constraining frameworks of time, space, and genre associated with industrialization and modernization.

The Playful in Mörike in many respects may be productively compared to Friedrich Schiller's notion of the play drive [*Spieltrieb*], although one important difference ought to be foregrounded from the outset; Schiller's play drive is an essentially human faculty by which beauty can be perceived, whereas the Playful in Mörike is an aesthetic operation that engenders a

*specific* type of creativity. In other words, the Playful, for Mörike, does not refer to aesthetic reception as such (regardless of genre, for example), but refers to a certain mode of sensuous engagement.

A key characteristic of the Playful in Mörike consists in the oscillatory quality of the playful character's encounter with the world, a characteristic also essential to Schiller's play drive. While oscillation also occurs in Mörike's aesthetics of the Playful, it is precisely through this oscillation that the Playful functions, rather than a natural deficiency of its expression in the world, a means to the end of balance. The Playful in Mörike requires oscillation between differing temporalities, genres, moods, and space in order for this specific aesthetic operation to function.

Another significant characteristic of the Playful in Mörike can be found in its anaesthetic force; in the face of transgression or catastrophe, the Playful exhibits the ability to dive headlong into disaster while simultaneously avoiding its deleterious effects. Using a description found in a short programmatic text by Mörike entitled *Doppelte Seelentätigkeit*—which I will examine in depth later in this chapter—the Playful in Mörike can be considered as an operation “halb zum Spaß, halb im Ernst.”

In this chapter I examine Mörike's poems “Göttliche Reminiszenz,” the *Idylle vom Bodensee oder Fischer Martin*, and the novella *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* to show how Mörike outlines the Playful as a mode of experience that prioritizes the multiple over the singular, oscillation over fixity, exploration over pursuit. In “Göttliche Reminiszenz” the Playful takes shape as an encounter with the divine and a divine encounter with all layers of experience, from past, through present, and into the future. Play becomes a means to break outside of the frame of a painting and to call upon the generative possibilities of an interaction with memory,



whether organic or mineral. In *Idylle vom Bodensee*, the Playful allows categories like transgression, genre, and space to become flexible, opening up potentially rigid constructions to redefinition. Finally, in *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*, I examine how Mörike explores a character like Mozart as the playful character *par excellence*, whose interaction with the world always entails a two-fold attention to present reality and a multitude of imagined or remembered associations, leading a life and pursuing a form of creation that cannot be reduced to the linear and goal-oriented. I couple these readings with Mörike's more theoretical conceptions of consciousness and experience as outlined in "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit" and "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde." In these texts Mörike outlines a method for moving beyond the limits of experience through an engagement with both a "scherzhaft" and an "ernsthaft" perception of the world. My definition of the Playful in Mörike draws on Schiller's notion of play as distinctly human and the play drive as a means for reconciling the formal and sensual elements in aesthetic experience. The Playful, however, does not constitute every encounter with an aesthetic object, but rather describes a mode of being in which the contingent event becomes the means for rendering frameworks of time, space, genre, and normativity "inoperative" (in the way that the philosopher Giorgio Agamben uses the term), thereby opening these categories up to new and varied possibilities. Mörike's Playful is a process that one must surrender to rather than engage in, and in doing so it renders an experience of the world more malleable, thus introducing a counter-force to the momentum of goal-directed rationality.

## CHAPTER ONE: THE PURSUIT OF TRANSFORMATIVE TRANSCRIPTION ACROSS JOSEPH VON EICHENDORFF'S LYRIC, AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS, AND TRANSLATIONS

*“Warum sollte man so ein lumpiges Menschenleben nicht ganz in Poesie übersetzen können?”<sup>29</sup>*

### Introduction

The apparent simplicity of the question above provides a paradigmatic example of the late-romantic author, Joseph von Eichendorff's approach to poetic creation. Why *shouldn't* one be able to transform such a tattered life entirely into *Poesie*? Compared to his early-romantic influences Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel, Eichendorff's work evokes a seemingly unencumbered readability, which for some has resulted in decreased scholarly interest. In one of the most recent edited volumes on the author, Claudia Liebrand and Thomas Wortmann characterize Eichendorff as a fringe topic in current literary research: “Manches aus dem Œuvre wirkt auf den ersten Blick ‘ausinterpretiert’ [...] Manches ruft eher antiquarisches Interesse hervor [...] und wird hauptsächlich in Eichendorff-Biographien einer Auslegung unterzogen, die, das bringt das Genre der wissenschaftlichen Biographie mit sich, auf Vollständigkeit angelegt sind und Autor und Werk im Ganzen zu besprechen versuchen.”<sup>30</sup> In their volume, *Zur Wiedervorlage: Eichendorffs Texte und Ihre Poetologien*, Liebrand, Wortmann, and their contributors reevaluate Eichendorff's “texts,” from his literary to his autobiographical works.

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<sup>29</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Dichter Und Ihre Gesellen : Erzählungen II*, Werke in Sechs Bänden / Joseph von Eichendorff Bd 3 (Cambridge, England Ann Arbor, MI: Chadwyck-Healey ; ProQuest Information and Learning, 2002), 174.

<sup>30</sup> Liebrand and Wortmann, *Zur Wiedervorlage*, 1.

Conspicuously absent, however, is the very activity mentioned in the epigraph to this chapter: translation.

The transformational operation described in the idea that one could "translate" a "lumpiges Menschenleben" into "Poesie" does not merely frame translation as the movement from one language to another. Instead, we find a commensurability between life (*Leben*) and poetic operations (*Poesie*) that encompasses all of Eichendorff's textual endeavors: the lyrical, the autobiographical, and the translational. This chapter will be structured according to this triangulation of concepts (poetry, life, and translation). The quote above, which appears in Eichendorff's *Dichter und ihre Gesellen*, spoken by the character Lothario, recalls these three modalities; indeed, the character Lothario enacts such a translation of life into *Poesie* throughout the novella. The character first enters the narrative masquerading as a policeman, only to introduce himself as Lothario Literatus.<sup>31</sup> Towards the end of the tale upon his return to Germany, Fortunat (the novella's protagonist) discovers that this is yet another disguise: "Er erfuhr nun, daß der seltsame Lothario Graf Victor selber war und seit geraumer Zeit hier oben als Vitalis lebe [...]." <sup>32</sup> The character transforms from Lothario to Literatus to Vitalis, proceeding from the literary character, to literature itself, and finally to life in a broader sense.

This central question in Eichendorff's work—whether base life can be transformed into poetry—points to a foundational factor in Eichendorff's poetic practice. In his works, Eichendorff crafts a poetic practice that at once emphasizes a disruptive and connective potential in processes of transformation. The transformation described above at once contains and transcends human life. Life exists as a source for the poetic text, and yet Eichendorff seeks to

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<sup>31</sup> Eichendorff, *Dichter Und Ihre Gesellen : Erzählungen II*, 152–53.

<sup>32</sup> Eichendorff, 343.

transform life fully into text, thereby erasing the concrete life at the same time. Eichendorff forms this connection through the unrealized transgression of boundaries between life and text, and across time. In this chapter, I will examine this disruptive-connective approach to transformation through text in Eichendorff's lyric, autobiographical, and translational work. While these operations differ in their respective goals, I will show how this transformational approach to text guides Eichendorff's practice to create texts that at once transcend the life and context of their creators, and yet, bear their unmistakable characters.

### **Transformation Through Lyric: “Wünschelrute,” “So oder so,” “Dichterlos,” and “Symmetrie”**

Eichendorff has long been recognized as an author focused on the past, sometimes to his detriment. According to Thomas Pfau, the disruptive power of the past characterizes the romantic poetic endeavor: “For these writers, the poetic word was imbued with the unsettling power of projecting the past into the present regardless of the modern subject's conscious intentions or avowed beliefs.”<sup>33</sup> The focus on the past as represented by memory and “die schönen alten Zeiten” in his lyric works open up space for a disruption of teleological time instead of a simple retrogression. Pfau identifies the past as a powerful influence on Eichendorff's poetic production. “Eichendorff centers his lyrics on [the] irruption of past memories into the patterns of quotidian, conscious existence—a strategy calculated to intensify not only our perception of psychological depth as “recollections” but also our sense of a nontranscendable covenant between subject and history.”<sup>34</sup> Eichendorff's poetry at once calls forth distant, and sometimes forgotten, memories, projects itself hypothetically into the future,

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<sup>33</sup> Thomas Pfau, “Conjuring History: Lyric Cliché, Conservative Fantasy, and Traumatic Awakening in German Romanticism,” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102, no. 1 (January 1, 2003): 60.

<sup>34</sup> Pfau, 64.

while also staging “a traumatic awakening to History as the nontranscendable horizon of European culture.”<sup>35</sup>

In addition to his attention to the past, scholars identify in Eichendorff’s lyric works a resistance to stable temporal situation. In his essay, “Zum Gedächtnis Eichendorffs,” Theodor Adorno famously draws attention to Eichendorff’s “untimeliness” [*Unzeitgemäß*], more specifically, to the ability of Eichendorff’s works to remain open to criticisms of their trivial and traditional quality, while nonetheless transcending these criticisms to suggest that “irgend etwas daran mehr sei.”<sup>36</sup> Eichendorff’s timelessness is in part due to his specific deployment of what at first appears to be stock phrases and images. Adorno draws out Eichendorff’s ability to capture vague and abstract thought: “Noch das Unsinnliche und Abstrakte ward bei Eichendorff zum Gleichnis für ein Gestaltloses.”<sup>37</sup> Since Adorno, Eichendorff has long been identified by his formulaic, almost depersonalized lyric style, in which repetition creates a timelessness, a temporal dislocation. Richard Alewyn notably remarks on the sometimes frustratingly repetitive quality of Eichendorff’s works. “Forever we have forests rustling [*rauschen*], nightingales singing, fountains murmuring, rivers shimmering. Time and again, light reflects and harmonies from summits, from down below or from among the treetops waft over to us or enter through the window.”<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Pfau, 84.

<sup>36</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften in 20 Bänden: Band 11: Noten zur Literatur*, 6th ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2003).

<sup>37</sup> Adorno.

<sup>38</sup> Richard Alewyn, “Ein Wort über Eichendorff,” in *Eichendorff heute. Stimmen der Forschung*. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1966), 7–18.

It would seem that Eichendorff's works exhibit a strong focus on the past, represented in part by the power of memory, and a timelessness irreducible to nostalgic reminiscence. In this chapter I will draw out this tension between a focus on the past and timelessness in Eichendorff's lyric to show how both qualities stem from his approach to the text as both a particular product of the poet, and as an independent object capable of disrupting a linear conception of time. In his lyrical works, Eichendorff's decentering and even erasure of the speaking subject transforms the subject itself. In this chapter, I specifically examine how Eichendorff's poetic practice decenters the poetic voice through structures of repetition. The repetitive word has the ability to connect across temporal boundaries to extend beyond the poet, and through these connections creates a potential for a reorientation of formally teleological temporal relationships. In emptying out the subject within the text, Eichendorff then makes room for any reader to become the subject.

Daniel Müller Nielaba highlights the role of transformation in Eichendorff's construction of the subject in his lyrical works.

Die These lautet: Eichendorffs Epistemologie des Dichtens lässt sich fassen als eine Poetologie der Transformation [...] Diese Transformation, die [...] auf den endlos rekurrenten Text zielt. [...] An die Stelle eines [...] der Transformation voran stehenden und diese vollziehenden Subjektes tritt, vielmehr: gelangt, ein sprachliches *agens*, das strikte nicht anders als in genau dieser formlosen Form, als Partizip Präsens, zu beschreiben ist; das damit, streng genommen, keinen raumzeitlichen Ort hat[...].<sup>39</sup>

In Eichendorff's work, as Nielaba highlights, the lyrical voice of each poem exists only in its moment of speaking the words of the poem. Just as the speaking voice of the text remains uncoupled from a specific identity, neither voice nor text occupies a specific space or time.

While Eichendorff's language usage has often been referred to as formulaic, his usage of terms like *Rauschen* and *Vögel* never fully collapses into a systematic usage, but rather achieves

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<sup>39</sup> Daniel Müller Nielaba, "*Du kritische Seele*": *Eichendorff: Epistemologien des Dichtens* (Königshausen & Neumann, 2009), 35.

an incantation-like power to transcend temporal stasis and the author himself, much like folk songs. These themes and constructions appear with regularity, but with enough variance to avoid clear definition. For Helmut Koopmann, the seemingly formulaic appearance of these terms is only the byproduct of Eichendorff's tendency toward repetition: "Was als Gegenständliches erscheint, ist zumeist Formel. Zur Formel aber gehört die Wiederkehr, oder umgekehrt: Ständig wiederkehrende Bilder machen diese schließlich zur Formel."<sup>40</sup> Unlike other romantic authors like Novalis, Ludwig Tieck, or E.T.A. Hoffmann, Eichendorff views the supersensual as only indirectly accessible. Eichendorff himself conceptualized the poetic endeavor as such in his *Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands*. Here he defines *Poesie* as "die indirekte, d.h. sinnliche Darstellung des Ewigen und immer und überall Bedeutenden, welches auch jederzeit das Schöne ist, das verhüllt das Irdische durchschimmert."<sup>41</sup> The poetic text, in Eichendorff's formulation, is always indirectly indicating something beyond temporal confinement, something that is both always [*immer*] and forever [*ewig*], and nonetheless remains latent, obscured by something ephemeral or worldly [*irdisch*]. In his lyrical works, Eichendorff draws out this latency through the formulaic use of text and through a decentering of the subject. In these movements both toward form and away from system, Eichendorff enacts transformation through the text of the subject, the world, and their respective relationships to time.

Eichendorff's particular poetics of repetition is what allows the poet to pursue the indirect and ephemeral representation of the eternal. The very same method that typifies Eichendorff's works, namely the repetitive use of terms like *Vögel* and *Rauschen*, also in part erases the author,

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<sup>40</sup> Helmut Koopmann, "Konstruierte Wirklichkeiten. Zu Eichendorffs Lyrik," *Aurora, das Jahrbuch der Eichendorff-Gesellschaft* 68/69 (2009 2008): 41.

<sup>41</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Geschichte der Poesie: Schriften zur Literaturgeschichte*, 1. Edition (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2006), 21.

transforming the text into general artifact. What results are texts that at once bear Eichendorff's signature, while also constantly effacing any traces that point to an individual or idiosyncratic subjectivity of an individual author. This process affects both poetic voice and poetic text. As Koopmann makes clear, Eichendorff appears unconcerned with originality, and instead fashions texts that remain indistinct in their description of objects and places, but attain clarity of meaning through the long history of the terms used. "Keine Landschaft ist unbestimmter als die Eichendorffs, weil sie nicht zu konkretisieren ist, aber zugleich ist keine Landschaft bestimmter, da sie aus einem Arsenal genau bekannter Details aufgebaut ist."<sup>42</sup> Essentially the pursuit of an authorless work is the most characteristic feature of Eichendorff's works.

This expansion of the meaning of text extends to the author's voice. While the repetitive structure of the lyric work as a whole is a hallmark of Eichendorff's poetics, the same quality de-individualizes the poet's voice in the text. Gerald Gillespie highlights the similarity this structure bears to the more communal genre of the folksong: "As in folksong and hymnody, his standard motifs and even entire lines function as effectively interchangeable elements with which a voice speaks that very often sounds more communal than personal[...]"<sup>43</sup> The adoption of a folksong-like character both defines Eichendorff's work and opens ownership of its content to every reader.

The uncoupling of author from artwork Eichendorff achieves in his works facilitates an expansion of significance in the poems themselves. Thomas Petraschka asserts that Eichendorff's lyric achieves almost fetish-like character, in that these terms possess a double character

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<sup>42</sup> Koopmann, "Konstruierte Wirklichkeiten. Zu Eichendorffs Lyrik," 42–43.

<sup>43</sup> Gerald Gillespie, "Hieroglyphics of Finality in Eichendorff's Lyrics," *German Life and Letters* 42 (1988): 204.



comprised of a literal meaning, and a significance beyond full comprehension: “Seine Poesie scheint stets über sich selbst hinaus zu weisen auf etwas, das nie real fassbar werden kann, sie entzieht sich sowohl inhaltlich als auch sprachlich bzw. strukturell dem konkreten Zugriff.”<sup>44</sup>

According to Petraschka, the fleeting character of Eichendorff’s use of language also affects the lyrical subject.

For this work, I focus on more self-reflexive poetic texts where Eichendorff examines the power of the poetic text to transcend boundaries. In these texts, the relationship between word and time bears the potential of transforming both reader and author. I begin with Eichendorff’s well-known “Wünschelrute.” First published in 1838 in *Deutscher Musenalmanach*, then again in 1842 in Eichendorff’s second poetry collection, “Wünschelrute” thematizes the power of the perfect word (as song text or as poem) to awaken the human soul, a topic which also appears in the works of Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Ludwig Tieck, and Friedrich Schlegel.<sup>45</sup> The term *Wünschelrute* also appears in Eichendorff’s later literary historical writing, where the poet draws out the connective potential of *Poesie*:

Auch das hat die Poesie mit der Religion gemein, daß sie wie diese den ganzen Menschen, Gefühl, Phantasie und Verstand gleichmäßig in Anspruch nimmt. Denn das Gefühl ist hier nur die Wünschelrute, die wunderbar verschärfte Empfindung für die lebendigen Quellen, welche die geheimnißvolle Tiefe durchranken; die Phantasie ist die Zauberformel, um die erkannten Elementargeister herauf zu beschwören, während der vermittelnde und ordnende Verstand sie erst in die Formen der wirklichen Erscheinung festzubannen vermag. Ein so harmonisches Zusammenwirken finden wir bei allen großen Dichtern, bei Dante, Calderon, Shakespeare und Goethe, wie sehr auch sonst ihre Wege

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<sup>44</sup> Thomas Petraschka, “Die ‘indirecte Darstellung des Ewigen’: Fetischistische Mechanismen in der Dichtung Eichendorffs,” *Aurora, das Jahrbuch der Eichendorff-Gesellschaft* 68/69 (2009 2008): 127.

<sup>45</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Gedichte. Text und Kommentar*, 1. Edition (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2006), 732, 1040–42.

auseinandergehen. Der Unterschied besteht nur in dem Mehr oder Minder jener drei Grundkräfte.<sup>46</sup>

In this passage, Eichendorff highlights *Poesie*'s ability to draw together the entirety of the person, specifically feeling [*Gefühl*], fantasy [*Phantasie*], and understanding [*Verstand*]. In the following text we will see the same elements in poetic form, namely, the divining rod [*Wünschelrute*], a discussion of depth, and the importance of form. While the term "Wünschelrute" appears in Eichendorff's drafts and his poetological writings, the editor of the *Deutscher Musenalmanach*, Adalbert Chamisso, ultimately chose the title for the poem, drawing on his correspondence with Eichendorff about the role of poetry.<sup>47</sup> Eichendorff emphasizes here, and in the following text, is the harmonic cooperation [*harmonisches Zusammenwirken*] of these elements and the connective potential afforded by the poetic text.

### Wünschelrute

Schläft ein Lied in allen Dingen,  
Die da träumen fort und fort,  
Und die Welt hebt an zu singen,  
Triffst du nur das Zauberwort.<sup>48</sup>

Connection also structures the poem "Wünschelrute." In "Wünschelrute," Eichendorff conceives of the poet's relationship between the world and the word in the form of a divining or dowsing rod [*Wünschelrute*]. From a formal standpoint, the divining rod appears as a bifurcated whole, usually in the form of a Y-shaped branch, where the user (a dowser) holds the two ends, one in

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<sup>46</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 1. Edition (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2006), 1039.

<sup>47</sup> Claudia Schülke, "Nachlass Joseph von Eichendorf: Ewige Klänge," *FAZ.NET*, accessed June 18, 2021, <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/rhein-main/frankfurt/nachlass-joseph-von-eichendorffs-ewige-klänge-16823683.html>.

<sup>48</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, "Wünschelrute," in *Sämtliche Gedichte. Text und Kommentar*, 1. Edition (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2006), 328.

each hand, while pointing the convergent end forward. In addition to its own connected form, the divining rod also serves as a connection between the user and the earth, allowing the dowser to locate unseen materials, most often a water source, but historically including minerals, oil, among other earth(l)y treasures. Through the greater connection to the rhythms of the earth, the successful dowser's activity always ends in the surprising discovery of something once buried deep within the earth. The surprise is at once the planned outcome, and yet it punctuates time as an event where potential becomes actual. Since the discovery is never assured, the sudden appearance of buried treasures or hidden springs becomes a surprising transformation.

Connections abound in the text itself, and in place of the Y-shaped divining rod, Eichendorff draws the connective possibility of the word itself. Pairs of words resonate with one another like *Schlafen/träumen*, *Lied/singen*, *Wort/Lied*, all of which share contexts of sleep, music, and language while retaining their separate meanings. The text also bears a resemblance to the form of the divining rod. The first two lines of the poem describe a passive state of objects, while the final two lines describe the potential action of the world. The conjunction *und* at the start of the third line connects these active and passive branches to form the unified poem.

In addition to the semantic and grammatical connections of the text, the lyrical voice describes connections formed in the word and the song. In the first two lines, "Schläft ein Lied in allen Dingen,/Die da träumen fort und fort," the song forms a commonality between all things, whether the reader understands this to mean that all things possess *a song*, or more emphatically, that a singular song inhabits all things. The song and particularly the sleeping song, for Eichendorff, resembles the folksong, in that it refers to both musical and poetic forms. In the second half of the poem, the text similarly unites all entities of the "world" [*die Welt*] in the form of the song, which itself is predicated on finding the correct (magic) word [*Zauberwort*].

Just like the divining rod, the word in “Wünschelrute” possesses the potential for transformation. The discovery of hidden springs and buried treasure facilitated by the divining rod—in a manner analogous to the function of the word in “Wünschelrute”—ushers in a transformation of potentiality into actuality. The poem’s opening construes the existence of things [*Dingen*] as a passive continuum in the form of sleep that continues on and on [*fort und fort*]. The potential arrival of the magic word in the final line suggests the interruption of this continuum in the form of active singing (instead of the latent existence of song). *Anheben* on the one hand suggests the connective possibility of collective action, while on the other signals the beginning of something new. The verb also suggests a physical movement upward (to take up), which recalls the divining rod’s purpose of uncovering hidden, often underground elements. The sleeping/dreaming song interrupted by the poet forms a standard motif in Eichendorff’s lyric works.<sup>49</sup> In particular, Eichendorff’s use of this motif accompanies a discussion of depth, where the sleeping/dreaming song must be brought up to consciousness.<sup>50</sup> In the text, the word as *Wünschelrute* functions less as a tool, more as a hinge between potentiality and actuality, a transformative connection between divided realms like unconsciousness and consciousness, a mysterious underground and a lively surface, and even temporal realms of the past and the present. In each case, the word (as *Lied*, or as *Zauberwort*) disrupts a passive status quo with a new action, while maintaining contact between these two states.

Eichendorff marks the transition between these two states with decisive action. This is most evident in the final line of the text “Triffst du nur das Zauberwort.” *Treffen* encapsulates

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<sup>49</sup> Otto Eberhardt, *Eichendorffs Dichtersprache: Wörter, Wendungen, Motive. Ein Lexikon* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2019), 337.

<sup>50</sup> Eberhardt, 409–11.

this disruptive connection, just as it draws out the physical contact at the center of the divining rod (its ability to sense vibrations, which results from the disruption of particles that produce a chain reaction of collisions eventually transferred to the hands of the dowser). *Treffen* implies precision and contact, “to strike,” but also to make contact, as in the more social usage, meaning to “meet.” To make contact with the magic word at once disrupts the passive state of sleep and connects the worlds of things and of singers. This contact takes shape as a kind of reverberation, which becomes clearer in the history of the poem. *Treffen* also has a musical dimension, which comes to the fore in an earlier version of Eichendorff’s “Wünschelrute.” In earlier versions, the word “Wünschelrute” does not appear by name. Instead, these texts draw out the connection to music. In the final portion of one draft, entitled “Musik,” reads: “Und sie heben an zu singen, / Wie Säuseln von Schwingen / Triffst du den rechten Klang.”<sup>51</sup> In this earlier version, the role of vibrations as simultaneously disruptive and connective tool. Instead of the divining rod, which receives vibrations, the unnamed tool at the center of this text could be the tuning fork (another bifurcated object, struck to create a tone). In another version from the *Nachlass*, the text draws a direct connection between the word and sound: “Machst du’s vom Banne frei: / Vom Banne, Gleichviel, wie, / Mit Worten oder Tönen, / S’ ist nur Zauberei, / S’ ist nur Poesie.”<sup>52</sup> In each case, the resonance of the word and of the tone interrupt the dormancy of the sleeping song.

While connections structure this text, these connections never truly occur, as the arrival of the magic word, the lynchpin of the entire process, only exists in the hypothetical. The continuity of the sleeping song remains undisturbed until some as yet undiscovered “du” appears.

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<sup>51</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Werke Des Freiherrn Joseph von Eichendorff: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, vol. 1.3 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006).

<sup>52</sup> Eichendorff, 1.3:235.

By formulating the transition from passive continuum to active interruption, Eichendorff imbues the word with latent potentiality, encapsulating both modes of being. The word as song within each thing hints at an eternity, while the magic word presents the imminent potential of revolution. To this Eichendorff adds one last connection between the lyrical voice and the reader through the pronoun *du*. The speaking poet only indicates the potential for connection, leaving the reader to actualize such a connection. Just as Nielaba indicates, Eichendorff's speaking subject remains unidentifiable, allowing any reader to embody the subject, just as the pronoun *du* allows space for any reader to take up the task presented. In this formulation, the poet himself becomes the divining rod for the eventual reader, in that the poetic text points the way to disruptive contact with long buried treasures. Or rather, the stirrings of eternity produce a chain reaction of vibrations that lead through the poet and the word to each and every reader thereafter.

In the poem "Dichterlos," Eichendorff again transforms the poet into a kind of divining rod. The poem, first published in Eichendorff's first poetry collection, invites the reader to first ponder the meaning of its title. The title displays an ambiguity with the suffix *-los*, which could indicate a state without poets, or the fate of the poet, both of which have an oracular quality, either predicting the future for the poet, or that the future contains no poet. *Los* also suggests a looseness, as if the poet can somehow become uncoupled from the artwork.

#### Dichterlos

Für alle muß vor Freuden  
Mein treues Herze glühn,  
Für alle muß ich leiden,  
Für alle muß ich blühn,  
Und wenn die Blüten Früchte haben,  
Da haben sie mich längst begraben.

Just like "Wünschelrute," this text emphasizes connection, but this time Eichendorff stresses the temporal element of this connection. Eichendorff characterizes the poet's fate as a kind of

martyrdom, where the poet exists in a one-way relationship with his public: he creates while the public enjoys the fruits of his labor. Hilda Schulhof highlights the similarity of Eichendorff's formulation of the poet's occupation with that of Novalis in the poem "Der Sänger geht auf rauhen Pfaden" from *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*.<sup>53</sup> While both texts characterize the poet's task as a thankless struggle, what comes forward in Eichendorff's work is less the individual struggles and ensuing loneliness of the poet, as in Novalis, but rather Eichendorff emphasizes that, even though the poet's work serves others, it is through this work that the poet's work creates connections between his readers across temporal divides.

The collectivizing drive of "Dichterlos" begins with the first words. "Für alle" introduces half of the six lines of the text. These two words make clear Eichendorff's goal: the poet's text should unify all readers. Just as the poet's magic word unifies a world of singers in "Wünschelrute," the poet of "Dichterlos" becomes the nexus of common feeling among the unnamed "alle" of the text. The poet becomes both the unifier of all people, and his text the unified product of all common feelings.

This connection achieves a temporal dimension in the final lines of the text, where the poet imagines his eventual absence from the world. Here the lyric voice emphasizes the temporal divide between the fruits of his labor and the end of his life. The connection between poet and public occurs across a boundary, but it does not dissolve the boundary. This boundary takes the shape of the ground out of which the poet's fruits bloom and under which the poet's body is buried. The ground signifies a physical boundary as much as a temporal one, where objects like ancient minerals, fossils, or oil remain physically hidden representatives of distant time. In this formulation, the poet resembles the buried treasures discovered by the divining rod of the

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<sup>53</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Gedichte*, 1st edition (Tübingen: De Gruyter, 2003), 110, 683.

previous text. Just like the magic word of “Wünschelrute,” the poet remains undisturbed, and yet whose presence can still be felt through the reverberation of his words across the boundary of the ground and of time.

The poem’s end brings us back to the title. Just as the title suggests both the poet’s lot and his absence, the poem’s end sees this fate come to fruition. The text, resulting from the poet’s collective feeling on behalf of the world, persists in time, while the poet’s fate is to disappear. In other words, it is the poet’s transformation of this collective feeling into text that transcends the temporal boundaries of a single lifetime to further transform into a poet-less poem. This convergence of lot (*Los*) and absence (*-los*) also characterizes Eichendorff’s poetic goals, where the text loosens itself from the poet in order to cross boundaries of time. The successful poet creates poems (transformations of collective feeling) that eventually become *dichterlos* as they persist across multiple lifetimes.

Where the successful poet of “dichterlos” expires before his words reach the generations that follow him, Eichendorff examines the role of writing to action and to history in another poem. In the text “So oder so,” Eichendorff similarly addresses the word’s potential to cross boundaries of time:

So oder so

Die handeln und die dichten,  
Das ist der Lebenslauf,  
Der Eine macht Geschichten,  
Der Andre schreibt sie auf,  
Und der will beide richten;  
So schreibt und treibt sich's fort,  
Der Herr wird Alles schlichten,  
Verloren ist kein Wort.

In a similarly Eichendorffian fashion, at no point does the lyric voice become a stable “I” that is speaking, nor does the poet [*Dichter*] appear. Instead, Eichendorff engages with the power of the



word through a discussion of contrasting occupations. Here specifically, Eichendorff compares writing [*dichten*] and action [*handeln*], and much like in “dichterlos,” he emphasizes the ability of the word to persist beyond the span of a life. Eichendorff first outlines the order of a life before subverting the order in the final lines of the text. In the opening of the text, Eichendorff sets up an order of occupations, where action (making stories / histories) precedes transcription (writing stories / histories). Even here, the word comes forward as the connecting force between two groups: those that write [*die dichten*] and those that act [*die handeln*]. The established continuity between action and transcription defines the life, in which each occupation has a specific role *vis à vis* stories and histories [*Geschichten*]: one creates histories, the other transcribes them. Like the dream-state of the song in “Wünschelrute,” the life built from action and transcription forms the standard course of life [*Lebenslauf*] which Eichendorff disrupts through connection.

The disruptive element of this text comes forth in two other occupations, judging [*richten*] and resolving [*schlichten*], that seems to exercise power over the central two of writing and action. In the first case, the actor of verb *richten* is unclear. In one reading, the relative pronoun *der* could refer to *der Andre* of the line immediately preceding, signaling that those that write exercise judgement over both writing and acting. If this is the case, it would seem the writers are not successful in this endeavor, as the verb to want or to will [*will*] suggests an attempt, but not achievement. A much more definite actor carries out the following occupation of resolving conflict [*schlichten*]. *Der Herr* immediately indicates the Christian “Lord,” but could also be understood more generally as “the master.” Instead of the more suggestive appearance of *richten*, *schlichten* appears in the future tense, suggesting the inevitability of the process. In both cases, the word persists through judgement and resolution. Immediately following the reference

to resolution, the order of operations switches; where action precedes transcription in the opening, writing appears first in the closing portion of the text: “So schreibt und treibt sich’s fort.” Here writing appears with no reference to a writer (es schreibt sich fort), as if already uncoupled from an author, as well as from an inspiring action. The lord's effort to resolve—to produce a harmonious reconciliation of the tensions of stories and histories—appears to erase the action, but not the word, as the text ends with “Verloren ist kein Wort.” Both judgement and resolution suggest a corrective, in which elements or directions are either bent or shorn off, often in pursuit of greater continuity. The word, however, remains as a persistent element, even through the process of straightening or smoothing, as indicated by the final line “Verloren ist kein Wort.” The word also creates a new continuity, one that transcends its dependence on action to span lives.

Just as the text itself contains many ambiguous references as to the various agents of these various occupations, the title contains an ambiguity typical of Eichendorff’s works. *So oder so* sets up an ambivalent relationship between two unnamed approaches. One could read the doubled “so” of the opening to stand in for writing and action, or smoothing and straightening. In this reading, Eichendorff equates the two activities, or even perspectives on the course of life. However, this understanding would suggest that both approaches achieve the same result. The text, however, also demonstrates the persistence of the word. Read as “one way or another” [*So oder so*], the title fittingly describes the power of the word, that one way or another, irrespective of the poet’s life and time itself, persists, both as a disruption of time and as a continuity across temporal boundaries.

Temporal boundaries become a primary concern in Eichendorff’s “Symmetrie,” and while text creation does not appear explicitly, the representation of time through text similarly

achieves Eichendorff's pursuit of connection across disparate times. The text follows an order similar to "So oder so," where the poetic voice introduces the typical movement of time from the past, through the present, into the future, before presenting an idealized reformulation of these temporal relations. In its original appearance, a short second, almost aphoristic, strophe followed "Symmetrie," which has since caused debate about its belonging to the text as a whole.<sup>54</sup> I have chosen to include this short aphoristic strophe in the poem, which I will examine separately.

Symmetrie  
1810<sup>55</sup>

O Gegenwart, wie bist du schnelle,  
Zukunft, wie bist du morgenhelle,  
    Vergangenheit so abendrot!  
Das Abendrot soll ewig stehen,  
Die Morgenhelle frisch drein wehen,  
    So ist die Gegenwart nicht tot.

Der Tor, der lahmt auf einem Bein,  
    Das ist gar nicht zu leiden,  
Schlagt ihm das andre Bein entzwei,  
    So hinkt er doch auf beiden!<sup>56</sup>

The text opens with a statement on the linearity of time; a forward striving present moment constantly renews itself as the past slips away and the future rises in front of the lyrical voice. The exclamation can be read as a lament of transience, of the impossibility of holding onto the present moment in the face of a setting past and rising future. Eichendorff equates two

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<sup>54</sup> Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Gedichte. Text und Kommentar*, 899; Eichendorff, *Gedichte*, 155, 697.

<sup>55</sup> The date signals this poem's date of composition; however, it also expresses a kind of symmetry, if cut laterally.

<sup>56</sup> "Symmetrie," Joseph von Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Werke Des Freiherrn Joseph von Eichendorff: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006), 142.

divisions of time, past and future, with divisions of the day, evening and dawn, respectively. As such, the past is always ending, the future always beginning anew, and the present speeds through the darkness between the two. In this construction, both past and present are lost while speeding forward into the future. The following three lines of the strophe suggest a corrective, suggested by the verb *sollen*. In order to preserve the present, the evening and morning should meet. By mixing together evening and morning like breezes [*drein wehen*], the present becomes perpetual.

As with the magic word in “Wünschelrute,” the solution to temporal linearity remains unrealized. The verb *sollen* suggests a strong intention, but lacks any confirmation that this intention will be achieved. And yet, while the lyric voice cannot confirm the success of such a reorganization of time, he nonetheless achieves both a reorganization of time in the text and the symmetry of the title. Recall that in the first three lines, the text represents the abstract flow of time through the textual images of the setting and rising sun. In the next three lines, the terms “past” [*Vergangenheit*] and “future” [*Zukunft*] do not return, replaced instead by their symbolic correlates, the rising and setting sun. This symbolic replacement erases the previous order contained in the terms themselves, i.e. *Vergangenheit* has no longer elapsed [*vergangen*], *Zukunft* is no longer yet to come [*zukünftig*]. As symbolic representation and as text, Eichendorff represents time as more malleable. This malleability also comes out in the organization of these elements in the text itself. With each line dedicated to one of the three divisions of time, Eichendorff structures their appearance symmetrically: Gegenwart-Zukunft-Vergangenheit|Abendrot(Vergangenheit)-Morgenhelle(Zukunft)-Gegenwart.

The pursuit of symmetry and new continuity unites the two estranged strophes of this text. In the second strophe, the pursuit of symmetry takes a more violent turn. Here, the lyric

voice similarly offers a corrective to a problematic situation: the lamed fool should have his healthy leg broken so that he will limp evenly. At first perhaps obscured by the violence of the second strophe, both sections of “Symmetrie” outline a problematic continuity that must be disrupted in order to create a new continuity. In the second strophe, the lyric voice describes the fool’s limping gait as intolerable [*nicht zu leiden*] in the first two lines. In the context of the poem “Symmetrie,” the problem becomes the fool’s favoring of one leg over the other, which results in a lack of balance. The doubly-lamed gait of the next two lines, however, while still a limp [*hinken*] resolves this problem, in that the fool’s legs are brought into equilibrium. In both strophes of “Symmetrie,” we see Eichendorff’s approach to new continuity. While both sections of the text foreground symmetry, they also present its lack. Whether a fool’s uneven legs, or a future-oriented temporality, Eichendorff proposes transformative action as a new form of contact. The transformation in text of these temporal relationships between past, present and future at once draws attention to the dissymmetry of the current situation, while also presenting a potential new symmetry, one that itself is not entirely symmetrical.

Each of these poems represents a transformation of an aspect of the world into text. In “Wünschelrute,” the lyrical voice confronts the inner essence of all things as a slumbering song; in “So oder so,” the lyrical voice details the transformation of action into text; in “Dichterlos” the poet’s experience of collectivized feeling becomes the fruits of his labor; and in “Symmetrie” general temporal markers of “past” and “future” transform into the setting and rising sun, gesturing toward the possibility of temporal symmetry. These shifts from world to text oscillate between transformation and transcription. The poems at once foreground the transformative action of the poet, transferring an aspect of the world into the poem, while also recording this

transformation, halting it, in a sense. These poems foreground their own transformative origins, while persisting in time to confront situations common across temporal boundaries.

### **Words That Resonate: Eichendorff's Autobiographical Projects**

The surprising transformative contact afforded in Eichendorff's work is not unique to his lyric works. In his autobiographical works, the author similarly emphasizes the need for transformation in the relationship between life and text. Perhaps surprisingly, Eichendorff's pursuit of such transformation in his lyric works through the gradual decentering of the author extends to his autobiographical works. In these texts, Eichendorff explores the potential of this transformative approach to craft uniquely Eichendorffian autobiographical texts. This practice contrasts starkly to contemporary autobiographical projects. The autobiography of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries draws on the *Tagebücher* and confessional texts of the German Pietist tradition. The autobiographies of the eighteenth century in particular sought greater self-discovery beyond a mere list of actions that comprise a life. Günter Niggel stresses how the question at the heart of autobiographical writing during this period shifted from *what* a person had done and *what* that person was to *how* they became who they are.<sup>57</sup> Contemporaneous and influential to this shift in autobiographical writing during this period is the burgeoning notion of individuality that took hold, especially around the start of the nineteenth century. Eugene Stelzig draws attention to how the fundamental difference between the nineteenth-century autobiographical endeavor and later examples consists in the nineteenth-century's seeming unwavering faith in the completeness of the self. "Romantic writers differ fundamentally from our late-twentieth-century postmodern and dispersive sensibility in their root

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<sup>57</sup> Günter Niggel, "Die Vorgeschichte der psychologischen Autobiographie in Deutschland," *Études Germaniques* 50, no. 1 (January 1, 1995): 5–7.

assumption that there is a core self, no matter how mysterious or elusive, and their most telling experiences are intimately bound up with and often indeed are experiences *of it*.<sup>58</sup> Authors of this period, like Goethe and Rousseau, share the assumption that “they can render the plenitude of their experience in and through language, and that they can be at home with themselves, if anywhere, in their texts.”<sup>59</sup> Goethe’s behemoth autobiographical work, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, provides an illustrative example of autobiography in this period, as well as the backdrop for Eichendorff’s particular innovations in the genre.

Goethe’s *Dichtung und Wahrheit* was conceived as a completion of the self contained in Goethe’s poetic works. As the title suggests, Goethe openly acknowledged the mixture of truthful recounting of experience and poetic creation that gave rise to the autobiography. For Goethe, autobiography “was a programmatic procedure throughout his self-presentation, a poetic heightening of experience to a symbolic and humanly representative level according to which, to invoke a remark of his, he incorporated no trait that was not experienced, but no trait in the actual manner in which it was experienced.”<sup>60</sup> As such, Goethe’s approach to autobiography as a completion of his poetic works similarly links this work to the process of *Bildung*, replete with the same teleological impulses. It becomes the story of becoming. Goethe’s retelling of this story of becoming involves both the individual and his historical context and their relationship of mutual *Bildung*. In the very opening of his work, Goethe states explicitly his main objective in penning the autobiography, which he elevates to the central motivation of any biography:

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<sup>58</sup> Eugene L. Stelzig, *The Romantic Subject in Autobiography: Rousseau and Goethe*, 1st edition (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 11–12.

<sup>59</sup> Stelzig, 12.

<sup>60</sup> Stelzig, 16–17.

Denn dieses scheint die Hauptaufgabe der Biographie zu sein, den Menschen in seinen Zeitverhältnissen darzustellen und zu zeigen, inwiefern ihm das Ganze widerstrebt, inwiefern es ihn begünstigt, wie er sich eine Welt- und Menschenansicht daraus gebildet und wie er sie, wenn er Künstler, Dichter, Schriftsteller ist, wieder nach außen abgespiegelt. Hierzu wird aber ein kaum Erreichbares gefordert, daß nämlich das Individuum sich und sein Jahrhundert kenne, sich, inwiefern es unter allen Umständen dasselbe geblieben, das Jahrhundert, als welches sowohl den Willigen als Unwilligen mit sich fortreibt, bestimmt und bildet, dergestalt daß man wohl sagen kann, ein jeder, nur zehn Jahre früher oder später geboren, dürfte, was seine eigene Bildung und die Wirkung nach außen betrifft, ein ganz anderer geworden sein.<sup>61</sup>

For Goethe, the individual and his historical context are intimately bound together. Stelzig highlights the importance of historical circumstances in the formation of the self in his examination of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*: "Goethe sees a biological and even ecological relationship—a balance and interdependency—between the self and its world in his imaginative reconstruction of the history of his (richly informed) personality."<sup>62</sup> For Goethe, an understanding of the individual through autobiography becomes the entryway to an understanding of the world.

Both Goethe and Eichendorff recognized the role of poetic imagination in the autobiographical endeavor; however, these two authors differed in their approach to the individual and to *Bildung*-oriented progress. Eichendorff makes explicit his avoidance of intentionality in his comments on autobiography. The problem of autobiographical writing is intentionality in construction of one's own experience. Eichendorff purports to achieve this goal by shifting focus away from the individual at the center of the work so as to create resonance across temporal boundaries between author and reader.

Ich will jedoch weniger meinen Lebenslauf schildern, als die Zeit, in der ich gelebt, mit einem Wort: Erlebtes in weitestem Sinne. Wenn dennoch meine Person vorkommt, so

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<sup>61</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Aus Meinem Leben: Dichtung Und Wahrheit* (Leipzig: J. Singer, 1922), XV–XVI.

<sup>62</sup> Stelzig, *The Romantic Subject in Autobiography*, 5, 16.



soll sie eben nur die Reverbère sein, um die Bilder und Ereignisse schärfer zu beleuchten. [...] Man tadelt an den Memoiren häufig, daß sie entweder die Sentimentalität oder die Reflexion zu sehr vorwalten lassen. Mir scheint, wer die eine oder die andere absichtlich sucht, fehlt ebenso, als wer sie ängstlich vermeidet. Sie wechseln beide nothwendig im Leben, und so will ich denn schreiben, wie sich's eben schicken und fügen will. Und wenn auch immerhin weder meine Persönlichkeit noch meine Schicksale ein allgemeineres Interesse ansprechen, so dürften doch vielleicht manche Streiflichter dabei auch eine Zeit erhellen, die uns so nah und doch bereits so fern liegt und der Gegenwart so fremd geworden ist.<sup>63</sup>

While Goethe approaches the individual as the key to understanding the world, Eichendorff has a more pessimistic outlook on his own life's relevance to the general public. Instead, Eichendorff views the single life that structures the autobiography as a potential source of illumination, to unknown readers and to distant times. Eichendorff likens the individual life to an oil street lamp [*Reverbère*], which reflects [*réverbèrent*] the light of a flame contained within. In other words, it is not the flame itself that provides light, but its reflection (divorced from the flames' heat and contours) on the street below. In his evaluation of the autobiographical enterprise, Eichendorff voices the same skepticism of the ability for one to transcribe themselves without loss.

Eichendorff's ideal, rather, the autobiography entails a transformation of the person transcribed into a reflection of the self, rather than the wholesale representation of the person within the textual medium. It would seem that in order to completely [*ganz*] transform one's life into text, the autobiographer must accept that his persona [*Person*] is only part of what makes up a life. The transcribed persona recalls the autobiographical author, and yet is also bound up as an element of the constructed images and events, serving at times as their illumination.

In order to craft such an autobiography, Eichendorff approaches his life as both a transformation and a transcription. As we saw in the section on Eichendorff's lyric works, the

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<sup>63</sup> Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 1059–60.

poetic text possesses a transformative potential that extends beyond the life of the poet. In his autobiographical works, Eichendorff similarly pursues this transformation in transcribing the life into text. The autobiographical transcription entails transformation of the author, his world, and his perspective. In contrast to Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (a major influence for Eichendorff's *Erlebtes* and *Unstern*), which orients the world around the poetic autobiographer, Eichendorff assigns the autobiographical persona a supporting role in the events transcribed. "Der Biograph wird zum Chronisten, der mit der Ausrichtung seines Spiegels unerkant die Perspektive bestimmt und selbst gar nicht in Erscheinung tritt."<sup>64</sup> Misa Fujiwara examines Eichendorff's autobiographical text *Unstern* as both an homage and critique of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Fujiwara highlights how Eichendorff achieves such a perspective in his autobiographical works, creating a schism between the self and representation, resulting in distance from reality and the production of a fictional 'ich.'<sup>65</sup> "Das aber würde heißen, dass zwischen dem geschilderten Ich und dem Erzähler in *Unstern* ein ungelöster Zwiespalt besteht. Je mehr der Erzähler über sich selbst schreibt, desto fiktiver wird das Geschriebene, ganz gleich, welche Faktizitäten nun auch in den Bericht eingeschoben sein mögen."<sup>66</sup> According to Fujiwara, Eichendorff's autobiographical work makes no presumption of *Wahrheit*, as Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* might attempt. Instead, the persona of the author becomes a poetization of the self, an approach that extends to Eichendorff's representation of time in text. Eichendorff acknowledges that the recollection of the both near and distant time indicated in his comments

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<sup>64</sup> Eichendorff, 889.

<sup>65</sup> Misa Fujiwara, "Das fiktive Ich oder die Suche nach der 'Wahrheit'. Überlegungen zu Eichendorffs autobiografischem Versuch *Unstern*," in *Nachleben der Toten - Autofiktion*, ed. Hiroshi Yamamoto (München: Iudicium Verlag, 2017), 117–19, 122.

<sup>66</sup> Fujiwara, 122.

on autobiography is not an objective enterprise. In *Der Adel und die Revolution*, he conveys such direct recollection as bound up in fiction creation: “Sehr alte Leute wissen sich noch der sogenannten guten alten Zeit zu erinnern. Sie war aber eigentlich weder gut noch alt, sondern nur noch eine Karikatur des alten Guten.”<sup>67</sup> Again, the act of recollection entails a transformative transcription. By acknowledging both the transcription of the human life and the time bound up with it, Eichendorff approaches the transcription of life into text not as *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, but rather *Dichtung* with the potential of illuminating *Wahrheit* “als Streiflichter.” Here Eichendorff further emphasizes the indirect approach of the autobiography and the role of transformative potential. The text offers the potential illumination of differing times, both near and far, by becoming stray rays of light [*Streflichter*].

Essential to Eichendorff’s approach to autobiography, and to writing itself, is displacement, both as the author’s signature style and as an oft-confronted theme. In Eichendorff’s autobiographical endeavors, we encounter an authorial voice displaced from the center of the text, while at the same time reporting on his own displacement in a socio-historical context. In her analysis of Eichendorff’s and Jean Paul’s specific contributions to the genre of autobiography in the wake of Goethe’s *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Bettina Knauer highlights the importance of such displacement in Eichendorff’s works: “Eichendorffs Autobiographie ist wesentlich durch eine zeitlich und räumlich zu verstehende Randposition bestimmt. Es ist die Lebensbeschreibung eines zu spät Geborenen, der “auf dem einsamen Landschloß zu L.” fern der großen Weltzusammenhänge das Licht der Welt erblickt.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 1064.

<sup>68</sup> Bettina Knauer, “Kombinatorik, Digression Und Inszenierung Als Schreibweisen Vom Ich: Jean Pauls Und Joseph von Eichendorffs Autobiographische Entwürfe,” *Freies Deutsches Hochstift - Frankfurter Goethe-Museum. Jahrbuch Des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts. - Göttingen : Wallstein*, 1997, 196.

Eichendorff's use of displacement in his autobiographical writing sets up a stark contrast between his works and Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Most famously, Eichendorff's rendering of his own birth scene in *Unstern* engages playfully with the ideal of Goethe's autobiographical project. Where Goethe frames the individual as fully embedded within a specific historical and even cosmological context, Eichendorff shifts this frame to examine an autobiographical subject constantly out of place. Let us examine these two scenes side by side:

Goethe, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*:

Am 28ten August 1749, Mittags mit dem Glockenschlage zwölf, kam ich in Frankfurt am Main auf die Welt. Die Konstellation war glücklich: die Sonne stand im Zeichen der Jungfrau und kulminierte für den Tag; Jupiter und Venus blickten sie freundlich an, Merkur nicht widerwärtig, Saturn und Mars verhielten sich gleichgültig; nur der Mond, der soeben voll ward, übte die Kraft seines Gegenscheins um so mehr, als zugleich seine Planetenstunde eingetreten war. Er widersetzte sich daher meiner Geburt, die nicht eher erfolgen konnte, als bis diese Stunde vorübergegangen. Diese guten Aspekten, welche mir die Astrologen in der Folgezeit sehr hoch anzurechnen wußten, mögen wohl Ursache an meiner Erhaltung gewesen sein.<sup>69</sup>

Eichendorff, *Unstern* fragments:

Der Winter des Jahres 1788 war so streng, daß die Schindelnägel auf den Dächern krachten [...] Die Konstellation war überaus günstig, Jupiter und Venus blinkten freundlich auf die weißen Dächer, der Mond stand im Zeichen der Jungfrau und mußte Schlag Mitternacht kulminieren. [...] der Mond hatte so eben kulminiert! um ein Haar wäre ich zur glücklichen Stunde geboren worden, ich kam grade nur um anderthalb Minuten zu spät, und zwar in der Konfusion mit den Füßen zuerst, man sagt, ich habe damit ein Entrechat gemacht.<sup>70</sup>

Like Goethe, Eichendorff anchors his birth in a cosmological context; however, Eichendorff undermines his own situation within this context through subtle changes. Compared to Goethe's

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<sup>69</sup> Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke: Aus meinem Leben. Dichtung und Wahrheit*, vol. 16 (München: Carl Hanser Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, 1985), 5.

<sup>70</sup> "Unstern," Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 351–52.

historically and cosmologically rooted birth, Eichendorff's birth appears either loosened from such a context, or entirely displaced. Instead of the warm late August midday of Goethe's birth, Eichendorff's autobiographical persona arrives in the middle of a cold and clear winter night. In place of the sun in Virgo, Eichendorff situates the moon in the same sign. Eichendorff adds indeterminacy to this cosmological context. Goethe describes the constellation attending his birth as happy [*glücklich*], while Eichendorff describes the situation as opportune [*günstig*] (but not assured). Where Jupiter and Venus look upon the scene kindly [*blickten freundlich an*] in Goethe's case, Eichendorff's Jupiter and Venus waver [*blinken*].

The birth itself in Eichendorff's autobiographical writing appears displaced compared to that of Goethe. As Knauer, Fujiwara, and Scheible emphasize, Eichendorff's playful depiction of the autobiographical birth scene further emphasizes the importance of context that Goethe sets up in his own autobiography.<sup>71</sup> "Die Pointe besteht darin, dass er Goethe nicht eigentlich widerspricht, sondern dessen Aussage lediglich zuspitzt. Goethes Bemerkung, eine um zehn Jahre frühere oder spätere Geburt entscheide bereits über den Lebenslauf eines Menschen, wird hier auf die Spanne von anderthalb Minuten verkürzt."<sup>72</sup> Approached from the opposite side, Eichendorff explores the consequences of displacement for the singular person. As the above passage shows, Eichendorff's autobiographical subject comes into the world a few minutes too late [*anderthalb Minuten zu spät*] and in the wrong direction [*mit den Füßen zuerst*]. What Eichendorff's inversion and displacement of the birth scene accomplishes, however, is that

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<sup>71</sup> Fujiwara, "Das fiktive Ich oder die Suche nach der 'Wahrheit'. Überlegungen zu Eichendorffs autobiografischem Versuch Unstern," 123–25; Knauer, "Kombinatorik, Digression Und Inszenierung Als Schreibweisen Vom Ich," 193–94.

<sup>72</sup> Hartmut Scheible, "Das 'ungeheuer Gantze': Eichendorffs autobiographische Schriften," in *Deutsch im Kontakt der Kulturen. - Berlin : trafo*, 2006, 221.

whether embedded within or displaced from the correct context, the autobiographical life still moves forward, and in some cases in great leaps [*Entrechat*].

In the “Einsiedler-Episode,” another section of the *Erlebtes* fragments, Eichendorff further explores the connective and creative potential of displacement. Composed at the same time as Eichendorff’s other autobiographical texts, the “Einsiedler-Episode” first appeared as the opening to the *Erlebtes* fragments and chapters, under the title “Vorwort” in the 1908 *Sämtliche Werke* compiled by Wilhelm Kosch.<sup>73</sup> While the text resembles Eichendorff’s novelistic works, autobiographical references abound; the text itself follows Eichendorff’s model of depersonalized autobiographical writing and similarly foregrounds displacement as constitutive of his lived experience.

Eichendorff built the text around a series of displacements. The first displacement occurs at the very start of the text: the narrator notices castle ruins from the window of his train car. To the narrator, the ruins appear entirely strange [*ganz ungewöhnlich*], and perhaps out of place in a modern world, one the narrator describes as entirely made up of train stations.<sup>74</sup> The strangeness of the ruins prompts the narrator to ask his fellow passengers about their history, only to find out that they house another displaced entity, a hermit. Intrigued by these two temporally incongruent entities, the narrator himself decides to take a detour in the trajectory of the journey:

Alle stimmten endlich darin überein, daß besagter Einsiedler etwas verdreht im Kopfe sein müsse. Diese Notwendigkeit wollte mir zwar keinesweges so unbedingt einleuchten, doch war das Wenige, das ich gehört, abenteuerlich genug, um mich neugierig zu machen. Ich beschloß daher, auf der nächsten Station zurückzubleiben, und den seltsamen Kauz wo möglich in seinem eigenen Neste aufzusuchen.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Scheible, 223.

<sup>74</sup> Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 381.

<sup>75</sup> Eichendorff, 382.

The narrator describes the hermit [*Einsiedler*, earlier *Eremit*] as *verdreht*, already emphasizing a quality of the character that seeks to exempt itself from the present. The narrator adopts a similar position, deciding to remain in place [*zurückbleiben*] against the flow of the train. Like *verdreht*, *zurück-* indicates a countermovement.

Once out of the train, the narrator further dislodges himself from a bustling context. Mirroring the confusion of the birth scene that displaced Eichendorff's entrance into the world in *Erlebtes*, the train station becomes another chaotic context through which Eichendorff's narrator moves: "In den Bahnhöfen ist eine so große Eilfertigkeit, daß man vor lauter Eile mit nichts fertig werden kann."<sup>76</sup> The narrator alone appears capable of a distanced perspective on the scene, in which all other characters are firmly embedded. When asking for directions from passersby, the narrator receives no answer: "der Befragte blickte verwundert nach der bezeichneten Richtung hin, ich glaube, er hatte die Ruine bisher noch gar nicht bemerkt." Once again, the narrator turns away from his current context, toward a space of displacement, one that again appears to move outside the flow of time: "Desto besser! dachte ich, schnürte mein Ränzel und schritt wieder einmal ... in die unbestimmte Abenteuerlichkeit des altmodischen Wanderlebens hinein." Both *unbestimmt* and *altmodisch* convey the narrator's progression toward increasing ambiguity. The term *altmodisch* especially conveys the temporal disruption of the narrator's journey. For an object to be old-fashioned, it must either dislodge itself from an original temporal context in which it appeared contemporary, or it must consciously come into being in a style that recalls the past (it is either from an *old fashion* that has passed, or it has been *fashioned* to look *old*).

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<sup>76</sup> Eichendorff, 382.

The end result of this series of displacements is the narrator's eventual meeting with the hermit, and it is in this interaction that transformative potential of the disruptive connection that guides Eichendorff's work as a whole comes forward in his autobiographical works. Once the narrator himself is displaced, he confronts a similarly displaced, mysterious hermit only to find a reflection of himself. Just before the narrator encounters the hermit, we find the first description of the narrator himself as he ascends the hill: "So kletterte ich unter dem feierlichen Waldesrauschen [...] zwischen Weißdorn und Berberitzen, die im vollen Blütenstaat jugendlichen Übermuts auf meine grauen Haare und abetragene Wandertasche stichelten."<sup>77</sup> The narrator betrays his age in both his gray hair and his tattered bag, which both brush by the youth of the surrounding shrubs. In the confrontation with the hermit, the narrator discovers his old companion from former military service, now aged, like the narrator himself:

Also am Ende doch wirklich ein Eremit im alten Stil, dachte ich und eilte der bezeichneten Geißblattlaube zu. Dort saß ein Mann, den Rücken nach mir gekehrt [...] Da wandte sich der Einsiedler. – Arthur! rief ich ganz erstaunt – es war mein liebster Kriegskamerad von Lützowschen Korps! [...] Er trug nichts weniger, als eine korrekte Einsiedler-Uniform, grünen kurzen Jagdrock und nur einen schönen vollen Bart, wie ihn unsere modernen Einsiedler in den Kaffeehäusern und Lesekabinetten tragen.<sup>78</sup>

The hermit appears similarly temporally inconsistent, recalling age and modern qualities alike. Like the narrator's own appearance, the hermit displays his age in his long, full beard, and yet recalls a modern context of coffee houses and reading rooms. The *unerhörte Begebenheit* at the center of the novella-like fragment, the hermit's true identity, draws both hermit and narrator together. Their similar age and history with the "Lützowschen Freikorps" unite both figures with

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<sup>77</sup> Eichendorff, 383.

<sup>78</sup> Eichendorff, 384.



Eichendorff himself.<sup>79</sup> A further indication of Eichendorff's autobiographical approach to the hermit, as well as to the narrator, is the hermit's occupation at the time of discovery. Upon recognizing his friend Arthur, the narrator exclaims, "Um des Himmels willen, was machst denn Du hier?" to which the hermit replies: "Ich lese Calderons Autos."<sup>80</sup> At the same time that Eichendorff composed this fragment, he was actively reading and translating the very same text—a text to which I will turn in the next section of this chapter.<sup>81</sup>

In summation, Eichendorff splits his *persona* across the two displaced characters of this text so that it no longer dominates, instead highlighting a generalized feeling of displacement. The text culminates in a surprising moment of contact in which the narrator encounters an Other, which is also a reflection of the Self:

Wir hatten uns seit den Kriegsjahren nicht mehr gesehen; nun beschauten wir einander eine Zeit lang stillschweigend, bis wir zuletzt beide in ein lautes Lachen ausbrachen: so uralt und ehrwürdig waren wir beide seitdem geworden; nur seine Augen waren noch immer die alten, treuen, ich hatte ihn sogleich an dem ganz eigentümlichen Blicke wiedererkannt.<sup>82</sup>

In the disruption of the flow of travel and displacement from the immanent modern world of the train station, Eichendorff's narrator reconnects to a past self, which is also an entirely new connection to an aged hermit now living in castle ruins. Neither hermit, nor narrator, nor author restore the past (both men remain old, the castle remains in ruins), and yet all parties find connection in this punctuation of continua of travel and time.

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<sup>79</sup> Scheible, "Das 'ungeheuerere Gantze,'" 223.

<sup>80</sup> Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 384.

<sup>81</sup> Judith Purver, "'Das Romantische Selbst Ist Eine Übersetzung': Eichendorff's Translation from Spanish in Their Romantic Context," in *Romantik and Romance: Cultural Interanimation in European Romanticism*. (University of Strathclyde Department of Modern Language, 2000), 45.

<sup>82</sup> Eichendorff, *Tagebücher/Autobiographische Dichtungen/Historische und Politische Schriften*, 385.

## Conversations Across Time: Eichendorff's Translations from Spanish

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, translation played an instrumental role in thought surrounding poetic creation, and even the German language in its entirety. Many translators, from this period to our current moment, credit Martin Luther's translation of the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into German as the origin point of German as we know it.<sup>83</sup> Susan Bernofsky suggests that nineteenth-century Germany is the "golden age of translation."<sup>84</sup> As Bernofsky notes, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Friedrich Hölderlin, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and August Wilhelm Schlegel, among many others, produced some of the most influential translations of foreign language works in this period. Many of these translations have continued to be printed, even into our current moment.<sup>85</sup>

The intense discussions of translation and language during this period also affected the conception of the poetic act; indeed, the scope of translation conceived as language-to-language transmission was broadened and used as a paradigm for poetic creativity itself. Exemplary for this shift was Johann Gottfried Herder, who wrote as follows: "Die Sprache ist nur Kanal, der wahre Dichter nur Dollmetscher, oder noch eigentlicher der Überbringer der Natur in die Seele und in das Herz seiner Brüder."<sup>86</sup> In Herder's formulation, the poet translates nature into the language of human heart. Novalis similarly suggests in a letter from November 30th, 1797, "Übersetzen ist so gut dichten, als eigne Werck zu stande bringen – und schwerer, seltner. Am

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<sup>83</sup> Adam Schnitzer, "A History in Translation: Schleiermacher, Plato, and the University of Berlin," *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 75, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 56–57.

<sup>84</sup> Susan Bernofsky, *Foreign Words: Translator-Authors in the Age of Goethe*, First Edition (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2005), ix.

<sup>85</sup> Schnitzer, "A History in Translation," 53–54.

<sup>86</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 8 (Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 1994), 339.

Ende ist alle Poesie Übersetzung.”<sup>87</sup> Translation (*Über-setzung*) implies above all the crossing of boundaries: from the foreign to the local and from the local to the foreign. For “service translators,” to borrow Bernofsky’s term, like Schleiermacher, translation consists in a movement from the foreign language *into* the target language (German), for which the translator “strives to subjugate his own authorial intention to that of the author of the original text.”<sup>88</sup> Friedrich Kittler, however, points out that during this period, the poetic act can also translate *out* of the target language. For Kittler, to translate *out* of the “mother tongue” is to distill from one’s native tongue part of its original discourse, thereby altering the notion of the mother tongue itself. This ability to translate out of the “mother tongue,” according to Kittler, defines the poet.<sup>89</sup> In reversing the direction, the poet translating out of the mother tongue achieves contact with the foreign.

In connecting *Poesie* and translation, authors around 1800 highlight the creative and retentive features of translation itself. The translation at once retains the content of the original, while also creating a new form to house this content. The translation is simultaneously a relic of the past and a projection into a future. For romantic authors like Novalis, translation serves as a method for rediscovering and even creating an “Ursprache,” a language at once foreign and natural. In his lecture on Schelling and Kant, Jacques Derrida locates in the translations of the romantic period an effort to create as well as recreate:

“Roughly speaking what we call German Romanticism, which was *at once* a moment of intense, restless, tortured, fascinated reflection on translation, its possibility, its necessity,

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<sup>87</sup> Novalis, Paul Kluckhohn, and R. H Samuel, *Novalis Schriften: Die Werke Friedrich von Hardenbergs* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer VerlaG, 1960), 237.

<sup>88</sup> Bernofsky, *Foreign Words*, ix.

<sup>89</sup> Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, 1st edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1992), 73–74.

its meaning for German language and literature *and* a moment when a certain thinking about *Bildung*, *Einbildung*, and all the modifications of *bilden* are inseparable from what one could call precisely the imperative of translation, the task of the translator, the duty-to-translate.”<sup>90</sup>

Derrida sees in translation the unification of archeology (uncovering what is past) and architecture (building into the future); translation in the romantic period seeks to recover what is lost and create something new. Alison Stone describes a similar aim in Novalis’s mature works. The romantic author was concerned with “showing how we could reacquire a (presently lost) experience of natural phenomena as 'enchanted'.”<sup>91</sup> This pursuit of enchanted, lost knowledge works itself out in language. In Antoine Berman’s account of translation practices of the nineteenth century, translation facilitates a blending of the familiar and the foreign.

The theory of poetic language [...] in Novalis and F. Schlegel, [...] results [...] in a theory of the “state of mystery” [*Geheimzustand*]. At the basis of this, first of all, is the idea, popular at the end of the eighteenth century, of a superior language, a Sanskrit for initiates. [...] It describes the supreme poetic operation by which language becomes both familiar and foreign, near and distant, clear and obscure, intelligible and unintelligible, communicable and incommunicable. [...] The place of the work is the distant, the unknown-known, the familiar foreign.<sup>92</sup>

Whether framed as the pursuit of a more natural language, or a superior “Sanskrit,” translation has the potential to pull the poet and reader alike out of the common understanding of the world. In this romantic formulation, poetry as translation facilitates the movement *out* of a common approach to language and *into* an enchanted future. The poet progresses from original to translation.

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<sup>90</sup> Jacques Derrida, “Theology of Translation,” in *Eyes of the University: Right to Philosophy 2*, 1st edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004), 65.

<sup>91</sup> Alison Stone, “Being, Knowledge and Nature in Novalis,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46, no. 1 (2008): 141.

<sup>92</sup> Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, trans. S. Heyvaert (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 98.

Scholarship has in the meantime assembled a canon of thinkers and poets around 1800 most intimately associated with the aesthetics and practice of translation: Tieck, Schleiermacher, the Schlegel brothers, Goethe, Novalis, Kleist, and Hölderlin. Rarely is the later romantic Joseph von Eichendorff mentioned in this constellation. However, Eichendorff took up the task of translation late in his creative life, beginning work on translations around 1838. His translations appeared as an appended eighth section to the seven sections of his 1841 collection *Gesammelte Werke*. The translations from Spanish he produced offer insight into his approach to both translation and poetic creation. Eichendorff translated *siglo de oro* poetry as well as prose and dramatic works from Don Juan Manuel, Miguel de Cervantes, and Pedro Calderón de la Barca.<sup>93</sup> While the translations of the works of Cervantes, Calderón, and Manuel follow the tradition of “service translations” akin to Schleiermacher, Eichendorff’s translations of the romances is exceedingly free, and according to Judith Purver, “amounting to re-creations in the manner of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.”<sup>94</sup> Eichendorff altered poetic form, historical details, shifted tone, and even incorporated hallmarks of German romantic works like “Waldeinsamkeit” and expressions from his own lyric works like “Herzensgrunde.”<sup>95</sup> As Purver highlights, Eichendorff’s

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<sup>93</sup> Purver, “‘Das Romantische Selbst Ist Eine Übersetzung’: Eichendorff’s Translation from Spanish in Their Romantic Context,” 37–38, 41–42, 49–50. The romances stem from Jacob Grimm’s collection “Silva de romances viejos” and V.A. Huber’s “Spanisches Lesebuch”; Eichendorff produced the first and only extant German translation of Manuel’s “El Conde Lucanor”; Of Cervantes’s works, Eichendorff translated a number of entremeses dear the end of his life.

<sup>94</sup> Purver, 37.

<sup>95</sup> Purver, 38–39. “He creates stanza forms where there were none before; alters the structure to produce greater lyrical or dramatic impact; expands or compresses; introduces internal rhymes and alliterations which are not in the original; removes place names and other concrete historical details; tones down harsher features—realistic descriptions of cruelty, death, seduction, adultery, and malice; heightens the emotional impact of the role of nature; and includes vocabulary and turns of phrase characteristic of German folk-songs as mediated by the *Wunderhorn*: diminutives such as *Schifflein*, *Vöglein*; of Romanticism: *Waldeinsamkeit*, a term coined by Tieck; and not least of his poetry: “aus Herzensgrunde”,

translations follow Romantic creative impulses, such as the translation practice outlined in Brentano's *Godwi*. Just as *Godwi*'s narrator, Maria, theorizes, Eichendorff approaches translation as a transformation of both content and form.

However, as a whole, Eichendorff's translation practice resembles neither the "authorial translation" (Bernofsky) practices of Kleist, Tieck, and Goethe nor the service translations of Schleiermacher or Hölderlin. "Authorial translations" bear the indelible marks of their authors, while service translations attempt to bring the reading audience as close as possible to the original context of the work and its author.<sup>96</sup> While the authorial method emphasizes the creation of something new, and the service translation a rediscovery of something foreign and distant, Eichendorff identifies in the foreign and distant something familiar, and in translating, crafts something new. Like Eichendorff's poetic and autobiographical practice, the author's translation practice blends aspects of authorial and service translation practices, crafting a work that at once appears authorless and uniquely Eichendorffian. In this section, I will consider two examples of Eichendorff's practice from the beginning and end of his translation period: a more free translation of a seventeenth-century poem by Borja Principe des Esquilache that Eichendorff published in 1842, and a more faithful translation of one of Calderón's *autos sacramentales* published more than a decade later in 1853. Whether free or faithful, Eichendorff engages in transformative transcription in his translations by playing with and exploring the transformative potential of the word. The translations presented here offer varying amounts of new material while also retaining a strong connection to the original text. The process of translation always

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'Herzensbruder', or lines such as 'Wie mein Herz von Schmerz zerissen.' The result, as Schulhof states, is modernized, Germanized, and "Eichendorffized".

<sup>96</sup> Bernofsky, *Foreign Words*, ix–xi; Henrik S Wilberg, "Translation as Subversion: Ludwig Tieck's Don Quixote and the Poetic Logic of Jena Romanticism," *Monatshefte* 108, no. 1 (2016): 42–44.

entails transformation and temporal dislocation; however, Eichendorff draws these facts to the surface in his transformative transcriptive practice by drawing attention to the textual process of translation itself within the translation. More precisely, these translations are also meta-translations: works that not only reflect on the process of translation, but that also find this very aesthetics of translation latent in the original textual artifacts. Working backward, I will begin with Eichendorff's translation of Calderón.

Even before Eichendorff's engagement with these texts, the genre *auto sacramental* itself represents a transformative process. These one-act didactic verse plays were performed in the streets and squares during Corpus Christi week, itself a celebration of the transubstantiation. In addition to this celebration of transformation, these texts were themselves syncretic and generic transformations of medieval mystery and morality plays inasmuch as they placed classical mythology in the service of Catholic doctrine of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>97</sup> This is especially true of Calderón's *autos* in general, and of his *El divino Orfeo* specifically. Calderón's *autos* represent the height of this syncretic mood of the Corpus Christi festivities, and Paul Joseph Lennon calls his *El divino Orfeo* "a tapestry of allusions to Ovidian, Virgilian, and biblical sources."<sup>98</sup> Chief among the sources for Calderón's *auto* are the book of Genesis and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. *El divino Orfeo* is a Christianization of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice through a retelling of the stories of creation (both biblical and Ovidian), the fall of mankind, the journey to the underworld, and redemption through Christ's sacrifice.<sup>99</sup> The text follows the

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<sup>97</sup> Purver, "Das Romantische Selbst Ist Eine Übersetzung": Eichendorff's Translation from Spanish in Their Romantic Context," 53.

<sup>98</sup> Paul Joseph Lennon, "Sources, Syncretism, and Significance in Calderón's *El Divino Orfeo* (c. 1634)," *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 68, no. 2 (2016): 93.

<sup>99</sup> Lennon, 71.

Prince of Darkness [*El Príncipe de las Tinieblas*] and Envy [*La Envidia*] who witness Orpheus's creation of the world, the seven days, and a personified humankind [*La Naturaleza humana*] through song. Envy and the Prince of Darkness then deceive humankind to partake of the fruit from the forbidden tree, after which she is taken to the underworld and must be rescued by Orpheus with the aid of his lyre and cross-emblazoned staff. Calderón seizes on the similarities between Christian and classical conceptions of creation, Orphic katabasis and Christian resurrection, in order to craft a new text which itself crosses the Christian/Pagan boundary, thereby allowing these seemingly opposed domains to transform themselves in contact with their respective other. In short, Calderón transforms Virgil's and Ovid's accounts of Orpheus and Eurydice into a Christian tale in celebration of a core transformation of Catholic doctrine, the transubstantiation. Lennon highlights how the text itself underwent transformation between Calderón's 1634 version and the later 1663 revision.<sup>100</sup> As a whole, the text can be understood as one about the transformation of the world, which itself underwent translation, in a genre born of the transformation of classical sources, in the service of a Catholic celebration of transformation. To this series of transformations, Eichendorff adds yet another that highlights the transformative potential of the text.

As stated previously, Eichendorff's *Der göttliche Orpheus*, translated from the 1663 version, follows a more faithful translation practice. His translations of the *autos* as a whole were seen by his contemporaries as the first to successfully represent the intentions of the original author in the German language, and still is.<sup>101</sup> Eichendorff preserved the syncretic tradition of the

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<sup>100</sup> Lennon, 71–72.

<sup>101</sup> Purver, “‘Das Romantische Selbst Ist Eine Übersetzung’: Eichendorff's Translation from Spanish in Their Romantic Context,” 57.



*autos* that combines the serious and the comic, the sacred and profane. Where necessary, Eichendorff altered meter, but the poet went to great lengths to preserve rhyme scheme and even the assonances of the original Spanish text.<sup>102</sup>

While exceedingly faithful, the text does include notable differences from the original. I will not enumerate here every difference between the translation and the original; instead, I will outline moments that Eichendorff's translation practice draws out the distance between the reader and Calderón's original, while simultaneously transforming the text to form a connection to the original, without replacing it. The most obvious, and most consistent change Eichendorff makes in his translation, is the clipping and alteration of stage-directions. As mentioned before, Calderón's text was always meant to be performed for the festivities of the Corpus Christi week. Eichendorff's translation, however, indicates that his version is meant more for an audience of readers rather than festival goers.<sup>103</sup> This is the first transformation in Eichendorff's translation, and in keeping with transformative transcription, this transformation emphasizes the role of the text in such an act. The translation becomes the primary vehicle of communication of an original text itself instead of the live performance.

Eichendorff foregrounds text and language within the text itself at the very start of the play in the creation scene. After a brief dialogue between Envy [*die Scheelsucht*] and the Prince of Darkness [*der Fürst der Finsterniß*], Orpheus enters singing, initiating the creation of the world.

Ungeborne Masse, formlos  
In sich selber noch verschlungen,  
Nichts einst in der Schrift geheißten,

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<sup>102</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Übersetzungen I,2 - Geistliche Schauspiele von Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca*, 1st edition (Tübingen: De Gruyter, 2003), 563.

<sup>103</sup> Eichendorff, 556.

Chaos von den Dichtertzungen!<sup>104</sup>

[¡Ah de ese informe embrión!  
¡Ah de esa masa confusa  
a quien llamará el poeta  
caos y nada la escritura!]<sup>105</sup>

In both original and translation, Orpheus addresses in song the Urstoff of the universe, while connecting the creative gesture to poetry and writing. However, a difference in order persists throughout this short section. To start, Eichendorff's translation of *embrión* as *Ungeborne Masse* shifts the emphasis of becoming. While both terms gesture toward an eventual birth, *Embrión* emphasizes a potential being viewed from the perspective of its current situation, from its point of origin; whereas *Ungeborne Masse* emphasizes the potential end result, the birth itself. *Embrión* directs the reader from an imagined beginning outward, while *Ungeborne* leads the reader to contemplate the past of the action that has already come into being, namely the birth of the universe. In the former, the reader experiences the act of becoming with the text, and in the latter, the text emphasizes the action that leads to the process of becoming that has already transpired.

Eichendorff extends this shift in temporal perspective through the discussion of text itself. Immediately following his address to the embryonic universe, Orpheus remarks on how such a state will be transcribed; "Nichts einst in der Schrift geheißen, / Chaos von den Dichtertzungen!" [*a quien llamará el poeta / caos y nada la escritura!*]. Eichendorff again shifts the temporal perspective on this textual act. In the original, Calderón uses the future-oriented *llamará*, which Eichendorff translates into the past-oriented *einst geheißen*. In the original, the

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<sup>104</sup> Eichendorff, 8 ll. 75-78.

<sup>105</sup> P. (Pedro) Calderón-de-la-Barca, *El divino Orfeo (1663)* (GRISO-Universidad de Navarra, 1999), 5 ll. 77-80.

event represented is yet to be transcribed, and in Eichendorff's translation the text has already been written. Not only does Eichendorff alter the temporal relationship between event and transcription, he also alters the linear order of their appearance in the text itself. Eichendorff reverses the order of Orpheus's remark in the original to position the text [*Schrift*] as antecedent to the poetic utterance [*Dichterzungen*].

The temporal shift Eichendorff initiates in the translation of the creation scene prepares a further shift, which draws the reader's attention to translation itself. In a later scene, Pleasure [*Placer/das Vergnügen*], another character, recounts the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice as part of a trick he plays on The Prince of Darkness and Envy. In his retelling, Pleasure explains the etymology of both of their names. In his translation of this monologue, Eichendorff draws in elements of translation. Beginning with Orpheus, Pleasure describes the relationship between the name and the character's defining trait:

Unter dieses Landes Wundern  
Ist ein Sanger jetzt das erste,  
Denn bei seiner Stimme Klang  
Bleibt kein Wesen ohne Regung.  
Orpheus wird er drum genannt,  
Das ist in der bersetzung:  
Goldmund oder goldne Stimme;<sup>106</sup>

[Entre otras grandezas suyas,  
es hoy su mayor grandeza  
un musico que a su voz  
no hay cosa que no se mueva,  
a cuya causa es su nombre  
Orfeo, que se interpreta  
dorada voz o voz de oro,]<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Eichendorff, *bersetzungen I,2 - Geistliche Schauspiele von Don Pedro Calderon de la Barca*, 30 ll.610-16.

<sup>107</sup> Calderon-de-la-Barca, *El divino Orfeo (1663)*, 26 ll. 636-43.

Here Eichendorff follows the order of name creation, in which the name Orpheus follows the defining action of singing. However, Eichendorff chooses to call attention to the naming action *as* an act of translation. Eichendorff translates *interpretar* as *übersetzen*, thereby foregrounding the textual dimension of naming. The use of *Überetzung* would also call attention to the text itself as translation.

The connection to translation extends into Pleasure's description of Eurydice, where he similarly describes the reasoning for her name.

Keine Wissenschaft, womit sie  
Nicht so überreich versehen,  
Daß sie darum Euridice  
Wird geheißten, welches ähnlich  
Klingt wie Erudition,  
Wenn man's etwas anders wendet.<sup>108</sup>

[No hay ciencia de que no esté  
dotada, tanto que al verla  
tan sabia que incluye toda  
la erudición de las ciencias,  
Eurídice la han llamado  
los que al pronunciarla alteran  
al nombre de erudición  
el acento o la cadencia]<sup>109</sup>

In this section, Eichendorff alters the relation between action and name. Eurydice's name comes from the false pronunciation of *erudición*, which Calderón includes before and after the name Eurydice in the text itself. In Eichendorff's translation, however, the text must make a different connection between the name and its referent. Eichendorff still emphasizes the sonic similarity between Eurydice and *Erudition*, but he again reverses the order of action and text. In the

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<sup>108</sup> Eichendorff, *Übersetzungen I,2 - Geistliche Schauspiele von Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca*, 31 ll. 637-42.

<sup>109</sup> Calderón-de-la-Barca, *El divino Orfeo (1663)*, 27 ll. 664-71.

Spanish, the name Eurydice results from altering the already extant term *erudición*. In the German, Eurydice “sounds like” *Erudition* “when one says it differently,” the it [*das*] referring to the name, meaning the similarity starts with the name. In other words, Eichendorff must again create connections between points of the text: he provides the latinized term *Erudition* for the reader and connects it sonically to the name Eurydice. In the original, the connection comes from live speakers pronouncing the name [*pronunciarla...al nombre*], where Eichendorff’s text transforms *Erudition* into a term, which bears sonic [*klingt wie*] similarity to Eurydice. The former stresses a spoken, living connection between name and reference, the latter foregrounds a textual connection that is not part of the lived present.

After explaining the origin of these names, Pleasure remarks in an aside on his own utterance, providing the second reference to translation in Eichendorff’s text:

(Ich bin so im Zug, daß ich  
Gar Latein und Griechisch rede!)<sup>110</sup>

(¡cuáles están, aunque en griego  
les hablo, la boca abierta!)<sup>111</sup>

Both original and translation make explicit reference to the Greek origin of these names, thus drawing attention to the syncretic nature of the *auto sacramental* tradition. In the translation, however, Eichendorff foregrounds his own act of translating through Pleasure, adding Latin to the languages referenced in this aside. The inclusion of Latin presumably serves to link this utterance back to the use of the latinized *Erudition*; however, this reference also draws attention to the German language’s lack of Latin roots, foregrounding the present text’s status as a translation

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<sup>110</sup> Eichendorff, *Übersetzungen I,2 - Geistliche Schauspiele von Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca*, 31 ll.643-44.

<sup>111</sup> Calderón-de-la-Barca, *El divino Orfeo (1663)*, 27 ll. 672-73.

from Spanish. Rather than translate completely faithfully, Eichendorff instead acknowledges that the German translation necessarily transforms the Spanish text.

In Eichendorff's translation of the Spanish lyric poem "Vom Strande," the poet follows a much freer practice. Unlike the translations of Calderón, Eichendorff's translations of Spanish lyrical romances follow more closely the folksongs of Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* in that they combine translation and poetic work. It is for this reason that these translations are most often included with Eichendorff's poetry rather than with his translations in complete collections of his work.<sup>112</sup> The poem "Vom Strande" is no exception. Eichendorff discovered the original poem in V.A. Huber's *Teatro Pequeño de Elocuencia y Poesía Castellana con breves Noticias Biograficas y Literarias*, published in 1832.<sup>113</sup> We now know the poem, which Eichendorff had received from his son in 1838 and was printed without author or title, was written by Principe des Esquilache in the seventeenth century. For his translation, Eichendorff not only translated the original Spanish freely, but inserted motifs from his own poetry into the text and added alliterations and internal rhymes. For my examination of this poem, as in my examination of Eichendorff's Calderón translation, I will focus on spaces in the text where Eichendorff's transformative transcription at once foregrounds the boundary between familiar and foreign while binding the two through translation.

Just as Eichendorff's romance translations probe the boundary between translation and poetic creation, the translated text itself is concerned with the boundary between land and sea. In translating, Eichendorff emphasizes these boundaries most strongly in the poem's refrain, which opens the text:

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<sup>112</sup> Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Gedichte. Text und Kommentar*, 1170–72; Eichendorff, *Gedichte*, 808.

<sup>113</sup> Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Gedichte. Text und Kommentar*, 1168.

Ich rufe vom Ufer  
Verlorenes Glück,  
Die Ruder nur schallen  
Zum Strande zurück.<sup>114</sup>

[Llamo con suspiros  
El bien que pierdo,  
Y las galerillas  
Baten los remos.]<sup>115</sup>

In the original Spanish, the lyrical voice makes no mention of his position in these first lines or in their later repetition, focusing instead on his loss. Eichendorff, however, positions the lyrical voice on a beach with the addition of “vom Ufer” and “Zum Strande,” which he also synthesizes for the title “Vom Strande.” While this boundary occupies the lyrical voice’s attention in Eichendorff’s refrain, it is not as impassable as it may first appear. As we have already seen, the original Spanish emphasizes loss, first in “El bien que pierdo” and in the motion of the boats away from the speaker suggested by the motion of the oars [*los remos*]. While these elements are still present in Eichendorff’s translation, they take on a new sonic dimension. Eichendorff imbues the lyrical voice’s call with a direction outward, which the oars then reciprocate: the voice calls *from* the shores, and the oars *echo back* [*schallen zurück*]. While the boundary exists and occupies much of the lyrical voice’s attention, Eichendorff’s translation makes possible a certain transgressive movement.

Eichendorff transforms the emphasis on loss in the original text into an emphasis on change in his translation. Later in the poem, the lyrical voice contemplates the fleeting and destructive nature of the sea, again foregrounding a loss.

Todo cuanto tocan

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<sup>114</sup> Eichendorff, 583.

<sup>115</sup> Eugenio de Ochoa y Ronna, *Tesoro de los romanceros y cancioneros españoles, recogidos y ordenados por E. de Ochoa*, 1838, 313.

Mudándose va.  
No está el mar seguro,  
Ni el viento jamas;  
Mis suspiros solos  
En un ser se están.<sup>116</sup>

For the lyrical voice of the original, the sea is a site of constant retreat, where everything touched by the sea can vanish. In fact, all that lies outside the lyrical voice itself is subject to the same loss. In Eichendorff's translation, loss becomes transformation, in that the sea is no longer the void that swallows up the goods of the lyrical voice, but a space of constant change.

Und was sie berühren  
Verwandelt sich all',  
Es wandeln die Wellen  
Und wandelt der Wind —  
Meine Schmerzen im Herzen  
Beständig nur sind.<sup>117</sup>

Instead of loss, Eichendorff's poet experiences the sea as a site of transformation, which Eichendorff emphasizes through the triple repetition of *wandeln*. The original poet identifies in the world beyond his person the threat of loss, the sense that nothing is safe. What remains in Eichendorff's translation of the loss of the original is a feeling of distance. The feeling that everything can be lost transforms into a feeling that everything will change. In this respect, the sea resembles the undifferentiated cosmos of Calderón's *El divino Orfeo*, which is both nothing and chaos, and yet, is also the space of creation. The boundary that opens Eichendorff's translation remains throughout the text, repeated with each refrain; so too remains the possibility of connection across this boundary.

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<sup>116</sup> Ronna, 313.

<sup>117</sup> Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Gedichte. Text und Kommentar*, 584.



Eichendorff's approach to translation itself takes shape across a boundary not just of language, but more importantly, of time. The author himself conceived of his translation work as a dialogue across time: "Ich flüchte mich daher noch immer häufig in's Spanische, wo mir denn Cervantes u. Calderon über manche Sandscholle wacker hinweghelfen."<sup>118</sup> Rather than replace either author, Cervantes and Calderón serve as interlocutors for Eichendorff, and the translation of their works provide space for communication and self-transformation. In such a practice, Eichendorff retains and even references the original as a separate document within the translation itself while creating something new. For Eichendorff, this transformative process is only possible through a text that foregrounds itself as text.

## **Conclusion**

Returning to Lothario's rhetorical question at the start of this chapter, Eichendorff's poetic, autobiographical, and translational practice seems to beg the same question: "Warum sollte man so ein lumpiges Menschenleben nicht ganz in Poesie übersetzen können?"<sup>119</sup> It is this potential for transformation, the possibility that one could translate the fragments of the human life entirely into text through a process of transformative transcription, that undergirds each of Eichendorff's projects. In his lyric works, this is the pursuit of the magic word that imbues an individual's text with the connective power of communal folksong in "Wünschelrute," of the transformation of the poet into the poetless text of "Dichterlos." In his autobiographical works, it is the transformation of the autobiographer into bystander that allows the work to illuminate across temporal boundaries. And finally, in the translation, Eichendorff at once pursues the

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<sup>118</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff, *Sämtliche Werke Des Freiherrn Joseph von Eichendorff: Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, vol. 7 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006), 163.

<sup>119</sup> Eichendorff, *Dichter Und Ihre Gesellen : Erzählungen II*, 174.

presentation of the sentiments of the original with the least possible alterations, and the acknowledgement that the translation itself is a pursuit of contact with the original, rather than a replica of the original itself. In other words, the translation is the gateway to the original, rather than its replica. In each of these projects, we see a foregrounding of the author's work, that itself is also a lateral move away from the work that makes room for contact. Such a practice highlights the potential to create contact across the boundaries of time.

## CHAPTER TWO: UNCANNY ANIMATION OF THE DAGUERROTYPE AND THE GROUND IN THE LYRIC OF ANNETTE VON DROSTE-HÜLSHOFF

### Introduction

#### Das Wort

*Das Wort gleicht dem beschwingten Pfeil,  
Und ist es einmal deinem Bogen  
In Tändeln oder Ernst entfliegen,  
Erschrecken muß dich deine Eil'.*

*Dem Körnlein gleicht es, deiner Hand  
Entschlüpft; wer mag es wiederfinden?  
Und dennoch wuchert's in den Gründen  
Und treibt die Wurzeln durch das Land.*

*Gleicht dem verlorenen Funken, der  
Vielleicht verlischt am feuchten Tage  
Vielleicht am milden glimmt im Hage,  
Am dürren schwillt zum Flammenmeer [...].*<sup>120</sup>

For the nineteenth-century German poet, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, objects possess a remarkable ability to communicate. Like the eponymous word of the above poem, objects communicate possibilities for growth as well as destruction; they can be lost, or they can travel at fearsome speeds. In addition to her poetry, Droste-Hülshoff utilized objects in everyday life to communicate her presence to those whom she could not visit in person. In a letter from 1845, the author details her attempts to facilitate contact through a daguerreotype and any “stupid, little thing” [*kleines dummes Zeug*] that could remind the addressee, Fürstin Salm-Reifferscheidt, of her.

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<sup>120</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, “Das Wort,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 293–94.

Würden die Tage nur heller, dass ich mit meinem Ausschneiden voran käme oder wenigstens mein Daguerreotyp könnte aufnehme lassen. Jetzt mache ich mir vorläufig die Freude, allerlei dummes kleines Zeug für Sie zusammenzubringen, damit Sie überall an das Nettle erinnert werden und auch sehen, wie es überall an Sie gedacht hat. (An Fürstin Salm-Reifferscheidt, 10. Januar 1845)<sup>121</sup>

For Droste-Hülshoff, these objects serve as memory aids, actively reminding the Fürstin of the poet. These objects, whether daguerreotype images, glimmering ashes, or small seeds, provide contact across some form of boundary.

Boundaries and the transgression of boundaries factor heavily in characterizations of Droste-Hülshoff. In his 1861 biography of Droste-Hülshoff, close friend and editor Levin Schücking frequently references her unconventionality, even on the first page referring to her as *dieser merkwürdige Frauengeist*.<sup>122</sup> In Schücking's depiction, Droste-Hülshoff's oddity ranges from her appearance, to her relationship to the world, and her approach to writing.<sup>123</sup>

Oft ist aber auch das Seltsame und Befremdliche, namentlich in den Bildern und Naturschilderungen, die einfache Folge der Art, wie Annette selbst die Gegenstände erblickte. Sie war sehr kurzsichtig, wie wir bereits erwähnt haben. Sie erblickte deshalb die sie in einiger Entfernung umgebenden Dinge in anderen, mehr verschwimmenden Umrissen als die meisten Menschen. Ihre Phantasie kam hinzu, um diese verschwimmenden Linien und Contouren anders zu gestalten, als sie Anderen erschienen; aus dem Festen und klar Bestimmten ein Dämmeriges, in Flocken und Nebel sich Auflösendes, und wieder aus dem Nebelhaften ein Festgestaltetes zu machen, und ganze Welten dahin zu träumen, wo vor unsern Augen nur eine bunte Wolke, nur ein verschwimmender Dunst auftaucht.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe : Briefe 1843-1848*, vol. 10 (Tübingen : Niemeyer, 1978-2000., 2000).

<sup>122</sup> Levin Schücking, *Annette von Droste : Ein Lebensbild. Mit Ausführlichem Nachwort Und Herausgegeben von: Levin L. Schücking.*, n.d., 1.

<sup>123</sup> Schücking, 12–16, 101–2.

<sup>124</sup> Schücking, 149.

The description above, along with earlier descriptions from the biography of the author's appearance and her "unwomanly" writing style, foreground the nonconformity of Droste-Hülshoff's literary output, behavior, approach to the world.<sup>125</sup> Casting aside Schücking's misogynistic conclusions, the amateur biographer characterizes the relationship of Droste-Hülshoff's work to genre, gender, and creative expectations of the period. Her poetry possesses the ability to manifest the strange [*das Seltsame*] and the bewildering [*Befremdliche*] in the familiar, and her imagination explores the blurring of boundaries to undo fossilized associations.

Droste-Hülshoff's contributions to German literature have pushed boundaries from the poet's lifetime until today. Genre conventions of the romantic, Biedermeier, protorealism, and Modern have all appeared in Droste-Hülshoff's oeuvre.<sup>126</sup> Like Schücking's contemporaneous evaluation, current scholarship emphasizes the boundary-crossing nature of Droste-Hülshoff's work. For example, Heinrich Detering identifies in Droste-Hülshoff's *Naturlyrik* a threefold function of nature as symbol, experience, and matter, drawing together Romantic *Waldeinsamkeit* with more modern attention to material detail.<sup>127</sup> This attention to materiality and to detail has also led some scholars to speak of a *Detailrealismus* or a *Frührealismus* in Droste-Hülshoff's lyric.<sup>128</sup> Jochen Grywatsch locates in Droste-Hülshoff's lyric works a modern

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<sup>125</sup> I do not mean to ignore the problematic nature of Schücking's characterization of Droste-Hülshoff. Though adulatory, these descriptions position Droste-Hülshoff's gender as an obstacle she successfully overcomes through her writing, and diagnose the author's imaginative, boundary-breaking work as a side effect of her visual impairment.

<sup>126</sup> *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Handbuch*, 51–59.

<sup>127</sup> Detering, "Versteinter Äther, Aschenmeer. Metaphysische Landschaften in Der Lyrik Der Annette von Droste-Hülshoff," 61.

<sup>128</sup> Ulrich Fülleborn, "'Erweislose' Wirklichkeit. Frührealismus Und Biedermeierzeit," in *Besitz Und Sprache. Offene Strukturen Und Nicht-Possessives Denken in Der Deutschen Literatur* (München, 2000); Claudia Liebrand, *Kreative Refrakturen : Annette von Droste-Hülshoffs Texte*, 1. Aufl., Rombach Wissenschaften Reihe Litterae, Bd 165 (Freiburg: Rombach, 2008).

interrogation of the subject, which he calls a “verunsicherte[s] Ich”, which facilitates a disruption of the subject-object binary.<sup>129</sup> This attention to materiality, natural processes, signifying power of the lyric, and destabilized subject present in Droste-Hülshoff’s work all intersect in her approach to the boundaries established in part by technological, scientific, and industrial advancements of this period. This chapter focuses on this nexus of spatial, temporal, and experiential shifts and how Droste-Hülshoff disrupts the systemizing tendencies of these shifts through the genre of lyric poetry.

The concurrence of Droste-Hülshoff’s poetic production with explosive developments in science, culture, and industry uniquely positions her œuvre to level critique against technological and scientific advancements of this period. Paleontology, geology, biology, and ecology all came into being as disciplines over the course of the nineteenth century, and Droste-Hülshoff was well acquainted with these developments.<sup>130</sup> In Droste-Hülshoff’s poetry, these advancements function as boundary-crossing objects and entities. In this chapter, I examine how Droste-Hülshoff harnesses the critical potential of the lyric against the systemization brought about by technological, industrial, and scientific advancements of this period through a reimagining of these objects. I will argue that Droste-Hülshoff mobilizes in her lyric poetry the disruptive potential of image-bearing objects (daguerreotype and the mirror) and earthy objects (fossils and erratic stones) against the totalizing and regulative drives of contemporaneous technology.

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<sup>129</sup> Jochen Grywatsch, “Produktive Leerstellen. Anmerkungen Zur Aktualität Des Dichterischen Werks Der Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Und Zur Veränderlichkeit Seiner Wertschätzung,” in *“Zu Früh, Zu Früh Geboren ...”*, *Die Modernität Der Annette von Droste-Hülshoff* (Düsseldorf, 2008), 18–35.

<sup>130</sup> Josefine Nettesheim, *Die Geistige Welt Der Dichterin Annette Droste Zu Hülshoff* (Münster: Regensburg, 1967); Lindsey Brandt, “Tangled up in Truths: German Literary Conceptions of Nature between Romantic Science and Objective Empiricism,” in *Diss. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, 2015, 48–51.

Contrary to the Biedermeier tendency described by Friedrich Sengle of flight toward domestic comforts in the face of a tumultuous, ever-changing world, I will demonstrate how Droste-Hülshoff's lyric manifests its critical potential through direct engagement with this technological world, rather than against it.<sup>131</sup> Droste-Hülshoff lyrically repurposes the contemporaneous technical advancements in photography and modern travel in order to disrupt their respective logics of reproducibility and temporal acceleration. Both technologies exhibit the potential to bind and unify subjects within the totalizing systems of a vast, ever-growing network; the daguerreotype establishes a system of reproducibility, while the railway system plots the world along a continuum, diminishing difference between interconnected spaces. In her lyric works, Droste-Hülshoff intervenes in the expansion of these networks to disrupt the tight fit between subject and technology and to reincorporate the reader into a more imaginatively expansive world.

The same strangeness that comes forth in Schücking's description of Droste-Hülshoff's style structures this chapter's two sections—on the daguerreotype image and the ground—in that both image and ground exhibit what I will call an uncanny animation in the lyric of Droste-Hülshoff. The “uncanny” in uncanny animation draws on Schelling's conception of the uncanny rather than Freud's; however, a discussion of both definitions will further clarify my usage of this concept. Drawing on Schelling's definition in *Philosophie der Mythologie*, Freud defines the uncanny [*das Unheimliche*] as:

[...] wirklich nichts Neues oder Fremdes, sondern etwas dem Seelenleben von alters her Vertrautes, das ihm nur durch den Prozeß der Verdrängung entfremdet worden ist. Die Beziehung auf die Verdrängung erhellt uns jetzt auch die Schellingsche Definition, das

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<sup>131</sup> Friedrich Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit: Die Dichter*, vol. 3 (Metzler, 1999), 128, V. 1.

Unheimliche sei etwas, was im Verborgenen hätte bleiben sollen und hervorgetreten ist.<sup>132</sup>

For Freud, the uncanny represents an originally familiar element that has undergone repression and then is later encountered as unfamiliar. For Schelling, the uncanny is also associated with something latent that comes to the fore. The uncanny in Schelling is associated with secrets, darkness, and the unknown: “unheimlich nennt man alles, was im Geheimniß, im Verborgnen, in der Latenz bleiben sollte und hervorgetreten ist.”<sup>133</sup> While Freud’s uncanny is predicated on a process of psychological repression [*Verdrängung*], Schelling’s uncanny appears as an ontological space of possibility.<sup>134</sup> According to Rod Giblett, in Schelling the monstrous, the dark, and the foreign are not evil, but rather sources of the uncanny, and therefore source of another form of truth. “Schelling’s uncanny is a rich, dark brew which yields nourishment for the body and soul for those who value spirituality and materiality.”<sup>135</sup>

Freud’s essay on the Uncanny also confronts the idea of *animation*, specifically in Freud’s analysis of Ernst Jentsch’s definition of the uncanny. Freud criticises Jentsch’s definition of the uncanny in E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Der Sandmann* as the effect produced by the life-like automaton Olympia. For Jentsch, the uncanny results from the oscillation across a boundary between the lifelike and the lifeless:

Unter allen psychischen Unsicherheiten, die zur Entstehungsursache des Gefühls des Unheimlichen werden können, ist es ganz besonders eine, die eine ziemlich regelmässige,

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<sup>132</sup> Sigmund Freud, *Imago. Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften V 1919 Heft 5/6* (Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1919), 302.

<sup>133</sup> Schelling, *Sämmtliche Werke*, 649.

<sup>134</sup> Freud, *Imago. Zeitschrift für Anwendung der Psychoanalyse auf die Geisteswissenschaften V 1919 Heft 5/6*, 297.

<sup>135</sup> Rod Giblett, *Environmental Humanities and the Uncanny : Ecoculture, Literature and Religion*, Routledge Explorations in Environmental Studies (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2019., 2019), 63.



kräftige und sehr allgemeine Wirkung zu entfalten im Stande ist, nämlich der Zweifel an der Beseelung eines anscheinend lebendigen Wesens und umgekehrt darüber, ob ein lebloser Gegenstand nicht etwa beseelt sei, und zwar auch dann, wenn dieser Zweifel sich nur undeutlich im Bewusstsein bemerklich macht.<sup>136</sup>

For Jentsch, the animation of the lifeless automaton Olympia evokes the uncanny, as it oscillates between animate and inanimate, life and death. Life also informs Schelling's conception of the uncanny. Giblett draws out in Schelling's discussion of the uncanny a lived and experiential quality. For Schelling, the uncanny is the veiled truth at the origin of mythology, and the truth "is something lived and experienced." This also holds true for Freud, who argues that the "truth is not something believed in the abstract, a dead disembodied truth, but a concrete, living, and embodied truth."<sup>137</sup>

However, this chapter will revisit the connotation considered by Jentsch and ultimately rejected by Freud, namely, the boundary between life and death, and how the transgression of this boundary leads to another uncanny experience in the works of Droste-Hülshoff. The uncanny in Schelling, and to some extent in Freud, involves play with boundaries, a kind of "magical" engagement with language, to borrow Teresa Fenichel's term. A magical language draws on the world-creating capacity of Schelling's uncanny of the divine.<sup>138</sup> In Droste-Hülshoff, this world-creating capacity of language draws out the uncanny in two domains, namely *physis* and *techne*: that of the natural as represented by the ground, and that of the technological as represented by the daguerreotype. Just as Droste-Hülshoff's work itself plays with boundaries,

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<sup>136</sup> Ernst Jentsch, "Zur Psychologie Des Unheimlichen," *Psychiatrisch-Neurologische Wochenschrift*, no. 22 (1906): 197.

<sup>137</sup> Giblett, *Environmental Humanities and the Uncanny*, 61.

<sup>138</sup> Teresa Fenichel, *Schelling, Freud, and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychoanalysis: Uncanny Belonging* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2018), 218–19.

her engagement with the daguerreotype and the ground entail the imaginative, and magical, transgression of boundaries, often the physical boundaries of the photographic frame and the grave. In the following two sections, I will draw out how Droste-Hülshoff animates the uncanny qualities of these objects to generate intimacy, rather than fear, through a reimagining of the worlds they represent.

### **Moving Beyond the Frozen Reflection: On the Daguerreotype in Droste-Hülshoff's Lyric**

Since its first presentation to the public in 1839, the daguerreotype promised to redefine the human relationship to the world. While the object would have ramifications for the development of visual technological media for the next century, it also managed to provoke diverse affective responses in its viewers: wonder, apprehension, admiration. One of the somewhat paradoxical effects of the daguerreotype included the capacity to suture those seemingly removed from the world (the dead, those not physically present) into the cultural currents of the contemporary moment. Seen from this light, the daguerreotype could be described as a technology of presence (even if ultimately based on an absence, for example, of the living body). Such seemed to represent the promise of the daguerreotype in the case of Droste-Hülshoff. As Droste-Hülshoff became increasingly ill, these early photographic images facilitated a kind of presence in the world no longer available to her.

Droste-Hülshoff possessed around fourteen portraits of herself and actively produced *Scherenschnitte*, but the daguerreotype far surpassed the potential of these earlier forms of image production in its seeming ability to teleport the body outside of its environment. In a letter to Elise Rüdiger in 1845, Droste-Hülshoff describes how the daguerreotype allows her to accompany her close friend wherever she goes despite their physical distance. The daguerreotype in this instance is not merely a reproductive technology, but becomes an object through which

bonds of sociality and friendship are concretized; here, a consultation with two friends (Nanny and Luise) takes place to determine the image best suited to represent the poet:

Vor uns mein brauner Tisch, blank von Daguerreotyps; drei von Ihnen, eins von Nanny und zwei von mir (eins *en profil*, das andre *en face*). Beide Freundinnen stimmten für das erste, und so schicke ich es Ihnen denn, damit ich an unserem Namensfeste doch auch bei Ihnen bin wie Sie bei mir. (An Elise Rüdiger, 11. November 1845)<sup>139</sup>

Droste-Hülshoff is surrounded by friends, present both physically in the form of Wilhelmine von Thielmann (Nanny) and Luise von Bornstedt and through the daguerreotype of Elise Rüdiger. Elisa Rüdiger had left Münster in 1845 due to her husband's recent transfer, and the absence of such a close friend had severely depressed Droste-Hülshoff. The daguerreotype selected for Rüdiger serves as more than just a memory of the now distant poet. This activity already indicates the daguerreotype's ability to serve as proxy, replacing the poet's physical presence for Elise on her name day, Elise for the poet on hers.

Over the course of my argument, I will elucidate how Droste-Hülshoff draws out the tension inherent to the daguerreotype and its relationship to the world. Positioned at the beginning of a parade of photographic inventions, the daguerreotype makes possible rapid replication of the world for the first time, setting the course for later technological advancements. While acknowledging the daguerreotype's ability to proliferate realistic images, Droste-Hülshoff indicates through these technologies of reproduction another potential trajectory. Unlike modern photography, which produces an endlessly reproducible negative, the daguerreotype process produces a singular copy. As such, the daguerreotype bridges a divide between the photograph and the mirror image; a single, mobile copy of the depicted object. At first, Droste-Hülshoff identifies in the reflective nature of these images the possibility of replication, which later

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<sup>139</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. Briefe: Herausgegeben Von Hermann Cardauns*, n.d.

becomes the basis for objectivity, whereby the image can replace nature and the individual. The daguerreotype makes the first step toward the replication of the photograph, with its potential to isolate the onlooker from the world beyond the reproduced image, only to find itself supplanted into a world without variation. It is here that Droste-Hülshoff's poetry intervenes to suggest a way beyond the image, through the daguerreotype itself, back into the world, a re-worlding, as it were, where the image redirects the onlooker away from the artificial likeness of itself into a more complete, and yet disparate likeness outside in the world. In Droste-Hülshoff's approach to the daguerreotype, the reproduced image makes possible an extension of the onlooker's world across boundaries of space and time, while simultaneously becoming a catalyst for an enchanted reimagining of the world itself. The image in the poems indicates in both directions: both beyond the world frame as a disruption, and toward the restoration of a world beyond the image.

Reports of Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre's invention immediately highlight the potential of the daguerreotype to push image production into unknown territory. Within a month of its premier, the daguerreotype had firmly cemented its position at the beginning of a new age of the image. A London periodical, *The Spectator*, likened the daguerreotype's potential effect on image production to that of the industrial mechanical loom for manufacturing, the steam engine for travel, and the steam plough for agriculture, emphasizing its participation in the greater mechanization of the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>140</sup> Alexander von Humboldt was especially impressed by the invention's ability to reproduce the world with astounding clarity and detail. Humboldt makes frequent mention of the process in his letters during this period. This process, according to Humboldt, far surpasses the potential of all other image production: "The images

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<sup>140</sup> Steffen Siegel, ed., *First Exposures: Writings from the Beginning of Photography*, 1 edition (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2017), 65–68.

possess to the full the inimitably natural character that only Nature herself could have stamped on them.”<sup>141</sup> Such a direct reproduction of the image becomes the reproduction of nature itself, or in Humboldt’s characterization, the imitation of the inimitable.

However, the daguerreotype was not without its dangers. The daguerreotype sits near the beginning of the march of photographic progress that ends in television and cinema, and as such the daguerreotype possesses the same systemizing potential. According to Jonathan Crary, photography, like money, becomes a great equalizer and a proliferator of “mere symbol[s],” creating a “totalizing [system] for binding and unifying all subjects within a single global network of valuation and desire.”<sup>142</sup> Friedrich Kittler situates the daguerreotype specifically at the beginning of such technical regimes, calling it the “invention of invention itself.”<sup>143</sup> Like other such technical media, the daguerreotype pursues the extension and eventual replacement of the senses. In Droste-Hülshoff’s letter, one can already witness how the daguerreotype both extends the poet’s contact and substitutes for her physical presence. While images have long possessed powerful communicative ability, the daguerreotype achieves this effect through its extreme likeness to the depicted object.

The daguerreotype’s power, according to some, lay in its ability to capture and its ability to reflect. The polished quality of the silver plate receives mention in many descriptions of the invention, and proves to be an integral step in the production of “true-to-life” images. Daguerre’s own description includes detailed steps for achieving the highest possible reflectivity, and his

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<sup>141</sup> Siegel, 69–70.

<sup>142</sup> Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the 19th Century*, Reprint edition (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), 13.

<sup>143</sup> Friedrich A. Kittler, *Optical Media: Berlin Lectures 1999*, n.d., 131.

later letters stress that without such a polished surface, the process would fail.<sup>144</sup> Daguerre's representative to the French Academy of Sciences, Dominique François Arago describes the image created as “[nature] herself reflecting her own face, but as though ‘in a glass, darkly,’ and engraving it too, that we may have copies of it!”<sup>145</sup> The exactness of these images provoked both awe and fear. The *Leipziger Anzeiger* includes a reference to these new images, calling them “frozen reflections” [*festgehaltene Spiegelbilder*], whose intent alone to replicate divine creation through technical media amounts to blasphemy.<sup>146</sup> Reflected and fixed in this manner, the image of nature becomes portable, and its likeness threatens to replace the world from the very outset.

The vision of the daguerreotype's ability to reproduce inimitable nature set a new standard in techniques of representation oriented around “objectivity.” Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison locate the search for objectivity in the photographic experimentation of the 1820s and 1830s. This innovation, the ability to produce “true-to-life” impressions give rise to what Daston and Galison identify as “objective images.” Many reactions to these novel, life-like images emphasize the removal of human imperfection from the process of production. Rather than the human hand, such images appear as if “impressed by nature's hand” according to inventor Henry Fox Talbot, or having the “inimitably natural character that only Nature herself could have stamped on them.”<sup>147</sup> The daguerreotype, frozen upon the mirror-like surface of the silver plate and possessing the exactness of a reflection, likewise freezes the onlooker caught up in looking

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<sup>144</sup> Siegel, *First Exposures*, 253–55, 351–53.

<sup>145</sup> Siegel, 65.

<sup>146</sup> Walter Benjamin, Rolf Tiedemann, and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, *Gesammelte Schriften II. Aufsätze, Essays, Vorträge.*, Neuaufgabe. edition (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), 369.

<sup>147</sup> Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York, NY: Zone Books, 2010), 130–31; Siegel, *First Exposures*, 69–70.

at an image that functions to replace its referent. The reflective relationship established by such images achieve the very removal of human sensory organs Kittler describes as the goal of technical media, in that the onlooker no longer needs to venture beyond the frame in order to experience the world visually.

Droste-Hülshoff's lyric work, including the publication of the large 1844 edition of her poetry, not only coincides with the importation of the daguerreotype to Germany, but also with an explosion of interest in image rhetoric in the mid-nineteenth century. Thomas Althaus details the role of the image in the nineteenth century along with its influence on Droste-Hülshoff's literary production. The first two sections of Droste-Hülshoff's 1844 poetry collection showcase this influence. These sections bear the titles "time images" [*Zeitbilder*] and "moorland (or heathen) images" [*Heidebilder*], which at once participate in the technologically-conditioned journalistic genres of writing, such as "travel images" [*Reisebilder*], "images of the world" [*Weltbilder*], and "biographical portraits" [*Lebensbilder*], while presenting a specifically lyric variety of such images. These titles, however, simultaneously gesture beyond the capabilities of the technical medium in an effort to capture time and space. Influenced perhaps by the new 'objective images' wandering over from France during this period, the image rhetoric of this period becomes a code for a new type of aesthetic attention, according to Althaus.<sup>148</sup>

Droste-Hülshoff's poetry contains a variety of images, in addition to the daguerreotype, that engage with the world alienating and isolating abilities represented by the daguerreotype itself. Since the reflective quality and replicative abilities of daguerreotype contribute to greater systemization, replication, and substitution, I address Droste-Hülshoff's representation of these

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<sup>148</sup> Thomas Althaus, "Flüchtige Und Bleiche Bilder. Von Den Spuren Ikonischer Wahrnehmung Bei Droste Und von Der Zeichensuche Der Moderne," *Droste-Jahrbuch* 12 (2018 2017): 16.

same facets in mirror images, reflective surfaces, and portraits, in addition to the daguerreotype. While the mirror image does not equal the fixed quality of the daguerreotype image, it shares characteristics that will resurface in the daguerreotype: the frame, visual distortion, the confrontation with a perspective not available to the unaided eye, as well as a physical similarity to the polished silver surface of the daguerreotype.

### **The Broken Mirror: “Das Spiegelbild”**

The daguerreotype’s potential as the first step toward a system of replication stems from its ability to produce a mirror accurate reflection of the world. In her poetry, Droste-Hülshoff destabilizes this reflective relationship of the mirror image in the poem “das Spiegelbild,” in which the lyrical voice confronts its reflection as Other. Rendering the reflection inoperative, Droste-Hülshoff probes the possibility of an image that resists stable representation to extend beyond the frame.

The opening to “Das Spiegelbild,” immediately registers feelings of dissimilarity between the lyrical voice and its mirror image. The lyrical voice states emphatically and repeatedly that the mirror image is foreign, unfamiliar, and ghostly.

“Phantom, du bist nicht meines Gleichen!” (l. 7)

“Es ist gewiß, du bist nicht Ich, (l. 29)

“Ein fremdes Daseyn, [...]” (l. 30)

“Voll Kräfte die mir nicht bewußt, / Voll fremden Leides, fremder Lust;” (ll. 31-32)<sup>149</sup>

The ghostly and foreign qualities of the reflected image stem from its instability. Droste-Hülshoff creates a being of both incomplete and doubled visage.

Und dennoch, dämmerndes Gesicht,  
Drin seltsam spielt ein Doppellicht, (ll.10-11)<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, “Das Spiegelbild,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 158–60.

<sup>150</sup> “Das Spiegelbild,” Droste-Hülshoff, 158.



The shimmering face of the image seemingly hovers between stable existences. The image's waning countenance [*dämmerndes Gesicht*] also emits a dual light, suggesting both a liminal and doubled existence. The fractured image of the reflection in turn fractures its description, as Droste-Hülshoff splits the face itself into portions, where the eyes and brow occupy the first half of the poem and the mouth appears in the second half, each portion appears with differing descriptions.

The fracturing of the reflection draws out the dissimilarity of the reflected image to the lyrical voice, allowing the lyrical voice to find disparate similarities instead of simply a reproduction of itself. Each of these sections, including eyes, mouth, and brow, the lyrical voice further splits the image into various human and non-human entities, all of which direct the lyrical voice further away from the unified image of the reflection. The text opens with the further segmentation of the eyes in the mirror image. The lyrical voice speedily lists disparate similarities one after another, creating further dissimilarity.

Schaust du mich an aus dem Kristall,  
Mit deiner Augen Nebelball,  
Kometen gleich die im Verbleichen;  
Zügen, worin wunderlich  
Zwei Seelen wie Spione sich  
Umschleichen ja, dann flüstere ich:  
Phantom, du bist nicht meinesgleichen! (ll.1-7)<sup>151</sup>

The opening already disrupts the reflective relationship, not by turning the image's gaze outward, but by making the image's gaze indeterminate. The mirror image stares back at the lyrical voice. However, the verb-first formation of the first line first suggests both a question and a hypothetical if/then statement. Already, the gaze of the reflected image appears destabilized,

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<sup>151</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 158.

loosened from the gaze of the lyrical voice. Unable to confirm the reflection's gaze, the voice proceeds to list likenesses that emphasize direction away from the image.

Cycling through fog [*Nebel*], fading comets [*Kometen ... im Verbleichen*], and finally spies, Droste-Hülshoff draws together elements with no immediate similarity. However, upon closer inspection, these elements, like the lyrical voice's relationship to the mirror, share a directional quality. First, fog draws the association of directionlessness, or an inability to discern a direction. To peer into eyes like fog could mean that they give no indication that they are staring back. Unlike the directionlessness of fog, the likeness to a comet lends the reflection an otherworldliness, while suggesting a much more intense form of direction. This direction stems from the comet's tangential relationship to earth. Droste-Hülshoff distinguishes in her lyric between meteors and comets, and any likeness to meteors in her texts she couples with a description of bright flashes of light<sup>152</sup> whereas comets appear with an emphasis on the comet's tail, a clear sign of its direction.<sup>153</sup>

The longer the voice's eyes linger on the reflection, the less the image reflects the lyrical voice, and the more it references obfuscation and disruption. The features further split into two souls [*Zwei Seelen*], which then resemble two slinking spies. While the reference to two souls further segments the mirror image, the reference to spies draws in the idea of political disruption into the image, as an example of counter-movements against the political system. The spy

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<sup>152</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "Das Hospiz," in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988); Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "Widmung an Sybille Mertens," in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988); Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "Mein Beruf," in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 92–94; Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "Am Weihnachtstage," in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 551–53.

<sup>153</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, "Das Hospiz"; Droste-Hülshoff, "Widmung an Sybille Mertens"; Droste-Hülshoff, "Das Spiegelbild."

functions through misdirection, and a concealment of intention, and here further complicates the direction of the gaze within this text.

Also a target of the gaze, the lyrical voice focuses on the reflection's mouth, again emphasizing the evasive qualities of its appearance.

Und was den Mund umspielt so lind,  
So weich und hilflos wie ein Kind,  
Das möcht in treue Hut ich bergen;  
Und wieder, wenn er höhrend spielt,  
Wie von gespanntem Bogen zielt,  
Wenn leis' es durch die Züge wühlt,  
Dann möcht ich fliehen wie vor Schergen. (ll. 22-28)<sup>154</sup>

Like the eyes before it, the reflection's mouth proves similarly unstable, oscillating between innocent and potentially dangerous features. At first the mouth displays child-like helplessness that evokes a protective instinct in the lyrical voice. This helpless quality also appears unfixed, dancing around the mouth [*den Mund umspielt*]. The reference to play adds to the already furtive quality of the image, and here leads to yet another reversal of effect. Protective instincts directed toward the image transform into defensive flight from the image upon prolonged consideration. The child-like quality of the mouth progresses from helpless to sneering [*höhrend*], to burrowing [*wühlt*]. This motion engenders a sympathetic reaction in the lyrical voice. The persistence of movement in the face of containment transforms the reflection's features into conspirators [*Schergen*]. Just like the earlier comparison to spies, the likeness to conspirators connects the reflected image to disruptive elements that potentially turn on the lyrical voice. This winding progression from child to criminal further destabilizes the mirror image in the text in such a way that provokes action on the part of the onlooker, the lyrical voice in the form of potential flight away from the image. Spurred on by the difference present in the mirror image, Droste-

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<sup>154</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, "Das Spiegelbild," 159.

Hülshoff's poet moves from a search for the self within the image outward in differing directions, amplifying difference in a relationship meant to reflect similarity.

Beyond the disorientation of dissimilarity, the greatest threat to the lyrical voice of Droste-Hülshoff's "Das Spiegelbild" is the possibility that the foreign image might break through the boundary separating their respective worlds. The fragmentary nature of the mirror image complicates the effect of such a rupture, provoking an ambiguous response in the lyrical voice. While at times the lyrical voice makes known its aversion to the foreign countenance in the mirror, the voice exhibits subtle interest in the possibility of contact between itself and the image. "Trätest du vor, ich weiß es nicht, / Würd' ich dich lieben oder hassen?" (ll. 13-14)<sup>155</sup> Formulated in the subjunctive, the hypothetical status of this utterance construes the situation as an imaginative possibility that must be thought through rather than experienced. As an imagined situation, the outcome of a breach of the mirror's surface oscillates along with the features of the image itself.

After further exploration of the image, the lyrical voice appears to arrive at a tentative answer at the close of the text. Unable to define the image as repulsive or attractive, the lyrical voice concludes that some sort of combination of both fear and sympathy would be the likely outcome.

Und dennoch fühl ich, wie verwandt,  
Zu deinen Schauern mich gebannt,  
Und Liebe muß der Furcht sich einen.  
Ja, trätest aus Kristalles Rund,  
Phantom, du lebend auf den Grund,  
Nur leise zittern würd ich, und  
Mich dünkt – ich würde um dich weinen! (ll. 36-42)<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 159.

<sup>156</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 159.

The hypothetical rupture, in contrast to the experienced confrontation with the mirror, makes possible a closeness unavailable in the original reflective relationship. Whereas the confrontation with the dissimilar mirror image evokes discomfort and strangeness, an opening up of this relationship, while only imagined, lessens the degree of distance between the self and other. First, the lyrical voice prefaces the imagined crossing of the mirror's boundary with feelings of connection, bound both relationally [*verwandt*] and forcefully [*gebannt*]. At the same moment that the self-reflection's boundary breaks down, fear and love blur, as if necessitated by the boundedness of the lyrical voice and the reflection. Finally, the proposed reaction of the lyrical voice mirrors the ambiguity of feeling that accompanies the hypothetical rupture of the mirror's surface. The final line "Mich dünkt – ich würde um dich weinen!" provides no clear context for the action depicted. In scholarship, this ending has provoked varied interpretations,<sup>157</sup> and rather than suggest a definitive interpretation of this line, I maintain that the ambiguity of the text and the diverse reactions it has provoked indicate the expansive nature of its ending. Moving from the deceptively simple construction of the reflective relationship between self and mirror image, ends up dissolving the boundaries that define it, if only hypothetically.

### **The Wandering Eye: "An Elise in der Ferne mit meinem Daguerrotyp"**

Replacing the similarity of appearance in the image with a spiritual connection, Droste-Hülshoff undoes the quality of the daguerreotype that would anchor it to the long line of reproductive technical media that would follow it. This substitution also liberates the viewer from the attraction of the image; it is the distance created by this uncoupling that allows the viewer's eye to wander. This dislocation of image from referent is the first step toward escape from the confines of the frame and from the reflective relationship embodied by the

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<sup>157</sup> *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Handbuch*, 341–32.

daguerreotype. Once liberated, the lyrical voice follows a directionality Droste-Hülshoff identifies in the real-world image of her letters. This direction is the photographic subject posed in profile, or in a three-quarter turn. In the previously-cited letter, Droste-Hülshoff and her friends ultimately decide to send Elise Rüdiger the daguerreotype of the poet *en profil*, rather than *en face*. The down-turned or out-of-frame gaze already sets the image apart from the reflection, indicating a world beyond the daguerreotype, inviting the onlooker to ponder what lies beyond the frame.

In Droste-Hülshoff's poetry, the confrontation with the image, whether of the self, the other, through the mirror or in a reproduction (painterly or photographic), almost immediately results in a confirmation of dissimilarity. Alongside the letter to Elise Rüdiger quoted above, Droste-Hülshoff had composed a poem on the very topic of the daguerreotype, "An Elise in der Ferne / Mit meinem Daguerrotyp." Much like the letters, the poem declares the intention behind Droste-Hülshoff's inclusion of the daguerreotype in her correspondence, as a kind of representative of her longing and her physical presence. In the poem, however, the lyrical voice gradually disassociates itself from the image, whereas the daguerreotype of Droste-Hülshoff's letters serves as her proxy. The lyrical voice signals this distance between itself and its image by gradually withdrawing first person possessive pronouns and by referring to the image as ghostly. The lyrical voice begins by describing how she ("*mein Geist*") is teleported through the daguerreotype into another space ("*in fremden Land*")—a dramatic description for her friend's house—before describing how the image acquires an autonomous and magical poetic identity:

Zum ersten Mal im fremden Land  
Sucht dich mein Geist an diesem Tag  
Muß ängstlich spähen, scheu und zag  
Eh er die liebe Schwelle fand.

Das stille Zimmer kenn ich nicht

In dem zu dir mein Schatten tritt  
Mit leisem luftgem Geisterschritt  
Und dämmernd wie ein Elfenlicht,

Du schaust ihn an, er schaut seitab [...] (ll. 1-9)<sup>158</sup>

The use of monikers like “mein Geist” and “mein Schatten,” which at first signal a connection to the image through possessives, eventually disappear as the poem progresses. The possessive pronoun *mein* is replaced by the exclusive use of the third person pronouns *ihn* and *er* (ll. 7, 9), and the possessive pronoun *seiner* (l. 9).<sup>159</sup> While not the initial aversion between image and lyrical voice in “Das Spiegelbild,” Droste-Hülshoff uncouples the lyrical voice and its reproduced image. In this text, this uncoupling not only lends the image the kind of autonomy of the mirror image in “das Spiegelbild,” it also explores the oblique gestures of the image itself, which lead the onlooker outside of the frame.

The outward-tending gaze was not uncommon in early photography. Walter Benjamin comments on this feature of early photography in his “Kleine Geschichte der Photographie,” locating an unnamable quality, something novel and unusual about this gaze, which extended to the image itself. This quality, according to Benjamin, was constantly striving for expression, while also resisting confinement within a simple definition of “art.”<sup>160</sup> Benjamin’s later identification of this unnamable quality already appears in Droste-Hülshoff’s poetic engagement

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<sup>158</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, “An Elise in der Ferne mit meinem Daguerrotyp,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 686–87.

<sup>159</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 686.

<sup>160</sup> Benjamin, Tiedemann, and Schweppenhäuser, *Gesammelte Schriften II. Aufsätze, Essays, Vorträge.*, 370“Bei der Photographie aber begegnet man etwas Neuem und Sonderbarem: in jemen Fischweib aus New Haven, das mit so lässiger, verführerischer Scham zu Boden blickt, bleibt etwas, was im Zeugnis für die Kunst des Photographen Hill nicht aufgeht etwas, was nicht zum Schweigen zu bringen ist, ungebärdig nach dem Namen derer verlangend, die da gelebt hat, die auch hier noch wirklich ist und niemals gänzlich in die ‘Kunst’ wird eingehen wollen.”

with the image more than fifty years earlier. In “An Elise,” Droste-Hülshoff not only notes the outward-tending gaze of the image, but explores the possibility of the uncontainable essence of the image to generate inconsistency beyond the photographic system of reproduction.

As in Droste-Hülshoff’s own daguerreotype and the image cited by Benjamin, so too does the daguerreotype of “An Elise in der Ferne” redirect the lyrical voice outside the frame through the gaze. The lyrical voice’s image in the daguerreotype appears *en profil*, just like Droste-Hülshoff’s own image mentioned in the letter: “Du schaust ihn an, er schaut seitab [...]”<sup>161</sup> Unlike the closed loop of the image and referent, Droste-Hülshoff establishes a constellation made up of lyrical voice, the daguerreotype, and poem’s addressee (the eponymous Elise Rüdiger), through the dislocation of the image and the image’s oblique gaze. At no point do the participants in this chain of gazes find their gaze returned. The poem begins with a projection of the lyrical voice beyond its physical confines toward the addressee, which occurs through the daguerreotype. The image, imbued with the lyrical voice’s spirit, forms a connection between the lyrical voice and the addressee without communication. The room where the image arrives is unknown to the author: “Das stille Zimmer kenn ich nicht.”<sup>162</sup> Next, the addressee directs its gaze toward the object, a gaze which the object redirects with its own oblique [*seitab*] gaze. In short, the lyrical voice addresses Elise through the image of the daguerreotype, Elise gazes at the image, and the image gazes outward.

Unlike the unnamable, novel quality of the image’s gaze in Benjamin’s account, the image of Droste-Hülshoff’s poem acquires an agency of its own, becoming the locus of a gaze. The oblique gesture initiated by the daguerreotype’s gaze, no longer bound to the lyrical voice,

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<sup>161</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, “An Elise in der Ferne mit meinem Daguerrotyp,” 686–87.

<sup>162</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 686.



redirects the reader, the lyrical voice and Elise toward a fantastical otherworld outside of time and space. The final lateral move, the image's *en profil* position gestures outward toward "yet unrealized time" [*ungeborne Zeit*]. In the closing lines of the poem, Droste-Hülshoff weaves together references to creation, revitalization, and restoration:

Als such in ungeborner Zeit  
Für seiner Treue Seligkeit  
Er sich den frommen Zauberstab

Der aus dem Keim die Blüte ringt  
Erweckt den Nachtigallenschlag  
Und auch den lieben warmen Tag  
Der ihm sein Liebstes widerbringt<sup>163</sup>

The poetic rendering of the daguerreotype generates both familiar and novel imagery for the lyrical voice. The daguerreotype in this poem fulfills some of the functions Droste-Hülshoff attributes to the real-world object. Just as Droste-Hülshoff's reproduced image serves to suture the distance between her and Elise Rüdiger, the poetic daguerreotype means to deliver its "beloved object" and the "warm day" of their reunion either through magic or through memory.<sup>164</sup> To bring forth [*widerbringen*] also sonically recalls a restoration [*wiederbringen*], and so the suturing of time and space accomplished by the daguerreotype's gaze in the text could also suggest a recapitulation of past contact. The efforts to recover the past occur simultaneously with gestures of creation. Flowers bloom, Nightingales awaken, and day breaks in the yet-unrealized time of the image's gaze.<sup>165</sup> While the real-world daguerreotype received praise for its realistic reproduction of "Nature herself," the daguerreotype of the poem is no longer bound to

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<sup>163</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 10-16, 687.

<sup>164</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 15-16, 687.

<sup>165</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 13-15, 687.

the mere reflection of nature, but rather makes possible the magical invention of time and space, an “unborn time” [*ungeborne Zeit*]. In Droste-Hülshoff’s rendering, the daguerreotype of the poem provides access to an unseen, and yet always present otherworld, rife with creative possibilities, what Eric Downing calls “the metatextual dimension.”<sup>166</sup> It is in fact through the daguerreotype that the lyrical voice seeks to access magic, like the *Zauberstab*. As Downing demonstrates, magical ways of reading are not antithetical to the realist tradition, in which Droste-Hülshoff participated. It is in this metatextual dimension, that the lyrical poem imagines past, present, and future blending together. In this sense, “unborn time” could suggest a yet unknown future, a time that was previously prevented from coming into being, or the raw potential of a time not yet brought into being, something outside of time. Through these creative and restorative impulses, Droste-Hülshoff’s poetic daguerreotype sutures not only the two companions (Elise and the lyrical voice), but also blends imaginative present, past, and future in the gaze of the image.

### **Finding an Alternative Image Beyond the Frame: “Das Bild”**

In “Das Spiegelbild” and “An Elise in der Ferne,” Droste-Hülshoff explores a loosening of the connection between individual and representation in both the mirror and the daguerreotype. In “Das Spiegelbild,” Droste-Hülshoff hypothesizes a breach of the mirror’s reflective surface through the dissimilarity of the reproduced image, destabilizing the image’s ability to reproduce the onlooker. In “An Elise,” Droste-Hülshoff explores the creative possibility of such an uncoupled image, locating within the image a way beyond the frame and beyond simple replication. In “Das Bild,” Droste-Hülshoff builds upon the disruption of the

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<sup>166</sup> Eric Downing, *The Chain of Things : Divinatory Magic and the Practice of Reading in German Literature and Thought, 1850-1940*, Signale : Modern German Letters, Cultures, and Thought (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2018., 2018), 5.

reflective image and the oblique drive of the image itself to further pursue the ability of the reproduced image to scatter likenesses beyond the frame, upending the systematizing function of objective images like the daguerreotype.

In “Das Bild” Droste-Hülshoff similarly foregrounds the dissimilarity of the captured image, this time faulting the reproduction for its excess rather than its fractured appearance. Here, instead of the mirror, the lyrical voice confronts an image of an unnamed interlocutor. Whether the image discussed in the text is photographic or painterly has not been resolved in the scholarship. Clemens Heselhaus suggests that the image could be a daguerreotype, based on Droste-Hülshoff’s familiarity with the technique, and as Amalie von Hassenpflug was the likely addressee in the text, who Droste-Hülshoff had not seen in person since 1839 and of whom Droste-Hülshoff had a daguerreotype.<sup>167</sup> While Cettina Rapisarda voiced doubt about the veracity of such a claim based on the “retouchability” of the image inferred by the poem, Kristin Eichhorn and Lothar van Laak have most recently sided with Heselhaus on the likelihood of the image being a daguerreotype.<sup>168</sup> The emphasis on exactitude in the opening poem also resonates with current debates during this period about the the daguerreotype’s superior ability to reproduce nature.<sup>169</sup>

The lyrical voice makes clear its intention: to find in the image only the interlocutor referred to as *du*. “Ich will nur sehn in deine Augen, / Den einen reinen Blick nur saugen, / Der

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<sup>167</sup> *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Handbuch*, 438–39; Clemens Heselhaus, “Memory, Natural History and Annette von Droste-Hülshoff’s Heidebilder,” in *The Poetics of Memory*, 1998, 153.

<sup>168</sup> Cettina Rapisarda, “‘Wandernde Zeichen’. Freundschaft und Liebe in Gedichten Annette von Droste-Hülshoffs,” in *Querelles Jahrbuch*, vol. 3, 2006, 246; *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff Handbuch*, 438–39.

<sup>169</sup> Daston and Galison, *Objectivity*, 125–30.

leise meinen Namen nennt.” (I/ II. 26-28).<sup>170</sup> Like the Elise of “An Elise”, the lyrical voice of “Das Bild” directs its gaze into the image, only here the lyrical voice states explicitly the expectation of what should gaze back. As before, the lyrical voice casts doubt on the transferability of one’s three-dimensional essence onto a two-dimensional surface using the same invocations of foreignness with the added language of excess.

Sie stehn vor deinem Bild und schauen  
In dein verschleiert Augenlicht,  
Sie prüfen Lippe, Kinn und Brauen,  
Und sagen dann: “du seist es nicht,  
Zu klar die Stirn, zu voll die Wange,  
Zu üppig in der Locken Hange,  
Ein lieblich fremdes Angesicht. (II. 1-7)<sup>171</sup>

Was fremd dahin will ich nicht schauen, (I. 22)<sup>172</sup>

The confrontation with the image is here likewise fragmented into discrete characteristics, and with the repeated use of *zu*, excess becomes the source of the lyrical voice’s negative evaluation of the image.

While the criterion of objective images represented by the daguerreotype is the true-to-life quality highlighted by contemporaneous accounts and formalized in Daston and Gallison’s *Objectivity*, the poetic image in “Das Bild” appears to pursue a different goal. Such an image creates the initial impression of strangeness and dissimilarity through a fractured or overwrought recreation of the human countenance. However, like the daguerreotype in “An Elise in der Ferne,” Droste-Hülshoff explores these inconsistencies to draw out the strangeness inherent to

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<sup>170</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, “Das Bild,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 328–31.

<sup>171</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 328.

<sup>172</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 328.

the reproduced image. Like the case of the addressee of “An Elise in der Ferne,” who stares into the image in search of the lyrical voice, the object diverts her gaze toward another object, and possibly to another space-time. For the lyrical voice of Droste-Hülshoffs poetry, the poetic onlooker similarly searches the image for itself or its interlocutor only to instead find something other, which directs the onlooker out of the subject-object binary. In order to complicate the image-self relationship, Droste-Hülshoff uses this image as a springboard outside of the parameters normally associated with the real. Confronted with the dissimilarity and foreignness of the image, the lyrical voice explodes the binary of self and reproduction by drawing in distant similarities, creating an expansive network of images to replace the simple connection between self and reflection.

In “Das Bild,” like in “Das Spiegelbild,” the image confronted by the lyrical voice and the dissimilarity it displays directs the viewer’s gaze away, if not so repulsively as the mirror image. As discussed earlier, the lyrical voice in “Das Bild” seeks the features of a companion in confronting the image, rather than to recognize the self within the mirror. Despite the difference of object–mirror vs. daguerreotype or painting– and of intention–reproduction of the self vs. reproduction of the other–the lyrical voice in “das Bild” confronts its own expectations and the image represented in much the same way that the lyrical voice confronts the mirror in “das Spiegelbild.” In doing so, the lyrical voice not only finds difference, but in the second poem of the set describes how the image will only expand upon these original differences.

Where the first poem of this three-poem set focuses on the shortcomings of the image in its likeness to the represented companion, the second poem imagines the growing dissimilarity between the person in the lyrical voice’s memory and in the imagistic reproduction. The increase in dissimilarity occurs simultaneously with a shift in direction. Recall that the dissimilarity

identified by the lyrical voice in the first poem results from an excess of detail, whereas in the second poem, the lyrical voice imagines the gradual changing of the human form. In some descriptions, the lyrical voice registers a loss.

“Nicht so elastisch deiner Lippen Zug [...]” (3/II)  
“Wenn minder stolz und edel die Gestalt,” (8/II)  
“O Fluch des Alters, wenn das beßre Theil  
Mit ihm dem Gottesbilde müßte weichen!  
Wenn minder liebewarm ein Lächeln [...]” (15-17/II)<sup>173</sup>

In other descriptions, change takes the form of accumulation.

“Und wär es wahr auch, daß der Jahre Pflug  
Dir Furchen in die klare Stirn getrieben,” (1-2/II)  
“Wenn dichter auch die Hülle dich umschlingt,” (5/II)<sup>174</sup>

The changes listed off throughout this text signal a movement away from the image. As a reproduction fixed in time, the image cannot register the changes that will likely occur in the represented person; however, it is precisely through the image that the lyrical voice approaches these hypothetical changes. The lyrical voice registers each shift in the companion’s appearance in the comparative, tying it back to the image, almost superimposing the changes upon it.

The connection between various instantiations of the depicted person becomes apparent in the final strophe of the second poem. Here the person exists in the imagination of the lyrical voice, as an individual, and in the reproduced image.

Und dennoch hält sie Alle uns bethört,  
Die Form, die staubgeborne, wandelbare,  
Scheint willig uns ein Ohr das leise hört,  
Kühn einer frischen Stimme Siegsfanfare,  
Wir Alle sehen nur des Pharus Licht,  
Die Glut im Erdenschooße sehn wir nicht,

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<sup>173</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 329–30.

<sup>174</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 329–30.

Und Keiner denkt der Lampe am Altare.” (22-28/II)<sup>175</sup>

The three descriptors referenced by the personal pronoun *sie* in line 22, (*form/staubgeborne/wandelbare*) can be read as having the same referent or as three separate instantiations of that referent. The depicted person discussed throughout this text exists in these three shapes: as a form or image, as an earthly (and earthy) being, and as an ever-shifting idea. The text strengthens the connection between these three states in the final three lines of the second part of the poem. The light of the Alexandrian lighthouse, the earth’s core, and the lamp on the altar appear vastly different, and yet are all instantiations of fire or light, and have the potential to indicate one another. It is in the oscillation between these differing forms that the lyrical voice finally progresses beyond the confines of the image itself to find a final likeness beyond the frame.

The breach of the frame that occurs in the hypothetical in “Das Spiegelbild” occurs in the final poem in “Das Bild.” Here the lyrical voice suggests a superior image to the reproduction in the previous two poems. In the short recapitulation of the failings of the earlier image, the lyrical voice emphasizes the fixed nature of the image and its boundaries.

Ein bessres als zu dessen Rahmen,  
Wenn Jahre schwanden, Jahre kamen,  
Man wie sein eigener Schatten schleicht. (ll. 5-7/III)<sup>176</sup>

According to the lyrical voice, to find a better image, one must look beyond the frozen image and beyond the frame. Though not a definitive connection, Droste-Hülshoff refers again to the image as a shadow, just as she had done in “An Elise in der Ferne.” The lyrical voice follows its own direction outward in reconstructing an image of *du* addressed in the poem. In the following

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<sup>175</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 329–30.

<sup>176</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 330.

four strophes, the lyrical voice lists off disparate locations only to relate these images back to the addressee of the text in the final line of each strophe.

Lausch' ich am Strande ob der lauen  
Entschlafnen Flut mit scheuer Lust,  
Wird unterm Flore dann, dem blauen,  
Lebendig mir die ernste Rust,  
Ich seh' am Grunde die Korallen,  
Ich seh' der Fischlein goldig Wallen –  
Und schaue tief in deine Brust,

Und wieder an der Grüfte Bogen  
Seh' ich der Mauerflechte Stab  
Mit tausend Ranken eingesogen  
In des Gesteines Herz hinab,  
Von Taue schwer die grünen Locken,  
Leuchtwürmer in der Wimper Flocken —  
Das ist dein Lieben übers Grab.

Und wenn an der Genesung Bronnen  
— Im Saale tafeln Stern und Band —  
Sich mittags kranke Bettler sonnen,  
Begierig schlürfen überm Rand  
Und emsig ihre Schalen schwenken —  
Dann muß ich an dein Geben denken,  
An deine warme, offene Hand.

O, jener Quell, der glüh und leise,  
Ein Sprudel, deiner Brust entquillt,  
Der nichts von Flocken weiß und Eise,  
Mit Segen seine Steppe füllt,  
Ihm kann nur gleichen, wessen Walten  
Nie siechen kann und nie veralten,  
Und die Natur nur ist dein Bild. (ll. 8-35/III)<sup>177</sup>

Disparate images of aquatic life, grassy crypts, fountains engender images not just of the physical features of the addressee, but of its actions and intentions. Droste-Hülshoff's lyrical poem proposes an alternative image to the reproduced image, one that has no boundary.

Everywhere the lyrical voice casts its gaze it finds the likeness of the *du* reproduced in the

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<sup>177</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 330–31.



eponymous *Bild*. The ocean floor, replete with corals and fish, becomes its breast; the grassy crypts full of glowworms, transforms into its love beyond the grave; and healing fountains that nourish sick beggars becomes the image's open hand. In short, the image expands to encompass the world.

What occurs in these texts is not the disavowal of the image, for these images feature so prominently at the exact moment of transformation within these texts. Instead, Droste-Hülshoff draws out the uncanniness of the image to reanimate it. The mirror of "das Spiegelbild" becomes the catalyst for the destruction of the narcissistic relationship to the reflected image. The daguerreotype of "An Elise in der Ferne" guides the lyrical voice, the poetic Elise, and the reader out of the frame toward poetic potential of yet-unrealized time. Finally the image of "Das Bild" provokes reflection on the medium's shortcomings and provides direction for an alternative frame-less and living image. As noted in the analysis of these texts, many of the gestures beyond the reflected and reproducible image occur in the hypothetical, and in many ways this can extend for Droste-Hülshoff's rendering of the image within the poem. In her poetry, Droste-Hülshoff suggests that the image rendered poetically, and specifically the objective image ideal of the nineteenth century, can serve as a catalyst for the dissolution of the closed reflective relationship. In the place of this closed relationship, Droste-Hülshoff generates an uncanny, living image, one that generates intimacy, rather than fear and disgust. The lyrical voice hypothetically shifts the trajectory of future progress of image reproduction after the daguerreotype away from the totalizing and inanimate system of technical media, and toward a living ideal that cannot be replicated, mindlessly consumed, or systematized.

## Between *Sterben* and *Reisen*: Embodied Ground in Droste-Hülshoff's "Der Hünenstein," "Im Grase," and "Die Mergelgrube"

In the novel fragment, *Joseph: Eine Kriminalgeschichte*, Droste-Hülshoff summarizes through the narrator, Caspar Bernjen, the state of modern travel at the middle of the nineteenth century. Largely seen as beneficial, modern travel is not without its negative side effects:

Die Zeit schreitet fort. Das ist gut, wenigstens in den meisten Beziehungen. Aber wir müssen mitrennen, ohne Rücksicht auf Alter, Kränklichkeit und angeborene Apathie. Das ist mitunter sehr unbequem. In meiner Kindheit, wo das Sprichwort: «Bleib im Lande und nähre Dich redlich» seine strenge Anwendung fand; wo die Familien aller Stände ihre Sprossen wie Banianenbäume nur in den nächsten Grund steckten und die Verwandtschaften so verwickelt wurden, daß man auf sechs Meilen Weges jeden Standesgenossen frischweg: «Herr Vetter» nannte und sicher unter hundert mal kaum einmal fehlte; in jener Zeit kannte ein ordinaier Mensch mit zehn Jahren jeden Ort, den seine leiblichen Augen zu sehn bestimmt waren und er konnte achtzig Jahre nach einander sich ganz bequem seinen Pfad austreten.

Jetzt ist es anders. Die kleinen Staaten haben aufgehört; die großen werfen ihre Mitglieder umher wie Federbälle, und das ruhigste Subjekt muß sich entweder von allen Banden menschlicher Liebe lossagen oder sein Leben auf Reisen zubringen, je nach den Verhältnissen umherfahrend wie ein Luftballon, oder noch schlimmer immer denselben Weg angähnend wie ein Schirrmeister; kurz, nur die Todkranken und die Bewohner der Narrenspitäler dürfen zu Hause bleiben, und Sterben und Reisen sind zwei unabwendbare Lebensbedingungen geworden.<sup>178</sup>

This text highlights in modern travel its particular ability to restructure existing relationships [*Beziehungen*]. New physical networks of travel form during this period, but also new interpersonal and societal relationships also come into being. As the quote argues, modern travel ushers in a reorganization of norms according to mobility, specifically the ability to participate in networks of travel across ever vaster stretches of ground. Like death, travel rises in prominence to become an essential condition of life [*unabwendbare Lebensbedingung*], essentially reframing

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<sup>178</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe : Prosa*, vol. 5/1 (Tübingen : Niemeyer, 1978-2000., 2000).

the difference between life and death as travel and death. Previous metrics for structuring society like age, constitution, and character become reduced to participation in these new networks. Those unable or unwilling to participate in such travel also undergo transformation. No longer counted among the living, those not participating in travel cannot be integrated into the system, only thinkable as either crazy or dead.

In addition to the restructuring of human relations, the reframing of life through the *Sterben-Reisen* dichotomy of the passage above articulates a specific relationship between human and earth/ground. Travel, as Caspar Bernjen describes it, reduces life to movement across the ground, and death to the cessation of this motion. The human body disappears in the speed of the railway, as does the ground as anything more than the foundation for the rail. Only in the mention of the abnormality of non-participation, does the body return in the form of sickness and the embodied space of the home. While Droste-Hülshoff highlights the presence of these new boundaries at the start of *Joseph*, she blurs this distinction in her lyric poetry, finding mobility and life within the embodied space of the ground.

In this section, I examine how Droste-Hülshoff articulates an alternative paradigm of travel through an exploration of the poetic possibility of the ground. I argue that the anchoring to the ground problematized by modern travel represents in Droste-Hülshoff's texts a source of new mobilities outside of the developing experiential framework exemplified by modern travel during this period. I consider the representation of this novel form of contact in three texts, "Der Hüenstein," "Die Mergelgrube," and "Im Grase," in which Droste-Hülshoff explores poetically the transformative potential of an intimate connection to the ground. I will begin by briefly discussing the poetic productivity of the ground, followed by an examination of

contemporaneous discussions of modern travel's effect on experience, before focusing on how Droste-Hülshoff's lyric draws out the potential of the ground as an alternative source of mobility.

As we shall see in these texts, the ground always exists as a mixture of sand, earth, dust, various stones, former mountains, but also diverse entities, both living and dead. For Droste-Hülshoff, the ground harbors a disruptive potential, able to blur distinctions between living and dead, mineral and biological, past, present, and future. The ground appears uncannily alive in Droste-Hülshoff's work, where she resurrects and communes with long dead or inanimate entities, like fossils and rock formations. The ground and its contents offer contact with diverse imaginative possibilities, and according to Heather Sullivan, redemptive possibilities. Sullivan proposes "dirt theory" as "an antidote to nostalgic views rendering nature a far-away and "clean" site precisely in order to suggest that there is no ultimate boundary between us and nature."<sup>179</sup> The ground (made up of dirt, sand, soil, and the like) exists everywhere and can contain anything. "We exist in a diaspora of granular minerals, particulate matter, and organic odds and ends that find their way into our soil and elsewhere, too."<sup>180</sup> Droste's poetry engages with the ground in the same kind of expansive dispersion, which allows it to form a more productive relationship to the world, one that is life-sustaining, rather than life-threatening. As Sullivan articulates, and as we see in Droste-Hülshoff's poetry, the contents of the ground exist between science and culture, and the ground has the ability to preserve the imports of both lines of thought, despite their often conflicting explanations of the world.<sup>181</sup> Modern advancements in

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<sup>179</sup> Heather Sullivan, "Dirt Theory and Material Ecocriticism," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 19, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 515.

<sup>180</sup> Sullivan, 516.

<sup>181</sup> Sullivan, 518.

transportation increasingly lead to a separation from the earth, as a ground and as a planet. “Most of our discursive and material practices posit human beings in opposition to the “earth” instead of fully participating in dirty processes.”<sup>182</sup> What Sullivan articulates about the problematic separation that occurs in the space travel of science fiction, takes shape in these texts as the advent of modernized travel, as the primary separation of oneself from the earth.<sup>183</sup> An attention to the ground is also an attention to boundaries, the shifting and porous nature of ostensibly hard boundaries, and the realization that “human bodies and minds are fully ensconced in material environments, which shape us just as vividly as we shape them.”<sup>184</sup> Whether they are the boundaries between the traveler and the ground, the borders of nations, or between the living and the dead, Droste-Hülshoff’s poetic engagement with the ground offers a means for dissolving these boundaries rather than simply expanding them.

The intermixing of diverse materials, cultures, and beings found in the earth is the source of the ground’s disruptive potential. For Donna Haraway, the ground serves as a source of trouble, a space for challenging and living with the discomforts of mortality and for recognizing our connection to the world at large. According to Haraway, full recognition of the ground, “requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings.”<sup>185</sup> One source of this troublesome nature is

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<sup>182</sup> Sullivan, 529.

<sup>183</sup> Sullivan, 518–19.

<sup>184</sup> Sullivan, 528.

<sup>185</sup> Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene. Experimental Futures*, Illustrated Auflage (Durham: Combined Academic Publ., 2016), 1.

the presence of what Haraway labels “Chthonic ones.” These entities are “beings of the earth, both ancient and up-to-the-minute. [...] [They] are monsters in the best sense; they demonstrate and perform the material meaningfulness of earth processes and critters [...] they belong to no one.”<sup>186</sup> What emerges in Droste-Hülshoff’s poetry is a vision of the earth rife with similar disruptive possibilities. By crafting a form of mobility that journeys into and through the ground, rather than simply upon it, Droste-Hülshoff brings her reader into contact with similar Chthonic beings that have the potential to deterritorialize and desystematize the world.

Returning to the introduction of modernized travel to Germany, Droste-Hülshoff increasingly describes its effect as disconnection of the human from the ground, and of the mind from the body. Much like her relationship to the daguerreotype, Droste-Hülshoff was familiar with new modes of transportation during her lifetime. In her letters, Droste-Hülshoff outlines the various effects that new forms of mechanized travel had on her as a traveler. One of her earlier reference to such mechanized travel is in relation to the steam ship “Friedrich Wilhelm,” which she calls a “Höllmaschine,” citing the cacophonous noise of the engine, which would have been similar to the steam locomotive.

Kurz, das Ganze gleicht einer Höllenmaschine, doch soll gar keine Gefahr dabei sein, und ich möchte diese schöne Gelegenheit wohl benutzen, um nach Koblenz zu kommen, was in fünf Stunden möglich sein soll.<sup>187</sup>

In this early reaction to the steam ship, Droste-Hülshoff marries devilish machinery and modern convenience. The author fully acknowledges the enticement of more rapid transportation, while still communicating something ominous about the experience itself.

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<sup>186</sup> Haraway, 2.

<sup>187</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe : Briefe 1805-1838*, vol. 8 (Tübingen : Niemeyer, 1978-2000., 2000)18. Oktober 1825.

This ominous tone did not dissipate over the next decades for Droste-Hülshoff. Like many of her peers, she voiced concern over the effect that this high-velocity transportation had on the mind and body, particularly that such forms of travel could undo the binds that tie one to the world.

Die Zeit läuft so schnell und immer konfuser, daran sind die Eisenbahnen schuld, man kömmt auseinander, leiblich und geistig. Gottlob, dass das Hangen an Erinnerungen mit den Jahren zunimmt, sonst müßte es eine schreckliche Zerfahrenheit geben.<sup>188</sup>

According to Droste-Hülshoff's account, the speed of modern travel gives way to confusion and mindlessness [*Zerfahrenheit*]. Droste-Hülshoff views this mindlessness as a particular problem of modern travel. The speed and sensory confusion overwhelm the mind and body to the point of dissolution, against which only memory can serve as an anchor.

Droste-Hülshoff continued to refine her opinion of modern travel over the following years, further detailing the effect it had on the mind and body. In a later letter, the author no longer defines rail travel solely in terms of speed. Once acclimated to this acceleration, Droste-Hülshoff describes a more nuanced relationship between modern travel and time:

Die Eisenbahn machte uns dieses Mal gar keinen ängstlichen oder seltsamen Eindruck mehr, aber einen höchst langweiligen, ganz als wenn man auf schlechten Wegen langsam voranzuckelt, überall aufgehalten wird und gar nicht vorankömmt. Auf dieser Bahn müssen nämlich die Schienen nicht gut gelegt sein; sie stößt bedeutend, und das ewige Anhalten bei den Stationen erhöht noch den Eindruck von schlechten Wegen und Langsamkeit, obwohl es pfeilschnell geht und wir nur etwa fünf Stunden bis Mannheim brauchten.<sup>189</sup>

Measured in clock time, travel progresses *pfeilschnell*, while the lyrical voice's internal sense of time dilates outward to an eternity of interruptions [*das ewige Anhalten*]. What Droste-Hülshoff identifies as the gradual disorientation of the mind in the earlier letter seems to have progressed

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<sup>188</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, *Historisch-Kritische Ausgabe*, 2000 April 1845.

<sup>189</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 20. Oktober 1844.

in this letter, leading to an experience of time that does not square with its measurement. Modern travel oscillates between interminable slowness to lightning speed, never creating a stable relationship between mind and body.

Considering all of these characterizations of rail travel, Droste-Hülshoff highlights seemingly contradictory effects. On the one hand, rail travel brings about a feeling of nervous confusion, both physical and mental. Especially in the letter from April 1845, through the use of the term *Zerfahrenheit*, Droste-Hülshoff indicates both a scattering and an absence of thought (scatterbrained/absentminded). On the other hand, rail travel creates boredom through repetition of the ever-same. The image that emerges of rail travel in Droste-Hülshoff's letters is that of a system able to pull passengers through space at a confusingly fast pace, while also smoothing over the differences of the spaces enough to bore the same confused passengers.

We find these effects mirrored in histories of modern travel during this historical period. Like Droste-Hülshoff, early commenters on the experience of modern travel emphasize a similar disconnection between mind and body. Prevailing among accounts of the mid-nineteenth century emphasize destabilization, brought about in part by the feeling that the ground is slipping away. In Heinrich Heine's estimation, rail travel's violence is nothing short of murder: "Durch die Eisenbahn wird der Raum getötet."<sup>190</sup> Karl Marx similarly contends that modern transportation brings about the obliteration of space by time. "Vernichtung des Raums durch die Zeit."<sup>191</sup> This destruction, of course, is mostly illusory, serving as an illustrative metaphor for what Wolfgang Schivelbusch describes as the negative experience of a complete restructuring of one's

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<sup>190</sup> Heinrich Heine, "Lutetia," in *Sämtliche Schriften in Zwölf Bänden*, vol. 9 (München, 1976), 448.

<sup>191</sup> Karl Marx, "Grundrisse Der Kritik Der Politischen Ökonomie," in *Marx-Engels-Werke*, vol. 42 (Berlin: Dietz, 1983), 430.



relationship to the environment. This illusion occurs, according to Schivelbusch, because of the complete replacement of former transport technologies that relied on living power, whether derived from animal or human action, instead of mechanical. This fact leads to the perception of rail travel as a spatial and temporal intrusion in the world. “[T]he railroad did not appear embedded in the space of the landscape the way the coach and the highway are, but seemed to strike its way through it.<sup>192</sup> What certain travelers experienced as destruction of space was the implementation of a new network that bypassed familiar facets of life that had previously defined travel. Anette Freytag similarly locates the discomfort of rail travel during this period in a restructuring of space of time relations, whereby “the railway by its enormous speed dissolved the given space continuum,” which was based on a “mimetic relationship with topography.”<sup>193</sup> This disruption in spatial and temporal experience brought about by modern travel detaches the traveler from the ground. What the contemporaneous criticism of Heine and Marx miss—and Droste-Hülshoff’s lyric restore—is the distinctness of the human relationship to the ground. Rather than simply seeking to restore the sense of space, Droste-Hülshoff’s lyric approaches the earth as embodied and primordial ground, replete with granular materials, unknown entities, and subversive potential.

From here, I will consider the representation of contact with the ground in the texts “Der Hünenstein,” “Im Grase,” and “Die Mergelgrube.” For the purpose of this section, I will first summarize the events described in each poem. In “Der Hünenstein,” an absent-minded poet stumbles out into a storm and suddenly falls into a monolithic grave, which evokes images of

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<sup>192</sup> Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey* (Berkeley, Ca: University of California Press, 2014), 51–52.

<sup>193</sup> Anette Freytag, “When the Railway Conquered the Garden,” in *Landscape Design and the Experience of Motion* (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2003), 235.

long-gone battles. In “Im Grase,” the lyrical voice takes up a position on the ground while musing about ephemerality; however, from the position on the ground, subjects of death and impermanence lead to greater contact with the world, rather than a loss of contact. In “Die Mergelgrube,” the lyrical voice ventures into a sand pit, and while taking inventory of the contents within imagines the distant past and an apocalyptic future before a shepherd happens upon the pit. As these summaries show, each text stages a descent into the ground, and once there, the lyrical voice discovers a wealth of material developed over the course of the text.

### **Finding Hollow and Hallowed Ground in “Der Hünenstein”**

In “Der Hünenstein,” Droste-Hülshoff most directly recalls her own characterization of modern travel from her letters. Specifically, the poet problematizes the repeated stops, perceived slowness, and lack of perceptible progress she highlights in the 1844 letter. Droste-Hülshoff utilizes a specifically literary comparison to express the feeling of such unfulfilling motion.

So träumt ich fort und, wie ein schlechtes Buch,  
Ein Pfennigs-Magazin uns auf der Reise  
Von Station zu Stationen plagt,  
Hab’ zehnmal Weggeworf’nes ich benagt.<sup>194</sup>

This description registers the effects of modern travel as the experience of both bodily and literary fulfillment. The lyrical voice’s characterization of travel as “von Station zu Stationen,” strongly resembles Droste-Hülshoff’s critique of rail travel as “ewige Anhalten bei Stationen” from her 1844 letter to Jenny Laßberg. The lyrical voice describes the lack of progress felt between stops as “ten-time-gnawed refuse” [*zehnmal Weggeworf’nes benagt*] qualifying such motion as repetitive and without nourishment, while again recalling the boredom described by Droste-Hülshoff in the letter and detailed in the many accounts in Schivelbusch’s history of rail

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<sup>194</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, “Der Hünenstein,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), 48–51.

travel.<sup>195</sup> The reference to the “Pfennigs-Magazin” also recalls the experience of rail travel and the popularity of travel reading at the time, a reference to Germany’s first weekly magazine, *Das Pfennig-Magazin der Gesellschaft zur Verbreitung gemeinnütziger Kenntnisse*, which primarily reported on popular scientific and medicinal knowledge coupled with pictures. The lyrical voice exhibits a negative opinion of this type of publication [*ein schlechtes Buch*], and seems to suggest that such reading is akin to this type of train-like motion.

Whether specifically a reference to train travel or not, the type of motion depicted here exhibits the same regularizing characteristics common to modern travel, and especially rail travel listed in Schivelbusch’s account.<sup>196</sup> The lyrical voice’s description of its motion throughout the opening of the text recalls the regular directionality of modern travel: “Grad war der Weg, ganz sonder Steg und Bruch.”<sup>197</sup> The lyrical voice then couples this regularity of direction with a regularity of motion at the end of the same strophe, echoing the mechanical power of the train engine. “Und fortgeleiert überdrüß’ge Weise.”<sup>198</sup> The term *leiern* implies a circular motion, like that of a drive wheel or crank, which is the same mechanism that transmits the up and down motion of the piston into forward motion. It also refers to a droning sound, like that of the hurdy-gurdy, which is also driven by a crank. In both a sonic and a mechanical sense, the term implies regularity of motion. In the next strophe, the lyrical voice describes a similar circular motion, this time suggesting that such motion does not amount to progress. “Entwürfe wurden aus Entwürfen reif, / Doch, wie die Schlange packt den eignen Schweif, / Fand ich mich immer auf derselben

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<sup>195</sup> Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*, 71.

<sup>196</sup> Schivelbusch, 27.

<sup>197</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, “Der Hünenstein,” ll. 13, 48.

<sup>198</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 18, 49.

Stelle.”<sup>199</sup> Here, the ouroboros seems to signify endless reproduction of the same, rather than death and rebirth. The first line indicates that this motion yields literary, sonic, and even alimentary products, but this circular motion does not amount to nourishment or progress.

Coupled with the lyrical voice’s circular motion is a feeling of isolation, which seems to contribute to its lack of progress. The second strophe emphasizes the solitary state of the lyrical voice and its disconnection from the environment around it.

Zu dieser Dämmerstunde war’s, als ich  
Einsam hinaus mit meinen Sorgen schlich,  
Und wenig dachte, was es draußen triebe.  
Nachdenklich schritt ich, und bemerkte nicht  
Des Krautes Wallen und des Wurmes Licht,  
Ich sah auch nicht, als stieg die Mondesscheibe.<sup>200</sup>

The lyrical voice starts in a state characterized by a focus on mental activity and a disregard of external environment. Much like the *Zerfahrenheit* that characterizes Droste-Hülshoff’s experience of modern travel, the lyrical voice emphasizes its absorption in thought and the effect that this state has on its relationship to the world around it. In these lines, the lyrical voice appears to have lost contact with the world around him. The lyrical voice describes this relationship in a list of negated actions: “wenig dachte,” “bemerkte nicht,” “sah auch nicht.” This relationship carries through to the third strophe, where the lyrical voice describes its activity as *fortträumen*.<sup>201</sup>

While Droste-Hülshoff never mentions the railroad by name in “der Hünenstein” the selections discussed earlier make clear the thematic connections of the lyrical voice’s motion to

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<sup>199</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 19-21, 49.

<sup>200</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 7-12, 48.

<sup>201</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 14, 48.

the experience of modern travel at this time. In fact, in lamenting its inability to progress mentally, the lyrical voice repeats the same situation in slightly varied form in three consecutive strophes. First descriptively in the second strophe, next through the train and magazine metaphors of the third strophe, and finally as the ouroboros of the fourth strophe.<sup>202</sup> The lyrical voice's motion becomes a succession of increasingly similar situations, not unlike the lyrical voice's own descriptions of his<sup>203</sup> thoughts as progressing from "station" to "station." This repetitiveness also resembles many contemporaneous accounts of the gradual loss of spatial individuality due to the train station. Isolation from the environment, circular or repetitive motion, and absorption within one's own mind characterize the lyrical voice's relationship to the world in this text, while also mirroring the state of rail travel at the time.

In a world increasingly defined by cyclical motion, mental absence, and intangible forces, the lyrical voice of "Der Hüenstein" turns toward the ground as an intervention in the regularizing relationship to the world represented by modern travel. Surprisingly, this motion into the ground does not appear as an isolating activity or a retreat from modernity. On the contrary, the poetic interaction with the ground provides the lyrical voice and the reader with a form of contact that relies on discontinuity. The contact with the ground in "Der Hüenstein," and in the other poems, upends the linear continuity of modern travel, while also upending the "grounding" function of the past's continuity with present identity

Where the lyrical voice's train-like motion in the world exacerbates his isolation in "Der Hüenstein," the ground soon interrupts this isolation through sudden contact. Unlike the

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<sup>202</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 8-9, 10-12, it actually occurs twice in this strophe, ll. 13-18, 19-21, 48-49.

<sup>203</sup> For "Der Hüenstein," I use masculine pronouns for the lyrical voice in order to preserve the gender suggested by the designation "Herr" at the end of the text.

repetitiveness of the previous sections, Droste-Hülshoff crafts this contact with the earth as a sudden, unexpected drop and shift in perspective facilitated by a small and strange representative of the earth.

Da plötzlich fuhr ein plumper Schröter jach  
An's Auge mir, ich schreckte auf und lag  
Am Grund, um mich des Heidekrautes Welle.

Seltsames Lager, das ich mir erkor!  
Zur Rechten, Linken schwoll Gestein empor,  
Gewalt'ge Blöcke, rohe Porphirbrode,<sup>204</sup>

The stag beetle [*Schröter*] welcomes the lyrical voice into the earth.<sup>205</sup> The beetle offers a fitting welcome to the world below, as an insect that finds nourishment deep within the earth, feasting on humus and tree roots. This suddenness of the beetle's appearance disrupts the absentmindedness of the lyrical voice, and the ensuing fall into the grave pulls the lyrical voice out of its cyclical motion and into the earth. The physical shift in orientation (from standing to lying down [*ich schreckte auf und lag am Grund*]) coincides with a reorientation of the lyrical voice *vis à vis* the world. No longer confronted with the ever-same, the lyrical voice finds himself in a space of discovery, made strange [*seltsam*] by this shift in perspective.

Exploration of this newly discovered space of the ground in "Der Hünenstein" proves to reinvigorate the lyrical voice. The previous repetitive motion of the lyrical voice upon the earth

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<sup>204</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 22-27, 49.

<sup>205</sup> The term *Schröter* also recalls the famous German astronomer of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Johann Hieronymus Schröter. Schröter wrote extensively on his topographical discoveries on the moon and on mars. As a result of his discoveries, Schröter became the namesake for various craters on the moon and mars. (see: *Selenotopographische Fragmente zur genauern Kenntniss der Mondfläche*, 1791). In this context, Schröter's name could reference an otherworldly quality of the *Hünengrab*.

resulted in a gradual retreat from the present (“wenig dachte,” “bemerkte nicht,” “sah auch nicht”). From this new perspective within the earth, however, the lyrical voice appears much more connected to himself and his surroundings. The rustlings of insects and the composition of the granite stones that line the grave excite the lyrical voice, provoking a particularly bodily reaction.

Und fester drückt' ich meine Stirn hinab,  
Wollüstig saugend an des Grauens Süße,  
Bis es mit eis'gen Krallen mich gepackt,  
Bis wie ein Gletscher-Bronn des Blutes Takt  
Aufquoll und hämmert' unterm Mantelvliebe.<sup>206</sup>

Deep within the earth, the lyrical voice rediscovers his body, calling attention to the motions of his brow and the racing beat of his pulse. This passage contrasts sharply with the cyclical motion of the previous description, especially regarding nourishment. Where the lyrical voice describes gnawing refuse in the earlier citation, here he lustfully sucks down the sweetness of his dreadful environment [*Wollüstig saugend an des Grauens Süße*].<sup>207</sup> In this passage, the ground appears to quench the thirst of an earlier hunger. Interestingly, the lyrical voice's repossession of his own body occurs simultaneously with growing ambiguity between surrounding and body. The lyrical voice describes the horror of the earth as having claws [*Krallen*], while likening his own circulation to a glacial spring. Contrasted with the world above, the earthen grave appears in this text as a strange embodied space, where organic and inorganic materials intermix

In the strange space of the grave, Droste-Hülshoff locates a potential for boundary dissolution, much like Sullivan's characterization of the ground. The lyrical voice describes the

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<sup>206</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, “Der Hünenstein,” ll. 32-36, 50.

<sup>207</sup> Here, *des Grauens Süße* also recalls a graying quality [*ergraunen*] that appears later in “Die Mergelgrube”.

effect of the monolithic grave on its senses as the deletion of boundaries. “Ich lachte auf; doch trug wie bügellos / Mich Phantasie weit über Spalt und Barren.”<sup>208</sup> In the grave, the lyrical voice breaks the chain of stations and ouroboros-like movement of the surface world. It is from this liberated position within the earth that the lyrical voice can move beyond its own recycled thoughts, which brings it into contact with various foreign elements. This begins with the lyrical voice’s rediscovery of his own body and the bodies of the earth, but this experience almost immediately drives toward temporal dilation and deterritorialization. Droste-Hülshoff presents the ground’s ability to bring immediate contact across vast distances of time and space facilitated by the lyrical voice’s position within and direct contact with the ground. The ground and its inhabitants appear to possess memories of their own and the ability to communicate these memories to the voice. Through this connection, the lyrical voice contemplates a past unknown through a confrontation with the ground. This time, the entities it discovers communicate distant spaces that, like the Egyptian images, further complicate a sense of monolithic cultural heritage.

The lyrical voice’s crossing of temporal and spatial boundaries occurs chiefly through the large granite blocks that mark the grave. The titular *Hünenstein* draws together aspects of the *Findlingstein* with the added indication of traditions beyond the German border. First, as a *Findlingstein*, the stones that make up the grave call upon the same prehistoric timelines of those in “Die Mergelgrube.” “Zur Rechten, Linken schwoll Gestein empor, / Gewalt’ge Blöcke, rohe Porphyrbrode.”<sup>209</sup> The lyrical voice draws attention to the composition of both the *Findlingstein* of “Die Mergelgrube” and these monoliths, both types of porphyry, an igneous rock originating deep within the Earth. Porphyry also recalls classical archeology, as it was also a favored

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<sup>208</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, “Der Hünenstein,” ll. 44-45, 49.

<sup>209</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 26-27, 49.



decorative stone of ancient Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians. The appearance of porphyric rock in this context adds yet another cultural heritage to this site.

Beyond the stone itself, the lyrical voice's experience in the grave brings it into contact with communities beyond the Ancient Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians. The naming of the stones crosses national boundaries through the various possible interpretations of the term *Hünen*, pushing the lyrical voice further east. With the spelling preserved, the term *Hünen* refers to giants, which relates to the megalithic grave, but also to possible mythical giants of the Nordic tradition. At the close of the text, the lyrical voice proclaims to see the giant buried in the grave rising up in the distance to confront him. "Wie, sprach ich Zauberformel? Dort am Damm – / Es steigt, es breitet sich wie Wellenkamm, / Ein Riesenleib, gewalt'ger, höher immer."<sup>210</sup> The term also relates to *Hunnen*, or Huns, which expands the lyrical voice's world eastward. From within the grave, the east appears so close to the lyrical voice that it indicates it with the demonstrative *dort*. "Dort ist der Osten, dort drei Schuh im Grund, / Dort steht die Urne, und in ihrem Rund, / Ein wildes Herz, zerstäubt zu Aschenflocken."<sup>211</sup> With each successive indication of these eastern elements in its surroundings, the lyrical voice comes in closer contact with this distant space. In addition to the Huns, the grave also puts the lyrical voice in contact with the Celts, another far-flung community. While the Celts occupied Europe, their dispersion covers much of Europe, and despite this common territory, the lyrical voice highlights their cultural and linguistic difference. "Wer war die Drude, die im Abendstrahl / Mit Run' und Spruch

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<sup>210</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 61-63, 53.

<sup>211</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 53-55, 53.

umwandelte das Tal.”<sup>212</sup> The celtic rune and its magical elements highlight the difference between the world inhabited by the druid and the one formerly inhabited by the lyrical voice.

### **Becoming One with the Earth: “Im Grase” and “Die Mergelgrube”**

As discussed at the opening of “Der Hünenstein,” the lyrical voice finds himself swallowed up by the ground at the apex of his own repetitive motion. The ground becomes a sudden refuge from the deleterious effect of such motion. Conversely, in the following texts, “Im Grase” and “Die Mergelgrube” Droste-Hülshoff presents the voluntary motion of the lyrical voice into the ground, coming into contact with “chthonic” entities, to borrow Haraway’s term. Droste-Hülshoff complicates the relationship of *Sterben* and *Reisen* she sets up in the opening to *Joseph* by blurring the distinction between the dead and the living, the immobile and the mobile. In these texts, the dead and inorganic, spring to life, and the lyrical voice finds an expansion of time and space through contact with these denizens of the ground.

From the very start of *Im Grase*, the lyrical voice subverts the deadly immobility of an earthy existence. From a prone position, the lyrical voice sinks into the earth, adopting a similar stance to the lyrical voice in “Der Hünenstein.” From this new perspective, the lyrical voice articulates a closeness to the smallest features of the ground with an acute attention to detail.

Süße Ruh’, süßer Taumel im Gras,  
Von des Krautes Arom umhaucht,  
Tiefe Flut, tief, tief trunkne Flut,  
Wenn aufs müde schwimmende Haupt  
Süßes Lachen gaukelt herab,  
Liebe Stimme säuselt und träuft  
Wie die Lindenblüt’ auf ein Grab.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 52-53, 53.

<sup>213</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, “Im Grase,” in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), ll. 1-8, 307-08.

The lyrical voice appears embedded within the grass, close enough to the ground to bathe in its herbaceous scent. The thrice repeated adverb *tief* further embeds the voice's position within the ground. Finally the lyrical voice's position with respect to the sounds of laughter that falls upon its head situate the speaker upon the earth, or possibly within the earth as if sealed within a grave as noted in the eighth line.

The sweetness that characterizes these lines sets this connection to the ground apart from the fearsome quality of "Der Hünenstein," and yet this experience appears just as nourishing. Despite the frequent references to rest [*Ruhe*], drowsiness [*müde*], and death [*auf ein Grab*], the environment expresses a vibrant quality through miniscule motions. Sounds and smells trickle, whisper, flutter, and swim across the lyrical voice's countenance, creating intimate contact and establishing a form of communication through actions like laughter and quiet voices.

The reference to death coupled with the establishment of a restorative and intimate form of contact blurs the boundaries of life and death. After the emphasis on description of the opening lines, the lyrical voice focuses on the image of the grave that ends the first strophe "Wie die Lindenblüt' auf ein Grab."<sup>214</sup> The next lines foreground the death implied by the mention of the grave in the previous line.

Wenn im Busen die Toten dann  
Jede Leiche sich streckt und regt,  
Leise, leise den Odem zieht,  
Die geschlossne Wimper bewegt,  
Tote Lieb', tote Lust, tote Zeit,  
All die Schätze, im Schutt verwühlt,  
Sich berühren mit schüchternem Klang  
Gleich den Glöckchen, vom Winde umspielt.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 307–8.

<sup>215</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 9-16, 308.

Just as the opening lines repeatedly reference the sweetness of contact with the ground, death abounds in this strophe. Death in this section, however, includes more than the absence of life. While the ninth line references a resurrection of the dead, what qualifies as “the dead” expands in the thirteenth line to include love, lust, and time. The position within the ground qualifies death in these lines. Entities and ideas alike, what the lyrical voice refers to as treasures, lie buried in the ground, and by extension, only accessible through the ground.

Death appears to have lost its finality in this text, and the reversal of this formerly permanent state occurs through minute actions. Despite the terms “Toten,” “tot-” and “Leiche,” used to describe the entities in these lines, the lyrical voice constantly refers to a quiet vitality within each of the represented “treasures.” Each action contradicts the state immediately preceding its description. Corpses stretch, closed lids open, and buried treasures stir all on their own. It would seem that if death removed these entities from contact with the living, their interment in the ground facilitates contact with the living once again.

The perception of these subtle movements requires a close attention to the ground. Every action described occurs at the lowest level possible. Like the description from the opening lines, the lyrical voice further emphasizes the smallness of each action through repetition. (“Leise, leise den Odem zieht” or “mit schüchternem Klang”) Together with the first strophe, the first half of the text explores the contact available to the lyrical voice through a closeness to the ground. Not only does the voice perceive the small joys of the earth, like herbs and grass, but the voice also finds a connection to time and life formerly sealed away through death.

The contact afforded the lyrical voice through a connection to the ground works in both directions, as the lyrical voice finds expansive contact in the final strophe. In the preceding lines, the lyrical voice highlights the ephemerality of contact, measured in hours. This strophe appears

to interrupt the position, as if to provide comparison to the world outside of the lyrical voice's almost subterranean position.<sup>216</sup> For the first time, the lyrical voice's description expands beyond the position on the ground, stretching to include distant lakes, flying birds, and unnamed hands. Unlike the descriptions of the earthly treasures preceding them, each comparison to the hour highlights a fleeting moment of contact that occurs between two objects in motion. The kiss of light on churning water, the singing bird passing above, and the beetle passing through a ray of sunshine all depict a world in constant motion. Even the attempt to dwell in contact illustrated in the two ending lines already announces the end of contact by noting that this is the last time it will occur.

The final gesture of the text establishes the expansive nature of contact with the ground in opposition to the constant motion of time illustrated in the previous strophe. Familiar figures like the bird, the beam of light, and the hand return in these lines, this time without the finality of the previous strophe. The lyrical voice states this opposition through the adverb *dennoch* before listing forms of contact that persist in time, a solution for each of the previous illustrations of ephemerality. From a position on the ground, the lyrical voice extends outward to contact each of these fleeting images. While the first solution is *a* soul, the following solutions come directly from the lyrical voice.

Dennoch, Himmel, immer mir nur  
Dieses eine nur: für das Lied  
Jedes freien Vogels im Blau  
Eine Seele, die mit ihm zieht,  
Nur für jeden kärglichen Strahl  
Meinen farbig schillernden Saum,  
Jeder warmen Hand meinen Druck  
Und für jedes Glück meinen Traum.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 17-24, 308.

<sup>217</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 25-32, 308.

The recurrence of figures in this strophe also undergoes expansion, in that the lyrical voice replaces the general reference to a song or handshake with an action meant for every instantiation of these actions or occurrences. “Des zehenden Vogels Lied” becomes “das Lied jedes freien Vogels im Blau,” “der flüchtige Druck einer Hand” becomes “Jeder warmen Hand meinen Druck.” The text ends with the most expansive of all gestures, and one that does not originate from a previous section of the text. “Und für jedes Glück meinen Traum.” This text locates within the ground the possibility of an explosion of both time and space. The sweet repose that opens the text leads not to stagnation of life, but instead leads to shift in focus onto minute movements that are nonetheless capable of connecting across distances.

Like “Im Grase,” “Die Mergelgrube,” explores a plurality of temporal and spatial constructions. Here, instead of the grave, the lyrical voice plunges into a marl pit. Climbing into the eponymous marl pit, the voice imagines himself<sup>218</sup> transformed into *Findling* (an “erratic stone” deposited into a new geological context via glacial activity), fossil, and mummy before awakening from an apocalyptic vision to converse with a nearby shepherd. Unlike modern transportation’s increased contact with the world through regulation, the lyrical voice encounters these entities and their origins through a process of identification: the lyrical voice transforms into these objects while cohabiting the ground with them, thereby connecting the lyrical voice to the disparate times and spaces communicated by these objects. These objects possess a vitality not unlike the contents of the earth in “Im Grase.” Rather than subject these items to simple anthropomorphizing, the lyrical voice approaches these earthy objects through identification with

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<sup>218</sup> I use masculine pronouns for “Die Mergelgrube” in order to preserve Droste-Hülshoff’s identification of the lyrical voice as “Herr.”

them, which allows the objects to retain their otherness and establish contact with their disparate geographical and temporal origins.

As an intersection of diverse temporal constructions, the entities within the ground afford the lyrical voice immediate access to differing constructions of the past and imagined forms of the future. The *Findlingstein* already in its name foregrounds interruption and a commingling of meaning. Understood as a glacial erratic, the *Findlingstein* represents a mineral untouched by human hands, deposited into a human timeline by a now absent glacial flow. Ice age and Anthropocene intersect in the glacial erratic, inviting the onlooker to plumb the depths of both stretches of time. The *Findling* as orphan communicates a similar interruption of time. Transplanted from a possibly unknown heritage into a new familial context.

In the text, both the disruption of familial history and of geological material appear in the lyrical voice's definition, while also emphasizing its ability to connect these different lineages.

Die zorn'ge Welle hat sie hergescheucht, [...]  
Findlinge nennt man sie, weil von der Brust,  
Der mütterlichen sie gerissen sind,

In fremde Wiege schlummernd unbewußt,  
Die fremde Hand sie legt wie's Findelkind.<sup>219</sup>

The lyrical voice blends both understandings of the term *Findling*, as both a product of prehistoric glacial movement, and as an orphaned child. In doing so, the voice draws the human and mineral closer through their similar temporal displacement.

Present beside the geological history of the *Findling* in this text is the biblical history of the great flood. Instead of the frozen wave of the glacier carrying the erratics to their current positions, it is the tail of the Leviathan and the waves that carried Noah's ark that the lyrical

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<sup>219</sup> Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "Die Mergelgrube," in *Sämtliche Gedichte*. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, Frankfurt, 1988), ll. 17, 25-28, 52.

voice posits as the primary mover of these prehistoric stones.<sup>220</sup> This biblical narrative, however, is not the only explanation for the prehistoric activity that birthed the occupants of the sand pit.

The fossils present in the text similarly sit at the nexus of human-less prehistory and the current era of human dominance of the world. Compared to the discussion of *Findlinge* on the surface, the fossil appears in a more intimate context, as a confrontation deep within the marl pit, where fossil and poet have become co-inhabitants of the earth. While the *Findlinge* of the text announce their presence through their size and dazzling variety, the fossil must be hunted, and excavated, often within the *Findlinge*, themselves. Here the lyrical voice almost seems surprised to find these stony neighbors in his earthen refuge. Once found, however, these objects convey a temporal immensity akin to the *Findlinge*.

Ha, auf der Schieferplatte hier Medusen –  
Noch schienen ihre Strahlen sie zu zücken,  
Als sie geschleudert von des Meeres Busen  
Und das Gebirge sank, sie zu zerdrücken.  
Es ist gewiß, die alte Welt ist hin,  
Ich Petrefakt, ein Mammutsknochen drin!<sup>221</sup>

The lyrical voice's encounter with the fossil initiates an explosion of temporal scale, zooming out from the focal point of human and fossil contact to include moments beyond the advent and end of human life. First, the fossil's radiance [*Strahlen*] lends the object a living quality, engendering in the lyrical voice an image of the fossil's former life. The lyrical voice describes the habitat of the once-living fossil as a different world from his own, set apart by cataclysmic shifts in the lithosphere which collapsed mountains and altered oceans. Next, the image of its fossilization via subsumption into the earth recalls the lyrical voice's own current situation

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<sup>220</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 17-22, 52.

<sup>221</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 54.



within the ground of the marl pit. The equation of lyrical voice with fossil, specifically with a fossilized mammoth bone, further emphasizes the boundary-crossing nature of the fossil encounter. It was only half a century earlier that Georges Cuvier had identified the mammoth as an extinct species different from the elephant, showing that fossil evidence could communicate beyond the temporal boundaries of extinction.<sup>222</sup> Through the fossil, the lyrical voice's perspective ripples outward from the point of contact, traversing the boundaries of human experience to imagine non-human being.

Both the fossil and the *Findling* appear as more than mere objects in the ground in this text. Borrowing Jane Bennett's term, these two items function as "vibrant matter," which "dissipates onoto-theological binaries of life/matter, human/animal, [...] and organic/inorganic."<sup>223</sup> Together, the fossil and the *Findling* communicate differing spans of time through the immediacy of identification, which only becomes possible as the lyrical voice cohabits this space. In the account of both objects, the lyrical voice reflects their materiality back at them, and in so doing, the lyrical voice projects itself into an imagined apocalyptic future.

Vor mir, um mich der graue Mergel nur;  
Was drüber, sah ich nicht; doch die Natur  
Schien mir verödet, und ein Bild erstand  
Von einer Erde, mürbe, ausgebrannt;  
Ich selber schien ein Funken mir, der doch  
Erzittert in der toten Asche noch,  
Ein Findling im zerfallnen Weltenbau.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Pittroff, "'Bertuchs Naturgeschichte'; Les't Ihr Das? Annette von Droste-Hülshoff: 'Die Mergelgrube'. Naturgeschichte, Poesie, Apokalypse." 156.

<sup>223</sup> Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Combined Academic Publ., 2010), x.

<sup>224</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, "Die Mergelgrube," ll. 45-51, 53.

The identification with the *Findling* here occurs through the lyrical voice's common environment. Both poet and *Findling* find themselves carried vast temporal and spatial distances by the gray, earthy material of the marl pit. Like the *Findling*, the lyrical voice imagines itself carried far into the future, to the end of the world as he knows it. Coupled with his earlier description of the origin of the *Findling*, the lyrical voice's temporal perspective to include the biblical flood and the apocalypse.

The close contact between fossil and lyrical voice evokes in him a more detailed response. While the lyrical voice identifies with both *Findling* and fossil, it is the fossil that the lyrical voice imitates even after its discovery, and through this imitation becomes further enmeshed with the earth.

Und müde, müde sank ich an den Rand  
Der staub'gen Gruft; da rieselte der Grand  
Auf Haar und Kleider mir, ich ward so **grau**  
Wie eine Leich' im Katakomben-Bau,  
[...]  
Zu einer Mumie ward ich versandet,  
Mein Linnen Staub, fahl**grau** mein Angesicht,<sup>225</sup>

Through his previous identification with the fossil, the lyrical voice enacts its own fossilization to the point of blurring the distinction between itself and its surroundings. Sinking deeper into the earth, the voice covers itself in the gravel [*Grand*] of the pit, imagining himself first as a corpse, then as a mummy. Moving from human to corpse to mummy, the lyrical voice empties itself of organic material much like the process of fossilization, while simultaneously taking on the mineral material of the surrounding. This transformation also finds expression in the increasing presence of grayness in the lyrical voice. Again, these denizens of the earth resist

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<sup>225</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 54.

regulation and work through interruption rather than continuum. They do not conform to a singular perception of time, but instead interrupt to transform the onlooker.

The identificatory interaction of the lyrical voice with these objects facilitates its further contemplation of the human relation to the ground. In so doing, the lyrical voice achieves greater physical closeness to diverse heritages of the world. Just like the diverse temporalities of the fossil and the *Findling*, these objects blur the boundaries of national borders in a way that contemporaneous networks of travel could never accomplish.

As a representative of the dazzling variety of material contained within the earth, the *Findling* recalls distant and diverse human heritages. Extending the orphan metaphor, the lyrical voice identifies in the ground its ability to pull disparate forms into contact.

O welch' ein Waisenhaus ist diese Haide,  
Die Mohren, Blaßgesicht, und rothe Haut  
Gleichförmig hüllet mit dem braunen Kleide!<sup>226</sup>

Divorced from a familial or national hierarchy, the contents of the earth achieve an equality and similarity unseen in human relations. The ground collects together distant races without subordinating one to the other, or relating them under a common heritage. Difference persists but does not repel or dissolve in the ground.

The diversity of the *Findling* prompts the lyrical voice to consider an alternative history of its own. In digging itself into German ground and German historical identity, the lyrical voice surprisingly transforms itself into an Egyptian rather than a Greek. Considering the rise of philhellenism in German-speaking lands at this time, and attendant “grounding” of German

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<sup>226</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 29-31, 53.

identity on a Greek base the representation of the ground in this text represents a complication of this regulative heritage.<sup>227</sup>

Es war der Totenkäfer, der im Sarg  
So eben eine frische Leiche barg; [...]   
Und anders ward mein Träumen nun gewandt,  
Zu einer Mumie ward ich versandet,  
Mein Linnen Staub, fahlgrau mein Angesicht,  
Und auch der Scarabäus fehlte nicht.<sup>228</sup>

Not only does the lyrical voice become a mummy within the ground, but even the symbols of the dead like the scarab appear in its imagined interment. The image of Egypt extends outward above the ground, if only for a moment, as the shepherd drops his ball of thread into the pit, which the lyrical voice misidentifies as byssus.<sup>229</sup> The appearance of byssus, like that of the *Findlingstein*, indicates in differing directions. From one perspective, the material extends the Egyptian imagery, as the textile was used to wrap mummies. From another perspective, the term also refers to the fine filaments excreted by mollusks, connecting its mention to the seascapes once occupied by the fossilized jellyfish. In both cases, the descent into the earth provides contact with distant spaces, a goal of modern travel like the railroad or the steamship. However, unlike modern forms of travel, this connection occurs instantly and without violence to the distance covered, the traveler, or the destination.

The closing gesture of the text makes clear the communicative possibility of the connection with the earth and its stony objects. Eventually, a shepherd interrupts the lyrical voice's apocalyptic visions and the two debate the nature of fossils. The debate takes the form of

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<sup>227</sup> Susan Marchand, *Down from Olympus: Archeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, n.d.), 35.

<sup>228</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, "Die Mergelgrube," ll. 69-70, 73-76, 54-55.

<sup>229</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, ll. 77-80, 55.

a conflict between two texts that represent competing explanations: the book of Genesis and *Bertuch's Naturgeschichte*. Initially the shepherd defends the biblical understanding of the world against that of *Bertuch's Naturgeschichte*, dismissing the existence of fossils as *Spaß* and *Kurzweil*. In response, the lyrical voice simply presents the fossil he found in the marl pit to the shepherd.

Ich reichte ihm die Schieferplatte: "Schau,  
Das war ein Tier." Da zwinkert' er die Brau  
Und hat mir lange pfiffig nachgelacht –  
Daß ich verrückt sei, hätt' er nicht gedacht! –<sup>230</sup>

Unlike the immediate response to the contents of the book, the shepherd seems to hesitate when confronted with the fossilized form, first squinting to consider the object, then laughing. Perhaps the shepherd recognizes the uncanny nature of these reanimated stones, and his laughter is meant to keep this uncomfortable truth at bay. The meaning of laughter here is ambiguous, as the shepherd never formulates a verbal response. Instead the lyrical voice interrupts the shepherd's laughter to assert the shepherd's vague opinion: the lyrical voice is *not insane* [*nicht verrückt*]. Of course, the diagnosis *not sane* does not equal *sane*, but it is certainly more flexible than the shepherd's earlier assessment of the *Naturgeschichte* ("Der lügt!"). This flexibility coincides with the presentation of the fossil, an object much more portable than the *Findling* and much more direct than the *Naturgeschichte*. In "Die Mergelgrube," this contrast in scale, between the immensity of time and the object's miniature size, enables the fossil to form a more effective connection to these vast expanses of time, blurring the boundaries between the human subject and the ground. As readers, we too are presented with the fossil, here a poetic fossil, the poem

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<sup>230</sup> Droste-Hülshoff, 55–56.

itself, that conveys the immensity of deep-time and our own eventual fossilization, in the endearing form of a keep-sake.

**Conclusion:**

Over the course of the nineteenth century, the daguerreotype and the railway became increasingly ambivalent objects. Given the ambivalence with which contemporaries like Humboldt and Heine approached these objects, Droste-Hülshoff finds a transformative strangeness. Well acquainted with the rail and the daguerreotype, Droste-Hülshoff finds expansive and contractive effects of these new technologies. The author made frequent use of both technologies to maintain contact with friends and relatives, travelling by train across Germany, or sending her likeness captured within the daguerreotype when sickness prevented such travel. In her letters, Droste-Hülshoff comments on the uncomfortable effect of rail travel on the mind, whereby increased speed and frequent pauses give way to an absentmindedness and restlessness against which memory serves as the only defense. While the daguerreotype increased a feeling of imagined closeness between Droste-Hülshoff and her social network, the object simultaneously signaled that physical presence was no longer possible. In Droste-Hülshoff's letter to Elise Rüdiger, the daguerreotype's accuracy in reproducing the far-flung friend provokes deep sadness for the author, as well as an urgency to send a copy or proxy of herself. Droste-Hülshoff draws out the strange, contradictory nature of these technologies as both accelerating and still in the railway, and creating closeness and foregrounding distance in the daguerreotype. Through this strangeness—this form of an uncanny that comes forth through figures of animations (animating what is normally considered inanimate)—Droste-Hülshoff transforms these technologies in her poetry.

As part of her engagement with the daguerreotype and the railway, Droste-Hülshoff picks apart the seemingly stable relationships on which these technologies rest. Just as Schücking describes it in his biography of the author, Droste-Hülshoff's perspective on the visual similarity of the mirror and the daguerreotype, or the ground upon which new systems of transportation would be built, was full of "das Seltsame und Befremdliche." Her poetic recreation of the increasingly quotidian experiences of modern travel or of the image reproduced in mirrors, paintings, or on light-sensitive plates renders these experiences strange and unfamiliar. In "Die Mergelgrube," "Im Grase," and "Der Hünenstein," the stable ground that supposedly undergirds modern travel becomes a gateway to instantaneous transport through time and space facilitated by objects like the fossil or the erratic stone. The lyrical voices of these texts confront biblical history, extinction, and the apocalypse all within the moment of contact with these earthy entities. In "das Spiegelbild," "Das Bild," and "An Elise in der Ferne mit meinem Daguerrotyp" the resemblance of the reproduced image to its reference redirects the gaze of the onlooker outside of its frame and beyond the image. Following the enchanting gaze of the image, the lyrical voice finds its way back into the world, while also imagining new worlds.

While Droste-Hülshoff's poetry amplifies the strangeness she identifies in these everyday technologies, the greater impact of her lyric engagement with the image and with transport is how this strangeness leads to closer contact with the world, rather than alienation from it. Despite Schücking's characterization of Droste-Hülshoff's outlook (both figurative and her literal visual perception) on the world, even when she defamiliarizes objects in her lyric, the engagement with strange objects results in greater closeness to the object itself, rather than foreignness. An encounter with the dissimilar doppelgänger in "Das Spiegelbild" draws the lyrical voice nearer to the image through imagined contact, rather than frightful retreat. The

apocalyptic visions inspired by earthy objects like the *Findling* and the fossil of “Die Mergelgrube” inspire the lyrical voice to imitate these objects by climbing into the grave to become similarly earthy. Instead of evoking aversion or antipathy, strangeness draws the onlooker deeper into the object through, rather than away from, technologies of image reproduction and transportation.

Through the production of an affirmative, rather than repellent, strangeness, Droste-Hülshoff finds a new potential in the objects of a projected technological future, and the remnants of a catastrophic past. The fossil in the poem represents its own past, but also catapults the human onlooker into its own future, and potentially outside a specifically human perspective. Similarly, the enchanting daguerreotype conveys the intimacy of a past moment while indicating a time yet to be imagined. Each object conveys an “ungeborne Zeit,” which combines the intimacy of the past, potential of the future, and immediacy of the present.



### CHAPTER THREE: THE PLAYFUL AS AESTHETIC OPERATION IN EDUARD MÖRIKE'S "GÖTTLICHE REMINISZENZ," *IDYLLE VOM BODENSEE*, AND *MOZART AUF DER REISE NACH PRAG*

#### Introduction

The figure of Mörike is one of constantly shifting definition. Friedrich Sengle, in his voluminous account of the period known as *Biedermeierzeit*, describes Mörike as an author who often lies beyond characterization. "Wer Mörike und die Mörike-Forschung wirklich kennt, wird mich verstehen wenn ich sage: er gehört zu den Gegenständen, die für die Literaturwissenschaft ungewöhnlich schwer zugänglich sind."<sup>231</sup> Bernhard Böschstein similarly calls Mörike "ein Dichter zwischen den Zeiten."<sup>232</sup> In some depictions, Mörike appears as the provincial poet, whose conversational tone, folksy compositions, and tendency toward fantasy situate him in the camp of the naïve poet in the Schillerian sense; however, Sengle warns against this supposition, citing its "lokalpatriotisch" background and the stereotype of provincial Württemberg.<sup>233</sup> In current scholarship, Mörike appears at times as a contradiction: both isolated and socially connected, nostalgic and proto-modern, saturnine and playful.<sup>234</sup> In some cases, Mörike becomes

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<sup>231</sup> Friedrich Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit*, 3 Bde. (Metzler, 1999), 691.

<sup>232</sup> Bernhard Böschstein, "Eduard Mörike-Ein Dichter Zwischen Den Zeiten," *Oxford German Studies* 36, no. 1 (2007): 9–10.

<sup>233</sup> Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit*, 3 Bde., 694–95.

<sup>234</sup> Daniel Graf, "Klage, Klang, Und Kompensation: Mörikes Todeslyrik Als Spiegel Seiner Poetischen Verfahrensweise," *Schiller Jahrbuch* 49 (2005): 282–83; H. J. Hahn, "Mörike's Mozart: A Birth of Tragedy in Mozart's Music?," in *Mozart-Eine Herausforderung Für Literatur Und Denken/Mozart-A Challenge for Literature and Thought*, Jahrbuch Für Internationale Germanistik (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2007), 61–62; Ursula Mahlendorf, "Eduard Mörike's 'Mozart on the Way to Prague': Stages and Outcomes of the Creative Experience," in *Mörike's Muses: Critical Essays on Eduard Mörike*, Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1990), 95–96; Cettina

the bridge between classical and modern aesthetics.<sup>235</sup> Others draw out his social connection to outline both a lively political life in Mörike's letters, as well as hidden political meanings in his texts, while others have noted Mörike's mediality.<sup>236</sup> In many cases, there have been efforts to revise some of the characterizations of Mörike that have accumulated since the turn of the century, especially the cliché of Mörike as an asocial, hypochondriac poet.<sup>237</sup> While I do not seek

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Rapisarda, "‘Ich sah es wohl, - allein mit blinden Augen’: dunkle Bilder in Eduard Mörikes ‘Maler Nolte,’” in *Blindheit in Literatur und Ästhetik (1750 - 1850)*. - Würzburg : Königshausen & Neumann, 2012, 227–28; Gert Sautermeister, "Musik im Spiegel der Literatur: Mozart und ‘Don Giovanni’ zu Gast bei E. T. A. Hoffmann, Eduard Mörike und Hanns-Josef Ortheil," in "Und es trieb die Rede mich an ...". - Tübingen : Niemeyer, 2008, 75–76; Gerhard Vom Hofe, "Mozart-Bilder in Der Literatur," in *Mozart. Ansichten* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1995), 123–25.

<sup>235</sup> Eckart Goebel, "Glücksschuh und goldne Waage: Eduard Mörikes artistische Balance zwischen Klassik und Moderne," *Pandaemonium Germanicum* 6, no. 1 (2002): 85–87; Bernhard Böschstein, "‘Auf getrennten Bergen’: Mörike und Hölderlin ; zwei unvergleichliche schwäbische Dichter," in *Hölderlin: Sprache und Raum.*, 2008, 249–65 Böschstein situates Mörike in a direct line from Friedrich Hölderlin to Georg Trakl; Wolfgang Braungart, "Gegenwärtigkeiten der Literatur: Notizen zur Einführung ; am Beispiel dreier Gedichte Eduard Mörikes, Uwe Kolbes und Dirk von Petersdorffs," in *Gegenwart Literatur Geschichte*, 2013, 9–10; Stefan Busch, "Unzeitgemässe Konjunktionen: Saturn Und Psychologie in Eduard Mörikes Novelle Mozart Auf Der Reise Nach Prag," *German Life and Letters* 53, no. 2 (April 2000): 201–2; Johannes Endres, "Im Garten Der Zeit: Zu Einem Landschaftselement Bei Mörike," *Görres Jahrbuch* 41 (2000): 125–26; Christophe Fricker, "Interpretationen der Vorläufigkeit: die Mörike-Auswahl von George und Wolfskehl," *Oxford German Studies* 36, no. 1 (2007): 121.

<sup>236</sup> Jürgen Brokoff, "Das Ende der geselligen Kunst in Eduard Mörikes Novelle ‘Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag,’” *Euphorion*. - Heidelberg : Winter 104, no. 2 (2010): 199; Wolfgang Braungart, "Lyrik - Lebenswelt - soziale Welt: zu einem grundlegenden Zusammenhang in den Gelegenheitsgedichten Eduard Mörikes," in *Mörike und sein Freundeskreis*. - Heidelberg : Universitätsverlag Winter, 2015, 47–48; Ulrich Gaier, "Mozart und Mörike auf der Reise zur Revolution?," in *Prag als Topos der Literatur*. - Olomouc : Univerzita Palackého, 2011, 67; Wolfgang Wittkowski, "‘Von der alten schönen Zeit’: ‘Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag’ ; Eduard Mörike (1804 - 1875) und Eichendorffs Zeitkritik," in *Wittkowski, Wolfgang, 1925-. Über deutsche Dichtungen ; 8. Leidenschaft und Ordnung*. - Frankfurt am Main [u.a.] : Lang, 2015, 155–56.

<sup>237</sup> Günter Karrasch, "Mörike auf der Reise zu sich selbst: Halbheit, Übermaß und Vollendung als kunstpsychologische Motive in der Erzählung ‘Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag,’” in *Von Goethe zu Krowow*. - Frankfurt, M. [u.a.] : Lang, 2008, 57–72; Hans-Henrik Krummacher, "Gattungstradition und zeitgeschichtlicher Augenblick: zur zeitgenössischen Rezeption von Mörikes ‘Idylle vom Bodensee,’” in *Klassik-Rezeption*. - Würzburg : Königshausen & Neumann, 2003, 53–69; Yuçji Nawata, "Von Der Traumgestalt Zum Ding: Eduard Mörikes Literatur Im Zeitalter Der Photographie," *Weimarer Beiträge: Zeitschrift Für Literaturwissenschaft, Ästhetik Und Kulturwissenschaften* 58, no. 3 (2012): 423–35; John H. Smith, "On the Novelle and/as Ereignis," *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies* 48, no. 4 (November 2012): 417–39; Alexandra Schamel, "‘... Une Apparition Surnaturelle’: Window-Motif and

to undermine these efforts to modernize Mörike's image, my interest consists in a re-examination of some of the qualities often integral to these contradictions. Specifically, contemporary to current characterizations of Mörike highlight a certain playfulness in his compositions and personality. Although one might tend to see this characteristic as a tendency toward comedy, childishness, or light-heartedness, I understand the Playful as a window into the specificity of Mörike's textual production; in particular, the Playful refers to specific aesthetic operations in Mörike's texts, the contours of which will be outlined below.

One should not confuse the Playful (as aesthetic or representational strategy) with simple play. According to analyses contemporary to Mörike and to our present moment, play makes up an essential operation in human development, whether as preparation for later serious activity, a means for grasping both formal and sensual attributes of beauty, or a release valve for excess energy previously required for hunting and gathering.<sup>238</sup> Theorizations of play tend to invoke a differentiation between the reality of everyday life and the unreality of play. Cultural historian Johan Huizinga defines play as a limited, self-contained, voluntary activity executed according to rules with the consciousness "that it is different from ordinary life."<sup>239</sup> Drawing on this distinction, Helge Hein emphasizes how the institution of these limits allow for the creation of unreality, while Brian Sutton-Smith defines play as an operation that is not serious, but also not

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Framing Strategies in Mörike and Proust," *TRANS- Revue de Littérature Générale et Comparée*, no. 17 (February 8, 2014).

<sup>238</sup> Karl Groos and Elizabeth L. Baldwin, *The Play of Man* (New York, Appleton, 1901); Konrad von Lange, *Das Wesen der Kunst: Grundzüge einer realistischen Kunstlehre* (G. Grote, 1901), <http://archive.org/details/daswesenderkuns05langgoog>; Friedrich Schiller, *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (B.G. Teubner, 1875).

<sup>239</sup> Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens : A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1967), 28.

frivolous, not real, but also not unreal, “a positive, the sum of two negatives.”<sup>240</sup> This dual attentiveness—moving towards reality and irreality—that defines play is also characteristic of the Playful in Mörike.

The Playful in Mörike in many respects may be productively compared to Friedrich Schiller’s notion of the play drive [*Spieltrieb*], although one important difference ought to be foregrounded from the outset; Schiller’s play drive is an essentially human faculty by which beauty can be perceived, whereas the Playful in Mörike is an aesthetic operation that engenders a *specific* type of creativity. In other words, the Playful, for Mörike, does not refer to aesthetic reception as such (regardless of genre, for example), but refers to a certain mode of sensuous engagement. In Schiller’s nomenclature, play is an anthropological constant; it exists as an essential part of the human experience, a drive that may require some cultivation, but is nonetheless ever-present.

Aber was heißt ein bloßes Spiel, nachdem wir wissen, daß unter allen Zuständen des Menschen gerade das Spiel und nur das Spiel ist, was ihn vollständig macht und seine doppelte Natur auf einmal entfaltet? [...] Denn, um es endlich auf einmal herauszusagen, der Mensch spielt nur, wo er in voller Bedeutung des Wortes Mensch ist, und er ist nur da ganz Mensch, wo er spielt.<sup>241</sup>

To play is to be human, and to be human is to play, according to Schiller. For Mörike, however, to play is to point beyond human understanding; the Playful represents not “ein Spieltrieb”, but rather “ein Spiel treiben.”

A key characteristic of the Playful in Mörike consists in the oscillatory quality of the playful character’s encounter with the world, a characteristic also essential to Schiller’s play

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<sup>240</sup> Hilde Hein, “Play as an Aesthetic Concept,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 27, no. 1 (1968): 67–71; Brian Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity of Play*, Revised ed. edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>241</sup> Schiller, *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*, 240–42.

drive. In Schiller, this oscillatory quality between form and matter is the only possible expression of beauty in the real world.

In der Wirklichkeit wird immer ein Übergewicht des einen Elements über das andere übrig bleiben, und das Höchste, was die Erfahrung leistet, wird in einer Schwankung zwischen beiden Prinzipien bestehen, wo bald die Realität, bald die Form überwiegend ist. Die Schönheit in der Idee ist also ewig nur eine unteilbare einzige, weil es nur ein einziges Gleichgewicht geben kann; die Schönheit in der Erfahrung hingegen wird ewig eine doppelte sein, weil bei einer Schwankung das Gleichgewicht auf eine doppelte Art, nämlich diesseits und jenseits, kann übertreten werden.<sup>242</sup>

The ideal remains a unified expression of form and reality achieved by the play drive, an asymptote for any practice of the play drive, which ends up oscillating between these two poles in pursuit of balance. This is the function that for Schiller requires cultivation, aiming ultimately to diminish the disequilibrium between formal and sensual drives. While oscillation also occurs in Mörike's aesthetics of the Playful, it is precisely through this oscillation that the Playful functions, rather than a natural deficiency of its expression in the world, a means to the end of balance. The Playful in Mörike requires oscillation between differing temporalities, genres, moods, and space in order for this specific aesthetic operation to function. For example, the Playful, through oscillation between reality and irreality, often renders the contours and connotations of its objects (in this case reality and irreality) inoperative, in an Agambenian sense, in that inoperativity signals not a “cessation of all activity, but as an activity that consists in making human works and productions inoperative, opening them up to a new possible use.”<sup>243</sup> To illustrate this form of inoperativity, Agamben refers to the way in which feasts or celebrations (like the saturnalia) enable a space of redefinition, one in which orders are inverted or suspended,

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<sup>242</sup> Schiller, 244–45.

<sup>243</sup> Giorgio Agamben, “What Is a Destituent Power?,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32, no. 1 (February 1, 2014): 69.

opening up a realm of new possibilities. The Playful can be applied to sensuous forms of organization like natural spaces, the unidirectional flow of time, generic distinctions such as elegy or idyll, and even the transgression of such attempts at demarcation; but one of its central functions is to suspend these orders while opening them up for reinterpretation as heterotemporalities, -spaces, -genres, etc. Unlike Schiller's ideal of beauty as achieved through the play drive, the Playful strives for an oscillatory contemplation of the many over the singular preoccupation with the ideal.

Another significant characteristic of the Playful in Mörike can be found in its anaesthetic force; in the face of transgression or catastrophe, the Playful exhibits the ability to dive headlong into disaster while simultaneously avoiding its deleterious effects. The Biedermeier quality, as described by Sengle, of the family resting comfortably together, at every moment susceptible to a sudden lightning strike, in Mörike appears as the family struck by lightning, but with no discernable trace of its terror left upon them.<sup>244</sup> Where Schiller restricts the operations of the play drive to the beautiful, the Playful allows for the representation of the sublime alongside the beautiful, the serious alongside the light, the deep alongside the superficial, and in doing so, the Playful extracts the terror from the sublimity of catastrophe. In this way, the Playful resembles many nineteenth century theories of the joke. For Jean Paul, for example, drawing on earlier eighteenth-century aesthetic discourses, *Witz* is the ability to find "entfernte Ähnlichkeiten" between dissimilar objects.<sup>245</sup> For Arthur Schopenhauer, the joke grows out of the perception of an "Inkongruenz zwischen einem Begriff und den realen Objekten, die durch ihn, in irgendeiner

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<sup>244</sup> Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit*, 3 Bde., 128 Bd 1.

<sup>245</sup> Jean Paul, *Jean Paul. Sämtliche Werke: Vorschule der Ästhetik; Levana oder Erziehlehre; Politische Schriften*, vol. I/5 (München, 1963), 169.

Beziehung, gedacht worden waren.”<sup>246</sup> Like the joke in these two examples, the Playful presents the possibility of communion across differences or amidst incongruities.

As is the case in Schiller’s and Ackerman’s notions of play, the Playful for Mörike serves an aesthetic function. In Schiller’s *Aesthetic Letters*, the play drive [*Spieltrieb*] simultaneously engages form and life, temporal specificity and timelessness, living form and the human perception of beauty.<sup>247</sup> The observer recognizes beauty through the play of formal and sensual drives in understanding. For Mörike, however, the Playful can be defined as an aesthetic operation rather than as part of the aesthetic experience as such. The Playful, at its most refined, functions as a prelude to creation instead of a process of recognition when confronted with the aesthetic object, and in this way it resembles what Ackerman describes as “deep play.” Deep play, according to Ackerman, characterizes a mood different from simple play, in which “all the elements of play are visible, but they’re taken to intense and transcendent heights.”<sup>248</sup> For Ackerman, this mood influences her own creativity; however in Mörike, one could rarely describe the Playful as akin to the concentration Ackerman associates with high-risk pastimes like mountain climbing and parachuting. For Mörike, one must engage with the Playful in order to access a realm of creativity beyond the limits of quotidian existence, but in his representations of the Playful, not everyone is afforded this access, or rather certain ways of being in the world have greater access to the Playful than others. For example, Mörike represents characters prone to distraction, contemplation, fancy, trickery, and fits of memory like Wolfgang Amadeus

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<sup>246</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, vol. 2 (München: Georg Müller Verlag, 1913), 96.

<sup>247</sup> Schiller, *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*, 234.

<sup>248</sup> Diane Ackerman, *Deep Play*, Vintage Books edition (New York, NY: Vintage, 2000), 12.

Mozart and Martin the Fisher in the *Idylle vom Bodensee* as having greater access to this modality as well as a greater creative ability. This openness to an alternative mode of being that characterizes the Playful also resembles play as conceptualized by Hans-Georg Gadamer. For Gadamer, play is a choice; players choose to engage in a mode of being different from their everyday behavior, and in so doing shift from a subject-oriented experience to one in which subjectivity is diminished, though not altogether absent.<sup>249</sup> Gadamer characterizes this shift as a relaxation [*Entlastung*], a shift that opens one to a world of greater possibility.<sup>250</sup> It is this openness that allows play to become progressive, according to Thomas Pfau. The shift from mental to physical action in play facilitates greater access to “oscillation” (*Schwingung*), “tension” (*Spannung*), and sheer “precariousness” (*Schwankung*) defining the mind/world relation[...].<sup>251</sup> The inverse relationship between mental presence and generative possibility that characterizes play in Gadamer—as well as this triangulation between oscillation, tension, and precariousness (*Schwingung*, *Spannung*, and *Schwankung*)—also characterizes the Playful in Mörike’s texts.

Using a description found in a short programmatic text by Mörike entitled *Doppelte Seelentätigkeit*—which I will examine in depth later in this chapter—the Playful in Mörike can be considered as an operation “halb zum Spaß, halb im Ernst.”<sup>252</sup> With the inclusion of playful, sometimes superficial seeming aspects and themes like love, nature, and social ties, Mörike’s

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<sup>249</sup> Hans G. Gadamer, *Gesammelte Werke: Band I: Hermeneutik I: Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, 7th ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 112–13.

<sup>250</sup> Gadamer, 110.

<sup>251</sup> Thomas Pfau, “The Appearance of Stimmung: Play as Virtual Rationality,” *Stimmung: Zur Wiederkehr Einer Ästhetischen Kategorie?*, January 2011, 105.

<sup>252</sup> Eduard Mörike, “Doppelte Seelentätigkeit,” in *Sämtliche Werke*. (München: Carl Hanser, 1964), 1226.



work has garnered comparisons to the Anacreontics; however in the Playful, Mörike diverges from the ironic superficiality of these works to take a different direction. In his works, the Playful does not exclude the melancholic, just as what may first seem like a light-hearted surface of the contemplation of a painting, an amusing anecdote, the tale of a trickster, or the portrait of a genius does not exclude a depth afforded at times by a proximity to death. The Playful affords not only a depth of meaning, but a depth of time in which the surface of the present moment can be integrated into the past, and both can be folded into eternity.

In this chapter, I focus on the Playful as a means for momentarily existing within a frame and outside of it simultaneously—a state of being that Mörike sees as essential to creativity, whether temporal, spatial, generic, or otherwise. Dreams, memory, encounters with art, idle pastimes [*Zeitvertreib*]*—all common *topoi* in Mörike’s literary output—represent playful events in which varied spatio-temporal relationships emerge and become the precondition for the emergence of something new and culturally significant, e.g. a work of art that can simultaneously stabilize and rejuvenate the world. In this chapter, in addition to considering how Mörike’s later theoretical engagement with the workings of the mind in sleep and dreams informs his aesthetics of the Playful, I will concentrate on how the Playful realizes itself within various genres: in the lyric, the idyllic, and the novelistic modes. As we will see, each genre—as exemplified in the lyric poem “Göttliche Reminiszenz”, the *Idylle vom Bodensee*, and *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* respectively—delimits its own field of possibilities through which the Playful can be said to simultaneously stabilize and perturb the self-evidence of worldly categories in order to make possible something like a creative *genesis*: an act of creation that strips the world of catastrophe while infusing it with a sense of transcendent purpose.*

**Göttliche Reminiszenz**

Παντα δι αυτου εγενετο.

*Ev. Joh. 1, 3*

Vorlängst sah ich ein wundersames Bild gemalt,  
Im Kloster der Kartäuser, das ich oft besucht.  
Heut, da ich im Gebirge droben einsam ging,  
Umstarrt von wild zerstreuter Felsentrümmersaat,  
Trat es mit frischen Farben vor die Seele mir.

An jäher Steinkluft, deren dünn begraster Saum,  
Von zweien Palmen überschattet, magre Kost  
Den Ziegen beut, den steilauf weidenden am Hang,  
Sieht man den Knaben Jesus sitzend auf Gestein;  
Ein weißes Vlies als Polster ist ihm unterlegt.  
Nicht allzu kindlich deuchte mir das schöne Kind;  
Der heiße Sommer, sicherlich sein fünfter schon,  
Hat seine Glieder, welche bis zum Knie herab  
Das gelbe Röckchen decket mit dem Purpursaum,  
Hat die gesunden, zarten Wangen sanft gebräunt;  
Aus schwarzen Augen leuchtet stille Feuerkraft,  
Den Mund jedoch umfremdet unnennbarer Reiz.  
Ein alter Hirte, freundlich zu dem Kind gebeugt,  
Gab ihm soeben ein versteinert Meergewächs,  
Seltsam gestaltet, in die Hand zum Zeitvertreib.  
Der Knabe hat das Wunderding beschaut, und jetzt,  
Gleichsam betroffen, spannet sich der weite Blick,  
Entgegen dir, doch wirklich ohne Gegenstand,  
Durchdringend ewge Zeitenfernen, grenzenlos:  
Als wittre durch die überwölkte Stirn ein Blitz  
Der Gottheit, ein Erinnern, das im gleichen Nu  
Erlöschen sein wird; und das welterschaffende,  
Das Wort von Anfang, als ein spielend Erdenkind  
Mit Lächeln zeigt's unwissend dir sein eigen Werk.

Written in 1845, Mörike's "Göttliche Reminiszenz" outlines an encounter with multiple nested reminiscences. The text first appeared in *Cotta's Morgenblatt für Gebildete Leser* alongside another poetic text by Mörike dealing with memory, "Ach nur einmal noch im Leben", before inclusion in the 1846 collection of poetry.<sup>253</sup> The poem is divided into two sections. The first section consists in the lyrical voice's introduction to a painting from a chartreuse monastery, recalled during a walk in the mountains. The second section is ekphrastic: a description of the painting, in which the Christ child can be seen contemplating a petrified sea-growth [*ein versteinertes Meergewächs*] while gazing out of the frame, which the lyrical voice interprets as the child briefly remembering his divine origins. From the beginning the text appears syncretic: diverse temporalities and cultural semantics collide, as the text deals with a Christian subject matter in the Latin iambic Senarius meter, with a biblical motto in Greek.

In this section, I will examine how Mörike's "Göttliche Reminiszenz" places a multi-layered temporality in the service of creative genesis. Memory, fossilization, and the representative quality of art all complicate a linear conception of time, creating polytemporalities in this text, a quality which Mörike links to an increase in creative possibility. I begin by outlining the various temporal levels of the text and their relationship to one another in order to draw out how Mörike presents a conception of time that is interwoven, oscillating, and multileveled. I go on to examine how the inorganic material of rock formations, fossils, the printed word, and the painting oscillate between preservation of the past and creation of the future. Each one introduces a layered conception of time, in which the past can be excavated, while also disrupting these layers by persisting in time. In the next section, I examine Mörike's

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<sup>253</sup> *Morgenblatt für gebildete Leser* (Cotta, 1846), 105.

engagement with memory and recollection as a chief inspiration for Mörike's literary output.

Finally, I will examine the implications that these conceptions of memory, preservation, creation, and the use of polytemporalities have for Mörike's aesthetics.

### **Temporal levels**

The epigraph already announces the diverse temporalities of Mörike's text, juxtaposing the time of the poem with the time of creation. As Mörike makes clear by his own division of the text into two sections, the lyrical voice's experience appears divided into two temporal horizons. For Matthias Mayer, Rainer Hillenbrand, and Eleonore Frey, the first strophe becomes the frame for the lyrical voice's ekphrastic reminiscence of the painting in the second strophe, casting their temporalities as a time of telling and a time of remembering, respectively.<sup>254</sup> In my reading, these temporalities bifurcate further, for while the frame relates to the second strophe as the lyrical voice's introduction to his memory, this memory presents a complex web of temporalities, which I have outlined below. As the graphic makes clear, the division of the text becomes fivefold, and each part becomes associated with a specific action: framing, describing, reading, playing, and creating. Not only do these sections delineate distinct experiences of time in the text, but taken together, they trace a process for uniting these temporalities in service of creation through play. The lyrical voice reminisces about a painting of the creating divinity as a playing earthchild, just as he himself plays with the temporality of the painting in the creation of the lyric.

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<sup>254</sup> Rainer Hillenbrand, "Mörikes Göttliche Reminiszenz Und Die Augustinische Erinnerungstheologie," *Euphorion: Zeitschrift Für Literaturgeschichte* 107, no. 4 (2013): 437–61; Eleonore Frey, *Poetik Des Übergangs: Zu Morikes Gedicht "Göttliche Reminiszenz,"* Untersuchungen Zur Deutschen Literaturgeschichte: 17, 170 pp. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1977), 17, 170; Mathias Mayer, *Eduard Mörike* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1998).

| <u>Lines</u> | <u>Action</u> | <u>Temporality</u>                            |
|--------------|---------------|---|
| I-V          | Framing       | Reflection in the past tense.                 |
| VI-X         | Describing    | Description in the present tense.             |
| XI-XVII      | Reading       | Interpretation in the present and past tense. |
| XVIII-XX     | Playing       | Beginning in the past, becoming indeterminate |
| XXI-XXIX     | Creating      | Indeterminate                                 |

The first level, as shown above, serves as a frame for the later portion of the text. This section outlines the impetus for the speaker's lyrical act, namely his imagined re-experience of the painting. This is a temporality of reflection; the lyrical voice looks backward in time to his experience of the painting and his morning hike, making these memories part of the present through their retelling. Just as the physical act of framing entails a simultaneous excision from time and acknowledgment of context, the lyrical voice describes the painting in a three-fold temporal schema: as physical object of the past, a reminiscence in the present, and a projected future ekphrastic rendering of its contents. Already, Mörike depicts a lyrical voice preparing the field of play for his engagement with multiple temporalities.

The lyrical voice's description of the painting makes up the next temporal layer of the text. Despite the painting's location in the past of the lyrical voice's memory, his description of the work occurs entirely in the present tense, as if the lyrical voice (and the readers of the poem) were standing before it once again. His representation of the characters in the work also appears static: the present participles *sitzend* and *weidend* (den steilauf weidenden am Hang, / Sieht man den Knaben Jesus sitzend auf Gestein) almost imply that these actions could continue in perpetuity as long as one observes them, just like any action depicted in the pregnant moment of painterly representation. Rather than depict what he saw at a fixed moment in time, the lyrical

voice describes what one sees [*man sieht*] when he stands before the painting. This presence of description breaks down as the lyrical voice's ekphrasis continues.

The next level of temporality entails a shift in direction and in hermeneutic focus; description becomes reading or interpretation. The lyrical voice no longer simply lists the attributes of the scene depicted, but attempts to derive information from them. This turn inward coincides with a turn to the past. This shift can be seen in the turn from the present tense of *man sieht* to the past of *deuchte mir*, in which the general present-ness of the painting as an artwork becomes the individual past of the lyrical voice's encounter with it. By reading the information in the painting, the lyrical voice begins to stretch its temporality by inscribing a past to the figures represented; for example, the Christ child's appendages are not tan, but *tanned* over the course of his fifth summer. This section shifts back to the present tense toward the end, already hinting at the play with temporality to come in the following sections.

The fourth level of temporality moves from reading to playing. Where reading entails the engagement with information from a source, such as a painting, playing does not require a strict adherence to such material. With the introduction of shepherd and the petrified sea-growth, the reader can no longer distinguish which actions are part of the representation and which belong to the imagined moments preceding its depiction. The inclusion of the shepherd entails both a widening of the moment depicted and a playful suggestion of the intentions of his actions. Play also describes the lyrical voice's interpretation of the shepherd's action: "Ein alter Hirte, freundlich zu dem Kind gebeugt, / Gab ihm soeben ein versteinert Meergewächs, / Seltsam gestaltet, in die Hand zum Zeitvertreib." As *Zeitvertreib*, the plaything becomes a catalyst for a peculiar form of temporal action: it drives time along, but also exempts itself from the continuum of time and destabilizes a purely linear temporality.

Ultimately, the shepherd's call to play achieves the destabilization of time supposedly intended by his gift; temporal confusion in play results in the layering of Christ child's experience of time. The lyrical voice's engagement with the painting no longer attempts to represent the artwork, while time becomes explicitly linked with creation of both the artwork and the world. Here creation itself spans multiple temporal distances [*Zeitenfernen*], becoming a meta-temporality in which the time of the playing earth-child coexists beside the time of divine creation. The lyrical voice returns to the eternal present nature of the painting at the close of this passage, with return of the present participles, *welterschaffend* (as an adjective) and *spielend*. The ever-playing child and the ever-world creating divinity become equal, or at least co-temporal in the artwork.

### **Fossilization**

As discussed above, Mörike weaves together the temporalities present in the text, not simply by placing them inside one another as recollections, but by actively linking them through common, ever-present objects. Marriages of organic and inorganic material in the form of fossils and rock formations populate every portion of the text, serving as hinges between the various temporalities, whereas the painting and the text itself similarly express temporalities in themselves while also linking differing moments in the text. Each case represents the productive quality of the combination of temporalities. I will proceed with a general examination of each object and its attributes, before discussing the intricate placement of these objects in the text.

The first temporality-laden object I will examine is the petrified sea-growth [*versteinertes Meergewächs*] held by the Christ child in the painting. It is well known that Mörike was an avid

fossil collector and amateur paleontologist.<sup>255</sup> The fossil, as an object, bears within it multiple temporalities. *Meyers Großes Konversationslexikon* defines *Petrefakten/Versteinerungen/Fossilien* as “im allgemeinen diejenigen Überreste oder Spuren von Organismen, die bei der Bildung der in vorhistorischer Zeit entstandenen Gesteinsschichten in diese gekommen sind.”<sup>256</sup> The definition goes on to explain how the process of petrification involves the gradual replacement of organic material by mineral deposits, while still retaining the form of the original organism. According to this definition, the fossil already represents a mixture of organic and inorganic temporalities, prehistoric and historic time. In the first case, the fossil becomes the representation of organic matter in mineral form, a reference to its original, with minor alterations where the petrification process is incomplete. The fossil recalls an original organism, but rather than replacing the original, the fossil becomes something new entirely. In this case, the temporality of organic degradation merges with the temporality of inorganic creation. Through excavation, the fossil comes into contact with yet another temporal layer, linking prehistoric and human historic time. By uncovering the fossil from under layers of sediment and temporal distance, the collector dislodges the object from its original place in time to implant it in his present moment, which Mörike likens to the creative gesture. In a related poem, “Der Petrefaktensammler,” the search for terebratulida fossils becomes a form of artistic expression: “Doch, den Zweck nicht zu verlieren,/ Will ich jetzt auf allen Vieren / Nach besagten

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<sup>255</sup> Thomas Wolf, *Brüder, Geister und Fossilien: Eduard Mörikes Erfahrungen der Umwelt* (Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2001), 129.

<sup>256</sup> Hermann Julius Meyer, *Meyers Grosses Konversations-Lexikon: Ein Nachschlagewerk Des Allgemeinen Wissens*. (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1908), Bd. 6 Sp. 664.



Terebrateln / Noch ein Stückchen weiter kratteln; / Das ist auch wohl Poesie.”<sup>257</sup> Here again, the combination of temporalities and the disruption of linear time, this time through the act of excavation, results in a form of *poiesis*.

In addition to the temporalities it represents as a fossil, the petrified sea-growth achieves additional temporal significance in the text. First, the intention behind the gift of the fossil to the Christ child is framed as *Zeitvertreib*. Already, the term “*Zeitvertreib*” bespeaks a specific experience of time. According to the Grimms’ *Wörterbuch*, *Zeitvertreib* is “das Vertreiben der lästig fallenden leeren Zeit und der Langeweile [...] die Beschäftigung mit einer Sache oder Gegenstand, wodurch die Zeit vergeht.”<sup>258</sup> In this case, time becomes an empty vessel, which one can fill with interesting objects, whereby one literally occupies one’s time through engagement with objects. The fossil qua *Zeitvertreib* achieves temporal duration as an object that can fill these open spaces of time; the *fulfillment* of time normally associated with Christ becomes associated with child’s play. The term also invokes the action “Zeit vertreiben,” in which the fossil becomes a talisman imbued with the power to chase time away. In this sense, the fossil works in the opposite direction, freeing its possessor from time for a while, instead of making time whole. In both cases, filling time and chasing it away, *Zeitvertreib* signals a shift in the experience of time, a shift from one temporality to another. This shift in temporal experience, whether intended by the shepherd or not, occurs as a result of the Christ child’s interaction with this petrified piece of sea-growth.

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<sup>257</sup> “Der Petrefaktensammler,” Eduard Mörike, “Gedichte,” in *Sämtliche Werke*. (München: Carl Hanser, 1964), 210.

<sup>258</sup> Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Stuttgart: Hirzel, n.d.), 578 The definition goes on to explain how the term could relate to a medication, usually an opiate, used to slow or halt the patient’s experience of time.

While the petrified sea-growth describes organic matter that has undergone fossilization, other objects in the text, including the text itself, become fossil-esque by comparison. Like the definition for the fossil, the fossil-esque in my reading signals the coalescence of temporalities in objects that transcend their historical position, bearing the form of their organic origin in the creation of a new inorganic object. The fossil preserves the memory of the original organism in mineral deposits, whereas the text and the painting preserve a reminiscence, the product of an organic mind, in the inorganic substance of ink, oils, paper, and canvas. Also similar to the fossil, the encounter with text and image becomes a form of excavation in Mörike's text, whereby engagement with the artwork does not entail passive reception of its form, but rather an active excavation of its living character *from* its inorganic form. This is exactly what Mörike's lyrical voice describes at the start of the text, when he describes his recollection of the painting as appearing "mit frischen Farben vor die Seele mir."<sup>259</sup> The creation and engagement with an artwork becomes a process of uncovering the interplay of disparate temporalities. As the lyrical voice further describes his recollection of the painting, his description breaks through the frame of the work into the world of the reader, just as the painting breaks out of its own frame to engage with the lyrical voice. What appears fresh and vibrant to this "mir", the lyrical voice turns outward through the use of "dir" at the close of the poem. The Christ child's gaze breaks out of its temporal fixedness [*Durchdringend ewge Zeitenfernen*] into the present of a "dir" either meant by the lyrical voice as the reader or as some impersonal "you" without specific location.<sup>260</sup> Through the gaze and direct address Mörike weaves the temporal levels of creation, fossilization,

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<sup>259</sup> "Göttliche Reminiszenz" Mörike, "Gedichte," 164.

<sup>260</sup> "Göttliche Reminiszenz" Mörike, 165 "Der Knabe hat das Wunderding beschaut, und jetzt,/Gleichsam betroffen, spannet sich der weite Blick/Entgegen dir, doch wirklich ohne Gegenstand[...]", and "Mit Lächeln zeigts unwissend dir sein eigen Werk."l.

and excavation into the polytemporality of the artwork, which repeatedly incorporates infinite temporalities into itself.

### Recollection and Memory

Read as fossil-esque, the text preserves something other than its own utterance. In the case of “Göttliche Reminiscenz,” this is the familiar topic of Mörike’s lyrical and prosaic works referenced in the very title of the text: memory. Mörike’s treatment of memory in this text from 1845 differs from that of earlier works, especially in his use of the term *Reminiscenz* over *Erinnerung* in the title. Definitions for the term in the nineteenth century list *Wieder-erinnerung*, *Nachklang*, *Rückerinnerung*, “etwas aus der Erinnerung Geschöpftes, von Andern Entlehntes, nicht Selbsterfundenes.”<sup>261</sup> What stands out in each definition is the repetitive act of memory. Inclusion of “Rück-” and “Wieder-” signal that the information recalled must first be found: something originally present but then lost enters into the pre-history of the recollection. In this light, *Reminiscenz* can be traced back via the Latin *reminiscentia* to ἀνάμνησις, especially in the usage of Plato and Aristotle. Here too, reminiscence entails a recollection of knowledge after a period of forgetting, especially when triggered by a likeness in the present moment, rather than simple memory. For Plato, anamnesis deals with the immortal soul’s recollection of the heavenly forms “whenever the sight of one thing brings you a perception of another, whether they be like

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<sup>261</sup> Joachim Heinrich Campe, *Wörterbuch zur Erklärung und Verdeutschung der unserer Sprache aufgedrungenen fremden Ausdrücke. Ein Ergänzungsband zu Adelungs Wörterbücher* (Grätz F.X. Miller, 1808), 181; Friedrich Erdmann Petri, *Gedrängtes Handbuch der Fremdwörter in deutscher Schrift- und Umgangssprache ...* (Arnoldische Buchhandlung, 1852, n.d.), 716, accessed March 17, 2018; Carl Venator, *Die in unserer Sprache gebräuchlichen Fremdwörter: mit Angabe ihrer Aussprache, ihrer Verdeutschung und Erklärung, in alphabetischer Ordnung sowohl zum Hausgebrauch für Jedermann, als auch für Schulen* (Pabst, 1838), 441; Ferdinand Daniel Fenner von Fenneberg, *Der unterrichtete Zeitungsleser: Sammlung und Erklärung aller in den politischen Zeitungen vorkommenden Fremdwörter, Parteinamen u.s.w* (Lampart, 1848), 201; Johann Friedrich Heigelin, *Allgemeines Fremdwörter-handbuch für Teutsche, oder Erklärung aller ...* (C.F. Oslander, 1838), 940, <http://archive.org/details/allgemeinesfrem00heiggoog>; Karl Wilhelm Ludwig Heyse Johann Christian August Heyse, *Allgemeines verdeutschendes und erklärendes Fremdwörterbuch...* (Hahn, 1848), 702.

or unlike.”<sup>262</sup> Stretching beyond living memory, reminiscence, as anamnesis, signals a combination of divine and human temporality. For Aristotle, reminiscence, a subcategory of remembrance, always involves a recovery and reinstatement of something lost. “[Whereas] when [after an interval of oblivescence] one recovers some scientific knowledge which he had before, or some perception, or some other experience, the state of which we above declared memory, it is then, and then only, that this recovery may amount to a recollection of any of the things aforesaid.”<sup>263</sup> According to Aristotle, recollection or reminiscence is not simply the remembering of forgotten knowledge, but an enrichment of that knowledge by bringing it into the present of the imagination.

Like the fossil, a reminiscence becomes a memory that one must excavate, examine, and interpret. The title itself suggests such an excavation of memory. The connection between the adjective *göttlich* and the term *Reminiscenz* allows for various interpretations: a poet who reminisces *about* divinity, a reminiscence *of* divine quality, or the reminiscing carried out *by* a divine being, to name a few. Coupled with the motto *panta di autou egéneto* (πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο), or “Alle Dinge sind durch dasselbe [Gott] gemacht,” quoting the first epistle of the evangelist John, the title itself is a reminiscence of the act of creation, the *genesis*. Just like the fossil, the reminiscence unites creation and memory. In the process of creating its own narrative, the text recalls the creation of the original narrative of the Old Testament.

The reminiscence at the center of this text deals with exactly that moment of creation. The Christ child, through his interaction with the petrified piece of sea-growth, recalls and

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<sup>262</sup> Plato, *Plato: Euthyphro. Apology. Crito. Phaedo. Phaedrus*, trans. Harold North Fowler, Reprint of 1904 edition (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999), 259, 481–85.

<sup>263</sup> Aristotle, *The Works of Aristotle* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1910), 451b.

simultaneously forgets his divinity, in a flash. The temporality of this moment expands and contracts simultaneously, recalling the chasing away and filling up of time implied by the term *Zeitvertreib*. A memory that lasts only as long as a flash of lightning encompasses the entirety of creation. The child's gaze unites "ewige Zeitenfernen;" however Mörike's characterization of the reminiscence through the gaze does not indicate a looking backward or forward, but a stretching motion that encompasses even the most distant temporal experiences. To engage in reminiscence, according to Mörike, is not to escape time as the word *Zeitvertreib* suggests, but to blur the divisions between historic, prehistoric, human, and divine experiences of time. This reminiscence leaves no trace on subject's perception of himself in its culminating moment, for the child, turned toward the audience of the painting, communicates his divinity without recognition: "und das welterschaffende, / Das Wort von Anfang, als ein spielend Erdenkind, / Mit Lächeln zeigt dir unwissend dein eigen Werk."<sup>264</sup> The child, who is the Logos and the creating one, shows the audience, simultaneously the lyrical voice and the reader, his work, which could be the petrified sea-growth, the surrounding mountain scenery, the painting, the poem, or creation itself. *Kind*, *dir*, and *Werk* exist polytemporally through reminiscence, but also through the creative act. For Mörike, to reminisce is to equate an act of divine genesis with the co-presence of multiple temporalities.

### **Creativity**

Each level of temporality involves an engagement in creative activity, from the reader's experience of the text, to the lyrical voice's reminiscence of the painting in the chartreuse monastery, and finally the Christ child's fleeting memory of his role in the world's creation. In

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<sup>264</sup> "Göttliche Reminiszenz" Mörike, "Gedichte," 165.

the moments where reminiscence or fossilization enable the confluence of multiple possibilities, creative genesis is present.

Within the text, reminiscence occurs through interaction with physical objects. These objects, however, not only work through resemblance, a simple harmony between the physical world and interiority of the subject, but each one bears the signs of creation in some way or another. The two most significant objects in the poem are the “Felsentrümmersaat” and the “versteinertes Meergewächs”, and each one enables the reminiscences of the two portions of the text. The lyrical voice’s reminiscence of the painting occurs during his morning hike amid an encounter with what Mörike calls the wildly dispersed cliff-rubble sowings [*wild zerstreute Felsentrümmersaat*]. This rock formation bridges the gap between the lyrical voice’s mountain hike and the painting of the Christ child with its similarity to the stony chasm [*Steinkluft*] that opens the ekphrasis of the second section. Beyond its similarity, the portmanteau *Felsentrümmersaat* also unites different temporalities, where the geological degradation suggested by *Felsentrümmer-* appears linked to agricultural regeneration in *Saat*. Like the fossil, *Felsentrümmersaat* unites organic and inorganic material, this time in retrograde. The lyrical voice’s characterization of this rubble also bears the signs of some sort of higher agency, possibly a creative act. These stones did not always exist in these positions, but appear *wild zerstreut*, as if cast out like seeds. The rubble not only triggers the lyrical voice’s memory of the painting, but seems to recall its own creation. This wildly dispersed rubble achieves fixity in the form of the *versteinertes Meergewächs*; if these cliff fragments are to resemble seeds, the petrified sea-growth could be considered the fruit of the poetic act. As discussed earlier, the fossil, by definition, transmits the memory of its earlier organic existence; however, in the text, the *versteinertes Meergewächs* inspires another form of memory by indicating the conditions of

its own creation. Like the *Felsentrümmersaat*, the lyrical voice's description of the *Meergewächs* includes a reference to the object as a product of creative agency; the sea-growth appears as *seltsam gestaltet*, a result of another subject's act of formation. At the end of the text, the sea-growth becomes the work of the Christ child, albeit "unknowingly." In addition to its createdness and representation of disparate temporalities, perhaps because of these attributes, the lyrical voice calls the sea-growth a *Wunderding*, just as he calls the painting *wundersam*. Both products of creative activity, the painting and the fossil perform the miracle of transcending their temporal fixedness, successfully venturing into foreign temporalities.

Through a playful engagement with memory and the fossil-esque, Mörike's "Göttliche Reminiszenz" offers a means for overcoming a purely linear and hermetic relationship to time. This "redemptive" polytemporality becomes the solution for problems of modern experience, problems which Mörike outlines in his later *Gelegenheitsschriften*. In these texts, Mörike formalizes the openness to play illustrated in *Göttliche Reminiszenz* as an antidote for closed systems of experience by interpreting a series of personal anecdotes and showing how each of these experiences perturbed the homogeneity of quotidian spatiality and temporality.

### **Uniting Two Halves of a Whole: "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde" and "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit."**

In late December 1833, Mörike claims to have learned of his uncle's death in a dream. In said dream, Mörike states that he found himself in a large white room, sparsely furnished, with a simple calendar hung on a wall. The calendar appeared obscured by a white fog, through which Mörike could only clearly discern two dates, one written in black, the twenty-fourth, the other in red, denoting a holiday. At the same moment, Mörike had an inkling that someone close to him

would die on that day. Days later, he received word that his uncle had died from a stroke on Christmas Eve, confirming his vision.<sup>265</sup>

The dreaming mind has always been a focal point of Mörike's literary and epistolary output. Whether at the start of his 1867 edition of poems with "Auf einem Wintermorgen, vor Sonnenaufgang" from 1825, and the later "Nächtliche Fahrt" in 1878, to "Besuch im Urach" from 1827, the dream in Mörike functions as a form of seeing differently, a distinct form of sight than what one experiences in the daytime.<sup>266</sup> In a letter to his sister, Luise, from 1824, Mörike describes how heavily the events of a dream weigh on his mind throughout the day, coloring his every encounter or action:

Wenn ich am Morgen mit einem schönen, halbtraurigen Traum aufstehe, so wird darnach die Stimmung meines ganzen Tags, und ich bin entweder über mäßig still und dabei unverträglich oder zu meinem eigenen Verdruß – ausgelassen. Und jene nächtliche Empfindung verfolgt mich bei jedem Tritt, weil ich sie nicht etwa durch Erzählung an einen andern oder durch ein freyes Spiel des Schmerzens u. der Leidenschaft, oder durch einen Gewaltstreich, von mir losschlagen mag.<sup>267</sup>

Mörike goes on to assert that no one can accurately and specifically relay the contents of a dream in language, emphasizing the impression made by the totality of the dream as the main take away. Given this background, it is hardly surprising that Mörike went on to engage with this topic from a more theoretical standpoint later in his life, even publishing some of these texts, including the account mentioned above.

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<sup>265</sup> Eduard Mörike, "Aus Dem Gebiet Der Seelenkunde," in *Sämtliche Werke*. (München: Carl Hanser, 1964), 1225.

<sup>266</sup> "An einem Wintermorgen vor Sonnenaufgang", "Nächtliche Fahrt", "Besuch im Urach", "Der Petrefaktensammler", Mörike, "Gedichte," 9, 12, 32, 209. In the first poem, Mörike describes the liminal experience of waking with constant reference to the images of the dream. In "Besuch in Urach", a day's journey into a valley turns into the sublime confrontation with a dream world. In "Der Petrefaktensammler" the lyrical voice attributes a liveliness of experience to the dream that only occasionally appears in waking life.

<sup>267</sup> *Briefe, 1811 - 1828* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1982), 69.



Mörike's interest in dreams and spirits is by no means atypical for his work, and the pursuit of an understanding of these phenomena aligns him with the pursuits of thinkers such as Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, Arthur Schopenhauer, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.<sup>268</sup> While Mörike nurtured his early interests in a theory of the soul and its afterlife with texts by Schelling, Adam Karl August von Eschenmayer, Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert, and Johann Heinrich Jung-Stilling, Justinus Kerner was to become his primary exposure to theories of the paranormal and animal magnetism.<sup>269</sup> Originally drawn to Kerner's literary output, Mörike became acquainted with the doctor-poet during his time at Cleversulzbach, when Kerner saw him as a patient.<sup>270</sup> Mörike would eventually publish his accounts of ghostly activity at the seminary in Cleversulzbach in Kerner's journal, *Magikon. Archiv für Beobachtungen aus dem Gebiete der Geisterkunde und des magnetischen und magischen Lebens*. Beyond the activity of the spirit in the afterlife, Kerner and his circle engaged in close study of the activities of the mind during altered states, in trance, possession, sleep, and hypnosis. Kerner and his circle found in these states the ability to transcend traditional sources of knowledge and thought these states might possibly open a window onto the future. While texts such as Franz von Baader's "Über den inneren Sinn im Gegensatz zu den äußeren Sinnen," Nikolaus Gerber's *Das Nachtgebiet der Natur im Verhältniss zur Wissenschaft, zur Aufklärung und zum Christenthum*, and Kerner's wildly popular *Die Seherin von Prevorst* certainly informed

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<sup>268</sup> Stefan Andriopoulos, "Die Laterna magica der Philosophie Gespenster bei Kant, Hegel und Schopenhauer," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 80, no. 2 (June 1, 2006): 173–211.

<sup>269</sup> Wolf, *Brüder, Geister und Fossilien*, 79–83; Matthias Luserke-Jaqui, "'Fernsehen Im Träumen': Über Mörikes Beschäftigung Mit Der Romantischen Traumtheorie," in *Traum-Diskurse Der Romantik*, vi, 391 pp. vols., Spectrum Literaturwissenschaft (Berlin, Germany: de Gruyter, 2005), 313–33.

<sup>270</sup> Wolf, *Brüder, Geister und Fossilien*, 75.

Mörike's engagements with dreams, somnambulism, and the constitution of the soul, his drives appear distinctly different from those prevalent in Kerner and his circle. In his study on Mörike's engagement with the occult, Thomas Wolf demonstrates how the frame through which Mörike observed these phenomena lacks the pseudoscientific gestures of his predecessors. "Sowohl Gespensterkontext – der für Kerner verfassten Beschreibung der Cleversulzbachphänomene – als auch im Fossilkontext – der für Kurr gefertigten Beschreibung eigener paläontologischer Fundstücke – zeigt sich das zentrale Interesse Mörikes weniger als ein natur- oder pseudowissenschaftliches, denn als ein poetisch-ästhetisches."<sup>271</sup> In his introduction to *Geschichte zweyer Somnambülen. Nebst einigen anderen Denkwürdigkeiten aus dem Gebiet der magischen Heilkunde und der Psychologie*, Kerner proclaims his intention to enrich the study of the natural sciences through further investigation of Franz Anton Mesmer's theory of animal magnetism.<sup>272</sup> Mörike, on the other hand, makes no mention of the scientific benefits of his own investigations, and in fact acknowledges the shortcomings of his own assertions. In his texts on the soul, dreams, and the search for knowledge in the beyond, Mörike offers not so much an explanation for these phenomena, as an examination of their potential for creativity.

Two texts stand out in Mörike's theoretical investigations of the otherworldly. The first text, written sometime before 1861, was published in the journal *Freya. Illustrierte Familienblätter* in 1861 under the title "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde," and the second text, written between 1861 and 1863, titled "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit," remained unpublished during Mörike's lifetime, only to first appear in the *Nachlass* of Mörike's works in 1904. Until now,

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<sup>271</sup> Wolf, 3.

<sup>272</sup> Justinus Andreas Christian Kerner, *Geschichte zweyer Somnambülen. Nebst einigen andern Denkwürdigkeiten aus dem Gebiete der magischen Heilkunde und der Psychologie* (Karlsruhe : G. Braun, 1824), VIII–X.

these texts have received only scant mention in considerations of Mörike's non-literary texts, either in conjunction with an examination of the supernatural in Mörike's prose or lyrical works, or glossed in sections titled "Gelegenheitsschriften" or "Vermischte Schriften."<sup>273</sup> Rather than present these works as explanations and interpretations of Mörike's literary output, I am interested in how these texts represent, alongside Mörike's literary output, an interest in cognition and an investigation in alternative methods of gathering and processing information. Mörike's interest in and engagement with contemporary theories of somnambulism and Mesmerism, an interest that informs the composition of many of his literary texts, highlights the creative, rather than scientific, possibilities of these theories. Both texts shed light on Mörike's intuition about the function of dreams, or rather dream-states, presented in some of his poetic work by describing his own experiences and theories developed regarding the rehabilitative and productive quality of such states.<sup>274</sup> In these poetic texts, Mörike suggests an intimate communication between waking and dreaming life, a connection that appears more concretely in "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde" and "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit."

Mörike's interest in the otherworldly amblings of the spirit provides a look into the importance of resting states to the author's conception of knowledge and its sources. In "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde," Mörike retells two moments of premonition that occurred during sleep, the first of which I described at the start of this section. The second premonition occurred

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<sup>273</sup> Ulrich Kittstein, *Eduard Mörike: Jenseits der Idylle* (Darmstadt: Lambert Schneider, 2015); Ulrich Kittstein, Inge Wild, and Reiner Wild, *Mörike-Handbuch: Leben, Werk, Wirkung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2004); Mayer, *Eduard Mörike; Eduard Mörike, Sämtliche Werke.*, ed. Herbert Georg Göpfert (München: Carl Hanser, 1964).

<sup>274</sup> "An einem Wintermorgen, vor Sonnenaufgang," "Seltsamer Traum," "Gesang zu Zweien in der Nacht," "Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag," "Besuch in Urach," and "Um Mitternacht," Mörike, "Gedichte," 9, 10, 20, 32–35, 44, 100–101, 116.

when Mörike suddenly awoke from sleep to the sensation of phantom water droplets (phantom only inasmuch as they are not physically present) falling on his skin, only to find out later that his hostess had blessed the house from a separate room in the catholic tradition of sprinkling holy water in each residents' direction. Mörike's explanation of the events reads as follows:

“Hiernach erklärte sich das Rätsel einfach aus einem momentanen Fernsehen der Seele im schlafenden, völlig gesunden Zustand. Die Seele bekam oder gab vielmehr sich selbst ihre Wahrnehmung sinnlich durch einen scheinbar äußeren Eindruck zu fühlen.”<sup>275</sup> The experience of precognition is limited temporally to moments during which communication between the disparate sides of the mind, or between the mind and the spirit, becomes possible. This momentary bridge only becomes possible in the state of rest, in this case sleep, a fragile state easily disrupted by the very reception of extra sensory information it enables. Mörike highlights the transition from sleeping to waking during the moment of inspiration in his second account, where he describes the effect of the phantom water droplets as both sudden [*plötzlich*] and violent [*gewaltsam*].<sup>276</sup> Once Mörike feels the droplets on his face, his dream-state terminates, severing the communication between the various parts of his mind.

While this first account focuses primarily on the possibility of oracular experience in dream states, Mörike focuses more on the receptive quality of the dreaming state in the text's second half, and how this reception primarily occurs in the absence of regularly measured time. His illustration of the event stresses on one hand his passivity in sleep [*in vollkommener Ruhe geschlafen*], and on the other hand his inability to locate the event in time. At the same time that the description of time becomes vague and action decreases, the sensual impression left by the

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<sup>275</sup> Mörike, “Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde,” 1226.

<sup>276</sup> Mörike, 1226.

water droplets appears to intensify. Sensory input from the skin and the ears is so great as to deceive Mörike into believing that the droplets actually fell, or better yet, were sprinkled intentionally on him, leading him to search for their traces on his bed.<sup>277</sup> The first part of the text also exhibits the same vagueness of temporal markers, in addition to a detailed account of how Mörike received the information of his uncle's death in the dream. In the absence of an awareness of time and a reduction in physical activity, Mörike's impression of the information achieved in this state becomes more vivid. Whether or not the dream state outlined by Mörike provides a window into the future, each instance outlines a type of knowledge produced in this state resulting from the communication of parts of the mind normally separate. This connection between mental operations and its relationship to passivity, though untenable, proves to be a source of inspiration for Mörike's aesthetics. For the act of creative genesis will also be shown to consist in an oscillation between different temporal realms, around a hinge (such as the word *unwissend* in *Göttliche Reminiszenz*) that links these realms.

In "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit", Mörike further explains the connection between the waking and sleeping mind laid out in "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde," focusing more on the *way* that information is gained, rather than the possibly oracular nature of the information provided by dreams. Instead of relaying another series of evening premonitions, Mörike pulls the dream out of its typical nighttime atmosphere, claiming it as a specific register of the mind accessible at any time, in fact, constitutive of our consciousness: "Im allgemeinen ist meine Voraussetzung diese: die Seele strahlt und wirkt von ihrer Nacht- oder Traumseite aus in das wahre Bewußtsein herüber, indem sie innerhalb der dunkeln Region die Anschauung von Dingen

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<sup>277</sup> Mörike, 1225–26.

hat, die ihr sonst völlig unbekannt blieben.”<sup>278</sup> Mörike goes on to state that the mind oscillates between its “day” and “night” sides at endlessly small intervals so that waking consciousness appears uninterrupted (although it is in fact unconsciously permeated by this “other world” through this rapid alternation). For Mörike, the ability to dream is no longer restricted by time, but constantly available to us, and with it the wealth of untapped information in the “wissende Traumseele” of our minds. The event which serves as proof of this phenomenon for Mörike is a late discussion of the future with Ludwig Bauer, during which Mörike seemingly randomly consults a book, a collection of Shakespeare in German translation, from a nearby shelf for insight. According to Mörike, his text selection affirms his future, leaving him to conclude “Entweder ist es purer Zufall, oder kann ich es nur mit meiner alten Hypothese von einer doppelten Seelentätigkeit erklären.”<sup>279</sup>

Unlike the previous text, Mörike offers no further explanation of how or whether his premonition affects his life or the life of his conversation partner, choosing instead to focus on an investigation of how exactly he came to the seeming source of information, Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*. Just like the news of Mörike’s uncle’s death or the phantom feeling of water droplets that came during sleep, the decision to consult Shakespeare on the question of future prosperity comes from a similar, somnambulistic source. “In dem oben erzählten Fall nun hätte die wissende Traumseele den Einfall, das Buch zu befragen, bei mir angeregt und mich im folgenden durchaus geleitet: das heißt ich verhielt mich in dem Augenblick bis auf den entscheidenden Griff meines Fingers hinaus partiell somnambül.”<sup>280</sup> As before, sleep represents

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<sup>278</sup> Mörike, “Doppelte Seelentätigkeit,” 1227.

<sup>279</sup> Mörike, 1227.

<sup>280</sup> Mörike, 1228.

a state of altered perception; however, rather than relying on a dream as the only source of information, Mörike's conception of the "dream-soul" appears instead to be a portion of the mind capable of leading one in the direction of intimations of another world. Though Mörike refers to this state as something different from waking consciousness, this night/dream mode has the outward appearance of waking consciousness; its only distinguishing feature appears to be a shift from active searching to more passive observing. After a particularly intense conversation about his future, Mörike claims to have been led to the bookcase in his surrounding by the dream side. This movement can be characterized as a turn from conscious, serious pursuit of an idea, to a semi-serious [*Halb zum Spaß, halb im Ernst*] probing of the surroundings for less obvious sources of inspiration or guidance.

While "Aus dem Gebiet der Seelenkunde" and "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit" appeared after the literary works examined in this chapter, they offer a formalization of the concept of the Playful already present in Mörike's literary works—a form of attunement that seemed to have penetrated into Mörike's personal experiences. The opening up of spatio-temporal relationships and redemptive possibility of a playful encounter with the world characterized in these more theoretical texts enable a more nuanced examination of these facets in Mörike's most well known literary texts. In the next two sections, I examine how Mörike conceptualizes the redemptive possibility of the Playful in the face of a more strictly delineated relationship between space and time, both outlined in *Idylle vom Bodensee oder Fischer Martin* and *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*.

### **Playing with Genre: *Idylle vom Bodensee***

In her account of the idyll in German literature, Renate Böschenstein-Schäfer outlines the watershed moment in which Mörike found himself. "Mörike ist das letzte Beispiel eines

Dichters, für den die Idee der Idylle bestimmend wurde; vielleicht ist seine Poesie ihre reinste Ausprägung in der deutschen Literatur.”<sup>281</sup> According to Böschenstein-Schäfer, Mörike’s Idyll-concept is fragile, or unsustainable against the “verbannten Dämonen,” compared to the models that came before his. This fragility, as Böschenstein-Schäfer calls it, represents less a breakdown in the genre concept in Mörike’s hands, and more another example of his playful engagement with its structure. In this section, I will examine how Mörike’s engagement with the idyll represents a simultaneous adherence and playful subversion of the genre when compared to those of Schiller, Jean Paul, and finally his model, Theocritus.

Among the features that define the idyll, David Wellbery highlights its temporal encapsulation and isolation as well as its didacticism. In terms of its relationship to the reader, Wellbery states, “[there] is no passage from this enclosed temporal world to the “now” of reading, no bridge joining this “once upon a time” to the present.[...] The idyll’s spatio-temporal insularity with regard to the time of reading is balanced by an unshakeable temporal continuity.”<sup>282</sup> The idyll, according to Wellbery, represents the ideal of social order, far removed from the present moment and from reality itself. This fictionality serves the didactic purpose of the idyll in Wellbery’s reading. This idyll does not simply point to an historical golden age of the past, but to a timeless social utopia as “an instructional device, a heuristic construction, the advertisement of an “ought.””<sup>283</sup> Mörike’s *Idylle vom Bodensee*, however, opposes this insularity. Instead, the text already announces its connection to world through geographical

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<sup>281</sup> Renate Böschenstein-Schäfer, *Sammlung Metzler; M 63: Idylle*, 2. Bearb. u. erg. (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1977), 94.

<sup>282</sup> David Wellbery, *The Specular Moment: Goethes Early Lyric and the Beginnings of Romanticism*, First edition (Stanford, Calif: Meridian, 1996), 14.

<sup>283</sup> Wellbery, 13.



reference to the community around “der württembergischen Landesgrenze gegen Bayern, südöstlich von Friedrichshafen zu denken.”<sup>284</sup> Mörike’s idyll also complicates Wellbery’s notion of the idyll as instructional device; while some characters get their just deserts for social missteps, Martin the Fisher, the hero of the tale, typically achieves his ends through thievery, destruction of property, and dissimulation.

In many ways, Jean Paul’s definition of the idyll in the *Vorschule der Ästhetik* represents a democratization of the genre; rather than follow the typical restriction of the genre to bucolic scenes of a social utopia of the past, Jean Paul opens up the genre to all works that fulfill a single criterion: “eine epische Darstellung des Vollglücks in der Beschränkung.”<sup>285</sup> According to Jean Paul, the idyllic could take place anywhere, so long as its rendering occurs in accordance with his single stipulation. “So wie übrigens für die Idylle der Schauplatz gleichgültig ist[...]denn die Idylle ist ein blauer Himmel, und es bauet sich derselbe Himmel über die Felsenspitze und über das Gartenbeet, und über die schwedische Winter- und über die italienische Sommernacht herüber.”<sup>286</sup> Just like the setting, Jean Paul’s idyll can contain characters of all statuses, and no longer is it constrained to the “goldene Alter der Menschheit,” enabling the elevation of everyday occurrences to the sphere of the idyllic. Even in the face of this expansion, Jean Paul does not broaden this democratization of the genre to include all aspects of the idyllic; for him, the idyll must not venture too far into the melancholic. “Erstlich kann die Leidenschaft, insofern sie heiße Wetterwolken hinter sich hat, sich nicht mit ihren Donnern in diese stillen Himmel

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<sup>284</sup> Eduard Mörike, “Idylle Vom Bodensee Oder Fischer Martin,” in *Sämtliche Werke*. (München: Carl Hanser, 1964), 409.

<sup>285</sup> Jean Paul, *Jean Paul. Sämtliche Werke: Vorschule der Ästhetik; Levana oder Erziehlehre; Politische Schriften*, I/5:258.

<sup>286</sup> Jean Paul, I/5:261.

mischen; nur einige laue Regenwölkchen sind ihr vergönnt, vor und hinter welchen man schon den breiten hellen Sonnenschein auf den Hügeln und Auen sieht.”<sup>287</sup> Jean Paul’s idyllic ideal cannot tarry long on the saturnine without jeopardizing the representation of “Vollglück in der Beschränkung.” Mörike’s idyll, however, obeys no such rule. Not only does Mörike’s text bridge topics ranging from suicide, child murder, untimely death, and the fleeting quality of life, but does so without disrupting the “breiten hellen Sonnenschein” character of its surface. Schiller’s definition of the idyll, however, accommodates such a saturnine character. In *Über die naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, Schiller appears to appreciate the inclusion of melancholy in the idyll genre. In his conception of sentimental poetry, Schiller situates the idyll under the category of the elegiac (generally defined) alongside the elegy (more strictly defined). What for Schiller differentiates these subspecies is their relation to reality; the idyll engages with its object as a reality of the past, whereas the elegy engages with its object as a lost ideal.<sup>288</sup> Both describe a lack, in Schiller’s imagining, meaning both engage in a type of mourning of their respective unattainable objects.

While defining the idyll, Schiller makes no mention of Theocritus; however, Mörike’s admiration for Theocritus is no great secret. In the preface to his own translations of Theocritus, Mörike sings the praises of his idylls as the apex of classical creation.

Seine Gedichte gehören gewiß zum Vollkommensten, was wir von der klassischen Literatur irgend besitzen. Sie sind, abgesehen von den Epigrammen, erzählender, dramatischer, lyrischer Art und heißen Idyllen, worunter man nicht allein ländliche Poesien, sondern überhaupt kleine dichterische Gemälde zu verstehen hat. Darin

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<sup>287</sup> Jean Paul, I/5:260.

<sup>288</sup> Friedrich Schiller, *Schillers philosophische Schriften und Dichtungen* (Berlin : Deutsche Bibliothek, 1914), 269.

begegnet uns die reizende Naivität, heitere Ironie, kräftige Leidenschaft, selbst großartige Darstellung und die reichste Mannigfaltigkeit der Anschauungen.<sup>289</sup>

The naivety and natural quality attributed to Theocritus's idylls become the defining features of the genre for many authors of the nineteenth century.<sup>290</sup> The *Idylls* of Theocritus provided the model for the idyll as a landscape hidden from time, especially from the present moment.<sup>291</sup> One particular attribute of the Theocritian idyll consists in the inclusion of the solemn, mournful, and passionate within the idyllic registers. Unlike later definitions, which I examine in more detail below, the idyllic does not exclude the elegiac, a fact not only known to Mörike, but practiced by him as well.

Mörike's concept of the idyll represents a shift in the genre as conceived by Schiller and Jean Paul, a playful reinterpretation nonetheless recognized as part of the genre by the likes of Ludwig Uhland and Jacob Grimm. At its core, Mörike's intervention in the conception of the idyll can be described as an inclusion of the elegiac within the idyllic; Mörike includes the melancholic with the joyful, transgressive with the normative, infinite with the finite, sublime with the beautiful. What Böschenstein-Schäfer reads as fragility in Mörike, namely the instability of the idyll over and against the demonic, I read as another example of Mörike's engagement with the Playful, a dual attentiveness to the moment and to infinity that transcends the moment. Seemingly "demonic" forces of death, suicide, and criminality exist without compromising Mörike's reimagining of the theocritian *Fischeridylle*. Mörike expresses this Playful quality most

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<sup>289</sup> "Übersetzungen aus Theokrit" Eduard Mörike, "Classische Blumenlese," in *Sämtliche Werke*. (München: Carl Hanser, 1964), 1334.

<sup>290</sup> Böschenstein-Schäfer, *Sammlung Metzler; M 63*, 7–8.

<sup>291</sup> "Der Charakter des Abegeschirmten, Eingegrenzten, Geborgenen bestimmt den Raum der Idylle." Böschenstein-Schäfer, 8.

clearly in his inclusion of saturnine and transgressive elements within the text without disruption of its idyllic quality.

Criminality takes on a softer appearance in Mörike's idyll: transgressions occur, but do not threaten the social order; perpetrators appear to avoid the responsibility of and punishment for their criminal deeds, allowing the blame to fall back on the affected parties against which the transgressions occurred. This playful reversal reaches its apex in the form of the "Wald-Frevel" planned by Martin. Martin's actions, along with his fellow townsmen, function as both transgression and reinforcement of social order.

One of the central purposes of Mörike's idyll is thus to foreground and repair tensions in the fabric of the social order. The first betrayal to take place in this section is a romantic one: Gertrud breaks with her beloved Tone and marries Peter the Miller. This rupture is then met with a "restitution" that is at the same time a transgression: Tone's comrades, among them the wily fisher Martin, plan the theft of Gertrud's and Peter's belongings on the night of their betrothal, in order to recreate the domestic space in the middle of a forest. Already, the text sets up a hierarchy in which the social transgression of disloyalty ranks higher than the legal transgression of theft, though Martin's actions cannot simply be described as theft. Instead these stolen objects serve the playful creation of a place in which time and space become indistinct, as I intend to show below. The juxtaposition of natural surroundings and homely furnishings blurs the line between the two spaces, creating a world at once natural and artificial:

Stück für Stück ward alles so, wie es vom Wagen herabkam,  
Gleich an die schickliche Stelle gesetzt, und die grünenden Wände  
Schmückten sich wohnbarlich aus. Ein paar hellstrahlende Spiegel  
Hingen an zwei dickstämmigen Birken von Nagel herunter,  
Gegeneinander gekehrt, an den längeren Seiten des Saales.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Mörike, "Idylle Vom Bodensee Oder Fischer Martin," 399–400.

The surroundings exist as both a collection of trees and vegetating walls, blooming not into the forest, but rather refashioned as a “naturalized” living room or hall. The “play” of Fisher Martin on the one hand suspends the difference between domestic space and natural space, but on the other hand reinforces this difference, since it is only by virtue of this dissonance that the prank can function.

Time also becomes indeterminate in this scene. First, events of the evening, though begun at midnight, take place away from the world of measured clock time, despite the presence of a *Standuhr*:

Lustig ertönte der Guckuckruf aus der Uhr, die der Fischer  
Aufgezogen, jedoch auf die Stunde zu richten vergessen:  
Neunmal rief sie, den herzerfreuenden Sänger des Frühlings  
Schlecht nachahmend im Walde, bei Nacht und wider die Jahreszeit.  
Nur erst zwei Uhr war es vorbei und ferne der Tag noch.<sup>293</sup>

Here, one might say that Fisher Martin consciously seeks to make time out of joint, thus creating a temporal order that flouts the rules of the synchronized clock, just as the arrangement of furniture gives rise to an alternative space, mirroring and parodying the reality of the outside world. Finally, the group creates a parody of the wedding ceremony that exceeds the splendor of the original (between Gertrud and Peter), which alludes to but at the same time diverges performatively from typical wedding rituals; the family is completed by a loaf of bread fashioned to resemble a child.

The child-shaped loaf functions metonymically and poetologically by standing in for Mörike’s aesthetics of the Playful: it is simultaneously orderly and transgressive, mimetic and divergent. Upon introduction, the loaf of bread appears as a transgression itself:

Doch in der Wiege – befremdlicher Anblick! schreckenerregend  
Jeder gesitteten Jungfrau, wenn sie es sollte gewahren –

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<sup>293</sup> Mörike, 401.

Lag ein gebackenes Kind, mit Augen und Mund und Nase,  
Gelb, schön glänzender Kruste, vom Sohne des Bäckers gestiftet.<sup>294</sup>

This description, outlining a hypothetical encounter between a civilized maiden and this bread-child, does not seem to apply. It remains hypothetical within the context of the *Frevel*, since the effects of such a sight are to a certain extent negated and ironized by its idyllic surroundings. Nevertheless, the bread-child does complete the domestic picture alongside his faceless parents, gradually transforming into the couple's real child in the mouths of the townsfolk. Upon discovery of the scene, overwhelmed by the situation, Peter the miller absentmindedly eats his would-be loaf-child, an act elevated to the level of transgression (in this context, the idyll makes a farce out of a primordial mythical violence, i.e. eating one's own children) through inclusion in local legend:

Deshalb sagt man noch heut: er ißt wie der Müller von Bärnau,  
Welcher sein eigenes Kind, das unmündige, so ihm geschenkt war,  
Gleich am Tag nach der Hochzeit fraß, ein grausames Frühstück.<sup>295</sup>

The discovery of the scene in the woods illustrates the redemptive quality of the Playful. The Playful conjures the symbolic intensity of a transgressive act, but without the necessity of punishment, without criminality. Martin can play the hero as well as the thief, the fisher as well as the trickster.

Just as Mörike playfully recasts transgression as the reparation of social order in the idyll, so too does the idyll make a place for the "playful" saturnine. Unlike Jean Paul, Mörike allows for the co-existence of morbid thunder and joyful sunshine. Characters appear in their youth alongside descriptions of their fates, whether real or imagined. In the cases of Tone and

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<sup>294</sup> Mörike, 400.

<sup>295</sup> Mörike, 404.

Käthchen, two characters closely tied to Martin, death appears just around the corner, despite their joyful appearance in the text. Upon informing Tone of Getrud's betrayal, the narrator allows a self-destructive dynamic to surface just before the end of the song—only to ultimately be downplayed and disarmed:

Dies die Rede des Fischers. Hierauf denn schieden sie beide.  
Nur noch folgte dem Tone von fern sein Freund bis zu Ecke,  
Ob er auch sicher ins Haus, nicht etwas hinab dem Gestad zu  
Liefe, ein Leid sich zu tun; denn es geht jähschlüssige Liebe  
Gern auf das Äußerste gleich, und besorgt ist herzliche Freundschaft.  
Aber so weh es ihm war, nicht solches gedachte der Jüngling.<sup>296</sup>

The narrator affords the reader a glimpse into the tragic possibilities of Tone's situation, à la Werther, allowing the reader to gaze briefly into the depths of a potentially elegiac or tragic act, only to quickly negate this path just before closing the section. This turn does justice to both Schiller's and Jean Paul's definitions of the idyll, engaging in the mourning essential to the former's concept of elegiac sentimental poetry, but doing so parenthetically so as not to corrupt the latter's *Vollglück*. The narrator's aside about Käthchen, a member of Tone's circle of friends, achieves the same effect, this time with a negation at the forefront; the narrative pattern of the "Playful" appears in this context as follows: indication of a tragic eventuality that is immediately discarded, but nevertheless remains operative as part of the color and atmosphere of idyllic space:

– Damals glaubtest du nicht, bald selber den Liebsten zu kränken,  
Bitterer weit, als jene vermocht, in eiligem Siechtum  
Scheidend vom lieblichen Leben hinweg aufs Jahr, wenn der See blüht,  
Eh du den eigenen Tag der Vermählung erblicktest, o Jungfrau!  
Deiner gedenket die Muse mit Leid, so oft als der Frühling  
Über den See neu wieder die schwimmenden Teppiche lasset  
Gleiten aus goldenem Staub und dem Fischer die Garne vergoldet.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>296</sup> Mörike, 383.

<sup>297</sup> Mörike, 384–85.

Here, the situation is no longer hypothetical. Käthe's youthful vengeance appears side by side with her eventual accelerated deterioration. Still, the idyllic remains undisturbed in this section, for Mörike shields the dramatis personae by restricting these thoughts to the narrator, and in doing so playfully links the temporality of the narrated moment with the memory of the narrator and the infinite memory of the muse. Each attribute cannot appear without its opposite; youth points to eventual degradation, the bounty of memory recalls the dearth of the present, the idyllic recalls the elegiac.

In the final section of the text, the elegiac makes its final appearance. The narrator again references the fleeting nature of existence, this time compared to the sudden end of a catchy song.

O glückselige Zeit, da der Jüngling blüht und die Jungfrau!  
Unaufhaltsam gehst du dahin, nie wiederzukehren!  
Gleichwie ein weitaussehendes Lied anhebet und freundlich  
Jedem das Herz einnimmt (dies hoffet ein Sänger bescheiden),  
Daß man der fliehenden Stunde nicht wahrnimmt und sich das Ende  
Gerne verhüllt, doch kommt es zuletzt, und die Töne verstummen<sup>298</sup>

The narrator's comparison emphasizes the playful quality of life as a pastime that everyone can participate in, and through participation momentarily escapes finitude. Similar to the idyll itself, composed of various songs, the narrator emphasizes the limits of the joyful moments of life, and just beyond those limits, the elegiac waits. Again, the narrator shields his characters from this intrusion of finitude, calling back to Martin, "Solche Gedanken, o munterer Greis, betrübten die Seele/ Dir nicht am Abende dort auf dem Heimweg von der Kapelle."<sup>299</sup> And while for these

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<sup>298</sup> Mörike, 405.

<sup>299</sup> Mörike, 405.



characters only the idyllic exists, Mörike presents the reader with a space both idyllic and elegiac.

Beyond a fusion of the idyllic and elegiac, the Playful again exhibits a creative-generative function in *Idylle vom Bodensee*. I have touched upon this element of the Playful in “Göttliche Reminiszenz” and I will further discuss this generative element of the Playful in *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*. In each case, the engagement with the Playful entails a departure from a singular temporality and spatiality—rather than a definite act of will that aims at a “realization” (as if the artist were a super-conscious subject, able to simply realize an idea travelling along a straight line), the artist must wander among multiple spaces and temporalities in order for something new and unexpected to emerge; here Mörike alludes to a generativity beyond the subjective act of will. Just at the end of the second song, the lyrical voice turns partially away from the titular character, Martin the Fisher, in order to address the wellspring of creativity, the muses. Just as the intrigue of the story comes to an end, the narrator describes Martin as already departed: “Aber hinweg schon hatte sich leise der Horcher mit langen,/ Weit ausgreifenden Beinen gemacht, bis wo das Gebüsch ihn/ Deckte. Gemächlich so fort nun schlendert’ er neben den Erlen/ Hin auf dem Fußpfad längs dem Berg [...]”<sup>300</sup> Martin’s casual, meandering [*schlendern*] gait bespeaks the direction of his thoughts, as he considers, cheeks already reddening, his past chicanery along with his present plots. Just as his attention divides along the lines of past and present, the lyrical voice mirrors this movement, moving away from Martin to invoke the muse:

Ländliche Muse! Nun hemme den Schritt und eile so rasch nicht  
Fort an das Ziel! Du liebest ja stets nach der Seite zu schweifen  
Und ruhst, wo dir’s gefällt. So wende dein offene Antlitz  
Hinter dich, fern in die Zeit, wo dein Liebling, jung noch mit andern,

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<sup>300</sup> Mörike, 376.

Kühnerer Taten sich freute. Vergönn uns einen der Schwänke,  
Deren er jetzo gedenkt auf dem Heimweg dort nach dem Dorfe.  
Niemals Alternde, du hast alles gesehn mit Augen!  
Selbst auch hast du ihn manches gelehrt, mithelfend am Werke,  
Und die roheren Kräfte mit deinem Geiste gemildert.  
Sing! Und reich', die wir lang nicht übten, die Flöte dem Dichter!<sup>301</sup>

The lyrical **voice**'s invocation to the rural muse recasts the fisher's mere reminiscence of past trickery as the beginning of lyrical production. Martin's previously described levity and wit in the face of his arduous work as a fisherman the narrator ascribes in part to the inspiration and protection provided by the muse. The divinely inspired Martin ascends from simple trickster to lyrical artist: the *Fischer* becomes *Dichter*.

This invocation offers an outline of the narrator's preferred form of lyrical creation, namely one rich in variation as opposed to the precise and goal-oriented. The term *Schwank*, while indexing the amusing adventures Martin reflects upon while walking home from the old church, also conjures up the image and motion of the meander, the sinuous course of a river through a valley: it is both genre and figure. The narrator's call to "hemme den Schritt und eile so rasch nicht/ Fort an das Ziel!" inspires just such a motion to the side, an oblique spatiality and temporality. The *Schwank* that becomes the story of Tone and Gertrud and Martin's forest folly becomes the bend of the story's course, eventually flowing back to its point of origin. The motion serves two purposes: to generate or collect and incorporate material that enriches the content of the main course, and to shift the perception of time, avoiding the inclination to rush. Just as this *Schwank* becomes the source of the poem, an engagement with the Playful for Martin becomes the site of artistic production, or at least the source of material for such an act. This lateral move, one out of a singular temporality, provides the viewpoint required for playful

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<sup>301</sup> Mörike, 377.

engagement, a side perspective from which disparate categories such as elegy and idyll, past and present, and memory and reality can be considered simultaneously, made to coalesce in an act of instantaneous creation.

In the *Idylle vom Bodensee*, Mörike demonstrates the redemptive and expansive possibility of the Playful, crafting a text that expands the definition of its own genre, while rendering both linear temporality and criminality inoperative, thus reinstating their potential for a fresh consideration of their possibilities. Mörike further develops the genre-bending, polytemporal, and redemptive aesthetic operation of the Playful in *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*, this time adding another layer, one in which a consideration of Mozart oscillates between historical and playful poetic representation.

### **Returning to Creative Play in *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag***

For Mörike's "Charaktergemälde" of Mozart, he chose the form of the novella. Goethe famously describes the genre as "eine sich ereignete, unerhörte Begebenheit," stressing the uniqueness of the situation described, the quality that literally makes it worthy of being narrated.<sup>302</sup> The Grimm Brothers also stress the newness of the content of the novella.<sup>303</sup> Mörike asserts, if only gently, the newness of his work, as he introduces the text. "Meine Aufgabe bei dieser Erzählung war, ein kleines Charaktergemälde Mozarts (das erste seiner Art, soviel ich weiß) aufzustellen, wobei, mit Zugrundelegung frei erfundener Situationen, vorzüglich die heitere Seite zu lebendiger, konzentrierter Anschauung gebracht werden sollte."<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> Christoph Michel and Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, 1st ed. (Berlin: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2011), 221.

<sup>303</sup> Grimm and Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 966–67.

<sup>304</sup> Eduard Mörike, *Briefe*, ed. Friedrich Seebaß (Tübingen: Wunderlich Verlag, 1939), 731.

Like the idyll, the novella often represents a temporally excerpted event, this time focused on an interesting or important occurrence [*Begebenheit*] which appears more or less closed or complete.<sup>305</sup> According to the Grimms, the novella differentiates itself from the novel in its simplicity and breadth, but not in its completeness.<sup>306</sup> The novella represents both the part and the whole, in that the excerpt offers the information of the whole, but in a concentrated form. Concentration also plays a key role in Mörike's outline of his "Charaktergemälde" in that Mörike's goal in imagining a slice from Mozart's life is to convey the entirety of his character. Scholars tend to disagree on the likeness of Mörike's novella-istic endeavor to Goethe's genre definition and the concentration of character that Mörike claims to deliver. John H. Smith seems to agree with Benno von Wiese's identification of the central occurrence of the text as Mozart's encounter with the orange tree, whereas Helmut Koopmann finds this occurrence lacking the incredibility essential to Goethe's novella. "Also herzlich wenig an Vorfällen, keine sogenannte unerhörte Begebenheit, die das Wesen einer Novelle, so Goethes berühmte Definition, auszumachen hat – die Geschichte von der eher versehentlich gepflückten Orange hat sich zwar ereignet, aber unerhört ist sie gewiss nicht."<sup>307</sup> Rather, Mörike's organizing point, as he states in his letter, is the character of Mozart, and in general the character of the artist. Karl Konrad

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<sup>305</sup> Hans Joachim Kreutzer, "Der Zeit und der Tod: Über Eduard Mörikes Mozart-Novelle," in *Obertöne, Literatur und Musik: neun Abhandlungen über das Zusammenspiel der Künste* (Königshausen & Neumann, 1994), 216. Kreutzer goes so far as to call Mörike's Mozart-Novelle a modern idyll for its valuation of the ephemeral. .

<sup>306</sup> Grimm and Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 966–67.

<sup>307</sup> Helmut Koopmann, "Anmutige Lebenskunst - vor dunklem Hintergrund: zu Mörikes 'Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag,'" in *Von Tönen und Texten. - Berlin : De Gruyter*, 2017, 100.

Polheim similarly characterizes Mörike's work as a "Figurennovelle" as opposed to a "Handlungsnovelle."<sup>308</sup>

If Mörike's invention was truly a Figuren- or Charakternovelle, then the organizing point of the text would undoubtedly be Mozart himself. Between Mozart's death in 1791 and Mörike's Mozart-Novelle, three biographies of the artist appeared in the German language, beginning with Franz Niemetschek's *Leben des K.K. Kapellmeisters Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart* in 1798, followed by Georg Nikolaus von Nissen's *Biographie W.A. Mozarts* in 1828, and finally Aleksandr Dmitrievich Ulybyshev's [Oulibicheff] *Mozart's Leben: nebst einer Uebersicht der allgemeinen Geschichte der Musik und einer Analyse der Hauptwerke Mozarts*, first translated into German from the original Russian in 1847 by A. von Schraishuon. For Mörike, Ulybyshev's biography furnished much of the background information for the novella and was a topic of discussion between Mörike and Wilhelm Hartlaub. Even though these biographical accounts purport to deliver only the truth about Mozart, the texts themselves tend toward the literary.<sup>309</sup> Mozart was also of no small literary interest for the nineteenth century. The artist appears in dramatic form, though aside from repeating basic biographical information mixed with anecdotal material, the image of Mozart was often used as a means for advancing political programs, antisemitism, and Germanomania.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> Karl Konrad Polheim, *Theorie und Kritik der deutschen Novelle von Wieland bis Musil*, Reprint 2017 (Tübingen: De Gruyter, 1970), 68.

<sup>309</sup> Hans Joachim Kreutzer, "Der Mozart der Dichter: Über Wechselwirkungen von Literatur und Musik im 19. Jahrhundert," in *Obertöne, Literatur und Musik: neun Abhandlungen über das Zusammenspiel der Künste* (Königshausen & Neumann, 1994), 104.

<sup>310</sup> Kreutzer, "Der Mozart der Dichter: Über Wechselwirkungen von Literatur und Musik im 19. Jahrhundert" These dramatic works include Joseph Hoffbauer's *Mozart. Ein dramatisches Gedicht* from 1823, Adolph von Schaden's *Mozart's Tod. Ein Original Trauer-Spiel* from 1825, and Leonhart Wohlmut's *Mozart. Ein Künstlerlebensbild in vier Aufzügen* from 1856.

As stated above, the novella delivers an excerpt of time, rather than a series of actions, a “vereinzelte Begebenheit” rather than a “zusammenhängende Handlung.”<sup>311</sup> In the case of his novella, Mörike chose to portray the specific slice of Mozart’s life from his trip to Prague in the autumn of 1787 for the premiere of arguably his most famous opera, *Don Giovanni*.<sup>312</sup> Famously declared the “Oper aller Opern” by E.T.A. Hoffmann, *Don Giovanni* occupied a privileged place in nineteenth century German literature. Hoffmann’s own text on the subject, *Don Juan* (1813), ascribes a transformative power to the opera, which serves as a portal to the “poetische Welt” of the narrator’s own interiority, where creativity and death appear closely related; in this instance, the author’s productive nighttime fit of inspiration coincides with the death of one of the opera performers. *Don Giovanni* occupied both an honored and feared place in Mörike’s own experience; four days after attending an 1824 staging in Stuttgart with his brother August, the same brother unexpectedly passed away in his sleep. Even in 1843, almost twenty years later, Mörike relayed to Wilhelm Hartlaub how the opera will forever carry with it the saturnine memory of his deceased brother.<sup>313</sup> Beyond its biographical significance, death and creativity also play a crucial role in Mörike’s text, and while his Mozart also visits a poetic world of interiority, his treatment foregoes Hoffmann’s supernatural in favor of a form of inspiration anchored in temporal experience: a blending of past, present and future.

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<sup>311</sup> Grimm and Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 966–67.

<sup>312</sup> Eduard Mörike, “Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag,” in *Sämtliche Werke*. (München: Carl Hanser, 1964), 1012.

<sup>313</sup> Mörike, *Briefe*, 32“Ist gar der Gegenstand von so besonders ergreifender Art, daß man sich vor einer angekündigten vollständigen Aufführung fürchtet, wie mirs bei dieser Oper immer geht, weil sie zu viele subjective Elemente für mich hat und einen Überschwalm von altem Dufte, Schmerz u Schönheit (August – meinen Schwester Luise – Rud. Lohbauer &c.) über mich herwälzt, dermaßen, daß ich ohne den Halt an einem sichtbaren gegenwärtigen Freund und Consorten mich nicht damit einlassen mag, so muß man einem solchen Anlaß der uns gelegentl. Mitfortreißt u. zu rechter Zeit auch wieder losläßt, doppelt danken.”

Mörike's contemporary and fellow Mozart enthusiast, Søren Kierkegaard also touches upon the temporal dimension of *Don Giovanni* in his consideration of the work and its titular figure in *Either/Or*. For Kierkegaard, like Mörike, *Don Giovanni* was the zenith of Mozart's compositions. "Anyone who wishes to see Mozart in his true immortal greatness must consider his *Don Giovanni*, in comparison with which everything else is incidental, unimportant."<sup>314</sup> While Kierkegaard certainly admires Mozart's genius in finding the perfect expression of desire in the musical representation of Don Juan, his interests lie more in the product of Mozart's abilities rather than the process. However, questions of process and form are not totally absent from Kierkegaard's text.

In his consideration of the construction of the opera, Kierkegaard foregrounds the role of time in the opera, especially in comparison to the drama and its need for continuous action. "The opera by nature does not have this urgency: it is characterized by a kind of tarrying, a kind of self-extension in time and space. This action does not have the speed of the fall or its direction, but moves more horizontally."<sup>315</sup> Kierkegaard appears to have found in the opera a quality Mörike seized upon in his Mozart novella, that quality being the sometimes seemingly directionless, meandering sequence of events as captured in the text itself, a quality also taken up in the secondary literature.<sup>316</sup> Just as this tarrying quality is essential to the being of the opera in Kierkegaard's analysis, Mörike's representation of this quality in Mozart by no means lessens his

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<sup>314</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, Edna H. (Edna Hatlestad) Hong, and Howard V. (Howard Vincent) Hong, *Either/Or* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), 74.

<sup>315</sup> Kierkegaard, Hong, and Hong, 118.

<sup>316</sup> Koopmann, "Anmutige Lebenskunst - vor dunklem Hintergrund"; Smith, "On the Novelle and/as Ereignis"; Kreutzer, "Der Zeit und der Tod: Über Eduard Mörikes Mozart-Novelle," 202. "Vordergründig betrachtet ist die Novelle ereignisarm und nicht eigentlich spannend, sie ist fast etwas unordentlich erzählt."

creative genius and ability, but rather becomes a source of his aesthetic power. Mörike's Mozart appears to obey the same invocation of the muse in *Idylle vom Bodensee* in service of his art, pursuing not the straight path to Prague and the premier of *Don Giovanni*, but taking the scenic route at every opportunity, and every time reaping the benefits of his lateral movement, a tarrying that seems to be at first a suspension of time but also gestures towards a temporal fulfillment.

Mörike's *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prague* follows the Mozarts (Wolfgang and his wife Constanze) on their way to the premiere of *Don Giovanni*, referred to in the text as *Don Juan*. On one of their stops between Vienna and Prague, Mozart manages to wander onto the grounds of the Count Max von Schinzberg, pick a bitter orange [*Pomeranze*] from his prized tree, and rather than receive punishment, the count invites the couple to his palace to celebrate the engagement of his niece, Eugenie, for whom the bitter orange tree was a gift. The Mozarts spend the evening and night in the company of the count and his family, making music and telling stories, before the couple depart for Prague in the morning.

Like Martin the Fisher, Mörike's depiction of Mozart presents the reader at every moment with an ideal of the Playful. Mozart exhibits the ability to oscillate between literal and figurative representations of space and time, flitting between reality and "una finzione di poeti." His first reported stop along his journey appears to him as much a church filled with "ein ganzes Volk von Bäumen beieinander" as a "ordinären Tannenwald an der böhmischen Grenze."<sup>317</sup> Like Martin's *Wald-Frevel*, Mörike's Mozart exhibits an ability to fuse the natural and the human, to constantly reinvent or refashion his surroundings in service of his own creative impulses, a

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<sup>317</sup> Mörike, "Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag," 1014.



quality that I will examine in greater depth in my later consideration of the scene with the bitter orange.

Similar to its representation in “Göttliche Reminiszenz,” the Playful exhibits a temporal dimension in *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*. From the start, Mörike’s novella contains multiple nested temporalities. In addition to the specific temporal location of the narrative suggested by the title and opening line, “Im Herbst des Jahres 1787 [...] Am dritten Reisetag, den vierzehnten September, gegen eilf Uhr morgens[...],” the narrator operates from a less determinate position in the future, while characters within the narrative become narrators in their own rights over the course of the roughly twenty-four hour time period, as they relay memories, personal anecdotes, and family histories. Even the “location” of the novella is resolutely liminal: on the Bohemian border, at a pause during a journey rather than a destination.

Mörike’s depiction of Mozart is that of the dreamer whose actions almost never adhere to the temporal limits imposed upon him. The portrait of the dreaming Mozart is nothing new, as even Robert Schumann characterized the composer as such.<sup>318</sup> In Mörike’s rendering, this quality shares a close relationship with time. Both the narrator and Constanze report on this friction between the composer and temporal boundaries. Constanze characterizes Mozart as absent-minded, though her description rings less of contempt and sounds more like wonder. When wrapped up in his music, it appears to her as if Mozart were in a hot-air balloon, “sechs Meilen hoch über dem Erdboden schwebend, wo man die Glocken nicht mehr schlagen hört.”<sup>319</sup> Taking this image further, Mozart’s perspective appears to necessitate taking leave of regulated temporality, an ability not without its disadvantages, for when his aircraft eventually touches

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<sup>318</sup> Robert Schumann, *Gesammelte Schriften Über Musik Und Musiker* / (Leipzig :, 1854), 199.

<sup>319</sup> Mörike, “Mozart Auf Der Reise Nach Prag,” 1051.

back down, time appears to race forward. Mozart's own lament makes this clear: "Wie halb ist das bei mir und immer en passant? [...] Allmittelst geht und rennt und saust das Leben hin – Herr Gott! Bedenkt mans recht, es möcht einem der Angstschweiß ausbrechen!"<sup>320</sup> Constanze's description seems to suggest that these moments in which Mozart takes leave of the measured time serve as an escape from one of his greatest fears. However, when Mörike represents one of these momentary retreats into temporal ambiguity, Mozart does not appear fearful, or even willful in his daydreaming, but rather Mörike renders this moment as one of profound creativity and production.

These moments, like those of the idyll, exhibit the simultaneously joyous and melancholic qualities of the Playful in Mörike. Mozart becomes the playful character *par excellence* in his personal as well as his musical existence, according to the narrator: "Gram aller Art und Farbe, das Gefühl der Reue nicht ausgenommen, war er als eine herbe Würze jeder Lust auf seinen Teil gewöhnt. Doch wissen wir, auch diese Schmerzen rannen abgeklärt und rein in jenem tiefen Quell zusammen, der, aus hundert goldenen Röhren springend, im Wechsel seiner Melodien unerschöpflich, alle Qual und alle Seligkeit der Menschenbrust ausströmte."<sup>321</sup> This alternation [*Wechsel*] between differing perspectives, temporalities, and phenomenological forms of attunement becomes Mozart's mode of being as well as aesthetic operation. For Mozart, an engagement with the Playful entails both an escape from the forward momentum of everyday existence and a confrontation with life's end, a side-step out of time and a total acknowledgment of its telos.

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<sup>320</sup> Mörike, 1016.

<sup>321</sup> Mörike, 1018.

Also similar to the idyll, *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag* offers multiple examples of the redemptive quality of the Playful in the face of catastrophe, or moments that should have ended in some sort of punishment or retribution, which, through the aesthetic lens of the Playful, end up being redirected away from their traumatic implications. This dynamic can be seen in both the smallest of objects and in the most significant contexts of life. The first instance of this dynamic occurs at the beginning of the text, in which the couple discover that Mozart had upended an entire bottle of rosewater perfume in their suitcase. The narrator describes this loss of such a costly product as “ein kleines Unheil,” oxymoronically a “small calamity,” but nevertheless a waste of something beautiful and costly. However, the event scarcely imparts its severity before Mozart resignifies the loss entirely:

Erst saß man in einem Backofen, und all dein Gefächel half nichts, bald aber schien der ganze Wagen gleichsam ausgekühlt; du schriebst es den paar Tropfen zu, die ich mir auf den Jabot goß; wir waren neu belebt, und das Gespräch floß munter fort, statt daß wir sonst die Köpfe hätten hängen lassen wie die Hämmel auf des Fleischers Karren, und diese Wohltat wird uns auf dem ganzen Weg begleiten.<sup>322</sup>

The “Unheil” appears, in Mozart’s rendering, to be the path to salvation; rather than incurring further misfortune, the spilling of the perfume transforms the hellish environment of the coach into a heaven of sorts, saving the couple from the gruesome, albeit figurative, fate of slaughtered sheep at the market. In addition to this transformative effect, Mozart attributes the “Unheil,” rebranded as a “Wohltat,” with the production of a positive mood that will stretch beyond the sensual perception of the rosewater to cover the entirety of their journey. In this example, Mörike does not negate or avoid the catastrophe, but rather allows Mozart to resignify it, exorcising it of its negative effects.

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<sup>322</sup> Mörike, 1013.

The most recognizable moment of playful resignification comes at the center of the novella. The moment in question is Mozart's encounter with the bitter orange tree, resulting in his theft and the damage of the count's property. In his own estimation of the event, Mozart calls his actions a "Frevel," a term shared with Martin the Fischer's wedding parody in the woods discussed above. Again, in the face of the language of damnation, especially his own (tongue-in-cheek) comparison to his actions to those of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Mozart suffers no such retribution for his actions. Rather than face his expulsion from this paradise, he finds himself elevated to yet another, in the form of an invitation to the count's palace. Mörike allows the catastrophe to occur, the Vesuvius of Mozart's imagination appears to erupt, but the rain of ash that he anticipates never comes. Instead, this figurative volcano is generative rather than destructive. This scene, however, results in a kind of creativity different from the above example of the rosewater scene. Here, creativity and artistic production become a question of the Playful, just as the memory of the creative act of the logos coincides with the playing Christ child in "Göttliche Reminiszenz." A consideration of this scene in relation to Mörike's depiction of thought and creativity is new. Recent scholarship still finds this scene worth discussing, whether analyzing the oedipal drives that inform artistic production in the text, investigating the role of death in Mörike's depiction of Mozart, locating seduction and the sublimation of erotic impulses as a source of creative drives, or exploring the possibility of representing existence (*Dasein*) in this central "Ereignis" of Mörike's novella.<sup>323</sup> My interest in considering this scene is

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<sup>323</sup> Smith, "On the Novelle and/as Ereignis"; Mahlendorf, "Eduard Mörike's 'Mozart on the Way to Prague'"; Wolfgang J. A. Bender, "Ingenium Animum Humanum Iuvat: Gedanken Zum Inspirationsgeschehen in Mörikes 'Mozart Auf Der Reise Nach Prag,'" in *"Das Schöne Soll Sein". - Bielefeld : Aisthesis*, 2001, 381/392; Helmut J. Schneider, "'Liebe Kunstverwandte': romantische Kunsterfahrung und musische Gemeinschaftsstiftung in Mörikes Erzählung 'Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag,'" in *Mörike und sein Freundeskreis. - Heidelberg : Universitätsverlag Winter*, 2015, 89–108; Hans Ester, "Mörike Und Mozart: Die Faszination Des Nächtlichen," in *Künstler-Bilder: Zur Produktiven Auseinandersetzung Mit Der Schöpferischen Persönlichkeit*, 223 pp. vols., Duitse Kroniek (Duitse

in Mörike's linking of the oscillatory quality of the Playful with his depiction of the creative act. Beyond ascribing creative overtones or reference to the creative act, Mörike outlines in detail the aesthetic operation he associates with the Playful in this depiction of Mozart at play. While time has also served as a topic of consideration in other scholar's examinations of this and other scenes from the text, my focus will be on the experience of time, rather than the way in which Mörike folds distant points of historical time into a twenty-four hour stopover on Mozart's journey.<sup>324</sup>

During their first stop on their trip to Prague, Mozart sets out on a quest for diversion while Constanze rests at their accommodations, eventually finding his way into the Count's garden. At this point, the narrator has already given the reader an impression of Mozart's playful character through an overview of the composer's demeanor; this time, the narrator invites the reader to observe the composer's particular actions, outlined in detail. The narrator's description of Mozart's approach begins with sporadic acknowledgement of the composer's surroundings, cataloguing the various objects and the scenery that briefly hold the artist's attention, gradually slowing down as Mozart moves deeper into the garden, with the orange tree at its center. Starting with a palace constructed in an Italian style, the layout of the garden with its various flora, a reflecting pool, the orange tree, and finally a single orange, each description of these objects stretches beyond the next, until the narrator focuses the reader's attention on the qualities of this single orange. Mörike again illustrates the act of *Zeitvertreib*; whereas the *Zeitvertreib* of "Göttliche Reminiszenz" flashes momentarily through the reader's consciousness before

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Kroniek): 52 (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Rodopi, 2003), 53; Kreutzer, "Der Zeit und der Tod: Über Eduard Mörikes Mozart-Novelle," 205.

<sup>324</sup> Endres, "Im Garten Der Zeit"; Busch, "Unzeitgemässe Konjunktionen"; Karrasch, "Mörike auf der Reise zu sich selbst."

evaporating into the divine memory of the poem's title, the narrator's description of Mozart's experience could be likened to the movement of a camera slowly tracking in to focus on the orange. The scene begins with a description of Mozart's movements, it ends with a description of the object of his consideration, the orange:

Das Ohr behaglich dem Geplätscher des Wassers hingegeben, das Aug auf einen Pomeranzenbaum von mittlerer Größe geheftet, der außerhalb der Reihe, einzeln, ganz dicht an seiner Seite auf dem Boden stand und voll der schönsten Früchte hing[...]. Nachdenklich lächelnd reicht er hinüber nach der nächsten Frucht, als wie um ihre herrliche Ründe, ihre saftige Kühle in hohler Hand zu fühlen.<sup>325</sup>

Mozart, however, moves in the opposite direction of the narrator; while he physically engages with the orange, mentally he is transported to another time and place. As Mozart's wandering path through the garden slows, the meandering path of his thoughts breaks free from the present moment to move simultaneously along two tracks: memory and pure sensory stimuli.

These foci outline the three separate but contemporaneous levels of awareness that appear to be at work during this scene, each with their own temporalities, objects of consideration, but each in communication with the other. The first level is that of Mozart's narrated actions in the garden, which takes place in the present of the narrative, separate from present of the narration, a historically ambiguous moment after the death of Mozart. Mozart begins the section walking through the garden, slowly nearing the tree before coming to a stop, picking the orange, then finally cutting the orange and allowing it to open and close in his hand by simply pressing and releasing his fingers around it. As discussed above, the events of this level appear slowed down through an increase in description as Mozart becomes steadily more passive, allowing Mozart's encounter with the orange tree to take up more than twice the textual space of his journey to it from the garden's entrance. The narrator's ever-narrowing gaze follows Mörike's elevation of a

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<sup>325</sup> Mörike, "Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag," 1025.

seemingly insignificant object into an intensification of meaning.<sup>326</sup> On the level of physical sensations, time seems to stop, whereas Mozart's mental activity jumps into overdrive.

Memory forms the second level of awareness, which appears split, just like Mozart's orange; the narrator makes only vague references to Mozart's recollection of a memory from his childhood, which Mozart himself outlines in greater detail later in the text. According to the narrator, the sight of the orange tree, possibly in combination with the Italian-style palace mentioned earlier, "ward unser Freund [Mozart] durch diese Anschauung des Südens alsbald auf eine liebliche Erinnerung aus seiner Knabenzeit geführt."<sup>327</sup> Mozart later clarifies this "liebliche Erinnerung" as a memory from a trip with his father to Napoli in 1770, during which he witnessed an aquatic acrobatic performance. With Mozart's description of the memory comes the first inkling of the temporal friction between his physical experience in the garden and the mental experience of the memory. In the text alone, Mozart's description of the water-show towers over the description of his transgression in the garden, with the garden scene comprised of a mere 389 words and Mozart's memory 1298.<sup>328</sup> While some of the guests, Eugenie in particular, offer their doubts on the veracity of Mozart's retelling, seeing the memory instead as the work of a creative genius, the composer asserts that these images and events appeared more real to him that day in the garden than when he first experienced them in 1770.<sup>329</sup> In contrast to

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<sup>326</sup> See Thomas Althaus, "Nichtssagende Dinge. Die Funktion Des Unwichtigen Bei Mörike," in *Eduard Mörike - Ästhetik Und Geselligkeit* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2011).

<sup>327</sup> Mörike, "Mozart Auf Der Reise Nach Prag," 1025.

<sup>328</sup> Mörike, 1025–26, 1035–38. For Mozart's account of his memory I started with his line "Im Frühling 1770[...]" and ending with Eugenie's evaluation of the anecdote. My count for the garden scene is on the charitable side, using the mention of the Italian palace as the start of the memory and ending with the interruption of the gardener. If one starts with the narrator's first mention of the memory, the word count is only just over 200.

<sup>329</sup> Mörike, 1039. "So lebhaft aber wie heut in Ihrem Garten war mir der letzte schöne Abend im Golf kaum jemals wieder aufgegangen. Wenn ich die Augen schloß – ganz deutlich, klar und hell, den letzten

the scene with the orange, Mozart's memory appears to burst forth in a flurry of action produced by the series of acrobatics, swimming, and sailing. Also in contrast to the previous level, Mozart's memory of the water show has a discrete directionality, with each event of the show building into a fantastic climax, rather than tracing their way around a space according to fancy. All of these events spring from Mozart's free association between the simple orange in the garden and the golden balls used in the performance in Napoli. However, this scene does not culminate in a memory brought to the surface by coincidence, but rather in a burst of creative activity.

The final level of awareness in the orange scene is the compositional activity spurred on by the input from the first two levels. This level of mental activity is without temporal markers, only vague descriptions of Mozart's thought process, later clarified by Mozart as the memory of the Neapolitan water-show. Like the memory, the narrator's description of Mozart's creative activity only receives scant mention during the orange-picking scene:

Ganz im Zusammenhang mit jener Jugendszene aber, die wieder vor ihm aufgetaucht, stand eine längst verwischte musikalische Reminiszenz, auf deren unbestimmten Spur er sich ein Weilchen träumerisch erging. Jetzt glänzen seine Blicke, sie irren da und dort umher, er ist von einem Gedanken ergriffen, den er sogleich eifrig verfolgt.<sup>330</sup>

Again Mozart's mental activity appears accelerated in comparison to his physical state, though this time the description of his activity has no narrative, no flow of one event into the next, only the pursuit of an idea. The term "Reminiszenz" makes another appearance in this quote, along with many of the qualities discussed in conjunction with "Göttliche Reminiszenz." Like the

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Schleier von sich hauchend, lag die himmlische Gegend vor mir verbreitet! Meer und Gestade, Berg und Stadt, die bunte Menschenmenge an dem Ufer hin und dann das wundersame Spiel der Bälle durcheinander!"

<sup>330</sup> Mörike, 1026.



contemplative Christ child, Mozart can be observed at play in the garden, transfixed by some seemingly simple object, teeming with memory, while simultaneously engaging another side of his consciousness; like the lyrical voice who composes a “gemalte Symphonie” in words, the landscape of Napoli appears before him “mit frischen Farben.” Mozart’s thoughts and actions come across as both sporadic and focused, as his glances “irren,” while in the same moment he is gripped by a singular thought. Temporality also oscillates between fluidity and determinacy. While the narrator first describes his foray into creative experience in the past tense and by using the vague increment of time “Weilchen,” time suddenly shifts to the present with the deictic gesture of “jetzt,” only to shift back to the past, before seemingly springing ahead into the future of completion of Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. The polytemporality of the Playful unites past, present, and future in a form of creativity that appears entirely different than the process of composition; here one sees the creative drive of a perceptual process captured, in this instance, in text rather than in musical composition.

Mozart’s later description of his thought process to the assembled wedding party, while more detailed, also mixes the order of events in the other two levels of experience. “[Ein] ganzer Rosenkranz von fröhlichen Melodien zog innerlich an mir vorbei, fremdes und eigenes, Krethi und Plethi, eines immer das andre ablösend. Von ungefähr sprang ein Tanzliedchen hervor, Sechsstück, mir völlig neu.”<sup>331</sup> At this level of awareness, Mozart becomes the “Männchen in einer Montgolfiere,” in that his experience is no longer subject to the forward drive of time, at least until his experience is interrupted by the arrival of the gardener. The creative product also appears freed of temporality, in that the piece that would become the duet with choir for Massetto and Zerlina at the end of the first act of *Don Giovanni* appears to Mozart not in a state of

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<sup>331</sup> Mörike, 1039.

becoming, but rather in its finished form. Mozart exclaims upon realizing what he had brought into being: “Halt, dacht ich, was gibts hier? Das scheint ein ganz verteufelt niedliches Ding! Ich sehe näher zu – alle Wetter! das ist ja Masetto, das ist ja Zerlina!”<sup>332</sup>

Each of the three levels of experience focus on discrete objects for consideration: the orange in the first, the memory of Napoli in the second, and the dance song and stream of melodies in the third. However, though these levels have a certain degree of autonomy, there exists multiple bridges between the levels, allowing them to become mutually informative. This communication is what enables Mozart’s creative experience. Between the first and the second levels, the likeness of the orange and the balls from the performance, the smell of the orange in the garden and the atmosphere of the southern environment, the sound of the water from the fountain, and possibly the sight of the Italian palace all allow information to pass between these two levels. In the same fashion, the memory of the music of the water-show, the image of the people, and the naïve longing Mozart experienced toward the female performer in the water-show, link the second and third levels of experience. The creative act, as Mörike renders it here, is not simply the concentration on the minute, nor the artistic rendering and reinterpretation of memory, but an act of surrender in which all levels of experience can flow into one through the Playful. The Playful necessitates a flexibility of interpretation in which an orange can be a golden ball, a stately fountain in a garden can become the coast of Napoli, and the charming songs of a memory can give birth to a totally new composition. Only in the conflation of acceleration, deceleration, and some seeming beyond of temporality does Mozart’s creative process begin. Mozart makes this point clear when he outlines his own view on composition in opposition to the idea of continuous, strained work:

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<sup>332</sup> Mörike, 1039.

Weil man nun im geringsten nichts erzwingen soll, und weil dergleichen Kleinigkeiten sich oft gelegentlich von selber machen, ging ich darüber weg und sah mich im Verfolg der größeren Arbeit kaum wieder danach um. [...] Genug, ein Stündchen später, in der Laube beim Brunnen, erwisch ich ein Motiv, wie ich es glücklicher und besser zu keiner andern Zeit, auf keinem andern Weg erfunden haben würde. Man macht bisweilen in der Kunst besondere Erfahrungen, ein ähnlicher Streich ist mir nie vorgekommen. Denn eine Melodie, dem Vers wie auf den Leib gegossen – doch, um nicht vorzugreifen, so weit sind wir noch nicht, der Vogel hatte nur den Kopf erst aus dem Ei, und auf der Stelle fing ich an, ihn vollends rein herauszuschälen. Dabei schwebte mir lebhaft der Tanz der Zerline vor Augen, und wunderbar spielte zugleich die lachende Landschaft am Golf von Neapel herein.<sup>333</sup>

Mozart's practice dictates a departure from the forward striving in time of diligent work, opting instead for a side-step out of time in which various, disparate sources can work both subconsciously and consciously in the act of creation. For Mörike's Mozart, composition consists not in the careful and gradual piecing together of themes, the conscious construction of musical structure, but bursts into sudden existence in a place out of time when one opens oneself to the influences of the Playful. Mörike's image of Mozart proliferates the legend of Mozart as the genius who could freely compose in his head, to then notate the piece in its entirety on paper once he had finished the work.<sup>334</sup> Mörike's aim, however, is not blind adoration for the artist, but rather Mozart serves as an example for the artistic ability to free oneself from the temporality of an ever-accelerating life, if only in fits and starts. Mörike outlines the same approach to creative production in his own work as early as 1828:

Das, was ungefähr von Poesie in mir steckt, kann ich nicht so tagelöhnermäßig zu kauf bringen. Ich bin, wenn ich mich zu so einer Arbeit hinsetze, auch schlechterdings nicht im Stande, tief aus der Seele einen Anlauf zu nehmen, einen freien, unbefangenen Zug der Begeisterung zu bekommen, wie es doch sonst bei mir ist oder war, wenn ich für mich oder gleichsam für niemand etwas unternahm. Gleich verkleinert und schwächt sich

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<sup>333</sup> Mörike, 1040.

<sup>334</sup> Kreutzer, "Der Mozart der Dichter: Über Wechselwirkungen von Literatur und Musik im 19. Jahrhundert," 104–5.

alles, was eben noch frisch in mir aufsteigen wollte, von dem Augenblick an, wo ich fühle, daß ichs für die Zeitung machen soll, und daß man auf mich wartet.<sup>335</sup>

Just like his depiction of Mozart, Mörike's creation must take place outside a measured temporality, beyond the limits of time. In order for him to move forward, he must first move laterally, stepping outside of the dictates of linear temporality. The same tarrying Kierkegaard highlights in Mozart's opera, Mörike outlines as the source of creativity.

As the creativity associated with the Playful entails a removal from the forward momentum of the moment to a lateral perspective of multiple temporalities, this state not only enables a consideration of disparate sources of information such as past, present, and future, but also entails a return to the elegiac, an ever-present terminus. The closing of the text signals one such return as Eugenie attempts to hold onto her encounter with Mozart, as if his essence could be preserved by simply closing the lid of the piano.<sup>336</sup> Like Mozart in search of something he does not yet recognize he needs, Eugenie dreamily moves about the salon putting things back in their place, when she comes upon the notation of a familiar bohemian folksong:

Ein Tännlein grünet wo,  
Wer weiß, im Walde;  
Ein Rosenstrauch, wer sagt,  
In welchem Garten?  
Sie sind erlesen schon,  
Denk es, o Seele,  
Auf deinem Grab zu wurzeln  
Und zu wachsen.

Zwei schwarze Rößlein weiden  
Auf der Wiese,  
Sie kehren heim zur Stadt  
In muntern Sprüngen.  
Mit deiner Leiche;  
Vielleicht, vielleicht noch eh

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<sup>335</sup> Mörike, *Briefe*, 130–31.

<sup>336</sup> Mörike, "Mozart Auf Der Reise Nach Prag," 1069.

An ihren Hufen  
Das Eisen los wird,  
Das ich blitzen sehe!<sup>337</sup>

As the narrator notes, Eugenie's discovery elevates the accidental to the oracular, the playful act becomes prophecy as Mörike describes in "Doppelte Seelentätigkeit." Here Eugenie finds confirmation of her premonitions of Mozart's early death, but beyond that the text reaches out to the reader beyond the frame of the text, much like the *dir* of "Göttliche Reminiszenz." Especially the line "Denk es, o Seele, / Auf deinem Grab zu wurzeln / Und zu wachsen" recalls the imperative and memento mori of Goethe's "Warte nur! Balde/ Ruhest du auch." Instead of prophesying the coming of rest, this folksong unites the saturnine contemplation of an end with the creation of new life, the solemnity of the funeral march with the youthful jaunt of a pair of horses. Rather than ending with a confrontation with death, each verse of the folksong ends with a turn. Death receives recognition, but does not dominate the mood of the text, and instead becomes part of the Playful. Through incorporation in the Playful, Mörike anesthetizes the sublimity of death while emphasizing the immortality of creation.

### **Conclusion**

Georg Lukaács famously referred to Mörike as one of the "niedlichen Zwerge" among the authors of the nineteenth century, possibly for his restricted access to the world outside of the kingdom of Württemberg, his stature, love of nature, or perhaps as a critique of his output as small and unserious.<sup>338</sup> Much of recent research on Mörike has sought to upend this evaluation, to turn the gnome back into a man, but perhaps at the cost of some truth that Lukaács uncovered. Gnomes, while small in stature and worldly influence, even in Mörike

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<sup>337</sup> Mörike, 1069–70.

<sup>338</sup> Siegbert S. Praver, *Mörike und seine Leser* (Klett, 1960), 83.

represent master craftsmen, mythic in origin. In Mörike's *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prague* as well as the *Idylle vom Bodensee*, Mozart and Fischer Martin seem to share an affinity for nature and mischief, a playfulness that sets them apart, and in some ways above, their peers. To reiterate, the Playful as an aesthetic operation is rooted in this productive quality. The Playful entails the engagement with the multiple over the one. Through memory and dream, one encounters a multiplicity of temporalities, moving beyond the ever-accelerating linearity of the day-to-day. Spatial categories of natural, human, and artificial become freely interchangeable in the Playful, allowing for the creation of new hetero-spatial realms, such as Martin's woodland wedding parody that is both domestic and natural, or rather, neither domestic nor natural: in short a space oscillating between oppositional categories while refusing to linger in either category. Genre distinctions also become inoperative, in that elegiac content can exist peacefully within the idyll without friction, the melancholic can exist alongside the sanguine, both fully acknowledged without negating one another. Finally, at the heart of the Playful is the representation of both a fall and its redemption. Rather than avoid the fall, Mörike allows it to occur; however, the Playful renders its negative effects inoperative, opening the moment up to seemingly endless productive possibilities. The plucking and splitting of an orange yields the completion of an opera and the favor of its owner; the theft and destruction of property yields a reinforcement of social order; the extinction of a species yields the memory of creation.

## CONCLUSION

In a period of rapid political, scientific, and technological change, the works of Joseph von Eichendorff, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, and Eduard Mörike may at first appear disengaged with their contemporary moment. Their lack of explicit political statements and close connection to their regional contexts may seem like isolation; however, as this dissertation has shown, their works offer a singular perspective on their temporal situation. While recent scholarship has recognized that these authors are irreducible to their typical nostalgic, quietistic, and politically conservative characterizations, this dissertation has shown how these designations offer an entry point to another perspective on their contributions. Specifically, their belatedness, understood as their dislocation from the expectations of their temporal context, presents an opportunity to explore imaginative encounters with the past and creative reimaginations of the past.

In each of these chapters, my readings of Mörike, Droste-Hülshoff, and Eichendorff touch upon questions of memory, technology, and the environment. As this dissertation and recent scholarship has shown, despite their seeming insulation from a scientifically inflected modernity, these poets still engaged in the networks and advancements of their time. All three authors had their image immortalized in the daguerreotype at some point during their lives. Both Mörike and Droste-Hülshoff participated actively in the burgeoning fields of geology and paleontology, while Eichendorff's participation in autobiographic and translation projects connects him to the contemporaneous development of these genres.

In their works, some significant shared objects of reflection—such as the daguerreotype, the fossil, and the translation—all exhibit a dislocation corresponding to that of their authors. Each of these objects exists long after their creation, injecting remnants of the past into another temporal context. Rather than simply interrupting this new context, these objects also provide connection across these temporal boundaries. In their poems “Göttliche Reminiszenz” and “Die Mergelgrube,” Mörike and Droste-Hülshoff find connection through the fossil to the worlds beyond the human. In “An Elise,” Droste-Hülshoff reimagines the connective potential of the daguerreotype. Eichendorff’s translational practice provides a space for communication with authors of the Spanish Golden Age that at once inserts works of the past into a new context, while simultaneously transforming these texts into something unique to Eichendorff.

These connections present new considerations for the fields of memory studies, ecocriticism, and technology studies. This dissertation, in line with contributions to memory studies, highlights the disruptive potential of the past preserved through memory and history as a counterforce to the growing prioritization of teleological notions of progress, technological, industrial, or otherwise.<sup>339</sup> The ecocritical focus of this dissertation engages with the entanglement of human endeavors in a greater environmental context, as exemplified by the growing literary-critical studies that focus on biology, ecology, and paleontology works of art. This dissertation examines the form of motifs that still shape environmental thinking today, such as philosophical discourses that thematize human and animal fossil remains and geological

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<sup>339</sup> Astrid Erll, “The Invention of Cultural Memory: A Short History of Memory Studies,” in *Memory in Culture*, ed. Astrid Erll, Palgrave Macmillan Memory Studies (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2011), 28; Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, 5. Edition (München: C.H.Beck, 2005), 56 In particular, figures from the ground, like the fossil, and technological advancements like the photograph present potential points of connection between Assmann’s conception of “Communicative Memory” and “Cultural Memory.”



strata. Finally, this work examines contemporaneous technological and industrial developments as tendencies toward greater systematization, framing lyric mediations as potential disruptors of such systematization.

While recent scholarship and this dissertation highlight the embeddedness of these authors in contemporaneous social, academic, political, and local networks, the works of Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike nonetheless open up the possibility for a lateral move outside of these contexts. Returning to Said's conception of lateness, the works considered in this dissertation, a certain dual signification defines late style: to be late is to be both "in and apart" from the present. In the excerpt cited at the start of this dissertation (which I have copied again here), Said emphasizes the ironic connection between late style and death: "Late style does not admit the definitive cadences of death, instead death appears in a refracted mode, as irony [...] the irony is how often lateness as theme and as style keeps reminding us of death."<sup>340</sup> This ironic engagement with death resembles the relationship that the works of this dissertation share with the connections they ascribe to other temporal registers. Rather than ironic, Eichendorff, Droste-Hülshoff, and Mörike often frame the connection with the past as an imaginative hypothetical. In Eichendorff's "Wünschelrute," the discovery of the magic word that unites the world in song never actually occurs, remaining instead as a latency. In Droste-Hülshoff's "Das Spiegelbild," the mirror image's potential rupture of the mirror's surface and ensuing connection with the onlooker remains just that: a potential. The Christ child of Mörike's "Göttliche Reminiszenz" appears to acknowledge his own divinity, while also existing as a child at play. In the same way, the primary objects of consideration that recur throughout this study—the fossil, the daguerreotype, and the translation—only offer imaginative connection. In other words, the fossil

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<sup>340</sup> Said, *On Late Style*, 32–33.

never makes possible the resurrection of its ancient animal source; the daguerreotype never becomes the person depicted; and the translation or the autobiography never replaces the original text or person described. And yet, while reanimation of the past does not occur, its position within the imaginative hypothetical of these works offers new potential relationships to these objects and projects. Rather than a restorative approach to the past, in which these authors might seek to return to a utopia, this imaginative hypothetical relationship to the past allows these works to move laterally to consider cross-temporal points of connection. In these new potential relationships, the ground (and its contents) can become a window onto a world beyond human experience; the daguerreotype a new connective medium; the translation and autobiography a means for communicating beyond one's own lifetime; and play a site for reimagining generic conventions.

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