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FROM IDYLL TO EXILE:
THE TRANSFORMED SELF IN THE EARLY WORKS OF
JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

by
ELIZABETH POWERS

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Germanic Languages and Literatures in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1995

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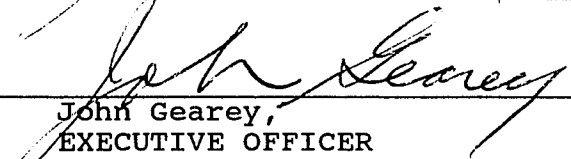
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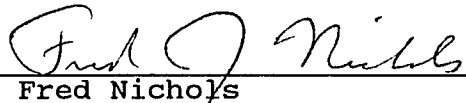
ELIZABETH POWERS

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Germanic Languages and Literatures in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

FROM IDYLL TO EXILE:
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Adviser: Professor John Gearey

This dissertation examines works of Goethe's pre-Weimar period and his autobiography, Dichtung und Wahrheit, which reconstructs that early period as the emergence of poet and oeuvre in terms of the abandonment of the idyll. It disputes the traditional view of Goethe as the poet of experience ("Erlebnis"). It seeks instead to demonstrate that Goethe wrote in the manner of his poetic forebears -- by the imitation of literary models -- and that "experience" was created in his work by emptying these models of their communal content. Once liberated from traditional literary forms, the new subjective lyric voice was literally homeless and its encounters with idyllic life forms were marked by ambivalence.

The fragility of the idyll in Goethe's work mirrors the breakup of the idyll genre itself, and of genres and rules-oriented poetics in general, and it also inscribed in literature a new idiom, the main feature of which is the

assertion of the rights of the self over the demands of the communal order. The resulting poetic convention (rejection of fixed standards based on eternal verities in favor of endless self-creation and rootlessness) has had far-reaching implications for the course of literature since the eighteenth century, particularly notions of originality, sincerity, creativity, and individuality.

The works examined include the Leipzig poem collections; the pastoral play Die Laune des Verliebten; the poems "Wanderers Sturmlied" and "Der Wanderer"; the novel Die Leiden des jungen Werther; and the Sesenheim idyll of Dichtung und Wahrheit.

Preface

When I returned to graduate school in 1988, after a fifteen-year absence, much had changed in Germanic and in literary studies in the U.S. It was indeed my sense of the differentness in the way literature had come to be talked about in the world outside academia that prompted my return, for I also sensed that the source of my dissatisfaction could be traced back to academic discussions of literature. I desired to learn why so much that I had regarded as giving value to human life had come to be not simply de-valued but occasionally derided. In the meantime, many of the things that disturbed me have come to the surface in American life.

Upon my return I also did not dream that I would write a dissertation on Goethe, one of the most contested figures in German if not in world literature. The values that different ages give to poets can be appreciated if one compares the mountain of scholarship on Goethe in the nineteenth and early twentieth century with his relative neglect in the last thirty years. Here, too, however, I found myself out of step with prevalent views. Though it undoubtedly has much to do with the way the profession of letters forked off in two directions in the nineteenth century, into "interpretive" and "creative" sides, the adulation in which earlier generations of scholars held Goethe was associated with a view of literary creation that

I, as a writer of fiction, found untenable. According to this view, Goethe was the poet of "experience," a view that seemed to find confirmation in Goethe's own sibylline pronouncement that his works were "fragments of a great confession."

Though the traditional view of Goethe highlighted the humanness of the work, the trust that the work could tell us something about life led, I believe, to improper expectations concerning literature. I had begun to discern in the view of Goethe as the poet of "experience" a link to the very issues that disturbed me most about contemporary academic practice. For it was by immersing myself in the literary world in which the young Goethe came of age, by bearing in my hands books with frail bindings and crumbling, yellowing pages, by reading lots of poems that can only be loved by a scholar, that I began to appreciate the extent to which Goethe was dependent on the models provided by his literary forebears. What scholars perceived as a new existential content in his work was produced by an earlier literary practice, the imitation of other poets.

By demanding that a poet's work be about life, however, we inevitably judge it as we do other great practical efforts of the intellect (say, those of our contemporary statesmen and politicians!). We begin to ask questions like: why has it failed to address the problems of life? When literature gets drafted into the service of life

(cultural studies), it follows that it will be faulted when it insists on being apart from life. Or, as in the case of Goethe, lacking the "right" (i.e., late-twentieth-century enlightened) view on late-eighteenth-century political and social issues, he is called reactionary.

In the course of the past century many people have forgotten what poets of earlier ages knew, that creating literature (and to a great extent enjoying it) is about drawing on the resources of a literary tradition. Living in a democratic age makes the matter complex; a poet is no longer required to immerse himself in his people's history, myths, institutions, and culture to be taken seriously by his culture, or to have mastered every device thought up by rhetoricians in order to demonstrate his connoisseurship to that select portion of the population that considers itself the guardians of the literary inheritance. Instead, we take it for granted that the subject of literature comes from the "self." But after having abandoned an understanding of literature's constructedness, we now find that a dominant strain of modern literature is the emptiness of the self. Or the search for the self. Or the alienation of the self. But literature cannot construct our self for us; that is the task of life.

If some people wish to read a lesson into literature, fine, but we really should be able to read The Sorrows of Young Werther without committing suicide afterward! The

tendency to look at literature as life is to forget that it is the product of a human intelligence that sees the world around it in a way that is absolutely particular to itself. This human intelligence resides within a particular human being who occupies a unique standpoint in time, and thus it is not about people occupying other standpoints. We can enjoy literature only insofar as we, as readers, come to occupy a standpoint that is different from our own. To read literature well is to understand life from a point of view never vouchsafed us in "real" life. To study literature is to dissect (a practice Goethe abhorred), to lay bare the material means by which an illusory world is created.

This conception of literary production has affected my own work as a writer and is one I would not have arrived at had I not had the good fortune to return to graduate school in 1988. Among the professors who have enriched my understanding of particular areas of intellectual and literary life have been William Coleman, Tamara Evans, Edward Fichtner, Fred Golden, Burton Pike, and Rolf Kieser.

As every writer knows, it can be something as small as the details of a person's dress or an offhand remark from which a work springs. It was in discussions with Martina Laque, a fellow student in the Program in German, as we spent many a Saturday at the Mina Rees Library preparing for our orals, that my earliest thinking on the subject of the idyll originated. From Martina's interest in the

"Glücksbilder" of the idyll arose my preoccupation with what I perceived to be the destruction of the idyll in Goethe's work and the consequences such destruction has had, namely, modern notions of homelessness and exile.

Professor E. Allen McCormick, formerly executive officer in the Program in German, provided fertile insights concerning the young Goethe. Among the members of my committee, John Gearey first introduced me to the study of Goethe with a course on Faust and has steadily and firmly steered me through the the shoals and depths encountered in writing a dissertation. While sharing a wide-ranging curiosity on the most diverse of literary topics, Fred Nichols and Patrick Cullen have also served as models of academic detachment for which I am grateful. All have been constant encouraging presences. For their contributions as well as for their friendship and good cheer, I would like to express my profound gratitude to all of the above.

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Das wirkliche Leben verliert oft dergestalt seinen Glanz, daß man es manchmal oft mit dem Firnis der Fiktion wieder auffrischen muß.

Dichtung und Wahrheit

Introduction

Bernard Suphan, reporting in 1895 on the discovery of a 1767 handwritten copy of "Das Buch Annette," says that it would not occur to anyone that the poems in it were written by Goethe. "Man darf auch bei einem Goethe nicht vergessen, dass kein Meister vom Himmel gefallen ist ... Geschichtlich, als Belege zu seinem Werden, nicht mit dem Anspruch auf ästhetischen Genuss muss man diese Erstlinge betrachten" (141).¹ This dissertation sets as its task the investigation of this subject of how Goethe became Goethe. It will take issue with established views of that subject as well as with equally well established views concerning what artists do when they create. In doing so, it will consider Goethe's work before 1775, including "Das Buch Annette" and other first efforts that are either dismissed (Suphan) or given short shrift in Goethe scholarship.

I seek to establish the following thesis: that Goethe could scarcely have written in any other manner than the neoclassical one of imitating models; that the change from such normative, neoclassical poetic practice to an expressive poetics was mediated by writing exactly the kind of poetry written by his predecessors but stripping from it reference to its communal ethos; and that the emergent

¹ The discussion in Chapter 2 will provide information about the discovery of this collection of poems.

poetry in turn generated a new paradigm which has become the predominant literary paradigm since the nineteenth century, namely, an individual who enacts his independence through the abandonment or rejection of communal structures. If the hero of the epic reached home at the end of his quest, the modern hero(ine) might be said to be born in exile.

A century and a half of Goethe scholarship that has left no stone unturned provides clear evidence that the role of literature in the formation of Goethe's work has not been underestimated. As Trunz writes in his introduction to the early lyric: "Der Frühstil jedes Künstlers zeigt, daß es mit der künstlerischen Sprache nicht anders ist als mit der Sprache überhaupt: keiner hat sie aus sich selbst" (HA, I, 441). Trunz has also given as precise a definition as any of neoclassical literary practice: "Jeder Künstler, auch der genialste, beginnt in Formen, die er vorfindet ... Dichten bedeutet für [den jungen Goethe] noch, ein rhetorisches, d.h. nach festen Stilvorschriften angefertigtes Reimwerk über ein gegebenes Thema liefern" (HA, I, 439).

Despite the fact that scholars have documented every facet of the poet's life, including all the literary influences in his work, the overwhelming tendency has been to adduce the life in discussing the work, asserting that Goethe invented the poetry of experience ("Erlebnis-dichtung"). This tendency is abetted by Goethe's own

sibylline pronouncement that all his work represents "fragments of a great confession," a Rousseau-tinged expression that is misleading. Why is it tempting to adduce the life when speaking of Goethe's work, as does Nicholas Boyle, for instance, in his recent biography of Goethe, in which he writes, in reference to the year 1773, "Never again in his writing life was there so exact a coincidence of personal and general concern"?

This autobiographical element is rarely brought to bear when considering poets in the generation immediately prior to Goethe. Why this is so is clear from pronouncements of Johann Christian Gottsched (1700-1766), the spokesman for the prevailing view and practice of literature in Germany up to the mid eighteenth century, particularly in his 1730 treatise, Versuch einer Critischen Dichtkunst vor die Deutschen (hereafter, Versuch). Following French neoclassical theory, Gottsched saw the poet in a functional way, as "ein geschickter Nachahmer aller natürlichen Dinge" (Versuch, 39). The poet's main subject was not his own inner world but the actions of men ("die Handlungen der Menschen," 48), and it was taste ("Geschmack," 58) that would allow the poet to understand things and men clearly and not judge solely by his own feelings. The training of the poet came through exact observation of past masterpieces from which would be discovered the rules from which all beauty had its origin,²

² Echoing Dryden: "Without rules there can be no art."

rules that were not specific to one period but to all times, because beauty had its solid and necessary ground in the nature of things ("festen und notwendigen Grund in der Natur der Dinge," 70). Since the aim of poetry was to instruct by pleasing, it was imperative to aim for universal effect, which explains the importance (in criticism, if not in practice) of traditional genres (tragedy, epic) and of such didactic forms as the fable. It was by following such dicta that Germany, in the 1740s, began to catch up with several centuries of European literature and literary criticism.

Gottsched, however, did not have the field to himself. In 1721, in the 19th Discours der Mahlern, Johann Jakob Bodmer (1698-1783) had made the following statement concerning the role of the poet's inner life. Bodmer imagined the poet's heart affecting the imagination, with passion itself producing the necessary figures of rhetoric:

Es seye, dass er [der Poet] in dem Schatten einer ausgespannten Eiche sitzt, von allen Neigungen der Liebe, des Mitleidens, der Traurigkeit, des Zorns, frey und unbeweget, so bringet ihm doch die Stärke seiner Imagination alle die Ideen wieder zurück, die er gehabt hat, als er wircklich erliebt, mitleidend, betrübt, erzörnt gewesen, sie setzet ihn in einen eben so hitzigen Stande, als er damahlen gestanden ware, und ruffet ihm dieselbe Expressionen wieder zurück, welcher er sich zur selben Zeit bedienet (6).

To support this point Bodmer adduced the example of two poets, the Saxon court poet Johann von Besser (1654-1729) and Friedrich Rudolf von Canitz (1654-1699). He was

particularly interested in poems they had written stemming from a "real" experience, the death of their spouses:

Aber ich werde niemals so empfindlich getroffen, als wenn ich die Klag-Gedichte lese, welche [Besser und] der Hr. Canitz über das Absterben ihrer Gemahlinnen geschrieben haben. Dies sind velleicht die zwey passioniertste Stücke, welche wir in der Deutschen Poesie haben. Es is unmöglich, dass ein Leser nicht einen Theil der Grösse des Affectes, welcher sie beyde erhitzt hat, in seinem Hertzen empfinde (7-8).

Gottsched responded specifically to this passage in the Discours in his own treatise:

Denn soviel ist gewiß, daß ein Dichter zum wenigsten denn, wenn er die Verse macht, die volle Stärke der Leidenschaft nicht empfinden kann. Diese würde ihm nicht Zeit lassen, eine Zeile aufzusetzen, sondern ihn nötigen, alle seine Gedanken auf die Größe seines Verlusts und Unglücks zu richten. Der Affekt muß schon ziemlich gestillet sein, wenn man die Feder zur Hand nehmen und seine Klagen in einem ordentlichen Zusammenhange vorstellen will (Versuch, 82).³

As Saintsbury has noted, it is precisely the triumph of religion that is the signal for the appearance of a heresy (III, 419), and so it was for such neoclassical dicta in Germany. By the time Goethe came of age, a change was taking place that literary histories describe as a revolution, a kind of pre-1789 storming of the literary

³ This is something that Diderot stated much more wittily but also much later in his treatise on acting. Besides the belief that, for poetry, emotion is best recollected in tranquility, for a neoclassicist like Gottsched the personal lacked the universal dimension required for great works of poetry: "ein Poet [habe] sich an den Geschmack seiner Zeiten und Örter nicht zu kehren, sondern den Regeln der Alten und den Exempeln großer Dichter zu folgen" (Versuch, 76).

ramparts that were represented by the marvelous edifice created by Boileau in his L'art poétique (1674). In the process German literature moved from Gottsched's universal rules for writing poetry to something that looks like what Wordsworth later described as the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. A not unusual view concerning that change, especially Goethe's contribution to it, is that of a scholar like Heinz Kindermann. Tracing the change from Goethe's early Anacreontic-style lyrics to the Sesenheim Lieder and into the Sturm und Drang period, Kindermann sees Goethe undergoing a personal breakthrough that led him away from artificiality to poetry that comes from "dem innersten Empfindungsleben" (55).⁴

The difference from Bodmer's description of the genesis of a poem, one that results from an experience, to the way scholars like Kindermann have come to speak about Goethe's work lies in an imputed transformation of the mental and spiritual life of an individual in which the workings of art and those of the human psyche are scarcely distinguished. Hermann Baumgart, for instance, not as dismissive of "Das Buch Annette" as Suphan, believes to perceive in it "einen tiefen Einblick in die leidenschaftlichen Stürme, von denen die Brust des werdenden Dichters erschüttert wurde, und [wir] werden zu Zeugen gemacht, wie unzerstörbare Kräfte

⁴ Kindermann is referring here to Geßner, but would no doubt have included the poetry of Besser or Canitz.

seines Innern frei werden, um ihn aus der Unnatur einer konventionell erheuchelten Gefühlswelt zu der frischen Luft der Wahrheit und Natur die Wege finden zu lassen" (25). Albert Leitzmann perceives the flowing of the "poetische Ader unter der Einwirkung von Erlebnissen" (795), while Eugen Wolff speaks of the Neue Lieder as "organisch aus der Dichterseele erwachsen" (332). For Kindermann, the end of the Rococo period of Goethe's works marks the "Befreiung des Ich" (76).⁵

It is this "Befreiung des Ich" with which I am concerned, but it is my contention that poets who wrote before or after Goethe differed little in their mental or emotive makeup, as is suggested in a comment like the following by Fritz Brüggemann in Die bürgerliche Gemeinschaftskultur der vierziger Jahre (hereafter, Gemeinschaftskultur): "In den vierziger Jahren finden wir ... noch all irrationalen Kräfte des Seelenlebens in ihren Anfängen unentwickelt vor ..." (13). This attempt to trace the change from an imitative to an expressive poetics in terms of what has been viewed as a newly developing interiority is misplaced. In part this attempt is heavily influenced by views of Goethe that developed in the nineteenth century, particularly the work of Wilhelm Dilthey

⁵ Something similar can be heard in Lukacs' statement concerning the transition from epic to the novel, the "vollkommene Umwandlung der transzendentalen Topographie des Geistes," which is undoubtedly an effect of the kind of Goethe scholarship cited here.

and his concept of "Erlebnis" in connection with "Dichtung." For Dilthey, poetry is the representation and expression of life (113). According to Dilthey, the emergence of the natural sciences in the eighteenth century caused life itself to grow "in seinem Reichtum und seiner Kraft" (2). Though one might quibble with Dilthey's terminology ("Erkenntnis der Wirklichkeit") while still agreeing with him that the new scientific understanding produced "einen veränderten Massstab für den religiösen Glauben," the conclusion of this thought, that there occurred "entscheidene Veränderungen in dieser höchsten Region des Geistes" (5-6), is debatable.⁶ René Wellek has pointed out that revisions Dilthey wrote for Poetik in 1907 recognized the failure of his psychological conception that denies the dualism of life and poetry, but by then "Erlebnis" had become the shibboleth of German poetic theory (410-11). Yet, as Hans-Georg Gadamer has pointed out in this connection, the word "Erlebnis" was not an eighteenth-century word at all. He dates its first appearance to one of Hegel's letters, and it became common only in the 1870s, when nineteenth-century biographies of artists and poets sought to understand the work from the life (55-56).

⁶ What Schiller said about Klopstock can equally well be applied to Dilthey: "Seine Sphäre ist immer das Ideenreich ... Man möchte sagen, er ziehe allem, was er behandelt den Körper aus, um es zu Geist zu machen ..." (572).

It might be thought that this staple of Goethe scholarship had been discredited in recent years, or even that it might be restricted to Germany. Yet the notion not simply of a change, but of a wholesale progressive development, in human interiority is echoed in other quarters, for instance, in the work of social scientists like Philippe Ariès and Jürgen Habermas.⁷ Pointing to domestic developments (e.g., private rooms over communal rooms, chairs instead of benches), they situate the locus for the development of interiority in the bourgeois nuclear family. Before there was a fully developed market system, people did not possess things that signified them individually; everyone had the same things (pots, pans, jewelry). From Habermas' description of Germanic legal traditions (18-19), one would even be led to maintain that there were no idiosyncratic desires ("das Besondere" in contrast to "das Gemeine"). Speaking of the growing awareness on the part of the bourgeoisie of its "public" self and the presentation of that self, Habermas adduces as a manifestation of the discovery of subjectivity (44) the cult of letter-writing that arose in the eighteenth century, supposedly private documents actually meant for public circulation (66-67). The letter and the diary (a letter addressed to a sender) were "Experimente mit der in den

⁷ Postmodernist theory also posits such development, but has removed all semblance of an "interior" from the process. I will return to this in my Conclusion.

kleinfamilial-intimen Beziehungen entdeckten Subjektivität" (67).

Like nineteenth-century writers whose views were colored by their response to an age of mechanization in which life seemed alienated from experience (Gadamer, 58), these contemporary social scientists confuse what the specifically capitalist marketplace offers -- products for every "individual" taste -- with a universal human stratum: the triumph of market forces has led them to propose a new human authenticity ("Befreiung des Ich"). It is my contention, however, that the recourse to psychological terminology, call it experience, subjectivity, development of the self, or interiority, has obscured the literary nature of the transformation wrought in poetic practice by the end of the eighteenth century. That Goethe was always seeking to express some mood in poetry may be accepted; that the mood also came from within may also be accepted. But it can also be demonstrated, and it is my purpose to demonstrate, that poetry itself often determined Goethe's moods. Goethe was not intent on freeing interiority but rather in constructing the process by which he came to write.

All of these views describe a decisive break with the past, in literary practice, but particularly in world view. Thus Hanna Fischer-Lamberg can say, in connection with Goethe's Leipzig poetry, that Goethe's "anhaltende Bindung

an die literarische Tradition" had the effect of inhibiting for a long time "seine dichterische Selbständigkeit" (DjG, I, viii). Because we have come to esteem "Selbständigkeit," because of what Goethe went on to achieve, and because of what seems a decisive break in literary practice if not in world view, it is easy to overlook how close he was to the neoclassical poetic practice of the eighteenth century. The fact that Goethe went on composing "Gelegenheitsgedichte" into the 1790s is a measure of how much he was still anchored in an earlier image of the poet's function (Sengle/Konvention, 16), but because so much art and literary criticism since the nineteenth century has come to focus on the genius or the individual artist, the importance in an artist's formation of the earlier and long-established practice of imitation, the sincerest form of flattery, as Oscar Wilde has said, has tended to be eclipsed. Yet with the young Goethe one is often reminded of what is said of painters, namely that before seeing the world in terms of their own brushstrokes, they see it via someone else's brushstrokes.⁸ It is precisely because Goethe at first imitated other poets, and not life, that he came to develop his own artistic armature, one that was so

⁸ In his 1889 essay, "The Decay of Lying," Wilde also speaks of the inability to see life except according to certain frameworks: his mouthpiece Vivian, for instance, blames nineteenth-century painters for the fogs of London, proof for him that art tells us more about life than life does. He goes on to bemoan the tendency of artists of his period to go directly to life for their subject matter.

powerful that it became in turn a powerful poetic framework by which succeeding generations of poets came to see the world.

This is evident already in the next generation of German writers.⁹ Karl Heinz Bohrer, in his book on the birth of what he calls "aesthetic subjectivity" in the Romantic period, tries to account for the failure of "naturalistische Mimesiserwartung" (13) -- in other words for the insufficiency of normative poetics -- by resorting to the kind of mental categories that are so often applied to Goethe. Thus Bohrer sees, in the letters of Kleist, G nderode, and Brentano, the construction of a fictional self, a kind of  ber-Ich that rises above the minutiae of experience and the perceived fragmentariness of the emotional life. Bohrer adduces John Keats' 22 November 1817 letter to Benjamin Bailey in connection with the "identity loss" of the modern artist, compellingly described in the case of Bohrer's three subjects. Indeed there is something in Keats' example of "negative capability," of the poet projecting himself into the sparrow picking about in the gravel, that suggests an inner emptiness. Yet, I would suggest that Bohrer's reading of Keats omits the very considerable arsenal of poetic resources that Keats was able

⁹ That Goethe's intention was primarily literary seems to have been understood by the Romantic generation. In this connection see the discussion of Werther and Sesenheim in Chapter 5.

to marshal in the service of imagining that bird. Keats, after all, was writing imitations of Spenser at the age of eighteen. Like Shelley's Aeolian lyre, the image of the poet's self as a transmitter is a misleading Kantian inheritance. It may well be that the subject matter of the modern artist is snatched from the data of the world around him, including the data of his own experience, to put the matter in crude Kantian terms, but to view Goethe's early work as a kind of synthetic transformation of the personal into the gold of art is to neglect the considerable inheritance of the poetic tradition. This, I would stress, constitutes the store of brushstrokes by which an artist views the world, before he begins to see things according to his own brushstrokes.

It is clear, however, despite Goethe's praise of Boileau to his sister Cornelia (28 May 1766), that the poetic tradition was in flux and that the marvelous structure of neoclassical principles articulated in L'art poétique, all of which had represented the rock of Gibraltar to Gottsched, was resting on quicksand. In Dichtung und Wahrheit Goethe even mentions that the major genre, tragedy, had practically disappeared from the German stage by the 1760s. As testimony to his own ambition, Gottsched is described by Goethe in a Leipzig letter solely in terms of the great Enlightener's massive size, towering as he did

behind his "lofty" lectern at the university, as if he were an idol ready for toppling (8 November 1765).

Barker Fairley makes the point in his study of Goethe that, once Goethe's generation "had broken with the brittle school of Gottsched, there was little or nothing for them to turn to in their country's past. They were in a sort of void, left entirely to their own resources" (39). Fairley is seeking, like some of the other writers I have cited, to explain Goethe's achievement, which he does by resorting to mental states, in this case "irrationality." Yet the thesis that there was a decisive break with the past does not strike me as entirely convincing.

If it is true that the pursuit of strictly neoclassical precepts was no longer a possibility for the literary generation born at mid-century, it is not true that there were no literary models for the new generation. Two currents that stand out in the transition from neoclassical practice -- contemporary drama and the poetry of Friedrich Klopstock -- need to be commented on because they represent paths that continue to show the problematics in which they came into being.

In drama Lessing may be seen as the preeminent figure, and one must not forget the influence of Shakespeare. That this dramatic current was strong is clear from the flowering of drama that stretches from Goethe's Götz to Schiller's Kabale und Liebe. Two themes are prominent in these works,

exemplified by the two dramas just mentioned, that testify to the fracturing of social consensus in the mid eighteenth century: in one the central character is at odds with the society in which he lives; while in the other middle-class concerns, particularly the choice of marriage partners, fuels the central action.

The second major model, Klopstock, was also of major consequence for the Sturm und Drang generation, especially after the republication of his Odes in 1771. Goethe's knowledge of Klopstock's work emerges already in a 1766 letter to his sister, while Dichtung und Wahrheit tells of his childhood rapture with the poet of the Messias. Pace Fairley, Klopstock was one of those who gave the new generation "their country's past" as literary subject (Hermanns Schlacht, 1767).¹⁰ Of equal importance was Klopstock's verse, especially his free rhythms, which contributed so much to the development of German as a literary language.¹¹ If the dramas of this period emphasize the problematics of family and personal relationships, Klopstock's efforts take the opposite approach. Characterized by a tone of exhaltation, whether the subject be life or death, they are linked to a vision of man with

¹⁰ In this connection, H.W. von Gerstenberg's Gedicht eines Skalden (1766) should be mentioned as well as Karl Fr. Kretschmann's Gesang Ringulphs des Barden (1768), which Goethe criticizes in a letter to Friederike Oeser.

¹¹ See in particular the discussion in Eric Blackall.

unbreakable ties to God and his fellow man. The circle of friendship commemorated in the "Lake at Zurich" or the members of the Göttinger Hainbund exemplify the urge to communal celebration that is of the essence in Klopstock's work and in any poetry that can be called representative.

What is important in connection with these two currents is the failure of that communal ethos, the representation of "das Allgemein-Menschliche," a failure that Sturm und Drang dramas exemplify. The bourgeoisie as subject was problematic, and the Sturm und Drang dramatists had something like an uncanny premonition of the vituperation to which the bourgeoisie would be exposed in the next two centuries, primarily by its own representatives. In contrast to Habermas I would argue that the bourgeoisie never developed the representative status of the older orders and that specifically bourgeois virtues ("virtue" itself being the prime virtue) could not serve as a uniting ethos for literature. Instructive here is the belated take-off of the novel in Germany, the failure of this bourgeois product to attain the facility of its English model despite the popularity of the novels of virtue of, say, LaRoche and Gellert. The cultivation of bourgeois virtue is an activity that is intimately related to the acquisition of wealth, despite the efforts of the bourgeoisie, particularly in view of its close relationship to the clergy, to appropriate for

itself a higher moral ground.¹² As one nineteenth-century German realist novel after another testifies, material goods are not a source of human values and indeed lead ultimately to decline, which is exemplified most powerfully by that most representative (of family, city, etc.) realist novel Buddenbrooks.¹³

What did become a uniting ethos for literature was the rejection of the bourgeoisie and the fetishizing of the emancipated individual, which are themselves expressions of the built-in obsolescence of goods that promoted the growth of the bourgeoisie in the first place.¹⁴ Despite obvious material differences between an aristocrat and a peasant,

¹² Though the middle class is always regarded as having occupied this intangible realm vis-à-vis upper sections of society, it is instructive to read accounts of historians to get an impression of what the bourgeoisie consisted of. At a somewhat later period, Magdeburg in 1816, for instance, a town of 30,000, had 971 persons in the higher ranks of the middle class. Seventeen thousand individuals were not even accounted for in the town directory, which listed only "economically active and independent persons" -- that is, persons of independent means, persons engaged in trade (cobblers, butchers, carpenters, fishmongers, bakers, etc.), and titled persons (Brunschwig, 119-21).

¹³ That female virtue, again, had much to do with market forces and not with any "allgemein-menschlich" value is wonderfully portrayed in the chapter of Buddenbrooks in which the Consul negotiates the re-acquisition of his daughter from Grünlich.

¹⁴ Arnold Hauser, on the relation between emotional state and economic condition: "The element of genius in artistic creation is in most cases merely a weapon in the competitive struggle [among writers], and the subjective mode of expression often only a form of self-advertisement" (54). See also Pierre Bourdieu's notion of literary field.

both were chained by something like metaphysical bonds to class obligations. Changes in material conditions that promoted the growth of the middle class in this period, on the other hand, led to a new kind of emancipation among certain male members of this new class (which contrasted with the disasters befalling those who were beginning to lose their position in traditional economic units). From Werther to Frédéric Moreau, the literary record concerns the former for the most part, and it documents their failure to assume the responsibilities of their class while reacting varyingly with scorn or ennui to the demands of the class for the kinds of constraints involved in producing money but that necessarily inhibit freedom.

It is clear that a great social movement was underway in the eighteenth century that would strain this dissertation to document. My concern is with its literary manifestations. The changes I am describing were accompanied by the diminishing of the authoritative voice in religion, politics, and other spheres and the enlargement of the authority of the inner voice regarding the significance of things, whether of ultimate or penultimate nature. Though Pietism, Sentimentalism, the "Genie" movement, and so on have been cited as sources of what prompted the change from a universal neoclassical literary practice to an expressive aesthetics, I would contend that they are not so much discoveries as codifications of a new importance

accorded expressive emotional states that arose from material conditions of affluence arising in Western Europe since the sixteenth century. The present study focuses on the way in which this expressivity was constructed in Goethe's early works.¹⁵ My point of departure for understanding this construction is Goethe's engagement with the literary form known as the idyll.

From Goethe's earliest known play, Die Laune des Verliebten (1768), to final scenes of Faust, completed shortly before his death in 1832, we find refinements and variations on the idyll. Though a "humble" genre, the idyll has a long literary tradition in the West founded on the twin pillars of Theocritus and Virgil. Even without shepherds, it has always provided a charming interlude in the largest literary creations, from the Odyssey to Orlando Furioso to Faust. In fact, the idyll has possessed a singular permutability and ability to move beyond its

¹⁵ Though I realize that I come perilously close to a Foucauldian position, I do not believe that human beings are constructs, and therefore I don't subscribe to a view like that of, say, Nancy Armstrong in Desire and Domestic Fiction, who sees our emotional life engendered as either male or female. Emotions are emotions are emotions. Foucauldians have absorbed the materialist view that arose in this period, which regards humans as products. The positions I am advancing in this study have to do with a certain kind of literature and a dominant cultural paradigm, which, like the cultural paradigm it replaced, shows signs of terminal exhaustion. The poststructuralist position has a great bearing, however, on the matter of "experience" (Erlebnis) and reality, and I will return to it in my Conclusion.

origins and to insinuate itself in any number of other genres and forms. Theocritus' idyllic world of shepherds and cowherds, pursuing song and love and other supposedly rural occupations, was deepened in Virgil's eclogues by a heightening of what was implicit in Theocritus -- the endangered nature, the precariousness, the enclosed quality of the idyll's existence and also the disparity between the artful quality of the literary form and the natural existence described therein.

Pastoral obviously refers to the activities of shepherds (or goatherds, in the case of Theocritus), which by poetic extension came to revolve around music and the pursuit of love. These activities occur in a location with certain attributes often called amoenic (recourse to a non-amoenic setting, as in Crabbe's village poems, would be working against this convention). It is around this encapsulated setting and the peaceable activities of the inhabitants within such setting that, in the course of literary time, the attributes of the idyll have tended to converge. The pastoral implies an idyll, but the reverse is not always the case. Though the terms are often used interchangeably it is the order that forms the basis of what has come to be known as the "idyll," which in most respects has separated itself out from the "pastoral." Thus it is, in Schiller's formulation in Naive und sentimentalische

Dichtung (1795), that the essence of idyll is not its shepherds but its imagined condition of harmony and peace.

It was the artificial nature of the pastoral, so prominent since the Renaissance (shepherds' plays; As You Like It), along with its "double perspective" (it is about shepherds -- it is not about shepherds but about poets) that had become problematic by the mid-eighteenth century. A great deal of contemporary literary debate in Germany as well as in France and England turned on the discrepancy between art (Latin-named shepherds) and life (real conditions of the life of shepherds) and the degree to which the idyll should give voice to the latter. The parameters, of course, remained literary: should the rusticity of Theocritus be the model for the idyll (Dr. Johnson, M. Mendelssohn) or Virgilian elegance (Rapin, Pope, J.A. Schlegel)?

With its enclosed sense of place and its circular order of life based on recurring seasons and human rituals, however, the idyll also represents refuge and a harmonious, if endangered, form of human social existence. Retaining the dual perspective but jettisoning the pastoral element (with one significant exception), Goethe returns time and again to the idyll, not to celebrate communal harmony but to depict the quarrel of the individual with the constraints, and security, of the idyll. In contrast to Habermas, I would say that it is only the breakup of the bourgeois

family (with the concomitant liberation of members of that unit from the demands of labor) that guarantees the emergence of an "individual." The "Befreiung des Ich," the "free" expression of feelings, was ultimately for those who were in fact free. In turn, the demise of the idyll in Goethe's works, e.g., its destruction (Werther) or its fragility under the effect of historical forces (Hermann und Dorothea, emulating Virgil's first eclogue), mirrors the breakup of the genre itself, and of genres and rules-oriented poetics in general, as well as the shift from a "representative" to a "personal" poetic voice that took place in the eighteenth century. It is not so much that Goethe turned his life into poetry as that he developed a new literary idiom the main feature of which is the assertion of the rights of the self over the demands of the communal order, represented by the idyll, thereby inscribing in the literature both the emergence of the individual and the revolt against neoclassical literary practice. That his work stands at a significant juncture in the genre's history is signaled by the important consideration accorded the idyll in Schiller's Naive und sentimentalische Dichtung (1795).

That Goethe was interested in the idyll is evident already in his early letters and literary and critical writings, which demonstrate his enormous receptivity to and recycling of traditional literary forms. There are

refinements of the idyll throughout his career, notably in Torquato Tasso, Die Wahlverwandtschaften, Hermann und Dorothea, and the second part of Faust, all of which articulate the tension between what Sengle calls "altem Gesetz und neuer Notwendigkeit" (Konvention, 23). The problematic nature of the relationship between the idyll and the development of the individual was effected in Goethe's earliest works. Therefore, in this dissertation I will confine myself to works of the pre-Weimar period (before 1775) and to the autobiography, Dichtung und Wahrheit (1811/14), which reconstructs that early period as the emergence of poet and oeuvre in terms of the abandonment of the idyll.

The subject of Chapter 1 is the lyric poetry of Goethe's Leipzig period, "Das Buch Annette" and Neue Lieder. It details the first steps in the development of an "individual" poetic voice by the creation of a subjective point of view. Following the poetry that was favored in Leipzig, Goethe modeled much of his early poetry on Anacreontic poetry, which is a convivial ("gesellige") poetry, one celebrating communal values. His particular transformation was to remove what was "gesellig" about it. Influenced by another popular poetic style, solitary wanderer poetry, the result is mood poetry, but not the harsh, unhappy mood of the solitary wanderer (as in the "Oden an Behrisch"); instead, in the language of the

"scherzhafte Muse" the lover celebrates being alone or apart from the beloved.

Chapter 2 is concerned with Die Laune des Verliebten, the other major work of Goethe's Leipzig period. It is also a challenge to "Geselligkeit" -- a lover who doesn't want to participate in communal activities but wants to be alone with his beloved. The more rigidly defined pastoral play form inhibited the kind of transformation delineated in Chapter 1, but Goethe's employment of this form is itself puzzling in view of the fact that the pastoral play was a superannuated genre by 1767. It will be seen that by inscribing in Die Laune the problematics of Lessing's Sara Sampson, namely, the male ambivalence toward conjugal relations and the troubled reconciliation of love and family relationships in that play, Goethe telegraphs the kind of difficulties to be found in Die Laune's reconciliation and indicates his move away from the solution of Arcadia.

Thus, within the same period in Leipzig, Goethe arrived poetically at two different positions: the lover in Die Laune wants to be alone with his beloved, a situation that is reversed in the "Annette" poems and Neue Lieder. In both cases, Goethe was working within two traditions that defined the parameters of the literary debate in the early eighteenth century: the importance of art in instructing and delighting. Goethe was on the cutting edge of a profound change that was destroying the basis on which these two

views rested, the belief in a common social reality. The challenge to such authority was part of the literary menu of the day and is the subject of Chapter 3. That Goethe was still firmly anchored in the eighteenth century is seen in the way his challenge to and the rejection of authority are necessarily framed within the terms of the old poetic order: Klopstock's God-centered universe in "Wanderers Sturmlied"; Nature in "Der Wanderer." In the former poem, the traditional dependence of man on God, as *creatura* to Creator, is transformed into independence via the poet's self-generation from a freely chosen divinity. In "Der Wanderer" this self-creation is likewise procreative, of enduring works of art and culture, a process that stands in opposition to mothering nature in which individual existence is obliterated within the larger cycle of human continuity. It is this process, encountered in the idyll, from which the Wanderer separates himself. In both poems, the Wanderer figure is distinguished from the traditional trope in that home and integration into the idyllic order are not the goal of his journey.

The metaphor of existence described in Chapter 3 -- a self-invented individual without attachments to traditional pieties or institutions-- has become so naturalized that we fail to recognize, especially in Goethe's case, its literary roots. That Goethe's concern, however, was a poetological one, the self-creation of the poet in rejection of

traditional poetic models and not the "individual" is exemplified by Die Leiden des jungen Werthers. It was precisely the freedom from economic constraints that enabled people like Werther the freedom to "create" their own lives, but Chapter 4 shows that life without the structure of God or art results in self-destruction. Though it is not discussed in this dissertation because it falls beyond the pre-Weimar time frame, the second version of Werther shows that economic perilousness caused other people to be jettisoned from the social order (the farm lad). For both the farm lad and Werther the idyll represents an unrecoverable unity, but in Werther's case it is also a regression because the idyll stands in conflict with the desire for self-expression made possible by the liberation from material constraints.

The subject of Chapter 5 is the Sesenheim idyll of Dichtung und Wahrheit, in which the problematics of the conflict between self-expression and the idyll receives its fullest exposition. This chapter emphasizes the distinction between self-created poet (Goethe) and self-created individual (Werther) since the supposedly autobiographical events reprise many aspects of the novel. The events of the Sesenheim idyll, it will be shown, have their literary model in Werther and The Vicar of Wakefield. The attractions of the idyll are dangerous, however, as the inserted "Melusine" fairytale warns. The idyll functions on two levels: on one,

it represents security and domesticity; on the other, the idyll is a stand-in for the neoclassical literary past that must be rejected if Goethe is to go on to become the titan of German letters.

The emphasis on "Erlebnis," on a psychological category, has obscured the essentially poetic nature of the transformation wrought in literary practice at the end of the eighteenth century. The move away from the imitation of Nature (in Gottsched's sense) to what is called an expressive poetics was, in Goethe's case, a breakthrough that was literature-mediated. The process, for Goethe, was primarily poetic and only secondarily autobiographical. This transformation was formulated in the poetic theory of early nineteenth-century German Romantic writers and philosophers and was then translated to England via the writings of Coleridge and Carlyle. That the ideas Coleridge sought to propagate were radical is pointed out by Rosemary Ashton, in her study of the reception of German thought in England in the first half of the nineteenth century, who stresses the puzzlement among Englishmen concerning these ideas. The continuing influence of the neoclassical norm is seen in Coleridge's own puzzlement at the lack of "a high moral tone" (52) in such poets as Shakespeare.¹⁶

¹⁶ Even Schiller was affected, expressing the same ambivalence toward the Bard, as Ashton adduces in the following passage from Naive und sentimentalische Dichtung

Friedrich Sengle, in his article on convention and originality in Goethe's work, has employed the phrase "existentielle Gewichtsunterschiede" (17). This seems to go to the heart of the matter in connection with the reception of Goethe, but it is my contention that this existential difference that is felt so strongly has been achieved by conventional poetic means. After all, are we to deny existential weight to Shakespeare, Dante, or Petrarch, even when we fully recognize the structure of conventions of which their works are composed? Sengle situates the change that Goethe wrought precisely in the framework of form: "Was 'Faust' an Gewicht gewinnt, verliert er an Form" (17). It was in his transformations of form that Goethe created the conditions for felt subjectivity. The next chapter demonstrates how this process began, on the subject of the poems written in Goethe's Leipzig years, "Das Buch Annette" and Neue Lieder.

(554): "Als ich in einem sehr frühen Alter [Shakespeare] zuerst kennen lernte, empörte mich seine Kälte, seine Unempfindlichkeit, die ihm erlaubte, im höchsten Pathos zu scherzen, die herzzerschneidenden Auftritte im 'Hamlet,' im 'König Lear,' im 'Macbeth' usf. durch einen Narren zu stören ..."

Chapter 1:
The Rococo-Goethe

When the sixteen-year-old Goethe arrived there to study in 1765, the important trade and publishing city of Leipzig was referred to as a Paris in miniature.¹ Though it might be said that Paris, in the person of Napoleon, eventually came to Goethe, it is interesting that Goethe never reached the City of Light himself. From first to last, the foreign influence that mattered most was that of Italy, a paternal inheritance. His father's choleric reaction toward France in the person of the military attaché quartered in the Frankfurt family home in 1759 is emblematic of a larger rejection of France that was taking place as Germany entered the second half of the eighteenth century. A measure of the precarious dominance and the ultimate rejection of the reigning European culture of this period, particularly the customs of the French court, can be gauged from the moment in Die Leiden des Jungen Werther when the rebellious anti-hero of that novel takes Lotte in his arms and switches from the minuet to the waltz. Goethe's early lyric, while partaking in the reigning taste of French literary models, which themselves mirror a larger world view represented by neoclassical literary practice, makes a similarly individual gesture: it abandons the communal ethos that contains this

¹ Leipzig "ist ein klein Paris, und bildet seine Leute," says Frosch in Auerbach's Keller (Faust, l. 2172).

practice and thereby transforms the model into a vehicle for subjective literary expression.

In 1765 French dominance was still strong in poetry and on the Leipzig stage, which, despite Gottsched's own shrunken dominance, featured the French plays and French-modeled theater that he had recommended to German writers. Goethe's letters to his sister, Cornelia, evoke a city captivated by French fashion. The following letter from the end of March 1766 concerns the females of Leipzig, but it contains much that would later be held against French-influenced poetry as well:

Allons Mesdames les Saxonnnes ... Vous prenez de soins extravagans, de votre exterieur; toutefois vous n'en etes gueres plus belles. L'exces tant du port, et du maniemment, que de la parure du corps merite toujours moins l'approbation du bon gout, a mesure qu'il s'eloinge d'une maniere naturelle, de s'habiller ou de porter son corps. Mais je leur passerois volontairement toutes ces fautes, si elles n'etoit couronnees de la plus grande et la plus meprisable folie qu'on peut trouver chez une femme; savoir de la coqueterie. ... On se croiroit presque a Paris.²

From the nineteenth-century beginnings of Goethe scholarship scholars have emphasized the formal indebtedness of Goethe's Leipzig poetry to the French example, often mediated via German writers themselves under such influence. The first

² Unless otherwise noted, all citations to Goethe pre-1775 are to Der junge Goethe (DjG) and include Goethe's frequent misspellings and uncertain punctuation. For the most part, letters will be cited according to dates given in DjG. If necessary, references will be supplemented by volume, page, and line number. References to Goethe's works post-1775 are from the Hamburg edition of his works and are cited as HA with the appropriate volume and page number.

chapter of Jakob Minor and August Sauer's Studien zur Goethe-Philologie, published in 1880, was entitled "Goethe's Oldest Lyric Poetry," and it dealt principally with the Neue Lieder, which had been published in 1769 and which represented indeed, in 1880, Goethe's oldest surviving lyric poetry. Though Minor and Sauer did not expand their study after the discovery in 1895 of the even older collection, "Das Buch Annette,"³ it is doubtful that the new material would have influenced their original orientation, which was to illuminate the Neue Lieder in terms of their connection "with the dominant [literary] direction at the time of Goethe's appearance, Anacreontic poetry" (1).

Much work in the last hundred years has thrown doubt on the existence of a "dominant direction" in literature in Germany in the 1760s, and Anacreontic poetry has in the meantime been more precisely distinguished from the larger body of Rococo and Empfindsame literature.⁴ Minor and Sauer, for instance, in speaking of the traits shared by eighteenth-century German Anacreontic poets, include J.G.

³ The handwritten collection of nineteen poems was prepared by Goethe's Leipzig friend Ernst Wolfgang Behrisch (1735-1809), tutor in the service of the duke of Lindenau. Goethe's letters to Behrisch provide lively evidence of the making of the collection, but Goethe scholarship proceeded without it until 1894, when a manuscript copy of the collection (along with the Urfaust), found among the papers of Luise von Göschen (see Suphan), made its way into the Goethe archives in Weimar.

⁴ The outlines of the Anacreontic-Rococo distinction are to be found in Alfred Anger's volume, Literarisches Rokoko (hereafter cited as Anger/LR).

Jacobi⁵ in their discussions as well as "(Mahomets) Gesang," "Ein Gleichniss,"⁶ and the Darmstadt odes. That not one of the twenty poems of Goethe's Neue Lieder was in Anacreontic meter appeared to have been of import to them; and knowledge of "Das Buch Annette," which at least begins with such an example, would scarcely have put things in a different light.⁷ As the word "philology" in the title of their study indicates, Minor and Sauer saw the connection between Goethe's work and what they termed Anacreontic poetry in terms of language. Their interest was focused on "das sprachliche Moment, besonders ... das phraseologische und den Wortschatz ..." (2). It is clear they were operating with a definition of Anacreontic that coincides fairly well with the first of the two uses of the term in Zastrau's Goethe Handbuch, namely, a French literary mode that, via

⁵ Along with Hagedorn, Uz, Gleim, Lessing, Cronegk, Weisse, and Gerstenberg.

⁶ "its scenery recalls Anacreontic poetry: meadows, streams, flowers, blossoms" ("erinnert in der Szenerie: Wiese, Bach, Blumen und Blüten an die Anakreontic") (Minor and Sauer, 65; hereafter cited as M/S with page number).

⁷ Of the poets nowadays called Anacreontic (e.g., Hagedorn, Uz, Götze, Ramler, Zachariae), only Gleim consistently wrote in a form that imitated the Greek original, namely a non-strophic, rhymeless trochaic or iambic meter of three or four feet. This meter and the lack of rhyme and of such prosodic features as enjambment, and the resulting concentration on the individual line of verse, also resulted in the characteristic "Reihung" of Gleim's poems. Everyone from Gottsched to Lessing tried his hand at this style of versification, but Gottsched and Lessing are not usually considered representative Anacreontic poets (except for the latter in Minor and Sauer's study). See the discussion below.

poets like Chaulieu, LaFare, Derat, and Voltaire, became the model for a corresponding German Anacreontic poetry. This is the use Lees had in mind in his 1911 study of eighteenth-century German Anacreontic poetry, in which his array of German poets (including J.G. Jacobi) are specifically related to such French models.

Without the aid of computers, Minor and Sauer culled an enormous body of linguistic echoes from contemporary poetry that resonate in Goethe's poems. To give an idea of their achievement, I include here the final stanza of "Der wahre Genuß," from the Neue Lieder, the pointe of which, with its witty moralizing, is characteristic of this French-influenced poetry:

Die Ehrfurcht wirft mich ihr zu Füßen
 Die Wollust mich an ihre Brust.
 Sieh Jüngling, dieses heißt genießen!
 Sey klug und suche diese Lust.
 Der Todt führt einst von ihrer Seite
 Dich auf zum englischen Gesang,
 Dich zu des Paradieses Freude,
 Und du fühlst keinen Uebergang.

Minor and Sauer find the poem begins with "the sermonizing pathos characteristic of Gellert" (6) but quickly turns into "Anacreontic trifle" ("Tändelei") (15), containing such code words as "Wollust," "Lust," "Trieb," "Genuß," "Zärtlichkeit," "zärtlich," and "wahr." Each of these words finds echoes in a selection of poets, e.g., in Uz' "im Tausel wilder Lüste"; Cronegk's "sanfte Triebe"; Uz' "Gott beglückter Zärtlichkeit"; Gleim's "zärtliches Gehör"; and Cronegk's double-header "wahre Wollust," to cite only four

examples. The mention of the beloved's breast ("verdeckt" in Goethe's poem) is an Anacreontic stereotype (15), and Minor and Sauer go on to list forty-two examples, from Gleim's fairly plain "weisser Busen" to that of the master of trifles, Gerstenberg's "hüpfende Brust, holde Brust, lose Busen" (16).

Subjecting any of the "Annette" poems to the kind of linguistic scrutiny exercised by Minor and Sauer on the Neue Lieder will turn up similar echoes.⁸ At the same time that such linguistic echoes ring true, it is also clear, from the perspective of 100 years, that, if our focus is the vocabulary in "Das Buch Annette" and Neue Lieder, we might as well call some of Goethe's later poetry or Brentano or Eichendorff's poetry Anacreontic since this verbal imagery lived on well into the Romantic period and later. Even Goethe's lugubrious "Oden an meinen Freund," composed in this same period, contain such echoes.⁹

A wide range of differing influences on Goethe was subsumed, by this earlier generation of scholars, under the

⁸ For example, "Triumph der Tugend: Erste Erzählung," which, despite its superficially serious content, contains such words as "Wollust," "zärtlich" (four times!), "hüpfen," "Herz," "Kuß/Kusse," "Entzückung," and "Amor" ("Mit Schmetterlingen, Bienchen, Zephirs, und überhaupt mit geflügelten Wesen (Amoretten u. dgl.) bevölkert die Anakreontik die Luft") (M/S, 19). "Sanfter Kummer" (l. 26) is not far from "süßer Schmerz" (Weisse) or "süßer, süßer Wonnetod" (Gerstenberg) cited by M/S (18), from two very different poems.

⁹ Herbert Zeman has pointed out the Anacreontic traces in Goethe's late poetry.

label "Anacreontic," while the present century has come to make different distinctions and refers to Goethe's early poetry as "Rococo" (e.g., Kindermann's "Der Rokoko-Goethe"). As used by such scholars, Rococo comes in for a great deal of negative judgment, especially when it is related to Goethe's early work, but the negative judgment is not concerned primarily with language. Baumgart (25) strikes a not uncharacteristic note, speaking of Rococo poetry as "Unnatur einer konventionell erheuchelten Gefühlswelt." Brüggemann (Anbruch, 12) cites the days of "vorsubjektivistische[] Seelenhaltung." Kindermann, while recognizing the genesis of Goethe's genius in this soil,¹⁰ makes a statement that shows what twentieth-century readers have come to expect of poetry: "Es gibt ja kaum eine andere Entwicklungsphase der deutschen Dichtung, in der dichterische Fiktion und wirkliche Lebensgestaltung so weit auseinanderklafften als im deutschen Rokoko" (13).¹¹ The apparatus accompanying Goethe's poems in Der junge Goethe stands as one giant footnote, the kind of commentary that Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708-1754), a poet of the previous generation, himself appended to each of his poems, and shows the prejudice of scholars concerning the young Goethe, namely, that he, like that earlier generation of poets,

¹⁰ "Humus ... für das neu Werdende" (10).

¹¹ Only a generalist like Erich Auerbach has any distance from this poetry, which he refers to as "pleasantly stylized reality" (432).

slavishly followed models, principally French ones. As has been pointed out, it was an age that scarcely distinguished between the accomplishments of a poet and those of a translator.¹²

The most recent analysis of "Das Buch Annette," by Werner von Nordheim, has rightly attempted to rescue this collection by pointing out the importance of the training ground these poems represented for Goethe by which he emulated and tried to better his poetic models. While documenting the contrasting positions of earlier critics concerning this collection -- (1) that it contains no Erlebnis character, but is only an imitation of Rococo models; or (2) that even these first imitative efforts reveal traces of the "real" Goethe -- and while making important points concerning Goethe's partiality for the conventional,¹³ von Nordheim falls into the same trap, measuring this earlier poetry on the amount of "personally experienced" that it contains.

The pejorative evaluation of this poetry for its supposed lack of experienced content was obviously not felt by those writing in that style beginning in the 1740s. As Anger has documented in Literarisches Rokoko, they would not even have regarded themselves as "Rococo," since the word

¹² De Boor/Newald, V, 494 (hereafter cited as DB/N).

¹³ "... ausgeprägten Sinn ... für die oft heilsame Notwendigkeit gesellschaftlicher Konventionen und jeglicher Erscheinungsform des objektiv Verbindlichen" (65).

seems to have made its first appearance in the late eighteenth century. During the lifetime of many of these writers, however, this so-called Rococo poetry, like the Saxon females of Goethe's letter, like the French theatrical influence, had fallen into disfavor.¹⁴ What is often forgotten in the rejection of Rococo (even before it was called "Rococo") is that this poetry itself represented a rejection of an earlier literary style, a triumph over "Schwulst" and all that had been consigned by the Enlightenment to the dustbin of the unnatural. It was poetry that answered Gottsched's demands for a simple, clear style. When the sixteen-year-old Goethe arrived in Leipzig, it was a propitious moment, language-wise, for the unwieldy structure of Baroque verbal expression had been disassembled by the luminaries of the new dispensation, and a generation of poets, under the inspiration of French and other European models and Gottsched's grammatical reforms, had honed the poetic resources of the German language. Rococo poetry was one of the century's achievements.¹⁵

¹⁴ Compare Schiller's comment in Naive und sentimentalische Dichtung: "... alle sogenannten Werke des Witzes [heißen] ganz mit Unrecht poetisch ..." (557). Theodor Verweyen discusses the ideological change in the literary-historical perception of this poetry, from the eighteenth-century view of it as "tändelnde Kleinigkeiten" (as in Lessing's first collection of poetry, Kleinigkeiten [1751]), to "Nichtigkeiten" (quoting Hermann Hettner's evaluation of Gleim).

¹⁵ See the discussion in Blackall.

Rococo poetry also incorporated a world view that itself represented a rejection of many elements of an earlier era. As Basil Willey has so aptly put it: "... it seemed obvious [to Shaftesbury and Addison] that all spectres of history could be laid much more effectively to rest by banter than by zeal" (74). Like the Enlightenment its subject was man in the use of his reason, without too much passion. It was moral/ethical, like all Enlightenment discourse.¹⁶ It was a sociable poetry: "Der einzelne ist an sich noch sehr wenig gefühlbewegt [!]; sein Handeln richtet sich nicht nach eigenem Fühlen, sondern zeigt im Grunde nur in der Gemeinsamkeit und im geselligen Zusammensein ein Gefühlsleben im Sinne der geforderten sozialen Verbundenheit" (Brüggemann/Anbruch, 12). It celebrated the here-and-now, and it pointedly dismissed lugubrious concerns. It was in fact the most pleasing product of a new feeling about life:

Das neue Lebensgefühl befreite sich von der Gewissensangst, welche das 17. Jahrh. bedroht hatte. Es rettete das neuplatonische Erbe in die Erkenntnis harmonischer Zusammenhänge und zweckmäßiger Ordnungen und legte ohne Beihilfe der Religion den Grundstein zu Glückseligkeit und Begeisterung an den Dingen dieser Welt. Lieblingsworte der Zeit sind Fröhlichkeit, Vergnügen, Lust (DB/N, V, 459).

¹⁶ Hauser has pointed out that Rococo was the last universal style of Western Europe, "a style which is not only universally recognized and moves within a generally speaking uniform system over the whole of Europe, but is also universal in the sense that it is the common property of all gifted artists" (35).

Since the period, but especially generic conventions, precluded writing about the conditions of the real world, Rococo poetry was primarily about love. And as Heinz Schlaffer has pointed out, the transposition of erotic poetry to Arcadia resulted in the stripping away of the tension between private and public that had characterized Latin poetry (42). With this stripping away, love in the Arcadian world became unproblematic and unserious; hence, its "trifling" character. This poetry is not about love in its transcendent or soul-enriching aspects, but in its most worldly and time-dependent manifestations. With the removal of a concern with the "Jenseits" in such poetry, the emphasis is on the "Diesseits." A pervading sentiment is the Horatian carpe diem.

It is within this context and atmosphere that Goethe wrote the poem "Der Schmetterling." Appearing in Neue Lieder, it is a witty riff on the sentiment of carpe diem and shows how much Goethe had learned from his models.¹⁷

¹⁷ Although I would not go so far as Eugen Wolff, who finds that the poem is rooted deeply in Goethe's experiences of the time, specifically the end of his relationship with Kätchen Schönkopf (342), I was struck by Wolff's association of the imagery in this poem with a reference in a letter of 13 February 1769 to Friedrike Oeser, in which Goethe describes his convalescence in Frankfurt: "Ich schlich in der Welt herum, wie ein Geist, der nach seinem Ableben manchmal wieder an die Orte gezogen wird, die ihn sonst anzogen, als er sie noch körperlich geniessen konnte" (DjG, I, 267). The surfeit of influences that one must consider when studying Goethe is apparent here because this image of a wandering ghost also stands somewhat under the influence

In des Pappillons Gestalt
 Flatter' ich nach den letzten Zügen
 Zu den vielgeliebten Stellen,
 Zeugen himmlischer Vergnügen,
 Ueber Wiesen, an die Quellen,
 Um den Hügel, durch den Wald.

Ich belausch ein zärtlich Paar,
 Von des schönen Mädchens Haupte
 Aus den Kränzen schau ich nieder,
 Alles was der Tod mir raubte,
 Seh ich hier im Bilde wieder,
 Bin so glücklich wie ich war.

Sie umarmt ihn lächeld stumm,
 Und sein Mund genießt der Stunde,
 Die ihm gut'ge Götter senden,
 Hüpf vom Busen zu dem Munde
 Von dem Munde zu den Händen,
 Und ich hüpf um ihn herum,

Und sie sieht mich Schmetterling.
 Zitternd vor des Friends Verlangen
 Springt sie auf, da flieg ich ferne.
 "Liebster komm ihn einzufangen!
 "Komm! ich hätt' es gar zu gerne,
 "Gern das kleine bunte Ding.

In regard to this poem, Minor and Sauer have drawn attention to the common poetic topos of butterflies and, in particular, of winged beings in Anacreontic poetry (19), and to formal features found in other poets. For instance, they cite the following verse from a poem by Gleim:

Freier als ein Schmetterling,
 Flattert' ich, und hin und wieder
 Küsst' ich, sang den Musen Lieder,
 War ein loses kleines Ding.

Gleim's last line is picked up in Goethe's own last line ("Gern das klein bunte Ding"). Flattern (along with hüpfen) is a stock descriptive verb of motion for people and

of Goethe's reading of Ossian at the time.

butterflies in Rococo poetry, emphasizing lightness and ultimately lack of serious purpose, but, besides the use of the present tense (Flattert! becomes Flattr!), Goethe's reincarnation of the former lover avoids Gleim's metaphorical situation altogether and makes him present. There is additional linking of man and butterfly in the use of "hüpfen" to describe the motion of the man's kisses and the movements of the butterfly in the last three lines of the third stanza. The result is a striking joining of life and death ("Bin so glücklich wie ich war"), with the carpe diem attitude strangely modified by the startling image of the departed poet (now dis/embodied as a butterfly) returning to the scene of former pleasures to witness "himmlischer Vergnügen." The poem also exemplifies what von Nordheim has identified as Goethe's "demythologizing" of myth (111).

"Der Schmetterling," like Gleim's poem, emphasizes that life is not eternal but short, that sensual enjoyment has a space-and-time urgency. The words that are invoked to characterize such a state -- zärtlich, sanft, witzig, scherzhaft (Zeman, 84)¹⁸ -- were later used by Lessing in connection with his discussion of "Anmut" in Laokoon (section 20), which he characterizes as transitory beauty ("bewegliche Schönheit") (Zeman, 124). Johann Nikolaus Götz

¹⁸ Besides the ones already mentioned above, M/S's study of Goethe's early lyric further includes "munter," "Lust," "Trieb," "flattern," "klein," and "Vergnügen."

(1721-1781) in his preface to the 1746 edition of his Anacreon translation, uses the phrase "anmutige Gemählde" to refer to this poetry.¹⁹ This is an area that has been voluminously treated by scholars. To a great extent this poem by Goethe holds its own within this tradition, despite all that is derivative about it. Its rhyme scheme alone (found nowhere else among Anacreontic poets: M/S, 190) beautifully evokes the flatterhaft quality of the butterfly's progress and has the distinctive and unerringly right note that we associate with Goethe's poetry. And yet -- had Goethe written only poems like this, he would be standing equal with Gleim and not on his shoulders. Its general mood is too close to what has come to be rejected in poetry or in literature as distant, artificial, light, and lacking in emotional substance.

The reforms that brought Rococo poetry into being, including Gottsched's attempt to sweep the German stage clean, were not simply a matter of housekeeping, but came at a time when much of the intellectual and cultural inheritance was being abandoned by some of Europe's most

¹⁹ The preface to the 1746 edition is reprinted in the facsimile version of the 1760 edition of Die Gedichte Anakreons und der Sappho Oden (hereafter, Götz/Zeman) and includes the following statement by Götz: "Damit nun diesen Liedern oder vielmehr diesen anmuthigen Gemählten im Nachbilde ihr Glantz, ihr zärtliches und lachendes Wesen, ihr sanftes und beynahe göttliches Feuer nicht benommen werden möchte, sondern ihre allgemeine Macht auf das menschliche Hertz so viel möglich ungeschwächt bliebe, hat man sich das Joch des Reimes vom Hals geschüttelt, wie der Herr Professor Gottsched zuerst getan hat ..."

enlightened figures. It was not that certain literary forms (e.g., Schwulst) had become exhausted,²⁰ but that the vision contained in the forms -- religion, in particular -- began to lose its unquestioned support. Absent a transcendental framework, with the only metaphysical support that of a Great Watchmaker, the scales soon tipped. It is my contention that Rococo poetry, which contained in its fragile form the last bit of world connection, in turn fell into disfavor as the weightlessness it ascribed to man was rejected in favor of the importance the new empirical trends were ascribing to him.²¹ Dichtung und Wahrheit, written almost fifty years after Goethe's arrival in Leipzig, lovingly reassembles a period in which, for the last time, all the old certainties stood precariously in place. In becoming the German poet Goethe would give voice to the abandonment of the system of metaphysical and theological certainties once supported by the gigantic Baroque verbal edifice and of all that flowed from those certainties, including the literature that mirrored them.

The twentieth-century dismissal of Rococo corresponds in turn to the gradual rejection of a unified, socially harmonious world view in the eighteenth century in favor of the model of self-realization contained in the empiricist

²⁰ DB/N, V, 456.

²¹ It is not inconsequential that Gottsched regarded the English empirical philosophy as a danger to his system of rules (DB/N, V, 492-93).

philosophies. "Erlebnis," which is another way of encapsulating empiricism, expresses such rejection, but it is a term that tells us more about where we have ended up than it does about Goethe. In the same way, "Rococo-Goethe" (like "Schwulst" or "Baroque") says not only that something has been assimilated and left behind but also that we have become different kind of people because of this rejection.²² The model has become in turn so naturalized that people have come to speak of a change in mental or emotional states to explain the changes Goethe wrought. Rococo poets never wrote poetry "aus einem empfindungsgeschwellten Herzen," and the same undoubtedly goes for Goethe's period of apprenticeship, before he, with "a heart swollen with feeling," somehow "raised experienced reality into the poetic."²³ The problem with such a view is that it omits the middle step, the one between the cold heart of Rococo

²² Literary historians feel discomfort about period terms (at least for those who have not yet raised themselves to the elevated viewpoint of the history of humanity, in Friedrich Schlegel's memorable words), though they have not usually managed to articulate why such terms are so problematic. See, for instance, René Wellek and Austin Warren's chapter on literary history in Theory of Literature.

²³ DB/N, V, 488, 476. Hauser gives a different view of Rococo: "... the intimacy and elegance of boudoirs and cabinets are preferred to cold marble and heavy bronze ... In contrast to the art of the Régence, the rococo gains in preciousness and brilliance, playful and capricious charm, but also in tenderness and spirituality; on the one hand, it develops into the society art par excellence, but, on the other, it approaches the middle-class taste for diminutive forms" (32).

and the "real" Goethe. It is not enough to say that Goethe "nahm diesen Stil auf, um überhaupt dichten zu können, und als er dichtete, überwand er ihn" (HA, I, 444). How, precisely, was this "Überwindung" effected?

Heinz Schlaffer has cited the tendency of critics to look for original achievement in Goethe rather than for what he calls the generic ("gattungspoetischen") origin of his poetry. Indeed, if we look at his own letters, Goethe could more likely be described as "Melancholie-Goethe" in the late 1760s than as "Rococo-Goethe." The former term, expressive of a certain prominent trend beyond what might be generally regarded as the "dominant direction," also reminds us that there were many influences operative at the time. Mid-eighteenth-century Germany in fact presented a fluctuating genre situation, and it is, I contend, this fluctuating situation that produced the kind of mixing of styles in Goethe's work that led to the development of a subjective lyric.²⁴ In line with this I would contend that Goethe's early lyric is a study of transmutation of genres,²⁵ with

²⁴ Of interest here is Pierre Bourdieu's concept of literary system, which is not harmonious but is driven by conflict and in which one aesthetic construction negates opposing constructions.

²⁵ No doubt economic changes played a role in transforming poetry from an occupation of "Gelehrten" or economically independent men, for whom it had been essential to demonstrate their relatedness to the greater literary tradition, to a training ground for a bourgeoisie without such intellectual roots. Goethe, despite his education and wide reading, was not a "Gelehrter" but in fact somewhat of a dilettante in comparison to his immediate predecessors.

subjectivity being created from the Rococo vocabulary and forms. Schlaffer's discussion of the poem "Unbeständigkeit" from Neue Lieder gives an indication of this process:

Bei den Rokokodichtern war es nur dem Wind gestattet, die Welle als weiblichen Körper, genauer und schon im Sinne Goethes: als Busen, zu erfahren. "Die Zephyr wiegten sich auf sanft geschwollenen Wellen" -- bei Goethe macht diese Erfahrung das Ich. Die Lyrik des Rokoko hatte die Gestalt der Natur bereichert, den menschlichen Bereich jedoch vernachlässigt. Goethe nutzt diesen Prozeß und kehrt ihn um. ... er erweitert die Erlebnismöglichkeiten des -- wenn auch einsamen -- lyrischen Ich über all bisherige Naturlyrik hinaus, indem er die Tradition der erotischen Lyrik verändert gebraucht (183).

I would like to expand on Schlaffer's treatment by showing how such formal changes produced a radical change in content. Let us return to the Anacreontic label, specifically the transformations Goethe made on the mode of poetry initiated by Gleim, Uz, Götz, and so on from around 1740 in imitation of the poet Anacreon. Though from today's perspective, Anacreontic poetry may seem as obscure a corner of literary activity as triolets or writing in sestinas, it was the culmination of a vernacular tradition in Germany stretching back to Weckherlin and Opitz (and in Europe to the sixteenth century).²⁶ Seventeenth-century poetry in the style of Anacreon as well as translations were heavily imbued with the religious and otherworldly spirit of the larger body of Baroque poetry, which the antithesis of the

²⁶ The Anacreontic poetry in the rest of Europe, as well as its appearance and direction in Germany, has been traced by Zeman.

alexandrine meter intensified.²⁷ The changes in literary style in the eighteenth century prompted a new reception. In tandem with the decline of Baroque Schwulst and the rise of the Leibnizian ideals of elegantia and claritas (Zeman, 90), some Germans recognized the fruitfulness for German of a reevaluation of the Greek original, particularly what was regarded as the nobility and simplicity of its language.²⁸ The following poem by Hagedorn exemplifies the slimmed-down eighteenth-century transformation of the Anacreontic meter (see footnote 7, above):

In Tejos und in Samos
 Und in der Stadt Minervens
 Sang ich von Wein und Liebe,
 Von Rosen und vom Frühling,
 Von Freundschaft und von Tänzen

²⁷ See Fritz Strich, "Der lyrische Stil des 17. Jahrhunderts."

²⁸ Gottsched published in 1733 "Versuch einer Übersetzung Anakreons in reimlose Verse." The three odes were offered as part of his larger program of banishing Baroque tendencies from German and opening the language to new stylistic possibilities, thereby raising the standard of literary German. His attempt to render the Greek syllabic verse in German is understandable in light of his admiration for Greek poetry and his belief that early progress in poetry came from the Greeks' discovery of the euphony of alternating long and short syllables (Versuch, 16; see also Götz/Zeman, 41*). That Gottsched continued, in his own dramas, to write in alexandrine meter, as did Gellert, J.E. Schlegel, and the young Lessing, underlines the importance of the poetic vessel for the presentation of an emotion. The unrhymed verse struck a chord, however; Gleim's publication in 1744 of Versuch in scherzhaften Liedern, containing fifty-one poems, all but six of which were in Anacreontic meter, initiated a literary mode that was to last for two decades (Kindler, VI, 398; see also Goedeke, IV, § 212).

Gleim was the only poet consistently to write in this meter. Had other poets written dozens of poems in this meter, we might speak today of the last flowering of a new genre at mid-century. But even an "Anacreontic" poem could not be retained within an Anacreontic "form," which partly explains why it is often used interchangeably with "Rococo." It was instead the "philosophy" of Anacreon that was a runaway success.²⁹ Let us look at its components.

This philosophy, like the larger body of Rococo and Enlightenment literature, is "Diesseits"-oriented. The themes of Anacreon's odes, small in number -- wine, woman, and song -- are sounded in the first four odes, which, in Götz' 1760 translation, are entitled "Auf die Leyer," "Auf das schöne Geschlecht," "Auf Amorn," and "Auf sich selbst."³⁰ Like Theocritus, who was also the subject of

²⁹ The poet Anacreon stands at the center of the European recovery, from the fifteenth century, of the Greek collection of poetry bearing his name. The historical reality of Anacreon is certain, though the attribution of odes to him is less so. He was born in Teos, an Ionian city in Asia Minor, served at the court of the Greek tyrant Polycrates at Samos, and died in around 478 B.C., which places him contemporaneous with Aeschylus. Götz' 1760 edition of the poetry of Anacreon, which represented the first complete and literarily valuable translation in German, was the culmination of a half-century's efforts in this area (Zeman 110; Sulzer I, 130-134). The "Vollender" of the tradition in German, the beneficiary of over a century of philological efforts, was Eduard Mörike, with his 1864 work Anakreon und die sogenannten Anakreontischen Lieder: Revision und Ergänzung der J. Fr. Degen'schen Übersetzung mit Erklärungen von Eduard Mörike. See the thorough discussion in Zeman.

³⁰ That the 1760 edition was a refinement over that of 1746 can be seen even from the titles of the first three

scholarly and literary activity in the eighteenth century, Anacreon kept his eye focused on the small subjects and themes of life; unlike Theocritus, however, he kept a distance not only from rural occupations and coarse detail³¹ but also from the pathos that characterizes many of the idylls. To quote from Johann Georg Sulzer's article on Anacreon, "Der Dichter sieht in der ganzen Welt und in allen Handeln der Menschen nichts, als was sich auf Wein und Liebe bezieht . . ." (I, 130). The most serious aspect of life, its eventual end,³² is not cause for the kind of reflectiveness found, say, in the lament for Daphnis in Theocritus' first idyll, but serves instead as cautionary admonishment to the enjoyment of wine, woman, and song.

The odes of Anacreon, subject of a pan-European translation effort, must be distinguished from poetry written in the manner of Anacreon,³³ but there is a

odes in the earlier edition: "Auf seine Leyer," "Auf das Frauenzimmer," and "Erzählung vom Amor" (Götz/Zeman, 3-4*).

³¹ "Er [Theokrit] ist göttlich, aber er hat für Leute von andern, vielleicht bessern Sitten gesungen; ich kann den Käse und die Nüsse im Gedicht auch nicht zu oft ausstehen." Letter from Geßner to Gleim, 29 November 1754, quoted in Idyllen, note, p. 16.

³² "Denn das Leben fleucht von hinnen,
Wie ein rollend Rad am Wagen;
Und wenn dieß Gebein zerfallen
Sind wir eine Hand voll Asche." (Ode IV)

³³ "welche in dem Geiste des Anakreons geschrieben sind" (Sulzer, I, 131).

relation, and it has to do with these constituents of Lebensfreude, which are not, like isolated footpaths and dark groves, things enjoyed in private. Again, let me quote Sulzer, writing on Anacreon: "Hieraus ist zu sehen, daß diese Lieder nicht zum Lesen in einsamen und ernsthaften Stunden, die man besser anwenden kann, sondern als ein artiges Spiel zur Ermunterung in Gesellschaften, und zur Erquickung des Geistes geschrieben sind" (I, 131). Zeman, in speaking of the "Neufassung des Anakreon-Bildes" in the eighteenth century (83), mentions that this portrait was colored by that of Socrates, as represented in Plato's Symposium, which in the eighteenth century conveyed not an image of electrically lit classrooms and auditoriums but a convivial occasion in which drinking played a major role, as the German translation, "Trinkgelage," suggests. It also appears to have been crucial for the development of Anacreontic poetry in German that it was not one man, say, Hagedorn,³⁴ but a group of men, four students in Halle in 1739 through 1741, who, drawn together by bonds of friendship, conceived the project of translating the entire corpus of Anacreontic odes into German. It is ironic that this poetry, based on "eine Philosophie des Witzes, Scherzes, der Liebe und des Weins" (Zeman, 85), had its

³⁴ Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708-1754) did much to introduce not just the poetry but also the spirit of foreign poets to Germans. His translations of Pope also conveyed something of the lightness of spirit and wit of the English poet.

origin in Halle, which in the early eighteenth century was the site of struggles between Pietists and the secularist forces of the Enlightenment. Zeman finds that Götz and Uz were probably influenced by a desire to oppose Pietism with "eine[m] aufklärerischen Hang zu antiker Lebensfreude" (Götz/Zeman, 42).³⁵

Taking my cue from Minor and Sauer's study, I will call this attitude "das gesellige Moment" (the convivial situation/moment), an attitude in which Anacreontic poetry reflects the general social ethos of the Enlightenment.³⁶ Though this attitude can be found throughout Rococo poetry (see, for instance, Ramler's Lieder der Deutschen [1766]),

³⁵ Uz in particular was later singled out by the Swiss, representatives of serious, holy, and seraphic poetry, as immoral. Bodmer used Wieland as his whipping boy; into the 1750s Uz was attacked for his "barbarischen Schwarm[]" and as "Priester des Unsinns" (Uz/Sauer, xxv).

³⁶ Brüggemann refers to Anacreontic poetry as a "Seelenhaltung, die nicht vom Subject, sondern von der Gemeinschaft geformt ist" (Anbruch, 15). A sampling of titles from midcentury, of poetry collections, anthologies, and journals, conveys a rich sense of this attitude: Schriften zum Vergnügen des Geistes (J.A. Cramer 1746), Lieder zweier Liebenden (Göckingk), Scherzhaftes Lobgedicht auf den Caffee (Pfeiffer, 1752), Scherz und Ernst beim Trunke (Molter, 1753), Scherz und Ernst in Liedern (Hafner, 1763), Freundschaftliche Lieder (Pyra), Scherzhafte Lieder (Weiße, 1758), Der Kobold, ein scherzhaftes Heldengedicht (anonymous, 1758), Scherze der lyrischen Muse (1760), Launigte Winter-Mährchen bey dem Camin zu erzählen (1780), Belustigungen des Verstandes und des Witzes, Neue Belustigungen des Gemüths, Neue Beyträge zum Vergnügen des Verstandes und Witzes, Ermunterungen zum Vergnügen des Gemüths, Gesellschaftliche Erzählungen für die Liebhaber der Naturlehre ... und der Sitten, Der Gesellige, and last but by no means least Der Menschenfreund. Even Johanne Charlotte Unzer (1725-1782) produced a collection of gesellige poems, Versuch in Scherzgedichten (1751).

it will be instructive to take Gleim's Versuch in Scherzhaften Liedern (1744/45) as the prime representative of "das gesellige Moment" because of the success of his work and because it was intended by its author as a display of Anacreontic poetry. A cursory glance at the following titles yields a wealth of the slender Anacreontic themes. It seems that Gleim was adept at turning any subject into an example of the "philosophy of wit and joviality."

Der Rechenschüler (about counting girls)

An Herrn von Kleist (alternatively, an Rittmeister Adler, an Uz)

Todesgedanken ("Werd ich im Grab auch dursten?")

An Doris (alternatively, "An das Frauenzimmer")

Amor im Garten

Lebenspflichten ("Soll ich mich mit Sorgen quälen?")

Der Gelehrte ("Er, der Prinz berühmter Narren")

Auf den Tod einer Nachtigall ("Wollt er etwa, wie ein Weiser/ Seinem Tod entgegen scherzen?")

Die Brüderschaft ("Laßt mich lachen, laßt mich scherzen")

Kaffee und Tee ("Freund, warum trinkst du Kaffee?/ .../ Zur Ehre der Brunetten!")

It is this joie de vivre, or its absence, that I will examine in order to assess Goethe's relation to something called Anacreontic poetry, as well as to Rococo poetry, not simply in the presence of specific words (e.g., "Lust," "zärtlich," "Busen"), but rather in the "gesellige" attitude. It is, I suggest, in his permutations on this

attitude that Goethe creates the conditions for "experience." Let us look first at "Das Buch Annette." The subject of song is touched on in "An Annetten," the opening poem, in which Goethe bows to the ancient tradition of invoking his muse.³⁷

Es nannten ihre Bücher
Die alten sonst nach Göttern,
Nach Musen und nach Freunden,
Doch keiner nach der Liebsten;
Warum sollt' ich, Annette,
Die Du mir Gottheit, Muse,
Und Freund mir bist, und alles,
Dieß Buch nicht auch nach Deinem
Geliebten Nahmen nennen?

At the same time Goethe somewhat sets himself apart from tradition, as he himself admits, by invoking his beloved, rather than the "Göttin der Liebe" or Cupid, another staple of Anacreontic poetry. The poem thus suggests that poetic inspiration (and, perhaps, love) has its genesis beyond the confines of the poetic tradition, namely within the experience of the poet.³⁸ It is indeed love/women who are

³⁷ Strictly speaking the only poem in the collection on the subject of song is the final poem, "An meine Lieder." As a sidelight it might be mentioned that the first poem of Neue Lieder refers to the subject of song ("Neujahrslied," the wares in question being the songs that follow) and that the collection is likewise rounded off in this manner ("Zueignung"). Unlike Gleim, Goethe sends his songs off into the world.

³⁸ There is precedent for this in Gleim's prose preface to his Versuch -- whose beloved is even a "Brunette"! The muses that have animated poetry from time immemorial emphasize that the effects come from outside the poet. Netoliczka also discusses an anonymous pastoral poem in three cantos from 1750, "Die Liebe oder Thyrsis und Dora": "... an die Stelle der Anrufung der Muse tritt die der eigenen Geliebten ..." Betraying his own nineteenth-

the preeminent subject of "Das Buch Annette," as the following list of titles and themes shows:

- [1] "An Annetten" (dedication)
- [2] "Ziblis, eine Erzählung" (in this frame story, the female listeners, via an Ovidian scene of seduction, are warned not to trust the outward appearance of suitors)
- [3] "Lyde, eine Erzählung" (another frame story in which female listeners are warned of the untrustworthiness of males who have enjoyed their favors)
- [4] "Kunst die Spröden zu fangen, Erste Erzählung" (a mixture of verse and prose in which the poet describes how the affecting of indifference eventually wears down the girl's barriers)
- [5] "Kunst die Spröden zu fangen, Zwote Erzählung" (in another mixture of verse and prose the poet describes the help of Amor in seducing the most resolute girl)
- [6] "Triumph der Tugend, Erste Erzählung" (though in a propitious setting, Daphnis is prevented from having his way; the setting is ancient)
- [7] "Triumph der Tugend, Zwote Erzählung" (on the verge of ravishing the girl, the lover is restrained; the setting is contemporary)
- [8] "Elegie auf den Tod des Bruders meines Freundes" (the tyranny of a prince has caused death and prevented two lovers from marriage)
- [9] "Ode an Herrn Professor Zachariae" (the German poet, celebrated as the singer of love, is mourned for his absence)
- [10] "An den Schlaf" (invocation to Sleep to remove the mother's watchfulness and allow for seduction)

century heritage, Netoliczka does not ascribe "Erlebnis" character to this: "Indem er [the anonymous poet] die Liebe als Lebensprincip des Universums feiert, erhebt er sich nicht ohne Schwung aus der persönlichen Sphäre" (64-65). See my discussion of "Wanderers Sturmlied" in Chapter 3.

- [11] "Pygmalion, eine Romanze" (an updating of the Greek story, in which the sculptor is punished with a wife)
- [12] "Die Liebhaber" (the girl, in a dream, is represented as a Venus for whose favor various lovers vie)
- [13] "Annette an ihren Geliebten" (a 6-line role poem in madrigal verse)
- [14] "An einen jungen Prahler" (the danger of bragging about conquests of girls)
- [15] "Madrigal" (concerning envy in lovers)
- [16] "Das Schreyen, nach dem Italiänischen" (boy runs after girl, with joke ending)
- [17] "Madrigal aus dem Französischen" (a shortened translation of a poem by Antoine de Rambouillet de la Sablière)
- [18] "Madrigal aus dem Französischen des Herrn v. Voltaire" (the dream versus the reality of love)
- [19] "An meine Lieder" (the songs as memories of vanished pleasures)

The collection displays a great breadth in terms of forms, verifying von Nordheim's training-ground thesis, but an extreme narrowness concerning the relations between men and women, which are chiefly characterized in terms of seduction. Seduction of women is a frequent Anacreontic situation and would not be so noteworthy were it not the case that Goethe's collection is composed almost entirely of such poems. As the above descriptions show, these poems tread and retread a conventional battle ground on which a female seeks to guard her virtue and a male seeks to undermine it. There is the most occasional nod in the direction of a woman having a spiritualizing effect

("Triumph der Tugend: Zwote Erzählung"), but the influence of Richardson's novels on this poem has been pointed out.

Kindermann divides the "Annette" poems into two groups, the larger of which contains "exemplary erotic recipes" (24), the smaller group those veering in the direction of "experience." His division is based as much on the "exemplary" as on the "erotic," for in this first group the poet always demonstrates a certain "Sentenz":

Mädgen, fürchtet rauher Leute
 Buhlerische Wollust nie
 Die im ehrfurchtsvollen Kleide
 Viel von unschuldsvoller Freude
 Reden, Mädgen, fürchtet die

This didacticism also characterizes the tone of the letters Goethe wrote to Cornelia from Leipzig: though Goethe doesn't offer advice on sexual matters in the letters (as in the poems "Ziblis" or "Lyde"), he is full of admonitions about reading matter, specifically against anything that might be considered unsuitable for young women. (See, for instance, the letters of 6 and 7 December 1765 and the long letter of 30 March 1766.) In this respect Goethe is thoroughly within the orbit of conventional poetic treatment of women. Gleim's poems were no different, nor were the moral weeklies.

The most striking thing about the poems in this collection in connection with "das gesellige Moment" is the total absence of wine or its accompanying theme, celebrations of brotherhood. The following, from a poem by

Johann Benjamin Michaelis (1746-1772), is a good example of the genre:

Siehst du nicht den Abend winken?
 Bruder, der muß unser seyn!
 Warum sollten wir nicht trinken,
 Und uns unsrer Jugend freun?

Soll ich sorgen, wie die Thoren,
 Was den Sultan aufgebracht?
 Wer die letzte Schlacht verlohren,
 Nehm sich künftig mehr in acht!

Bald vielleicht - vielleicht schon morgen
 Hat uns Sultan Tod getrennt.
 Oefters bechern, selten sorgen
 Macht das beste Testament!³⁹

"Das Buch Annette" contains no such tributes to wine or to friends, though the two poems in the collection that have always puzzled scholars, because they seem so out of place within this orbit of erotic dalliance, touch on such subjects. The first is "Elegie auf den Tod des Bruders meines Freundes" (no. [8] above) and the second "Ode an Herrn Professor Zachariae" (no. [9]). Though they are not about brotherhood or friendship as celebrated in Anacreontic or Rococo poetry and though they are not "gesellig," the address of the ode ("meines Freundes") does establish the topos of friendship (without, however, "Gesellen").⁴⁰ In the same way, the poem about Zachariae laments the loss of

³⁹ Anger/Dichtung, 104.

⁴⁰ It seems to be the case, looking as far ahead, say, as 1773, that the ode is Goethe's preferred form for treating friendship. Compare the three "Oden an einen Freund" written in 1767. I dispute that "ein echtes Erlebnis" stands behind these odes (DjG, I, 474; also HA, I, 444), but they are expressive of great poetic sentiment.

conviviality occasioned by his departure. As von Nordheim says, Zachariae's presence in the "Annette" collection is justified by way of his actual presence in the Schönkopf house ("und hat so auch den Lebenskreis Käthchens berührt," 87).⁴¹

In addition, the concern of the elegy (and of three other poems, written in 1767, "Oden an meinen Freund") with death and decay, with the corruption of the body or of nature, is not so much in the lugubrious vein of Andreas Gryphius (or Seneca), of "Jenseits" poetry; rather, it is suggestive in connection with the major sentiment of Anacreontic lyric, the reason for the high spirits and the enjoyment of wine, woman, and song, namely the transitoriness of life. In contrast to Anacreontic poetry, the elegy connects the sentiment of *carpe diem* to a "real" subject, the death of Behrisch's brother and the brother's fiancée. That scholars have shown this real subject to be a fiction (Behrisch's brother had died many years before) does not alter the "grounding" of this poem in the experience of loss.

Further, although von Nordheim finds that the elegy's "Sprechhaltung, Motivik und Szenerie" are a foreign body in the vicinity of the other poems in "Annette," he does allow that it too applies to the general theme of love, "jedoch in

⁴¹ The poet Friedrich Wilhelm Zachariae (1726-1777) visited Leipzig in 1767. His brother was a member of the Schönkopf Mittagstisch, where Goethe met him (DjG, I, 472).

einer völlig rokokofremden Weise" (87).⁴² I would point out, however, that the motif of the poem is not so foreign at all: it deals with another frequent subject of Rococo literature, namely (in)constancy in love, which contrasts with the decay of the forest setting. The poem might be called "Beständigkeit." Let me introduce here two stanzas from this elegy.

- (1) Im düstern Wald, auf der gespaltnen Eiche,
Die einst der Donner hingestreckt,
Sing' ich um deines Bruders Leiche,
Die fern von uns ein fremdes Grab bedekt.
- (8) Sie hoft im hochzeitlichen Kleide
Bald mit ihm zum Altar zu ziehn;
Da riß sein Fürst von ihrer Seite
Tyrannisch ihn.

What we see here is a transformation of Rococo themes as required by their presence in an alien landscape: the girl's desire for marriage ("Sie hoft im hochzeitlichen Kleide/ Bald mit ihm zum Altar ziehn"); constancy ("Ihr Herz/ Liegt mit in seinem Grab"; ll. 15-16); and carpe diem ("Doch unaufhaltsam trug die Baare/ Ihn schnell davon"; ll. 7-8).⁴³

Several poems in Goethe's Neue Lieder can be seen as reprising these themes, for instance, "Wunsch eines kleinen Mädgen," "Unbeständigkeit," and "Der Schmetterling." And, in fact, the elegy points up the changes that Goethe

⁴² Quoting Wolff, Kindermann, and others, von Nordheim writes of this poem: "Sie allein erscheint ihnen als das eigentlich zukunftssträchtige Werk der Sammlung" (88).

⁴³ Something similar happens in Ossian, which I discuss in Chapter 4.

effected in this collection, that is, the widening of what Schläffer calls the "Erlebnismöglichkeiten" (183).⁴⁴ If in "Das Buch Annette," conviviality was centered in the narrow realm of dalliance between males and females, we will see a continued narrowing of focus in Neue Lieder, achieved by setting the amatory themes in foreign settings, with the effect that the treatment of love and of women is deepened. At the same time, the result yields new poetic imperatives.

Looking at the titles and themes of the Neue Lieder we see again that Goethe's premier theme is love. At the same time, the situatedness of the poems in "Das Buch Annette" in the milieu of erotic dalliance has been diminished to a considerable degree.⁴⁵

- [1] "Neujahrslied" (merry in tone, this is a jaundiced view of love relations among classes and sexes)
- [2] "Der wahre Genuß" (the pleasures of virtuous love over lust)

⁴⁴ "Die Neuen Lieder ... zeigen zwar im Vergleich zu dem Buch Annette schon stärkere Ansätze zum Erlebten und Echten ..." (HA, I, 445).

⁴⁵ "NEUE LIEDER in Melodien gesetzt von Bernhard Theodor Breitkopf" represents the first published collection of Goethe poems. It appeared in 1769, without Goethe's name on the title page. Two hundred ten copies were sold by October. The Neue Lieder resulted from the reworking of poems contained in "Lieder mit Melodien," which Goethe had given to Friederike Oeser before leaving Leipzig in August 1767. ("Das Schreyen," from "Das Buch Annette," was included in "Lieder mit Melodien," while only one poem of the latter was omitted from Neue Lieder.) In all cases I have followed the versions in Neue Lieder, as they appear in Der junge Goethe.

- [3] "Die Nacht" (a mood piece set in a moonlit forest describing a lover's feelings after visiting the beloved)
- [4] "Das Schreyen" (repeated, with changes, from "Das Buch Annette")
- [5] "Der Schmetterling" (departed lover enjoys springtime pleasures in guise of butterfly)
- [6] "Das Glück: An mein Mädchen" (the transitoriness of pleasure, especially kisses)
- [7] "Wunsch eine jungen Mädgens" (the material pleasures of having a husband)
- [8] "Hochzeitlied" (an epithalameum)
- [9] "Kinderverstand" (the contrast of city and country respecting matters of sex)
- [10] "Die Freuden" (how we destroy what is beautiful by looking too closely)
- [11] "Amors Grab" (on reviving love)
- [12] "Liebe und Tugend" (mother's lessons have little effect on a girl's stubbornness or fickleness)
- [13] "Unbeständigkeit" (water as symbol of inconstancy of female)
- [14] "An die Unschuld" (the fragility of virtue)
- [15] "Der Misanthrop" (one who can't distinguish between love and boredom)
- [16] "Die Reliquie" (souvenirs of love are poor substitutes for the real thing)
- [17] "Die Liebe wider Willen" (girls play with love as with cards, while males suffer)
- [18] "Das Glück der Liebe" (best love is in its absence)
- [19] "An den Mond" (the moon sees what the lover would like to see)⁴⁶

⁴⁶ "Die Natur ist hier ... nicht mehr nur Staffage, sondern wird gefühlt und gestaltet" (HA, I, 447).

[20] "Zueignung" (reprise of Anacreontic themes)

Three poems in this collection bear closer examination. I will begin with "Die Nacht" [3], which contains the greatest portion of narrative element of all the poems of this collection and which shows a Rococo landscape cross-fertilized by another poetic tradition.⁴⁷

Gern verlaß ich diese Hütte,
Meiner Liebsten Aufenthalt,
Wandle mit verhülltem Tritte
Durch den ausgestorbnen Wald.
Luna bricht die Nacht der Eichen,
Zephirs melden ihren Lauf,
Und die Birken streun mit Neigen
Ihr den süßten Weihrauch auf.

Schauer, der das Herze fühlen,
Der die Seele schmelzen macht,
Flüstert durchs Gebüsch im Kühlen.
Welche schöne, süße Nacht!
Freude! Wollust! Kaum zu faßen!
Und doch wollt' ich, Himmel, dir
Tausend solcher Nächte laßen,
Gäb' mein Mädgen Eine mir.

Were it not for the adverb with which "Die Nacht" begins ("Gern"), we would know at the start that we were firmly in the Rococo territory of (perhaps successful) seduction. Indeed, the ending, with its stock Anacreontic pointe (M/S 18), identifies the beloved with the same old "sprödes Mädchen" of countless poems of this period. Because of the adverb, however, from the start we are dealing with a paradox for an Anacreontic poem: the lover is happy to be

⁴⁷ "Die Nacht" appears as number 4 in "Lieder mit Melodien." It was also published ("mit ihren Varianten wohl auf umlaufenden Abschriften [berührend], " DjG, I, 499) in Almanach der deutschen Musen auf das Jahr 1773 and in Die Muse in 1776.

leaving the beloved. The juxtaposition of the hut, as domicile of the beloved ("Meiner Liebsten Aufenthalt"), with the departure of the lover has been cited by various scholars in connection with a theme throughout Goethe's work that is often combined under the larger thematic of "Begrenzung versus Entgrenzung."⁴⁸ Herman Meyer has also pointed out the more purely literary associations of the hut, as a place of hermitage or retreat from civilization. It is a major part of the interior decoration of Geßner's idylls. That the hut here is meant as part of such an amoenic setting⁴⁹ is evident from several other words in the poem, connected with the locus amoenus. These deal with daytime activities of the pastoral world (Zephirs, Neigen, süßten, flüstert),⁵⁰ and strengthen the association with lovers. Here, however, they are aufgehoben, by being transferred to another set of imagery stemming, as Arno Schirokauer has pointed out, from a separate poetic tradition, that of melancholy: e.g., ausgestorbenen Wald, Eichen, and Schauer. In addition, though "Luna" is Rococo,

⁴⁸ See e.g., Helmut Rehder, "Das Symbol der Hütte bei Goethe"; L.A. Willoughby, "The Image of the 'Wanderer' and the 'Hut' in Goethe's Poetry"; and Theodore G. Gish, "The Evolution of the Goethean Theme of the 'Wanderer' and the 'Cottage'."

⁴⁹ The connection of the locus amoenus with pastoral has always been very strong, particularly its associations with love and with song.

⁵⁰ See, again, Ramler's Lieder der Deutschen for countless examples.

night is generally a Rococo theme only insofar as it bears on the occasion of love's pleasures enjoyed or to be enjoyed.⁵¹ Compare, for instance, the different treatment in the first stanza of Hagedorn's "Die Nacht":

Willkommen, angenehment Nacht!
Verhüll in deine Schatten
Die Freuden, die sich gatten,
Und blende, blende den Verdacht!
Wann treue Liebe küssen macht;
So wird der Kuß der Liebe,
So werden ihre Triebe
Beglückter durch die stille Nacht.⁵²

It is in the darkening of the Rococo "Tageswelt," which is at its shadiest in its arbors and groves, that Schirokauer finds this poem most at odds with its Rococo character (141). He rightly identifies in it echoes of Edward Young, Thomas Gray, and Macpherson as well as diverse melancholic sentiments expressed in Goethe's letters of the time; but instead of drawing the conclusion that the mixing of genres resulted in a poetry of "experience," he instead views experience as giving rise to the poetry.⁵³

⁵¹ This is Goethe's first use of the moon motif (Boyd).

⁵² Anger/Dichtung, 23-24.

⁵³ While disagreeing with Gundolf and Kommerel that this poem marks the end of the Rococo-Goethe ("die Überwindung des Rokoko"), Schirokauer does find that the poem's particular darkness represents an important transition stage: "Aus dem Zusammenrücken der vorher getrennten Begriffsteile ... darf man nicht auf ein neues Erlebnis-Bild schließen, ... sondern auf eine stärkere Dynamik dessen, der das alte Bild noch einmal denkt. Selten wird sich eine so handgreifliche Gelegenheit bieten, das, was in der dichterischen Seele vorgeht, so genau verfolgen zu können" (142).

Just as the Rococo setting has at least two inhabitants, the lovers, so the tradition of melancholy poetry has its own denizen, a solitary wanderer. The following lines, from the first hymn of Friedrich von Cronegk's "Einsamkeiten" (1758), provides a fair example of the sentiments of such wanderers:

Dir, schauervolle Nacht der heil'gen Einsamkeit,
 Dir, traur'ge Stille, sei mein zärtlich Lied geweiht!
 Die müde Seele sucht in deinen Dunkelheiten
 Die beim mühsamen Schwarm scheinbarer Eitelkeiten
 Von allen Sterblichen umsonst gesuchte Ruh':
 Ihr sing' ich, und der Hain hört mir stillschweigend zu.⁵⁴

Goethe's night wanderer, in contrast, is not given to the lugubrious or anti-social sentiments that characterize the melancholy wanderer in Cronegk's poem.⁵⁵ He speaks in fact just like a lover in a Rococo poem. As Hagedorn's poem emphasizes, night suggests love pleasures to be enjoyed, whereas in this poem it is the night itself that is enjoyed, minus the pleasures of the girl: "Welche schöne, süße Nacht" refers not to the experience of love,⁵⁶ but, as the title illustrates, to the solitary experience of the night. In

⁵⁴ Quoted in Brüggemann, Anbruch, 99.

⁵⁵ This kind of poetry has a long tradition and will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3. Garber, in his discussion of the "locus terribilis," speaks of it as a site of lament, but, like the hut, it is also traditionally the site of the solitary activity of monks, hermits, and other meditative types.

⁵⁶ Cf. "angenehme Wüste" in Götze's "Laura," in which the forest is the site for recollecting the beloved.

fact, he is undergoing something like a religious experience.

This "feeling" component (the "Schauer") is likewise present in poems by Brockes, Haller, Kleist, Klopstock, Young, and Ossian, some of whom were pointed out by Schirokauer. In common with the themes of these poets, the wanderer is touched with reverence verging on the holy, underlined by Weihrauch (l. 8), though the natural setting is more pagan than Christian in its associations. The topos of sympathetic nature, for instance, is present in the story of Orpheus' death and in Theocritus' description of the death of Daphnis in the first idyll. That the poet expresses the holy in the human, sensual terms common in Rococo poetry -- "Freude! Wollust" -- does not undermine the ineffable character of the experience, which is again, however, not that of sensual love but of the lover's solitary condition. Emphasizing the ineffable, this experience is "Kaum zu faßen!" -- another way of indicating that experience and life are transitory.

The one thing missing in this poem is a commensurate female presence. The female, however, because of all the vocabulary associated with her, belongs in Rococo territory, the battle ground of love. Whether the situation was one of coquetry ("Das Schreyen"), or whether it verged on eroticism ("Triumph der Tugend: zwote Erzählung"), the situations in "Das Buch Annette" described the erotic trajectory of Rococo

poetry -- the male's preparations for seduction, on the one hand, and the coquetry/ defensive tactics of the female, on the other. Togetherness, for shorter or longer duration, was the intended aim of the parties. The solitary lover in "Die Nacht," however, has wandered into a territory that doesn't admit a companion of any kind, much less a female presence. Though the irreconcilability is ultimately the result of genre constraints, the end effect is that the lover is happy because he is alone. In fact, the pleasure at leaving the site of love and the failure to individualize the female, with the reversion to an epigrammatic ending, suggest the impossibility of having the male and the female together within the same poetic space. All of this adds particular poignance to the situation in the elegy concerning the death of Behrisch's brother, in which the two lovers were brought together in the same poetic space -- except that one of them was dead.

That the combativeness of the sexes in "Das Buch Annette" has been transformed into an irreconcilability occurring on a different plane in Neue Lieder can also be seen in "Das Glück: An mein Mädchen" [6]. The division of the sexes is indicated by the way each half of the first stanza is given over to the female or male.

Du hast uns oft im Traum gesehen
 Zusammen zum Altare gehen,
 Und dich als Frau, und mich als Mann;
 Oft nahm ich wachend deinem Munde
 In einer unbewachten Stunde,
 So viel man Küße nehmen kann.

Das reinste Glück, das wir empfunden,
 Die Wollust mancher reichen Stunden
 Floh, wie die Zeit, mit dem Genuß.
 Was hilft es mir, daß ich genieße?
 Wie Träume fliehn die wärmsten Küße,
 Und alle Freude wie ein Kuß.⁵⁷

The first stanza juxtaposes the female's desire for marriage (which in Anacreontic poetry is bound up with their "spröde" character) with the desire of the male for the kiss, the central erotic act of this poetry. This stanza bears strikingly similar imagery to that in the elegy concerning Behrisch's brother in which the desired marriage was prevented by death: "Sie hoft im hochzeitlichen Kleide/
 Bald mit ihm zum Altar zu ziehn" (stanza 8, lines 1-2). In "Das Glück," the state of matrimony ("dich als Frau und mich als Mann') is rendered ineffable in that it is perceived, by the woman, only "im Traum."

Besides contributing to the poem's reflective character, the lack of epic element or of an amoenic setting translates the combativeness of the sexes in "Das Buch Annette" to a new plane of irreconcilability. In the first of the "Oden an Behrisch," this irreconcilability is linked to the theme of transitoriness: death precluded the lovers from being together. In "Das Glück," however, the transitoriness is not a reminder of the necessity of grabbing the kiss; the lover has succeeded, "wachend," at that goal. It is the attainment of the kiss that has

⁵⁷ The verse form of this poem is a beloved "Anacreontic" one (M/S, 22).

produced the awareness of transitoriness: "Was hilft es mir, daß ich genieße?/ Wie Träume fliehn die wärmsten Küße." Despite the extensive Rococo vocabulary of this poem ("Das reinste Glück," "Wollust," "reich," "Floh," "Genuß," "genieße," "fliehn," "wärmsten Küße," "Freude"), the effect of removing the subject of love from its social setting is to transform the here-and-now to the now. All the verbs and adjectives suggesting fleeting motion and the fleeting moment in Rococo poetry and contributing to the game of love have been translated by Goethe into the evanescent quality of experience, leading to the renunciation of love. The Anacreontic in-the-world breaks down into the fragmentariness of different points of view.

The irreconcilability of lovers in the same space is the subject of one of Goethe's letters.⁵⁸ It is the March 1768 letter to Behrisch, a letter near the end of our epistolary record of Goethe's Leipzig period (he returned in August 1767 to Frankfurt).

Gut wenn du es wissen willst wie es mit uns steht, so wisse. Wir lieben einander mehr als jemals ob wir einander gleich seltner sehen. Ich habe den Sieg über mich erhalten sie nicht zu sehen, und nun dacht ich gewonnen zu haben, aber ich bin elender als vorher, ich fühle daß die Liebe sich selbst in der Abwesenheit erhalten wird. Ich kann leben ohne sie zu sehen, nie, ohne sie zu lieben.

⁵⁸ As I will discuss in the next chapter, Goethe's letters are not only revealing of his literary interests but also show him working through certain themes and framing his experience in terms of his reading.

The content of this letter is echoed in the final poem I will discuss here, "Das Glück der Liebe" [18].

Trink, o Jüngling, heiliges Glücke
 Taglang aus der Liebsten Blicke,
 Abends gauckl' ihr Bild dich ein;
 Kein Verliebter hab es beßer,
 Doch das Glück bleibt immer größer
 Fern von der Geliebten seyn.

Ew'ge Kräffte, Zeit und Ferne,
 Heimlich wie die Krafft der Sterne,
 Wiegen dieses Blut zur Ruh.
 Mein Gefühl wird stets erweichter,
 Doch mein Herz wird täglich leichter,
 Und mein Glück nimmt immer zu.

Nirgends kann ich sie vergeßen,
 Und doch kann ich ruhig eßen,
 Heiter ist mein Geist und frey;
 Und unmerkliche Bethörung
 Macht die Liebe zur Verehrung,
 Die Begier zur Schwärmerey.

Aufgezogen durch die Sonne,
 Schwimmt im Hauch äther'scher Wonne
 So das leichtste Wölckgen nie,
 Wie mein Herz in Ruh und Freude.
 Frey von Furcht, zu groß zum Neide
 Lieb ich, ewig lieb ich sie.

This poem, Goethe's only nod to the wine-and-brotherhood thematic ("Trink, o Jüngling"), maintains a precarious balance on this side of the outright banal, with the trochaic meter of the drinking song splashing, so to speak, against "heiliges Glücke." The admonishment in the last two lines of the first stanza adds an almost unbearable weight of sententiousness. In an Anacreontic poem, the admonishment is along the lines of the ending of the following poem, Gleim's "An den Tod." Gleim's trochaic four-footer is also used in Goethe's poem.

Brüder, seht doch das Gerippe,
 Seht, es fehlen Lefz und Zunge!
 Brüder trinkt, und schmekkt den Rheinwein!
 Seid ihr einst, wie dis Gerippe,
 Ohne Lefz und ohne Zunge,
 Dan könnt ihr ihn nicht mehr schmekken.

Just as his mixing of moonlight and lover and departure in "Die Nacht" brought items together from different poetic traditions, so this poem mixes conventions and achieves paradoxical results. First of all, a girl does not belong by poetic tradition in a drinking song. She belongs in the song in which erotic dalliance is the subject. Goethe's lover in any case undercuts any literalness (not wine is being drunk, but happiness) and recommends instead something like sobriety: drink from her glances and her picture but, best, stay away from her altogether!

This paradox might seem to be a rejection of the scheme of love in Anacreontic poetry, in which happiness consisted in mutual erotic dalliance, a game ("Tändelei") that avoided the strong passions and the transcendental associations of much of Western literature's love poetry. Passion, besides being an unreasonable state in the higher reaches of the logicians, was also at odds with the culture of wit and joviality. By the late 1760s, however, the rational was no longer exalted, and that love was recognized as something powerful is encapsulated in the inversion that enthrones "Liebe" (subject of the verb "macht") as a mediator between "Bethörung" and "Verehrung" (ll. 16-17). At the same time, love is also dangerous, as is seen in its enthronement, via

its absence, between "Begier" and "Schwärmerey" (l. 18). Thus, Goethe, like the Anacreontic poets, bans overpowering love, though not as subject, but by distance, a banishment that replicates the strategies of the earlier poets.

Amid the loftier sentiments of this poem there is a most homely observation -- "Und doch kann ich ruhig eßen,/ Heiter ist mein Geist und frey" -- the kind of state that one attains from self-knowledge. Yet whatever the specific impulse behind these poems, Goethe did not create them whole cloth from the fabric of his life. The sheer number of words in this poem from the Rococo trope (Trink, Glücke, Blicke, Glück, Geliebte, wiegen, erweichter, Herz, heiter, frey, Begier, Sonne, schwimmt Wonne, leichste) indicates Goethe's debt to this tradition of writing about love. His acquaintance with Shakespeare (or Petrarch?) at this stage may have been too superficial to have suggested a literary scenario that would have united the lovers after surmounting their conflicts. But, as Schlaffer has pointed out, the character of this erotic poetry was precisely its lack of tension. The last stanza, containing anticipations of the final scenes of Faust II, achieves such absence of conflict by negatively comparing the peace of the lover's heart with a small cloud passing through ethereal substances. The fragile sense of motion described here, however, is as Anacreontic or Rococo as the butterfly's wings in "Der Schmetterling."

To conclude, Goethe, following a dominant poetic model, transformed it by removing its specific social locus and inhabitants (the beloved or companions), with the result that it lost its convivial ("gesellig") character. The resulting poetic space, whether it is rendered as epic or simply lyrical, has room for only one inhabitant, the experiencing "I." At the same time, the duplication of the strategies and themes of the model -- the Anacreontic vocabulary of love coupled with the flight from seriousness, the theme of carpe diem linked to the evocation of transitoriness -- foregrounds the aloneness of the lyric voice. What was once a poem reminding of the urgency of grasping experience becomes an expression of fragmentariness, in which it is questioned whether love can exist at all.

The break in Neue Lieder from a "geselliges" model will, in turn, lead to a break from the "love" model. "Glück der Liebe," after all, is the most ironic of titles, for this "Glück" is again about leaving the beloved. Though Goethe changed this title in 1815 to "Glück der Entfernung," the poem indicates that distance does not make one sad and alone but alone and happy. It is when one is alone that the individual, uncontaminated by the reality of others, can experience oneself fully. In the next chapter I will show the effect of generic conventions in inhibiting such self-expression.

Chapter 2:
The Pastoral Order

In the previous chapter I discussed the negative evaluation of the "Rococo" character of Goethe's Leipzig lyric poetry, particularly the criticism of what has been regarded as its artificiality and lack of experiential character. I argued that such criticism has failed to perceive how "experience" was created in Goethe's work by formal means, by imitating Rococo models while removing the communal substance from them. In reprising themes of Anacreontic poetry in "Das Buch Annette" and Neue Lieder, particularly those of wine, women, and song, Goethe was operating in accord with the still strong normative poetic practice that informed the work of the generation writing in the 1740s and 1750s, which itself represented the emergence of German literature from centuries of provincialism. What allowed him to transform his models in a way his literary predecessors, in their strictly imitative poetics, would never have ventured was the fluid situation of genre at this period of the eighteenth century. The effect was a move away from a communally oriented poetry (as in the title of Brüggemann's volume Die bürgerliche Gemeinschaftskultur) to poetry that emphasized private experience.¹

¹ The change that Goethe wrought can be better appreciated when we keep in mind that the vast body of Enlightenment literature, not simply Anacreontic poetry, reflects a non-private, communal ethos. Instructive here is

Literary models and imitative poetics are also central to my discussion in this chapter of the other major product of Goethe's Leipzig stay, the pastoral play Die Laune des Verliebten. In order to underline how changes in existential content were achieved by transformation of literary models through such manipulation of genre (what Schläffer calls "gattungspoetische" changes) I will show that it was precisely the strict formal demands of Die Laune that inhibited the kind of changes that we see in Neue Lieder. In this play communal values are central and an errant individual is shepherded, much like the hero of Wieland's practically contemporaneous comic novel Don Silvio (1766), back into the fold of the group. As I pointed out in my Introduction, the necessary prerequisite for the emergence of the individual ("die Befreiung des Ich") is freedom, and freedom is generically absent in Arcadia, the setting of Die Laune.

Stressing Goethe's formal indebtedness, I reject the scholarly position that sees this play as a working out of

the reception of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe in Germany, the first translation of which appeared in 1720 and set loose a flood of German imitations, known as Robinsonaden (Kimpel, 43-48). The unbearably private lot of Crusoe fending for himself on an island is transformed in Schnabel's novel, Die Insel Felsenburg (1731). Schnabel highlights the individual destiny of his characters by allowing each to narrate his own autobiography. Yet, whereas Robinson Crusoe flees his own individually caused corruption, it is as a community that Schnabel's castaways find salvation on an island far away from the corruptions of Europe.

Goethe's jealousy of Käthchen Schönkopf. The impetus behind the play, I will argue, was Lessing's Miss Sara Sampson, which enacts the dilemma of freedom and love in the emerging bourgeois drama. Goethe's further development as a poet was specifically a rejection of and a move away from the solution to the problematics of love relationships dramatized in the plays of Lessing and, later, of the Sturm und Drang generation and, instead, toward a position of freedom, a move precluded by the generic conventions of Die Laune des Verliebten.

In speaking of the formal requirements of Die Laune, I am referring to conventions that are at the heart of genre and of what Heather Dubrow calls the "contract" operating between writer and reader (31): they are the signals by which a reader recognizes, for instance, that he is reading a mystery instead of a historical romance, and they thus govern his response to what he reads.² Genre thus indicates an awareness of communal values and of the conventions that accompany a communal ethos.³ As for pastoral poetry, there

² See in this connection Hans Robert Jauß' discussion of this process in his essay "Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft," especially page 175.

³ See particularly the discussion in Hobbes' "Answer to Davenant's Preface to Gondibert" (1650): "As philosophers have divided the universe, their subject, into three regions, celestial, aerial, and terrestrial, so the poets ... have lodged themselves in the three regions of mankind, court, city, and country, correspondent in some proportion to those three regions of the world. For there is in princes and men conspicuous power, anciently called

is scarcely another poetic form that bears so much of the freight of genre, incorporating a communal ethos in its very terms. The major ancient genres, epic and tragedy, treat a common, public world and attain their resonance from the conflict of an individual with the communal order. A lonely shepherd, on the other hand, is by definition looking to rejoin the community, which is itself a reflection of an order of life larger than the individual. The pastoral world displays a reverence for the order of things, be it expressed in the movements of the heavens, the changing seasons, or the regularity of harvests or of festivals. Implicit in all this, of course, is the necessity of forming one's behavior to that order while subsuming expressions of individuality that might disrupt it. The ripples that disturb the surface of the pastoral world are part of a larger wave of time in which everyone and everything are merged in a continuous human cycle.

"Order" stands at the center of eighteenth-century literary debates, which reflect the larger changes in society, culture, politics, and religion, and "Schäfer-" or "Hirtendichtung" was at the center of one of the largest

heroes, a luster and influence upon the rest of men resembling that of the heavens ..." (Reprinted in Hazard Adams, ed., Critical Theory since Plato, p. 213.) Besides establishing cosmological hierarchies, Hobbes links an orderly poetic system with that of an orderly social system. Other important neoclassical discussions of genre that implicitly reflect this aspect are those of Pope (1711) and Dryden.

literary debates not only in Germany in mid-eighteenth century but also in Europe.⁴ The often acerbic criticism that accompanied breaches of genre in connection with pastoral poetry illuminates how strongly felt was the concept of literary order. Indeed, modern dismissiveness of this poetry (again, we are in the heart of the criticism of Rococo) gives a misleading impression of the seriousness of these literary debates, but such dismissiveness, again, testifies to the modern rejection of the order embedded in the poetry. Goethe, however, was not a modern, and to assess his achievement in Die Laune it is necessary to understand the particular conventions he was following.

The French and French-influenced poetry of the eighteenth century, discussed in Chapter 1, was thoroughly saturated with pastoral conventions. At the same time, all the details and characters of shepherds' lives that had provided the details of the idylls of Theocritus and the eclogues of Virgil, the "real" lives of shepherds, had been banned from poetry. As Schlaffer has pointed out, removing an earlier tradition of erotic poetry to Arcadia had the effect of removing the tensions that had characterized earlier love poetry. By the early eighteenth century this poetry had become so rarefied that two major elements of pastoral life -- the shepherd and his music -- had become

⁴ See the survey of this debate in Böschenstein-Schäfer, Idylle (50-64).

self-representational, for the poet and the poem, respectively, with love in its most harmonious manifestation the only subject. The opening stanzas of "Morgenlied der Schäfer" by Johann Peter Uz (1720-1796) provide a good example of the appropriate intermingling of the themes of love and music in Arcadia:

Die düstre Nacht ist hin;
Die Sonne kehret wieder.
Ermuntre dich, mein Sinn!
Und dichte Freudenlieder.
Laßt, was mein Herz begehrt,
Auch diesen Tag geschehen,
Ihr Götter, die ihr hört,
Wann fromme Hirten flehen.

Gebt mir ein weises Herz,
Das allen Gram verfluche;
Und mehr den Jugendscherz,
Als Gold und Sorgen suche.
Es rufe nie die Nacht
Den güldnen Tag zu Grabe,
Bis ich mich satt gelacht,
Das ist, gelebet habe.

Schützt Amors frohes Reich
Und auch die frohen Reben;
Daß Lieb und Wein zugleich
Stets jedes Herz beleben.
Wird Bacchum Geiz und List
Mit Wasserbädern schwächen:
Wird stündlich nicht geküßt:
So wollet ihr es rächen.

Nie soll ein artig Kind
Die wilde Strenge lieben.
Nur die nicht artig sind,
Laßt Grausamkeit verüben.
Auch segnet nun den May,
Der manche zärtlich machte;
Daß keine Schöne sey,
Die nicht nach Küssen schmachte.⁵

⁵ Quoted in Anger, Dichtung, 21.

A sharp criticism of breaches against conventions came from Johann Adolf Schlegel, who penned a satire in 1746 against the Bremer Beiträge, a major organ for pastoral plays and pastoral poetry, entitled Vom Natürlichen in Schäfergedichten wider die Verfasser der Bremischen neuen Beyträge verfertigt vom Nisus einem Schäfer in den Kohlgärten einem Dorf vor Leipzig...⁶ The title of this satire shows that what Schlegel found objectionable in pastoral poetry published in the Bremer Beiträge was precisely what was "natural" about the lives of shepherds. Pastoral poetry should be, he wrote, "nicht sowohl eine Nachschilderung als eine Schöpfung. Ihr Arkadien ist nicht eine Gegend unsrer Welt, die mit aller der Vollkommenheit ausgeschmückt worden, deren sie fähig war. Die Schäferwelt gehört eben so, wie die Feyenwelt, wie die Verwandlungswelt Ovids unter die bloss möglichen, denen nur ein glücklicher Einfall der Einbildungskraft ihre Wirklichkeit gegeben hat" (Net. 49). In a later treatise, Von dem eigentlichen Gegenstande des Schäfergedichts, we see that this animus against naturalism had to do with maintaining the separation between pastoral poetry and "Gedichte vom Landleben." The latter "besteh[en] grösstentheils nur in sinnlichen Gemählden, die die Entgegenstellung der Bilder des

⁶ The quotes from Schlegel's essays are taken from Oscar Netoliczka's extensive treatment of "Schäferdichtung und Poetik im 18. Jahrhundert" (hereafter cited as Net., with page reference).

Stadtlebens noch mehr hebt" (Net. 49).⁷ The object of pastoral poetry, Schlegel writes, is different:

Ihr wesentlicher Inhalt sind die sanften Empfindungen eines glücklichen Lebens, die vermittelt einer einfachen, weder heroischen, noch lächerlichen, sondern natürlichen Handlung entwickelt werden; und in der für sie gehörigen Scene, in der reizenden Scene der Natur, aufgestellt werden (Net. 51).

Pastoral poetry has to do with harmony, as is shown by the exclusion of heroism and of comedy ("weder heroischen, noch lächerlichen") and by the emphasis on "sanften Empfindungen," with the concomitant exclusion of violent emotions.

This generic bias, however, was being undermined by the debate concerning realism and idealism in pastoral poetry, prompted by, among other things, the growing interest in Theocritus by mid-eighteenth century. Gottsched, that supreme arbiter of taste, neatly encapsulated the two sides. On the one hand, he pointed out the artificiality of Fontenelle's shepherds, who would have met Schlegel's criteria: "In der That hat er seine Schäfer zu scharfsinnigen Parisern gemacht" ("Von Idyllen," 83).⁸ On

⁷ This was the kind of poetry criticized in Laokoon, a treatise also seeking to determine the proper parameters of literary and artistic works.

⁸ Fontenelle: "L'illusion et en même temps l'agrément des bergeries consist donc a n'offrir aux yeux que la tranquillité de la vie pastorale, dont on dissimule la bassesse: on en laisse voir la simplicité, mais on en cache la misère" (Discours sur l'Églogue [1688], quoted in Willey, 21).

the other hand, one had to be cautious about using Theocritus as a model: "Theokritus hat seine Schäfer zuweilen sehr grob und plump abschildert; das ist, wie sie etwa zu seiner Zeit waren, nicht wie sie hätten seyn sollen ..." (79). Gottsched's own view of pastoral was determined by his poetics of Nachahmung:

Man stelle sich die Welt in ihrer ersten Unschuld vor. Ein freyes Volk, welches von keinen Königen und Fürsten weis, wohnt in einem warmen und fetten Lande, welches an allem einen Ueberfluß hat, und nicht nur Gras, Kräuter und Bäume, sondern auch die schönsten Früchte von sich selbst hervorbringet. Von schwerer Arbeit weis man daselbst ebensowenig, als von Drangsalen und Kriegen ... (77)

Thus, Gottsched differs from French-influenced practice in that the shepherd in a pastoral poem is not simply a stand-in for a poet -- he is indeed a shepherd, sort of.

Nevertheless, his awareness of the unsuitability of real shepherds as subjects for pastoral poetry was no doubt responsible for the strong element of idealization in his definition: "Denn die Wahrheit zu sagen, der heutige Schäferstand, zumal in unserm Vaterland, ist derjenige nicht, den man in Schäfergedichten abschildern muß. ... Unsre Landleute sind mehrentheils armselige, gedrückte und geplagte Leute" (76).

His own demonstration of his theories, the pastoral play he wrote in 1741, Atalanta, oder die gezwungene Sprödigkeit, and the spate of pastoral plays by his followers and others did not manage to solve this dilemma

but remained caught in the portrayal of "sanfte Empfindungen" and pastoral harmony. These plays took place in the kind of encapsulated small world portrayed in the idylls of Theocritus and Virgil, in which shepherds pursue their concerns separate from the activities of the great world ("Nachahmung des unschuldigen, ruhigen und ungekünstelten Schäferlebens, welches vorzeiten in der Welt geführet worden"; 76). The dangers that threaten the pastoral world, which are especially strongly rendered in Virgil's eclogues, are reduced in the German plays: the only serious threat to the Arcadian setting comes not from wars or land appropriations but from city dwellers, in the form of wealth or influences like "Sprödigkeit." Although the shepherds in these German pastoral plays occasionally make reference to such skills as carving or even to pastoral activities like rounding up sheep (which was part of what had provoked Schlegel's ire), it wasn't until Geßner's idylls in the 1750s that the pastoral world was opened up to the range of activities found in the idylls of Theocritus or Virgil. Yet even Geßner was unable to go beyond idealization, and the emphasis in these pastoral plays remained on the harmonious order, specifically the mutual enjoyment and exchange of "sanfte Empfindungen." This ethos of communal order is, as I discussed in Chapter 1, embodied in Anacreontic poetry, but the even longer tradition of pastoral poetry, to which Goethe's early work is indebted,

places a premium on this harmonious aspect of human relationships.⁹

In considering Goethe's Die Laune des Verliebten, we encounter "sanfte Empfindungen" and the reestablishment of pastoral order threatened by a lover's jealousy. Within the compass of nine scenes of 526 alexandrine lines Die Laune deals with the conflict of two shepherd-lovers, Amine and Eridon. It is the day of a "Fest," and Amine, who dearly loves to dance, is looking forward to participating in this central Arcadian activity. Her lover, however, is insanely jealous and cannot bear the prospect of seeing her admired by other men. His jealousy thwarts her own pleasure and threatens to cast a pall over the festivities and, indeed, keep her from taking part in them. The divisiveness is summed up in the following couplet:

Wie pochte Deine Brust, wenn man vom Tanze sprach,
Dein Liebster flieht den Tanz, und zieht Dich arme
nach. (47-48)

⁹ Goethe's familiarity with German pastoral plays is evident not only in Die Laune. Pastoral characters and themes abound in both "Das Buch Annette" and Neue Lieder as well. "Der junge Prahler," a stock pastoral character, can be seen in the figure of Damon in Gottsched's Atalanta. "Der wahre Genuß," mentioned often in Goethe's letters at the same time as Die Laune, might likewise be a reference to the stock figure of Corydon, the rich city dweller, in Gottsched's play. And one of the greatest sources of disruption in Arcadia, Unbeständigkeit ("...man weiß bey ihnen von keinem größeren Laster, als von der Unbeständigkeit ..." [Gottsched, "Von Idyllen," 79]), is also a major theme of Goethe's two poem collections.

These lines are spoken by Amine's female counterpart, Egle, who, with her lover, Lamon, is untouched by such jealousy. The play opens with a short scene demonstrating the equanimity of love in Arcadia:

LAMON.

Aminen reich ich heut das seltene vom Jahr
Die Rose seh' ich gern in einem schwarzen Haar.

EGLE.

Und das soll ich wohl gar verbindlich, artig
nennen?

LAMON.

Wie lange liebst Du mich schon, ohne mich zu
kennen?
Ich weiß es ganz gewiß, Du liebst nur mich allein,
Und dieses muntre Herz ist auch auf ewig Dein.

(3-8)

Eridon rejects such sharing. His desire is that Amine not go to the dance but remain alone with him. Besides making Amine unhappy, he threatens to disrupt the conviviality and togetherness that regulate pastoral life. Egle, the sensible shepherdess, tries to weaken Amine's attachment to Eridon:

Besänftige den Sturm der Dich bisher getrieben,
Man kann sehr ruhig sein, und doch sehr zärtlich
lieben. (229-230)

Unsuccessful, she focuses on Eridon and his irrational jealousy:

Sag mir, glaubst Du denn, daß dieses Liebe sei,
Wenn Du sie bei Dir hältst? Nein das ist
Sclaverei. (412-413)

Such reasoning is also without effect. She finally manages to bring him to a correct posture of love by an intrigue,

enticing from him a kiss in order to prove that showing a favor to one girl does not lessen one's love for another.

ERIDON, der vor Aminen niederfällt.

Amine, liebstes Leben!
 O! zürne Du mit ihr! sie machte sich so schön;
 Ich war dem Mund so nah, und konnt nicht
 widerstehn.
 Doch kennest Du mein Herz, mir kannst Du das
 erlauben,
 So eine kleine Lust wird Dir mein Herz nicht
 rauben. (512-526)

In this way, Amine gets to go to the dance with her lover and enjoy herself.

AMINE.

Komm mit zum Fest.

ERIDON.

Ich muß.
 Ein Kuss bekehrte mich. (526-527)

To evaluate Goethe's debt to literary models, and the differences in his play, it is necessary to view Die Laune in connection with what are generally regarded as the best pastoral plays, those of Johann Fürchtegott Gellert (1715-1769). First, Sylvia, from 1745, which also pairs off two sensible lovers seeking to give an object lesson in love to a pair of unhappy lovers (cf. especially scene 10 in Die Laune). Die Laune indeed seems curiously to mirror Sylvia, in what might be seen as a variation on the oppositional method often remarked on in connection with Goethe:¹⁰ in Gellert's play the happy lovers try to talk the "Spröde,"

¹⁰ "Das Gesetz der Entwicklung in Gegensätzen" or "Kontrastverstärkung." Both are terms of Wilhelm Wundt, quoted in Wolfgang Martini (48).

the resistant female, into love, while in Die Laune the sensible shepherdess, seeks to talk the unhappy shepherdess out of loving too much. True to the kiss being the central erotic aspect of most pastoral poetry (Poggioli, 14), in both plays it is a kiss that gives away the unhappy lover at each play's end.

Though Sylvia, like many pastoral plays, has the Enlightenment aim of transforming a person to a correct position of love -- thus the Spröde is one of pastoral poetry's most endearing types -- the complications of plot of Gellert's other pastoral play, Das Band (1744), move it away from the static world of pastoral drama in the direction of the Lustspiel.¹¹ In this play the central character is a shepherdess named Galathea who is the victim of a prank played by two other shepherds on her lover, Montan. In a fit of jealousy she throttles the poor blackbird she had previously given to Montan. Gellert later discussed this in a preface to Das Band, which was included in the third of his Sämtliche Schriften in 1769: "Ein sehr blutdürstiges Unternehmen für eine Schäferin ... Freylich ist dieses Natur, aber Natur des Dorfes, nicht des Schäferstandes" (439).¹² It is this trait of excessive

¹¹ Enlightenment comedy, according to Steinmetz (1), experienced its "Blüte" between 1740 and 1760.

¹² This preface is a sign of the seriousness with which Gellert took Schlegel's criticisms, discussed above, and specifically responds to the naturalism that had offended Schlegel. Compare the following comment by

jealousy that Goethe portrays in Die Laune in the character of Eridon. And though it has been suggested that Eridon is particularly well characterized, that his behavior goes beyond the types usually appearing in pastoral plays (DjG, I, 483), I think that it is the direct threat his jealousy poses to the values of the community of shepherds that renders him particularly strong. In the case of Die Laune, Eridon's jealousy is a threat to the order of Arcadia itself: Eridon can't stand the thought of other men admiring Amine so he contrives to keep her from enjoying one of the main activities of Arcadia, dancing.¹³

Though Eridon's vice is foreshadowed in Gellert's Das Band, there are aspects of Die Laune that show the gap of twenty-plus years between it and Gellert's plays and that would lead one to disagree with Albert Köster's analysis of Die Laune as a pastoral play: "technisch ist dieser Spätling von den ersten Versuchen, die man ein Vierteljahrhundert früher gemacht hatte, kaum zu unterscheiden" (88). The language the shepherds speak, for instance, is

Batteaux, whose treatise on poetry had been translated by Schlegel: "Ein Schäfer, der sich vor der Tür seiner Schäferin erhenkt, ist kein arkadisches Schauspiel, weil man in dem Schäferleben solche starke Leidenschaften nicht kennen muß, die zu einer solchen Ausschweifung Anlaß geben könnten ..." (quoted in Merker, Idyllendichtung, 94).

¹³ Compare Goethe's comments in Dichtung und Wahrheit (Book 9) on his dancing lessons. Dancing there appears to be the site of dark jealousies. In Werther, by contrast, it is at a dance where Werther meets Lotte, who, like Amine, is the focus of all activity.

not that of Gellert's shepherds. This is the way Eridon is described:

Kein Wunder, daß er Dich bei keinem Feste leidet,
 Da er der Weise Gras un Deine Tritte neidet,
 Den Vogel den Du liebst als Nebenbuhler haßt ...
 (49-51)

These are very strong images, and are not to be found in Gellert's plays. Similarly, the sensible shepherdess, Egle, is defined by her speech as someone who has been formed by experience. It is true that Gellert's Sylvia dwells on last week's slight, yet after it has been explained, she does not draw any great lessons. Transformation is not in the nature of pastoral; pastoral is about life always being the same. Egle, however, shows that she draws lessons from life. She is a woman who has settled into a fixed relationship and no longer has any illusions. The following lines might be a commentary on the little scene quoted above that opened the play:

Mir selbst gefällt es nicht, wie mein Geliebter
 denkt,
 Zu wenig rühren ihn der Liebe Tändeleien,
 Die ein empfindlich Herz so klein sie sind
 erfreuen.
 Doch Freundinn glaube mir, es ist geringere Pein
 Nicht gar so sehr geliebt, als es zu sehr zu sein.
 (76-80)

In the following monologue, Amine shows herself to be a female hanging on in a pathologic relationship instead of acting like the pastorally happy characters in Gellert's plays.

Ja wohl verdienst Du ihn. Du siehst, Dich zu
 betrüben
 Hört er nicht auf, und doch hörst Du nicht auf zu
 lieben.
 Ich trag's nicht lange mehr. Still! Ha! ich höre
 dort
 Schon die Musick. Es hüpfet mein Herz, mein Fuß
 will fort.
 Ich will! was drückt mir so die bange Brust
 zusammen,
 Wie ängstlich wird es mir! Es zehren heftige
 Flammen,
 Am Herzen, fort! Ach, er hält mich zurück.
 Armseel'ges Mädchen! Sieh, das ist der Liebe
 Glück. (349-56)

The entire tone of Die Laune is so different from those
 earlier plays that it cannot be called, pace Wolfgang
 Martini, "der üblich kleine Liebesstreit" (54). Indeed, in
 spite of the constraining alexandrine meter,¹⁴ the tone is
 similar to that of the freighted emotional relationships
 between ordinary people that occur in the bourgeois drama
 developing in Germany.¹⁵

¹⁴ "In diesem Versmaß konnte man nie nach freiem
 Bedarf verstummen, sondern mußte weiterreden, mußte
 vernünfteln und das Für und Wider jeder Sache gegeneinander
 stellen" (Köster, 80).

¹⁵ "Bourgeois" is the operative word, as some of the
 following titles suggest (followed in parentheses by the
 author's name and year of publication): Das bürgerliche
 Drama: Seine Geschichte im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert (A.
 Eloesser, 1898); Das bürgerliche Drama (O. Walzel, 1922);
 "Der Kampf um die bürgerliche Welt- und Lebensanschauung in
 der deutschen Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts" (F.
 Brüggemann, 1925); Kritik und Krise: Ein Beitrag zur
 Parthogenese der bürgerlichen Welt (R. Koselleck, 1959); Das
 bürgerliche Drama: Seine theoretische Begründung im 18.
 Jahrhundert (A. Wierlacher, 1968). Despite the continued
 importance and development of the Lustspiel in this period,
 the ascendancy of "bourgeois" is underlined again by the
 evaluations of literary historians, for whom bourgeois drama
 is the signifying genre of the era. Pastoral drama finds at
 best a listing under pastoral or idyllic poetry

Despite this change in tone in Die Laune, it is clear that generic conventions inhibit the kind of emancipation exemplified in certain of the Neue Lieder: harmony is achieved, and lovers, not to mention aberrant individuals, are truly trapped within the bounds of Arcadia. Some insight into this adherence to generic conventions and Goethe's break with such normative poetics will be gleaned from closely examining the first of the two constants of Goethe scholarship on Die Laune, namely, that it represents the acme of the pastoral play genre, as in Wolfgang Kayser's designation, "Gipfel des ganzen deutschen Schäferspiels" (HA, IV, 470).

This turns out to be an inexact judgment for it must be stressed that the "culmination" mentioned by Kayser is one established by literary history and not one seen in actual eighteenth-century practice.¹⁶ An oddity that must be faced in regard to Die Laune and its position within a literary

("Hirtendichtung" in Sulzer); it is not even included in Newald/De Boor, in Otto Mann's Geschichte des deutschen Dramas, or in Walter Hinck's Handbuch des deutschen Dramas, to cite a few random titles.

¹⁶ Though nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary historians consider Die Laune "das vollendetste deutsche Schäferspiel" (Goethe-Handbuch, II, 422), it would not have been looked on in that light at the time it was written, primarily because it was not received at all. The only receptors were a few friends of Goethe. Its first performance was in front of a court audience in Weimar in 1777, and it was first published in 1806. It is, of course, not included in Sulzer's article on "Hirtendichtung" (1792), which comments on the pleasing versification of Sylvia -- thus, Gellert's play might be said to culminate this tradition.

tradition is the paucity of a pastoral play tradition at all. Kindler's Neues Literatur Lexikon refers to the pastoral plays of the 1740s as a "Spätphase" of European pastoral poetry (VI, 483) , but prior to Gottsched's Atalanta, there were no pastoral plays in German.¹⁷ Gottsched's play, as was Gottsched's practice, varied an Italian model, Guarini's Il pastor fido (1590),¹⁸ which prompted one contemporary critic to remark: "5 Akte sind freilich für solch eine Pastorale zu viel, denn man bildet Daphnis und Daphne nicht über Lebensgröße in Sandstein, sondern als Nippes in Porzellan" (quoted in Rühle, 8). Thus, most pastoral plays that follow Atalanta abandoned Gottsched's unwieldy five-act heroical/tragic format, and, like the popular one-act Lustspiele of the 1740s, focused in a handful of scenes on the single action of bringing a character to the proper behavior in love: Johann Christoph Rost's Die gelernte Liebe (1742); Gleim's Der blöde Schäfer (1742); Sylvia, oder Die Braut ohne Bräutigam (1743) by J.G.L.v.A.; K.G. Gärtner's Die geprüfte Treue (1744); and

¹⁷ Rühle mentions the five predecessors of Atalanta listed in Erdwin Koch's 1840 Compendium der deutschen Literaturgeschichte, only to dismiss them as bearing "einen mythologisch-allegorisch-opernhaften Charakter ... [Sie] gehören in der Kategorie der Pastoralen, nicht der Schäferspiele" (4-5).

¹⁸ Including, for example, the character who rejects his human nature by rejecting love in favor of hunting, the characters who have fallen in love with each other but turn out to be brother and sister, etc.

Gellert's Das Band (1744) and Sylvia (1745).¹⁹ It was these plays that led to Schlegel's 1746 satire.

Schlegel's satire, however, was a storm in a teacup, for between 1746 and 1756, when Geßner's Idyllen appeared, an event that may be said to mark a watershed in the treatment of pastoral subjects, Goedeke lists only thirty-three pastoral plays.²⁰ They bear such titles as "Das Kätzgen," "Das Strumpfband," "Die Spröde," and "Der Betrug bey der Schäferey," by authors like J.W. Jelpke and Johann David Herrmann. A few plays contained five acts (for instance, the anonymous Corydon from 1743); a few even have three (e.g., Die glückliche Eifersucht, anonymous, 1749); but whether any of these plays were performed or known to Goethe through publication is uncertain.²¹ Such was the pastoral play "tradition" in Germany, one that was long over by 1767, when Goethe began writing Die Laune.

More remarkable in connection with Goethe's revival of this superannuated form is that his adherence to models and

¹⁹ Data from Goedeke, VI, § 215.

²⁰ This figure is obviously inexact. Neither of Geßner's two pastoral plays (1765), Evander (which combines the story of Daphnis and Chloe in a five-act prose play resuming Il Pastor Fido) and the one-act prose Erast (a domestic idyll about finding one's father -- another lament at the loss of the old order?), bears much relation in structure or content to the plays discussed here.

²¹ Neither Hermann nor Jelpke is cited in the index to Der junge Goethe. Neither makes it into Kosch's Deutsches Theater-Lexikon (1953) either, although Jelpke is cited in the third edition of Das Dichter-Lexikon.

generic conventions was taking place at a time when the boundaries of dramatic art had been radically redrawn. Lessing's 17th Literaturbrief, published in 1759, challenged Gottsched's theater reforms while invoking the ghost of Shakespeare as a model for German dramatists, and the Hamburgische Dramaturgie began appearing in April 1767, two months after Goethe began to work on Die Laune. Gottsched, still alive when Goethe was studying in Leipzig, is mentioned in Goethe's Leipzig correspondence more as a figure of scorn than of literary seriousness, but it is Atalanta, oder die gezwungene Sprödigkeit that stands as godfather to the one-act pastoral play in nine scenes and alexandrine meter that Goethe wrote between February 1767 and April 1768. If Goethe had written dozens of poems in Anacreontic meter in the mode of Gleim, there could scarcely be a more faithful external adherence to the best examples of the pastoral plays that followed Gottsched, namely Gellert's Sylvia and Das Band.

Though Goethe mentions in his autobiography that tragedy had almost disappeared from the German stage at mid-century, the names of some of his earliest dramatic attempts, from both Frankfurt and Leipzig, evoke the very types of works recommended by Gottsched: "Der Thronfolger Pharaos," "Isabel," "Joseph," "Selima," and "Ruth."²² None

²² "Daher plegt sie [die Tragödie] sich lauter vornehmer Personen zu bedienen, die durch ihren Stand, Namen und Aufzug mehr in die Augen fallen ..." (Versuch, 99). For

of these ambitious efforts reached completion, although from the evidence of his letters Goethe had hopes for a five-act biblical drama, "Belsazar." All of these were consigned to an auto-da-fé, described in an October 1767 letter to Cornelia, at the time when he was working assiduously on Die Laune and also when Die Mitschuldigen probably began to ferment. A possible forerunner of Die Laune, "Amine," a copy of which Goethe left behind in Frankfurt and which has variously supported or vitiated a biographical interpretation of Die Laune has never been found (Roetteken, 184-86).

These early attempts, which have been mainly reconstructed from his letters, testify to Goethe's earliest poetic ambitions, and testify that they were scarcely different from those of many other German writers working in this period. Codrus, for instance, by Johann Friedrich von Cronegk (1731-1758), which won Nicolai's competition for best tragedy in 1756 (Köster, 81) and which was performed in Leipzig on 5 March 1766 (Max Herrmann, 185), had as its subject matter the suicide of an Athenian king for his country. Cronegk's Olint und Sophronia, which opened the Hamburg National Theater and thus served in a devastatingly

a thorough discussion of Goethe's early rejects, see Paul Merker, Von Goethes dramatischem Schaffen. I have to a certain extent bracketed from the present discussion the effect of the new dispensation of the Enlightenment concerning what Willey has referred to as the "steady decline in ... the tragic sense of life" (10). I will return to this in Chapter 5.

negative review as the subject of Lessing's first Hamburgische Dramaturgie in April 1767, was a Christian martyr's tragedy. Even Christian Felix Weiße, whose derivative plays were among the most frequently performed German plays on the Leipzig stage between 1766 and 1768 (von Biedermann, 82-86), was a model of innovation in comparison to the young Goethe.

One aspect that differentiates Goethe from his poetic predecessors and contemporaries is that he did not follow one poetic style. His early dramatic plans suggest, however, that he tried over and over and failed. Absent other evidence, it is difficult to establish a precise affinity on Goethe's part, but Die Laune's completion demonstrates his continuing interest in the pastoral play form, which dates from the above-mentioned "Amine," begun in Frankfurt. The long struggle that Goethe underwent in bringing the play to completion -- his Leipzig letters show him at work on Die Laune for over a year -- also suggest some kind of special literary imperative, however revealing a simple one-to-one correspondence may be. This brings me to the second constant in the critical response to Die Laune, the jealousy that critics find mirrored by Goethe's relationship with Käthchen Schönkopf (Eridon = jealousy = Goethe's relationship with Käthchen). With the resolution of that relationship and of his intense feelings of jealousy -- evidenced in the letters of fall 1767 to his friend and

mentor Ernst Wolfgang Behrisch (1738-1809) -- Goethe was supposedly able to bring the play to completion. This was the same resolution ("Gewältigung") that was sounded in connection with both the "Annette" poems and Neue Lieder: "... man sieht, wie auch diese Jugenddichtung [i.e., Die Laune] schon ein Blatt aus seiner großen Konfession ist, während die süßen Gebilde der Schäferpoesie sonst nur leeres Spiel der Fantasie waren" (Werner, 195).²³

It is manifestly true that jealousy is on the surface the major subject of Die Laune, which leads to a resolution that in turn integrates Eridon into the pastoral fold. Goethe's letters of this period also give voice to jealousy regarding Käthchen.²⁴ But is it true that Käthchen is the object of Goethe's jealousy? Or is the portrayal of jealousy a reenactment of what really stirs Goethe's passions, namely his literary interests and ambitions, in

²³ "Die Laune des Verliebten gilt [Goethe] ... als beispielhaftes Zeugnis für [den] Bekenntnischarakter seiner Werke: Er habe darin seine von Eifersucht beherrschte Liebe zu Anna Katharina Schönkopf ... 'zu einer quälenden und belehrenden Buße, dramatisch zu behandeln' versucht. Diese Formulierung [from Dichtung und Wahrheit] zeigt an, wie sehr freilich schon in Goethes dramatischem Erstling die Erlebnisunmittelbarkeit in einer literarischen 'Gewältigung' distanziert wird, die vom wachen Kunstbewußtsein des jungen Dichters beredtes Zeugnis ablegt," Kindler, VI, 483).

²⁴ In an important respect the jealousy described in these letters was rather academic, for, as an eighteen-year-old, Goethe was not in a position to contemplate having possession of Käthchen Schönkopf, i.e., marry her. Marriage is in any case beside the point, for it is love and not marriage that is at issue in pastoral. With some exceptions: Guarini's Il Pastor Fido and Shakespeare's As You Like It, which reflect dynastic necessities.

the widest sense, and his attempt to insinuate himself onto the literary stage dominated by Lessing?

His letters reveal these ambitions. The earliest preserved Leipzig letter, written to Cornelia on 12 October 1765, two weeks after he left Frankfurt, frames him as a poet. Barely sixteen years old, he quotes from the Deutsche Schaubühne translation of a play by the Danish playwright Holberg (1684-1754)²⁹ and speaks of himself as "wir Poeten." Not many days later (18 October 1765) he confides to Cornelia his plans to write plays ("Je plains les pauvres pieces de theatre").³⁰ The first preserved letter to Riese, his Frankfurt friend, contains what will be a frequent motif in these letters: "Ich gehe in die Commödie. Wir haben sie recht schön hier" (20 October 1765).

The letters written during his Leipzig student days show the deepest immersion in literature, his familiarity with what might be called canonical in the late 1760s, but they include as well a wide and eclectic variety of literary references, from Cicero and Pliny (the influence of Gellert perhaps) to Madame Riccoboni (author of epistolary novels), Pope, Boileau, Tasso, and Christian Weiße, and portray a voracious search for literary models. Stuart Atkins'

²⁹ Brambaras, oder der großsprecherische Offizier appeared in volume 3 of Gottsched's Deutsche Schaubühne in 1741 (DjG, I, 452).

³⁰ As noted in the previous chapter, I cite Goethe's from letters, with all their orthographic and spelling irregularities, as they appear in Der junge Goethe.

analysis of these early letters demonstrates convincingly that they represent a training ground in literary technique, particularly epistolary technique, that was to bear fruit in Goethe's first published novel (292). But, aside from this matter of his letters representing prose exercises, Atkins sees in them a poeticizing of emotions (296), particularly in the way Goethe describes in his letters subjects that can be found in, say, La nouvelle Héloïse. And though Atkins takes these Leipzig letters as "primarily personal," they attain artistic verisimilitude primarily because of their association with what Atkins calls a "central personality" (306).³¹

That Goethe, who would go on to become the major German writer, was writing a pastoral play in 1767 is odd enough, in light of what I have said concerning the pastoral play tradition. It would have been odder still, in view of the receptiveness his letters show to all literary influences, if he did not take some cognizance of the fact of bourgeois

³¹ I agree with Barker Fairley (in an article published almost simultaneously with Atkins') that Goethe was not suddenly struck with inspiration after meeting Herder and falling in love with Friedrike Brion in 1770, but I disagree with his contention that Goethe's letters were artless, uncouth, and showing "indifference to convention old or new" (163) or that these letters were an exercise in spontaneity, which later resulted in the spontaneous "Mailied" or the spontaneous creation of Werther (164). The use of this word "spontaneity," a characteristic of people in real life (unlike, say, of those stiff figures appearing on the pages of a play by Gottsched), underlines the kind of blurring of art and life that is a feature of writing and thinking about Goethe that probably dates to this period.

drama in Die Laune and of the major German playwright.³² An analysis of his letters in fact details the effects of this recognition, in the small vignettes contained in his letters at the time he was working on Die Laune.

First, Minna von Barnhelm, which was published at Easter 1767 in Berlin, in a single edition and collected in a volume of Lessing's Lustspiele. It was performed at the Leipzig theater on November 18, and Goethe also played the role of Werner in an amateur production at this time, the period in which, from the evidence of his letters, he was working most on Die Laune. I have not yet seen mention in the critical literature of the striking similarity between the characters of Egle in Die Laune and Minna, both of whom resort to homeopathic remedies to produce sensibleness in a man with an overflow of disrupting emotion. Egle, of course, is the enlightening shepherdess, not the suffering lover, but like Minna she resorts to a ploy to achieve the needed restoration of harmony. This kind of plot intrigue is standard operating Lustspiel procedure.³³ And even

³² At the risk of being imprecise my use of bourgeois drama encompasses "weinerlich," etc.

³³ The action, concerning the attempt to bring a jealous lover to a sensible conception of love, is one of those character deformations that Enlightenment comedies have as their special task to cure. And, as in such comedies, this is achieved by a particularly strong form of intrigue. Die Laune is at the same time as focused as any neo-classical tragedy, foregoing the subsidiary characters and props of Gellert's plays. There is no hectoring mother or any realistic detail, as in Das Band. The only props are flowers, and the only indication of setting is an unseen

though Eridon's jealousy is a vice, he is recognized as a "moral" person (Steinmetz, 45), capable of being reasoned with; thus, the similarities between Tellheim's exaggerated sense of honor and Eridon's extreme jealousy. If for no other reason than chronological proximity, I think that one might give a certain weight to the influence of Minna von Barnhelm on Die Laune. As revealing as such correspondences ("Egle = sensible girl = Minna") may be, they are simple in comparison with the complex relationship that exists between Die Laune and Lessing's Miss Sara Sampson.³⁴ In this regard it really serves us well to look closely at the evidence of Goethe's letters, again not so much in terms of biography or experience as in terms of literary models.

The chronology of progress on Die Laune shows that Goethe was writing precisely in the period in which Lessing was, so to speak, center stage in Leipzig and in German letters in general, from February 1767 through April 1768. The first mention of the play occurs in passing in a letter to Cornelia of 15 May 1767, but it is treated in more detail, in an exceptionally long letter, also to Cornelia,

"Fest." Die Laune has a simple action to which all elements of the play are subordinate, which is very much in line with Gottsched's dictum: "Die ganze Fabel hat nur eine Hauptabsicht, nämlich einen moralischen Satz; also muß sie auch nur eine Haupthandlung haben, um derentwillen alles übrige vorgeht."

³⁴ Köster has characterized Sara as a "weinerliche[s] Drama mit tragischem Ausgang" (168).

dated 14 October 1767.³⁵ In this letter he writes appreciatively of her criticism of the play, particularly in connection with the character of Amine, and he also mentions that he has been working on it for eight months, thus since February, "aber es will noch nicht parieren, ich lasse mich nicht dauern ganze Situationen zwey, drey Mahl zu bearbeiten ..." In the same letter he requests her to have their friend Brevillier burn "Amine," referring to a Frankfurt play of this name. He expresses his regret at not having taken this "Schäferspiel" with him when he left Frankfurt, since he would undoubtedly have included it in the auto-da-fé of his Frankfurt works described in the same letter.

A few days later (17 October) Goethe promises to let Behrisch see Die Laune: "du sollst's bald kriegen, du wirst's nicht mehr kennen es ist ganz geändert," and a 24 October letter to Behrisch, in which he alludes to his jealousy of Käthchen ("Liebe für einen Dritten"), contains a self-reference from the play: "Ein Herz das Einem liebt, kann keinen Menschen hassen." The next mention is a 20 November letter to Behrisch, in which he writes: "Der Brief muß heute fort und ich habe nicht grossen Trieb zum Schreiben, Apropos wenn du mein Schäferspiel sehen solltest, du würdest es nicht mehr kennen, es sind nicht hundert Verse stehen geblieben, alles umgeschmolzen. Bald wird es ganz

³⁵ This is letter 29 in DjG, where it is dated "[Leipzig, 12-14 Oct. 1767]". The letter, divided into installments, is dated by Goethe at the end as 14 October.

performiert seyn." A 4 December letter, also to Behrisch, contains the following reference: "Ich habe seit deiner Abreise sonst gar nichts gemacht. Mein Schäferspiel liegt gar, ob es gleich ziemlich fertig ist, und mir an einigen Stellen selbst gefällt." The last two references to the play, in March and April of 1768, allude to the number of corrections and revisions it has undergone. In the latter letter he finally includes the play for Behrisch to read and asks for his opinion.

These references to the play coincide with references in the letters to Käthchen Schönkopf, who, however, is always called "Annette." In the same October 1767 letter in which he informs Cornelia of his work on Die Laune, he makes a rather distanced observation about his "kleine[] Wirtin": "Sie ist ein recht gutes Mädgen, das ich sehr liebe, sie hat die Hauptqualität daß sie ein gutes Herz hat, das durch keine allzugroße Lektüre verwirrt ist, und läßt sich ziehen." A letter to Behrisch, on the other hand, likewise from early October, centers on his jealousy. The following is his description of Käthchen's reaction at encountering one of the male boarders of the Schönkopf house: "Diese Bewegung [rubbing her eye] kenne ich schon an meinem Mädgen. Wie oft hat sie ihre Röhte, ihre Verwirrung vor ihrer Mutter zu verbergen eben das gethan, um die Hand schicklich ins Gesicht bringen zu können." That Goethe is already working the theme of jealousy through literary models is suggested

by the topos of the suspicious mother, which can be seen in Gellert's Das Band. In that play the mother, Daphne, is continually spying out signs of love in her daughter. At the mention of her daughter's lover in scene 2, Daphne says: "Vielleicht hat ihn Montan -- Doch warum wirst du roth?"³⁶

The long letter of 10 November 1767 to Behrisch supposedly provides compelling evidence for experience, i.e., Goethe's jealousy and troubled relationship with Käthchen. Thus, Weißfels regards this letter as another instance of "experience" -- as in the "Umwälzung im Innern des Dichters"³⁷ that was leading to his Sturm und Drang period. This letter, as I hope to show, bears more directly on Lessing. In other words, the on-going chronicle represents literary self-stylization.³⁸ Even the way the letter is broken up into segments ("Abends um 7 Uhr"; "um 8

³⁶ The letter to Cornelia just cited also contains a description of Goethe's habit, in good weather, of taking a walk a mile from Leipzig and eating "Milch und Brodt" (DjG, I, 142/11). The end of Gellert's Das Band has the group of shepherd-lovers engaging in the same activity.

³⁷ In his Goethe im Sturm und Drang, quoted in Wolfgang Martini (48).

³⁸ In a 13 February 1769 letter to Friederike Oeser, Goethe replies to her criticism of such poetic stylization: "Ich sah dass Sie meynten, Poesie und Lügen wären nun Geschwister, und der Herr Briefsteller könnte wohl ein ehrlicher Mensch, aber auch ein starcker Poete seyn, der aus Vorteil für das Clair obscuür, oft die Farben etwas stärker, und die Schatten etwas schwärzer aufstriche, als es die Natur thut."

Uhr") suggests this, particularly the epistolary novels of Richardson.³⁹

Abends um 7 Uhr.

Ha Behrisch das ist einer von den Augenblicken! Du bist weg, und das Papier ist nur eine kalte Zuflucht, gegen deine Arme. O Gott, Gott. - Laß mich nur erst wieder zu mir kommen. Behrisch, verflucht sey die Liebe. O sähst du mich, sähst du den elenden, wie er raßt, der nicht weiß gegen wen er raßen soll, du würdest jammern. Freund, Freund! Warum hab ich nur Einen?

um 8 Uhr.

Mein Blut läuft stiller, ich werde ruhiger mit dir reden können. Ob vernünftig? das weiß Gott.

The cause of such consternation is ostensibly Käthchen:

"Meine Geliebte! Ah sie wird's ewig sein. Sieh Behrisch in dem Augenblicke da sie mich rasen macht fühle ich's. Gott, Gott warum muß ich so lieben. Noch einmal angefangen. Annette macht -- nein nicht macht. Stille, stille ich will dir alles in der Ordnung erzählen." What follows, in several installments, resembling the above-mentioned lengthy letter to Cornelia ("Mitwochs früh"; "Abends um 8"; "Freytags um 11. Nachts"; "Sonnabends"), is something between a novelette (first-person epistolary form, detailing the depths of jealousy with its attendant sickness and fevers followed by the sweet pleasures of consolation and

³⁹ The letter is dated "Dienstags den 10 Octb [November] 67." See DjG, II, 466 and Goethe Jahrbuch 7 (1886):3 regarding the dating.

healing) and a play (with all the letters -- "Billiet" -- and messages, entrances and exits, that propel the action in contemporary drama).

In the course of the letter, Minna von Barnhelm is mentioned (DjG, I, 151, l. 36), a reference that takes us back in time, from Tuesday to Sunday. Goethe writes that he has used as a pretext his participation in an amateur production of Minna to go see Käthchen at the Obermanns, where she was visiting. This did not produce the kind of intimate encounter he hoped for; instead she was cold to him. Her coldness, he reports, continued and "verursachte mir solches Aergerniß, daß ich Montags Abends in ein Fieber verfiel ...". While in this fever he learns of her intention to go to the theater that evening, which causes his condition to worsen: "Eben hatte das Fieber mich mit seinem Froste geschüttelt, und bey dieser Nachricht wird mein ganzes Blut zu Feuer! Ha! In der Comoedie! Zu der Zeit da sie weiß daß ihr Geliebter krank ist" (DjG, I, 152, ll. 22-23). This is mirrored by the situation in Die Laune in which Eridon becomes insanely jealous because Amine wants to go dance. Eridon refuses to attend the "Fest," precisely because he can't bear to see others paying court to Amine:

Könnt ich mich nur gewöhnen,
Zu sehn, daß mancher ihr beim Tanz die Hände
drückt,
Der eine nach ihr sieht, sie nach dem andern
blickt.
Denck ich nur dran, mein Herz möcht da für Boßheit
reißen. (447-450)

Goethe, on the other hand, breaking off from his letter to Behrisch, rises from his sick bed and rushes to the theater to spy on Annette. He gets a place in the upper balcony: "Ha! ein neuer Streich. Meine Augen sind schwach, und reichen nicht biß in die Logen. Ich dachte rasend zu werden ..." But, never mind, his neighbor in the stalls conveniently has a second pair of binoculars: "Ich sah hinunter, und fand ihre Loge -- Oh Behrisch --." What Goethe sees with some emotion is a constellation that includes Annette's mother, her brother, "ein kleines Mädgen," and "Herr Ryder." His reaction: "Dencke mich! Dencke mich! auf der Gallerie! mit einem Fernglaß --, das sehend! Verflucht! Oh Behrisch ich dachte mein Kopf spränge mir für Wuth."

That all this may be pure literary stylization is suggested by comparing this thrilling scene with one in a letter to Behrisch from the previous year (8 October 1766).⁴⁰ It too begins with a Richardsonian touch ("du secretaire de ma petite!"), but its interest here stems from the conjunction of rival for Käthchen's affections and theater-going:

Elle est s'en allee, mon cher, mon bon Behrish, elle est allee a la comedie, avec sa mere et avec son pretendu futur, qui cherche a lui plaire part cent parties de plaisir. C'est une chose tres agreable a voir, digne de l'observation d'un connoisseur, un homme s'efforcant a plaire,

⁴⁰ This is letter 13 in DjG. See the notes to this letter regarding the dating.

inventieux, soigneux, toujours sur ses pieds, sans en remporter le moindre fruit, qui donneroit pour chaque baisers deux louis au pauvres, et qui n'en aura jamais, et de voir apres cela, moi immobile dans un coin, sans lui faisant quelque galanteries sans dire une seule fleurette, regardé de l'autre comme un stupide qui ne sait pas vivre, et de voir a la fin apportés a ce stupide des dons pour les quels l'autre feroit un voyage a Rome. -- Je voulois partir en meme temps, lorçequelle sortit, mais pour m'en empecher elle me donna la clé de son secretaire, avec le plein pouvoir d'y faire ou d'y ecrire ce que je voudrois. Elle me dit en partant, restez la jusqu'aceque je revienne, vous avez toujours quelque folie en tete soit en vers, soit en prose, mettez la sur le papier comme il vous plaira. Je dirai au pere quelque galimathias pourquoi vous restes la haut, s'il peut penetrer la verite qu'il la penetre. Elle me laissa encore deux belles pommes, present de mon rival. Je les ai mangées elles etoit d'un gout excellent.

Let us likewise consider the theater fare in Leipzig in October 1766: it included Medon by Christian Auguste Clodius and Johann Elias Schlegel's 1743 play Hermann, which inaugurated the new theater. Von Biedermann (82-83) lists the following plays as having been performed in the preceding months of 1766: Die Mütterschule, a comédie larmoyante by Nivelles de la Chaussee; Codrus by Cronegk; Der Derwish, a French-style comedy; Das Herrenrecht by Voltaire; Der gelehrte Ignorant by du Vaure; Amalie by Weiße; and Der poetische Dorfjunker, a reworking by Mrs. Gottsched of a play by Destouches.

Compare the situation a year later. In the midst of all his feverish agitation at seeing Käthchen courted by another suitor, Goethe unobtrusively lets the reader know the play that is being performed: "Man spielte Miss Sara,"

of which he claims to notice nothing because of the distraction caused by the other scene, Herr Ryder leaning close to Annette and probably whispering in her ear. Terms for observing Käthchen at the center of such attention, which cause Eridon such pain in Die Laune, abound here: "Es kamen mir Tränen in die Augen, aber sie waren vom scharfen sehen ..."; "[ich] wollte nach Hause gehen, und dir schreiben, und da hielt mich der Anblick wieder, und ich blieb"; "Das alle glaubte ich zu sehen." On one level this vision of the beloved being courted by a rival in the context of theater-going produces jealousy, just as in Die Laune Eridon is pained by the sight of Amine surrounded by admiring shepherds.

The year before, however, as part of a similar three-way constellation, his reaction had been one of insouciance, but a year before Goethe's competition had been Clodius, a professor of philosophy and poesy in Leipzig, and Schlegel, who, despite exceptional promise, had been dead twenty years. That Goethe did not consider Clodius' Medon a serious rival is clear from a later letter (4 December 1767) in which he castigates Behrisch for having mentioned him in the same breath as Clodius:

Ich schreibe da eine Scene, :wenigstens ein Stück [Tugendspiegel] davon: mit vieler Mühe ab, und zu allem Dancke vergleicht sie der Herr mit dem Medon. Nun wahrhaftig du sollst weder das übrige von dieser Scene, noch das ganze Stück zu sehen kriegen, wenns fertig ist. Hätte ich Kinder, und einer sagte mir: sie sehen disem oder jenem ähnlich, ich setze sie aus wenn's wahr wäre, und

wäre es nicht wahr so sperrte ich sie ein; alle meine Scenen will ich verbrennen wenn sie dem Medon ähnlich sehen.⁴¹

Without dismissing personal content (jealousy toward Käthchen), unconscious rivalry toward Lessing cannot be dismissed in the 10 November letter. For, returning home from the theater, he writes: "Es schlägt neune, nun wird sie aus seyn, die verdammte Comoedie. Fluch auf sie." The next installment ("Mitwochs früh") continues in this vein: "Ich habe eine schreckliche Nacht gehabt. Es träumte mir von der Sara."⁴²

The tendency of Goethe to clothe himself in the raiment of his literary forebears is suggested by another reference in the same letter. In it I discern an allusion to The Vicar of Wakefield (German edition, 1767) that should put to rest the question whether Goethe was familiar with that work before the disputed scene in Dichtung und Wahrheit in which Herder reads aloud from the work to the Strassburg Goethe.⁴³

⁴¹ Book 7 of Dichtung und Wahrheit contains several negative evaluations of Clodius, as well as of Medon, "dessen Weisheit, Großmut und Tugend wir unendlich lächerlich fanden, so sehr auch die erste Vorstellung des Stücks beklatscht wurde" (HA, IX, 303).

⁴² Goethe's apparent ambivalence toward Lessing at this time can be seen in his 14 February 1769 letter to Oeser, an ambivalence that probably stems from Oeser's influence on Goethe. See DjG, II, 491-92. Goethe mentions in Book 8 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, with decided remorse, that he missed the opportunity of meeting Lessing in Leipzig, the effect, again, of Oeser's partisanship for Winckelmann.

⁴³ See the bibliographic references to the Sesenheim idyll in Chapter 5.

Goethe, having recovered from the fever of jealousy described in the earlier portions of the letter, mentions a friend of Behrisch's named Auguste: "Sieh, ich habe sie lieb, ob ich gleich ihr zu Liebe nicht das Fieber kriege. Guter Junge, ich will sie noch sehen. Sie wird wohl so gut seyn und warten biß ich nach Dresden komme, und geht sie nach Eulenberg; so geb ich mich für einen Stud. Theol. aus und besuche den Papa" (DjG, I, 155, ll. 31-34). What we see here, beyond Goethe's employment of literary references -- say, "Umsonst sagt Schäckesp. Schwachheit dein Nahme ist Weib" in the same letter -- or even his framing of the drama of jealousy vis-à-vis Annette as if it were a "weinerliche Kommödie," is his cloaking of life in literature.

Assuming such a relationship between Eridon's jealousy at seeing Amine the center of attention and Goethe's jealousy at seeing Lessing's success -- in other words, that jealousy of the major playwright is buried in this early effort -- what does it suggest about the issues of individuality, freedom, and the poetic subjectivity that I am suggesting Goethe constructed in his work? Die Laune's generic conventions, after all, resulted in a happy end and the restoration of harmony, the shepherding of the aberrant shepherd into the arcadian fold, just as the conventions of the Lustspiel produced a happy ending in Minna von Barnhelm. An answer to this question can be found if one looks at how Lessing solved the problem of the love relationship in Sara.

Miss Sara Sampson on its surface underlines the incompatibility of eros and family, which is what initially propels the drama, namely the choice of a marriage partner, the subject of countless eighteenth-century fictions.⁴⁴ Such a choice, what Habermas has termed entering into purely human relations (48), is what Sara, as a female, obviously cannot negotiate and thus she remains fatefully caught between family ties and lover. Without making Lessing into an Ibsen avant le lettre, I think his work suggests a flaw at the heart of the bourgeois family. The somewhat hopeful prospect of family continuity achieved at the end of Sara, for instance, Sir William's adoption of Mellefont's child, is achieved only after a murder and a suicide. While the relation between Sir William and his daughter can be viewed from various positions -- his failure to protect her from Mellefont, at one extreme, to an almost overbearing and incestuous attachment, at the other -- the death of Sara's mother at Sara's birth and the perverseness of Marwood as mother contribute to a disturbed family configuration. Sara's death, of course, prevents her from becoming a mother.

⁴⁴ This is not obscured by the fact that Sara, like Richardson's heroines, goes off with a man not economically independent and thus temporarily precluded from forming an independent marriage choice. I might suggest, in the German context, that it is Sara's "spoilation," so to speak, which disallows a happy ending, despite her father's apparent intention to legitimate a union between her and Mellefont.

On a deeper level, the play is about the male's conflicting desires for freedom and for love. The continuance of family after all can only be assured if the male is willing or can be coerced to enter into legal conjugal relations, and this is clearly in question in the case of Mellefont. As Köster has aptly put it, he is a man with two souls in his breast -- "Laster und Tugend" (168). Not at all promising is his reaction at the news that Sir William intends to welcome Sara back, with Mellefont as son-in-law, news joyfully received by Sara: "Sie ... die mir ihre Tugend aufgeopfert hat! ... Und doch ... der melancholische Gedanke, auf zeitlebens gefesselt zu sein" (4.2.). Marwood's warning to Sara emphasizes this trait of Mellefont: "... gesetzt, Sie brächten ihn dahin, daß er seinen nunmehr zur Natur gewordenen Abscheu gegen ein förmliches Joch überwinden müßte: glaubten Sie wohl dadurch seines Herzens versichert zu sein?" (4.8)⁴⁵

What relates this to Die Laune is the entrapment of people in relationships. Eridon's excessive jealousy is pathological, as much so as Galathea's strangling of the poor blackbird in Gellert's Das Band -- in both plays, the genre is being stretched to its limits by behavior, as J.A. Schlegel pointed out in 1746, that is not genre-specific.

⁴⁵ Compare Marwood's poisoning of Sara with Goethe's comment to Behrisch concerning Käthchen in the 10 November letter: "Aber ich liebe sie. Ich glaube ich träncke Gift von ihrer Hand."

In the end, however, the generic conventions perform their containing function. At the end of Das Band the shepherds go off for a glass of milk, and in Die Laune they presumably head for the Fest. But Die Laune is also about freedom, allowing Amine freedom to pursue certain pleasures so that love can continue.

Wird nicht Deine Lust vermehret,
Wenn Du das Thierchen siehst, das Dich so zärtlich
liebt,
Die Freiheit kennt, und Dir dennoch den Vorzug
giebt. (435-37)

Because this is a pastoral play this conflict is resolved, and freedom and love coexist on the same poetic plane. That such generic conventions were perceived as inadequate for newly felt contents, specifically the dilemma of love and freedom, is clear from Lessing's dramas or those of the Sturm und Drang period, which are populated by characters who have trouble solving their love relationships. For Lessing and for the moralist Schiller the only sure way to "secure" love in such star-crossed relationships was by death; other dramatists (Klinger, Lenz) show similarly stark situations, with dire effects for the females.

Though one must be cautious regarding a work that is indebted to so many literary influences (DjG, II, 505-506), Die Mitschuldigen is instructive here. The jarring, almost unpleasant nature of this play has been remarked upon, and I would suggest that this stems to a great extent from the same kind of mixing of forms that occurred in Neue Lieder

but with decidedly less felicitous results. On the one hand, the play is liberally represented by the sentiments and language found in Rococo poetry: female constancy and female virtue, tenderness and lust, dalliance and jealousy. There is the lack of privacy for tender moments between lovers, and there are attempts at seduction. On the other hand the play treats themes that belong in a vastly different poetic setting: a confining lack of money, a bad marriage, reproaches against a feckless husband, gambling debts, a theft, and betrayal by a parent.

The play also represents the result of Goethe's attempt to work the vein that was so profitable for Lessing at that moment. In Goethe's hands, the framework of the inn, which served Lessing so well in Minna and in Sara in terms of unity of place, seems to embody the claustrophobic atmosphere that characterizes Die Mitschuldigen from start to finish.⁴⁶ Though conjugal relations are restored at the end of this play, no one has ever suggested that this is a harmonious ending. Indeed, Goethe's attempts at dramatizing Lessing-style dilemmas -- Clavigo, Stella -- are not his most finished artistic works. The incompatibility between male and female, transfigured in Neue Lieder onto a high poetic plane, unavoidably comes off in the domestic setting

⁴⁶ Goethe is obviously still living in the world of verse. His continuing indebtedness to formal solutions as well as a recognition of the necessity of placing a barrier between art and life can be seen in the use of the alexandrine in this play.

of these plays (however vaguely characterized) as unpleasant. Clavigo's friend Carlos articulates the new imperatives, namely the relation between the new economics and the newly developing "subjectivity." While expressing the conflict quite crassly, he shows that the questioning of convention represents a European phenomenon:

Mich dünkt, man lebt nur Einmal in der Welt, hat nur Einmal diese Kräfte, diese Aussichten, und wer sie nicht zum besten braucht, wer sich nicht so weit treibt als möglich, ist ein Tor. Und heiraten! heiraten just zur Zeit, da das Leben erst recht im Schwung kommen soll! sich häuslich niederlassen, sich einschränken, da man noch die Hälfte seiner Eroberungen noch nicht gemacht hat!

A rejected female (Marie Beaumarchais), of course, without any independent economic base, can only "ihr Leben hinschleichen, hinjammern."

Much could be said about the strictness of generic conventions and the felicity of the solution: in Die Laune, order produces human harmony. Love and freedom coexist in Die Laune precisely because the lovers live in Arcadia, and Eridon and Amine remain there due to the conventions of the pastoral play.⁴⁷ The fact is, however, that in 1768 pastoral drama was dead, while the bourgeois drama could only produce such forced reconciliations as in Miss Sara

⁴⁷ Schöne (224) has pointed out the Rococo-style reconciliation between Goethe and Käthchen described in the 10 November 1767 letter to Behrisch: "... die Röhte, die Schaam, Liebe, Wollust, Furcht, auf die Wangen treiben, dies zitternde Bemühen sich aus meinen Armen zu winden, das mir durch seine Schwäche zeigt, daß nichts als F u r c h t, sie je herausreißen würde. Behrisch, das ist eine Seeligkeit, um die man gern ein Fegfeuer aussteht."

Sampson. Goethe took things the way they logically (following the economic imperative that liberated males) had to go, with the breakup of the individual from relationships. In the next chapter I will show Goethe's attempt to carve a sphere for the individual outside of Arcadia.

Chapter 3:
The Wanderer

Chapter 1 sought to show how the subjective voice created in certain of Goethe's Neue Lieder was wrested from Rococo poetry, specifically from the language of the male-female contest, by removing from the poetry its representation of the realm in which this contest took place and by setting it in a different poetic landscape. Goethe's originality thus lies, not in a break with traditional poetic models, but in a transformation of those models. In Paul Böckmann's words: "... in ihm lebt ein Formensinn, der nicht einfach die überkommenen Formenwelten hinter sich läßt, sondern sie ausdrucksstark zu verwandeln und zu erfüllen weiß ..." (629). In transforming the Anacreontic language of social play into one of "inwardness" (552) Goethe represents the lover as absent, separate, or departing from the beloved and as finding new value in this solitary state. At one extreme ("Die Nacht"), the poet experiences solitary rapture in the nocturnal forest after leaving the beloved; at the other ("Das Glück: An mein Mädchen"), the happiness stems from savoring love at a distance.

Chapter 2 attempted to show how such a process of separation from the site of love was inhibited by the generic conventions of the pastoral play, which had the effect of keeping the lovers together in Arcadia. Thus, inwardness could not achieve the "Eigenrecht" (Böckmann,

548) that it achieved in the Neue Lieder. Close analysis of Goethe's letters also sought to show that Goethe's treatment of the jealousy that threatened the pastoral order in the play was a staging of his literary rivalry toward Lessing, particularly the play Miss Sara Sampson, which itself reenacts the true threat to love relationships, namely, the incompatibility of freedom and love. This is a tension that the bourgeois drama in Germany was unable to solve.

These two models on which Goethe's earliest poetic efforts were formed represented the two sides of sharply divided debates in eighteenth-century Enlightenment culture concerning the function of poetry. Die Laune des Verliebten, in curing a lover of the vice of jealousy, replays thematics and morals of Enlightenment comedy which, in Gottsched's terms, "ist nichts anders als eine Nachahmung einer lasterhaften Handlung, die durch ihr lächerliches Wesen den Zuschauer belustigen, aber auch zugleich erbauen kann" (Versuch, 186). Anacreontic poetry, from which Goethe's "Annette" poems and the Neue Lieder derive, represented a softer approach to this aim of moral improvement. If Gottsched's opponents were not strictly of Dryden's view, that "delight is the chief, if not the only end of poetry," their discussions added a leavening of wit and fancy to the contests concerning the superiority of didacticism or pleasure.

Despite the immense amount of animosity and polemics generated by these debates throughout the eighteenth century, the opposing positions were united in one aspect, namely that literature, even in its most lyric manifestations, was mimetic, that art imitated Nature, not as she was but as she should be. The Aristotelian theory of mimesis was not solely an aesthetic theory but also explained the relationship of the human spirit to reality (Gerth, 32), and thus poetry emphasized the establishment of harmonious relations, whether between lovers or in the relations among members of a larger community. This aesthetics, as I have discussed in the previous chapters, reflected a belief in a larger cosmic order, hierarchically arranged, but attacks on orthodox religion in the course of the eighteenth century were the first steps in a process that likewise called this aesthetics into question. The troubled social and family relations in the plays of Lessing demonstrate, by the time Goethe began writing, that the underlying order of reality was in doubt.

The tensions articulated or implicit in Goethe's Leipzig works -- the conventional battle of the sexes transformed via the individual lyric voice into a new incompatibility; and the dilemma of freedom and love -- took place in a period when a third mode began to emerge that questioned the aesthetic task of mirroring reality, asserting instead the superiority of poetry created from the

poet's individual experience and vision. That the rejection of poetry directed toward a common social reality became coupled with a poetic persona loosened from all social anchoring was Goethe's achievement. This chapter seeks to show that Goethe in 1772, while continuing to base his poetry on imitation of existing structures and models, now made a broad leap, literarily speaking. His poetry began to incorporate a rejection of the intrinsic assumption of these structures, namely that individual existence receives its most important shaping precisely in its relations with others. After having removed love from the site of love, from its social context, he put into question the integrity of that context. His deployment of the motifs of the wanderer and the idyll forged a powerful metaphor of human existence -- an individual without attachment to traditional institutions or pieties and, moreover, the creator of his own existence. In a larger sense, the poetry became even more "art" than that of the Rococo, for it now inscribed its own self-consciousness in the poetry and its larger rejection of neoclassical poetic practice.

An examination of two poems, "Wanderers Sturmlied" and "Der Wanderer," will exemplify this transition. Both are products of the period that is variously characterized as "Sturm und Drang," "Irrationalismus," "Geniezeit," and the like, all of which express the newly emerging aesthetic. An early indication of the influence of the literary and

cultural factors suggested by such terms in connection with Goethe's work can be seen in a letter to Ernst Theodor Langer from mid-October 1769, in which he writes to his Leipzig friend: "Wenn je Gedichte [Neue Lieder] nicht unter Batteux Grundsatz gegangen sind, so sind's diese, nicht ein Strich Nachahmung, alles Natur." Though the "Annette" poems and Neue Lieder derived from Goethe's close study of models, including translations, by the end of the Leipzig period it was clear to Goethe that he was seeking to create something that was not imitation in the usual sense of the term. His continuing uncertainty about his work, however, is well attested by his frequently cited disinclination to publish it or even to make it available for criticism. A September 1771 letter reveals, for instance, that Goethe did not show the Leipzig poems to the more stringent Herder:

Es ist auch verplaudert worden [during a visit by Herder to Goethe's parents in Frankfurt while Goethe was still in Strassburg] dass ich f ü r - t r e f f l i c h e Wercke geschrieben habe. Meine Schwester weiss selbst nicht, warum sie sie, auf Ihr anhaltendes Gesuch nicht herausgeben wollte, es würde Ihnen nicht unangenehm gewesen seyn die Geschichte meiner Seele zu lesen, und den seltsamen Standort zukennen von dem ich damals die Welt sah.¹

An instructive case of the Zeitgeist as well as of the crucial importance of timing in achieving creative breakthroughs can be seen in the work of a slightly older contemporary, Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg (1737-1823).

¹ DjG, II, 67-68.

Gerstenberg's youthful diary, written during the years 1751 to 1757, bears remarkable similarities to Goethe's Leipzig letters. Much like Goethe's peppering of his letters with names of writers, the first page of Gerstenberg's diary lists the names of Bodmer, Pope, Schlegel, Ramler, Batteux, Baumgarten, Young, Winckelmann, Mendelssohn, Gottsched, Bossu, among others; praises Klopstock; and comments on the purpose of drama ("Besserung des Herzens") (Gerth, 13). His Tändeleien (1759) made him famous, but by 1766, precisely when Goethe was immersing himself in works like Tändeleien, Gerstenberg turned away from Anacreontic poetry and began publishing Briefe über Merkwürdigkeiten der Litteratur. These Briefe, modeled on Lessing's contributions to Nicolai's Literaturbriefe (1765) and Young's Conjectures (1759), also show the influence of Hamann's Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten (1759); in the forefront of Gerstenberg's criticism were the name Shakespeare (many of his ideas on Shakespeare were later to be found in Herder's 1773 essay on the English dramatist) and the concept of Genie.²

Goethe's letters between 1767 (when he was in Leipzig) and 1772 (when he was in Frankfurt again, after his year in Strassburg) describe a similar arc. One written to Oeser on 9 November 1768 and another to Herder on 10 July 1772 document Goethe's sense of apprenticeship, his learning of a poetic craft. More important -- and this is where the

² See the discussion in Gerth, particularly ch. 1.

comparison with Gerstenberg is instructive -- is the change in his self-understanding produced by the powerful effect of certain poetic models. To Oeser he writes:

Sie wissen was ich war da ich zu Ihnen kam, und was ich war da ich von Ihnen ging, der Unterschied ist Ihr Werck. Ich weiß wohl, es war mir wie Prinz Biribinckern nach dem Flammenbaade, ich sah ganz anders, ich sah mehr als sonst; und was über alles geht, ich sah was ich noch zu thun habe, wenn ich was seyn will.³

Though the aspect of apprenticeship is still present in the later letter to Herder, the language in which he conveys his understanding of himself has become personalized: "Seit ich die Kraft der Worte *στήθος* [Brust] und *παραπιδες* [Zwerchfell] fühle, ist mir in mir selbst eine neue Welt aufgegangen. ... Auch hat mir endlich der gute Geist den Grund meines spechtischen Wesens entdeckt."⁴ It is in the matter of the source of poetic inspiration that the difference in self-conception can be best appreciated. In the letter to Oeser, Goethe speaks in traditional poetic terms ("Ja, Herr Professor wenn Sie meiner Liebe zu den Musen nicht aufgeholfen hätten ..."), whereas in the letter to Herder the Anacreontic muse has given way to a new vocabulary of individual mastery:

Wenn du kühn im Wagen stehst, und vier neue Pferde wild unordentlich sich an deinen Zügeln bäumen, du ihre Krafft lenckst, den austretenden herbey, den

³ Compare Clavigo: "... ich wäre nichts, wenn ich bliebe, was ich bin!"

⁴ No Greek accents are indicated in Goethe's letters.

aufbäumenden hinabpeitschest, und jagst und
 lenckst und wendest, peitschest, hältst, und
 wieder ausjagst biss alle sechzehn Füsse in einem
 Takt ans ziel tragen. Das ist Meisterschaft,
 επικρατειν, Virtuosität.

The source of this change can be measured by the differing references to writers and poets in Goethe's letters. Both those from Leipzig and those to Leipzig after his return to Frankfurt dwell on the same names: Lessing, Hagedorn, Gleim, Wieland, Richardson, Voltaire, Rousseau. He discusses the bardic poetry of Karl Friedrich Kretschmann (1738-1809) with Friederike Oeser and frames his own moods in Ossianic imagery. Though he is aware of Herder, linking him with Lessing, it is clear that Lessing is still the more prominent figure in his own thinking at this time: "[er] wird in Herders Wäldgen garstig Holz machen, wenn er drüber kömmt" (14 February 1769; see also letter of 30 November 1769). An entirely new set of literary preoccupations occurs in the post-Strassburg letters and, with it, the crystalization of a personalized poetic self-conception. Under the influence of Herder's first two Fragmente, the Greeks become his constant source of study ("Seit ich nichts von euch gehört habe, sind die Griechen mein einzig Studium. ... zuletzt zog mich was [!] an Pindarn wo ich noch hänge"). This occurs precisely at the moment when Pindar in particular was pressed into the service of poetry proclaiming the poet's individual genius and exalting the sublime, imagination, and a dithyrambic spirit that

abandoned rules, taste, and genres. There is a great deal of irony, of course, in the fact that Greek poetry, bound up with the strictest generic standards, incarnating "heteronomy," became the vehicle for poetic autonomy.⁵ As Hauser has put it, genius was understood in the Enlightenment as a higher intelligence bound by reason; in the Genie period it was the personification of an ideal characterized by lack of all ties (119).

The effect of this poetic ethos on Goethe, particularly its contribution to a notion of self-mastery, is interestingly complicated by his relationship to the other major literary movement of the period, Empfindsamkeit. In line with Goethe's praise of Pindar and the other great model of Genie, Shakespeare, his scorn for Wieland is announced ("alle Franzosen und angesteckte Deutsche, sogar Wieland"), the most important figure in the sentimentally influenced Enlightenment poetry of the 1770s, who earlier had been proclaimed as one of his teachers (along with

⁵ Jochen Schmidt's evaluation, that the fundamental ideas of the Genie movement find their most perfect expression in the hymns of Goethe's youth ("... der fundamentale Bezug des Genies zur spinozistisch verstandenen schöpferischen Allnatur, die Autonomie-Erklärung des ganz auf seine eigene Produktivkraft vertrauenden Menschen, sein Originalitätsbewußtsein, seine Wendung nach Innen: zur Sphäre elementarer Gefühle," I, 196), is a judgment in hindsight, similar to saying that Die Laune des Verliebten represents the high point of German pastoral poetry (see Chapter 2). Like Die Laune, "Wanderers Sturmlied" was not published anywhere near the time of its composition. Goethe had turned his back on that era when the poem first saw print, without his permission, in 1810.

Shakespeare and Oeser).⁶ Though often associated with Genie and Sturm und Drang, the ethos of Empfindsamkeit was in fact quite different. Its password, like that of the Sturm und Drang, was "feeling," but Sophie von la Roche neatly characterized the difference between the two in Das Fräulein von Sternheim when she spoke of "Empfindsamkeit für andre" and "die für uns allein." While there were those who viewed this contemporary movement as neurotic ("Empfindsamkeit ist Seelenhipochondria"),⁷ its manifestations were social: "Denn Empfindsamkeit und Menschen-Freundlichkeit sind gewisser maassen Synonimen."⁸ One of the most beloved and vilified documents of contemporary German sentimentalism, which displays the literary roots of this cult of feeling in the novels of Rousseau and Richardson, was the correspondence between Georg Jacobi and Gleim (1768/1772), which was the focus of satire and ridicule by Goethe and

⁶ "... andre hatten mir gezeigt dass ich fehlte, diese zeigten mir wie ich s besser machen sollte" (letter to P. Reich, 20 February 1770). The former reference to Wieland is from the 1771 essay on Shakespeare.

⁷ Christian Friedrich Timme, Der Empfindsame Maurus Pankrazius Ziprianus Kurt, auch Selmar genannt. Ein Moderoman. (Erfurt, 1782.) Quoted in Empfindsamkeit: Theoretische und kritische Texte (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976), p. 135.

⁸ Karl Daniel Küster, "Empfindsam," in K.D.K., Sittliches Erziehungs-Lexicon . . . (Magdeburg 1773). Quoted in Empfindsamkeit: Theoretische und kritische Texte (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1976), p. 9.

Herder (H. Nicolai, 9).⁹ A major difference in the two sides is reflected in their view of the function of poetry. According to Heinz Nicolai, the sentimentalists, sounding their social orientation and its derivation from the Enlightenment belief in cosmic hierarchies, saw poetry as "Mittel der Geschmacksbildung und der Erziehung zu vernünftig-graziöser Sittlichkeit" (27). Their works, which we often find artificial today precisely because they shortchange the aspirations of the individual, are heavily tilted toward morality, particularly the obligations of humans to their fellow man. For the Sturm und Drang, poetry had no other function than to serve "der künstlicherischen Selbstverwirklichung des Genies, dem dichterische und menschliche Existenz ein Ganzes ist" (27).

In the later, full-blown manifestations of Genie and sentimentalism, both of which tend to be regarded as a continuation of the general secularization of religious sentiments and the irrational-associationist psychological theories of the period, there was a recognition, particularly on the part of the sentimentalists, of where this secularization might lead, namely, "Das Bekenntnis zum Gefühl bedeutete ein Bekenntnis zum Individuellsten, zu einer seelischen Wirklichkeit, die sich -- im Gegensatz zum Denken -- allen Ordnungen und Normen entzog" (Gerth, 33).

⁹ Max Morris cites evidence that Goethe's poem "Flieh, Täubchen, flieh," was a satire of the Gleim-Jacobi correspondence.

Sentimentalists, however, did not remove themselves from all "orders and norms"; their literary monuments are couched in language that testifies that the highest meaning in life derived from relations of friendship, love, marriage, family, and so on. Sophie von la Roche's distinction ("Empfindsamkeit für andre") is indicative of the kind of morality associated with those "orders and norms" of bourgeois variety that the Sturm und Drang repudiated as artificial, effete, and weak,¹⁰ in contrast to its own passwords: nature, truth, originality of feeling, and strength (H. Nicolai, 10). In a statement that might have been directed at the activities of sentimentalists, Goethe wrote in 1771 in his "Shakespeare" essay:

Auf meine Herren! trompeten Sie mir alle edle Seelen, aus dem Elysium, des sogenanntten guten Geschmacks, wo sie schlaftruncken, in langweiliger Dämmerung halb sind, halb nicht sind, Leiden-schaffen im Herzen und kein Marck in den Knochen haben; und weil sie nicht müde genug zu ruhen, und doch zu faul sind um tähtig zu seyn, ihr Schatten Leben zwischen Myrten und Lorbeergebüschen verschlendern und vergähnen.

What makes the matter complex is that Goethe was loosely attached to the so-called Darmstadt circle, one of the best documented examples of a sentimental cult of friendship, principally because one of its members, Caroline Flachsland, was Herder's fiancée. This circle was

¹⁰ In Book 13 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, Goethe uses the term "Verweichlichung" (513) and connects the movement with the novels of Richardson, which "die bürgerliche Welt auf eine zartere Sittlichkeit gemacht [hatten]" (512).

literarily rooted, modeling itself on the cult of feeling and friendship celebrated in Klopstock's odes and stylizing its activities and sociability in imitation of Klopstock.¹¹ Like certain geographical settings, the poetry of Klopstock became an aide memoire to time spent together by members of the circle.¹² Though Herder did not spend much time in Darmstadt, he was a "corresponding member," filling his letters to Caroline with references to Klopstock that show how his poetry contributed to their communion of hearts ("Jedweder Brief mehr als eine Klopstocksche Ode!").¹³

Klopstock's transformation of what was already highly seraphic friendship poetry into an expression of holy intimacy and idealized union has been well documented.¹⁴ Members of the Darmstadt group, including Johann Heinrich Merck (1741-1791), Goethe's new friend and mentor, wrote poems modeled on Klopstock's odes. Goethe himself wrote three in May 1772, dedicated to three members of the

¹¹ Much of what follows is drawn from Meredith Lee's illuminating piece on the Darmstadt circle (hereafter cited as Lee/Darmstadt with page number).

¹² For an excellent example of a sentimental setting, see Fritz Jacobi's letter to Goethe, dated 26 August 1774, which can be found in DjG, III, 376-78.

¹³ The correspondence has been collected as Herders Briefwechsel mit Caroline Flachsland and published as volumes 39 (1926) and 41 (1928) of Schriften der Goethe Gesellschaft. Citations in this chapter are by date from this edition.

¹⁴ See, for instance, the works by Lee and Langen, cited in the Bibliography.

Darmstadt group, that evoke "his departure and existence apart from the Darmstadt circle in order to augment his celebration of the fellowship within it" (Lee/Darmstadt, 103).¹⁵ His penchant for friendship and sociability and his willing participation in the Darmstadt circle in the spring of 1772 have been well documented in Caroline Flachsland's letters: "Unser Freund Göthe ist zu Fuß von Frankfurt gekommen ... Wir waren alle Tage beysammen, und sind in den Wald zusammen gegangen und wurden auch zusammen durch und durch beregnet, Wir liefen alle unter einen Baum und Göthe sang uns ein Liedchen, das Sie aus dem Shakespear übersetzt ..." (13 April 1772). In another imitation of sentimental activities, Goethe appropriated a large and splendid rock and engraved his name on its face; but, as Caroline Flachsland noted, "Es kann aber Niemand darauf als er allein" (end of April 1772). In the summer of 1772, when he was in Wetzlar, he became acquainted with Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter and through him with the Göttinger Hain, all of whom were "im Glauben und Geiste um Klopstock versammelt."¹⁶

At the same time, though Klopstock stood somewhat aloof from the Genie movement, his poetry had a major influence on

¹⁵ These were "Elisium an Uranien" (Henriette von Roussillon); "Pilgers Morgenlied an Lila" (Luisa Ziegler); "Fels Weihengesang an Psyche" (Caroline Flachsland). Caroline Flachsland referred to these poems as "Empfindungsstücke" (25 May 1772 letter to Herder).

¹⁶ Dichtung und Wahrheit, Book 12. Goethe's ambivalent attitude toward sentimentalism should also be considered in connection with his experience with Pietism.

it. Here is Herder's characterization of Klopstock's language in the second Fragmente: "... in Worten neu, kühn und unförmlich; in Constructionen verflochten und unregelmäßig ... So auch das Sylbenmaas Gesetzlos ..." (Sämtliche Werke, I, 312). It was because of such language, its ability to evoke the "Sprache des Herzens," that Herder had praised Klopstock as the major German poet. In the first collection of Fragmente, which Goethe was studying in July 1772, Klopstock is even mentioned in connection with Shakespeare and Ossian (I, 437).¹⁷

Thus, though Goethe's enthusiasm for the Greeks in his letters showed him to be their willing apprentice, it was clear that Klopstock had already got there first, with his poem "Der Lehrling der Griechen," "clarifying what it meant to be their apprentice" (Lee/Darmstadt, 23). The language and all the rhetorical strategies of what, in the eighteenth century, had come to represent the ethos of the pindaric ode -- sublimity, enthusiasm, and irregularity, all expressive of great passion -- which stood in contrast to the Anacreontic ode, characterized by elegance, ornateness, artificiality, regularity, and gentle sentiments, had already been appropriated by Klopstock.¹⁸ All the

¹⁷ Hamann, Herder's own mentor, referred (in Aesthetic in nuce) to Klopstock as "dieser große Wiederhersteller des lyrischen Gesanges" and as the German Pindar (141).

¹⁸ See, e.g., Nicolai (7); J. Schmidt (I, 221). Viator excludes Goethe's "freirhythmische Gedichte" from his

contracted and apocopic forms that Minor and Sauer have documented in "Wanderers Sturmlied," the omission of articles, the superfluity or omission of pronouns, the piling up of attributes, the many inversions, anaphors, interjections, repetitions, and neologisms (42-43), are likewise characteristic of Klopstock's ode style.¹⁹ For someone as form-dependent and yet as creative as Goethe, his employment of the ode form in 1772 will be seen to evoke the double tension of sentimentality and Genie.

On its surface, "Wanderers Sturmlied" bears no discernible sentimental character, although most commentators set the date of its composition in April 1772, during the period of his intimacy with the circle of "Empfindsamen."²⁰ They take at face value Goethe's statement in Dichtung und Wahrheit, that the poem stemmed from an experience, the walk from Frankfurt to Darmstadt mentioned in Caroline Flachsland's letter, during which he

study of the ode (187), calling them "dithyrambs." Most of the previously cited studies of "Wanderers Sturmlied" speak of it as an ode and consider it in light of the ode theories of the eighteenth century. Goethe himself, enclosing the poem in a letter to Fritz Jacobi (31 August 1774), writes: "Hier eine Ode ..."

¹⁹ See also Reiff.

²⁰ Scholarship on "Wanderers Sturmlied" from which I have benefited includes articles by the following, all cited in fuller detail in the Bibliography: Paul Reiff; Wolfgang Michael; E. M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby; Leo Spitzer; Hermann J. Weigand; Arthur Henkel; Gerhard Kaiser; Heinrich Henel; Rolf Christian Zimmermann; Meredith Lee; Jochen Schmidt; and Karl Eibl.

was caught in a downpour. Goethe apparently did not show the poem to Herder, although it is generally considered almost impossible to assess this poem without Herder's influence. Only in August 1774 did he apparently feel he had found a like-minded soul in Fritz Jacobi, to whom he sent the poem.²¹ Goethe's own memory of events is notoriously unreliable (see especially my discussion of Sesenheim in ch. 5). For instance, he also says in Book 12 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, dealing with this period, that he utilized few gods in his works, because they had their residence beyond the bounds of the nature he knew how to represent (HA, IX, 537) -- a statement at odds with the content of "Wanderers Sturmlied."²² Still, his association in Dichtung und Wahrheit of this poem with Darmstadt, especially his journey there on foot in the spring of 1772, possesses a poetic rationale that I wish to discuss.

The opening of "Wanderers Sturmlied," placing itself in a long poetic tradition, does not on the surface announce any radical departures: "Wen du nicht verlässest Genius" echoes the first line of Klopstock's "Lehrling der Griechen"

²¹ Based on certain aspects that I will not go into here I am inclined to set the date of composition as late as 1773. As Arthur Henkel has pointed out, whether the poem dated by most scholars as 1772 was in the form in which it was sent to Fritz Jacobi in August 1774 is doubtful (22).

²² Goethe's recollection of this period in Books 12 and 13 of Dichtung und Wahrheit is conveyed in the slightly distant tone that characterizes the entire autobiography; in some places he even uses the third-person pronoun to speak of himself ("der Verfasser").

("Wen des Genius Blick, als er gebohren ward").²³ Genius, for Klopstock, as this line expresses, is a personal protective spirit that one is endowed with at birth, and in this Klopstock echoes the opening of an ode (IV, 3) by Horace: "Quem tu, Melpomene, semel nascentem placido lumine videris" ("Whom thou, Melpomene, hast once beheld with favouring gaze at his natal hour").²⁴ Genius is thus not identical with the poet, and in both Horace and Klopstock poetic glory is thus ultimately ascribed to the Muse/Genius. Goethe's opening three stanzas also incorporate the notion of the Muses as protectors in inclement situations ("Wirst mit Hüterfittigen ihn decken"), a theme with which he was probably familiar from another Horace ode (III, 4) and which is also adumbrated in Klopstock's poem ("Eure Fittige lieht, und ihn umschattetet").

Despite the dense classical associations of "Lehrling," as Vietor has pointed out (117), Klopstock was never a real imitator of the Roman poet or of the Greeks. Klopstock had a lofty regard for his poetic calling. It was the example of Virgil and Horace, the ancients as models to master, that he set before himself; the content was important insofar as it bore on this calling. Klopstock's achievement was to

²³ This was not only Klopstock's oldest poem (1747) but also the one that stood at the head of the second (secular) part of the 1771 Darmstadt edition of odes (Lee/Darmstadt, 23).

²⁴ Translation by C.E. Bennett, Loeb Classical Library edition of Horace (Cambridge, 1968).

utilize the "antikisierende Mittel der zeitgenössischen Individualität und Eklektizismus" (Zimmermann, 81) in the service of Christian religious expression: for Klopstock to say that the Muses or one's Genius endows one with poetic talent, as in "Lehrling," is another way of saying that one's existence and gifts come from God. Likewise, when Klopstock spoke of reunions with friends, the reunion was as likely situated in the hereafter as on the shores of the "Lake at Zurich." Though the culture of sentimentality brought the celebration of reunion of soul-mates down to earth,²⁵ it would have been unlikely that any of Goethe's contemporaries, or Goethe himself for that matter, could imagine a world shorn of the hierarchies of dependence and submission that supported the social structure of Klopstock's vision. Goethe's poem, however, is a different matter. Though placing itself at the start within the poetic tradition constituted by the trajectory of Horace-Klopstock, it goes on to locate the source of poetic inspiration in the poet himself. The poem radically alters the Creation-based hierarchy explicit in Klopstock's poems and establishes a new relationship between the poet and the divine and, ultimately, man and the world.²⁶

²⁵ Thus Goethe's poem "Elisium, an Uranien" (in what might be seen as a parody of Klopstock's blessed fields, which really were in heaven) sites Elisium "auf Erden."

²⁶ I am obviously bracketing a myriad of other influences, particularly early eighteenth-century ideas equating God and Nature. For Shaftesbury "following

Two odes of Klopstock in particular give expression to the hierararchical relationship that forms the subtext of Goethe's poem: "Frühlingsfeier" (1759/1771) and "Dem Allgegenwärtigen" (1758).²⁷ Both are also about divine protection (evoked in Horace's ode III, 4) and about the inspiriting presence of the divine (evoked in the opening images of "Lehrling" and Horace's ode IV, 3). Though both poems expand traditional religious imagery in the service of modern, subjective religiosity (Jørgenson, 381), Klopstock's hierarchical conviction is clear at the outset, in the subsuming of the smallest creature within the divine order. And although distance of the soul from God produced by human corporeality is more frequently iterated in "Dem Allgegenwärtigen" (bücken, beflügle, leite, erhebe), the solitary human in the midst of the powerful storm in "Frühlingsfeier" places himself within Creation alongside the least of Jehovah's creatures, a worm ("gebildeter

Nature," looking within and reading the natural law written on the heart, produced no conflict with the larger social or economic order: self-love and social affection were the same. It is not my intention here to show how such metaphysical assumptions rapidly evaporated -- that equating God and the universe led to equating (and divinizing) man and the universe, that the poetry of the next 200 years demonstrates, absent a transcendent being who anchors the social, that the social itself fragments -- but merely to indicate how Goethe constructed a vessel for the expression of this emerging self-conception. See the discussion in Willey, ch. 4.

²⁷ "Das Landleben" and "Die Allgegenwart Gottes," respectively, in the 1771 edition. Citations are from the reprint Klopstocks Oden und Elegien; Nach der Ausgbe in vierunddreißig Stücken Darmstadt 1771 (Heidelberg, 1948).

Staub,/ Würmchen"), and, in a justly famous image, as a "Tropfen am Eimer." This emphasis on creaturely insignificance does not imply superfluosity. Quite the contrary: every creature is necessary in God's eyes and is part of the greater order of Creation, but there is a difference between Creator and creatura.

Goethe's poem contains several reversals, particularly in connection with weightlessness and distance, of this notion of hierarchy. The situation in which the poet/wanderer finds himself at the start of "Wanderers Sturmlied" is a combination of everyday "realism" -- a storm on a German highway -- and "idealism" -- with the poet seeking an image commensurate with his situation.²⁸ Similar to the situation in "Frühlingsfeier," the opening describes a powerful storm (Regen, Sturm, Schauer, Regen Wolke, Schlossensturm). Not to put too fine a point on things, the wanderer represents himself as a corporeal body bogged down in mud.²⁹ A similar situation of being bogged down occurs in the fourth and fifth verses of "Dem Allgegenwärtigen":

Dieser Endlichkeit Loos,
die Schwere der Erde
Fühlt auch meine Seele,

²⁸ Herder: "... so erlaubt [die Ode] die Mythologie als eine Quelle sehr lebhafter Bilder anzusehen, aus der ich welche herausheben kann, um meinen Gedanken gleichsam in sie zu kleiden, daß er sinnlich anschauend erscheine ..."
(Sämtliche Werke, I, 436).

²⁹ "... let us call 'der Sohn des Wassers und der Erde' by name: his name is mud" (Wilkinson and Willoughby, 103).

Wenn sie zu Gott, zu Gott!
 Zu dem Unendlichen!
 Sich erheben will!

Anbetend, Vater, sink' ich in Staub, und fleh!
 Vernimm mein Flehn, die Stimme des Endlichen!
 Mit Feuer taufe meine Seele,
 Daß sie zu dir sich, zu dir, erhebe!

In this case, however, it is the soul itself, the lightest of substances, that is enmeshed in "die Schwere der Erde," while Klopstock's erheben emphasizes the soul's distance from God, as does the contrast of "Endlichkeit" and "Unendlichen." Goethe's wanderer, in contrast, doesn't sink but feels protected from the mud ("Den du nicht verlässest Genius/ Wirst ihn heben übern Schlammfad"). His conviction of the favor of his genius stands in contrast to the humble supplication of Klopstock's "sink' ich in den Staub," and he find himself born aloft by the muses and graces so that his position resembles that of God on the second morning of Creation:³⁰

³⁰ It is hard to doubt that the abundance of references to "Staub" in Klopstock's poems escaped Goethe's attention. An opposing image, one that might have influenced Goethe, comes from Zacharariae's "Sehnsucht nach Einsamkeit" (discussed in Chapter 1, in connection with "Die Nacht"):

Du bist zu groß, im Staube zu verweilen;
 Zu göttlich groß, als daß nur eine Welt
 Im engen Raum dich eingeschränket hält.

Goethe's long preoccupation with "Staub" and indeed with other themes in "Wanderers Sturmlied" (poetic fame, wings, the role of the gods) can already be seen in a letter to Riese from 28 April 1766. The final lines of the poem included in that letter uncannily echo those of "Wanderers Sturmlied":

Ihr seyd rein wie das Herz der Wasser
 Ihr seyd rein wie das Marck der Erde
 Ihr umschwebt mich und ich schwebe
 Über Wasser über Erde
 Göttergleich

Goethe's rejection of hierarchy is further strikingly conveyed in the language of the poem. Klopstock's next verse, praying for enclosure in God ("Allgegenwärtig, Vater, umgiebst du mich!"), also finds linguistic echoes in Goethe, for instance, in "Der du mich fassend deckst" (l. 84), but Goethe's syntax alters the relationship at the outset. First, there is no petitioning of God. Aside from "Umschwebt mich ihr Musen!/ Ihr Charitinnen!" (ll. 29-30), which, after the long opening of confident declarations, sounds more like a conjuration along the lines of Faust, there are no imperatives. Next, unlike the long, meandering lines of Klopstock, which at times suggest a desire for deliquescence in the Almighty, Goethe's first three stanzas are tight constructions in which the poet/wanderer and his

Da sah ich erst, daß mein erhabner Flug,
 Wie er mir schien, nichts war als das Bemühn,
 Des Wurms im Staube, der den Adler sieht,
 Zur Sonn' sich schwingen, und wie der hinauf
 Sich sehnt. Er sträubt empor, und windet sich,
 Und ängstlich spannt er alle Nerven an,
 Und bleibt am Staub. Doch schnell entsteht ein
 Wind,
 Der hebt den Staub in Wirbeln auf, den Wurm
 Erhebt er in den Wirbeln auch. Der glaubt
 Sich groß, dem Adler gleich, und jauchzet schon
 Im Taumel. Doch auf einmahl zieht der Wind
 Den Odem ein. Es sinckt der Staub hinab,
 Mit ihm, der Wurm. Jetzt kriecht er wie zuvor.

genius not only frame the first and last line of verse but also anchor the first and last lines of each stanza.

Wen du nicht verlässest Genius
 Nicht der Regen nicht der Sturm
 Haucht ihm Schauer übers Herz
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius,
 Wird der Regen Wolcke
 Wird dem Schlossensturm
 Entgegensingen wie die
 Lerche du dadoben,
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius.

Den du nicht verlässest Genius,
 Wirst ihn heben übern Schlammfad
 Mit den Feuerflügeln
 Wandeln wird er
 Wie mit Blumenfüßen
 Über Deukalions fluthschlamm
 Python tödtend leicht gros
 Pythius Apollo
 Den du nicht verlässest Genius

Den du nicht verlässest Genius
 Wirst die wollnen Flügel unterspreiten
 Wenn er auf dem Felsen schläfft
 Wirst mit Hüterfittigen ihn decken
 In des Haines Mitternacht.
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius
 Wirst im Schneegestöber Warm umhüllen
 Nach der Wärme ziehn sich Musen
 Nach der Wärme Charitinnen,
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius.

The framework itself, with its syntactic balance of the repetitions of "Wen/Den du nicht verlässest Genius," conveys not a wish or a prayer for protection but the assuredness of being enclosed and protected from the storm. At the same time, it evokes an equal, separate relation, which is reinforced by the remaining internal lines of each of these three stanzas in which the actions of poet and genius alternate ("Wirst ihn heben; Wandeln wird er"). At times the pronoun is omitted and only the inflected form of the

verb indicates the subject, thereby blurring the difference between "du" and "Genius." This blurring, however, is not deliquescence in the Almighty but an appropriation of the divine. Genius is thus not something lent to the poet, as in "Lehrling," and which in a kind of psychomachia will pass to some other soul on the poet's death, but is intimately individual. Goethe rejects the traditional gift of poetic genius.

To paraphrase the Spirit in Urfaust (l. 159), this Genius "gleich dem Geist" that it chooses. After rejecting Dionysus and Apollo, as gods of warmth and light and as the inspirers of Anacreontic and idyllic poetry, the poet/wanderer chooses Jupiter Pluvius.³¹ On the one hand, Jupiter Pluvius seems to function doubly, first as the god of rain by which the wanderer evokes an image commensurate with the state in which he finds himself; and second in his inspirational function, as the embodiment of a "Jovial" (Spitzer, 164) style represented by the dithyrambs of Pindar.³²

³¹ See Jochen Schmidt's application of a pindaric triadic structure in connection with these divinities (I, 233f.).

³² Commenting on the parallels of deity and style of poetry, Spitzer speaks of a breach in the poem at this stanza: Pindar's poetry was in the service of Apollo, and thus, as the culmination of the divine hierarchy in "Wanderers Sturmlied," Jupiter requires his own style of poetry -- "die es nun nicht gibt."

Warum nennt mein Lied dich zuletzt?
 Dich von dem es begann
 Dich in dem es endet
 Dich aus dem es quoll
 Jupiter Pluvius.
 Dich dich strömt mein Lied
 Jupiter Pluvius.
 Und Castalischer Quell
 Quillt ein Nebenbach,
 Quillet müßigen
 Sterblich Glücklichen
 Abseits von dir
 Jupiter Pluvius
 Der du mich fassend deckst
 Jupiter Pluvius. (71-85)

The "quoll" and "strömt" (ll. 74, 76) are evocative of the inspirational power of Jupiter, while the stanza concerning the content of pindaric poetry ("Wenn die Räder rasselten Rad an Rad/ Rasch ums Ziel weg ...", ll. 104f.) suggests the result of such inspiration. The rich source of fluidity of Jupiter and the power of the pindaric poet contrast with the state of aridity and the supplicating posture in which Klopstock's creature finds himself in relation to God:

Augenblicke deiner Erbarmungen,
 O Vater, sinds, wenn du das himmelvolle Gefühl
 Deiner Allgegenwart
 Mir in die Seele strömt.
 Ein solcher Augenblick,
 Allgegenwärtiger
 Ist ein Jahrhundert
 Voll Seligkeit!
 Meine Seel dürstet!
 Wie nach der Auferstehung verdorrtes Gebein,
 So dürstet meine Seele
 Nach diesen Augenblicken deiner Ermarmungen!

That the invocation of Jupiter is more than metaphorical, more than simply the conventional topos regarding divine inspiration, is suggested by the fact that it bears the same syntactic balance and similar linguistic

and syntactic blurring of subject and object relations ("Dich dich strömt mein Lied" [l. 76]; "Der du mich fassend deckst" [l. 84]) noted in connection with the opening three stanzas. This mirrors the rejection at the outset of a hierarchy or a separation from Genius; rather than a culmination in Jupiter, one proceeding from lower deities (Muses) to higher ones, the poet asserts a relationship that was established at the very beginning: "Dich von dem es begann" (l. 71). What this refers to is the second stanza of the poem, the second creation of mankind by Jupiter. ("Python tödtend" in that same stanza recalls the mythical situation that gave rise to the Pythian games that Pindar's odes celebrate.) Though the classical works that Goethe was particularly fond of (Homer's epics, Ovid's Metamorphosis) presented Zeus/Jupiter as a notorious womanizer and breeder of offspring with mortals, in Goethe's poem the only allusion to Jupiter's reproductive power is in his promise, after destroying mankind by flood, to create a human progeny of marvelous birth. In the Deucalion myth, retold by Ovid, the human race is formed from rocks that have been thrown into the slimy, deluge-drenched earth. "Wanderers Sturmlied," in its description of mud and rain, duplicates this process of birth.

There are some relevant suggestions in Zimmermann's analysis of the hermeticism of this poem, in which he brings together the issue of sexual reproduction with that of

divine inspiration. He posits a structure in which the four deities in "Wanderers Sturmlied" (the Muses, Dionysos, Apollo, and Jupiter) correspond to the four principles of prophecy and inspiration (De vaticinio et furore) laid out in the Occulta Philosophia of Agrippa von Nettersheim (1486-1535), a work important in connection with the intellectual-historical background of Faust. Agrippa's fourth principle is not Jupiter but Venus, a deviation that Zimmermann justifies by equating them based on the following passage from Agrippa's chapter on Venus:

So führt auch Gott durch sein Bild und das Licht Dinge aus, welche die Welt vermöge der ihr innewohnenden Kraft nicht vollbringen kann. Das Bild Gottes aber ist der Mensch, wenigstens derjenige, der, durch die von der Venus ausgehende Begeisterung Gott ähnlich gemacht, allein mit dem Verstande lebt und von ganzem Herzen den Jupiter erfaßt ... (94-95).³³

Further linking reproduction and inspiration, Zimmermann states that it was common hermetic coinage that creation resulted from the conjunction ("heilige Hochzeit") of above and below, heaven and earth. Thus as Venus and Jupiter unite in inspiration ("die von der Venus ausgehende Begeisterung"), spirit descends to earth to animate it, as in stanza 5, mentioned above, in which the wanderer seems to stand above Creation:

³³ Interestingly, Goethe uses this image of Jupiter and Venus to describe his birth hour at the beginning of Dichtung und Wahrheit.

Ihr seyd rein wie das Herz der Wasser
 Ihr seyd rein wie das Marck der Erde
 Ihr umschwebt mich und ich schwebe
 Über Wasser über Erde
 Göttergleich

"Mit dem Herz des Wassers und dem Mark der Erde aber wird jeweils die philosophische Essenz der Polarität von oberen und unteren Kräften apostrophiert," with "Mark" for Goethe thus representing the "befruchtendes Prinzip des Unten, der Erde, also den Samen" and "Herz" "unzweifelhaft das befruchtende Prinzip von Oben" (112). The union of these two elements is called "Liebe-Begierde."

I agree with Zimmermann that the principle of generation ("befruchtendes Prinzip") is intimately connected with inspiration in this poem, but I would suggest that his analysis breaks down on the aspect of love or even polarity, for Goethe avoids the female principle altogether.³⁴ Granted that the rocks thrown by Deucalion represent the offspring of Mother Earth, this source is elided in "Wanderers Sturmlied." In rejecting "Lehrling"'s image of inspiration from without, Goethe moves away from the Greek-influenced notion of divine personal protector, much as Athene was Odysseus' protector, to one of the poet's "innewohnender" Genius (J. Schmidt, I, 224) -- which more

³⁴ My main objection to Zimmermann's excellent and insightful presentation is that he turns Goethe into an allegorical writer in the Renaissance tradition (the Occulta Philosophia). He states, e.g., that "'die Gesamtanlage von Wanderers Sturmlied von Agrippas furores-Lehre abhängig ist" (94).

nearly resembles the propagation of Athene from the head of Zeus.³⁵ What Goethe celebrates here, via the issue of inspiration, is a poet coming into being, but not through conventional lineage. Besides annulling the hierarchy that separates Creator and creature in Klopstock's poems, the wanderer's assertion of a close connection, at times a unity verging on identification, with the divinity of his own choosing reverses the separation of lover and beloved that I have described in Chapter 1.

I think that we must also consider the influence of Hamann here, both his notion of origins as well as his combination of Christian creation with classical themes, repeated over and over again in Aesthetica in nuce, and the comparison of divine creation with the poet's creation. That the earth is littered with rocks after the Deucalion, which Jupiter collected and formed into humans, finds analogy in Hamann's telling image -- "wir haben an der Natur nichts als Turbatverse und disiecti membra poëta" -- with the task of the poet being to assemble them and "in Geschick zu bringen" (N II, 198-199).

"Zum Schäkespears Tag" also provides evidence that Goethe's view of the poet was related to such self-conception and procreation. Its opening sentence addresses the issue of immortality, which is also a theme of

³⁵ Is this a "Vorahnung" of Homonculus in the second part of Faust, act II?

"Lehrling," in terms of the perpetuation of self: "Mir kommt vor, das sey die edelste von unsern Empfindungen, die Hoffnung, auch dann zu bleiben, wenn das Schicksaal uns zur allgemeinen Nonexistenz zurückgeführt zu haben scheint" (DjG, II, 83). Shakespeare's survival derives from his innate Genius, and Goethe couches this paeon to Shakespeare, and the desire for his own immortality, in terms of reproduction: "Wir ehren heute das Andencken des grössten Wandrers, und thun uns dadurch selbst eine Ehre an. Von Verdiensten die wir zu schätzen wissen, haben wir den Keim in uns" (my italics). He goes on to compare his first reading of Shakespeare to the experience of being born: "stund ich wie ein blindgebohrener." Lest this seem to literalize what was meant metaphorically, it is later elaborated in the same essay, specifically linking birth and Creation: "Unser verdorbner Geschmack aber, umnebelt dergestalt unsere Auguen, dass wir fast eine neue Schöpfung nötig haben, uns aus dieser Finsternis zu entwickeln." The poet's lineage is traced to a great progenitor that one chooses -- "Nach und nach lernt ich sehen, und, danck sey meinem erkenntlichen Genius" -- i.e., a creator that one recognizes as one's equal and not one on whom one is dependent and from whom one receives one's talent or gifts.³⁶

³⁶ The biblical "So aber jemand Gott liebt, der wird von ihm erkannt!" (1 Cor. 8, 3) is quoted by Hamann in Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten.

The Shakespeare essay emphasizes that Genius is at odds not simply with other people but with the very structure of life: "... seine [Shakespears] Stücke, drehen sich alle um den geheimen Punckt, ... in dem das Eigenthümliche unsres Ich's, die prätendirte Freyheit unsres Wollens, mit dem nothwendigen Gang des Ganzen zusammenstösst" (my italics). In the Shakespeare essay Genius and the theme of wandering are linked, with the opening paragraphs abundant in images of ambulation: e.g., dass keiner sein Ziel erreicht, wornach er so sehnlich ausging; auf seinem Gange; grosse Schritte; den unendlichen Weeg drüben; Wanderertrab; siebenmeilen Stiefel; Wanderer. Goethe calls Shakespeare the greatest wanderer of all (das Andencken des grössten Wandrers), who made giant strides which other mortals try to match, an indication of the yardstick he intends to measure himself by. The word comes up frequently in the correspondence of this period. For instance, Goethe writes of Fräulein von Ziegler (the "Lila" of the Darmstadt circle) as "chère pelerin." Minor and Sauer, citing Herder's frequent use of such terms as "Wallfahrt" and combinations with "Pilger," suggest Goethe may have borrowed from him (44). Thus, the name "Wanderer," by which he was known in the Darmstadt circle, was to a certain extent a mode expression, although Goethe himself was a great walker as well, as attested by the journeys on foot from Frankfurt to Darmstadt. The journey is also one of the oldest poetic

tropes, but Goethe's use of it transforms it radically, from a spiritual journey the contours of which were not always clear but the goal of which had been determined by the gods/God (Odysseus, Virgil, Dante, even Simplicissimus) into a quest without a discernible goal beyond self-potential.³⁷ The reason for this is that the poet, having sundered himself through his self-generation from the structure of ties and allegiances that otherwise binds men, has no home. "Wanderers Sturmlied" situates the rejection of home literarily, rejecting the poetry of social cohabitation celebrated by Anacreon and Theocritus in favor of the autonomy of Pindar. This in turn further embeds the rejection of hierarchy represented by neoclassical aesthetics.

Home is also the place where journeys begin and end, in which takes place real birth and, in miniature, the constant cyclic regeneration of mankind, which the poet's self-conception rejects. Home and family, as contemporary plays, especially those of Lessing, make clear, had become the site of struggles between individual aspiration and requirements

³⁷ Compare the beginning of Herder's 1769 Journal meiner Reise: "Den 23. Mai/3. Juni reiset ich aus Riga ab, und den 25./5. ging ich in See, um ich weiß nicht wohin? zu gehen." Herder then describes a series of situations that didn't suit him; instead of changing himself, he escapes: "Ich mußte also reisen ..." (Sämtliche Werke, IV, 345). This tendency to flee has often been remarked on as a theme in Goethe's life and work.

for perpetuation of the family. The forced resolutions of these plays denied the individual the emancipation he desired, restraining him within the "notwendigen Gang des Ganzen." It is Goethe who gives form to the "seelischen Wirklichkeit, die sich ... allen Ordnungen und Normen entzog" (see Gerth, 33). This motion of rejection (entziehen) is grafted onto the figure of the wanderer, and the image in Goethe's work representing home and family against which it frequently intersects is the literary form known as the idyll.

"Der Wanderer" is the first clear-cut representation in Goethe's work of the confrontation of the idyll and the wanderer.³⁸ Though its sources seem obvious, particularly the traces of Goldsmith and Geßner, the maturity of "Der Wanderer" obscures its literary roots to some extent.³⁹ On its surface, Walter Silz' statement, that anyone finding

³⁸ The theme of wandering, as has often been noted, takes many forms in Goethe's work and in fact seems to be one of his "Grundformen." (Trunz; Willoughby; Schrimpf.) An established line of Goethe scholarship, perhaps influenced by Faust, finds in the contrast of the idyll and the wanderer the poles of "Entgrenzung" and "Beschränkung" (e.g., Silz, 148). My focus is not on psychological motivations but primarily on the roots of the literary construct of the individual being born in Goethe's work.

³⁹ Goldsmith's poem "The Traveller" (1765) is often cited in connection with "Der Wanderer" as well as Geßner's idyll "Daphnis and Micon." Goethe might also have been familiar with Georg Jacobi's "Sommerreise" (1773), in which the narrator describes an encounter with a young woman nursing a child (M/S, 46). Articles cited more fully in the Bibliography that treat "Der Wanderer" include those by Herbert Thiele; Walter Silz; Dieter Breuer; and Arnd Bohm.

this poem undated among Goethe's papers would hardly place it in close proximity to "Wanderers Sturmlied," seems valid.⁴⁰ On the other hand it underlines a point I am trying to make, that Goethe did not create ex nihilo by translating an "experience" into art. As the break with Klopstock's God-centered universe is re-created by the transformation of the terms of that universe, so the break with the idyll is clothed with the cliches of the literary models he is rejecting. In the process, Goethe paradoxically gives voice to something that seems an original and authentic movement of the human spirit.

Book 13 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, which contains so many indispensable signals for this creative period,

⁴⁰ "It is both 'naïve' and 'sentimental', both 'Classical' and 'Romantic'. It conveys the mood of the young Goethe's Sturm und Drang and it foreshadows the older Goethe's Classicism at its best, that is, where it represents a blending of the cultural heritage of antiquity with the persistent naturalness of Goethe's mind, his native 'Naturhaftigkeit'" (139).

Unlike with "Wanderers Sturmlied," we possess a contemporary reference to the poem, in a letter of Caroline Flachsland to Herder dated 13 April 1772: "Göthe steckt voller Lieder, Eins, von einer Hütte, die in Ruinen alter Tempel gebaut, ist vortrefflich." Lest one think the matter is conclusively decided, however, in a letter dated May 1773 Goethe wrote to Kestner placing the origin of "Der Wanderer" in the summer of 1772 in Wetzlar: "Er ist in meinem Garten an einem der besten Tage gemacht. Lotte ganz im Herzen und in einer ruhigen Genüchlichkeit all eure künftige Glückseligkeit vor meiner Seele."

The earliest surviving manuscript copy, containing the first eighty-seven lines, is in Caroline's hand and was part of a letter she sent to Herder on 1 June 1772. Undoubtedly it underwent revisions after Goethe's stay in Wetzlar and before it appeared in the Göttingen Musen Almanach in 1774.

provides a clue here. Goethe writes in connection with the inception of Werther⁴¹ of the effect of English literature on his contemporaries, its emphasis on time's remorseless passage and the vanity of all earthly things (HA, IX, 578f.): Young, Gray, Milton's "Allegro," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," Hamlet, Ossian, Th. Warton's "The Suicide." In Neue Lieder we saw some of the effects of that influence. In "Der Wanderer," the past, exemplified by the ruins, is revered and regarded as holy by the wanderer (in somewhat the same tenor as the wanderer in "Die Nacht"), but the past is obviously dead, an impression heightened by the Ossianic language ("düstres Moos," "hohes, wankendes Gras," and the stately mourning by lone survivors of a better age).⁴² The overgrown foliage, the ruins, and the "modern, reflective" Wanderer (HA, I, 468), place us in fact right in the middle of the scenery perambulated by solitary wanderers in a poetic tradition stemming back not to Milton's "Allegro" but to "Il Penserosa." Indeed, scholars have commented on the monologic nature of the Wanderer's utterances. We must supply what Goethe has left out, elements that abound in a certain strain of German writing from the 1750s: the solitary wanderer fleeing "vom Kerker

⁴¹ As Silz points out, "Der Wanderer" also prefigures the Werther triad: simple, domestic woman, occupied husband, and artistic intruder (140).

⁴² Silz (141).

finstrer Stadt" and "ersticker Geschäfte Schwarm,"⁴³ the restless heart longing for peace of soul⁴⁴ but finding in the dark woods a mirror of its own transience.

The hackneyed tempus fugit thematic of what would otherwise be a solitary wanderer poem is transformed by the Wanderer's encounter with the Woman. Her private space is not the dark and melancholy forest inhabited by the Wanderer but the sequestered enclave of an idyll by Theocritus ("Felsenwand hier/ in des Ulmenbaums Schatten").⁴⁵ This idyll is not outfitted with the specificity of Theocritus or of Geßner.⁴⁶ Trunz has termed the resulting ambience, with its timeless and natural activities (the greeting, the drawing of water), "Homeric" (HA, I, 468), what Werther might recognize as "Odyssean." This idyll is cross-fertilized by the presence of the modern and sentimentally

⁴³ From Friedrich Wilhelm Zachariae's "Sehnsucht nach Einsamkeit" (quoted in Brüggemann/Anbruch, 77-88).

⁴⁴ Was braucht man mehr zur Lust als eine stille Seele?
Was braucht man mehr zum Glück als ein zufriednes Herz?

(Johann Friedrich von Cronegk, "Sehnsucht nach der Ruhe," quoted in Brüggemann/Anbruch, 97-99)

⁴⁵ This was the period in which Goethe was reading Pindar but also, at the opposite extreme, Theocritus. In his letter to Herder, he makes no ethical discrimination among the Greeks.

⁴⁶ Goethe's review of Geßner's Idyllen (Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen, 25 August 1772) presages his own disinclination to detail ("... und dann das Detail, wie bestimmt, Steine, Gräschen").

reflective Wanderer. Against Kantian logic, we find ourselves in a unitary space in which are located two private spaces, drawn from two literary traditions.⁴⁷

The idyll displays a great adaptability to such mingling with other forms. Because of a paradox at the heart of the idyll -- it is an art form portraying a manner of life that is supposedly artless -- the hut in this poem contains the different visions of the Wanderer and the Woman. On the one hand, people living in huts lead a "natural" life, in contrast to those seeking to escape from life's "unnatural" (e.g., urban) aspects. This hut, home of a family, however, has been constructed from the detritus of an artistic monument.⁴⁸ Though the hut in this poem is not the locus amoenus, the site of love, which, like certain flora and fauna, is usually itemized among the paraphernalia of the idyll, it does convey the sense of refuge and simple manner of life that are among the idyll's prized assets. Though the Wanderer speaks deferentially of it, we will see that the hut represents a form of life against which he stands necessarily in opposition.

As in "Wanderers Sturmlied" and in "Shakespeare" the artist's work is expressed via the imagery of reproduction,

⁴⁷ Something similar occurs in Faust's encounter with Helen in the second part of Faust.

⁴⁸ That Goethe combines the idyll with past ruins is not so unusual; Book 11 of Dichtung und Wahrheit ends with his departure from the idyll at Sesenheim and his visit to the Antikensaal in Mannheim.

a process threatened by the process of time. On seeing the inscription on the architrave, the Wanderer exclaims:

Eine Innschrift über die ich trete!
 Der Venus -- und ihr
 Seyd verloschen,
 Weggewandelt ihr Gespielen,
 Die ihr eures Meisters Andacht
zeugen solltest (36-41) (my italics)⁴⁹

This metaphor of reproduction is carried so far as to be applied to the other ruins: "Säulen Paar" (63); "einsame Schwester" (64); and "Eure Geschwister" (70). The more striking instance of creation and reproduction in "Der Wanderer," however, is obviously the nursing Woman. Her role as nurturer is underlined by the fact that the Wanderer does not fetch the water himself, though he has asked for the location of the spring. After the Woman has brought him water to drink, she says of her child: "Du meines Lebens Hoffnung!" as if to indicate that her own perpetuation is guaranteed by the child. Indeed, sitting amid ruins she is an emblem of an even larger process of creation, that of Nature, in which the child, like the trees that come into bloom and die, is an essential element of a recurring

⁴⁹ That ideas (and also perhaps manuscripts) were in the air is demonstrated by another curious similarity with a Georg Jacobi poem, "Charmides und Theone," published in Merkur in 1773. In this poem there is "ein halb erloschene Inschrift": "Er [Charmides] betrachtete die alten räthselhaften Buchstaben, und setze mit vieler Mühe daraus folgende Worte zusammen: 'der himmlischen Venus'" (M/S 47). Goethe's poem was first published in the Göttingen Musen Almanach in 1774, although Caroline Flachsland's possession of an early copy of the poem in 1772 probably guarantees that it was in circulation.

cycle,⁵⁰ one that also destroys the monuments the Wanderer admires. The Wanderer recognizes this commonality of the Woman and nature, speaking of nature in terms of its nurturing function:⁵¹

Natur, du ewig Keimende,
Schaffst jeden zum Genuss des Lebens.
Deine Kinder all
Hast mütterlich mit einem
Erbtheil ausgestattet
Einer Hütte.
Hoch baut die Schwalb am Architrav
Unfühlend welchen Zierraht
Sie verklebt.
Die Raup umspinnt den goldnen Zweig
Zum Winterhaus für ihre Brut.
Und du flickst zwischen der Vergangenheit
Erhabne Trümmer
Für dein Bedürfnis
Eine Hütt o Mensch!
Geniessest über Gräbern!

At this point he suddenly bids farewell to the woman, despite her invitation to share the evening meal with her and her husband: "Leb wohl du glücklich Weib!" Boyd's statement concerning the "benevolent envy" with which the wanderer departs is indicative of the misinterpretations of this ending: Cumae, "which we may imagine loomed as a mecca for the art-seeking wanderer, now becomes little more than a partially satisfying substitute" (36). This view is based

⁵⁰ Trunz calls this poem the first representation in Goethe's work of "Grundformen des Lebens" (HA, I, 469), by which individuals are transformed into universals (Hermann und Dorothea; the Joseph family in Wanderjahre), though I think the root of this can be found in Goethe's aversion to specificity.

⁵¹ Nature as a great and impartial geniatrix, the source of "manifold and equally justified forms of life" (Silz, 144).

on the last lines of the poem, which is a kind of valedictory on the part of the Wanderer in which he tenders his deference to the idyll.

O leite meinen Gang
 Natur, den Fremdlings Reisetritt
 ...
 Und kehr ich dann am Abend heim
 Zur Hütte vergüldet
 Vom letzten Sonnenstrahl,
 Lass mich empfangen solch ein Weib
 Den Knaben auf dem Arm.

A somewhat similar valedictory provides initial support for Boyd's contention, a passage from what is perhaps Goethe's most famous review in the Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen. This is the review of poems by the "Polnischer Jude," which appeared on 1 September 1772. Goethe begins with a criticism of the fictional females in the poems under review, which appear to be Rococo in character ("bunte Seifenblasenideale"). Then "ganz wertherizierend" (Bräuning-Oktavio, 14), he projects a vision of what the real poetic female ideal should be. The entire vision is one of domestic felicity ("ein Mädchen ..., deren Seele ... sich in stillem Familienkreis häuslicher thätiger Liebe glücklich entfaltet hat ...") in which man and woman find everlasting happiness in one another's arms. This ideal, as even contemporaries noted, bore a resemblance to Lotte Buff.⁵² Thus, not only are "Der Wanderer" and Lotte Buff

⁵² "Bei der Schilderung des idealen Liebespaares denkt Goethe an sich und Charlotte Buff" (DjG, II, 357). DjG also cites a letter to Boie from Gotter, another jurist in Wetzlar in the summer of 1772: "Was [der polnische Jude]

poetically linked (see Goethe's May 1773 letter to Kestner on the inception of the poem), but so also are Lotte and the vision in the "Polnischer Jude" review.

Two things, however, should be noted about the review. The first is that the poet whom Goethe envisions is linked with Genius: "Laß, o Genius unsers Vaterlands bald einen Jüngling aufblühen ..." This image of growth is close in tenor with the Wanderer's hopes for the child:

Welchen der [Geist heiliger Vergangenheit]
umschwebt
Wird im Götterselbstgefühl
Jeden Tags geniessen.
Voller Keim blüh auf!⁵³

The second thing to note is that the poet in the vision in the Polish Jew review is on a journey: "... laß ihn auf seiner Wallfahrt ein Mädchen entdecken" (my italics). Does Goethe really intend for such a poet to remain with the girl in the idyll? Though at the close of the review Goethe is clearly speaking of the author of the "Polnischer Jude" and not of his own ideal poet, it is not in the idyll that he encounters him in the future: "Wir wünschen, daß er uns auf denen Wegen, wo wir unser Ideal suchen, einmal wieder, und geisteriger begegnen möge."

zu der Ausschweifung seines Recensenten sagen wird, weiß ich nicht. Mir ist sie um so leichter aufzulösen -- da ich das Mädchen kenne, dessen Portrait er -- aber wie sichs die plastische Natur dachte -- u. mit Augen der Liebe gemahlt hat."

⁵³ See Morris Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp, concerning the organicist metaphors in this period.

Again, in order to emphasize the effect of literature, rather than experience, on Goethe's poetic self-conception, let us consider a scene in Geßner's "Die Zephyre." Goethe's review of Geßner's second collection of Idyllen appeared the week before the "Polnischer Jude" review (25 August 1772) in the Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen.⁵⁴ In this scene one zephyr has been trying to talk its companion into watching some naked nymphs bathe. The response of the second zephyr presents a portrait of a girl named Daphne that stresses her nurturing function and in whom is collapsed the Woman in "Der Wanderer," Lotte Buff, Lotte in Werther, and the "Polnischer Jude" female:

Bald wird ein Mädgen hier den Pfad vorübergehn,
 schön wie die jüngste der Grazien. Mit einem
 vollen Korb geht sie bey jedem Morgenroth zu jener
 Hütte, die dort am Hügel steht: Sieh, die
 Morgensonne glänzt an ihr bemoostes Dach; dort
 reichet sie der Armuth Trost, und jeden Tages
 Naahrung; dort wohnt ein Weib, fromm, krank und
 arm; zwey unschuldvolle Kinder würden hungernd an
 ihrem Bette weinen, wäre Daphne nicht ihr Trost.
 Bald wird sie wieder kommen, die schönen Wangen
 glühend, und Thränen im unschuldvollen Auge;
 Thränen des Mitleids, und der süssen Freude, der
 Armuth Trost zu seyn. Hier wart' ich, hier im
 Rosenbusch, bis ich sie kommen sehe: Mit dem
 Geruche der Rosen, und mit kühlen Schlingen flieg'
 ich ihr dann entgegen; dann kühl' ich ihre Wangen,
 und küsse Thränen von ihren Augen. Sieh das ist
 mein Geschäft.

The nurturing function of the Woman in "Der Wanderer"
 mirrors the larger nurturing function of nature, which is

⁵⁴ Goethe specifically criticized Geßner's "Swiss" idyll: "Warum muß sie sich nur so Schäfermäßig enden? kann eine Handlung durch nichts rund werden, als durch eine Hochzeit?"

itself tied to a larger procreative process, the constant replacement of generations and of the human species. As I mentioned above, the Wanderer's recognition of this replenishment of life through death (ll. 124f.) is followed by his decision to depart, replicating Goethe's own ambivalence toward this natural process. On the one hand, it is with sympathy that he writes in Dichtung und Wahrheit, characterizing what are the contours of life in the idyll: "Alles Behagen am Leben ist auf eine regelmäßige Wiederkehr der äußeren Dinge gegründet. Der Wechsel von Tag und Nacht, der Jahreszeiten, der Blüten und Früchte ... diese sind die eigentlichen Triebfedern des irdischen Lebens (HA, IX, 578)." Yet this recognition is mentioned in close proximity to the passage detailing the effects of English literature on his generation, its emphasis on time's remorseless passage and on the transience of earthly things.

The ambivalence stems from the desire of the artist to perpetuate himself through works, a desire that is subject to the annihilating effects of time, represented by nature. This is enunciated in a review Goethe and Merck wrote in common toward the end of their participation in the Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen at the end of 1772: "Was wir von Natur sehn, ist Kraft, die Kraft verschlingt nichts gegenwärtig alles vorübergehend ... Und die Kunst ...

entspringt aus den Bemühungen des Individuums, sich gegen die zerstörende Kraft des Ganzen zu erhalten ..."⁵⁵

Such language reveals a view of nature as devouring, which the artist, with the greatest of effort, must resist. Thus the necessity of self-conception and of the constant journey, wherever it may lead.

It is not true, as Boyd claims, that the Wanderer knows his destination.⁵⁶ He asks not for directions to Cumae, but instead

Wohin führt mich der Weg?
Dort übern Berg?

The last part of the poem is full of references to journeying ("Weg"; "meinen Gang"; "Reisetritt"; "wandle"), but the great wanderers, like Shakespeare, do not tread the well-worn path followed by the rest of humanity. That this is not a sightseeing expedition on the Wanderer's part is hinted at by "den goldnen Zweig" (l. 133), a reference to the means by which Aeneas gained entrance to the underworld at Cumae (Aeneid, Book VI). Though his goal was fated by destiny and though in the course of his wanderings Aeneas was given directions to Cumae (Book III), there was in general an errancy about his journey. When he left burning Troy he would have preferred to stay and die a warrior's

⁵⁵ "Die schönen Künste in ihrem Ursprung ..." (18 December 1772).

⁵⁶ Dieter Breuer also speaks of the Traveler "auf dem beschwerlichen Wege zum Ruinenfeld von Cuma."

death, and it was only with great difficulty that he grew into his mission and finally landed on the shores of Italy where he was destined to become the founder of a new race. In Cumae Aeneas entered the underworld where he learned, from his father, the future of that race. Again, the connection with reproduction is crucial, identifying the exceptional man as the founder of history and art.⁵⁷ This is also a process of reproduction, of giving birth, and is connected with the process of artistic self-creation I detailed above in "Wanderers Sturmlied." A 21 August 1774 letter to Fritz Jacobi contains similar metaphors:⁵⁸

Sieh lieber, was doch alles schreibens anfang und Ende ist die Reproduktion der Welt um mich, durch die innre Welt die alles packt, verbindet, neuschafft, knetet und in eigner Form, Manier, wieder hinstellt, das bleibt ewig Geheimniss Gott sey Danck, das ich auch nicht offenbaaren will den Gaffern u. Schwätzern. ... Was red ich über meine Kinder, wenn sie leben; so werden sie fortkrablen, unter diesem weiten Himmel.

Woman/ nature, by contrast, is seen as the genitrix of life, but it is a reproductive cycle that creates and destroys all, one the artist must struggle against if he is to be a creator. The inability to do so will otherwise result in his extinction. Goethe put the danger very

⁵⁷ Silz contends that the Traveler's sense of history is deep and discerning, while the woman's "is limited to the familial and reaches only one generation back" (144).

⁵⁸ Ten days later Goethe sent Jacobi a copy of "Wanderers Sturmlied": "Hiermit eine Ode zu der Melodie und Commentar nur der Wandrer in der Noth erfindet" (31 August 1774).

starkly in "Zum Shäkespear Tag": "... denn wenn es einem auf seinem Gange auch noch so lang glückt, fällt er doch endlich, und oft im Angesicht des gehofften Zwecks, in eine Grube, die ihm, Gott weis wer, gegraben hat, und wird für nichts gerechnet."

That in "Der Wanderer" the works of art lie in ruins seems to mock the artistic endeavor and to undermine the artist's hope for immortality. However, it is Klopstock, the singer of the poet's immortality, who reverses the image in "Der Wanderer." Again, it must be suspected that the following lines of the ode "Auf meine Freunde"⁵⁹ had an effect on Goethe. The "er" in these lines refers to Virgil, who surveys the monuments of his age and predicts their demise and his own continued fame:

Stolz mit Verachtung sah er die Ewigkeit
 Von Zeus Pallästen. "Einst wirst du Trümmer seyn,
 Dann Staub, dann des Sturmwindes Gespiele,
 Du Capitol, und du GÖtt der Donner!"

In Virgil's work, of course, subject and poetic convention coexisted, with the former being contained in its expression via the latter. Similarly, Breuer has spoken of the functionality of content and form in this "traditional idyll," as he calls "Der Wanderer." The effect of this is, namely "das Pathos des Genies zu mäßigen und die intendierte Harmonie zwischen genialischer Entgrenzung und in sich ruhender Naturform sprachlich-künstlich aufzuweisen" (312).

⁵⁹ "An des Dichters Freunde" in the 1771 edition. See the discussion in Schleiden (83).

The dialogue, which is so frequent in the idylls of Theocritus, Virgil, and Geßner, seems to function similarly to the strict generic requirements in Die Laune des Verliebten in maintaining the serenity of the idyll. Also, though the idyll appears to be embedded within the processes of nature in "Der Wanderer," it is a fragile structure that functions principally because its inhabitants assume certain prescribed positions within it: Frau, Mann, even the Wanderer himself, who, like Eridon in Die Laune, is absorbed in the form. "Der Wanderer" strikes the finest, most tenuous balance between the realization of poetic self-conception and the harmony of the generic order. This balance intimates Goethe's later "classicism," but it also suggests that, when the imperatives of art are unmoored from the conventions of genre, they will, like Hegel's Geist, devour content.

The order of genre is itself a reflection of a larger cosmic order, and the dethronement of God in "Wanderers Sturmlied" is enmeshed in the ongoing dethronement of neoclassical literary practice occurring in the eighteenth century. For instance, the poet-wanderer rejects the idyll contained in the central section of the poem, contrasting his state with the contentment of "Der kleine, schwarze feurige Bauer" and conceding such rewards are not for him. "Deine Gaben Vater Bromius" suggests the kind of paternal relationship that is being renounced. Klopstock found

individuality as a child of God; Goethe, rejecting God, created poetic individuality.

At the same time, the poem presages a new metaphor of existence for individuals and telegraphs the perilous consequences for the human relations within the ordered world of the idyll. As the next chapter will seek to demonstrate, when Goethe is not restricted by generic conventions, as in Werther, the idyll will be seen to stand in the way of individual self-expression and its fate and that of the individual will be much different.

Chapter 4:
The Artist in the Idyll

The movement I have been describing, by which Goethe extracted the social content from the poetry of his predecessors, problematized the love relationship, and established a self-created poetic persona, intended to demonstrate that the emergence of "self-expression" was not a development in the sense of an authentic change of the human spirit or a "dawning" (Anbruch) of hitherto unexperienced feeling (as the title of Brüggemann's book would suggest), but was primarily a literarily mediated reflection of the changing social and literary environment of the second half of the eighteenth century. Regarding Habermas' contention that eighteenth-century letter exchanges constitute evidence of newly developing subjectivity, I suggest that Goethe's Leipzig correspondence shows the search for a mode of literary expression that would give voice to new social realities, particularly the emancipation of opinion from accommodation to the vox populi or vox familiae, but that had little to do with the discovery of new feelings. I pointedly use the term "realities" here because economic changes gave rise to a splitting away from a theologically unified view of Reality.

Reality itself of course, however defined, had not yet disappeared.¹

As I stated in my introduction, the family does not allow, but rather inhibits, the free development of individual autonomy. The conflict between the "purely human" (say, individual choice of marriage partners) and the greater social order (e.g., the family's own needs for economic continuity) became one of the predominant subjects of literature in the eighteenth century. "Wanderers Sturmlied," discussed in the last chapter, rejected the larger social order, in which one is born and receives one's identity in a manner pre-manufactured, and substituted a new origin myth, that of individuals constituting their own creation and hence reality, a reality that Goethe conceived of as a poetic creation. Die Leiden des jungen Werther, the first version of which I discuss in this chapter and in the next, can be seen as problematizing the struggle to assert the rights of the individual heart. This struggle conflicts not only with the great power of traditional structures

¹ That individuals remained the same, with the same needs for love and shelter, but that some individuals were not in the position to create their own reality is vividly exemplified in the case of the farm lad in the second version of Werther. This episode, which Goethe calls "die schönste Idylle der Welt," will not be discussed in this dissertation because it falls outside the pre-1775 time frame, but in contrast to Werther, whose first words express happiness at lack of connectedness, the farm lad might be said to be seeking to stay within the idyll, in other words, within the framework of the old Reality. I will return to this in my Conclusion.

(e.g., the world of the court or of the ministry) but also with what Goethe represents as the seductiveness of such structures (the idyll). It is in the idyll, representing the enclosed, narrow, and ultimately fragile structure of human co-existence and reproduction in which the individual is of necessity submerged, that Goethe situates the greater danger to autonomy, an attraction that in fact leads to death. I contend, however, that Goethe's subject was not self-expression per se, and certainly not Werther's self-destruction, that he recognized and accepted the fragile balance existing between individual and society, and that the novel Werther problematized certain of his own artistic questions. The contemporary reaction to Werther, however, had the effect of moving the interpretation of the novel in a direction impelled by imperatives of the greater social and economic environment.

At this point it will be relevant to introduce a distinction made in Erdmann Waniek's insightful study on Werther as a reader and on the readers of Werther. Delineating contemporary misreadings of the novel, Waniek writes: "Werther ist kein Tugendabriß, sondern ein Mensch mit allen seinen schwer faßbaren Widersprüchen" (83). On the one hand, as Waniek shows, Goethe's novel was criticized for not providing proper moral guidance to readers (Teutscher Merkur, Lessing, etc.); on the other, unqualified and undistanced identification led to uncritical acceptance

(suicides as the obvious extreme). The former group objected that Werther was not a Tugendabriß, while to the latter he was all too human. This dichotomy sums up the "before" and "after" in the transition I am describing, from a socially derived models of behavior and identity to self-created ones.

Besides illustrating the way Werther's own reading (or supposed misreading of literature, which is really the subject of Waniek's study) mirrors the process by which his "contemporaries" felt that Werther was a real man, one they identified with or wished to emulate, the "after" position in the dichotomy also points up the way in which our tendency as critics to confuse the characteristics of figures in novels with the characteristics of "real" people obscures the purely poetic and constructed nature not only of the work but also of Werther himself. As I have stressed throughout this dissertation, Goethe was not writing about "real" people or "real" experience, but, in the case of Werther as well, was following an imitative poetic manner, relying on models provided by his poetic forebears. To demonstrate this, I would first like to document Werther's literary constructedness, whereby I show how the felt change in existential content was, again, derived from Goethe's transformation of a contemporary literary model. Following that, in the next chapter I discuss the Sesenheim idyll described in Books 10 and 11 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, in

which my intention is to show that Goethe repudiated the model of self-expression that animated Werther in the eyes of his contemporaries and instead clarified his own poetic method. In reprising aspects of Werther in Sesenheim, forty years after the initial writing of the novel, he frames the movement toward autonomy and subjectivity as part of an artistic process. If Werther deconstructed because he could not leave the idyll, Goethe, the artist described in Dichtung und Wahrheit, must abandon the idyll if he is to emancipate himself as a poet, precisely because the idyll was a stand-in for traditional literary practice. yet because he modeled his work on inherited forms, Goethe came to incorporate the abandonment or rejection of the model in his work, which in turn resulted in a new literary paradigm, that of the individual who must reject the past in order to "discover" himself.

In connection with Werther and Sesenheim, the same kind of complex literary interconnectedness existing between Lessing and Goethe's Die Laune des Verliebten obtains between Klopstock, Geßner, and Goethe. It is first apparent in the literary construction of Werther himself, a subject on which little critical attention has been bestowed, though his acquaintance with literature and the deep importance of it in his "self-conception,"² which jumps out from

² At this point I obviously return to speaking about fictional characters as if they were real people.

practically every page of the novel, have been well documented -- Homer, Ossian, Richardson, Goldsmith, Lessing's Emilia Galotti, to name only a few literary allusions. After he has been shown the door at the Count's reception, for instance, Werther turns for succor to the episode in the Odyssey in which Ulysses is hospitably received by the swineherd. Goethe's structuring of the novel, its form and the many situations that find their counterpart in other novels, has also been the subject of much study: to name only one, Rousseau's Lettres de deux Amans (1761), popularly known as Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse (the epistolary character, the menage à trois, the "asiles").³ A seldom-studied aspect of literary reference may throw light on the cross-fertilization of literary influences at work in Goethe's creation of Werther, namely "ein Mensch mit allen seinen schwer fassbaren Widersprüchen."

A clue to the literary lineage of Werther is a striking linguistic feature, the Wertherperiode. In this construction, a simple main clause is preceded by a series of subordinate clauses, often headed by wenn (which can be conditional, temporal, or simply emphatic), that is

³ I have profited from various studies on the role of literature in Werther while writing this chapter and the next. Fuller references to the following authors can be found in the Bibliography: Peter Pütz; Bruce Duncan; Richard Alewyn; Leo Tönz; Ilse Graham; Leonard Forster; Robert T. Ittner; Lawrence M. Price; Erich Schmidt; David Wellbery.

anaphorically repeated (Heun, 89). This construction is universally assumed to be a sign of Klopstock's influence on Goethe after 1770. Discussions of Klopstock's language (referring to this construction as the wenn-construction), stress the way this construction potentiates fantasies of anticipation, say, images of future/ otherworldly encounters with friends or the beloved. One of the most famous occurrences is in Klopstock's ode "An Fanny," which begins with seven subordinate clauses introduced by wenn, extending over twenty lines of verse, each foretelling the end of earthly life ("wenn einst ich todt bin ..."), before being capped by four dann-clauses expressive of a reunion of the lovers at the Last Judgment. A construction at odds with the clarity recommended by Gottsched as well as later much frowned on by Herder, Klopstock is credited with having reintroduced this dinosaur from the language of chancery German and making it literarily acceptable (K. Schneider, 126, n. 25).⁴ In his analysis of both Goethe's poetry and letters from this period, Hans Georg Heun has shown that this construction was of little influence on the poetry. The few wenn-

⁴ Despite his disapproval of the such long-winded constructions, Herder was not above using them himself. See particularly his letter to Caroline Flachsland of 15 August 1770. In view of the letter-sharing that took place in this period, it might be asked whether Goethe was privy to that letter, which begins by announcing the solitary state of the correspondent, goes on to establish, through a series of da-clauses, a connection of hearts, and ends: "O Gott ... allerliebstes, redliches Kind, ist's zu viel, daß ich glaube, damals Ihr Herz sprechen gehört zu haben?"

constructions in Goethe's poetry ("Wanderers Sturmlied," the "Prometheus" drama) do not reveal Klopstock's symmetrical structures but are put into service for rhythms more reminiscent of Klopstock's own "free rhythms." Klopstock's influence was instead on Goethe's prose (89-92).

This influence can be seen at work in nuce in "Von deutscher Baukunst," in which Goethe, in a passage evocative of the connection between procreation and artistic creativity discussed in the preceding chapter, likewise uses the construction to express anticipation and potentiation:

Heil dir, Knabe! der du mit einem scharfen Aug für
Verhältnisse geboren wirst, dich mit Leichtigkeit
an allen Gestalten zu üben. Wenn denn nach und
nach die Freude des Lebens um dich erwacht, und du
jauchzenden Menschengenuß nach Arbeit, Furcht und
Hoffnung fühlst; das muthige Geschrey des Winzers,
wenn die Fülle des Herbsts seine Gefäße an-
schwellt, den belebten Tanz des Schnitters, wenn
er die müßige Sichel hoch in den Balken geheftet
hat; wenn dann männlicher, die gewaltige Nerve der
Begierden und Leiden in deinem Pinsel lebt, du
gestrebt und gelitten genug hast, und genug
genossen, und satt bist irrdischer Schönheit, und
werth bist auszuruhen in dem Arme der Göttinn,
werth an ihrem Busen zu fühlen, was den ver-
götterten Herkules neu gebahr; nimm ihn auf,
himmlische Schönheit, du Mittlerinn zwischen
Göttern und Menschen, und mehr als Prometheus leit
er die Seeligkeit der Götter auf die Erde [my
italics].

Karl Schneider finds that it is this construction "in die der Dichter mit den Worten seines empfindsamen Helden seine innigsten und reinsten Gefühle fliessen lässt" (95-96).

Following Heun, he describes its use by Goethe as a "Funktionswandel der Form, die jetzt statt imaginärer Bilder und fingierter Empfindungen konkret erfahrene und erfüllte

Wirklichkeit ausdrückt" (96). The expression "experienced and felt reality" reminds me of Fairley's use of the term "spontaneity" in regard to Goethe's letters and is again misleading as to the process by which a fictional character is created. To compare any of the letters in Werther in which the wenn-construction is prominent (10 May, 18 August) is to be forced to conclude that the resemblance between Klopstock's use of the construction and Goethe's is highly superficial, a similarity based (at least in the case of "An Fanny" and "An Ebert") on length.

To find evidence in sentiment or in subject matter in a Klopstock poem that closely relates to that in Werther's 10 May letter, one would have to look at "Frühlingsfeier" (1759/1771), discussed in connection with "Wanderers Sturmlied" in the previous chapter. Of course, the wenn-construction is lacking in Klopstock's ode, and the structural harmony with which Goethe has built up Werther's rhapsody contrasts with Klopstock's free rhythms. But the voice is very similar, an ecstatic one; and, what is more, there is an "eye" at work here, looking at the order of Creation and of its place within this pre-established order of things (Werther: "das Wehen des Allliebenden, der uns in ewiger Wonne schwebend trägt"). This poem is the famous ode alluded to in a very important scene in Werther, during which Lotte and Werther watch a departing storm in a state

of rapture. I will return to this scene later in this chapter.

A more striking comparison with Werther's effusions in the 10 May letter, both in terms of structure and of content, is an earlier product of the 1750s, namely, the raptures of Damon in the idyll "Damon und Daphne" by Salomon Geßner. The two passages appear below, with the similar portions underlined. Besides the ear-catching and similiarly-linked wenn-periods, we have here practically identical nature imagery (absolutely lacking in Klopstock's poems in which the wenn-construction occurs), an individual confronted with the majesty of nature (as in "Frühlingsfeier"), and an identical expression of wordlessness at the end of the outpouring in both letter and idyll. Each ends with a comparison in which the speaker attempts to find an analogy that matches the feelings evoked by contemplating the glory of nature. The italics are mine.

Geßner

Umarme mich Daphne! umarme mich! O was für Freude durchströmt mich! wie herrlich ist alles um uns her! Welche unerschöpfliche Quelle von Entzücken! Von der belebenden Sonne bis zur kleinsten Pflanze sind alles Wunder! O wie reißt das Entzücken mich hin! wenn ich vom hohen Hügel die weitausgebreitete Gegend übersehe, oder, wenn ich ins Gras hingestreckt, die manigfaltigen Blumen und Kräuter betrachte und ihre kleine Bewohner; oder wenn ich in nächtlichen Stunden, bey gestirntem Himmel, den Wechsel der Jahreszeiten, oder den Wachstum der unzählbaren Gewächse - - wenn ich die Wunder betrachte, dann schwellt mir die Brust, Gedanken dengen sich dann auf; ich kan sie nicht entwikeln, dann wein' ich und sinke hin und stammle mein Erstaunen dem der die Erde schuf! O

Daphne! nichts gleicht dem Entzücken, es sey denn das Entzücken, von dir geliebt zu seyn.

Goethe

Ich bin so allein und freue mich so meines Lebens, in dieser Gegend, die für solche Seelen geschaffen ist, wie die meine. Ich bin so glücklich, mein Bester, so ganz in dem Gefühl von ruhigem Daseyn versunken, daß meine Kunst darunter leidet. Ich könnte jetzo nicht zeichnen, nicht einen Strich, und bin niemals ein grösserer Mahler gewesen als in diesen Augenblicken. Wenn das liebe Thal um mich dampft, und die hohe Sonne an der Oberfläche der undurchdringlichen Finsterniß meines Waldes ruht, und nur einzelne Strahlen sich in das innere Heiligthum stehlen, und ich dann im hohen Grase am fallenden Bache liege, und näher an der Erde tausend mannigfaltige Gräsgen mir merkwürdig werden. Wenn ich das Wimmeln der kleinen Welt zwischen Halmen, die unzähligen, unergründlichen Gestalten, all der Würmgen, der Mückgen, näher an meinem Herzen fühle, und fühle die Gegenwart des Allmächtigen, der uns all nach seinem Bilde schuf, das Wehen des Allliebenden, der uns in ewiger Wonne schwebend trägt und erhält. Mein Freund, wenn's denn um meine Augen dämmert, und die Welt um mich her und Himmel ganz in meiner Seele ruht, wie die Gestalt einer Geliebten; dann sehn ich mich oft und denke: ach könntest du das wieder ausdrücken, könntest du dem Papier das einhauchen, was so voll, so warm in dir lebt, daß es würde der Spiegel deiner Seele, wie deine Seele ist der Spiegel des unendlichen Gottes. Mein Freund -- Aber ich gehe darüber zu Grunde, ich erliege unter der Gewalt der Herrlichkeit dieser Erscheinungen.⁵

⁵ An ironic stance on Goethe's part cannot be discounted here. Compare, for instance, the passage in Book 7 of Dichtung und Wahrheit in which his search for poetic subjects was demystified by reality: "Und doch ward ich ... öfters bewogen, meinen Spaziergang einsam anzustellen, und weil weder von schönen noch erhabenen Gegenständen dem Beschauer viel entgegentrat und in dem wirklich herrlichen Rosentale zur besten Jahreszeit die Mücken keinen zarten Gedanken aufkommen lassen ..." Similar sentiments are expressed concerning visits to the Rhine valley in the Sesenheim chapters of Dichtung und Wahrheit.

W.E. Delp, who commented on these parallels in a 1925 note, did not draw any conclusions concerning Goethe's use of literary texts in Werther, being content to state that Goethe must have had Geßner in mind when he wrote the Werther letters and concluding that Goethe avoids Geßner's "mere visual observation" and weaves the elements of the passage into "an organic whole" (336-37).⁶ Besides the review of Geßner's Neue Idyllen in the 25 August 1772 issue of the Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen, which characterizes Geßner as a "mahlender Dichter" and writes off his shepherds as "Schattenwesen," there are other indications of Goethe's familiarity with Geßner. A 1766 letter to his sister recommends Geßner's style as a model for German, and, in the 13 February 1769 letter to Friedericke Oeser, he writes, in reference to his disdain for Kretschmann's Der Gesang Rhingulphs des Barden (1768): "Gleim, und Weise und Gessner in Einem Liedgen, und was drüber ist hat man satt." Goethe's early poems already utilized Geßnerian interior

⁶ The only other reference I have encountered in the critical literature to the similarities between these two passages is in a footnote in Heinrich Wölfflin's 1889 study on Geßner, in which he cites this idyll as containing "eine Vorahnung des zweiten Wertherbriefes" (108). Again, Stuart Atkins' article on the early letters as a literary training ground is a helpful reminder that Goethe was actively involved in a coming to terms with other writers, and one of those writers was Salomon Geßner. The supposedly "spontaneous" character of Goethe's early work obscures the deep ties Goethe had with the world of neo-classicist literary practice, one based on imitation of models.

decoration ("Die Nacht" or "Der Schmetterling," for instance).

Geßner's title signals the transformations Goethe has wrought on the "Damon, Daphne" idyll. Damon is accompanied by Daphne, whom he is addressing ("Umarme mich, Daphne, umarme mich"); Goethe's opening stands in contrast to Geßner's, for, as Werther himself points out, "Ich bin so allein ..." This presence/absence of an interlocutor necessarily affects the comparison with which each passage culminates. Damon refers to his opposite, Daphne: "es sey denn das Entzücken von dir geliebt zu seyn." Werther at first also compares all he sees to a beloved, who, however, is not present ("wie die Gestalt einer Geliebten"); being alone, his final comparison, one that is much more encompassing and complex and at the same time existential, very much like the mood of "Frühlingsfeier," refers not to anyone or anything in the outside world but to himself: "es würde der Spiegel deiner Seele wie deine Seele ist der Spiegel des unendlichen Gottes." The image of the mirror produces something like a doubling of Werther's self-absorption. In much the same way, the "du" to whom Werther addresses his letters is never heard from directly; Wilhelm's responses are always filtered through Werther's consciousness.

Werther's lack of his own Daphne at this point is a significant modification from the Geßnerian model, though it

is not a modification at odds with the movement in Goethe's poetry described in the previous chapters. Werther has already announced in his opening letter that he does not wish attachments ("Wie froh bin ich, daß ich weg bin!"), a sentiment strengthened by his mention of troubling family and inheritance problems. It is obvious that Werther likes being alone ("Die Einsamkeit ist meinem Herzen köstlicher Balsam ...") and that he has set up his own kingdom ("Bald werd ich Herr vom Garten seyn"). I would argue, however, that a lone bourgeois male, with a lot of time on his hands to devote to love or other amusements, was not a conventional fictional feature at this time, that, in fact, there might have been a certain impropriety about such a situation.⁷ Shepherds in idylls, on the other hand, have very little *raison d'etre* besides singing, pursuing love, admiring nature, and the amusements of the carefree, and they are always accompanied by (or looking for) a female counterpart. Thus, although Werther is intensely self-absorbed, this echo of Geßner's shepherd indicates that Werther is in need of a Daphne, while what we know of Goethe's work until now hints at the incompatibility of the male and female in the same poetic space.

⁷ Arnd Bohm, in his article on "Der Wanderer," comments (140) that it is the woman "who raises the mundane question of trade" ("Welch Gewerbe treibt dich/ Durch des Tages Hitze/ Den sandigen Pfad her?") Probably she has never encountered a man without a productive occupation.

The idyll, traditionally or in Geßner's portrayals of it, demands a special kind of social harmony, and Werther's recognition of this is shown by his references to the limitations such harmony imposes. The spurning of attachments voiced in his opening letter and the desire for solitary self-expression ("Ich kehre in mich selbst zurück, und finde eine Welt!") are aberrant in such a social universe. Shepherds, after all, usually sing alone when they are pining for love. The idyll at Wahlheim, however, is different from Geßner's more egalitarian world of shepherds in love. It is patriarchal and composed of different social classes. Thus, despite Werther's fondness for the ordinary people at Wahlheim, he is conscious of how different he is from them and that they are not the kinds of souls with whom he can share his own (17 May). The idyll works against the individuation he is interested in. It is characteristic of Werther that he would be drawn to children and not to any of the adults living in the world of work and responsibility.

What we see in Werther is what happens to a Geßnerian shepherded, predisposed to being in love, who wanders into a patriarchal idyll. That he is looking for love in the wrong place and that it will be a danger to him is evident, even before he meets Lotte, as he falls under the spell of the patriarchal elements. One of these is the girl drawing water at the fountain, which is located in a protected

setting ("Einfassung"), characteristic of idyllic space. As Werther enters the environs of Wahlheim,⁸ he begins to supply himself with just such a nest: "Du kennst von Alters her meine Art, mich anzubauen, irgend mir an einem vertraulichen Orte ein Hüttchen aufzuschlagen, und da mit aller Einschränkung zu herbergen. Ich hab auch hier wieder ein Plätzchen angetroffen, das mich angezogen hat" (26 May).⁹ That he is first attracted to Lotte while she carries out her role of substitute mother is another indication of the patriarchal idyll in which Lotte exists.

What next connects Werther with Damon, with his Geßnerian shepherd aspect, is that he falls in love with Lotte while dancing, which is associated with music, one of the most characteristic activities of shepherds.¹⁰ English dances and contredance are much more period specific to the novel than the Rococo-rustic lays piped on flutes by Geßner's shepherds; besides suggesting society, such à la

⁸ That is, "elective home"; a continuation of Goethe's interests in this matter of choice can be seen in Goethe's later novel, Die Wahlverwandtschaften.

⁹ "Das Erblicken des idyllischen Ortes und das Sichniederlassen haben etwas wom Wiedererkennen" (von der Thüsen, 160). In defending Geßner against Goethe's 1772 review in FGA and against what he saw as the new dogmatism of the "Shakespear Mainer," the writer Johann Jakob Engel said the following about Geßner: "er führt uns in die süßesten Augenblicke unsers Lebens zurück" (quoted in Böschenstein-Schäfer, Idylle, 64). The title of von der Thüsen's article, "Kindheit ohne Trennungen: Tiefenstruktur der Idylle," speaks to this aspect of regression.

¹⁰ Compare here also Die Laune des Verliebten.

mode dances also hint at the dangers to which this idyll will be subject. It is dancing that leads to the storm that Lotte and Werther observe in mutual rapture. This scene is itself foreshadowed in the "Damon, Daphne" idyll. Published in 1756 in Geßner's Idyllen (which in its own time went on to become one of Europe's literary sensations, much like Werther almost twenty years later), it begins with the shepherd pair exiting a cave in which they have taken refuge during a thunderstorm. Damon exclaims:

Es ist vorübergegangen, Daphne! das schwarze
Gewitter, die schrökende Stimme des Donners
schweigt. Zittre nicht, Daphne! Die Blize
schlängeln sich nicht mehr durchs schwarze Gewölk;
lass uns die Höle verlassen ...

Despite this echo of Aeneas and Dido's marriage ceremony after that pair took refuge in a cave during a storm, it can be safely assumed that nothing so substantial took place between Damon and Daphne while they sat out the storm. Geßner is firmly in the Rococo tradition with its coy playfulness regarding sex.

The second and third paragraphs of Geßner's idyll, however, are a remarkable premonition (I am echoing Wölfflin here) of Klopstock's "Frühlingsfeier,"¹¹ describing the movement of a departing storm, absent the existential Gehalt of the ode.

Izt traten sie Hand in Hand aus der schützenden
Grotte hervor; Wie herrlich! rief Daphne, dem Hirt

¹¹ Geßner's idyll appeared in his 1756 collection, Klopstock's first version of his ode in 1759.

die Hand drückend, wie herrlich glänzt die Gegend!
 Wie hell schimmert das Blau des Himmels durch das
 zerrißne Gewölk! Sie fliehen, die Wolken; wie sie
 ihren Schatten in der Sonnebeglänzten Gegend
 zerstreun! sieh Damon, dort liegt der Hügel mit
 seinen Hütten und Herden im Schatten, izt flieht
 der Schatten und läßt ihn im Sonnen-Glanz; sieh
 wie er durchs Thal hin über die blumichten Wiesen
 läuft.

Wie schimmert dort, Daphne! rief Damon, wie
 schimmert dort der Bogen der Iris von einem
 glänzenden Hügel zum andern ausgespannt; am Rücken
 das graue Gewölk verkündigt die freundliche Göttin
 von ihrem Bogen der Gegend die Ruhe, und lächelt
 durchs unbeschädigte Thal hin.

The divinities that populate Geßner's world ("die
 freundliche Göttin") are starkly different from the awe-
 provoking creator of Klopstock; and it seems almost ludi-
 crous to compare Geßner's "die schrökende Stimme des
 Donners" to Klopstock's "den Donner Jehovah/ ... Den
 erschütternden Donner des Herrn," not to mention bring
 Geßner's friendly zephyrs into contact with Klopstock's
 winds, which "fliegen, und wirbeln, und rauschen."¹² Yet

¹² Langen, in tracing the development from a static, enumerative "Enlightenment" style of nature description (Brockes, Haller, Chr. E. v. Kleist) to one in which the landscape becomes the mirror of the soul (say, Goethe's "Mailied"), credits this subjectifying of nature to the appropriation of the language of Pietism. What initially arose as a way of describing an intensely felt individual relation to God, itself a radical, personal process, the dynamic, verb-laden language of Pietism was extended to intimate relations between humans (e.g., "Thyrsis und Damon"; or see the 1768 letters between Gleim and Jacobi that Goethe and his friends were fond of parodying). The next step, as Langen points out, was the use of such language to characterize the relationship between man and nature (255-65). Although Geßner's connection with Pietism were superficial (271), Langen establishes him as the central link in this process, citing many examples of his verbal dynamic that give voice to a new language of the heart. Geßner's

the gentler conception of nature should not mask the similarities, especially the view of ultimately stable relations between man and either God (Klopstock's poem) or Mother Nature (Geßner) signalled in both by the contractual rainbow. The storm that Lotte and Werther observe, which produces the same kind of harmony of hearts seen in Geßner's idyll, is also one that is leaving everyone safely behind. Compare, for instance, Daphne's effusion, "Wie herrlich! ... wie herrlich glänzt die Gegend! Wie hell schimmert das Blau des Himmels durch das zerrissne Gewölk!" with Werther's description: "... es donnerte abseitwärts und der herrliche [!] Regen säuselte auf das Land ..."

Alewyn has pointed out in connection with this passage that Lotte, in uttering Klopstock's name, is not talking about literature but is showing Werther her heart (359), just as Damon had shown Daphne his in Geßner's idyll. Now, in Geßner's idyll, which today's readers would judge to be scarcely more than a bundle of literary artifice, Damon does not refer to Theocritus or Virgil to alert Daphne to her role in this idyll, that of lover. Werther and Lotte, however, are not strictly speaking figures in a pastoral, and thus Goethe must resort to literary mediation to suggest something new, something beyond prescribed literary roles and literary emotions, namely "feeling." This goes to the heart of what I referred to in the introduction when I spoke

use of Pietist language would be a Gehaltwandel.

of certain processes being so natural for modern readers that we don't stop to ask ourselves how natural they were to Goethe. For eighteenth-century readers like Lotte, this process by which an experience is translated into an aesthetic value was not yet totally natural; modern readers of this scene, on the other hand (who in any case find her utterance comical), do not need such literary mediation -- two centuries of literature have trained us to expect two people watching a storm to be moved, if not to tears. Yet, if one compares the constant flow of tears and displays of sentiments in a work like Gellert's Schwedische Gräfin (a "menage à trois" also reenacted in Werther), one recognizes that a huge leap has been accomplished, literarily speaking. An "objective correlative, absent in Geßner's idyll, has been discovered.

The intense mutual feeling produced by contemplation of a natural phenomenon, which contrasts so strongly with Werther's self-absorption described in the 10 May letter, is also present in Geßner's idyll. The following is Daphne's response to the effusion of Damon with which my discussion of Werther's 10 May letter began:

Ach Damon! auch mich, auch mich entzücken die Wunder! O laß uns in zärtlicher Umarmung den kommenden Morgen, den Glanz des Abendrochts und den sanften Schimmer des Mondes, laß uns die Wunder betrachten, und an die bebende Brust uns drücken, und unser Erstaunen stammeln; O welch unaussprechliche Freude! wenn die Entzücken zu dem Entzücken der zärtlichsten Liebe sich mischt.

Werther, in a similar scene, watching the departing storm with Lotte, confines himself to falling on his knees and wetting her hand with tears and kisses. Unlike Geßner's idylls, all of Goethe's poetry up until now has shown the impossibility for the male and female to coexist in the same poetic space. This scene in fact telegraphs Werther's death: just as Dido, who consummated her love for Aeneas in the cave scene, commits suicide, so the scene between Lotte and Werther, reprising the scene in "Damon" and in the Aeneid, presages its hero's regression and suicide.

The incompatibility of male and female in Goethe's lyric was established by juxtaposing conflicting poetic spaces, and something similar occurs in Werther, namely, the incompatibility of the Geßnerian idyllic landscape of lovers with the patriarchal territory of family and social relations. As Werther sinks into love, in the idyllic space before Albert's arrival, the kind of expansive self-expression voiced in the 10 May letter shrinks and he begins to form a new portrait of himself, modeled on Odysseus' homecoming, in which the Homeric hero reasserted his position in the oikos, which had fallen into disarray during his ten-year absence: "Und so sehnt sich der unruhigste Vagabund zuletzt wieder nach seinem Vaterlande, und findet in seiner Hütte, an der Brust seiner Gattin, in dem Kreise seiner Kinder und der Geschäfte zu ihrer Erhaltung, all die Wonne, die er in der weiten öden Welt vergebens suchte" (my

italics).¹³ Unfortunately, Albert's arrival precipitates his ejection from the idyll: "... und wenn ich zu Lotten komme, und Albert so bey ihr sizt im Gärtgen unter der Laube, und ich nicht weiter kann ..." That he might make Lotte his own is dealt with in the 8 August 1771 letter, in which he feebly responds to Wilhelm's suggestion that he take some action to counter his decline:

Entweder sagst du, hast du Hofnung auf Lotten, oder du hast keine. Gut! Im ersten Falle such sie durchzutreiben, suche die Erfüllung deiner Wünsche zu umfassen, im andern Falle ermanne dich und suche einer elenden Empfindung los zu werden, die all deine Kräfte verzehren muß.

The demands of wooing and supporting a real wife are in conflict with Werther's construction as a Geßnerian shepherd, which only allows him to be in love with Lotte. The real world of work and providing for a wife don't enter the picture, and Werther doesn't even respond to the first suggestion. Instead, in response to the second he compares his love to a sickness.

Werther's desire for Lotte is principally erotic, but his very constructedness from the Geßnerian shepherd model fates him to lack of fulfillment in this realm. The mutual contemplation of nature in Geßner's idylls brings lovers together -- as, say, to witness the above-mentioned thunderstorm -- and "transforms sensual perceptions into nervous vibrations, a rhapsody of feelings," but the lovers

¹³ In Jean Paul's felicitous phrase, "Vollglück in der Beschränkung" (quoted in Helmut Schneider, 370).

resolutely remain "ethereal creatures equipped with highly sensitive nervous fibers, but no epidermic cells" (Bersier, 42). As Renato Poggioli has pointed out, the central erotic act of the pastoral is the kiss: "... the pastoral insists on the preliminaries of love rather than on its final culmination. ... [The kiss symbolizes] man's wistful desire to enjoy the pleasure of the flesh without being threatened by ... the burden of a future family and the duty of raising children" (Poggioli, 54).¹⁴ It goes with being a Geßnerian shepherd that Werther would imagine Lotte was in love with him (13 July 1771), but he constantly seeks to frame his feelings for Lotte in the terms of a shepherd who is innocent of sex: "Ist nicht meine Liebe zu ihr die heiligste, reinste, brüderlichste Liebe? Hab ich jemals einen strafbaren Wunsch in meiner Seele gefühlt ..." (17 December). More frequently, however, his thoughts reflect a confused joining of the innocent and pastoral with highly charged sexual imagery, as in the letter from 21 August 1771:¹⁵

¹⁴ Poggioli's statement that the pastoral is free from the pitfalls of romantic love (15) suggests connections with the felt breach produced by the division of labor in the modern world, from which the pastoral world and its communal activities are also free.

¹⁵ Patrick Cullen has pointed out to me the similarity between Werther and the character of Daphnis in Longus' Daphnis and Chloe. The erotic element is also pronounced in the Greek novel, while the lovers display a great deal of helplessness and ignorance in regard to their desires.

Umsonst strecke ich meine Arme nach ihr aus,
 Morgens wenn ich von schweren Träumen aufdämmere,
 vergebens such ich sie Nachts in meinem Bette,
 wenn mich ein glücklicher unschuldiger Traum
 getäuscht hat, als säß ich neben ihr auf der
Wiese, und hielte ihre Hand und dekete sie mit
 tausend Küssen [my italics].

The possibility is always held out that he could be part of a family constellation -- Werther-Lotte-Albert. But in the description of himself walking with Lotte and Albert (10 August 1771), in which we see him picking flowers that he makes into a wreath (before throwing it into the river), it is this gesture of a Geßnerian shepherd that contrasts so sharply with the qualities necessary to support a real family.¹⁶ To underline this, the letter ends with a report on Albert's job prospects and a comment on his industry and orderliness. In other words, Albert works.

The inability to escape from this literarily imposed eroticism results in his gradual incapacitation, which is a heightened form of the pining away for love that is prevalent among the goatherds and shepherds of Theocritus and Virgil. In Werther, this becomes a sickness that

¹⁶ Besides literary models (La nouvelle Héloïse, Das Leben der schwedischen Gräfin), one must also consider Goethe's real-life attempts to enact a menage à trois. An obvious case is Kestner and Lotte and Goethe, but much might be said about Cornelia, Schlosser, and Goethe. In connection with this, Goethe makes an interesting mistake in chronology in Book 9 of Dichtung und Wahrheit concerning the publication of Werther: he says on the day on which his sister married Georg Schlosser and left the family home (1 November 1773) he received a letter from Weygand in Leipzig, asking for a manuscript. Other evidence shows that Werther was written in February 1774 and the manuscript sent to Leipzig in March 1774 (HA, IX, 589). See also Eissler.

endangers his individual self, a state already apparent in the loss of contours described in the 24 July letter:

Noch nie war ich glücklicher, noch nie meine Empfindung an der Natur, bis auf's Steingen, auf's Gräsgen herunter, voller und inniger, und doch -- ich weis nicht, wie ich mich ausdrücken soll, meine vorstellende Kraft ist so schwach, alles schwimmt, schwankt vor meiner Seele, daß ich keinen Umriß pakken kann ...

Before the end of the first part of the novel, the 22 August letter shows that Werther recognizes the threat to his integrity of his thinking:

Es ist ein Unglück, Wilhelm! all meine thätigen Kräfte sind zu einer unruhigen Lässigkeit verstimmt, ich kann nicht müssig seyn und wieder kann ich nichts tun. Ich hab keine Vorstellungskraft, kein Gefühl an der Natur und die Bücher speien mich alle an. Wenn wir uns selbst fehlen, fehlt uns doch alles.

A sign that the idyll represents a regression as far as individuation is concerned is seen in his pilgrimage to his birthplace after his painful experience in service at the court. This attempt to reconnect himself with the idyllic places of youth makes all too glaring the gap that exists between the world of childhood and the demands of the workaday world, that leaving home indeed means that one assume such demands. Because of his constructedness from Geßner's shepherds, he has no choice but to return to Wahlheim to fill out his destiny. Immediately, he encounters the woman whose husband had gone to Switzerland to settle his own inheritance problems. In the 27 May

letter she was brought into connection with the narrow circle of life in which exist the inhabitants of the idyll:

Ich sage dir, mein Schatz, wenn meine Sinne gar nicht mehr halten wollen, so lindert all den Tumult der Anblick eines solchen Geschöpfes, das in der glücklichen Gelassenheit so den engen Kreis seines Daseyns ausgeht, von einem Tage zum andern sich durchhilft, die Blätter abfallen sieht, und nichts dabey denkt, als daß der Winter kömmt.

On his return, however, we learn of the failure of her husband's mission and, we must presume, the end of what Werther perceived as her idyllic existence.

The end of the idyll for Werther is marked by increasing references to death (26 October; 3 November, which has linguistic similarities to the 10 May letter but which is emptied of the affect of that letter, signalling the death of his heart). The idyll never loses its hold on him, however, and his impending extinction is sounded in his suicide letter to Lotte in terms that transform the graveyard into an amoenic setting:

Wenn du hinauf steigst auf den Berg, an einem schönen Sommerabende, dann erinnere Dich meiner, wie ich so oft das Thal herauf kam, und dann blicke nach dem Kirchhofe hinüber nach meinem Grabe, wie der Wind das hohe Gras im Schein der sinkenden Sonne, hin und her wiegt.

His drift toward suicide and its connection with the idyll is mirrored in the selections from the poetry of Ossian,¹⁷ which represent what might be called a destroyed idyll. The

¹⁷ In the same article on Klopstock, Alewyn also pointed out (363) that Lotte and Werther's final meeting is under the sign of literature, the reading of Ossian.

Ossianic songs, which for a second time produce harmony of hearts and tears in Lotte and Werther, are almost a parody of the apostrophes to nature contained in Geßner's idylls. Though the scenery stands under the sign of death, the language of the songs verges at times on the Rococo: "Süß is dein Murmeln Strom"; "weiß wie der gefallene Schnee"; "Frühlingsluft" are a few examples. Indeed, the songs are full of laments for moments and landscapes that are remarkably Geßnerian: "Wie verändert seid ihr, meine Freunde, seit den festlichen Tagen auf Selma, da wir buhlten um die Ehre des Gesanges, wie Frühlingslüfte den Hügel hin wechselnd beugen das schwach lispelnde Gras" (my italics).¹⁸

The destruction of the Ossianic heroic world occurs, it should be noted, as a result of family quarrels, specifically those stemming from the attempts of children to leave the patriarchy and engage in individual marriage choices. The ironic ending, after the storms of passion and war are past and the ghosts of the children wander over the heath in "trauriger Eintracht," symbolizes Werther's belief that he and Lotte will find harmony together in heaven after he has killed himself because of the storms of his passion.

¹⁸ Two things should be pointed out in connection with this passage. First, the song contests, which are a stock feature of pastorals since Theocritus. Second, besides the grammatical inversions, the phrase "schwach lispelnd" is a characteristic Geßnerian participial construction.

This reencounter in heaven, of course, also stands under the sign of Klopstock.

Let me return to the scene between Lotte and Werther and to Werther's somewhat puzzling statement with which his description of the storm scene ends: "... und möcht' ich nun deinen so oft entweihten Namen nie wieder nennen hören!" Though he is never mentioned again, it might be said that Klopstock never leaves the novel: Werther's belief that he and Lotte will be reunited in the hereafter mirrors similar reunions of lovers and friends in Klopstock's poetry. Thus, in terms of the analysis with which I began this chapter -- Klopstock's use of the wenn-construction for fantasies of future/ otherworldly encounters -- Werther's reunion with Lotte in death is also signalled by his use of this construction in the 10 May letter. As I mentioned above, however, this scene also gives birth to what I referred to as the discovery of an objective correlative, and this is a literary movement of a revolutionary nature. Goethe, almost as if he is trying to cover over the tracks of this discovery in Klopstock, thus immediately consigns Klopstock to oblivion: "... und möcht' ich nun deinen so oft entweihten Namen nie wieder nennen hören!"¹⁹

¹⁹ This statement puts in perspective an extremely odd observation in Goethe's 28 May 1774 letter to Klopstock: "Und warum soll ich Klopstocken nicht schreiben, ihm selbst schicken was es auch sey, und was für einen Anteil er auch dran nehmen kann! Soll ich den Lebenden nicht anreden, zu dessen Grabe ich wallfahrten würde."

Die Leiden des jungen Werther has been interpreted as dramatizing the conflict between the demands of the heart against those of the world of work and responsibility. This was, however, a new literary scenario in the eighteenth century -- an emancipated, solitary male given to self-expression -- and came into being by Goethe modeling Werther on a Geßnerian shepherd. It was Werther's "personality" and his destruction that captured the imagination of his readers, but it should be remembered that his suicide also precipitated the end of the idyll at Wahlheim, presaged by the floods that covered his beloved environs. It is this destruction of the idyll in Werther that reflects a larger literary situation, namely the demise of neoclassical, normative poetics and the birth of a new, expressive poetics, a transition that has often been defined in terms of aggression (Bloom; Booth).²⁰ In a way, Werther's suicide is a heightening of Daphnis' death in Theocritus' first idyll, a pining away caused by love. That Goethe did not mean to validate Werther's self-destruction or that of the idyll, that he was instead operating in accord with the imperatives produced by his appropriation of certain literary models, and that the process he was describing was a literary one -- the overcoming of the neoclassical

²⁰ The movement toward such "destruction" has been prepared, however, by such maneuvers as removing the social content of Rococo poetry discussed in Chapter 1.

practice of writing poetry -- is the subject of the final chapter.

Chapter 5:
The Artist Leaves the Idyll

The Wertherperiode of the 10 May letter, with which I began tracing Werther's ancestry in the last chapter, is prefaced by a profound remark of Werther's that would have shaken Gottsched but that gives voice to an expressive art if not an expressive poetics: "Ich könnte jetzto nicht zeichnen, nicht einen Strich, und bin niemalen ein grösserer Mahler gewesen als in diesen Augenblicken." After the long series of wenn-constructions Werther goes on to utter the desire to put on paper what he is experiencing: "... ach könntest du das wieder ausdrücken, könntest du dem Papier das einhauchen, was so voll, so warm in dir lebt, daß es würde der Spiegel deiner Seele, wie deine Seele ist der Spiegel des unendlichen Gottes."

There is a long tradition equating the shepherd with the artist. Shepherds are not burdened with prosaic occupations, and they fill their hours with music, song, poetry. Theocritus' first idyll features a song contest between a goatherd and a shepherd named Thyrsis who wins the prize of a drinking cup by singing of the passion of Daphnis. In Virgil's sixth eclogue Silenus sings of the world's beginning, the Flood, the Golden Age, and Prometheus; of how the Muses gave Hesiod's reed pipe to Gallus; and of how the song he is singing was composed long ago by Apollo on the banks of the Eurotas. As was mentioned

in Chapter 2, in Rococo poetry the shepherd had come to serve as a stand-in for the poet, a conceit that also derived from Renaissance pastoral poetry.

Werther, despite his literary derivation, is of course not a pastoral shepherd. That he is not a singer but considers himself a painter also indicates a modern conflict of sentiment and expression that was itself finding expression in the eighteenth century. Though Werther seems hardly more than a dilettante to us, he is an "Augenmensch." Some of his most important perceptions come from this characteristic, and much of the effect of the novel derives precisely from Werther's vividly rendered observations of the world around him in his letters. He first sees Lotte slicing bread for her siblings, a scene that he calls "das reizendste Schauspiel." The following comment, from the 27 May 1771 letter, which was also quoted in the last chapter, highlights both his visual acuity as well as the danger the idyll poses to his self-expression:

Ich sage dir, mein Schatz, wenn meine Sinnen gar nicht mehr halten wollen, so lindert all den Tumult, der Anblick eines solchen Geschöpfs, das in der glücklichen Gelassenheit so den engen Kreis seines Daseyns ausgeht, von einem Tage zum andern sich durchhilft, die Blätter abfallen sieht, und nichts dabey denkt, als daß der Winter kömmt.¹

¹ One seems to hear Faust's "In dieser Armut welche Fülle!" as he inspects Gretchen's room (Urfaust, l. 545).

It is this inner tumult that the artist wishes to transpose into effective work and that Goethe has spoken of in connection with his own work:

Und so begann diejenige Richtung, von der ich mein ganzes Leben über nicht abweichen konnte, nämlich dasjenige, was mich erfreute oder quälte, oder sonst beschäftigte, in ein Bild, ein Gedicht zu verwandeln und darüber mit mir selbst abzuschließen, um sowohl meine Begriffe von den äußeren Dingen zu berichtigen, als mich im Innern deshalb zu beruhigen. Die Gabe hierzu war wohl niemand nötiger als mir, den seine Natur immerfort aus einem Extreme in das andere warf. (HA, IX, 283)

In regard to the 10 May letter, Werther's inability to find a comparative image beyond himself and indeed the monologic nature of this epistolary novel are signals of a self-absorption at odds with the necessity to transform feeling into something beyond the self -- an artistic image. The thrust of Book 13 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, in which Goethe describes the genesis of Werther, seems to be that it is not enough for an artist simply to have feelings. The lesson that Werther did not draw is summarized at the end of that book: "Doch das ist unser schönster und süßester Wahn, den wir nicht aufgeben dürfen, ob er uns gleich viel Pein im Leben verursacht, daß wir das, was wir schätzen und verehren, uns auch womöglich zueignen, ja aus uns selbst hervorbringen und darstellen möchten" (HA, IX, 598).

Though Goethe performed this feat in writing Werther, distancing himself from what he characterized as the aimlessness of his generation, the reaction artists evoke --

in this case the appeal of the solitary, misunderstood soul in Werther -- is often beyond their control. Thus, Goethe's reaction to the public response to Werther, for many years after its initial éclat, was guarded, indicating that his own intention in writing the novel had been misunderstood.² In this chapter I would like to show the way the Sesenheim idyll of Books 10 and 11 of Dichtung und Wahrheit took back artistic control to a certain extent precisely by clarifying what Werther was incapable of, namely the process of transforming experience into art. In doing so, Goethe might be said to be explaining the difference between Werther's subjectivity -- a subjectivity with which people all over Europe identified and made their own experience -- and that of the artist. He scrutinized the sentiments voiced in the 10 May letter and declared them insufficient for the artist. In reprising certain aspects of the novel in his autobiography, he highlighted exactly that aspect on which Werther founders, his failure to leave the idyll. The autobiography in turn shows the artist coming into being by, and finding his subject matter in, the abandonment of the literary inheritance represented by the idyll.

To discuss the Sesenheim idyll it will be necessary to put it within the context of the entire Straßburg period,

² Triumph der Empfindsamkeit, the play Goethe wrote in 1777, might be seen as evidence that he hadn't seen Werther as a real human with all his contradictory aspects but as a bundle of literary clichés.

for the three books of the autobiography (9-11) dealing with this period are like a series of nested boxes. The oft-used phrase "Wiederholte Spiegelungen" in connection with Goethe is particularly relevant here. Book 9 begins with a long quote from a 1765 review in the Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek that indicates the change in literary taste in the period, the importance of "Gemüt," of imagination, of the passions, all of which, Goethe tells us, corresponded to his own poetic conceptions and activity. After this he announces his departure from the patriarchal home in the spring of 1770, after recovering from the illness he suffered from in Leipzig, and his journey to Straßburg to study. Even his restoration to health, which is ongoing in Books 9 and 10, as well as several observations in Book 9 signal that Straßburg will represent a different kind of literary experience from Leipzig. On the first day, he reports, he rushed from his new lodgings to the top of the cathedral from which he viewed the city and surrounding countryside: if Leipzig was a Rococo town, a miniature Paris, Straßburg and its environs represent a "new Paradise," rich in vegetation, orchards, meadows, forest-covered mountains, and villages. Again, in contrast to the females in Leipzig, the girls in Straßburg wear richly varied local costume. The disquisition in Book 9 on the aesthetic qualities of the cathedral, especially his comment that as a child he had heard the cathedral disparaged, also

underlines that a new direction will be taken, one away from French influence to something that will be called German. Even the division of the autobiography at the end of Book 10, with the Sesenheim idyll forming the last book of Part 2 and the first book of Part 3, indicates a turn, poetically. This will be capped in the long discussion of the waning of the French literary model at the end of Book 11.

Because of the importance of Sesenheim's positioning in the autobiography, this is the point at which to insert some reflections regarding the chronology I have followed in this work. Chapter 3 of this dissertation, treating poems from 1772, Goethe's "Genie" period, obviously sprang over the important subject of the Straßburg period, which, in practically all Goethe scholarship, is considered something of an annus mirabilis. Two things justify my proceeding as I have. The first is the paucity of evidence from Straßburg. As beautiful as the poetry is, there is very little of it, and the authenticity of some of it is in doubt. There are also very few letters or other documentary remains. Friedrike Brion, as tenderly as she has been delineated in some studies of Goethe, unfortunately remains a shadowy figure. We scarcely see her for herself.

The importance of the Sesenheim idyll, however, is not in its reality content but in the way the autobiography reconstructs this period as Goethe's emergence from traditional literary practice. This reconstruction mirrors

my documentation of the way this process was effectuated on specific examples of his pre-1775 work. In leaving the idyll at Sesenheim, Goethe announces that he is leaving behind the literary inheritance represented by the idyll.

Stretching over Books 10 and 11 of Dichtung und Wahrheit, the Sesenheim idyll concerns events that occurred in 1770 and 1771 during the time that Goethe, who had just entered his twenties, was a student in Straßburg. The composition of this portion of his autobiography took place forty years later, in 1811 and 1812. Roy Pascal and others have, of course, warned us about the perils of accepting autobiography as a true record of historical fact or chronology. It is clear that Dichtung und Wahrheit is, instead, the imposition of "a pattern on life" (Pascal, 9), a record of an inner life coming into being, expressing, as Goethe himself said, "Ein Gefühl ... das beinah gewaltig überhand nahm, und sich nicht wundersam genug äußern konnte ... die Empfindung der Vergangenheit und Gegenwart in Eins ..." (HA, X, 32).

A key to the importance of the Sesenheim idyll as marking Goethe's recognition of his debt to traditional literary practice is his prefacing of the idyll with an account of Herder reading aloud to him from The Vicar of Wakefield, by Samuel Goldsmith, which had been published in Germany in 1767, a year after its appearance in England. Goethe proceeds to weave the Sesenheim idyll within the

model of Goldsmith's novel. According to Dichtung und Wahrheit, for instance, he traveled to Sesenheim with a fellow-student disguised as a poor theology student, which echoes the behavior of the character of Burchell, the rich lord in Goldsmith's novel, who wants to be loved for himself and not his money.³ On arriving in Seseheim, Goethe was much astonished, so he claims in Dichtung und Wahrheit, to encounter a real-life incarnation of Goldsmith's Primrose family at the parsonage in Sesenheim. As Goethe goes on to narrate the events of forty years before in Sesenheim, he continually refers to Friedrike's older sister by the name of the older sister in Goldsmith's novel. In rounding off the family configuration with the youngest Brion child, a boy, Goethe calls him "Moses," the name of the youngest Primrose boy; he omits the third Brion daughter completely, to maintain the parallel with the Goldsmith novel, in which there are only two daughters.

Scholarly research has disentangled the chronology of Goethe's and Herder's stays in Straßburg and concluded that Goethe must have met the Brion family before Herder read the novel aloud to him.⁴ Edgar Bracht's article on "Wakefield

³ Edgar Bracht also points out (372) that Goethe's disguise applies to two characters who enter the idyll in Goldsmith's novel, with disguised intentions if not appearances: Thornhill, alias Burchell, who is the family's benefactor; and his nephew, who seduces Olivia and becomes the cause of the family's downfall.

⁴ See, e.g., Lawrence Marsden Price, "Goldsmith, Sesenheim and Goethe." As mentioned in Chapter 2, I believe

in Sesenheim" is concerned with this reversal and concludes that Goethe would not likely have had the intense experience of déjà vu in Sesenheim described in Dichtung und Wahrheit. Bracht finds instead that the strong effect Herder's reading had on him as described in the autobiography ("das Übermaß von Gefühl") was the transformation in his memory of the Sesenheim experience into a presentiment ("Ahnung"), a process Bracht calls "anticipation" in Goethe, a means of eliding the Cartesian subject-object dichotomy (265-66).

Again, Bracht's conclusions hew closely to the experiential interpretation of Goethe's works. While not exactly doubting that Herder read aloud from The Vicar of Wakefield (his enthusiasm for the novel is in any case documented in his letters at the time), I find it more likely that The Vicar was in Goethe's thoughts when he wrote Werther than when he was in Sesenheim (or in Wetzlar, for that matter), that Sesenheim is a literary construction forty years after the fact describing not so much a romance outfitted with all the characteristics of an idyll, but rather a poetic process, namely the emergence of the poet from the idyll and from the literature of the past into a new independence, a movement Werther failed to make.

In introducing Werther with the speech and sentiments of a Geßnerian shepherd, Goethe had already announced his

Goethe had already read or known of Goldsmith's novel while he was in Leipzig.

engagement with the literary tradition of the idyll. In Sesenheim little remains superficially of the Geßnerian shepherd: Goethe is talking about himself, the artist. The Sesenheim idyll, conjoined with The Vicar of Wakefield, is specifically a "modern idyll" (HA, IX, 427), one that is of a natural-bourgeois nature (HA, IX, 428). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the patriarchal character and domesticity of such an idyll are not characteristic of the Geßnerian or the pastoral idyll, in which children and work are out of place, and in fact war with Werther's erotic inclinations, but they reflect changing social realities that also find their manifestation in eighteenth-century bourgeois literature. The affection for domestic idylls (e.g., Voss, Maler Müller, Geßner's late idylls), particularly the refuge that the idyll represents, also reflects the tenuousness of individuals amid new economic conditions.⁵ Whereas Werther's appearance in the novel is immediately associated with the amoenic setting of a pastoral, with playfulness and with eroticism, in describing Goldsmith's novel as a modern idyll Goethe introduces not the setting or the love interest or the playful activities but the anchor of the idyll's security: "Ein protestantischer Landgeistlicher ist vielleicht der schönste

⁵ Again, compare the farmhand story in the second version of Werther.

Gegenstand einer modernen Idylle ... er ist Vater, Hausherr, Landmann und so vollkommen ein Glied der Gemeinde ..."

Though the subject of these opening words is ostensibly the head of the Brion family, the rest of the description does not really fit that small, crotchety man but instead more closely resembles the man to whom Lotte has promised herself, Albert:

Denke man sich einen solchen Mann, mit rein menschlichen Gesinnungen, stark genug, um unter keinen Umständen davon zu weichen, und schon dadurch über die Menge erhaben, von der man Reinheit und Festigkeit nicht erwarten kann; gebe man ihm die zu seinem Amte nötigen Kenntnisse, sowie eine heitere, gleiche Tätigkeit, welche sogar leidenschaftlich ist, indem sie keinen Augenblick versäumt, das Gute zu wirken - und man wird ihn wohl ausgestattet haben. Zugleich aber füge man die nötige Beschränktheit hinzu ... (HA, IX, 427)

In the novel, Werther's patriarchal ideal is found in Homer and the Old Testament, which more nearly represent a "natural" way of life, before the intrusion of the division of labor in the modern period. Werther's constitutional inability to work, cited in the previous chapter, relates of course to his literary derivation from Geßner's shepherds, but to engage in a real relationship with a woman like Lotte would mean he would have to become like Albert, a rational man with real responsibilities. That would mean the death of Werther's heart and of his individuality. His reaction against Albert is an unconscious acknowledgment of the fact that his heart would be doomed by the requirements that a "modern" idyll would impose, that self-expression fares

poorly in the workaday world. Goethe, in turn, is portrayed in the autobiography not as a shepherd but as a young man living in the real French/German world of Straßburg in 1770/1771 and pursuing studies that will outfit him to take a position as a lawyer under his father's tutelage, precisely the sort of work Albert does.

For a woman in this period a husband who was a good provider was essential. The daughters in Goldsmith's novel as well as Lotte and Friedrike Brion, the love interest in *Sesenheim*, are highly desirable, marriageable young ladies of a healthy, practical, and uncomplicated nature. Though the outward details differ, the poeticization of Friedrike on her first appearance, as with Lotte, in terms of dress, figure, and disposition, suggests to the observing male her attractiveness and marital qualities:

In diesem Augenblick trat sie wirklich in die Türe; und da ging fürwahr an diesem ländlichen Himmel ein allerliebster Stern auf. Beide Töchter trugen sich noch deutsch, wie man es zu nennen pflegte, und diese fast verdrängte Nationaltracht kleidete Friedriken besonders gut. Ein kurzes weißes rundes Röckchen mit einer Fabel, nicht länger, als daß die nettsten Füßchen bis an die Knöchel sichtbar blieben; ein knappes weißes Mieder und eine schwarze Taffetschürze - so stand sie auf der Grenze zwischen Bäuerin und Städterin. Schlank und leicht, als wenn sie nichts an sich zu tragen hätte, schritt sie, und beinahe schien für die gewaltigen blonden Zöpfe des niedlichen Köpfchens der Hals zu zart. Aus heiteren blauen Augen blickte sie sehr deutlich umher, und das artige Stumpfnäschen forschte so frei in die Luft, als wenn es in der Welt keine Sorge geben könnte; der Strohhut hing ihr am Arm, und so hatte ich das Vergnügen, sie beim ersten Blick auf einmal in ihrer ganzen Anmut und Lieblichkeit zu sehn und zu erkennen. (HA, IX, 433)

The importance of family, insofar as it gives its members a sense of social and personal identification, is also highlighted in the very first exchanges. At the first get-together around the Brion family table in Sesenheim, equal hospitality is extended to Goethe; that he is treated as a member of the family is suggested by the discussion concerning the Brions' far-flung relatives and friends (HA, IX, 433). At their first meeting Lotte refers to Werther as "Herrn Vetter" when speaking to one of her young siblings; to his query, whether he could be so lucky to be counted among her relatives, she responds that her relations are far-flung. Even though he has met her only a few hours earlier, Werther feels a possessiveness in regard to Lotte while they are dancing that invites comparisons with a man who has claims to her hand ("Wilhelm, um ehrlich zu seyn, that ich aber doch den Schwur, daß ein Mädchen, das ich liebte, auf das ich Ansprüche hätte, mir nie mit einem andern walzen sollte, als mit mir"). Likewise, Goethe says the following about Friedrike: "... ich empfand auf einmal einen tiefen Verdruß, nicht früher mit ihr gelebt zu haben, und zugleich ein recht peinliches, neidisches Gefühl gegen alle, welche das Glück gehabt hatten, sie bisher zu umgeben" (HA, IX, 436).

Aside from the kinds of parallels that put one in mind of marriage, both novel and idyll present situations that allow common personality traits of Lotte and Friedrike to

appear to advantage. Dancing, for instance, plays a role in both Wahlheim and Sesenheim (HA, IX, 461). And Lotte's knack of smoothing the small social tensions that arise in groups -- e.g., her organizing of the game of forfeits at the dance that makes people forget their terror of the storm -- is also seen in Friedrike: "Diesen erquicklichen Äther, der sie umgab, brachte sie auch mit nach Hause, und es ließ sich bald bemerken, daß sie Verwirrungen auszugleichen und die Eindrücke kleiner unangenehmer Zufälligkeiten leicht wegzulöschen verstand" (HA, IX, 456). Both girls sing, one accompanying herself on the piano, the other under the open sky. Both Lotte and Friedrike are simple and are established within their respective domestic settings, which are outfitted with the accoutrements of the locus amoenus ("Laube," "Friedrikens Ruhe," etc.), which in turn are particularly suitable for wooing. It goes without saying that the girls in The Vicar of Wakefield are similarly accoutered with attributes and appear in settings that highlight their desirability to the opposite sex.

The Vicar of Wakefield also stresses the fragility of the position of the bourgeois female in this regard. In fact, it seems to provide an object lesson and a warning against the charms of the stranger that Goethe portrays himself as and the kind of man that Werther is. Thus,

though Lotte probably does not read much,⁶ when she does she prefers novels about the world she lives in and she is particularly fond of Goldsmith's novel, which suggests she might take to heart its warning about attractive but dangerous males to females like herself. Goethe, as if he is listening to Herder read The Vicar aloud, as if remembering Lotte, listens to Friedrike tell stories about the small world she lives in (HA, IX, 436). Her comment that she likes novels with lovely people whom one would like to resemble (HA, IX, 457), which again echoes Lotte, piles on the literary quotient of these scenes, but it also points up that the outcome in all three stories revolves around marriage. Werther is in love with a woman attached to another man and is a doubtful marriage prospect. In Sesenheim everyone expects Goethe and Friedrike to marry, whereas he abandons her. Only in The Vicar of Wakefield are expectations satisfied and marriage occurs despite villainy.

Goldsmith's novel had begun with an allusion to the subject of marriage: "I was ever of opinion, that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single and only talked of population" (308). In chapter 8 of that novel the vicar tells of a family picnic that resembles a modern version of Sannazaro's elegant Renaissance outings: "Our family dined

⁶ This is a trope with Goethe: his Leipzig letters express the usual alarm at learned females.

in the field, and we sat, or rather reclined, round a temperate repast, our cloth spread upon the hay, while Mr. Burchell gave cheerfulness to the feast" (331). Mr. Burchell, who is in disguise ("a man of broken fortunes," the vicar calls him, though he is really fabulously wealthy), proceeds to give an example of such cheerfulness by relating an English ballad that tells of the victory of true love.

Most of the get-togethers between Goethe and Friedrike in Sesenheim also occur in the out-of-doors, in an amoenic setting conducive to love, but a key to Goethe's ambivalence toward marriage and the idyll at Sesenheim is signalled by a literary insert at the end of Book 10, the Melusine fairytale. Its inclusion produces another literary layer in addition to The Vicar of Wakefield and Die Leiden des jungen Werther through which the Sesenheim idyll is filtered and also yields a striking example of Goethe's complex relationship to his models. This is the time that Goethe has been collecting ballads in the Straßburg region, and it is while Friedrike and her friends surround him in the grass that he narrates the Melusine story. He takes the precaution of doing so in the bewitching hour when her father has gone to take his afternoon nap (HA, IX, 446), as if to indicate that his intentions are not as honorable as those of Mr. Burchell, but that he will behave in the mold of Burchell's disreputable nephew. Goethe does not,

however, include the fairytale in Book 10, citing the clashing of genres (the idyllic setting, "geräumige Laube," "ländliche[] Wirklichkeit und Einfalt"). I am not the first to mention that this fairytale, as it later appeared in Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre is hardly one that would have found favor with a girl he was trying to woo.⁷ It is about a traveler who falls in love with a beautiful woman who carries with her a "zierliches Kästchen" and who turns out to be the daughter of a dwarf king; in order to be with her he has to reduce himself to her dimensions, and when he is forced to marry her he executes his escape from her kingdom.

Even before Goethe relates that he narrated the "Melusine" story to the Brion circle, there have been indications that Straßburg and Sesenheim are part of a landscape that is magical, with all the qualities of enticement and repulsion that magic suggests. The Rhine itself and the proximity of Sesenheim to the river should be included in any enumeration of such elements.⁸ Goethe's attraction and ambivalence to Friedrike are foreshadowed at the end of Book 9 when he is kissed by a jealous girl who goes on to curse his lips, saying that the next girl he

⁷ I think Bielschowsky and others are correct in seeing this story as a later justification for Goethe's abandonment of Friedrike.

⁸ Maria Antoinette's glass coach, mentioned in Book 9, might also be included in such an enumeration.

kisses will be harmed. (The kiss is of course the central erotic act of Werther.) Even before meeting Friedrike, as Goethe approaches the Sesenheim parsonage with Weyland, he describes the buildings as standing in a precarious balance between "Erhalten und Neuaufrichten," as if they are caught in a timeless never-never land. The father, a small man who speaks to the newcomer as if he has known him for years, comes straight from fairytales. Goethe's disguise, which the mother seems to see through immediately, provokes little comment and also indicates the kind of revelations and transformations that are to be expected in tales of the fantastic. After his meeting with Friedrike, he comes to rue the shabby disguise he has worn and on the following morning refers to himself as "verwünscht."

His second visit to Sesenheim is connected with a presentiment concerning this visit on Friedrike's part (HA, IX, 453). Though still under the fear of the curse, he overcomes it during a party and kisses Friedrike (459-60). He wakes up in the middle of the night spitting blood, however, which suggests that it still has power over him; light coming in through the crack in the window dispels it (461), a light associated with Friedrike whom Goethe has already told us has nothing moonlike about her (436). Friedrike, whom Goethe describes as always being the same (462), shares in the timeless quality of the fairytale setting. The importance of the test in fairytales comes

when the Brions make a journey to the city (423), and this is a test they clearly fail. Transferring the idyll to the city is disastrous; as Goethe describes it, a stone fell from his heart when they returned to Sesenheim, where, it must be assumed, they lived on in fairytale timelessness.

An exceptionally important element in connection with such fairytale elements concerns Goethe's forays into the Alsatian mountains, his visits to mines, and his descriptions of the region's geological origins and character. The visit to the mine sites occurs after traveling through a fantastic landscape: "Nun zogen wir durch waldige Gebirge, die demjenigen, der aus einem herrlichen fruchtbaren Lande kommt, wüst und traurig erscheinen müssen, und die nur durch den innern Gehalt ihres Schoßes uns anziehen können" (HA, IX, 420). At the end of Book 11, Goethe mentions how he lost his faith in the materialistic values of the Enlightenment when Voltaire, seeking to refute the Flood, denied the fossil evidence. On his visit to Bastberg he describes himself as standing on a spot representing an ancient seabed buried under the exuviae of its original inhabitants: "... ob vor oder während der Sündflut, das konnte mich nicht rühren, genug, das Rheintal war ein ungeheurer See, eine unübersehliche Bucht gewesen; das konnte man mir nicht ausreden" (IX, 485). Goethe's respect for the ancient quality of the earth shows an awe for the irrational, which is part of the substance of

fairytale, and it also goes to the heart of Goethe's great love and affection for traditional forms.

In "Die neue Melusine" itself, the nix tells her lover that God created the dwarves first of all beings "damit auch vernünftige Wesen wären, welche seine Wunder im Innern der Erde auf Gängen und Klüften anstaunen und verehren könnten" (HA, VIII, 367). This seeing into the inner nature of things is facilitated by the "Riß im Kästchen" (HA, VIII, 361) through which the narrator first sees into the dwarf kingdom. Book 11 of Dichtung und Wahrheit includes two references that echo this. The first occurs after Goethe has returned to Straßburg after his initial visit to Sesenheim. The contrast of city and country has put him out of sorts, as has his recognition of the true situation of German letters, which Herder has so starkly revealed to him, causing him to doubt his own talents. It is clear that Herder has revealed to Goethe his dwarf's nature. Right after this he once again attends his medical rounds at the university. This passage is particularly illuminating: it brings together the misshapeness of dwarves, sickness, and the attraction of the narrator of "Die neue Melusine" to his lovely nix, and it also illustrates Goethe's poetic method, one of applying "experience":

Verdrießlicher als jemals ... wohnte ich dem
Klinikum bei. Die große Heiterkeit und
Behaglichkeit, womit der verehrte Lehrer uns von
Bett zu Bett führte, die genaue Bemerkung
bedeutender Symptome, die Beurteilung des Gangs
der Krankheit überhaupt, die schöne hippokratische

Verfahrensart, wodurch sich, ohne Theorie, aus einer eignen Erfahrung, die Gestalten des Wissens heraufgaben ... das alles zog mich zu ihm und machte mir ein fremdes Fach [!], in das ich nur wie durch eine Ritze hineinsah, um desto reizender und lieber. Mein Abscheu gegen die Kranken nahm immer mehr ab, je mehr ich diese Zustände in Begriffe verwandeln lernte, durch welche die Heilung, die Wiederherstellung menschlicher Gestalt und Wesens als möglich erschien (HA, IX, 451-52). (My italics.)

The other reference that echoes the "Riß im Kästchen" occurs after he has kissed Friedrike on his second visit to Sesenheim and awoken to blood pouring from his mouth. He once again feels the curse of the dance teacher's daughter: "Glücklicherweise blickte durch eine Spalte im Laden das Tagslicht mich an; und alle Mächte der Nacht überwindend, stellte mich die hervortretende Sonne wieder auf meine Füße; ich war bald im Freien und schnell erquickt, wo nicht hergestellt" (HA, IX, 461).⁹ The sunlight and free nature refer of course to Friedrike (who, in curing him of this spell will herself be cursed by his treatment of her), and they also emphasize the amoenic elements of the idyll. Friedrike, despite her peasant characteristics, is more often associated with freedom-loving spirits of nature than with agricultural work. The lightness of step described in the following passage suggests she is not of the everyday world, which is underlined by the natural setting in which such spirits often reveal themselves to mortals:

⁹ Goethe likewise calls the architectural drawings he prepares for Friedrike's father "Risse."

Es gibt Frauenspersonen, die uns im Zimmer besonders wohl gefallen, andere, die sich besser im Freien ausnehmen; Friedrike gehörte zu den letztern. Ihr Wesen, ihr Gestalt trat niemals reizender hervor, als wenn sie sich auf einem erhöhten Fußpad hinbewegte; die Anmut ihres Betragens schien mit der beblühten Erde, und die unverwüsthliche Heiterkeit ihres Anlitzes mit dem blauen Himmel zu wetteifern. (HA, IX, 456)

It is in an idyllic setting that the narrator of "Die neue Melusine" consents to reduce himself to the dimensions of his nix and enter the dwarf kingdom. She has become pregnant, and the ancient race of dwarves requires new blood in order to avoid dying out. The following describes his bewitching:

In diesem Augenblick war mir's, als wenn ich sie nicht verlassen könnte. Sie hatte gerade wieder ihren schönen Tag oder, wenn ihr wollt, ihre schöne Stunde. Mit einem so lieblichen Wesen allein, auf grüner Matte, zwischen Gras und Blumen, von Felsen beschränkt, von Wasser umrauscht, welches Herz wäre da wohl fühllos geblieben! Ich wollte sie bei der Hand fassen, sie umarmen, aber sie stieß mich zurück und bedrohte mich, obwohl noch immer liebevoll genug, mit großer Gefahr, wenn ich mich nicht sogleich entfernte. (HA, VIII, 371)¹⁰

After his shrinking he is introduced to her father, the king of the dwarves, who begins speaking of marriage, which provokes the following:

Wie schrecklich ward mir auf einmal zumute, als ich vor Heirat reden hörte: denn ich fürchtete mich bisher davor fast mehr als vor der Musik

¹⁰ In an earlier part of the tale, the narrator had voiced certain disruptions in the happiness of himself and Melusine. In particular, he mentioned how he hated music, and like Eridon in Die Laune was jealous when other men admired her.

selbst, die mir doch sonst das Verhaßteste auf Erden schien. (HA, VIII, 373)

He makes a failed attempt to escape during which he is intercepted by an army of giant ants that recalls that Herder also recommended Swift to Goethe at this time (HA, IX, 451). Returned to the dwarf kingdom, he marries. And although all his needs are taken care of there ("Alles um mich her war meiner gegenwärtigen Gestalt und meinen Bedürfnissen völlig gemäß ..."), he is unhappy. The narrator's comments here reflect the situation in Sesenheim in conflict with all the other influences on Goethe in Straßburg:

Dabei hatte ich jedoch leider meinen vorigen Zustand nicht vergessen. Ich empfand in mir einen Maßstab voriger Größe, welches mich unruhig und unglücklich machte. ... Ich hatte ein Ideal von mir selbst und erschien mir manchmal im Traum wie ein Riese. (HA, VIII, 375)

Ultimately he manages to file off the gold ring by which he is bound and returns to human form.

Book 11 begins with a disingenuous comment concerning the genesis of "Die neue Melusine" (HA, IX, 450). Having been asked by one of his listeners concerning the "real people" on whom the story is modeled, Goethe expresses a certain irritation concerning the origin of his ideas about it: "ich hätte gar nicht anzugeben gewußt, wie ich auf den Einfall gekommen." Another set of mirrorings makes clear, however, that the story of Melusine refers to the very things that most occupy him in Straßburg: that the secure

structure of the Sesenheim idyll is alien to his nature, that it represents in fact a a dwarves' kingdom from which he will manage to escape, be "restored to human form and essence," and go on to become the titan of German letters. The references to literature in these books of the autobiography, particularly the beginning of Book 10, continually stress the smallness of the German literary world, the precarious existence of German writers, and the great chasm existing between poets and men of affairs. Goethe dismisses the epistolary correspondences of the period as "Wechselnichtigkeit." In fact, right after this disingenuous claim of ignorance, he expresses his new-found awareness of his artistic complacency and the insufficiency of his own literary achievement and that of the German literary world. At the same time, Herder (obviously a "Riese") has shown him the path he has to follow.

The influence of Herder's theories of language can be discerned in Goethe's comments concerning the strait jacket of the French language (HA, IX, 479f.), but these comments also make it clear that a life lived in France and speaking French would always be something unnatural for him, just as the narrator of "Die neue Melusine" found it unnatural to be a dwarf. His rejection of the wisdom of old men and of Voltaire, whom he refers to as "Altvater und Patriarch" (HA, IX, 485), and his recognition that French literature is superannuated (he uses the term "bejahrt" twice) emphasize

that he cannot stay in France if he is to be a poet. The fairytale/fantastic elements so liberally strewn throughout these books contrast with the rejection of French rationalism, particularly its materialism (HA, IX, 490f.), and emphasize the irrational currents that will gain in ascendancy in German literature. The rejection of French literary models parallels Goethe's abandonment of the idyll at Sesenheim.

One of the most popular literary genres of the eighteenth century was the idyll. Salomon Geßner's Idyllen had appeared in 1756, his Weitere Idyllen und Gedichte in 1762, and his last collection, Neue Idyllen (discussed in Chapter 3) in 1772. Though nowadays it is difficult to comprehend, before there was the phenomenon of Die Leiden des jungen Werther, there was the phenomenon of Salomon Geßner's idylls.¹¹ He was translated into French by Michael Huber, tutor to the physiocrat Turgot, who was a champion of the new literary taste in the Parisian salons and journals. Among Geßner's fans was Rousseau. A 1762 French edition of the Idylles et Poèmes champêtres, a collaboration involving Diderot and Melchior Grimm, was adorned with Poussin illustrations, in deluxe and low-priced editions. By 1830 Geßner's work had gone through thirty German editions and been translated into twenty-one European languages, and for

¹¹ Much of the following discussion of Geßner relies on Bersier's treatment, cited in the Bibliography.

a time he was the most widely read author of German literature abroad, his works in the hands of literate Europeans and North Americans.

Geßner was at the center of the literary debate on the idyll in Germany since he was the major German representative of this genre. Moses Mendelssohn found Geßner's shepherds exemplary, combining "erhabene Gesinnungen mit ländlicher Natürlichkeit (Böschenstein-Schäfer, Idylle, 50). Herder responded by praising Geßner with the caveat, "Ein Schäfer mit höchst verschönerten Empfindungen hört auf, Schäfer zu seyn, er wird ein Poetischer Gott ..." (Böschenstein-Schäfer, Idylle, 63). Despite Geßner's centrality and popularity, his work, a distillation of Empfindsamkeit and Rococo artfulness, was among the moribund types of literature that Goethe refers to in Dichtung und Wahrheit, as is clear from the earlier-mentioned review by Goethe of Geßner's Neue Idyllen in 1772 for the Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen. (Regarding Geßner's Swiss idyll, "Das hölzerne Bein," he wrote: "... das hölzerne Bein ist mir lieber als ein Dutzend elfenbeinerne Nymphenfüßchen.") The Sturm und Drang generation turned against him, particularly against his illusionism and "sentimental self-complacency," in the name of the new naturalism (Bersier, 38).

Many things are signalled by the Sesenheim episode, of course, including Goethe's forays into the Alsatian countryside in search of folk songs and "Germanness," but for pur-

poses of my thesis Goethe's framing of his love affair with Friedrike Brion as an idyll documents the effect that a certain kind of literature had on him in his formation as a poet and on his generation: works like Geßner's and the Rococo and Anacreontic-style poetry he wrote in Leipzig, previous to coming to Straßburg, which is replete with the same motifs as Geßner's idylls.

At the same time, Goethe had a great love and affection for traditional forms. But since he could no longer fit in the box, so to speak, represented by such forms, he reconciled his affection with the demand for a new poetics by staging this ambivalence. Thus, his use of the form invariably undermined the traditional content. His embedding of the "Melusine" story within the Sesenheim idyll works in this way, showing the magical and destructive effects on him as a poet of continuing to write in traditional forms like the idyll (dwarfdom); but it also documents the attractive and irrational aspects that will constitute what is German in contrast to the prescriptiveness of the French literary model. His juxtaposing of the Sesenheim idyll with his instruction under Herder reflects this movement in a new direction. However much the Sesenheim idyll may reflect real events in Goethe's life, as far as Dichtung und Wahrheit goes, when he takes leave of Friedrike at the end of Book 11, he is rejecting not simply this particular woman but the

literature of the past, as represented by the idyll. At this early stage of his career (pre-Weimar) and as this period is later reconstructed in Dichtung und Wahrheit, for "idyll" one has to substitute the literary conventions and standards of his poetic forebears. As Saintsbury has said so eloquently: "Goethe was a man soaked in literature, and ... those who read him without having at least dipped in it are apt to make mistakes" (III, 366n.). Unlike later poets, who may have drawn on life to write literature, Goethe, the man with the fondness for disguise, drew on literature to depict life.

It clear why the idyll had to be destroyed in Werther when one considers how much was at stake: the reigning literary taste and style of the eighteenth century, the overthrow of the system of genres, poetic standards -- in a word, literary authority. For Goethe, destroying the idyll represented the birth of a poetic "individual," and it is this cumulative process that is reproduced in Dichtung und Wahrheit. As Werther falls in love with Lotte, he begins to envision the possibility of accepting the very limitations that Goethe escaped, imagining himself, as the Wanderer returned home to find his wife and children. This, as I have discussed, is totally out of the question because Werther's very nature as a Geßnerian shepherd precludes his ever shrinking himself within such limits. The limitations

to which Albert submits represent just the kind of strait jacket that limits self-expression and autonomy.

When the security and domesticity of the idyll are rejected, the result is that an individual comes into being. It is not within the idyll, or the bourgeois family, that subjectivity is discovered, but when one leaves home. The "Befreiung des Ich," the birth of the endlessly self-creating subject, requires the rejection of home and leads to the long road into exile, both of which have become such permanent fixtures of modern fiction.

But the idyll also represents an arrangement that sanctifies the most basic and enduring human needs for continuity, community, safety, and love. The positive domesticity of the idyll, as later represented by Müller and Voss, in which marriage and work held privileged positions, were bourgeois "Wunschbilder" threatened by the forces of modernity. As these friendly little portraits of domestic felicity were multiplied throughout the nineteenth century they became an object of scorn, while marriage and work were increasingly seen as onerous obligations restricting self-fulfilment.

By its nature, the idyll is fragile. The powerful historical forces of revolution described in Virgil's first eclogue or in Goethe's Hermann und Dorothea are only the most obvious examples of the destruction to which the idyll

may be subject. It is apt that pastoral subjects were depicted on fragile china in the eighteenth century.

Conclusion:
Future Prospects

In documenting Goethe's reliance on neoclassical poetic practice and his transformation of inherited poetic models, which led to the development of a new poetic subjectivity, I have implicitly posited Goethe's work as the source of the turning point toward expressive, Romantic poetic practice. I have stressed, however, whatever the biographical implications of the early work, that the transformation was achieved by formal means: Goethe did not write from the heart but from the model of inherited poetic forms and subject matter. At the same time, he was writing about being an artist in a world in which imitative poetics was increasingly called into question. His work thus came to stage the conflict between, on the one hand, a liberated poetic subjectivity and, on the other, traditional poetic genres that, by the terms of their generic conventions, demand conformity of the individual to their norms. The power of this model of conflict that Goethe forged in his work is documented already by the emergence in the early nineteenth century of a Bildungsroman tradition in Germany. In these novels a budding artist also turns his back on convention, which is represented by home and the family and the social relations he must leave behind in order to develop as an artist. These include Wilhelm Meisters

Lehrjahre, Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen, and Godwi, among other works.

This convention of rejection was first fashioned by Goethe by imitating inherited poetic models. In Neue Lieder Goethe wrote in the language of sociability and conviviality that characterized Anacreontic poetry and took over its stock theme of romantic dalliance, while emptying this poetry of its social content and setting. He thereby created a subjective lyric voice with its own existential content. This poetic movement no doubt reflected trends of the period, particularly of empirical psychology, but once a subjective voice had been freed from the formal setting in which it had been ensconced, it could never go back. Thus, the stage was set for a new literary paradigm, that of an enduring breach between the individual and the larger social world.

Two contemporary poetic models served as paradigms for resolving this breach. One was the poetry of Klopstock, which evoked a modern subjective voice tied to traditional religiosity. The other was the bourgeois drama of Lessing, which produced idealized or forced solutions to the conflict between the demands of the heart and those of the family. Goethe's continuing reliance on poetic models, on a poetry of imitation, is seen, for instance, in the way he incorporated these two paradigms into some of his early work

(Miss Sara Sampson in Die Laune des Verliebten, Klopstock's divine hierarchy in "Wanderers Sturmlied").

Again, the conflict was staged by Goethe in formal terms. Rejecting Lessing's and Klopstock's social and religious solutions, Goethe separated the poet from the generic order by locating poetic inspiration in the poet himself. This contrasted with the traditional poetic Muse, which, in inspiring the poet from outside, explicitly underlined the poet's dependence on the poetic tradition. In Goethe's work, the poet's creation was self-generated. This process of self-creation necessarily was at odds with the mode of procreation within the family, represented by Goethe by the traditional genre of the idyll. The quarrel of the artist with the idyll, which is a stand-in for genre poetics, is staged in "Der Wanderer," in Die Leiden des jungen Werther, and in the Sesenheim idyll in Dichtung und Wahrheit. It is when the idyll is left behind that the artist emerges.

I have stressed Goethe's formal solutions in order to emphasize how the destruction or abandonment of the idyll in his works mirrors the break-up of genres and rules-oriented poetics in general. At the same time, it can be seen that it also inscribed in literature a new idiom, the main feature of which is the assertion of the rights of the individual over the communal order. Two hundred years of literature and literary criticism have naturalized this

model of individual autonomy and self-creation. An indication of this is the use of the term "Erlebnis" in Goethe scholarship. In delineating the difference between Goethe and what came before him, scholars tend to speak in the naturalistic terms in which Herder spoke of the human invention of language: poets before Goethe supposedly didn't feel and Goethe was able to produce some kind of breakthrough into a subjective mental life that people before 1750 didn't know existed. Though Goethe's indebtedness to his poetic predecessors has been well documented, there has been a singular tendency to leave out of account what has always been known as the practice of poets: they copy other poets. Thus, one great strand since the nineteenth century has been the blurring of the distinction between art and life, a blurring that is also seen in criticism, which treats literature not as the formal construct it is but as if it were another aspect of the author's life. The work is the "life." What Goethe "constructed" took on its own existential dimension.

Goethe came of age precisely in the period when two things hung in the balance: one was a normative poetic practice of imitation and demonstration of one's allegiance to the poetic tradition; the other was the new poetic paradigm waiting to be born that reflected new social and economic realities. The quarrel between the ancients and the moderns was completed in Goethe's work, with the victory

of the latter. While breaking from poetic models, he incorporated the break in his work. That the generation of writers immediately after Goethe recognized that this break concerned artistic self-creation vis à vis the inherited artistic past and not "life" is clear from the spate of Romantic Bildungsromane that problematized this artistic process. As poetry became less and less restricted to the class of the learned, however, as prose triumphed as medium, the naturalism of which I am speaking came to dominate the practice of literature and art, while the convention of rejection remained. By the time of Stifter, the Bildungsroman was no longer confined to the artist and his often-troubled relation to society but, as in Nachsommer (1857), described the alienation from society of the non-artist. A more familiar pattern is that of the bourgeois male revolting against social convention (e.g., Flaubert's Sentimental Education).

The resulting poetic convention (rejection of fixed standards based on eternal verities in favor of constant self-creation and rootlessness) has had far-reaching implications for the course of Western literature. The "Vereinsamung ... der späteren Dichter" and the "Entseelung und Entgeistung der Gesellschaft" (Sengle/Konvention, 22) have affected our notions of originality, sincerity, creativity ("the burden of the past"; "the anxiety of influence"), and, of course, individuality. In the

meantime, since it was forgotten that literature was a formal construct, something strange has happened. As the individual moves farther and farther from the idyll and toward poetic alienation, the end development, literarily speaking, is a poetic construct from which every trace of the "person" has been removed.

By now, it will undoubtedly have occurred to someone that Foucault has been strangely absent from this dissertation: after all, in recent years not only has life been removed from literature, but it has also been removed from life! The great propagation of cultural studies that now characterizes academic practice is a sign that this process has metastasized to enormous proportions, colonizing the world in which we live and turning every institution of human life into an example of the emptiness at the center of all social practice. My concern in this dissertation was to show the birth of this construction of life from art, but the following question might be proposed for the future: now that "experience" has finally been rejected in literature, can we return to life after (de)construction?

Goethe's ambivalence toward inherited norms and traditions, including poetic forms, as well as his great love for these are staged throughout his work. Once the work was published, however, it took on a life of its own. Goethe lived long enough to witness the incipient effects of the transformations he had set in motion, and his guarded

reaction to them is well known. Though he could speak of his work as "fragments of a great confession," it might be said that we have dismissed the confession and have been left with the fragments. Our current ethics of alienation is a legacy of this major change in literary practice in the eighteenth century.

Appendix

"Wanderers Sturmlied"

- Wen du nicht verlässest Genius
 Nicht der Regen nicht der Sturm
 Haucht ihm Schauer übers Herz
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius,
 5 Wird der Regen Wolcke
 Wird dem Schlossensturm
 Entgegensingen wie die
 Lerche du dadoben,
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius.
- 10 Den du nicht verlässest Genius,
 Wirst ihn heben übern Schlammfad
 Mit den Feuerflügeln
 Wandeln wird er
 Wie mit Blumenfüssen
 15 Über Deukalions fluthschlamm
 Python tödtend leicht gros
 Pythius Apollo
 Den du nicht verlässest Genius
- 20 Den du nicht verlässest Genius
 Wirst die wollnen Flügel unterspreiten
 Wenn er auf dem Felsen schläfft
 Wirst mit Hüterfittigen ihn decken
 In des Haines Mitternacht.
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius
 25 Wirst im Schneegestöber Warm umhüllen
 Nach der Wärme ziehn sich Musen
 Nach der Wärme Charitinnen,
 Wen du nicht verlässest Genius.
- 30 Umschwebt mich ihr Musen!
 Ihr Charitinnen!
 Das ist Wasser das ist Erde
 Und der Sohn des Wassers und der Erde
 Über den ich wandle Göttergleich
- 35 Ihr seyd rein wie das Herz der Wasser
 Ihr seyd rein wie das Marck der Erde
 Ihr umschwebt mich und ich schwebe
 Über Wasser über Erde
 Göttergleich
-

Soll der zurückkehren
 40 Der kleine, schwarze feurige Bauer
 Soll der zurückkehren, erwartend
 Nur deine Gaben Vater Bromius
 Und helleuchtend umwärmend Feuer
 Soll der zurückkehren mutig,
 45 Und ich den ihr begleitet
 Musen and Charitinnen all
 Den Alls erwartet was ihr
 Musen und Charitinnen
 Umkränzende Seeligkeit
 50 Rings ums Leben verherrlicht habt,
 Soll muthlos kehren?

Vater Bromius
 Du bist Genius
 Jahrhunderts Genius
 55 Bist was innre Glut
 Pindarn war
 Was der Welt
 Phöb Apoll ist.

Weh weh innre Wärme
 60 Seelen Wärme
 Mittelpunckt
 Glüh ihm entgegen
 Phöb Apollen
 Kalt wird sonst
 65 Sein Fürstenblick
 Über dich vorüber gleiten
 Neidgetroffen
 Auf der Ceder Grün verweilen
 Die zu grünen
 70 Sein nicht harrt.

Warum nennt mein Lied dich zuletzt?
 Dich von dem es begann
 Dich in dem es endet
 Dich aus dem es quoll
 75 Jupiter Pluvius.
 Dich dich strömt mein Lied
 Jupiter Pluvius.
 Und Castalischer Quell
 Quillt ein Nebenbach,
 80 Quillet müsigen
 Sterblich Glücklichen
 Abseits von dir
 Jupiter Pluvius
 Der du mich fassend deckst
 85 Jupiter Pluvius

- Nicht am Ulmen Baum
 Hast du ihn besucht
 Mit dem Tauben Paar
 In dem zärtlichen Arm
 90 Mit der freundlichen Ros umkränzt
 Tändelnden ihn blumenglücklichen
 Anakreon,
 Sturmathmende Gottheit.
- Nicht im Pappelwald
 95 An des Sibaris Strand
 In dem hohen Gebürg nicht
 Dessen Stirn die
 Allmächtige Sonne beglänzt
 Fasstest du ihn
 100 Den Bienen singenden
 Honig lallenden
 Freundlich winckenden
 Theokrit.
 Wenn die Räder rasselten Rad an Rad
 105 Rasch ums Ziel weg
 Hoch flog siegdurchglühter Jünglinge
 Peitschenknall
 Und sich Staub wälzt
 Wie von Gebürg herab sich
 Kieselwetter ins Tahl wälzt
 110 Glühte deine Seel Gefahren Pindar
 Muth Pindar - Glühte -
 Armes Herz -
 Dort auf dem Hügel -
 Himmlische Macht -
 115 Nur soviel Glut -
 Dort ist meine Hütte -
 Zu waten bis dort hin.

"Der Wanderer"

- Wanderer.
 Gott segne dich junge Frau,
 Und den saugenden Knaben
 An deiner Brust.
 Lass mich an der Felsenwand hier
 5 In des Ulmenbaums Schatten
 Meine Bürde werfen
 Neben dir ausruhn.

Frau.

10 Welch Gewerbe treibt dich
 Durch des Tages Hitze
 Den sandigen Pfad her?
 Bringst du Waaren aus der Stadt
 Im Land herum?
 Lächelst Fremdling
 Über meine Frage?

Wandrer.

15 Ich bring keine Waaren
 Aus der Stadt.
 Schwül ist schwül der Abend.
 Zeige mir den Brunnen
 Draus du trinckest,
 20 Liebes junges Weib.

Frau.

Hier den Felsen Pfad hinauf
 Geh voran! Durchs Gebüsche
 Geht der Pfad nach der Hütte,
 Drin ich wohne
 25 Zu dem Brunnen
 Da ich trincke draus.

Wandrer.

Spuren ordnender Menschenhand
 Zwischen dem Gesträuch!
 Diese Steine hast du nicht gefügt
 30 Reichhinstreuende Natur.

Frau.

Weiter 'nauf.

Wandrer.

Von dem Moos gedeckt ein Architrav!
 Ich erkenne dich bildender Geist,
 Hast dein Siegel in den Stein geprägt.

Frau.

35 Weiter Fremdling.

Wandrer.

Eine Innschrift über die ich trete!
 Der Venus - und ihr übrigen
 Seyd verloschen,
 Weggewandelt ihr Gespielen,
 40 Die ihr eures Meisters Andacht
 Tausend Enckeln zeugen solltet.

- Frau.
 Staunest Fremdling
 Diese Stein an?
 Droben sind der Steine viel
 45 Um meine Hütte.
- Wandrer.
 Droben.
- Frau.
 Gleich, zur Lincken durch's Gebüsch hinan!
 Hier!
- Wandrer.
 Ihr Musen und Grazien!
- Frau.
 50 Das ist meine Hütte.
- Wandrer.
 Eines Tempels Trümmern!
- Frau.
 Da zur Seit hinab
 Quillt der Brunnen da ich trincke draus.
- Wandrer.
 55 Glühend webst du über deinem Grabe
 Genius! Über dir ist
 Zusammengestürzt dein Meisterstück,
 O du Unsterblicher!
- Frau.
 Wart, ich will ein
 Schöpfgefäß dir holen.
- Wandrer.
 60 Epheu hat deine schlancke
 Götterbildung umkleidet!
 Wie du empor strebst aus dem Schutte
 Säulen Paar!
 Und du einsame Schwester
 65 Dort, wie ihr
 Düstres Moos auf dem heiligen Haupt
 Majestätisch traurend herab schaut
 Auf die zertrümmerten
 Zu euren Füßen
 70 Eure Geschwister!
 In des Brombeergesträuches Schatten
 Deckt sie Schutt und Erde
 Und hohes Gras wanckt drüber hin!
 Schätzest du so Natur

75 Deines Meisterstücks Meisterstück?
Unempfindlich zertrümmerst
Du dein Heiligthum
Säst Disteln drein.

Frau.

Wie der Knabe schläft!
80 Willst du in der Hütte ruhn
Fremdling, willst du hier
Untern Pappelbaum dich setzen?
Hier ist kühl. Nimm den Knaben
Dass ich da hinabgeh Wasser schöpfen.
85 Schlafe Lieber schlaf.

Wandrer.

Süss ist deine Ruh!
Wie's in himmlischer Gesundheit schwimmend
Ruhig athmet.
Du gebohren über Resten
90 Heiliger Vergangenheit
Ruh ihr Geist auf dir!
Welchen der umschwebt
Wird im Götterselbstgefühl
Jeden Tags geniessen
95 Voller Keim blüh auf!
Lieblich dämmernden Frühlingtags Schmuck
Scheinend vor deinen Gesellen.
Und welckt die Blüthenhülle weg,
Dann steig aus deinem Busen
100 Die volle Frucht und reif der Sonn entgegen.

Frau.

Gesegn' es Gott. Und schläft er noch?
Ich habe nichts zum frischen Trunck
Als ein Stück Brod
Das ich dir bieten kann

Wandrer.

Ich dancke dir!
105 Wie herrlich alles blüht umher
Und grünt.

Frau.

Mein Mann wird bald
Nach Hause seyn
110 Vom Feld, bleib Mann
Und iss mit uns
Das Abendbrod.

Wandrer.

Ihr wohnt hier.

Frau.

- Hier zwischen das Gemäuer her.
 115 Die Hütte baut mein Vater noch
 Aus Ziegeln und des Schutttes Steinen.
 Hier wohnen wir.
 Er gab mich einem Ackersmann
 Und starb in unsern Armen.
 120 Hast du geschlafen liebes Herz?
 Du meines Lebens Hoffnung!
 Wie er munter ist, und spielen will!
 Du Schelm!

Wandrer.

- Natur, du ewig Keimende,
 125 Schaffst jeden zum Genuss des Lebens.
 Deine Kinder all
 Hast mütterlich mit einem
 Erbtheil ausgestattet
 Einer Hütte.
 130 Hoch baut die Schwalb am Architrav
 Unführend welchen Zierraht
 Sie verklebt.
 Die Raup umspinnt den goldnen Zweig
 Zum Winterhaus für ihre Brut.
 135 Und du flickst zwischen der Vergangenheit
 Erhabne Trümmer
 Für dein Bedürfnis
 Eine Hütt o Mensch!
 Geniessest über Gräbern!
 140 Leb wohl du glücklich Weib!

Frau.

Du willst nicht bleiben?

Wandrer.

Gott erhalt euch.
 Segen' euren Knaben.

Frau.

Glück auf den Weg.

Wandrer.

- 145 Wohin führt mich der Weg?
 Dort übern Berg?

Frau.

Nach Cuma.

Wandrer.

Wie weit ists hin?

Frau.
Drey Meilen gut.

Wandrer.
150 Leb wohl.
O leite meinen Gang
Natur, den Fremdlings Reisetritt
Den über Gräber
Heiliger Vergangenheit
155 Ich wandele.
Leit' ihn zum Schutzort, vorm Nord geschützt
Wo dem Mittags Strahl ein Pappelwäldgen wehrt.
Und kehr ich dann am Abend heim
Zur Hütte vergüldet
160 Vom letzten Sonnenstrahl,
Lass mich empfangen solch ein Weib
Den Knaben auf dem Arm.

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