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Goethe's Scenographic Treatment of Melancholy *Lila between Therapy/Play and Festival/Script*

Beginning with its second, psychologically expanded and developed 1788 version, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Lila – Ein Festspiel mit Gesang und Tanz* (*Lila: A Festival Play with Song and Dance*) deals with the suffering and therapeutic treatment of the eponymous title character – who is always prone to »tiefen Melancholie« and eventually falls prey to »Wahnsinn.«¹ Yet there is something uncertain – or perhaps playful – about this diagnosis: in its original version, written around the turn of the year 1776/1777, before the play took on its current title, it was an occasional poem including »Sang und Tanz und Feenrei«² and was intended as a festive gift for the Duchess Louise on her birthday. In its first version, the play does not center around Lila's suffering and healing, but rather that of her hypochondriac husband, Baron Sternthal. Goethe's gift for the duchess was performed on January 30, 1777, at the Weimar Liebhaber-bühne, upon which the author himself made a significant impact during his tenure as Spiritus Rector between 1755 and 1784; this constituted important training for his later work directing the Weimar Hoftheater from 1791.³ Follow-

- 1 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: *Lila. Ein Festspiel mit Gesang und Tanz* [third version], in: J. W. G.: *Gesamte Werkausgabe*, Section 1: *Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. 5: *Dramen 1776-1790*, ed. Dieter Borchmeyer, Frankfurt a. M. 1988, pp. 835-869; here p. 844, line 7, also 6. This paper is a translation of a chapter from my forthcoming book, Sophie Witt: *Sprechende Körper, pathogene Umwelten. Psychosomatik & Theater*, Zürich/Berlin 2025 [forthcoming].
- 2 Taken from a poem in praise of Goethe's »delightful performance« as Magus (Verazio the doctor in the play-within-a-play) in the first version of the play: from the journal *Olla Potrida* II (1778), p. 11-12; cited in Gottfried Diener: *Goethes »Lila«. Heilung eines »Wahnsinns« durch »psychische Kur«. Vergleichende Interpretation der drei Fassungen. Mit ungedruckten Texten und Noten und einem Anhang über psychische Kuren der Goethe-Zeit und das Psychodrama*, Frankfurt a. M. 1971, p. 16.
- 3 On the Liebhaberbühne, see Gisela Sichardt: *Das Weimarer Liebhabertheater unter Goethes Leitung. Beiträge zu Bühne, Dekoration und Kostüm unter Berücksichtigung der Entwicklung Goethes zum späteren Theaterdirektor*, Weimar 1957; Volkmar Braunbehrens and Walter Salmen: *Lila*, in: *Goethe-Handbuch Supplemente*, Vol. 1: *Musik und*

ing its first revision in 1778, the play is referred to as a Festspiel; Goethe completed a third version of the work while in Italy in 1788 and published it in the 1790 edition of his collected works.⁴

In this third version, the plot proceeds as follows: Lila receives a letter erroneously reporting the death of her absent husband, Baron Sternthal. Henceforth she believes that he has fallen into an ogre's clutches, and upon his return, she takes him – and increasingly also her entire family and the courtly environment in which she lives – »für Schattenbilder und von den Geistern untergeschobene Gestalten.«⁵ The behavior which initially signals mourning for her loss (Lila immediately dresses in widow's weeds) subsequently takes on the structure which distinguishes melancholy from mourning – namely, a suffering which (beyond its status as a singular loss, clearly according to a pre-Freudian understanding around 1800) is characterized by »eigentümliches Festhalten am Zustand des Verlorenhabens,« a »selbstinduziertes, wiederholt angestacheltes Leiden [als] Lebensnotwendigkeit,« as David E. Wellbery describes one of Goethe's later Festspiele, *Pandora* (1808).⁶

Goethe's Singspiel formulates this particular structure as a temporal structure, specifically as a multifaceted time of »immer schon« and yet »jetzt erst.«

Tanz in den Bühnenwerken, ed. Gabriele Busch-Salmen, Stuttgart/Weimar 2008, pp. 200–220; Gabriele Busch-Salmen: Theaterpraxis in Weimar, in: Goethe-Handbuch Supplemente, Vol. 1: Musik und Tanz in den Bühnenwerken, ed. G. B.-S., Stuttgart/Weimar 2008, pp. 1–53.

4 On previous versions and editions of the play, see Braunbehrens/Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), esp. pp. 201–203. The research on *Lila* is concise; important for our purposes are the following sources, in order of appearance: Diener 1971 (fn. 2); Martin Huber: Inszenierte Körper. Theater als Kulturmodell in Goethes Festspiel »Lila«, in: Theater und Öffentlichkeit im 18. Jahrhundert, ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte and Jörg Schönert, Göttingen 1999, pp. 133–150; Tina Hartmann: Goethes Musiktheater. Singspiele, Opern, Festspiele, »Faust«, Tübingen 2004; Thorsten Valk: Die Überwindung der Melancholie im Therapiespiel »Lila«, in: T. V.: Melancholie im Werk Goethes. Genese – Symptomatik – Therapie, Tübingen 2002a, pp. 139–161; Marion Schmaus: Psychogenese der Krankheit und psychische Kurmethoden. Theatralische und prosaische Heilverfahren in der Goethezeit, in: M. S.: Psychosomatik. Literarische, philosophische und medizinische Geschichten zur Entstehung eines Diskurses (1778–1936), Tübingen 2009, pp. 73–168; Céline Kaiser: Spiel und Rahmen in der Theatrortherapie um 1800, in: Spielformen des Selbst, ed. Regine Strätling, Bielefeld 2012, pp. 151–166; Céline Kaiser: Das therapeutische Preenactment als Thema der dramatischen Literatur in: C. K.: Szenen des Subjekts. Eine Kulturmediengeschichte szenischer Therapieformen seit dem 18. Jahrhundert, Bielefeld 2019, pp. 106–112.

5 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 838, line 4.

6 David E. Wellbery: Goethes »Pandora«. Dramatisierung einer Urgeschichte der Moderne, in: Sitzungsbericht der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 2, 2017, pp. 3–74; here p. 48.

Her cousin Friedrich puzzles over her condition as follows: »daß ihr Wahnsinn schon damals seinen Anfang genommen hat; aber wer unterscheidet ihn von der tiefen Melancholie, in der sie vergraben war?«⁷ Eva Horn has emphasized melancholy's temporal structure in terms of the ›always already‹ and yet ›just now‹ in Goethe's work, but not in the case of *Lila*; according to Horn, in this play melancholy »übergeht ihren Anlaß, um von hier aus auf das ›immer schon‹ Mangelnde, die konstitutive Wunde zu kommen, aber dieses ›immer schon‹ wird erst nachträglich, im Rückblick vom Anlaß aus, sicht- und sagbar.«⁸ Mourning is distinguished as an »Erfahrung der Alterität (des Ich und des anderen),« while melancholy is the »konstitutive[r] Wunde des Ich« and »die Einschreibung des Todes als eigene Versehrtheit, als Sterblichkeit und Verstümmelung.«⁹

Against the background of this distinction concerning the constitution of the ego, however, it is striking to note that while *Lila*'s suffering is addressed at the beginning of the play in the typical terms used for hallucinatory madness, it is at the same time considered on the level of *systemic* suffering: the play addresses not only *Lila*'s melancholy, but that of the entire family and the court community, which had formerly been »in einem ewigen freudigen Leben von Tanz, Gesang, Festen und Ergetzungen« and is now infected with melancholy, »wie Gespenster,« and will consequently soon lose »selbst den Verstand.«¹⁰ It is also remarkably practical: the first act moves quickly from questions about melancholy's origins to questions about its treatment. After enduring several failed attempts at bodily cures, including »sezieren, klystieren, elektrisieren,«¹¹ a new doctor, Verazio, proposes a »psychological cure«. »Lassen Sie uns der gnädigen Frau die Geschichte ihrer Phantasien spielen! *Sie* sollen die Feen, Ogern und Dämonen vorstellen,« he suggests to *Lila*'s relatives:

Ich will mich ihr als weiser Mann zu nähern suchen und ihre Umstände ausforschen. [...] Zuletzt wird Phantasie und Wirklichkeit zusammentreffen. Wenn sie ihren Gemahl in ihren Armen hält, den sie sich selbst wieder errungen, wird sie wohl glauben müssen, daß er wieder da ist.¹²

The subsequent four acts stage and perform the entire setting and scenery of *Lila*'s melancholic fantasy: gardens, caves, fairies, ogres, and so on. In this play-

7 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 844.

8 Eva Horn: Trauer schreiben. Die Toten im Text der Goethezeit, München 1998, p. 32.

9 Ibid.

10 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 844, lines 34-37.

11 Ibid., p. 840, lines 20-21.

12 Ibid., p. 846, lines 8-32, italics in the original.

within-a-play, Lila finally frees her husband and the other members of her family and the court from the ogre, and in doing so is cured of her delusions. The final verses read as follows:

LILA:

Ich habe dich, Geliebter, wieder,
Umarme dich, o bester Mann!
Es beben alle mir die Glieder
Vom Glück, das fassen ich nicht kann.

CHOR:

Weg mit den zitternden,
Alles verbitternden
Zweifeln von hier!
Nur die verbündete,
Ewig begründete
Wonne sei dir!
Kommt ihr entronnenen,
Wieder gewonnenen
Freuden heran!
Lebet, ihr Seligen,
So die unzähligen
Tage fortan!¹³

It is not Lila alone, as it so often is in the research, but also her ›pathological family‹ that has passed through the melancholy vale of tears and now finds itself reconstituted in post-melancholic time.¹⁴ As a symbol of this community, the choice also points to a healing scenario that extends beyond Lila herself – this is also reflected in the envisaged temporal dimensions of post-historical ›eternity‹, the »unzähligen Tage,« which cannot simply be offset with the idea of a psychological subject.

The motif of a festive (re)united community is already inscribed in the context of the work's origin as a festive gift and its performance at the Weimar court. The third version of the play directly addresses the question of whether the festive theatrical play is an appropriate mode in which to consider pathology: as Count Friedrich says to Lila's sisters in the very first direct speech from a character in the play, »Pfui doch, ihr Kinder! Still! Ist's erlaubt, daß ihr so einen

¹³ Ibid., p. 869.

¹⁴ On the motif of restoring ›healthy‹ subjectivity, see Huber 1999 (fn. 4), esp. p. 148; Schmaus 2009 (fn. 4), esp. p. 88; Valk 2002a (fn. 4), p. 160.

Lärmen macht? Die ganze Familie ist traurig, und ihr tanzt und springt!« Yet one of the sisters promptly offers a rejoinder to Friedrich: »[W]ir sollten doch tanzen und springen, daß wir die andern nur ein Bißchen lustig machten.«¹⁵ Thus the text itself lays out a path for questioning this therapy/play's salutary value to the community – *Lila's* community as well as the Weimar community, among whom and from whose ranks the Festspiel is performed. Even if a semi-professional cast was tapped to give the first performance of *Lila* – with, among others, Corona Schröter (as the fairy Sonna) – the Weimar Liebhabertheater followed the model of other amateur theaters and was essentially a private theater of and for the court, a »Privattheater zu Weimar von Damen und Herren der Hofgesellschaft.«¹⁶ Goethe himself played Doctor Verazio. His involvement in Weimar's amateur theater scene led to the fusion of previously separate theatrical cultures: the courtly representational theater, which was reserved for the nobility and committed to French classicism, and the bourgeois social theater, in which court officials were among those eager to perform German-language plays and operettas. *Lila's* therapeutic reintegration can also be read against the backdrop of a »triumph of sentimentality« – that is, as an interrogation of whether bourgeois emotional and family culture's entry into courtly festivities was in fact »salutary«. While some of Goethe's early musical-theatrical Singspiele – including *Jery und Bätely* (1779) and *Die Fischerin* (1782) – did not actually make it into the canon of his significant works, *Lila* can indeed be identified as a »key text«.¹⁷

As a Festspiel, *Lila* is positioned within a history of the form itself and in relation to the later Festspiele written around and after 1800, which research on the subject classifies as »Momentaufnahmen klassizistischer Kunstpraxis.«¹⁸ *Pa-leophron und Neoterpe* (1800), *Pandora* (1808), and *Des Epimenides Erwachen* (1814) all constitute confrontations with the »Zeitenwende« and the dawning »new era«, both in terms of the tension between antiquity and modernity – which in Goethe's Festspiele takes on the character of a reconciliatory balance – and on the level of theatrical form, in terms of the gradual transformation of courtly festive and theatrical culture into bourgeois culture. Patrick Primavesi

15 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 837, lines 7-19.

16 Diener 1971 (fn. 2), p. 16.

17 He speaks of an »Abbreuiatur des Goetheschen Dichtens« with regard to the »great« texts, particularly *Iphigenie auf Tauris*; see Hartmut Reinhardt: Kommentar zu *Lila*, in: Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Sämtliche Werke nach Epochen seines Schaffens. Münchner Ausgabe, Vol. 2.1: Erstes Weimarer Jahrzehnt 1775-1786, ed. Hartmut Reinhardt, München 1987, pp. 614-620; here p. 614; cited in Huber 1999 (fn. 4), p. 136.

18 Patrick Primavesi: Goethes Festspiele – theatralische Versöhnung mit einer neuen Zeit, in: P.P.: Das andere Fest. Theater und Öffentlichkeit um 1800, Frankfurt a.M. 2008, pp. 385-392.

argues that the reconciliatory form of the Festspiel – particularly direct addresses to the audience, which necessarily invoke community – represent the cheerful resolution of conflict, which Goethe himself considered »freilich in dieser zerspalteten Welt nicht denkbar.«¹⁹ Thus a red thread would then stretch from the self-understanding of the therapy/play on the amateur stage to the later Festspiele, not only in terms of form, but also in terms of the aspiration to catharsis. Although the later Festspiele »bereits die Grenzen [markieren], die dieser genuin höfischen Gattung im bürgerlichen Zeitalter stets das Gepräge des falschen Scheines einer Versöhnung gab, die in der Wirklichkeit nicht mehr durchzusetzen war,« research has nevertheless classified Goethe's Festspiele as »idealistische Versuche [...] der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft mithilfe des klassizistischen Kunstprogramms eine ihrem Anspruch adäquate Form von Repräsentation zu geben.«²⁰ As I will argue in this article, however, in its combination of theatrical celebration and pathology *Lila* is much less a matter of reconciliation and harmonization than it seems at first glance. *Lila*'s melancholy is not simply a matter of content that deals with mourning or with reconstituting the »Netz der direkten Beziehungen.« In this vein, Norbert Elias describes the transition from the courtly social arrangement, with its »unmittelbare[r] Gesellschaftsgebundenheit,« to the bourgeois »durch den Beruf, durch Geld oder Waren *vermittelten* Kontakt.«²¹ In *Lila*, the idea of healing in or as a celebration – the immediate grasping, embracing, and kissing, as when the characters assert that »[w]enn sie ihren Gemahl in ihren Armen hält, den sie sich selbst wieder errungen, wird sie wohl glauben müssen, dass er wieder da ist« – is instead problematized by the theatrical form itself.

In the 1770s, Goethe – who would later reject any claims to effect in favor of principles of aesthetic autonomy and instead interpret catharsis as an »aussöhnende Abrundung« of the plot, and thus as a formal dramatic element²² – explic-

19 Letter to Sulpiz Boisserée, Sept. 27, 1816; cited in Primavesi 2008 (fn. 18), p. 388.

20 Ibid., pp. 388–389.

21 Norbert Elias: Die höfische Gesellschaft. Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Königtums und der höfischen Aristokratie, Frankfurt a. M. 1983, p. 92, italics in the original; see also Albrecht Koschorke: Körperströme und Schriftverkehr. Mediologie des 18. Jahrhunderts, München 2003, pp. 263–264; cf. Norbert Elias: Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation. Soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen, Vol. 1, Frankfurt a. M. 1939; Vol. 2, Frankfurt a. M. 1949.

22 Aristotle's question of »Ausgleichung« and »Versöhnung [der] Leidenschaften [...] auf dem Theater« was not a matter of the aesthetics of effect, but rather the »Konstruktion der Tragödie«; see Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Nachlese zu Aristoteles Poetik [1827], in: Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe, Vol. 12: Schriften zur Kunst. Schriften zur Literatur. Maximen und Reflexionen, ed. Erich Trunz, München 2000, p. 345, also p. 343. This edition is cited hereafter as HA with volume number.

itly envisaged not only the generally cathartic, but also the theatrical-therapeutic aspects of the play and the Festspiel. In a theater review around the same time as the Festgabe, he writes about the »Seelen« of the actors and actresses, which are »durch eine eigene Erziehungsart zu großen Empfindungen gebildet [...], die sie in ihrem ganzen Leben ausdrücken müssen,« and he asserts that the »Zuhörer,« for their part, must »mit fühlbaren starken Seelen zu ihnen kommen« – otherwise »[wären] alle Bemühung, der Bühne eine eigenthümliche Größe und ihren wahren Werth zu geben, ganz vergeblich.«²³ Even in his *Regeln für Schauspieler*, written from 1803 onward, Goethe would still consider the play in terms of the logic of the work and its effect from the spectator's perspective: »Die Bühne und der Saal, die Schauspieler und die Zuschauer machen erst ein Ganzes.«²⁴ Both systematically and in terms of the history of the theater, the early Festspiele bid farewell to the aesthetics of pathos that had been common since Lessing – that is, catharsis understood as the »Verwandlung der Leidenschaften in tugendhafte Fertigkeiten«²⁵ – without completely abandoning their claims to effect in favor of aesthetic autonomy. *Lila* gives a twist to the issue of ›touching‹ as pathos in the eighteenth-century ethics of effect: in *Lila* this is not a question of metaphorically *stirring* emotion, but rather of literal *touch*. Thus »Wenn sie ihren Gemahl in ihren Armen hält« (as above), the healing effect is premised upon a haptic event. *Lila* is supposed to feel herself »in seinen [des Gatten] Küssen, / Und glaub[en] an [ihrer] Liebe Glück.«²⁶ As a simultaneously anticipatory and restitutory performance, the festive therapy/play leads back to the social festivities of dancing and feasting, which were supposedly lost in melancholy; now once again there shall be »an willigen Füßen und Kehlen [...] gewiß nicht ermangeln.«²⁷

Thus the theater/festival *works* in *Lila*, but in a corporeal dimension, which would be reformulated in Jacob Bernays' *Grundzügen der verlorenen Abhandlung des Aristoteles über Wirkung der Tragödie* (1857): if the theater is to be considered from the »pathologische[n] Gesichtspunkt,« comparable to an »ärztliche[n] Cur,« then the »aus dem Gleichgewicht gebrachte Mensch« as the »eigentliche[s] Object der Katharsis« should be »unter Lustgefühl erleichtert werden.«²⁸ Thus when Goethe writes in a letter to Karl Friedrich Graf von Brühl

23 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Preßburg, Frankfurt und Leipzig. Müller, J. H. F. Genaue Nachrichten von beyden K. K. Schaubühnen (1772); cited in Sichardt 1957 (fn. 3), pp. 128-129.

24 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: *Regeln für Schauspieler*, in: HA 12, p. 260 (§82).

25 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing: *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, ed. Klaus L. Berghahn, Stuttgart 1999, p. 401; passim.

26 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 869, lines 1-2.

27 Ibid., p. 847, lines 17-18.

28 Jacob Bernays: *Grundzüge der verlorenen Abhandlung des Aristoteles über Wirkung der Tragödie*, Breslau 1857, p. 139, also p. 145. For the medical context cf. Witt 2024 (fn. 1).

in 1818 that »das Sujet der Lila [sei] eigentlich eine psychische Kur, wo man den Wahnsinn eintreten läßt, um ihn zu heilen,«²⁹ then we can certainly read this as just such an affective–somatic process of catharsis: here too, catharsis aims to ›excite‹, ›evoke‹, and ›heighten‹ affects, especially in their somatic dimension. Theater, in the narrower form of a festival, thus seems – proto-psychoanalytically – to hold out the prospect of a ›healing‹ social effect by means of its potential to reintegrate the physical and to contribute to ›facilitating‹ the heightening of the senses, as a first step toward the psychoanalytic formulation of ›repressed ideas‹ and ›blocked affects‹.³⁰ This longing would find its theatrical formulation – in both theory and practice – after 1900, when the return to the (Dionysian) festival is explicitly understood as a turning away from the idea that the theatrical event should be limited to the ›prescribed‹ dramatic text.

However, in Goethe's *Lila* the celebration incorporating the »wiedergewonnenen Freuden« is not so easy to accomplish, as the script of the play eloquently indicates in its final tableau. If we look more closely at the text, the first thing we notice is that the meta-reflection on theatrical form in *Lila* is already present in the first lines – indeed, in the very first stage direction: »Eine Gesellschaft junger Leute beiderlei Geschlechts, in Hauskleidern« are enjoying themselves »in einem Tanze, es scheint, sie wiederholen ein bekanntes Ballett.«³¹ Here the courtly festive company staging the well-known ballet and the proto-bourgeois house dresses permeate each other, as do the natural world of gendered bodies on the one hand and the performative acts of rehearsal and performance on the other.³² In this way, it is not only the performance of gender that proves to be a repetition, but the theatrical form more generally is temporalized in a specific, intermedial way: the festive healing thus extends between the temporal character of repetition and the anticipation of a coming, post-cathartic – and thus probably supra-historical – festive community.

The concept of ›immediacy‹ is complicated first by the fact that Goethe continues to write, edit, and add to the material/text for more than ten years. Over the course of this long history of revision, the therapeutic Festspiel and its longing for immediacy thus enter into a close relationship with writing: Goethe's *Lila* and its various versions are situated along the path of differentiation be-

29 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Letter to Karl Friedrich Graf von Brühl, Oct. 1, 1818; cited in Dieter Borchmeyer: Kommentar [Lila], in: Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Gesamte Werkausgabe, Section 1: Sämtliche Werke, Vol. 5: Dramen 1776-1790, ed. D. B., Frankfurt a. M. 1988, pp. 901-1492; here p. 937.

30 See Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer: Studien über Hysterie, Frankfurt a. M. 2011, p. 40.

31 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 837, lines 3-5.

32 See Judith Butler: Performative Acts and Gender Constitution. An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory, in: Theatre Journal 40/4, 1988, pp. 519-531.

tween theatrical and written culture,³³ marking the systematic moment when body and writing enter into a complex relationship; at the moment when a theory of the theatrical festival's effect becomes possible to write (in the psychological formulation of the third version of the play),³⁴ *Lila* already has more than a decade of (re)writing history under its physical-haptic belt. Moreover, the theory of effect is deeply embedded in the medical discourse of the late eighteenth century – I will say more about this below.

Above all, the play-within-a-play setting in Goethe's text is eminently meta-theatrical: as a Festspiel and a quasi-group therapy process, *Lila* does indeed display the formation of community by means of Lila's own body and the bodies of others – but this always occurs by disregarding the theatrical framework and its inescapable mediality. For *Lila* in its various versions, this disregard is primarily material: it is a matter of *textuality*. If we want to understand the healing effect of the theater/festival as a sensual and corporeal effect – as a return to co-presence, healing, and ›holistic‹ sensory enhancement – then a theory of writing is essential. On this side of the script, however – as Goethe's manic re-writing and its discursive anchoring show – the hoped-for affective-somatic cathartic process is immediately retracted at the very moment of its assertion. Nevertheless, this article is not concerned with a melancholic history of primordial loss – the loss of instinctual life in the process of civilization, or of the immediate event in writing. Instead of being simply an arbitrary historical testimony in the discourse of treatment for melancholy, *Lila* systematically short-circuits both melancholy and theater. In this way, the text traces the connection between therapy and theater, but it also does more than that: it displays the mutual referentiality between festive and written culture that is suspended in the play, as well as the corresponding, coveted (physical) immediacy on the one hand and the necessary mediatization on the other.

Mediology and Pathognomy: Goethe, Heinroth, and ›Representationalism‹

Theater studies research has a tradition of locating eighteenth-century theater at the intersection of mediatization and immediacy (longing).³⁵ Such a reading of *Lila* can be found in the work of Martin Huber, for example: in this reading, theater is positioned as a paradigmatic »Kulturmodell des 18. Jahrhunderts,« in which it serves to show »daß es eine Wahrheit gibt, deren Evidenz im Sehen und

33 See Koschorke 2003 (fn. 21).

34 See Diener 1971 (fn. 2).

35 See Günther Heeg: Das Phantasma der »natürlichen« Gestalt. Körper, Sprache und Bild im Theater des 18. Jahrhunderts, Basel 2000.

Berühren körperlich zu erfahren ist.« »Sinnlich erfahrbare Evidenz von Wahrheit« is thereby the »Aspekt des Theatermodells in *Lila*, der etwa auch in Goethes *Iphigenie* bestimmend wirk[e],« and this only comes to an end with Kleist.³⁶ Huber's reading takes aim at the fact that this sensually available evidence of truth can only be achieved »über die Inszenierung ihrer selbst«³⁷ – in other words, that eighteenth-century theater acts out a specific and socially relevant longing for immediacy that is nevertheless simultaneously carried forward as a narrative.³⁸

Goethe's concept of a bodily ›transmission‹ of healing communion, however, does not lead to a pre-medial immediacy: the cathartic aspect of grasping or seizing is the contact, the (re-)establishment of a phatic dimension (according to Roman Jakobson's distinction),³⁹ in this case between bodies. As *Lila* states early in the play, in the voice of melancholy: »Es ist vergebens, ich kann nicht ergreifen was ihr bietet. Eure Liebe, eure Güte fließt mir wie klares Wasser durch die fassenden Hände.«⁴⁰ Conversely, the healing ›fairy‹ Almaide proclaims: »Der Mensch [...] muß wandeln sein Glück zu suchen, er muß zugreifen es zu fassen.«⁴¹ Flowing and grasping (*fließen* and *fassen*) – here we are dealing with an explicitly medial transmission event. This is linked to Goethe's early ironizing of any hope for the immediacy of touch. As scholars have established, the revaluation of touch as the basic means of sensing reality in the eighteenth century is fundamentally linked to Herder's aesthetics. As Goethe writes to Herder in 1772:

Dreingreifen, packen ist das Wesen ieder meisterschaft. Ihr habt das der Bildhauerey vindiziert, und ich finde dass ieder Künstler so lang seine Hände nicht plastisch arbeiten nichts ist. Es ist alles so Blick bey euch, sagtet Ihr mir oft. Jetzt versteh ich's tue die Augen zu und tappe.⁴²

36 Huber 1999 (fn. 4), p. 149.

37 Ibid.

38 This narrative about the eighteenth-century longing for »Präsenz, Direktheit oder Gegenwärtigkeit« as well as the corresponding »kulturelle und künstlerische Praktiken, die darauf aus [sind], ihre eigene Medialität zu negieren, zu verschleiern, zum Verschwinden zu bringen« extends well beyond Kleist; as a recent example, see eikones – Zentrum für die Theorie und Geschichte des Bildes: »Von Körper zu Körper. Praktiken und Fantasien der Unmittelbarkeit,« a conference held at the University of Basel, May 16–17, 2019, at: https://eikones.philhist.unibas.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/eikones/Dokumente/Ausschreibungen__Events__etc/Tagungsprogramm_Unmittelbarkeit.pdf (10.11.2022).

39 See Roman Jakobson: Linguistik und Poetik in: R. J.: Poetik. Ausgewählte Aufsätze 1921–1971, ed. Elmar Holenstein and Tarcisius Schelbert, Frankfurt a. M. 1979, pp. 83–121.

40 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 855, lines 19–21.

41 Ibid., pp. 854–855, lines 37–38.

42 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Letter to Johann Gottfried Herder, July 10, 1772; cited in

Ironically, Goethe does not close his eyes in order to *touch*, but he lets us ›grope in the dark‹ and thus anticipates the outright devaluation of tactility in the context of his *Farbenlehre*: touch is the »stumpfte« sense, as he puts it, and the »Forderungen einer erhöhten geschärften Sinnlichkeit« lead to a tendency toward the »Oberflächlichen.«⁴³ Thus Goethe does not argue against touch per se, but rather against any assumption of a directly sensual – simultaneously ›comprehensible‹ and ›certain‹ – presence.

The mediality Goethe is negotiating here can be described in more detail with recourse to Régis Debray's mediological considerations. His neologism ›mediology‹ addresses the relation »[der] höheren sozialen Funktionen und deren Beziehung zu den technischen Strukturen der Übertragung.«⁴⁴ Here transmission (*Übertragung*) no longer means ›transport‹ or ›broadcast‹, as it does in classical media studies, or even ›message‹, which would then become ›communication‹.⁴⁵ Rather, in mediological terms, ›transmission‹ takes into account transformative moments – that is, interactions between the material/technical and the ideological/cultural. Thereby ›transmission‹ articulates »ein starkes Votum für das Körperliche und das Technologische bzw. die medialen Infrastrukturen als Ermöglichungsbedingungen von Medien« and their mediating function.⁴⁶ Debray thus suggests that »die Dynamik des Denkens [sich nicht] von der physischen Beschaffenheit der Spuren [trennen lässt].«⁴⁷

We can connect these considerations concerning mediology to a statement that the psychiatrist Johann Heinroth made about Goethe's thought, which he called »gegenständlich.« According to Heinroth's *Lehrbuch der Anthropologie* (1822), Goethe's thought is not »philosophisch« or »abstrakt,« but rather »nicht von den Gegenständen abgesondert« – meaning »daß die Elemente der Gegenstände, die Anschauungen, in dasselbe eingehen und von ihm auf das innigste

Gudrun Püschel: Das Berühren der Erinnerung. Praktiken der Erinnerungskultur Goethes, in: Berühren. Relationen des Taktile in Literatur, Philosophie und Theater, Themenheft Komparistik-online 2019, pp. 148-168; here p. 149.

43 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Die Schriften zur Naturwissenschaft, Vol. 1.6: Zur Farbenlehre. Historischer Teil, ed. Dorothea Kuhn, Weimar 1957, p. 70; cited in Püschel 2019 (fn. 42), p. 150.

44 Régis Debray: Für eine Mediologie [1994], in: Kursbuch Medienkultur. Die maßgeblichen Theorien von Brecht bis Baudrillard, ed. Lorenz Engell et al., Stuttgart 2004, pp. 67-75; here p. 67.

45 On its functions, see Knut Hickethier: Einführung in die Medienwissenschaft, Stuttgart 2003, pp. 20-21.

46 Frank Hartmann: Mediologie, in: Handbuch Medienwissenschaft, ed. Jens Schröter, Stuttgart 2014, pp. 159-165; here p. 160.

47 Debray 2004 (fn. 44), p. 67.

durchdrungen werden.«⁴⁸ Goethe welcomes Heinroth's »Beifall« in one of his essays on *Naturwissenschaft im allgemeinen* (1823), and refers specifically to this passage in Heinroth's *Anthropologie*.⁴⁹ Mediologically speaking, he thereby implicitly enters into the medical context in which Heinroth's interest in »representational thinking« is grounded – that is, as the first chair of psychological medicine, Heinroth is concerned with the question of how a being can be grasped beyond the surface of its biological body, according to the dictum: »[d]ie Person ist mehr als der bloße Körper, auch mehr als die bloße Seele, sie ist der *ganze* Mensch.«⁵⁰ Thus Heinroth advocates a quasi-humanistic extension of the empirical observation of nature.⁵¹ Yet he wants Goethe the »Denker« to be »ganz vom Dichter [gesondert],«⁵² and he disregards what I am suggesting in the remainder of this article: that (dramatic) literature is »representational« in the way it conceptualizes in terms of *scenes* and *settings*, namely by directing attention to the concreteness of bodies and »environments«, as well as to the inevitability of medial framings. Against Heinroth's assessment, Goethe himself argues that his poetry is also »gegenständlich« – quasi-physically »drückten sich gewisse Motive [...] tief in den Sinn,« which also explains his »Neigung zu Gelegenheitsgedichten,« »wozu jedes Besondere irgendeines Zustandes mich unwiderstehlich aufregte.«⁵³ In this way, Goethe turns Heinroth's argument for a spiritual »Ausgleichung«⁵⁴ of the natural sciences on its head and conversely strengthens the »materiality« of spiritual formations.

Before I return to *Lila* as just such a »representational« occasional text, it is worth digging up the debate between Johann Caspar Lavater and Goethe concerning physiognomy and pathognomy, and tracing Heinroth's »Votum für das Körperliche« in its entanglement with the »environmental«. Not only does this debate coincide with Goethe's revision of *Lila*, but it also imposes itself as a framework for interpretation, insofar as Goethe, in the wake of Georg Christoph Lichtenberg's work, strongly advocates the habituation of bodily signs and

48 Johann Christian August Heinroth: *Lehrbuch der Anthropologie*, Leipzig 1822, pp. 387–388.

49 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Zur Naturwissenschaft im Allgemeinen*, in: HA 13, p. 37.

50 Johann Christian August Heinroth: *Anweisung für angehende Irrenärzte zu richtiger Behandlung ihrer Kranken. Als Anhang zu seinem Lehrbuche der Seelenstörungen*, Leipzig 1825, p. 4.

51 See Heinroth 1822 (fn. 48), esp. pp. 389–401.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 387.

53 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Zur Naturwissenschaft im Allgemeinen*, in: HA 13, pp. 38–39.

54 Heinroth 1822 (fn. 48), pp. 386–388.

thus the medialization of bodily readings, over against Lavater's essentialist and a-medial semiotization.⁵⁵

In Johann Caspar Lavater's *Physiognomische Fragmenten* (1775–1778), physiognomy appears as an »Oberbegriff für Körpersemiotik im Allgemeinen.«⁵⁶ In *Von der Physiognomik*, Lavater defines the term as

*Fertigkeit durch das Aeufferliche eines Menschen sein Inneres zu erkennen; das, was nicht unmittelbar in die Sinne fällt, vermittelt irgend eines natürlichen Ausdrucks wahrzunehmen.*⁵⁷

Goethe offers an addition to this fragment, which expands »das Gebiet des Physiognomisten«: he asks what precisely this »exterior« is in the first place, and he proposes that a human being's purpose is not to be read from the body's surface, as the maximum exterior limit, but from its embedding in an extended and – above all – *social* environment. All behaviors, attributes, and objects, »Stand, Gewohnheit, Besitztümer, Kleider« – in short, the entire habitus – should also be part and parcel of the physiognomist's business.⁵⁸ In later fragments from volume 4, Goethe's addition merges with Lavater's distinction between physiognomy and pathognomy: the former is »Kraftdeutung« and generally the »Wissenschaft der Zeichen der Kräfte«; in contrast, the latter is a more limited science, namely »Leidenschaftsdeutung, oder Wissenschaft der Zeichen der Leidenschaften.«⁵⁹ Behind this differentiation between physiognomy and pathognomy lies the tension between a »stationary« and an »animated« character: physiognomy is a question for naturalists and scientific researchers,

55 For a cultural history of the problem, see Claudia Schmölders: *Das Vorurteil im Leibe. Eine Einführung in die Physiognomik*, Berlin 2007; on Lavater and Lichtenberg, see Rüdiger Campe: *Affekt und Ausdruck. Zur Umwandlung der literarischen Rede im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen 1990, p. 445–64; on the role of physiognomy in the context of affect semiotics, see *ibid.*, pp. 279–471.

56 Christian Begemann: *Das »Titelblatt der Seele«. Stifterns Gesichter und das Dilemma der Physiognomik*, in: *Figuren der Übertragung. Adalbert Stifter und das Wissen seiner Zeit*, ed. Michael Gamper and Karl Wagner, Zürich 2009, pp. 15–43; here p. 17. The following considerations build on Begemann's diagnosis that the »physiognomische Paradigma« operates in the »Spannung zwischen einem Begehren nach Lesbarkeit und der permanenten Gefahr ihres Misslingens« (p. 16).

57 Johann Caspar Lavater: *Physiognomische Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe. Eine Auswahl*, ed. Christoph Siegrist, Stuttgart 1984, p. 21, italics in the original.

58 *Ibid.*, pp. 24–25.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 275.

whereas pathognomy becomes a »Spiegel der Hof- und Weltleute« insofar as it enquires about social and »psychological« subjects.⁶⁰

Lavater does not hide the fact that he values the general science of physiognomy more highly, but in so doing, he first and foremost undercuts the fact that Goethe's addition concerns more and different things than merely the question of whether a person is to be understood as a divine natural being or as a social being. What is at stake here becomes clear when we take a detour via Lichtenberg's criticism of Lavater: in his *Über Physiognomik; wider die Physiognomen* (1778), Lichtenberg establishes himself as one of Lavater's principle critics. He argues that we still know too little about the »Verbindungsart« between body and soul; moreover, the body stands »zwischen Seele und der übrigen Welt in der Mitte, Spiegel der Wirkungen von beiden; erzählt nicht allein von unseren Neigungen und Fähigkeiten, sondern auch die Peitschenschläge des Schicksals, Klima, Krankheit, Nahrung und tausend Ungemach.«⁶¹ Lavater's pathognomic »Leidenschaften« thus conceal Lichtenberg's »traces of fate«, according to which the body is no longer the medium through which the unchanging soul or the »stationary character« – the spiritual entity – is expressed, but rather becomes an »impressionable surface«, and this simultaneously provokes the question of the nature of the environment that makes such impressions.

The anthropological formulation of this premise makes its way into Heinroth's later work, not coincidentally in the passages on »leibliches Leben« (in the appendix to his *Anthropologie*), in which he comments on how his work elaborates on »gegenständlichen Denken.« Heinroth's explanations are clearly medical: »leibliches Leben« is »das Medium, der Vermittler zwischen unserm inneren Ich, unserm im Bewußtseyn und in der Zeit fortlaufenden Leben, und zwischen der gesammten äußern Natur, so weit sie in unsern Bereich kommt.«⁶² In the subsequent paragraphs, Heinroth traces the processes of procreation and embryonic development as the interplay between the stimulating spiritual force and the malleable material, as well as between the body's generation and the external environment.⁶³ In turn, Goethe's addition to Lavater's work formulates the idea that this could be a transformative transference event – physiognomy, Goethe writes, should not simply be a matter of the »nackte Gestalt,« for »Was den Menschen umgiebt, wirkt nicht allein auf ihn, er wirkt auch wieder zurück auf selbiges, und indem er sich modificiren läßt, modificirt er wieder rings um

60 Ibid.

61 Georg Christoph Lichtenberg: *Über Physiognomik; wider die Physiognomen. Zu Beförderung der Menschenliebe und Menschenkenntnis*, in: G. C. L.: *Schriften und Briefe*, Vol. 3, ed. Wolfgang Promies, Frankfurt a. M. 1994, pp. 256–295; here p. 266.

62 Heinroth 1822 (fn. 48), p. 39.

63 See *ibid.*, pp. 41–56.

sich her.«⁶⁴ Conversely, this mediality – as a transformative interplay between ›body‹ and ›environment‹ or materiality and idea/ideology – can once again be underlined in distinction from Lavater's work in *Fragmente*, which is thoroughly permeated by an eminent fantasy of immediacy:

In so fern ich von Physiognomik als einer Wissenschaft rede – begreif' ich unter Physiognomie alle *unmittelbaren* Aeüßerungen des Menschen. [...] alles wodurch der leidende oder handelnde Mensch unmittelbar bemerkt werden kann, wodurch er seine *Person* zeigt – ist Gegenstand der Physiognomik.⁶⁵

Or again, a few pages later:

[Das] Aeüßerliche und Innere stehen offenbar in einem genauen unmittelbaren Zusammenhange. Das Aeüßerliche ist nichts, als die Endung, die Gränzen des Innern – und das Innre eine unmittelbare Fortsetzung des Aeüßern. Es ist also ein wesentliches Verhältniß zwischen seiner Außenseite, und seinem Innwendigen.⁶⁶

Yet for Lavater, starting from the premise that the physiognomic body is an ›expressive surface‹, immediacy means ›direct‹, non-mediated legibility.

Lichtenberg takes up this point in his critique of Lavater, remarking that our »Lesen auf der Oberfläche« proves to be a »Quelle unserer Irrtümer und in manchen Dingen unserer gänzlichen Unwissenheit.«⁶⁷ In this way, Lichtenberg identifies the ambivalent role played by physiognomy as a flagship subject area and a leading science in the newly founded discipline of anthropology in the late eighteenth century. If anthropology was concerned with ›knowing humanity in its entirety‹ – as Herder's work, and also Schiller's and Heinroth's prominently state – then in physiognomy, anthropological questions about the nature of humanity (and particularly the relation between body and soul) intermingle with mediological and epistemological questions, specifically concerning the actual, mutually transformative medializations that can be identified in the body as well as vis-à-vis knowledge, recognition, and reading.⁶⁸ Physiognomy's depend-

64 Lavater 1984 (fn. 57), p. 24.

65 Ibid., pp. 21–22, italics in the original.

66 Ibid., pp. 25–26.

67 Lichtenberg 1994 (fn. 61), p. 265.

68 On the importance of physiognomy and pathognomy in the eighteenth century more generally, see Wolfram Groddeck and Ulrich Stadler (Ed.): *Physiognomie und Pathognomie. Zur literarischen Darstellung von Individualität. Festschrift für Karl Pestalozzi zum 65. Geburtstag*, Berlin 1994.

ence on »Unterstützung aus dem Bereich der Künste«⁶⁹ – which is reflected, for example, in Lavater's mania for collecting portrait drawings and engravings, which Goethe reports on in books 18 and 19 of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* – is therefore neither accidental nor limited to the phenomenon of visualization. In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe explicitly identifies the profoundly anti-medial (also anti-mediological) streak in Lavater's physiognomy, which presumes, »daß die sinnliche Gegenwart mit der geistigen durchaus zusammenfalle.« He also diagnoses Lavater's fundamental skepticism concerning the »Kunstideale [...], weil er bei seinem scharfen Blick solchen Wesen die Unmöglichkeit, lebendig organisiert zu sein, nur allzusehr ansah und sie daher ins Fabelreich, ja in das Reich des Monströsen verwies.«⁷⁰ We may presume that the arts are potentially »monstrous« with regard to the physiognomist's enterprise because they can thwart the order of visibility – in Lavater's words, the immediate relationship between the »sichtbare Oberfläche« and the »unsichtbare[r] Inhalt.«⁷¹ For Lavater, physiognomy is the science of the sense of sight: the »empyrische Menschenkenntnis,« that which »aus Zeichen, die in die Sinne fallen, erkannt wird, was hiemit Erfahrungserkenntniß giebt.« As he puts it, »Ich *sehe* den Menschen, seh' ihn in seinen Bewegungen und Gebärden!«⁷² In place of the »ungeübte[n] Auge[n] des Unaufmerksamen,« this is about the »neue Auge [...] des Gesichtserkenners.«⁷³ In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe writes that it was especially this »Dramatisieren« that had »den Kopf so warm gemacht, indem wir alles Vorkömmliche nur unter dieser Form darstellten und keine andere wollten gelten lassen.« This made Lavater so »aufgeregt,« that he »im *Pontius Pilatus* mit Heftigkeit zu zeigen bemüht ist: es gebe doch kein dramatischeres Werk als die Bibel,« and that the Passion of Christ is the »Drama aller Dramen.«⁷⁴

In the rest of this article, I explore the extent to which this Goethean »dramatizing« can be deployed as a critical engagement with physiognomic presuppositions of visibility and legibility, as pathognomic and mediological thinking about the body and the environment. In contradistinction to anti-medial longings for immediacy, I read Goethe's Singspiel *Lila* as a »drama of mediacy« in which the psyche is considered in terms of its environmental relationality. Melancholy – which develops into a question of »Losgerissenheit [...] von der gan-

69 See Begemann on the difficulty arising from this conflation with the arts, namely the difficulty of »die Schwelle zu einer allgemein anerkannten Wissenschaft zu überschreiten.« Begemann 2009 (fn. 56), p. 16.

70 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, in: HA 10, p. 156.

71 Lavater 1984 (fn. 57), p. 22.

72 Ibid., pp. 92-93, italics in the original.

73 Ibid., p. 95.

74 Goethe (fn. 70), p. 157.

zen Welt« and also »Empfänglichkeit für die einwirkenden Umgebungen«⁷⁵ around 1800 – thus proves to be closely linked to the theatrical form and its relationality. In this way, the common narrative concerning the discursive function of the theatrical dispositif in the eighteenth century – one which is based on a fantasy concerning the immediacy of bodies in the theater and can be found not only in theories of acting, but also in the conflation or merging of physiognomy and theatrical thinking in philosophical debates (for examples, see Engel or Wolff on mimicry)⁷⁶ – is subjected to a re-reading. As Graf argues, »theater« in this case is an abstract concept: »[D]er Triumph des Theaters wird in erster Linie nicht auf der Bühne, sondern auf dem Papier erkämpft, und dieser »Sieg« [...] hat nicht so sehr mit dem wirklichen Theater zu tun als vielmehr mit einer im Denken des 18. Jahrhunderts tief verankerten Utopie der menschlichen Gesellschaft, der Sprache und der Kommunikation.«⁷⁷ In contrast to this philosophical and abstract utopia, in what follows I will read Goethe's »dramatizing« – with Heinroth – as a »representational« practice. When it comes to »drama«, it is not a question of genre, but of »theater« as a concrete medial and mediatizing environment. Here I follow Erika Fischer-Lichte's assessment that theatrical practice in the eighteenth century should certainly be positioned and studied as distinct from the socio-political premises of literary theater reformers.⁷⁸

Reil's »psychische Curmethode« and Goethe's »Umwelten«

The bridge back to *Lila* is Heinroth's dictum, quoted above, that melancholy is the »Losgerissenheit [...] von der ganzen Welt,« and that it is to be therapeutically countered by »Empfänglichkeit für die einwirkenden Umgebungen wieder

75 Johann Christian August Heinroth: *Lehrbuch der Störungen des Seelenlebens oder der Seelenstörungen und ihrer Behandlung. Zweyter oder praktischer Teil*, Vol. 1, Leipzig 1818, pp. 333–334.

76 See, for example, Ruedi Graf: *Utopie und Theater. Physiognomik, Pathognomik, Mimik und die Reform von Schauspielkunst und Drama im 18. Jahrhundert*, in: *Physiognomie und Pathognomie. Zur literarischen Darstellung von Individualität. Festschrift für Karl Pestalozzi zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Wolfgang Groddeck and Ulrich Stadler, Berlin 1994, pp. 16–33, esp. p. 17; the core element of immediacy is the concept of the »natural«; see also Heeg 2000 (fn. 35).

77 Graf 1994 (fn. 76), p. 17.

78 Erika Fischer-Lichte: *Zur Einleitung*, in: *Theater im Kulturwandel des 18. Jahrhunderts. Inszenierung und Wahrnehmung von Körper – Musik – Sprache*, ed. E. F.-L. and Jörg Schöner, Göttingen 1999, pp. 11–20.

[zu] regen.«⁷⁹ But what is it that links ›representational thinking‹, pathognomic environments, and melancholy? Reconstructions of *Lila*'s premiere leave no doubt as to the striking ›representationalism‹ of the stage set, and the fact that »kein Aufwand gescheut [wurde],« that it was »nicht nur aufwendige[], sondern überaus raffinierte[], mit Lichteffekten und Täuschungen arbeitende[] Inszenierung.«⁸⁰ Goethe wrote to his composer, Seckendorff, in 1777 about the immense effort, that went into *Lila* in terms of scenery and staging: »Es ist ein großes Schaustück mit Gesang und Tanz und einer Anzahl von Dekorationen, die vielleicht einzig in ihrer Art sind und von denen ich wohl wünschte, daß Du sie gesehen hättest.«⁸¹

This representationalism has a medical history. In 1818, when Goethe adduces the term »psychische Kur« to describe *Lila*'s therapeutic method, he is able to link this directly to Johann Christian Reil's *Rhapsodien über die Anwendung der psychischen Curmethode auf Geisteszerrüttungen* (1803), with which he was familiar and which he found important.⁸² In this work, Reil proposes that every ›madhouse‹ should have »ein für diese Zwecke besonders eingerichtetes, durchaus praktikables Theater haben [...], das mit allen nöthigen Apparaten, Masquen, Maschinerien und Decorationen.« Furthermore, the »Hausofficianten« and perhaps even the physicians should

jede Rolle eines Richters, Scharfrichters, Arztes, vom Himmel kommender Engel, und aus den Gräbern wiederkehrender Toter, nach des jedesmaligen Bedürfnissen des Kranken, bis zum höchsten Grad der Täuschung vorstellen [können]. Ein solches Theater könnte zu Gefängnissen und Löwengruben, zu Richtplätzen und Operationssälen formiert werden. Auf demselben würden Donquichotte zu Rittern geschlagen, eingebildete Schwangere ihrer Bürde entladen, Narren trepanirt, reuige Sünder von ihren Verbrechen auf eine feierliche Art losgesprochen. Kurz der Arzt würde von demselben und dessen Apparat nach den individuellen Fällen den mannichfaltigsten Gebrauch machen, die Phantasie mit Nachdruck und dem jedesmaligen Zwecke gemäß erregen, die Besonnenheit wecken, entgegengesetzte Leidenschaften hervorrufen, Furcht, Schreck, Staunen, Angst, Seelenruhe u. f.w. erregen und der fixen Idee des Wahnsinns begegnen können.⁸³

79 Heinroth 1818 (fn. 75), pp. 333–334.

80 Busch-Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), p. 16; with reference to Sichardt 1957 (fn. 3).

81 In Curt von Seckendorff: Karl Siegmund Freiherr von Seckendorff am Weimarer Hofe in den Jahren 1776–1785, Leipzig 1885, p. 22; cited in Braunbehrens/Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), p. 207.

82 For further details, see Diener 1971 (fn. 2), pp. 152–154.

83 Johann Christian Reil: *Rhapsodien über die Anwendung der psychischen Curmethode auf Geisteszerrüttungen*, Halle 1803, pp. 209–210.

Thus Reil links to the therapeutic method of ›pious fraud‹, which dates back to antiquity – that is, the entrenched ideas associated with melancholy are to be ›unmasked‹ as obsessions by means of mirror images. In Reil's work, however, as I will show, ›theater‹ becomes method all down the line; he ›reifies‹ the question of ideas through his interest in the »Beeinflussung der Seele durch sichtbare Gegenstände« (representations, visible objects), which are employed »auf festliche Weise und durch eindrucksvolle Rituale.«⁸⁴ In *Lila*, Goethe takes up this ›representational‹ treatment of melancholy – that is, the genuinely theatrical connection between the materiality of spaces and objects on the one hand and the sociality of rituals on the other – and then takes it one step further.

As Jean Starobinski reconstructs it, the idea of salubrious deception had been popularized since the late eighteenth century by Philippe Pinel, the chief physician at Hôpital Salpêtrière, and his student Jean-Etienne-Dominique Esquirol, among others. This ›pious fraud‹ consists in making the patient believe that the person offering treatment also believes the patient's ideas: »Der Zweck [...] ist es, den Kranken zu einer Handlung zu bewegen, die ihn am Ende selbst und mit seinen eigenen Augen die Zerstörung des Gegenstandes seines Wahns feststellen lässt.«⁸⁵ This then proves the »Unwirklichkeit des eingebildeten Gegenstandes.«⁸⁶

»Augen,« »Wahn,« »Unwirklichkeit« – here some of the characteristic features of Goethe's treatment of melancholy come to the fore. First, *Lila's* melancholy is still theorized according to precisely the same binary of truth and delusion. In the words of Count Friedrich:

Das ist eben das gefährlichste ihrer Krankheit. [...] Seitdem ihr die Phantasten den Kopf verrückt haben, traut sie niemanden [*sic*], hält alle ihre Freunde und Liebste, sogar ihren Mann für Schattenbilder und von den Geistern untergeschobene Gestalten. Und wie will man sie von dem Wahren überzeugen, da ihr das Wahre als Gespenst verdächtig ist?⁸⁷

But from this point on, the text takes a different route: when the new doctor, Verazio, appears in the first act and immediately claims to have seen something »an Ihren [Lila's] Augen,« Lila's sisters suspect something: they ask whether »Er ist wohl gar ein Physiognomist,« who moreover »Ohren [hat] wie ein Zaube-

84 Jean Starobinski: *Geschichte der Melancholiebehandlung von den Anfängen bis 1900*, trans. and ed. Cornelia Wild, Berlin 2011, p. 126.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 123.

86 *Ibid.*

87 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), pp. 837–838, lines 30–32.

rer.«⁸⁸ Analogous to this ridicule of physiognomy's principles of visibility, the salutary »Zusammentreffen« of »Phantasie und Wirklichkeit« produced by the cure does not turn out to be an anagnorisis in terms of the sense of sight. The therapeutic measure quoted above – »Wenn sie ihren Gemahl in ihren Armen hält, den sie sich selbst wieder errungen, wird sie wohl glauben müssen, dass er wieder da ist,« and that she will find herself healed »in seinen Küssen«⁸⁹ – also pointedly implies more than haptic therapy. Rather, the promise of salvation tells us something about the constitution – and potentially also the susceptibility to illness – of Goethe's psychological subject: this is thought of as arising from a »setting«, and also as spatially and objectively embedded in an environment. In this context, what was said at the beginning of this paper makes sense: Lila's melancholy world is not only staged – addressed to the sense of sight and the optical logic of delusional fantasy – but elaborately *scenographically constructed*, with fairies, ogres, caves, and gardens. It is thus addressed less to the eye and the delusion-reality binary than to the performative logic of this (as every) community. What becomes apparent here is a shift in the concept of delusion, from the spheres of pure thought and fantasy to a reciprocal entanglement with an environment that is simultaneously social and material.

This representationalism as an aesthetic and anthropological dimension is what Goethe took from Reil. Starobinski quotes at length from Philippe Pinel's »mélancolie« entry in the *Encyclopédie méthodique*, which cites stories of such healings over many pages, and which Starobinski characterizes as a »legendenhafte Illustration für die Wirklichkeit heilender Vorspiegelungen.«⁹⁰ According to Pinel, the mode of therapeutic theory is the narrative (or its retelling) in its simple quantitative assertion of evidence: the multiplicity of adducible case histories authenticates their reality. In Reil's work, »theater« in all its »representationality« meets Pinel's question of ideas and simulations. In my opinion, Starobinski overlooks this discontinuity – and with *Lila*, the story is once again able to be told.

Reil's therapeutic theater is not only a matter of imaginable roles, but decidedly also about the spatiality of scene and staging. We see this in the above quotation concerning »Gefängnisse,« »Löwengruben,« »Richtplätze« and »Operationssäle« – the physician is supposed to make »mannichfaltigen Gebrauch« of these, as well as of »dessen Apparat.«⁹¹ While Reil also bases his therapy for melancholy on premises of visibility (»mit seinen eigenen Augen«), he nevertheless considers the fact that this visibility does not function immediately, but rather »gegenständlich«, representationally – accordingly, the passage on theater in

88 Ibid., p. 840, lines 36–841, also line 3.

89 Ibid., p. 869, lines 1–2.

90 Starobinski 2011 (fn. 84), p. 124.

91 Reil 1803 (fn. 83), p. 210.

Reil's work expressly calls for »*Objekte*[] für den Sinn des Gesichts.«⁹² An impression of this theater's immense ›representationalism‹ is provided in the following example, taken from Reil's passage about a maniac, whom one

an einem Stricke in die Höhe gezogen, ihn dadurch schnell zahm gemacht und bald ganz geheilt habe. Man legt zu diesem Behuf dem Kranken bequeme Leibriemen an, bringt diese durch Stricke und Flaschenzüge mit einem hohen Gewölbe oder mit einem ungeheuren Mastbaum in Verbindung, und zieht ihn in die Höhe, daß er wie ein Himmelsbote in den Lüften schwebt. Der Eindruck wird um desto grausender seyn, je höher der Kranke, oder wenn er über Feuerbrände, über eine tobende See aufgezogen wird.⁹³

Goethe – who is not concerned with therapeutic practice on individual ›sick‹ people – does not have to stop at the ›gruesome impression‹, but can question this therapeutic use of scenographic positioning with regard to its significance for the reconstituted community. Thus the dramaturgy leads from the social interior space in the first scene (the »Saal«) to the natural exterior space – the »romantische Gegend eines Parks« – in the second, to a »[r]auhe[n] Wald, im Grunde eine Höhle« in the third, and to the »Wald« in the fourth scene. In fact, the scenography does not simply serve as an effect- or illusion-enhancing backdrop for Lila's fantasy; instead, the superstructures belong to the community's spatio-temporal activity within the fictional event. In the staging and props for the play-within-the-play, further spatial constructions occur when the chorus leads Lila into »Lauben« and to »gedeckte Tische.«⁹⁴ Strikingly, this community is one that functions by means of the spatial logic of setting. It is fitting that a familial peculiarity also obtains here: with the exception of Count Friedrich, who is Count Altenstein's son, all the family members are related either as siblings or as cousins. This horizontal organization of kinship relations is mirrored in the horizontal spatial practices that constitute and sustain the community. The model here is metonymic linkage – a surface structure.

If we re-examine one of the Singspiel's central scenes, in which the community supposedly reconstitutes itself as an ›immediate‹ corporeal community, it is striking to note that *Lila* – far from presenting a peaceful ›natural state‹ and the anti-theatricality this implies – is not only permeated by unambiguous implications of violence, but also explicitly does not result in post-cathartic autonomy. In order to convince Lila ›sensorially‹ that her husband needs to be freed from the ogre's clutches, the play-within-a-play has Lila's family members perform as

92 Ibid., p. 209, my italics.

93 Ibid., pp. 210–211.

94 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 853, lines 3–11.

a »Chor der Gefangenen« – »in Ketten, beklagen sie ihr Schicksal in einem traurigen Tanz,«⁹⁵ whereupon Lila promptly muses, »Vielleicht bin ich bestimmt euch zu befreien und glücklich zu machen.«⁹⁶ However, this ›liberation‹ does not immediately lead to the aforementioned grasping, embracing, and kissing; instead, Lila herself is also put in chains, (half) voluntarily: »Ich biete dir Trutz/ Gib her deine Ketten!/ Die Götter erretten, Gewähren mir Schutz.«⁹⁷ Whether this is meant to be interpreted as a rebellion against the ogre or her own confused psyche – »Ich soll vor dir erzittern?/ Mir regt sich alles Blut,/ Und in den Ungewittern/ Erzeigt sich erst der Mut« – the resulting community is one in which these bodies are ›imprisoned‹ alongside each other and hence have access to protection, healing, or salvation: »In Freud' und Schmerzen! Gefangen hier mit diesen Geliebten. Ihre Gegenwart tröstet mich über alles und belebt meine Hoffnung.«⁹⁸ Thus Lila's healing does not lead back to a pre-pathological primordial state of corporeal presence, but rather exposes the co-presence of these bodies in the way they are ›violently‹ manufactured out of a social environment.

In *Lila*, these issues are negotiated not only in terms of content, but also as a question of theatrical form. The peculiarity of the play-within-a-play situation is striking: it functions differently here than in the prototypical *Hamlet*, for example, in which the play's characters are presented with an embedded play so that the difference between truth and illusion can be revealed to them. In contrast, at first glance, there are no spectators in *Lila*'s embedded play: who is supposed to recognize anything when everyone dances together as fairies, ogres, and more? Based on the internal logic of the therapy/play, it is Lila – as both an actor and a spectator – who is supposed to gather from all this palaver that her fantasy has been playing tricks on her: »Zuletzt wird Phantasie und Wirklichkeit zusammentreffen. Wenn sie ihren Gemahl in ihren Armen hält ...«

Yet this thematic treatment of the socially constructed community thus potentially extends beyond the boundaries of the stage and into the audience's space. Therefore it is worth reiterating the nature of the Weimar Liebhabertheater community's self-understanding, as described above. Their preferred meeting place was the Redoutenhaus on the Esplanade (fig. 1): »Freund Oeser« [Adam Friedrich Oeser] gestaltete die Palais-Innenräume und den in der zweiten Etage liegenden, 13 m x 9,50 m großen Saal aus, der eine der Spielstätten wurde; der davor liegende blaue Salon konnte als Garderobe und Auftritt für die Darsteller dienen.«⁹⁹

95 Ibid., p. 858, lines 11–13.

96 Ibid., p. 858, lines 15–16.

97 Ibid., p. 861, lines 3–5.

98 Ibid., p. 861, lines 33–35.

99 Busch-Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), p. 13.

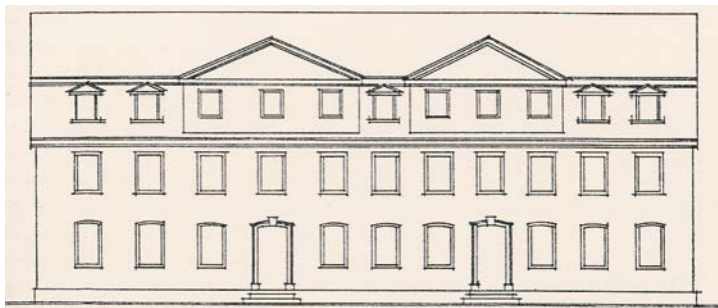


Fig. 1: Anton Hauptmann: Weimar Theatre; West Side (*Redoutenhäuser*) (1775)¹⁰⁰

The communal-festive self-understanding corresponds to the fact that the Weimar Redoutenhäuser were both meeting places and festive venues – they also housed ballrooms and masquerade halls. Even the rehearsals were catered. We can imagine that this society was similar to the one portrayed in *Lila*, »die in einem ewigen freudigen Leben von Tanz, Gesang, Festen und Ergetzungen schwebte« (see above). In this respect, *Lila* is not simply a musical-theatrical work, but one in which the festive culture of music and dance constitutes both form and content – more precisely, its content renders its form a theme.

All that survives of the Redoutenhäuser today is the above exterior view of the venue; no drawings of the hall or the stage have been preserved.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, I maintain that the representational nature of Reil's therapeutic scenery and setting is a decisive bridge to understanding the extensive files stored in the Thuringian Hauptstaatsarchiv on the woodworking and locksmithing that was required to produce the scenery for *Lila*'s aforementioned premier in the Liebhabertheater. An elaborate new stage set was built in Anton Georg Hauptmann's Redoutenhäuser on the Esplanade: »Die Spielfläche war vor allem zu vergrößern, in einer Aktennotiz heißt es sogar, daß »zu Maschinen [stark vereinfachte Kulissenwagen] eingerichtet auch eine neue Versenkung [Rampenlicht] dazu gemacht« wurde.«¹⁰² The fact that no visual representations of this immense effort have come down to us, but only the invoices for the ma-

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁰¹ See Jürgen Beyer: Die Veranstaltungsorte der Redouten in Weimar von 1770 bis 1835, in: Weimar – Jena: Die große Stadt 8/4, 2015, pp. 352-390; here pp. 352-353.

¹⁰² Braunbehrens and Salmen 2008 (fn. 3); for the quotation within the quotation, see Sichert 1957 (fn. 3), pp. 18-20.



Fig. 2: Adam Friedrich Oeser: Bukolic Landscape with Amor and Psyche.
Klassik Stiftung Weimar

terials, may be seen as a material fulfillment of the deconstruction of the sense of sight in *Lila*. The invoices show that curtains, sets, the backdrop, the eye-line, and the entrance were built from scratch, as were the costumes and the props – for example, »5 Stück Kätten von weißen Pollierten Blech in der Länge 5 Schu.«¹⁰³ The stage could thus be converted into a divided deck, making more elaborate scene changes possible.¹⁰⁴ »Der Hofebenist Johann Martin Mieding hatte eine »ganz neue Dekoracion die 4 mahl verändert werden kann« geschaffen, zu der ein Mittel- und ein aufziehbarer Rückprospekt aus »feiner Leinwand«, drei Kulissen für den dritten Aufzug (»rauhes Wald, im Grunde eine Höhle«) und ein neuer Horizont gehörten.«¹⁰⁵ Goethe asked his drawing teacher, Adam Friedrich Oeser, for sketches to use in the second scene, the »Romantische[n] Gegend eines Parks«:

103 Busch-Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), p. 16; see also Sichardt 1957 (fn. 3), p. 42.

104 See *ibid.*, p. 41.

105 Braunbehrens and Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), p. 207, with reference to Sichardt 1957 (fn. 3), pp. 18-19 and pp. 41-42.



Fig. 3: Nicolas Poussin: Landscape mit two Nymphs (1659). Chantilly, Musée Condé

Wir möchten auf diesem Prospect gern eine herrliche Gegend vorstellen mit Haynen, Teichen, wenigen Architekturstücken pp., denn es soll einen Park bedeuten. Hätten Sie so was vorrätig so schicken Sie's doch aber mit nächster Post, allenfalls ein Kupfer von Poussin, oder sonst eine Idee.¹⁰⁶

The reference to Poussin, and also the appeal to Oeser himself, provide clues as to the kind of stage space Goethe might have had in mind.¹⁰⁷

All of this contradicts the common assumption that the amateur stage feeds the private, intimate aspects of self-understanding by reducing the staging, especially the props and the scenery.¹⁰⁸ Instead, it seems more appropriate to refer the question of staging not only to the social roles being negotiated, but above all to the concrete scene, setting, and environment: rather than a theater

106 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Goethes Werke*. Herausgegeben im Auftrag der Großherzogin Sophie von Sachsen, Vol. IV/3, Weimar 1887-1919, reprint München 1987, p. 129; cited in Braunbehrens and Salmen 2008 (fn. 3), p. 207.

107 See Timo John: Adam Friedrich Oeser (1717-1799). Studie über einen Künstler der Empfindsamkeit, Beucha 2001, esp. pp. 101-103.

108 See Hartmann 2004 (fn. 4), pp. 81-83.

of illusion, *Lila* should be seen as a kind of theater of *objects*. We must also consider the fact that there is an immense medial difference between whether a medical treatise, like Reil's, is *about* the theater and its objects, or whether the treatise itself is ›dramatized‹. In addition to *Lila*'s internal perspective, this drama (like any drama) always implies an external, spectator's view – something that literary scholars tend to forget when they read dramas. From the perspective of the implicit spectator in the theater who sees Goethe's entire play, the explicit theatricality of the embedded play, along with the elaborate scenery – the »geschmückte[m] Garten,« the »Gebäude mit sieben Hallen,« the doors »an deren Mitte ein Rocken und eine Spindel befestigt,« and much more¹⁰⁹ – points to the veiling gesture entailed in the ›politics of grasping‹ with regard to the mediality of the bodies. Or to put it positively: as a theatrical text, Goethe's script is not simply poetological, but metatheatrical – precisely *not* in the sense of a reflection on the separation or separability of being and appearance, reality and staging, but because it identified the constitution of the ›psychological subject‹ in and through the community as a performative bringing forth in one's own body and by means of the (animate and inanimate) ›bodies‹ in one's environment. As far as the script is concerned, these ›surrounding objects‹ also include the potential spectators in the theater, whose bodies make up an overall scene of co-presence and an environment (in the sense of *Um-Welt*), but an environment that the theatrical framework establishes as genuinely and ineluctably medial.

Only against the background of *this* theatricality does Goethe's report make sense – that »Dramatisieren« made Lavater's »Kopf so warm« (see above). If Lavater understands pathognomy as a »Spiegel der Hof- und Weltleute« and fears – in contrast to his claims about physiognomy's a-mediality – that it might struggle »mit der Verstellungskunst,« then one can read *Lila* and her therapeutic Festspiel as an affirmation of Goethe's mediological ›environmental consciousness‹. The fact that Goethe is still interested in the mediality of pathognomy and its mechanisms of transmission in *Lila* may also indicate that in its language of symptoms, *Lila*'s melancholy functions wholly un-semiotically. In *Torquato Tasso*, which Goethe wrote between 1780 and 1789 and which is considered *the* pathography of the melancholic,¹¹⁰ the suffering of the tormented poet's soul is visibly articulated in his body:

109 Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 865, lines 12–14.

110 On melancholy in *Tasso*, see Thorsten Valk: *Melancholie im Werk Goethes. Genese – Symptomatik – Therapie*, Tübingen 2002b, pp. 106–138; Stephanie Böls: *Krankheiten und Textgattungen. Gattungsspezifisches Wissen in Literatur und Medizin um 1800*, Berlin/Boston 2016, esp. pp. 324–325. Böls argues that the »Bildregister von Körper und Krankheit« serves to depict psychological suffering (p. 332); only briefly, with reference to Schmaus 2009 (fn. 4), does she point out that the »psychosomatische Dimension der

O nehmt ihn [Vergils Kranz] weg von meinem Haupte wieder,
 Nehmt ihn hinweg! Er sengt mir meine Locken!
 Und wie ein Strahl der Sonne, der zu heiß
 Das Haupt mir träfe, brennt er mir die Kraft
 Des Denkens aus der Stirne. Fieberhitze
 Bewegt mein Blut.¹¹¹

Due to its lack of action, *Tasso* is considered not only as »kein Drama im herkömmlichen Gattungssinn,« but also as far removed from the stage itself.¹¹² Therefore it is not surprising that Goethe writes a letter in 1811 to thank the actress Frederike Bethmann for having »dieses theaterscheue Werk hervorgezogen und in ein günstiges Bühnenlicht (im Berliner Hoftheater) gestellt.«¹¹³ In his *Italienische Reise*, Goethe recalls writing *Tasso* in Florence, in the »Lust- und Prachtgärten,« and asserts that the corresponding passages still immediately recall »noch jetzt jene Zeit, jene Gefühle.«¹¹⁴ Yet in the dramatic text, the explicit bodies (of the actors) stand in for the environment's imprint on the lifeworld. This transformation of the environment is also supported by the fact that, according to a diary entry, Goethe got the idea for *Tasso* in 1780, during a walk: »Zu Mittag nach Tiefurt zu Fuß Gute Erfindung Tasso;«¹¹⁵ this originally concrete walk in and through space is then translated into the psychological realm, when Goethe later writes in a letter: »Auf der Reise wird Tasso durchgedacht und also auf einer Wandrung, die Schicksale eines Mannes dramatisiert, dessen ganzes Leben ein Hin- und Herwandern war.«¹¹⁶ In *Lila*, with its extensive scenery, there is no such expressive logic of bodies: rather than a favorable »günstige[m] Bühnenlicht,« *Lila* seems to remain caught in the »unfavorable« story Starobinski tells about the treatment of melancholy well beyond 1900, in which the »melancholische Mensch« ultimately remains »derjenige Typus eines un-

Humoralpathologie [genutzt wird], um den gefühlten Zorn durch Körpermetaphern darzustellen« (p. 329).

111 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Torquato Tasso, in: HA 5, pp. 86, 488-490.

112 Borchmeyer 1988 (fn. 29), in: p. 1406.

113 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Letter to Frederike Bethmann, Dec. 17, 1811; cited in Stuart Atkins et al.: Kommentar zu »Torquato Tasso«, in: HA 5, p. 502.

114 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Aus den Papieren zur Italienischen Reise. Erste Fassung des Abschieds von Rom, Weimar, Aug. 31, 1817; cited in Borchmeyer 1988 (fn. 29), p. 1386.

115 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Tagebuchaufzeichnung vom March 30, 1780; cited in *ibid.*, p. 1376.

116 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: Letter to Friedrich Bertuch, April 5, 1788; cited in *ibid.*, p. 1383.



Fig. 4: Heinrich Lips: Lila and Verazio, and Psyche bound, in: Goethe's Schriften, Vol. 6, Leipzig 1790

zugänglichen Wesens« to which the key must still be found.¹¹⁷ Or perhaps: in *Lila*, the psychological subject is not considered primarily in terms of their ›speaking body‹ at all, but rather in terms of their ›environment‹. Here we can draw a line from Heinroth's and Goethe's ›representational thinking‹ to the structure of melancholy. The fact that Lila made it onto the title page of volume 6 of Goethe's collected writings in the 1790 edition – the same volume that also contains *Tasso* – next to an image of Psyche bound with ropes (see fig. 4), indicates the play's importance:

Here the metaphorical fetters of the tortured soul and the representational ›ropes‹ and ›body straps‹ of Reil's object-like stage environment overlap (see above). As a ›representationally‹ fettered psyche, Lila is not a reference to an immaterial ›beautiful soul‹, as Goethe's and Schiller's classicism envisioned it in the

117 Starobinski 2011 (fn. 84), p. 193.

official ideologisms; rather, she embodies the entanglement of nature, culture, and material technology, and in her fetters she remains far removed from a peaceful state of ultimate healing and autonomy.

Pathogenic Environments: Lila's Family and Ottilie's Famishment

Up to this point I have already said quite a bit about environments, and Goethe, with an eye to pathognomy, also clearly seemed to presume that environments ›have an effect‹. Yet *Lila* has conspicuously little to say about the causes of melancholy. In terms of treatment, however, melancholy can be thought of as a situated condition, albeit one that is still quite diffuse.¹¹⁸ With regard to Goethe's ongoing preoccupation with environmental pathogenicity, two aspects of *Lila* are particularly noteworthy.

Concerning the first, Lila's plight is characterized by an *anorexic* moment – one that is at odds with contemporary melancholic symptomatology and includes the dimension of the ›body‹: not only does Lila refuse to eat, but the family community's formerly rich culinary life is also affected by the constant atmosphere of mourning evoked by her eating behavior. Moreover, throughout the course of the Festspiel, her position on the road to recovery is measured by whether she will sit down at the common dining table once again (she does not).¹¹⁹ *Lila* may gesture ahead to *Iphigenie*, but there is a clearer connection to the hysterical, starving Ottilie in Goethe's *Wahlverwandschaften* – Ottilie dies because she refuses to eat, as does Eduard.

In conclusion, I would like to take up a few more aspects. Ottilie – the quiet, ethereal child – is depicted not least through her counter-image, the loud, vivid Luciane, the daughter in Charlotte's house, with whom Ottilie grows up as an orphaned foster child. Like Lila's fairies/siblings, Luciane loves »pantomimische Stellungen und Tänze, in denen sie verschiedene Charaktere auszudrücken gewandt war. Ein Kavalier aus ihrem Gefolge hatte sich eingerichtet, auf dem Flügel ihre Gebärden mit der wenigen nötigen Musik zu begleiten; es bedurfte nur einer kurzen Abrede, und sie waren sogleich in Einstimmung.«¹²⁰ Luciane changes her clothes several times a day: »Wenn es ihr Vergnügen machte, sich des Tages drei-, viermal umzuziehen und mit gewöhnlichen, in der Gesellschaft

118 On the term ›situated,‹ see Donna Haraway: *Situated Knowledges. The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, in: *Feminist Studies* 14, 1988, pp. 575-599.

119 See Goethe 1988 (fn. 1), p. 853, lines 3-26.

120 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: *Wahlverwandschaften*, in: HA 6, p. 379 (part 2, chap. 4).

üblichen Kleidern vom Morgen bis in die Nacht zu wechseln, so erschien sie dazwischen wohl auch einmal im wirklichen Maskenkleid, als Bäuerin und Fischerin, als Fee und Blumenmädchen.«¹²¹ Retrospectively, *Lila* the »Feenspiel«¹²² points beyond the theatrical therapeutic treatment to the familial role-play and, in particular, the female relationship dynamics. Psychoanalysis has discovered that Ottilie's suffering and death are explicitly motivated by the incestuous/oedipal relations that cause her to refuse life, and the *Wahlverwandtschaften* has accordingly been read as a »Krankengeschichte.«¹²³ Here the »Mutter-Tochter-Beziehung« plays a central role. Based on this, it is striking – and this is the second noteworthy aspect concerning *Lila* – that not only is their community (both the lost one and the one to be reconstituted) one of sisters and brothers, but while fathers appear on the margins, the (hyper-symbiotic and also aggressive) mother-figure relevant to Ottilie's psychodynamic scenario constitutes a significant blank space in *Lila*. Through Ottilie's psychosomatic symptoms – her anorexia and her headache – this psychosomatic dimension becomes recognizable in *Lila*'s melancholy. It shows up just as much as an indication of systemic issues – of the sufferings caused by (familial) environments – as of the latent, violent implications of the ideal, horizontal (one almost wants to say ›anti-oedipal‹) community of dancing fairies. Since Goethe does *not* mention these issues in *Lila*, they resonate in the melancholic symptoms, fed in from the ›adjacent‹ texts that point to the history of Goethe's fascinations.

Translated into English by Alissa Jones Nelson

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121 Ibid.

122 This is the subtitle of the first version.

123 Ulrike Prokop: »Eßstörungen« – Goethes Wahlverwandtschaften als Krankengeschichte gelesen, in: Psyche 59, 2005, pp. 395–430.

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