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Setting Suns, Fading Forms of Life *Cooper and Tieck in Goethe's Novelle*

The conclusion of Goethe's *Novelle* has never ceased to riddle critics, above all because of the apparent discontinuity between realistic narrative exposition and idealized poetic end. Earlier readers such as Emil Staiger have argued that the conclusion functions to harmonize the semantic oppositions earlier set up in the narrative, such as those between nature and art, the destructive force of the elemental, envisioned as a violent fire symbolic of revolutionary fervor, and the pacifying power of a child's poetic song. As Staiger puts this, the end demonstrates »wie die Kunst als Blüte aufsteigt aus den Blättern der Natur und eine leichtgeschwungene Brücke von den Morgenländern zu der hochgebildeten Gesellschaft später Zeit hinüberführt.«¹ Later critics have qualified this harmonizing interpretation with an emphasis on the theatricality of the scene. Jane Brown, for example, reads the end as an anti-hierarchical integration of the arts that doubles as a societal integration, noting that »the various allusions in this scene are all spectacles which take place in theaters or arenas.«² Waltraud Wiethölter in the Frankfurt edition of Goethe's works further claims that the »artificiality« of the conclusion in its thick overlay of cultural allusions marks the harmonic resolution as a transitory, precarious moment that the text itself ironically puts into question: »Was hier als Versöhnung von Natur und Kultur erscheint, ist jener Kunst und jenem Handwerk zu verdanken, mit dem alle Figuren des Textes beschäftigt sind: ihre Welt aus Repräsentationen [...] herzustellen.«³ Whether one emphasizes the harmonic, integrative character of the end or its theatrical, citational status as artifice, there lingers the residual question of why the Princess and courtly society in general remain conspicuously absent

1 Emil Staiger: *Meisterwerke deutscher Sprache aus dem neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Zürich 1957, pp. 135-162; here p. 162.

2 Jane K. Brown: *The Tyranny of the Ideal. The Dialectics of Art in Goethe's »Novelle«*, in: *Studies in Romanticism* 19/2, 1980, pp. 217-231; here pp. 225-226.

3 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: *Gesamte Werkausgabe, Section 1: Sämtliche Werke, Vol. 8: Die Leiden des jungen Werthers. Die Wahlverwandtschaften. Kleine Prosa. Epen*, ed. Waltraud Wiethölter, Frankfurt a. M. 1994, p. 1076. Cited hereafter as FA Section.Vol:Page.

from the scene of the lion's taming. Gerhard Neumann has called this counter-intuitive disappearance of aristocratic protagonists at the *Novelle's* conclusion its ultimate ›mystery‹, arguing that the final scene represents a »Heterotop unter Ausschuß des Fürstenpaars, und [es] wird einer Familie fahrenden Volkes anvertraut. Dieser Schluß bleibt wohl das Rätsel dieses unvergleichlichen Textes.«⁴ Even Eckermann, *Novelle's* first reader, registered a certain dissatisfaction with the moment of narrative closure:

Nicht ohne Rührung hatte ich die Handlung des Schlusses lesen können. Doch wußte ich nicht, was ich sagen sollte, ich war überrascht, aber nicht befriedigt. Es war mir, als wäre der Ausgang zu einsam, zu ideal, zu lyrisch, und als hätten wenigstens einige der übrigen Figuren wieder hervortreten und, das Ganze abschließend, dem Ende mehr Breite geben sollen.⁵

Goethe's oft-cited response to Eckermann – his own interpretation of the end – has established an authoritative framework from which only few critics depart. To explain the conclusion, Goethe calls on an organic metaphor in order to establish a continuity between the overly idealized, even isolated lyrical end and the realistic narrative exposition that precedes it: »Um für den Gang dieser *Novelle* ein Gleichniß zu haben«, fuhr Goethe fort, »so denken Sie sich aus der Wurzel hervorschießend ein grünes Gewächs, das [...] zuletzt mit einer Blume endet. Die Blume war unerwartet, überraschend, aber sie mußte kommen; [...] das grüne Blätterwerk der durchaus realen Exposition ist nur dieserwegen da und nur dieserwegen etwas werth.«⁶ Such a metaphor figures textual holism on the model of vegetal organism and lends superficial credence to harmonizing interpretations such as Staiger's, though, as Cornelia Zumbusch has compellingly demonstrated, interpretive recourse to the text's own figuration of inorganic, ›gentle‹ forces of transformation opens up alternative, less harmonizing interpretive possibilities.⁷

4 Gerhard Neumann: Fernrohr und Flöte. Erzählte Räume in Goethes »*Novelle*«, in: Goethe und die Musik, ed. Walter Hettche and Rolf Selbmann, Würzburg 2012, pp. 125-144; here p. 140.

5 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Goethes Werke. Herausgegeben im Auftrage der Großherzogin Sophie von Sachsen, Weimar 1887-1919; here Section 5, Vol. 6, pp. 21-22. Cited hereafter as WA Section.Vol:Page.

6 WA 5,6:22-23.

7 Zumbusch's reading situates Goethe's text within a broader discourse of force(s) (*Kraft*) – both of nature and of art – around 1800, arguing that Goethe's *Novelle* explores the power of aesthetic/natural forces to become gentle (»sanft«) and, at the text's seemingly harmonic conclusion, to become manifest in their ›invisibilization,‹ neither the actualization of a capacity or force nor its mere absence, but something like an in-capacity, what Goethe, in

In any case, Goethe's remark is by no means hermeneutically transparent. The very fact that Goethe may re-describe the narrative plot («Gang») in terms of a poetic metaphor («ein Gleichniß») points to the systematic intertwining of narrative and lyric forms at the text's dénouement. Indeed, Goethe's *Novelle* might be described as a narrative that ends not in but *as* lyric, the «Gang» of an event-sequence not only figurable as, but itself metamorphosing into a «Gleichniß.» Goethe more clearly describes the inner necessity that guides the narrative's non-narrative, poetic closure in other remarks to Eckermann. He here continually returns to the threat of ›becoming prosaic‹ had the conclusion been written otherwise:

›Hätte ich,‹ sagte er [Goethe], ›einige der übrigen Figuren am Ende wieder hervortreten lassen, so wäre der Schluß prosaisch geworden. [...] Aber ein ideeller, ja lyrischer Schluß war nöthig und mußte folgen; denn nach der pathetischen Rede des Mannes, die schon poetische Prosa ist, mußte eine Steigerung kommen, ich mußte zur lyrischen Poesie, ja zum Liede selbst übergehen.‹⁸

Goethe's invocation of *Steigerung*, coupled with his emphasis on the necessity of the transition («übergehen») to poetry, allow the *Novelle* to be read as a linguistic metamorphosis of prose into verse, as narrative's self-transcendence into the state of lyric.⁹ Precisely by virtue of ›exceeding‹ itself, transgressing the apparent

a brief meditation on Spinoza, terms »Ruhe mit Kraft, Untätigkeit mit Vermögen.« See Cornelia Zumbusch: Ruhende Löwen. Goethes »Novelle« und die Kraft der Dichtung, in: Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft 64, 2020, pp. 217-239.

⁸ WA 5.6:22.

⁹ Two earlier readings, which begin from a resonant starting point but end at different interpretive conclusions, can be found in Himmel (1961) and Wells (1980). Himmel situates the *Novelle* in the context of other works by Goethe, associating the flute-playing child with *der Knabe Lenker* or Euphorion in *Faust II* as a personification of poetry. Wells reads the text as staging various polarities that are then harmonically »intensified« (*gesteigert*), taking Goethe's organic metaphor at face value and even ascribing the text a »Spiral-tendenz.« Wells takes Goethe's organic metaphor too literally, however, looking for correspondences between Goethe's plant morphology and themes in the text rather than elucidating the metamorphosis internal to the text's narrative structure qua process. In my own reading, I am hence concerned with the very specific structural jointures or metamorphic transitions that allow a narrative to transform into lyric. Himmel's approach is closer to my own, but his analysis addresses the poetic as theme in the story rather than as one of its discursive modes. See Hellmuth Himmel: Metamorphose der Sprache. Das Bild der Poesie in Goethe's »Novelle«, in: Jahrbuch des Wiener Goethe-Vereins 65, 1961, pp. 86-100; Larry D. Wells: Organic Structure in Goethe's »Novelle«, in: The German Quarterly 53/4, 1980, pp. 418-431.

boundaries of its genre (such as prose), the *Novelle* achieves its genre-internal aims, among them the representation of »eine sich ereignete, unerhörte Begebenheit.«¹⁰ The *Novelle* can thereby be reread as narratively setting up the pragmatic context appropriate for lyric poetry as such, as constructing a narrative situation that *necessitates* lyrical language so as to bring about narrative's self-transcendence into the state of poetry. In constructing a narrative situation that *necessitates* poetic language, however, Goethe simultaneously envisions a social world on the brink of crisis, in need of poetic form in order to salvage a form of courtly life on the verge of dying out. I will argue that Goethe's *Novelle* operates with figures of such anachronic temporality at three distinct textual levels: first, at the level of narrative structure; second, at the level of the intradiegetic world depicted through that narrative, in particular its anachronistic sociopolitical form of organization; and third, at the level of intertextuality and literary-historical reflection.

Before turning to the work itself, however, it will be helpful to dwell with the process of its textual genesis, for the *Novelle*, as a finished product, itself depicts a process, the transformation of narrative into lyric. Re-situated in its textual genetic background, Goethe's *Novelle* becomes legible as an exploration of generic structures and the boundaries (as well as transitions) between them. The *Novelle* began life in 1797 as the plan for a hexameter epic titled *Die Jagd*, but because the plot contained no moment of retardation, Schiller and Humboldt discouraged Goethe from the epic form. Goethe himself notes of the plot that »die Entwicklung auf eine Weise geschieht, die den Anstalten [der Jagd] ganz entgegen ist, und auf einem ganz *unerwarteten* jedoch natürlichen Wege.«¹¹ Thirty years later, in 1827, Goethe recalls exactly this »unexpected« character of the plot's dénouement when he figures the lyrical conclusion as a kind of »blossom:« »Die Blume war *unerwartet*, überraschend.«¹² In 1797, however, Schiller had argued that Goethe's planned poem was more »ein komisch-episches [Gedicht],« for it inclined toward comedy given the unexpectedly harmonic resolution of its plot.¹³ The epic, now a comic-epic, then metamorphosed in Goethe's plans into a rhymed poem as he concurrently returned to work on *Faust I*. Noting the »romantic« character of the subject matter (the heroic deed of a hunter from a

10 Gespräch mit Eckermann, 29. Jan. 1827, in: WA: 5.6:40.

11 Goethe, WA: 4.12:93. Emphasis added.

12 Goethe, WA: 5.6:22. Emphasis added.

13 Schiller had earlier claimed that *Hermann und Dorothea* was characterized by an analogous dramatic inclination, this time towards tragedy rather than comedy (»eine gewisse Hinneigung zur Tragödie«), given its quasi-dramatic unities of space and time, the limited setting of a town east of the Rhein, and the temporal duration of one day. The *Novelle* also lasts precisely one day. See Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller: Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe, Vol. 2: 1797-1798, Berlin n. d., p. 38.

knightly milieu overcoming a tiger), Schiller recommended the Italianate rhyme scheme of *Stanzen*.¹⁴ What began life as an epic then morphed once more into a ballad: »Es scheint mir [Goethe] jetzt auch ausgemacht, daß meine Tiger und Löwen in diese Form [des Reims] gehören; ich fürchte nur fast, daß das eigentlich Interessante des Sujets sich zuletzt gar in eine Ballade auflösen möchte.«¹⁵ Goethe's struggle to find an appropriate poetic form for his subject matter, which threatened to »dissolve« under improper formal constraints, can be read as a symptom of his classicist concern in the 1790s with the sequestration of genres. It has also been interpreted as indicative of the form-precedent centrality of the »ideal flower« that is the child's taming of the lion through song – indicative, that is, of a content ultimately indifferent to poetic form.¹⁶ The textual genesis of Goethe's *Novelle* must be seen, however, as central rather than incidental to the finished work, for the text itself stages the genesis of verse out of prose. Goethe emphasized to Eckermann the inevitability of his selection of prose as the fitting »form« for this subject matter:

Sie sehen aber wohl, daß ich mit der Prosa zuletzt am besten gefahren bin. [...] Und dann ließ sich auch der anfänglich ganz reale und am Schluß ganz ideelle Character der Novelle in Prosa am besten geben, sowie sich auch die Liederchen jetzt gar hübsch ausnehmen, welches doch so wenig in Hexametern als in den achtzeiligen Reimen [der Stanze] möglich gewesen wäre.¹⁷

Unable to find the proper poetic form – epic, comic-epic, ottava rima, ballad – Goethe settled on prose.

Prose, of course, is not a proper poetic »form.« As Friedrich Schlegel claimed, the prose novel is capable of integrating within itself all other poetic forms: a sung lyric, dramatic dialogue, even excerpts from other prose genres, such as academic treatises and newspapers. The potentially encyclopedic range of »forms« that prose may absorb allows it to function as a general medium for reflection on those very forms. According to a common-sense view, poetic forms only craft language into the meaningful shape of verse by »working« on precedent, prosaic sentences. Prose may thus serve as the *precedent* »material« upon which

14 Ibid., pp. 61–62.

15 Ibid., pp. 63–64.

16 Beutler discusses the work's genesis at length, ultimately finding the »origin« of this »Motivkeim« (the child's taming of the lion) in Goethe's early experiences of Christianity, in particular Friedrich Karl Ludwig von Moser's prose epic *Daniel in der Löwengrube* (1763). See Ernst Beutler: Ursprung und Gehalt von Goethes »Novelle«, in: Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte 16, 1938, pp. 324–352.

17 Goethe, WA: 5.6:24–25.

poetic forms exert their fashioning powers as well as the *subsequent* medium within which such forms are brought into self-conscious reflection. As Ralf Simons articulates this dialectic, »Vor der Form und nach der Form liegt eine genuine Verdichtung, einerseits als gebende Matrix für die Formen, andererseits als Reflexionsmedium der Formen und als ihr eigentlicher Erfüllungsgegenstand (Telos). Ich nenne dies: Prosa.«¹⁸ Simons's construal of prose remains dependent, however, on the common-sense view that poetic forms are akin to containers that merely ›shape‹ preexisting prosaic language. Such forms, however, more accurately first produce poetic language through the *generative* constraints they impose on language.¹⁹ Another way of putting this would be to think of poetic form not as the wine glass or poetic-formal container that holds the wine or ›prosaic‹ content, but as the winepress through which the wine/content is first generated. Goethe's selection of prose is hence key, for the medium of complete sentences allows him to restage the textual genetic problem of finding the proper poetic form *within* the very story that begins as prose and ends as verse. Goethe solves the problem of appropriate poetic form, then, by strategically displacing it, folding the textual genetic problem into the very texture of the finished work. As will become apparent, to resolve prose into poetic form also implies – within the storyworld of Goethe's *Novelle* – finding an adequate aesthetic solution to political problems prevalent in an aristocratic form of life on the verge of becoming an historical anachronism.

More than simply ›unformed‹ content, prose here is, furthermore, not simply synonymous with narrative. As Roland Barthes claimed, the freedom unique to narrative lies below the level of overarching plot structures yet above the level of standard linguistic unit-hierarchies (e.g., phonemes bundled into morphemes bundled into lexemes, etc.):

There is, of course, a freedom of narrative [...], but this freedom is limited, literally *hemmed in*: between the powerful code of language [*langue*] and the powerful code of narrative a hollow is set up – the sentence. If one attempts to embrace the whole of a written narrative, one finds that it starts from the

18 Simon draws on Agamben and Benjamin in his delimitation of a concept of prose. Cf. Ralf Simon: Vorüberlegungen zu einer Theorie der Prosa, in: Poetik, ed. Armen Avanesian and Jan Niklas Howe, Berlin 2014, pp. 124-144; here p. 126; Giorgio Agamben: Idea of Prose, trans. Michael Sullivan and Sam Whitsitt, Albany 1995, pp. 39-41; Günter Oesterle: »Die Idee der Poesie ist die Prosa«, Walter Benjamin entdeckt »einen völlig neuen Grund« romantischer »Kunstphilosophie«, in: Walter Benjamin und die romantische Moderne, ed. W.B. and Heinz Brüggemann, Würzburg 2009, pp. 161-173.

19 Along these lines, Simon Jarvis terms verse forms »compositional generators.« See Simon Jarvis: The melodies of long poems, in: Textual Practice 24/4, 2010, pp. 607-621; here p. 610.

most highly coded (the phonematic, or even the merismatic, level), gradually relaxes until it reaches the sentence, the farthest point of combinatorial freedom, and then begins to tighten up again, moving progressively from small groups of sentences (micro-sequences), which are still very free, until it comes to the main actions, which form a strong and restricted code.²⁰

The late style of Goethe's prose in *Novelle* presents a test case at the limits of Barthes's claims, for Goethe's sentences themselves mirror the greater, overarching codes according to which the narrative they make up is built. At the same time, those narrative codes – above all, as will be demonstrated, that of the anachronic event-sequence – do not *determine* the course of the sentences and the organization of their syntax; rather, the sentences themselves carry the greater narrative structure and drive its self-transformations in time, such that the narrative code does not remain static. In this regard, Goethe's sentences in *Novelle* are so radically free that they are syntactically constructed so as to elude actively and ultimately any greater supra-sentential narrative code they might inaugurate. At the same time, examining how the twists and turns of Goethe's sentential syntax inaugurates a certain structure of narrative events only to bend and ultimately overcome it in and through the state of verse opens onto a broader question of how literary forms and even genres of world literature, such as Tieck's neomedieval romance and James Fenimore Cooper's American frontier novel, are unconsciously invoked by Goethe's novella at an intertextual level.

I. Pathologies of the Imagination: How Goethe's Sentences Overcome Narrative Structure

The poetic prose of *Novelle's* very first sentence provides indispensable clues as to how its narrative is built. The scene opens onto a view-obstructing fog: »Ein dichter Herbstnebel verhüllte noch in der Frühe die weiten Räume des fürstlichen Schlosshofes, als man schon mehr oder weniger durch den sich lichten den Schleier die ganze Jägerei zu Pferde und zu Fuß durcheinander bewegt sah« (491).²¹ Every sentence in the first paragraph contains a comma separating one main clause from one subordinate clause. In this sentence, the comma takes on the function of a kind of axis across which the sentence turns to emphasize dif-

20 Roland Barthes: *Image – Music – Text*, trans. Stephen Heath, New York 1977, pp. 123. Emphasis in original.

21 All citations within the body are of Goethe's *Novelle* as printed in the Hamburg Edition: Johann Wolfgang Goethe: *Goethes Werke*, Vol. 6: *Romane und Novellen. Erster Band*, ed. Erich Trunz, Hamburg 1965, pp. 491–513.

ferent semantic values. In the first case, those semantic values relate to the conditions of visibility: in the main clause opacity (»Ein dichter Herbstnebel«) and in the subordinate clause transparency (»durch den sich lichtenden Schleier«). Accordingly, the verbs in each clause juxtapose semantic opposites: the obstruction of sight (»verhüllte«) and the act of sight (»sah«). As Inka Mülder-Bach has claimed, this »zwischen Verhüllung und Entschleierung angesiedelte Zwischenzone« corresponds to the kind of nebulous, atmospheric ground from which, according to Juliane Vogel, figures in Goethe's literary and in particular dramatic art emerge only to re-submerge.²² From a narratological perspective, this figural ground of quasi-theatrical appearance is further apprehended by an impersonal »man« that distances the narrator from the narrated storyworld and will recur throughout the narrative at the level of discourse. The sentence's careful syntactic parallelism, hinged on the comma, also brings two adverbial temporal modifiers into relief: »noch« in the main clause and »schon« in the subordinate one. This juxtaposition establishes a simultaneity between the lingering of the past into the present (»noch«) and the anticipation of the future in the present (»schon«), staging a Janus-faced event that *eludes* the present in order to take place as a transition from night to day in early morning, from summer to winter in autumn. Such syntactic parallelism hence generates semantic associations, here establishing a transition that hovers in stylistic equilibrium between past and future, opacity and transparency, the foreclosure of vision and the act of sight.

The poetic prose of Goethe's first sentence, its defining of a present event as a coincidence of »noch« and »schon,« retrospection and anticipation, also emblematically furnishes a structural principle for the interpretation of narrative events in general in the *Novelle*. The »event« in this sentence is a temporally fraught *transition* from occlusion to visibility, and the story, especially in its first half, will place great emphasis on the princess's acts of visual perception, as if an *Ereignis* in this storyworld were always also an *Eräugnis*. In addition to this elevation of the act of sight to the status of a potential narrative event, the coincidence of retrospection and anticipation in the present moment can be termed the paradoxical temporality of an »anachronic« event.²³ When located at the level

22 Inka Mülder-Bach: *Das Abenteuer der Novelle. Abenteuer und Ereignis in den »Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten« und der »Novelle« Goethes*, in: *Abenteuer. Erzählmuster, Formprinzip, Genre*, ed. Martin von Koppenfels and Manuel Mühlbacher, Leiden/Boston/Paderborn 2019, pp. 161-187; here p. 174.

23 The term is adapted from Genette, who defines anachronies as »the various types of discordance between the two orderings of story and narrative« (36). I here use the term in an expanded sense, referring both to discordances between story and discourse (what Genette calls »narrative«) as well as to discordances between causally unrelated events at the level of the story's event-series that remain concordant, resemblant with one another,

of discourse rather than story, anachronic events take place at a site of coincidence between analepsis and prolepsis (flashback and flashforward). All narrative events, of course, refer backwards and forwards in time, for they are embedded in a given causal sequence, i. e., a plot. Anachronic events, however, point towards past and future in indirect fashion, not according to the causal chronologic of plot but according to a paradigmatic resemblance. The operation of iteration is constitutive of these anachronic narrative events. To cite but two examples, the princess first sees the ruins of the old castle through two optical media (the telescope and her uncle Friedrich's drawings) before seeing them in person. She similarly sees »die bunten, kolossalen Gemälde« in town depicting a vicious tiger²⁴ eating a Moor alive before actually encountering the tiger on the mountainside. When she does so, she looks past the injured creature before her and instead perceives a violent threat »wie sie es vor kurzem gemalt gesehen.« The operation of iteration thus constitutes an anachronic event by coordinating an anticipatory viewing or *Eräugnis* with a later narrative event or *Er-eignis* that recalls in actuality the formerly mediated sight. Given the coincidence of retrospection and anticipation at the level of story, ana- and prolepsis at the level of discourse, it will not be clear whether an anachronic event is genuinely new or has actually happened; it will instead take on the appearance of a repetition. The princess's initial acts of sight (or *Eräugnisse*) in the first half of the story thus anticipatorily »prime« her with anxiety-ridden images or »Schreckbilder« (500) that function as phobic imprints, impressing themselves upon her imagination and memory in order to pre-contextualize a future event in terms of a past one.

The act of visual perception for Goethe is intermingled, of course, with that of mental apperception.²⁵ In his discussion of Purkinje's *Das Sehen in subjektiver Hinsicht* (1819), Goethe hence notes, »daß Gedächtnis und Einbildungskraft in

within character psychologies. When referring to the level of the story and/or character psychology, the reference to the past will be termed retrospection, that to the future anticipation; when referring to the level of discourse, I will use Genette's respective terms: analepsis and prolepsis. Both levels of story and discourse are intertwined at key moments in the *Novelle*, above all when the fire and animals are unleashed. Gérard Genette: *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin, Ithaca 1980.

24 The images of exoticized tigers and lions along with the »moor« index a societal configuration in *Novelle* wherein the »peaceful citizen« (»der friedliche Staatsbürger«) seek out sensational media depictions refracted through ideologies of European colonialism. The medium of the *Bänkelsang* here is above all central. See Tom Cheesman: Goethes »Novelle«. Die Novelle und der Bänkelsang, in: Goethe-Jahrbuch III, 1994, pp. 125-140; Gerhard Schulz: Exotik der Gefühle. Goethes »Novelle«, in: G.S.: Exotik der Gefühle. Goethe und seine Deutschen, Munich 1998, pp. 105-128.

25 Goethe, WA: 2.11:281-282.

den Sinnesorganen selbst thätig sind, und daß jeder Sinn sein ihm eigenthümlich zukommendes Gedächtniß und Einbildungskraft besitze, die, als einzelne begränzte Kräfte, der allgemeinen Seelenkraft unterworfen sind.«²⁶ The princess's acts of sight are thus also acts of the imagination, and the central problematic dramatized by *Novelle* at the level of story consists in the princess working through a pathology of the imagination, the latter's susceptibility to fearful enthrallment before *idées fixes*. These fixed ideas or phobic imprints give rise to anachronic narrative events by precontextualizing the present occurrence in terms of a past event and priming the princess for a future event in terms of the present. Liberation from this pathology of the imagination will ultimately come with the emergence of poetry at the text's conclusion and a correspondent shift from optical to auditory sensory channels. The child's lyric poetry speaks his present situation into aesthetically accessible presence and thereby enables a shift from the past's pre-contextualization of the present to the present's re-contextualization of the past, thus breaking the pathological imagination's repetitive cycle of anxious priming and sudden returns of the phobically impressed.

The narrative's focus on moments of optical mediation does *not*, then, aim at conveying the message that an ›unmediated‹ view of the ruins, say, is impossible, but, rather, that the imagination is all too quickly gripped and controlled by fearfully fixed impressions drawn from images and stories. Insofar as these phobic imprints prime the princess's character psychology and the narrator's description of subsequent events, the pathology of the imagination she exemplifies closely hangs together with the text's construction of anachronic narrative events. This becomes most explicit in the case of the fire, for here visual mediations give way to a verbal mediation, her uncle Friedrich's recounting of the first fire in the town's prehistory, a kind of framed story within a frame narrative:

»ich [Friedrich] reite niemals gern durch Markt und Messe; bei jedem Schritt ist man gehindert und aufgehalten, *und dann flammt mir das ungeheure Unglück wieder in die Einbildungskraft, das sich mir gleichsam in die Augen eingebrannt*, als ich eine solche Güter- und Warenbreite in Feuer aufgehen sah. Ich hatte mich kaum –« / »Lassen Sie uns die schönen Stunden nicht versäumen!« fiel ihm die Fürstin ein, da der würdige Mann *sie schon einigemal mit ausführlicher Beschreibung* jenes Unheils *geängstigt* hatte, wie er sich nämlich, auf einer großen Reise begriffen (496, emphasis added).

26 Eckhart Förster more generally discusses the role of the eye's inner activity when perceiving colors in relation to Fichtean concepts of activity. Eckhart Förster: *The Twenty-Five Years of Philosophy*, Cambridge MA 2012, pp. 250-276.

Not just the princess, but the uncle as well remains captive to the pathology of the imagination: the trauma of the first fire, »das ungeheure Unglück,« continues to ›blaze‹ in his »Einbildungskraft.« Despite his posttraumatic avoidance of riding through the town center, especially when a large social collective gathers there, the uncle nonetheless curiously repeats a descriptive story already told to the princess countless times, as if storytelling functioned for him as a means of working through the trauma or, alternatively, was symptomatic of a kind of repetition compulsion. The uncle's imaginative fixation on the fire has also contaminated the princess, for she remains »geängstigt« by the story. The »Schreckbilder« implanted into her memory through her uncle's storytelling blind her and other aristocratic protagonists to the reality before them in an anxiety-induced imaginative projection that infects the act of visual perception.

The symbolic potential of the fire in *Novelle* is usually read as an allusion to the French Revolution, but the fire may also symbolically stand for the ›flam-mability‹ of the imagination, as it were, and the sense organs it distorts from within, which may then light the world on fire, cast it into the red glow of an all-encompassing, projective anxiety. Goethe expressed exactly this in a paralympomenon to *Novelle*: »sie [die Fürstin] glaubte wirklich dergleichen [Bilder] zu sehen und es ist keine Frage daß ein feuriges Auge sich die Gegenstände zum Schein entzünden, und als flammend vor sich schauen könne.«²⁷ As Goethe's Plotinian poem from his introduction to the *Farbenlehre* makes clear, the organ of the eye is productive as well as receptive: »Wär' nicht das Auge sonnenhaft, / Wie könnten wir das Licht erblicken?«²⁸ Each organ, such as the eye, possesses its own kind of imagination and memory, its own mode of productively contributing to the apprehended phenomenon in its very receptivity to it. Perceiving organ and ›element‹ (medium of perception) are complementary: as Goethe said of the fish, »Der Fisch ist für das Wasser da, scheint mir viel weniger zu sagen als: der Fisch ist in dem Wasser und durch das Wasser da.«²⁹ The same holds for the eye and its medium of light. Goethe avoids the teleological preposition »für« in favor of a model of reciprocal co-determination between organism and environment, organ and medium. For »ein feuriges Auge« to blaze forth is hence for the organ of sight to supersede transgressively the solar element of light within which it perceives. The eye, »zum Schein entzünde[t],« overtakes the sun and only sees its own imaginings »als flammend vor sich,« thereby becoming inadequate to its medium of visibility by projecting its own distortive light instead.

27 Goethe, WA: 1.18:468.

28 Johann Wolfgang Goethe: Entwurf einer Farbenlehre. Einleitung, in: J. W. G.: Schriften zur Naturwissenschaft, ed. Michael Böhler, Stuttgart 1977, p. 177.

29 FA 1.24:212.

Beyond the pathology of the imagination, most striking in the uncle's recounting is the transition between the levels of story and discourse. When recounting his memory to the princess, uncle Friedrich begins what Genette would term an external analepsis in a ›framed‹ story, an intradiegetic citation of an extradiegetic prehistory. After the princess interrupts Friedrich, the narrator proceeds to take up the uncle's story and finish telling it outside of rather than within the citational frame. This can be visually schematized in relation to the chain of events composing the story (lowercase »b« representing the uncle's act of storytelling).



Such schemas will help track the narrative discourse's construction of an anachronic event. After the princess traverses the semiotic border from town into the arboreal mountainside, she witnesses an actual fire, the second in the town's history, and now in the narrative present, without verbal or visual mediation: »auch wurde das Unheil den guten, unbewaffneten Augen der Fürstin bemerklich« (500).³⁰ The uncle interprets this novel narrative event as a repetition of the former one he narrated: »Ich fürchtete immer, das Unglück zum zweiten Male zu erleben« (500). Unlike the princess and uncle, Honorio remains calm, interpreting the narrative event without reference to the first fire: »In der Stadt wie auf dem Schloß sind die Feueranstalten in bester Ordnung, man wird sich durch einen so unerwartet außerordentlichen Fall nicht irre machen lassen« (500). Despite such calm reasoning, the princess sees not the fire before her, but her uncle's story:

Die Fürstin glaubte nicht daran; sie sah den Rauch sich verbreiten, sie glaubte einen aufflammenden Blitz gesehen, einen Schlag gehört zu haben, und *nun bewegten sich in ihrer Einbildungskraft alle die Schreckbilder*, welche des trefflichen Oheims *wiederholte Erzählung* von dem erlebten Jahrmarktsbrände leider nur *zu tief eingesenkt hatte*. / Fürchterlich wohl *war* jener Fall, überr-

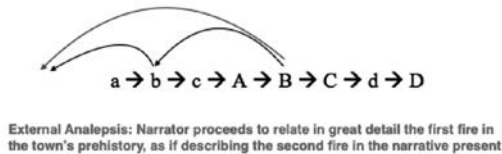
30 The term »semiotic border« (here between the town/new-castle spatial nexus and the forest/old-castle-ruins spatial nexus) is adapted from Jurij Lotman's definition of the narrative event: »An event in a text is the shifting of a persona across the borders of a semantic field.« Of note is the way in which the old castle ruins in the text dilate the border between the semantic fields of art/nature into a liminal zone in turn mirrored or ›bordering‹ on the zone of the second castle, itself bordering on the planar town. See Jurij Lotman: *The Structure of the Artistic Text*, Ann Arbor 1977, p. 233.

schend und eindringlich genug, um zeitlebens eine Ahnung und *Vorstellung wiederkehrenden Unglücks* ängstlich zurückzulassen (500-I, emphasis added).

The pathology of the imagination here traps its traumatized aristocratic victims in a repetitive cycle of imaginative fixation on past fearful events, which pre-contextualize present events and themselves call for compulsively repetitive storytelling. The princess thus conducts an internal analepsis of the uncle's external analepsis, which can be visualized as follows (capitalized »B« representing the princess's sight of the new fire in recollection of the uncle's recollection in »b«):



After describing the princess's condition, the narrator himself takes up the story of the first fire at length and in great detail, finishing the uncle's external analepsis earlier interrupted by the anxious princess. The overarching arrow indicates the level of discourse rather than story:



Even the verbal stylization of Goethe's prose here alters, shifting from a nominal style of syntactic parallelism, of an equilibrium in stillness, to a verbal style of dynamic action. The first style is characterized by a prevalence of substantives over verbs, often passive or reflexive; syntactically balanced main and subordinate clauses; as well as a self-contained rhythmic tempo. The second style is characterized by the prevalence of verbs over substantives; onomatopoeic associations; un-nested, direct, and shorter sentences; as well as a faster rhythmic tempo; for example: »unten wütete das Element unaufhaltsam, die Bretter prasselten, die Latten knackten, Leinwand flog auf, und ihre düstern, an den Enden flammend ausgezackten Fetzen trieben in der Höhe sich umher« (501).³¹ This delicate transition in the text's prose style, which coincides with the narra-

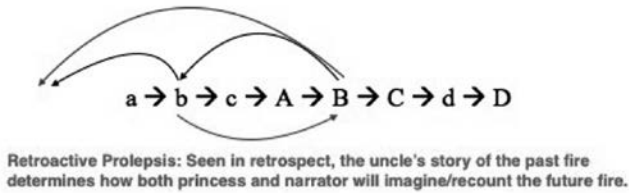
31 May also finds this distinction in the *Novelle's* style, arguing that both are synthesized when the Orientalized family enters the scene. I find this argument for stylistic synthesis unconvincing because it does not address the difference between prose and verse. Indeed, the *Novelle's* prose seems to return to the first style even after the family arrives, the sty-

tor's external analepsis of the first fire at the level of discourse, also happens to coincide with the narrative event of the second fire's outbreak at the level of story. Distinct textual levels are thus superimposed: first, at the level of story, the second fire in the narrative present; second, at the level of discourse, the first fire in the narrative's past; third, at the sub-narrative level of prose texture, the present event of a stylistic shift. Through this superimposition of distinct structural levels, the narrative generates an anachronic event.³²

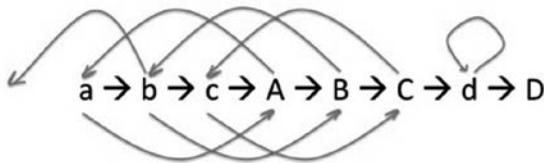
In other words, the ›event‹ of the prose style's transition from balanced and nominal to dynamic and verbal modes generates the impression at the sub-narrative level of prose language that the narrator now omnisciently describes the second fire actually taking place in town. In a sense, the narrator, too, cannot help repeating the uncle's »wiederholte Erzählung« rather than narrating the new event – this is his second external analepsis, as if the uncle's earlier recounting of the first fire was actually an anticipation of the second. When seen in retrospect from a further position along the story's event-series, the uncle's first story {b} can thus be read as a retroactive prolepsis of {B}. The ›event‹ of style, its shift from nominal to verbal patterning, thus ›sees‹ the second fire through the ›lens‹ of the first, allows the first to come into view as a prolepsis of the second. Such a subtle alteration in the narrative's syntactic texture metaleptically distorts the relationship of story- and discourse-levels to overlay a prolepsis onto an analepsis and so generate an anachronic event:

listic exception being the child's lyric poems. Kurt May: Goethes »Novelle«, in: Euphion 1/33, 1932, pp. 278–283.

- 32 This bare bones stylistic transition at the level of the prose sentence could be worked out in more granular detail; it remains relevant to my reading insofar as it explicates an interaction between the levels of story and discourse in terms of the generation of an anachronic event, which will be relevant for my later argument on anachronistic forms of life (e.g., the nobility) in *Novelle* that are associated with precedent generic options cycled through and ultimately abandoned in the text's long genesis (e.g., the latent epic in the novella archived by the figure of Honorio). In a brilliant reading of this passage, Mülder-Bach draws on Harald Weinrich's *Tempus. Besprochene und erzählte Welt* (1964) to interpret how the juxtaposition of various forms of verb participles and present participles in particular (e.g., *flammend*) function to generate a sense of temporal relief that aims at what ancient rhetoricians termed *energeia*, or a presentification that rhetorically ›brings before the eyes‹: »Was Goethes Text im Zusammenspiel von infinite Verben und Erzähltempora aufbaut, ist demnach eine Art Tempusbühne oder Tempusszene, in der die Partizipien den Hintergrund abstecken, von dem sich ein im Präteritum bezeichnetes Geschehen als Vordergrund abhebt. [...] So bleibt das Hintergrundgeschehen in dem ›heranprasselnden Feuer‹ nicht im Hintergrund, sondern bewegt sich in den Vordergrund.« Mülder-Bach 2019 (fn. 22), p. 180.



What Honorio saw as a genuinely new narrative event, »einen so unerwartet außerordentlichen Fall« (500), the princess and uncle imaginatively intuit as a traumatic repetition. Goethe's *Novelle* is thus titled not simply because it stages a single unheard-of event, but, rather, because it does so in such a manner that negotiates the very distinction between the event's singular novelty and its status as repetition, as a happening that takes place within the threshold between singularity and iterability. The anachronic event of the fire's outbreak thus hovers unstably between past and present to elude its own presentness in the foggy space where »noch« and »schon« coincide. Indeed, the »dichter Herbstnebel« that forms the grammatical subject of the text's very first sentence, which superimposed *still* and *already* into the paradoxical temporality of an event of sight, now recurs to mark the narrative's first genuine anachronic event. After recounting the first fire in excruciating detail, the narrator returns to the narrative present proper: »Leider *nun* erneuerte sich vor dem schönen Geiste der Fürstin der wüste Wirrwarr, *nun* schien der heitere morgendliche Gesichtskreis *umnebelt*, ihre Augen verdüstert; Wald und Wiese hatten einen wunderbaren, bänglichen Anschein« (501, emphasis added). Under the conditions of a pathological imagination, the event of the present moment (*Augenblick*) will only ever be perceptually accessible, only ever be »present,« as the temporal blur of this thick transitional fog (»umnebelt«), the anachronic event both still and already something other than its own happening.



Anachronic Events:	Princess sees/encounters the ruins:	{a, A}
	Princess hears about/encounters fire:	{b, B}
	Princess sees/encounters the tiger:	{c, C}
Synchronic Event of Lyric:	The child sings poems (before prince, before lion):	{d, D}

The narrative's prose metamorphoses in three phases into poetic verse, corresponding to the three members of the family that arrive onto the scene centered on the tiger needlessly slain by Honorio: (1) the mother's lament for the tiger, a discontinuous natural speech of affective exclamation; (2) the father's praise of creation, a continuous poetic prose; (3) and the child's sung trio of poems, themselves repeated twice: first in front of the prince with his family as musical accompaniment (›d‹ in the above diagram), then in front of the lion with only mother and guard as audience (›D‹ in the above diagram). Like Mignon's poem about a land presumed to be Italy in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, the mother's lament is a kind of proto-poetic speech embedded within the narrative's pragmatic frame. If Wilhelm in the *Lehrjahre* translates Mignon's poem so as to render its fragmented language semantically coherent and thereby carry out the narrativization of the lyric, then *Novelle* carries out the inverse operation of the lyricization of the narrative. The mother's lament, like Mignon's poem, is fragmented and in need of translation: »Eine natürliche Sprache, *kurz und abgebrochen*, machte sich eindringlich und rührend. Vergessens würde man sie *in unsern Mundarten übersetzen* wollen; den *ungefähren* Inhalt dürfen wir nicht verfehlen.«³³ After the father's praise of creation, which synthesizes rhetorical elements from the Book of Job with Goethe's geological Neptunianism, the child sings his first poem by recalling the tale of Daniel in the lion's den:

- 33 Commentaries note the confluence of three influences on the passage: (1) a »Grönländisches Todtenlied« from Herder's *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* from which Goethe adopts the speech-situation of a mother's apostrophic address to a deceased ›child‹; (2) a funeral lament for the deceased Mohican warrior Uncas in Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, from which Goethe adopts the pragmatic frame of the narrator's translation of »Ausbrüche der Leidenschaft,« a catalogue of the deceased's strengths as synecdochally represented by its body parts (e. g., paws and feet); and (3) Samson's riddle from *Judges* (»Speise ging von dem Fresser und Süßigkeit von dem Starken,« *Richter* 14:14, *Luther-bibel*). In Goethe's imagination, the lamentations of Cooper's Native Americans are, like Mignon's song in the *Lehrjahre*, in need of translation, and yet they recall the familiar *Volkspoesie* collected and edited by Herder while at the same time channeling the legend of Samson, who found a honeycomb in a lion's corpse after wrestling it to death. Cf. Johann Gottfried Herder: *Sämtliche Werke. Zur schönen Literatur und Kunst*, Vol. 7: *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*. Neu herausgegeben durch Johann von Müller. 1. Antheilung. Ueber Ossian und die Lieder der alten Völker, Stuttgart/Tübingen 1828, pp. 97-99; Hermann Meyer: *Natürlicher Enthusiasmus. Das Morgenländische in Goethes »Novelle«*, Heidelberg 1973; James Fenimore Cooper: *Die Lederstrumpferzählungen. Der letzte Mohikaner*, Meersburg/Leipzig 1936, pp. 410-412; Sp. Wukadonovic: *Goethes »Novelle«. Der Schauplatz – Coopersche Einflüsse*, Halle S. 1909; *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, ed. Michael D. Coogan, Oxford 2007.

Aus den Gruben, hier im Graben
 Hör ich des Propheten Sang;
 Engel schweben, *ihn* zu laben,
 Wäre da *dem Guten* bang?
 Löw und Löwin, hin und wider,
 Schmiegen sich um ihn heran;
 Ja, *die* sanften, frommen Lieder
Habens ihnen angetan! (508, emphasis added)

Emphasis has been added to first and second poems in order to explicate the precise substitutions conducted by the child's variation-in-repetition. Like the father's speech, the child's first poem uses deictic shifters to cast himself into the role of Daniel, now on the mountainside: »*hier* im Graben / Hör *ich* des Propheten Sang.« The child hears the prophet's song but also sings it. He thereby speaks the fact that he hears his very own act of song about the prophet *as* a prophet, or in a kind of prophet role. The second poem thus transitions from the third-personal situation of Daniel in the lion's den to the child's first-personal situation, shared with the courtly audience as they stand before the prince's decision regarding the potentially dangerous animals set loose:

Engel schweben auf und nieder,
Uns in Tönen zu erlaben,
 Welch ein himmlischer Gesang!
 In den Gruben, in dem Graben
 Wäre da *dem Kinde* bang?
Diese sanften, frommen Lieder
 Lassen Unglück nicht heran;
 Engel schweben hin und wider,
Und so ist es schon getan. (509, emphasis added)

The child here transforms his citation of Daniel's situation into an interpretive frame for his own communicative situation. He has cast himself into the role of Daniel so as to reflect on the narrational pragmatic context within which his poems are situated. A situation that cannot have an anxious outcome (»bang«) now faces not Daniel, »dem Guten,« but »dem Kinde.« The prophet's song has now morphed into that of the angels, itself channeled by the child. No longer do »Engel schweben, *ihn* zu laben,« as in the first song, but the angels now ›refresh‹ the child and courtly audience alike with music: »Engel schweben [...] *Uns* in Tönen zu erlaben.« The child's poetic speech here becomes ›auto-generative‹: he does not prosaically describe or refer to, but speaks his pragmatic situation into being, collapsing the narrative frame around the lyric in favor of

a simultaneity of the poetic act of speech and the situation of sonic performance thereby spoken.³⁴ The deictic shifters accordingly reference the communicative circuit formed by the songs themselves, now the self-indexing »*diese* [...] Lieder« rather than merely cited »*Die* [...] Lieder,« and the listening audience of »uns,« which includes the child.

The poem's last line thus transforms from the declaration of an action conducted by the songs to pacify the lions (»die Lieder / Habens ihnen [den Löwen] angetan«) into the declaration of an illocutionary speech act of poetic song. As Jane Brown has brilliantly claimed, this poetic speech act protects the child in this potentially violent »den« of courtly hunters by taming the humans and ends with a statement of its own success: »Und so ist es schon getan,« the child's poem has effected their pacification. All three family members now join together in a prayer-like song that praises the ultimate vision of the creator rather than the limited, imaginatively pathological vision that has plagued the novel's protagonists: »Denn der Ewge herrscht auf Erden, / Über Meere herrscht *sein Blick*; / Löwen sollen Lämmer werden, / Und die Welle schwankt zurück« (509, emphasis added). The hunting party may now, like this »Welle,« restrain itself from killing a second animal, liberate itself from the cycle of anachronic events that are *already* pre-contextualized by phobic imprints *still* present to the imagination. The pragmatic consequence is the prevention of further needless violence: »Blankes Schwert erstarrt im Hiebe, / Glaub und Hoffnung sind erfüllt; / Wundertätig ist die Liebe, / Die sich im Gebet enthüllt« (509). In summary, the child's first two poems transition in status from (1) a citation of the tale of Daniel in the lion's den into (2) an interpretive frame for the child's own narrative situation, a frame with which the child may replace the narrator's own pragmatic frame. The child's variation-in-repetition thus executes the lyricization of the narrative, the narrative's staging of the lyric as an event that transcends the chronologic of narrative emplotment. The child's second poem specifically does this by »healing« the princess and hunting party. The third poem then (3) sums up the family's activities claiming a divine authority above the political one. Every listener has accordingly been transformed by the aesthetic experience of poetry:

Alles war still, hörte, horchte, und nur erst, als die Töne verhallten, konnte man den *Eindruck* bemerken und allenfalls beobachten. Alles war *beschwich-tigt*, jeder in seiner Art gerührt. Der Fürst, als wenn er *erst jetzt* das Unheil

34 This is Klaus Hempfer's formulation, which he uses to delineate a transhistorical conception of the lyric not as genre, but as mode of verbal presentation on the same plane of generality as narrative and drama in the senses of mimesis and diegesis. Klaus W. Hempfer: *Lyrik. Skizze einer systematischen Theorie*, Stuttgart 2014, pp. 30-45.

übersähe, das ihn vor kurzem bedroht hatte, blickte nieder auf seine Gemahlin, die, an ihn gelehnt, sich nicht versagte, das gestickte Tüchlein hervorzu ziehen und *die Augen damit zu bedecken*. Es tat ihr wohl, die jugendliche Brust von dem Druck erleichtert zu fühlen, mit dem die vorhergehenden Minuten sie belastet hatten. Eine vollkommene Stille *beherrschte die Menge*; man schien die Gefahren vergessen zu haben, unten den Brand und von oben das Erstehen eines bedenklich ruhenden Löwen. (509, emphasis added)

It is no longer the »furchtbaren Bildern, die [...] den wundersamsten Eindruck [machen]« (502), but rather the child's liberating acoustic »Eindruck.« A stillness now rules over (»beherrschte«) this potentially violent »mob« (»die Menge«). The process of healing becomes clearest when one examines the condition of the princess's eyes, which includes the mind's eye: they were first described as »ihre glänzenden Augen« (492) when she looked upon the old ruins through the distortive lens of the telescope; then her vision before the anachronic event of the fire was »umnebelt, ihre Augen verdüstert« (501); in contrast, she now lifts her handkerchief, »die Augen damit zu bedecken.« The fearful, subjective projections of her »lustrous« eyes no longer cast the world in a »bänglichen Anschein« (501), no longer transpose onto present events an inner fog of anxiety cast outward. Her eyes are instead covered, her ears open to the present moment the lyric unfolds before her as she is attuned to the tonal flow that refreshes her senses and imagination alike. The princess and the prince, political authority itself, may both be »beschwichtigt, jeder nach seiner Art gerührt.« The same verb (*beschwichtigen*) will intradiegetically migrate from narrator to prince when the latter asks if the family may »durch den Gesang dieses Kindes, mit Hülfe dieser Flötentöne [den Löwen] beschwichtigen« (509). This lexical migration renders explicit that it is the hunting party and the prince's political authority that is actually in need of taming, not the lion.³⁵ The transformative stream of natural creation invoked by the father imaginatively becomes one with the mother's verbal »Strom von Worten,« with the child's musical »Tonfolge ohne Gesetz« to transform its listeners and prevent further violence by healing the pathology of their imaginations, ending the repetitive cycle of anachronic events by poetically attuning these humans to the now that is the present ongoingness of natural creation itself. The narrative event of the lyric, one might say, restores

35 Drawing on Goethe's reading of James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*, Jane Brown reads the child as a figuration of the flute-playing David, whose songs intended to tame the Indians often tame the colonial settlers instead, allowing her to interpret the true »taming« that takes place in the *Novelle* as referring to the humans rather than the animals, which, being circus performers and, for that matter, injured, are already tame, if not lame. See Brown 1980 (fn. 2).

presence to the temporal present through language and thereby overcomes a narrative temporality out of joint by syncing characters to its meaningfully sonic unfolding.

The textual mechanism that enables this poetic attunement of characters in the storyworld to the present moment is itself described by the narrator before the child begins his key, self-thematizing second poem. Spoken with Jakobson, the child projects the principle of equivalence from the paradigmatic axis onto the syntagmatic one: »Eindringlich aber ganz besonders war, daß das Kind *die Zeilen der Strophe nunmehr zu anderer Ordnung durcheinander schob* und dadurch, wo nicht einen neuen Sinn hervorbrachte, doch das Gefühl in und durch sich selbst aufregend erhöhte« (508, emphasis added). As the previous analysis makes clear, the child *does* bring about »einen neuen Sinn,« but the narrator cannot recognize this, merely ascribing the child's iterative rearrangement of verse lines an affective function. The narrator's oversight is not altogether surprising, for, in the realm of narrative, repetitions are, in a sense, mute, incapable of partaking in the progressive momentum driving forward the action-sequences that make up the plot. Barthes hence claims that »the origin of a sequence [of narrative events] is not the observation of reality, but the need to vary and transcend the first *form* given man, namely repetition: a sequence is essentially a whole within which nothing is repeated.«³⁶ In the realm of poetry, however, repetition forms the basic operation that projects paradigmatic equivalences onto the syntagmatic axis (for two phonemes or grammatical figures to be equivalent is for two syntagmatic elements to be seen as variant iterations of one and the same paradigmatic set). The metamorphosis of narrative into lyric thus takes place via the transformation of an iterative operation: whereas before, the narrative temporality of *Novelle* was governed by anachronic events that occlude the novelty of the event in lieu of its apparent (often traumatic) reenactment, the narrative event of the lyric now re-synchronizes characters to the present moment as well as reconfiguring narrative time. As Barthes notes,

structurally narrative institutes a confusion between consecution and consequence, temporality and logic. This ambiguity forms the central problem of narrative syntax. [...] Analysis today tends to »dechronologize« the narrative continuum and to »relogicize« it, [...] the task is to succeed in giving a structural description of the chronological illusion – it is for narrative logic to account for narrative time. [...] Time belongs not to discourse strictly speaking but to the referent.³⁷

36 Barthes 1977 (fn. 20), p. 124. Emphasis in original.

37 Ibid, p. 99.

Rather than debunking what Barthes terms »the chronological illusion,« analysis of the narrative ›unit‹ of the anachronic event in Goethe's *Novelle* exposes the limits of such a structuralist approach to narrative. This is the case because the anachronic event turns out not to be a clearly demarcatable unit at all, but a kind of blurred transition, the coincidence of »noch« and »schon« with which the text's very first sentence began. Irrevocably temporal in character, then, a narrative made up of anachronic events cannot be elucidated into a static structure nor segmented into neatly demarcated action-sequences; an atemporal logic lying behind and surreptitiously driving the narrative temporality cannot be found. At the subnarrative level of poetic prose, *Novelle's* sentences continue onwards, not just actualizing the anachronic structure but, via the arrival and performances of the itinerant family, de- and trans-forming it through a carefully tuned re-synchronization. The structure of narrative time (the anachronic event) thus changes *in* time, the time of the prose sentence's unfolding. As will become apparent below, the anachronic narrative structure of Goethe's text is closely linked to anachronistic forms of life that linger on within the intradiegetic storyworld, in turn ›archiving‹ precedent literary genres Goethe experimented with during the text's long genesis.

The entire text concludes with the lines of verse sung by the child; the narrator does not return to complete the narrative frame. If the child's first sung trio of poems constituted the narrative event of the lyric, then their second iteration constitutes the lyric's overcoming of the narrative, an opening onto the poetic event of ritual utterance meant to be repeated and brought to ever-renewed life in the present. Unlike the pre-contextualized, iterative semblance of anachronic events, the child's improvised variations on his former trio of poems repeat in a new context. Subject to the second, broader operation of recontextualization, poetic iteration functions to bring the singularity of the event to light, for repetition in a new context generates the possibility of novelty. While characters experiencing an anachronic event remain unaware of the event's occurrence in a different context, the semantic innovation of the child's final poem (unheard of before) allows repetition in a new context to open onto the singularity of the situation, speaking that situation into being directly for the reader and without further narratorial comment:

Und so geht mit guten Kindern
 Selger Engel gern zu Rat,
 Böses Wollen zu verhindern,
 Zu befördern schöne Tat.
 So beschwören, fest zu bannen
 Liebem Sohn ans zarte Knie
 Ihn, des Waldes Hochtyrannen,
 Frommer Sinn und Melodie. (513)

If the sentence, for Barthes, formed a ›hollow‹ of verbal freedom for the writer, situated between the linguistic code and the narrative code, then Goethe crafts sentences so radically free in *Novelle* that they overcome the sentence altogether to enter the sphere of poetry. As a sentence, the text's last bit of discourse might read: »So beschwören frommer Sinn und Melodie den Hochtyrannen des Waldes, um ihn dem lieben Sohn ans zarte Knie fest zu bannen.« As a series of verse lines, however, the poem violates grammatical word order to present us first with the verbs, then with the dative object of the child followed by the accusative object of the lion (referred to as a ›tyrant‹, as if in allusion to the prince).³⁸ Only at the very last line does the grammatical subject become clear: neither child nor lion, the only characters effectively left at the text's conclusion, but »Sinn und Melodie.« The poem's own musical mode of sense-making becomes the primary agent now, the verse line in its blatant, free disregard for word order overcoming the rule of the sentence. This overlay of multiple transformations ultimately provides an answer to the question of why Goethe titled *Novelle* after its generic designation. The »unerhörte Begebenheit« of its narrative is not simply the child's act of song that tames the lion nor even the more technical ›event‹ of the prose sentence's self-transcendence into the state of verse. Rather, the child's poetic act allows an occurrence, a *Begebenheit*, to be experienced as genuinely novel, as *unerhört*, as if for the first time in this storyworld: allows for the singular narrative *novum* to emerge from – as – poetic iterability itself.

II. An Intertextual Unconscious:

James Fenimore Cooper & Ludwig Tieck in Goethe's *Novelle*

The anachronic event, defined by a temporal imbrication of »noch« and »schon,« provides a general structural figure that further captures not only the anachronic temporality of the text's narrative structure, but also the political situation of this post-revolutionary social order: the prince's father and thus the state has *already* incorporated the lessons of a former revolutionary tumult, perhaps what led to the first fire in town, while the aristocratic nobility nevertheless *still* lingers on in new guise, even in a new castle.³⁹ An early sentence strik-

38 As Cornelia Zumbusch has compellingly noted, all three verbs in this final strophe are infinitives: »Indem die Zeitworte in die unbestimmte Form des Infinitivs versetzt sind, suggerieren sie auch die buchstäblich in-finite, unbegrenzte Formbarkeit des Gedichteten.« See Zumbusch 2020 (fn. 7), p. 238.

39 Werner Michler makes a similar point, drawing on the concept of anachrony but pursuing a reading that emphasizes the generic, abstracted character of the text's social topography, ultimately reading *Novelle* as an exploration of the very notion of genre in terms of

ingly recapitulates the structure of syntactic parallelism hinged on a comma, but this time brings to the fore the paradoxical simultaneity of bourgeois and feudal political orders by juxtaposing the »Finanzminister« and »Landjägermeister«:

Wenn sich nun der Fürst fast ausschließlich in diesen Tagen mit den Seinigen über diese zudringenden Gegenstände unterhielt, auch besonders mit dem Finanzminister anhaltend arbeitete, *so* behielt doch auch der Landjägermeister sein Recht, auf dessen Vorstellung es unmöglich war, der Versuchung zu widerstehen, an diesen günstigen Herbsttagen eine schon verschobene Jagd zu unternehmen, sich selbst und den vielen angekommenen Fremden ein eignes und seltnes Fest zu eröffnen. (491-2, emphasis added)

The economic self-regulation of the state, perhaps to be fully rationalized in the future, and the courtly ritual of the hunt, an adage from the feudal past, thus coincide. The sentence's phrasing, however, suggests that the courtly dimension of this form of life remains especially precarious: the head of the hunt retains his »Recht,« as if he might otherwise have lost it to the financial ministers. The hunt itself has also already been deferred and faded into a rarity, a »seltnes Fest,« as if the entire courtly form of life were in the process of fading away. The sentence's syntax thus performs a balancing act not just between its clauses (»Wenn ..., so ...«), but between two historically marked forms of sociopolitical organization. The sentence thus becomes legible as a syntactic emblem of the post-revolutionary lesson learned a generation earlier by the prince's father, »daß alle Staatsglieder in gleicher Betriebsamkeit ihre Tage zubringen, in gleichem Wirken und Schaffen jeder nach seiner Art *erst gewinnen und dann genießen* sollte« (491, emphasis added). The parallel arrangement of the sentence, moving from the prince's activity in economic »zudringende Gegenstände« to a »seltnes Fest,« thus mirrors the bourgeois civic arrangement among »Staatsglieder,« which proceed from profitable production to enjoyable consumption, from *Gewinn* to *Genuß*.

Viewed text-genetically, the deferred hunt in *Novelle* is exposed as a politically impotent residuum of Goethe's original plan for an epic.⁴⁰ As Wilhelm von

cultural practices for rendering generic in the sense of symbolic-typical: »Tatsächlich lässt sich die eigentümliche Anachronie der Novelle daraus erklären, dass es sich in ihr um einen inszenierten Zusammenstoß zweier historischer Epochen handelt, die sich vor allem über generische Signale profilieren. [...] »Alteuropa« vs. »Moderne«, ständische vs. Klassengesellschaft, Feudalismus vs. Kapitalismus. Dieser latente Konflikt ist present, wenn auch mit der größten Dezenz angedeutet.« Werner Michler: *Kulturen der Gattung. Poetik im Kontext, 1750 – 1950*, Göttingen 2015, pp. 347-411; here p. 379.

40 As Borchmeyer puts this, »Der Fürst und sein Hof führen eine durch überlieferte höfische Gepflogenheiten, Rituale und Förmlichkeiten nur dürftig verdeckte bürger-

Humboldt related Goethe's initial subject matter to his wife Caroline in a letter from 1797: »Nur bei der Jagd, meinte er [Goethe] zeige sich noch etwas dem Heldenalter gleichsam Ähnliches, weil doch da jeder selbst tätig sein, selbst Hand anlegen muß.«⁴¹ Hegel similarly argued that fundamental historical changes in the nature of social organization forced Goethe's epic *Hermann und Dorothea* to take shape as an idyll, for only within the restricted circle of a bourgeois town may individual activity influence the societal whole. Modern social organization, in contrast, is systemically differentiated and hence characterized by the fact that influence on the societal whole may only be exerted via supra-individual, mediating institutions. In *Über epische und dramatische Dichtung*, Schiller and Goethe anticipate this Hegelian argument about the epic's necessary transformation into a bourgeois idyll in modernity by claiming that epic protagonists »am besten auf einem gewissen Grade der Kultur stehen, wo die Selbsttätigkeit noch auf sich allein angewiesen ist, wo man nicht moralisch, politisch, mechanisch, sondern persönlich wirkt.« To allow the premise of the epic hunt to fade into a mere subplot within the *Novelle's* narrative trajectory toward the lyric, then, amounts to dramatizing the inherent unsustainability of courtly society under the historical conditions of modernity. Such a form of life is exposed as a kind of historical remnant or lingering specter, as unlivable in 1827 after the French Revolution as Goethe's original epic *Die Jagd* was unwritable. Goethe's novella thus thinks through how literary genres, by opening up a normative space of aesthetic possibility for infinite elaborations of their generic idea, simultaneously expose themselves to the possibility of their own extinction. Goethe's *Novelle* concerns itself in particular with how this historical exhaustibility of a genre correlates with the historical precariousness of human forms of life.

The precarity of this social form of life reaches subdued articulation as early as the third sentence of the *Novelle's* first paragraph, again built around a syntactic parallelism: »Auch hie und da gebärdete ein Pferd sich mutiger, von feuriger Natur getrieben oder von dem Sporn des Reiters angeregt, *der* selbst hier in der Halbhelle eine gewisse Eitelkeit, sich zu zeigen, nicht verleugnen konnte« (491, emphasis added). The second comma here functions as the crucial semantic axis, juxtaposing the horse with its rider, animal and human alike each attributed a reflexive verb (*sich gebärden*, *sich zeigen*). Whether the horse misbehaves due to its own »fiery nature« or the rider's spur, however, remains essentially ambiguous. This first subordinate clause's »oder« anticipates more

lich-prosaische Existenz, ihr Leben ist wie das aller anderen Staatsglieder von Arbeit angefüllt.« See Dieter Borchmeyer: *Höfische Gesellschaft und französische Revolution bei Goethe*, Kronberg i. T. 1977, pp. 333-350.

41 Cited in *ibid.*

global symbolic ambiguities about the status of the fire that breaks into town (is it simply a natural occurrence or one perpetrated by »die Menge«?) and the animals thereby set loose (are they already tame, given that they are circus animals, or driven by their own destructive »feuriger Natur«?). At the same time, the rider cannot help but indulge in the »Eitelkeit, sich zu zeigen,« articulating one of the main social-representative functions of the hunt, which qua ritual allows for the self-presentation of public persons or nobles in the worldly space of court society, even when transposed into a forest.⁴² The rider nonetheless remains shrouded »hier in der Halbhelle,« and so the visibility of courtly self-presentation – its societal recognizability – remains questionable, indeed, may even be the cause leading the rider to kick the spur and thus unleash a potentially revolutionary »feuriger Natur.«

What remains of the hunt as the subtext for a latent, unrealized epic within the novella is embodied in the character of Honorio: he archives the various genres and forms, from ancient epic to romantic ballad, through which the text cycled in its earliest conception. Honorio is the only character in Goethe's *Novelle* to carry a proper name (though an admittedly symbolic one). All other characters are designated by their social status or a rather stock name such as »Friedrich.« Seen through the lens of an intertextual triangulation between Goethe, James Fenimore Cooper, and Ludwig Tieck, Honorio emerges as a cryptic signature for an entire textual archive, as the outcome of a symbolic negotiation between heterogeneous genres and literary-historical contexts. Indeed, what a structuralist account of narrative would elide by virtue of its search for an atemporal logic of consequence standing behind an 'illusionary' chronology

42 Habermas interestingly relates this social-representative function of showing oneself in the world, part of the courtly form of life, to Wilhelm Meister's penchant for theater in the *Lehrjahren*: »Wilhelm gesteht dem Schwager das Bedürfnis, »eine öffentliche Person zu sein und in einem weiten Kreis zu gefallen und zu wirken.« Da er jedoch kein Edelmann ist und auch als Bürger nicht vergeblich sich bemühen will, es bloß zu scheinen, sucht er, sozusagen als Öffentlichkeitsersatz – die Bühne. [...] Das [theatralische] Publikum ist jedoch bereits Träger einer anderen Öffentlichkeit, die mit der repräsentativen nichts mehr gemein hat« (27–28). If *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* depicts in the figure of Wilhelm a bourgeois with an anachronistic desire to become a member of a fading nobility despite fundamental structural changes in society that render the aristocratic class economically defunct in the long-term (destined to be replaced by the managerial class of bureaucrats), then *Novelle* depicts this societal transition from the perspective of the nobility rather than the bourgeoisie. See Jürgen Habermas: *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Neuwied/Berlin 1971; Norbert Elias: *Die höfische Gesellschaft. Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Königtums und der höfischen Aristokratie*, Munich 1981.

here becomes apparent: the entire subplot of Honorio's illicit passion for the princess.

Before turning to these intertexts, however, some orienting plot summary is in order. In *Novelle*, Honorio's passion comes to expression only surreptitiously, filtered through the understated conventions of courtly politeness (*Höflichkeit*). After he shoots the tiger successfully, Honorio hesitates to shoot the animal a second time, as this would damage the fur he wishes to gift the princess as a sign of his triumph. The princess, however, finds this gift to have almost erotic undertones: she exclaims »Frevelt nicht!« and continues to repeat a thrice-spoken command »steht auf!« – »Vor allen Dingen steht auf! [...] Steht auf!« wiederholte die Fürstin [...]. Daß anstatt einer jugendlichen Freude eine gewisse Trauer über sein [Honorios] Gesicht zog, hatte die Fürstin nicht Zeit zu bemerken« (503-4). Only through the narratively functionless repetitions of the princess – her thrice-spoken command »Steht auf!« – does the gravity of the situation become apparent. The narrator restrains himself from providing the background of their relationship, simply noting that Honorio offers her the pelt as a »Triumphzeichen [...] mit glühender Wange« (503) and looks dismayed after she agrees to allow him to travel the world. Indeed, the princess expressly mentions the fact that the prince (her husband) must approve Honorio's travel, reminding the knight of her unavailability and class difference.

Why does the narrator restrain himself at just the moment that Honorio begins to unrestrain and hint at his amorous passion for the princess? In Goethe's narrative schema for *Novelle*, the unspoken background that reverberates in this dialogue becomes explicit:

86. Er kniet auf dem Tyger.
87. Äußerer Anstand.
88. Zugesagte Gnade.
89. Ausgesprochener Wunsch zu reisen.
90. Schon oft wiederholt und motivirt.
91. Warum sich entfernen jetzt eben da er so hülfreich geworden.
92. Höhere Bildung als Vorwand.⁴³

Already in this early schema, the civility of their dialogue remains but an »Äußerer Anstand,« Honorio's wish to travel away from court but a »Vorwand« for testing whether the princess reciprocates his interest (had she replied that Honorio was not allowed to travel away, this would keep him in her vicinity). At this point, the musical family arrives onto the scene, preventing further humiliation and potential impropriety. The prince orders Honorio to start a small

43 WA I/18, p. 487 (paralipomena). Emphasis added.

fire with which to frighten the lion should the family fail, but before Honorio can carry out his orders, he encounters the mother alone, as he was previously alone with the princess:

Aber die Herankommenden schien er [Honorio] kaum zu bemerken; er saß wie in tiefen Gedanken versunken, er sah umher wie zerstreut. Die Frau sprach ihn an mit Bitte, das Feuer nicht anzünden zu lassen; er schien jedoch ihrer Rede wenig Aufmerksamkeit zu schenken. [...] Honorio schaute gerade vor sich hin, dorthin, wo die Sonne auf ihrer Bahn sich zu senken begann. »Du schaust nach Abend,« rief die Frau; »du tust wohl daran, dort gibts viel zu tun; eile nur, säume nicht, du wirst überwinden. Aber zuerst überwinde dich selbst!« Hierauf schien er zu lächeln; die Frau stieg weiter, konnte sich aber nicht enthalten, nach dem Zurückbleibenden nochmals umzublicken; eine rötliche Sonne überschien sein Gesicht, sie glaubte nie einen schönern Jüngling gesehen zu haben. (510, emphasis added)

The semantics of (self-)overcoming (*Überwindung*) migrates from the mother's advice to the narrator's description of the child after the latter has tamed the lion: »wirklich sah das Kind in seiner Verklärung aus wie ein mächtiger, siegreicher Überwinder, jener [der Löwe] zwar nicht wie der Überwundene, denn seine Kraft blieb in ihm verborgen, aber doch wie der Gezähmte, wie der dem eigenen friedlichen Willen Anheimgegebene« (512). Critics have continually vacillated on the interpretive question of which scene of ›overcoming‹ to prioritize: does the lion represent a symbolic transfiguration of Honorio's newly ›tamed‹ passions, as critics such as Seuffert und Wäsche have contended, or does Honorio's need to overcome himself simply form an anticipation in the subplot of the more primary, utopian conclusion of the child's Orphic song that overcomes violence, as critics such as Beutler and Meyer have argued?⁴⁴ Rather than prioritizing one scene over the other, the semantics of (self-)overcoming and piety common to both invite us to see the scenes in symbolic counterpoint: Honorio's ›prosaic‹ passion and the child's poetic song, the taming of human instinct mirroring that of a bestial »Tyrannen der Wälder.«

Nonetheless, the symbolic thrust of readings that construct a paradigmatic resemblance between Honorio and the lion, both of whom overcome themselves, all too easily elides the implicit background of his relationship with the princess sketched above. This unspoken background only becomes fully legible when seen as the outcome of a complex intertextual interaction. Turning toward

44 Cf. Bernhard Seuffert: Goethe's »Novelle«, in: Goethe-Jahrbuch 19, 1898, pp. 133-166; Erwin Wäsche: Honorio und der Löwe. Studie über Goethes »Novelle« mit einem Abdruck derselben, Säckingen 1947; Beutler 1938 (fn. 16), pp. 324-352; Meyer 1973 (fn. 33).

neglected intertexts for Goethe's *Novelle* will allow us to specify more fully the role of Honorio. *Novelle* itself will thereby emerge as the structural outcome of a metamorphic reaction set off by the contact and mutual interpenetration of different plot structures in texts by Cooper and Tieck. Intertextual relationships can be understood in this way as a matter of morphological transformation, a twisting and bending of amalgamated plot structures projected into novel literary historical contexts so as to enable narrative innovation.

When the mother finds Honorio melancholy and isolated, he looks westward toward the setting sun, and so, too, was Goethe looking westward when he took up the plan for the failed epic *Die Jagd* in 1826. As his working diary makes clear, Goethe was closely studying *The Pioneers, or the Sources of the Susquehanna; a Descriptive Tale* (1823) by James Fenimore Cooper.⁴⁵ Indeed, the time of *Novelle's* conception coincided with Goethe's intense study of the United States. Herzog Karl Bernhard had conducted a fourteen-month-long journey through the U.S. and Canada in 1825-26, and Goethe diligently read through Bernhard's travel diary in epistolary form and met him in person upon his arrival, even facilitating the journal's publication in 1828. Goethe was further studying American geology and reading Warden's *Statistical, political, and historical account of the United States* (1819). Such multidisciplinary study of the U.S. accompanied his reading of a total of six novels by Cooper from September 1826 to January 1828. Cooper's novels were almost instantly translated into German and French upon publication in English. Right before taking up his old schema for the unrealized epic *Die Jagd* on Oct. 4, 1826, Goethe reads Cooper's *The Pioneers* a second time on Oct. 1: »Den Cooperischen Roman zum zweytenmal angefangen und die Personen ausgeschrieben. Auch das Kunstreiche daran näher betrachtet und fortgesetzt.«⁴⁶ The very next day, he notes: »Die Quellen von Susquehanna fortgesetzt.«⁴⁷ Finally, upon later finishing Cooper's *The Prairie* (1827), Goethe characterizes Cooper's novelistic art in general: »Las den

45 Nicholas Saul has investigated Cooper's influence on the conception of the *Wanderjahre*, while Jane Brown has drawn connections between *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Novelle*. Sp. Wukadonovic has also reconstructed the exact chronological arc of Goethe's study of Cooper's novels and notes a number of parallels to *Novelle* (examining the mother's lament in light of *the Mohicans*, for example) without, however, moving beyond the philological confirmation of influence to the exact nature of the intertextual connection. In what follows, I focus on Cooper's *The Pioneers*, the first Cooper novel Goethe read, rather than *The Last of the Mohicans*. Cf. Nicholas Saul: Goethe and Colonization. The »Wanderjahre« and Cooper, in: Goethe and the English-speaking World, ed. Nicholas Boyle and John Guthrie, Rochester 2002, pp. 85-98; Brown 1980 (fn. 2); Wukadonovic 1909 (fn. 33).

46 Ibid., p. 251.

47 Ibid., p. 252.

Cooperschen Roman bis gegen das Ende und bewunderte den reichen Stoff und dessen geistreiche Behandlung. Nicht leicht sind Werke mit so großen Bewußtseyn und solcher Consequenz durchgeführt als die Cooperschen Romane.«⁴⁸ In the article titled »Stoff und Gehalt, zur Bearbeitung vorgeschlagen« from an issue of *Ueber Kunst und Alterthum*, moreover, Goethe recommends diverse subject matter for literary rendition by ambitious German authors. Among the three texts recommended is Ludwig Gall's *Auswanderung nach den Vereinigten Staaten* (1822). Goethe notes the difficulty of adapting the source material, however, for »Der Bearbeitende müßte den Stolz haben, mit Cooper zu wetteifern, und deßhalb die klarste Einsicht in jene überseeischen Gegenstände zu gewinnen suchen.«⁴⁹

As these collected remarks make clear, Goethe considered Cooper a literary equal and closely studied Cooper's approach to novelistic construction. Goethe admired in particular »das Kunstreiche« in *The Pioneers*, which deftly introduces a vast cast of characters and the multifaceted interests that come into conflict with one another as the sprawling novel develops. For the sake of orientation, it will be helpful to provide a quick structural summary of Cooper's novel, for Goethe was not merely »influenced« by it, but adapted and transformed its inner constitutive principles. Though Cooper's narrative may appear disjunctive, it is quite carefully and thoroughly composed. As Goethe remarked, Cooper organized subject matter in his plots with great »Consequenz.«⁵⁰ If the status of the narrative event as anachronic was at issue in *Novelle* as the psychosocial problem of an inflamed imagination, in *The Pioneers* the question of narrative agency – how to characterize people's actions after the event, the retrospective account of what a human deed consisted in and was responsible for – becomes central.⁵¹

Goethe, who began his novella as a *Jagdepos*, must no doubt have been drawn into Cooper's *Pioneers* through its opening description of a hunt. The novel begins with a deer being shot, but who killed the deer (and may therefore claim

48 WA 3.11:76 (June 1827).

49 WA 1.41:294.

50 Some contributions in the secondary literature have brought out this structural organization in the background of Cooper's seemingly disjointed novel. Cf. Peter Valenti: »The Ordering of God's Providence«. Law and Landscape in »The Pioneers«, in: *Studies in American Fiction* 7/2, 1979, pp. 191-207; Thomas Philbrick: Cooper's »The Pioneers«. Origins and Structure, in: *PMLA* 79/5, 1964, pp. 579-593; Gerry Brenner: Cooper's »Composite Order«. »The Pioneers« as Structured Art, in: *Studies in the Novel* 2/3, 1970, pp. 264-275.

51 The original consulted here is James Fenimore Cooper: *The Pioneers, or the Sources of the Susquehanna. A Descriptive Tale. Historical Introduction & Explanatory Notes* by James Franklin Beard, Albany 1980.

it) remains ambiguous: Judge Temple shot at the deer, as did Natty Bumppo (a white settler who has taken on the Native American form of life) and Edwards (Natty's hunting companion and a mysterious character whose lineage is slowly revealed at end). Temple claims that he killed the deer, while Natty claims that he also shot at it but missed, arguing that a younger hand must have killed it. Edwards, it turns out, fired the killing shot, but was himself wounded by Judge Temple's misfire. To complicate matters, Temple owns the land, and it is technically illegal for Natty (also known as Leatherstocking) to hunt on this land. At the same time, townspeople will later argue over whether Edwards should sue Temple for the injury. Both sides in the dispute are thus exposed to their act's possible legal ramifications. Temple accordingly shifts from first claiming that he killed the deer to asserting his claim of ownership over the land qua hunting grounds and trying (out of goodwill) to buy the deer from Leatherstocking. In the end, Temple simply brings the injured Edwards into his home to be cared for.

Cooper thus takes the novels' very first narrative event – a deer is shot – and kaleidoscopically reflects it so as to introduce a world, seeing the deer's killing in multiple, conflicting legal and moral dimensions: Who killed the deer? To whom does it belong? To whom does the land belong? All protagonists are imbricated in the deer's shooting from the beginning, the deed not ascribable to one in isolation, the land (like the deer) sponsor to overlapping claims of ownership. The central conflict in the novel will turn out to be between Natty and Judge Temple, respective representatives of the unwritten code of woodmanship and hunting ritual (primitive freedom, natural law), on the one hand, and the written, man-made laws of civilized mercantile progress, on the other. The rights to the land are negotiated in the space stretched by this polarity, but the town complicates such facile oppositions, for its »wasty ways« (as Natty terms them) stand in stark contrast to the self-discipline exercised by *both* Natty and Temple. Four prominent vignettes on town life thus double as scenes of ecological devastation: the ruination of the trees during the manufacture of maple; the massacre of the passenger pigeons with cannon fire; the wasteful netting of fish; and a fire that has spread from town onto the mountainside. These four scenes also correspond to the elements of earth, air, water, and fire.

Much as Goethe's *Novelle* unfolds in a social setting characterized by an anachronic simultaneity of feudal and bourgeois political orders, Cooper's novel depicts the colonial settlement of Templeton near Lake Otsego in a *transitional* state, between the hunting culture of the Native Americans and the full establishment of an ordered, stable civilization. As the remnant of a past indigenous form of life stands Mohegan or Old Indian John, who dies during a forest fire and is the only ethnic Native American in the novel (Natty, a white man, has adopted the indigenous form of life). As a premonition of the future United

States, Edwards, on the other hand, symbolically merges all competing claims to land ownership within his complex identity: his father, the British soldier Major Effingham, was adopted by Mohegan after saving the latter's life during the French and Indian War; Effingham also obtained the royal patent to the New York lands later purchased far more cheaply, after the Revolutionary Wars, by Judge Temple, who was a business associate of Effingham. By marrying Elizabeth, Judge Temple's daughter, Edwards thus synthesizes the oldest, Native American claims to the land with Judge Temple's most recent. Between past and future forms of life (Mohegan and Edwards), the main conflict unfolds between Natty and Temple, themselves characterized as deficient modes of clinging to an irretrievable past (Natty, also known as Leatherstocking) and destructively progressing to a modernized future (Temple, also known as the Judge).

Though he lives as a native, Natty carries out an isolated existence in his hut in the woods, belonging neither to the white settlement nor to a native tribe, for Mohegan is the last of his kind. Estranged from human society by virtue of this isolating hybrid identity, Natty advocates instead on behalf of the animals and trees. During the massacre of the passenger pigeons, for example, he holds a monologue on God's creatures strikingly similar to that of the father in *Novelle* and thereby convinces Judge Temple of the procedure's wastefulness. Temple is deeply affected and tries to help as best he can, not by conserving the birds but by facilitating their commodification: he commercializes the sale of pigeons.

Temple's own past evinces itself as complex: he abandoned his Quaker background and betrayed the Crown during the Revolutionary wars, evolving into a figure of mercantile progress at the expense of past tradition. Tellingly, he is the only character to possess a slave in the novel, which violates the ethical principles of his past religious identity. The main protagonists in Cooper's novel are thus akin to phenomenological reductions of forms of life locatable on an historical continuum. The transitional historical stage of colonial settlement in upstate New York depicted by Cooper thus takes narrative shape through the anachronistic coincidence of competing forms of life: that of Mohegan and Edwards, native past and American future, as mirrored in perverted form by Natty and Temple, an adopted and nostalgic primitivism pitted against a corrosive mercantile progress.

In *Novelle*, Goethe does not simply draw rhetorical inspiration from select passages in *The Pioneers*, but isolates four moments of the narrative that correspond to four in the *Novelle*: (1.) landscape description as an instrument of psychologizing characterization; (2.) the heroic deed of shooting a wild feline; (3.) the outbreak of the elemental in the form of a fire; and (4.) a narrative departure from a protagonist who faces westward as the sun sets, a tableau emblematic of a fading form of social life. Both Cooper's novel and Goethe's *Novelle* are

concerned with the historical precarity of forms of life, with a cultural form of life's capacity to linger on into the present, anachronistically past its time, as it were. For the sake of brevity, only the last three moments will be discussed in their figural imbrication.

Wild cats: In the earliest of narrative schemas for *Novelle*, it becomes apparent that the princess's encounter with the injured *tiger* was influenced by a scene from Cooper's novel, in which Elizabeth encounters a baby *panther*, killed by her loyal dog, only to face the panther's mother:

Nebel Morgen. schon versamelte Jager [sic]
Abschied.
Abritt.
Jahrmarckt. Buden gemahlte Thiere
Dame allein mit dem Schwager und Mahler
Zeichnung und Risse des alten Schlosses.
Auslegung Beschreibung
Dahin reiten.
Höhe Brand.
Panther
Flucht Vorab Retardation des Tygers
Erlösung⁵²

In his letters to Schiller on the epic *Die Jagd* from 1797, Goethe refers to »meine Tiger und Löwen«; a panther was never planned.⁵³ The lexical substitution of panther for tiger is more than a casual mistake; rather, it functions as a kind of Freudian slip indicative of how narrative events from Cooper's novel were amalgamating in Goethe's imagination with congruent events in his planned novella. In *The Pioneers*, Natty saves Elizabeth by shooting at the panther twice, aiming for its head. In *Novelle*, Honorio similarly saves the princess by shooting at the tiger twice, though, unlike Natty, he misses the first time. Both Natty and Honorio, moreover, are emblematic within their narrative worlds for historically indexed cultural codes of honor, whether the indigenous ways of woodsmanship taken on by Natty or the aristocratic martial values embodied by Honorio in his very name. Both respective female characters are similarly haunted by the traumatic encounter in the form of phobically imprinted phantasmatic afterimages. As Honorio wishes to give the princess the pelt, so Natty takes the panther's hide

52 The multiple schemas are presented in their original layout in Christian Wagenknecht: *Novelle. Erläuterungen und Dokumente*, Stuttgart 1982, p. 21.

53 Goethe/Schiller (fn. 13), pp. 63-64.

in order to cash in the bounty: for both, the animal morphs into a symbolic object of gifting (for Honorio) or exchange (for Natty).

Unlike Cooper's panthers, Goethe's wild cats are tame; the tiger was needlessly slain by Honorio. Such tame, performing animals, coupled with the narrator's ironic reference to Honorio as »der Ritter,« together recall Schiller's poem »Die Handschuh,« sent to Goethe in 1797 as he was still searching for a poetic form for what would become *Novelle*. In Schiller's satiric ballad, a king and his royal court sit before a staged spectacle of violence, a den containing lion, leopard, and tiger. The cats, however, refuse to devour one another for the court's entertainment, and so to enliven the spectacle, the coy princess Kunigunde »mistakenly« drops her glove into the arena. The knight Delorges must maintain appearances and fetch it for her: »der Ritter in schnellem Lauf / Steigt hinab in den furchtbarn Zwinger / Mit festem Schritte / Und aus der Ungeheuer Mitte / Nimmt er den Handschuh mit keckem Finger« (53-57). Schiller here ironizes the knightly display of virtue and *Minnedienst*, for his knight Delorges throws the glove at Kunigunde's face after retrieving it from a den of wild cats: »Den Dank, Dame, begehrt ich nicht« (66). Delorges may be so satirized because the kind of servile, platonic love he emblemizes is already anachronistic in the bourgeois world of Schiller's time. Unlike the comic lampoon of an outmoded knightly form of love in the ballad, Goethe focuses on the potential for Honorio's tragically illicit passion to come to expression in *Novelle*. The figure of Honorio thereby becomes legible as an imaginative merging of Schiller's Delorges and Cooper's Leatherstocking. His character is the outcome of a symbolic negotiation between an outmoded form of courtly life in the Old World and an endangered form of native life in the New World. After the French Revolution, of course, royal courts would no longer stage such spectacles of bestial violence, and bourgeois love (pedagogical in character) would replace such courtly codes of platonic love, just as, after the settlement of the frontier, Native Americans will be displaced ever westward. Across the expanse of the Atlantic, nobles and natives both fade away; Honorio emblematically fixes their socio-historical self-withdrawal in light of the circumstances unique to modernity.

Fires: Though Natty saves Elizabeth from a panther, his mysterious, younger hunting companion, Edwards, saves her from the later fire. Elizabeth sets out for a walk on the mountainside with a female companion and dog, leaving Edwards on a hunt. She remarks of the latter: »daß ihm die feinern Sitten keineswegs fremd waren; daß er wohlerfahren in allen kleinen Höflichkeiten des gebildeten Lebens nur zuweilen durch die Heftigkeit seiner *unbändigen Leidenschaften*, besonders durch den häufig durchbrechenden Stolz, verhindert wurde, sich immer *mit Anstand* zu benehmen.«⁵⁴ In *Novelle*, Honorio, too, displays

54 Goethe would have read the 1826 translation of *The Pioneers*: James Fenimore Cooper:

»Äußerer Anstand,« as Goethe put it in his schema, though unruly passions circulate beneath the conventional courtly surface. As Goethe stated to Eckermann, he sought with *Novelle* to show »wie *das Unbändige*, Unüberwindliche oft besser durch Liebe und Frömmigkeit als durch Gewalt bezwungen werde.«⁵⁵

Even the diction used by Cooper (in the German translation Goethe read) to describe the outbreak of fire – »die Annäherung und Verheerung des wüthenden Elements,« – greatly echoes Goethe's emphasis on the elemental in the fire of *Novelle*.⁵⁶ The scene in Cooper climaxes when Elizabeth tells Edwards to flee and abandon her. In response, he gets on his knee – like Honorio after killing the tiger – and pleads:

»Und von *mir* verlangt Ihr, das ich Euch verlassen soll! Ich Euch verlassen am Rande des Grabes! O, Miß Temple! wie wenig kennt Ihr mich,« rief er auf die Knie fallend und sie mit seinen Armen umfassend, als wollte er sie vor den nahenden Flammen beschützen. »Verzweiflung trieb mich in die Wälder, aber *Eure Gesellschaft zähmte den Löwen in mir*.«⁵⁷

Throughout the novel, Edwards mediates between the Native American form of life and that of the white settlers. As Elizabeth noted, his very character is a negotiation between wild passion and civilized decorum. The symbolic counterpoint in Goethe's *Novelle* between Honorio's self-overcoming of his illicit passion and the child's taming of the lion here becomes audible as an intertextual echo of the same thematics of taming and self-mastery in Cooper's novel. It is as if Edwards's figure of speech – »Eure Gesellschaft *zähmte* den Löwen in mir« – had in Goethe's imagination taken on the stature of a literalized counterpoint between Honorio's self-tamed passion and the tame lion.

Goethe imaginatively fused, then, Elizabeth's rescue from the panther by Natty and from the fire by Edwards into Honorio's rescue of the princess from tiger *and* fire. In *Novelle*, the hero or knight's epic deed is reduced to a vanishing point: an utterly implicit inner act of self-restraint merely hinted at in dialogue, yet utterly explicit in its aesthetic transfiguration as the lion's taming »nicht wie der Überwundene, [...] aber doch wie *der Gezähmte*« (512). Like Edwards, who transitions from a native life of hunting into a civilized clerkship under the Judge, Honorio transitions from killing the tiger and asserting the ne-

Die Ansiedler, oder die Quellen des Susquehannah. Roman von Cooper, Vol. 3, trans. Fuddita, Frankfurt a. M. 1826, p. 93. Emphasis added.

⁵⁵ Goethe, WA: 5.6:24.

⁵⁶ The passage casts Elizabeth into the role of one of the Graces set on fire, what Warburg would have termed a nymph. See Cooper 1836 (fn. 54), pp. 48–49. Emphasis added.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 59. Second emphasis added.

cessity of an external »Triumphzeichen« to overcoming himself inwardly and, thereby, generically overcoming the epic latent in *Novelle* by making room for an »Idyllische Darstellung,« as Goethe described the final scene. Like Edwards, Honorio becomes capable of forgetting »Stand und Namen,« looking away from the princess and the Old World alike towards the West.

Setting suns, fading forms of life: In *The Pioneers*, Mohegan represents an historical anachronism, an indigenous form of life tied to the hunt and untenable in the agrarian society of the settlers. He dies as the fire rages on the mountainside and looks westward:

Hier hielt er [Mohegan] inne; den die Elemente schienen der Macht des Menschen zu spotten. [...] Selbst in der Wuth des zerstörenden Elements trat eine Ruhe ein, als ob eine höhere Hand dessen Fortschreiten Einhalt thue [...] Mohegan erhob sich, gleichsam als betrachtete er diese Naturerscheinungen als Signal zum Aufbruch, und *breitete seine Arme nach Westen aus. Sein dunkles Gesicht erhellte ein Strahl der Freude*, dem jeder andere Ausdruck allmählig wich; seine Muskeln wurden steif. [...] und die Gestalt des toten Kriegers sank gegen den Felsen, die gläsernen Augen weit geöffnet, und starr auf die fernen Berge gerichtet, als wenn sie dem scheidenden Geiste in die neue Wohnung folgten.⁵⁸

Even nature in the violent formlessness of the fire raging about him seems to hold its breath as Mohegan passes away. Honorio is similarly described as looking »nach Abend,« i. e. facing westward like Mohegan's outstretched arms, while »eine rötliche Sonne überschien sein Gesicht« (510), just as Mohegan's »dunkler Gesicht erhellte ein Strahl der Freude.« As Mohegan's soul seems to flee westward, so the novel concludes with Natty, Mohegan's companion, fleeing to the frontier: »Man hat ihn [Natty] nie wieder gesehen, noch von ihm gehört. Des Richters Nachforschungen blieben umsonst. Er [Natty] ging dem Niedergang der Sonne zu, und war der Erste, der den Amerikanern einen Weg durch das feste Land zum andern Ocean bahnte.«⁵⁹ The frontier here emerges as the spatial site into which anachronistic forms of indigenous life are displaced, only, of course, to be later encroached upon by further colonization.

In the figure of Honorio, then, Goethe has amalgamated Mohegan facing westward as the narrative departs from him; Natty shooting the panther twice; and Edwards kneeling before Elizabeth after rescuing her from the fire, ultimately overcoming his leonine passion for her. These three characters all adhere, in greater (Mohegan) to lesser (Edwards) degree, to the native form of life

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 76-77. Emphasis added.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 132.

going extinct in Cooper's novel, and so Honorio represents not so much a ›noble savage,‹ but a savage noble, the cryptic signature of a historical self-withdrawal. Goethe has amalgamated the last three structural moments mentioned above in order to stage the fading away of a courtly form of life exemplified by Honorio while simultaneously pointing toward the settlement of America as a hopeful site for the revitalizing investment of Western civilizational energies. After the French Revolution, as after the settlement of the frontier, such aristocratic or native forms of life come to take on the aspect of historical anachronisms. Like Natty and Edwards, Honorio is meant to emigrate to America and conquer the frontier after conquering himself.⁶⁰

To make full sense of how Cooper's natives merged and morphed in Goethe's imagination into the knightly Honorio, however, we will have to turn to a second key intertext that sheds further light on the unspoken background between Honorio and the princess: Tieck's *Leben und Tod der heiligen Genoveva* (1799). Tieck finished this metrically heterogeneous romantic drama three years after Goethe's *Jagd* failed to materialize (Tieck read the play aloud to Goethe and his son in Jena on December 7, 1799).⁶¹ Both *Genoveva* and *Novelle* begin with the same initial situation (*Ausgangssituation*): a husband with political authority departs on official business, leaving his wife behind in the care of a trusted confidant of lower social status. In Tieck's drama, prince Siegfried departs for the crusades, leaving princess Genoveva behind with Golo, who secretly desires his superior's wife. After attempting to seduce Genoveva, who rejects him, Golo accuses her of betraying her husband with a monk. Siegfried hears of the alleged infidelity on the war front, and, enraged, sentences his wife to death. The executioners of Golo's scheme, however, have mercy on Genoveva, cutting off the tongue and taking the eyes of wild animals in place of her own. She flees to a cave, where she has the prince's child, appropriately named Schmerzenreich and nursed by a goat just as Hercules's son Telephus was. During a hunt after his re-

60 As Michler compellingly claims, Honorio's hypothetical future narrative in the New World would be, in a sense, constitutively unwritable: »Der Weg nach Westen [...] ist bei Honorio durch den höfischen Wunsch nach Weltkenntnis und *aventiure* motiviert; schlug er ihn tatsächlich ein, dann führte er ihn in eine Welt, die die Sphäre, der er entstammt, nicht nur nicht kennt, sondern auch auf längere Sicht erst entwerten, dann zerstören wird; ökonomisches Kapital wird dann nicht länger Funktion symbolischen Kapitals sein, sondern umgekehrt.« Michler 2015 (fn. 39), p. 387.

61 As Tieck notes, »Ich habe nun das Trauerspiel *Genoveva* fertig gemacht. [...] Gestern habe ich Goethe die Hälfte vorlesen müssen, indem wir beide ganz allein waren, und er schien sehr zufrieden, heute soll ich es ihm vollends hinauslesen. Er hat mir viel Gutes darüber gesagt. Ich war gar nicht geniert, und hatte es vorher recht sehr geglaubt zu sein.« Quoted in Hartmut Fröschle: *Goethes Verhältnis zur Romantik*, Würzburg 2002, pp. 220-24.

turn home, Siegfried discovers that his innocent wife still lives, meets his son for the first time, and learns of Golo's betrayal; all ends well.

In Goethe's *Novelle*, Honorio takes on the role of the malevolent *Hofjunker* Golo, left behind with the princess he desires, yet he does not give in to revenge after the rejection, but is capable of overcoming his own illicit passion. Indeed, in Cooper's novel, Elizabeth is a largely passive character, while in Tieck's drama, Genoveva takes on the stature of a saint whose magical capacity to survive in the wilderness is effected precisely through her ardent piety and self-subjection to suffering. Like Tieck, Goethe grants his female protagonist more agency, but substitutes an aesthetic education of the sense organs (eye and ear) for the exercises of Christian piety. Above all, the Tieck intertext lends depth to the implicit familial background (even conflict) in play at the outset of Goethe's *Novelle*. At the drama's opening, Genoveva attempts to hold Siegfried back and present (or at least defer) his departure with the hesitant revelation that she is pregnant with child: »Siegfried: Nun, warum willst du mich zurück halten? / Genoveva: Nicht halten, nein [...] Doch zitt'r' ich hier allein zurück zu bleiben.«⁶² In *Novelle*, too, »die ganze Jägerei zu Pferde und zu Fuß« (491) is already assembled in a manner akin to »die Reiter / [...] aufgesessen, alle Mannschaft / schon in Zuge« in *Genoveva*. Both princes are being waited upon as their wives hold them back; in *Novelle*, »Alle jedoch warteten auf den Fürsten, der, von seiner jungen Gemahlin Abschied nehmend, allzulange *zauderte*« (491, emphasis added). What the recently married couple is discussing remains unspoken in Goethe's text, but the Tieck intertext suggests that the princess of *Novelle* may very well be pregnant with child as Genoveva is. Just as Tieck depicts Genoveva, the narrator in *Novelle* remarks that »Die Fürstin blieb ungern zurück;« while the prince states »Auch lasse ich«, sagte er, »dir unsern Honorio als Stall- und Hofjunker, der für alles sorgen wird« (492). Honorio, like Golo, is quite pleased at the prospect of remaining behind, potentially alone, with her. The narrator of *Novelle* even describes the prince's hunt as a crusade-like war, as if Goethe merged Siegfried's first departure for the crusades with his later departure for the hunt, after which he discovers Genoveva's survival with child: »man hatte sich vorgenommen, weit in das Gebirg hineinzudringen, um die friedlichen Bewohner der dortigen Wälder durch einen unerwarteten Kriegszug zu beunruhigen« (492). Readings of *Novelle* often note that Honorio is a kind of ironic figure: as Michler puts this, »[d]ie Ironie der Stelle besteht also nicht bloß darin, dass Honorio einen zahmen Tiger erlegt und sich als Ritter fühlt, sondern darin, dass der Text dieses Rittertum selbst schon als Zitat präsentiert.«⁶³ The historical epoch of chivalry and knighthood is already anachronistic around

62 Ludwig Tieck: *Leben und Tod der heiligen Genoveva*, Berlin 1820, p. 16–20.

63 Michler 2015 (fn. 39), p. 383.

1800, and one of the neglected sources for the text's ironized presentation of this fading courtly form of life in *Novelle* was Tieck's *Genoveva*.

The Tieck intertext allows us to return to Cooper's Native Americans and make sense of the transformative intertextual interaction that yielded *Novelle*. On a literary-historical level, *Novelle* becomes legible as the outcome of a three-stage morphological interaction between intertexts. Goethe first isolates four key narrative events from James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers*, all associated to greater or lesser degree with a Native American form of life that is fading away and thus anachronistic. He then amalgamates them in his imagination: all narratively central actions (often rescues) carried out by Cooper's natives become associated with Honorio. This amalgamated plot-structure from Cooper's New World novel is then projected into the Old World setting of Tieck's medieval romance in *Das Leben und Tod der heiligen Genoveva*, which catalyzes its transformation. Developing from the same initial situation shared with *Genoveva*, Goethe's *Novelle* redeems the villainous Golo-figure in the character of Honorio, who takes on the dignity of Cooper's endangered natives in *The Pioneers*, for he rescues rather than destroys the princess's life (from the tiger/panther, from the fire, and even from his own unruly, ›leonine‹ passion with its potential for erotic violence). Such intertextual amalgamation of plot structures and projection into new literary-historical contexts recalls how the child of *Novelle* repeats his poems in a new context so as to speak the novelty of the final situation as the event of poetic speech. The generic transformations immanent to the text of *Novelle* thus mirror more generally the literary historical transformations carried out by Goethe's own imagination.

Such transformative projection of a plot structure from New to Old World contexts generates a problem, however, for the intertextual interaction. There is no frontier in Europe into which to displace anachronistic forms of life in order to preserve them in a spatial elsewhere. If Cooper displaces his Native Americans – his primeval origin – westward into an untamed wilderness, then Goethe must relocate the origin eastward: the Orient wanders into the world of *Novelle* in the form of the gypsy-like itinerant family. It is the mother, after all, who tells a melancholy Honorio to overcome himself: »Du schaust nach Abend,‹ rief die Frau; ›du tust wohl daran, dort gibts viel zu tun; eile nur, säume nicht, du wirst überwinden.« Two historical anachronisms, the itinerant Orientalized mother and a Western knight of the court, thus coincide to point to a future beyond Europe.

In sum, a model of intertextuality that starts from the analogization of punctual coincidences between plot lines or of isolatable parallel passages in order to illuminate historical relations of influence proves to be methodologically insufficient here. It does not do justice to the complexity of Goethe's supple intertextual imagination. Intertextual relations can instead be understood as the result

of a process of morphological interaction, an interweaving and diffraction of plot structures whose amalgamations are projected into foreign literary-historical contexts to enable narrative innovation. Such a morphological model of intertextuality does not operate with isolated features common to several literary works that are then related to each other, but rather with second-order relations the interplay of which generates novel plot structures, even yielding a complex character whose subplot archives literary genres – the epic, the medieval romance, even the frontier novel – as it attempts to think through the exhaustibility of a literary genre vis-à-vis the historical precarity of human forms of life.

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