

INTERTEXTUALITY IN GOETHE'S "WERTHER"

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the intertextual references in eighteenth-century German author Johann W. Goethe's epistolary novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. The project consists of five chapters with a theory of intertextuality based on M.M. Bakhtin's ideas, which are presented primarily in the introduction. Chapter One addresses references to Klopstock, Chapter Two Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*, Chapter Three Homer, Chapter Four Ossian, and Chapter Five eighteenth-century knowledge.

This study examines intertextual references to authors, scholars, literature, and literary characters from other novels clearly identifiable in *Werther*. *Werther's* explicit references to other literary texts elicit various intertextual dialogues. *Werther* creates a dialogic network of literary relations through its references to these texts, and they, in turn, elevate Goethe's novel to a similar canonic status. My findings contribute to a different interpretation of *Werther*, one that comprehensively explains how both the well-known and lesser-discussed intertextual references in the novel function. I argue that the young Goethe operated within the cultural understanding that the inclusion of other prominent European texts could help to situate *Werther* in developing the national German literary canon. Though Holquist states that a canonic state does not allow dissenting voices and that the novel as a "...heteroglot genre – has no canon..." the tension caused by the intertextual references in *Werther* cannot be ignored (*Imagination* 25). Goethe's avoidance of *Werther* in his later years speaks to his contradictory ambitions. While he wanted to be the measure of success, he could not quiet the cultural context of originality in which he lived. *Werther* marks this general period of literary history when young writers expressed their expansive visions of greatness. *Werther* builds on the literary texts produced by German Enlightenment writers such as Gotthold

Ephraim Lessing and Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, and was influenced by authors beyond the borders of German-speaking lands, from the Anglo-Saxon tradition of Ossian to the Greek Antiquity of Homer, making *Werther* the first of many contributions to a *Weltliteratur* that Goethe discussed later in his career.

Goethe's intertextual references to authors and texts in *Werther* required a different understanding from audiences in the late eighteenth century than they do for readers over 200 years later. His references clarify general eighteenth-century interpretations of such writers as Ossian and Homer. Informed by Bakhtinian theoretical concepts, this study explains the significance the references had then and what they mean for readers today. For the study of intertextuality my dissertation provides an example of how Bakhtin's ideas alone can be used to guide an intertextual study of literature. It furthermore means that an intertextual framework can lead to conclusions concerning canon development.

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INTRODUCTION: INTERTEXTUALITY IN *WERTHER*.

I. OBJECTIVES.

This dissertation project shows what the intertextual references in Johann W. Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* (*Werther*) mean and how they function in the novel.¹ My method of research allowed me to examine comprehensively what Goethe had said about the references both in *Werther* and in his other texts, and what was generally understood by the references leading up to the initial version of *Werther* in 1774 and again in his 1787 revision. My research process involves close reading of the primary *Werther* texts, paying close attention to the differences between the 1774 and 1787 versions of *Werther*. Examining both versions allows me to see if and what changes were made to the explicit textual reference. In analyzing these intertextual references, I examine whether they function differently or alter the interpretation. Their forms include allusions to other works, naming of other authors, quoting from other texts, and re-articulating the names of characters from other texts. Comprehensively examining what Goethe said in reference to the explicit intertextual reference outside of *Werther* in his other texts followed the close readings of the two texts. A newly informed understanding of the reference then helped explain Goethe's inclusion of it in *Werther*. Contextualizing the references also helped to expand and deepen my interpretation of the references in *Werther*. Reviewing

1. All subsequent references to *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, referred to by the abbreviation *Werther*, will be from the Deutscher Klassiker edition. See Johann Wolfgang Goethe's "*Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*." *Romane I: Die Leiden des jungen Werthers. Paralleldruck der Fassungen von 1774 und 1787, Die Wahlverwandtschaften, Epen/Novelle/Kleine Prosa*. Ed. Waltraud Wiethölter. Frankfurt a. M: Deutscher Klassiker, 1994. 9-267. The primary translation of Goethe's novel used throughout the project is Elizabeth Mayer and Louise Bogan's English translation of *The Sorrows of the Young Werther and Novella*. New York: Random, 1971. 3-168. The other German texts quoted in this dissertation have been translated into English. The name of the translator is stated after the English translation. Where no name is indicated the translation is my own.

secondary scholarship concerning *Werther* often opened up additional questions on why certain interpretations of these intertextual references have become canonical.

Eighteenth-century research allows a more informed understanding than Goethe's contemporaries had through new methodological tools that have been developed and used in the studies of literature. Bakhtin's concept of "superaddressee" explains that we as temporally distant readers should have a better, more informed reading than was initially possibly in the same time space: "To understand a given text as the author himself understood it. But our understanding can and should be better" (1970 *Notes* 141). This chronological distance helps me in this project to refer to overviews of the period on writing letters, on the political system, on the role of antiquity as a literary influence, and on studies of what modernity encompasses. These studies enrich and inform my project.

After analyzing the material, including Goethe's own statements, the general understanding of the references, and background information on the reference, my findings related to secondary literature inform my ultimate conclusions. In scholarship, often only one of the two versions of *Werther* is studied, leading to an incomplete understanding of the intertextual references. Few researchers study both the original 1774 version of *Werther* and the rewrite of the novel from 1787. Melitta Gerhard's "Die Bauerburschenepisode im 'Werther'" (1916) is one study that also considers both Goethe's 1774 and his 1787 versions in explaining the addition of the *Bauerburschenepisode* in the 1787 version. Gerhard refers to the 1774 version as the *Ur-Werther* in explaining the addition of the 4 September 1772 entry and the next undated scene included by the narrator (Gerhard 23; Goethe, *Werther* 161, 203). Klaus Müller-Salget's 1981 study considers both versions in its discussion of the inclusion of the word *ode* after the "Klopstock!" reference (336). Deirdre Vincent's 1992 book focuses on general changes Goethe

made between the first and second *Werther* version (259). As with these studies, the examination of both texts is also very central to my research. The earlier text is a point of reference that helps clarify the later version and the overall impression Goethe wanted to leave.

In my dissertation these explicit literary references include Homer, Ossian, the Bible, Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* and Klopstock's ode, fairy tales, and the literary knowledge of educated men and women in *Werther*, as demonstrated through references to scholarship as well as texts.

In *Werther*, references are more than just the use of the one name – it is everything we think about and conjure up with that reference. Goethe achieves a sense of movement that transcends itself to pages of texts other than his own. Goethe's *utterances* of these materials create a chain of intertextual references that denote specific literary historical meanings, which are liberated through my process of reading as the "superaddressee." Bakhtin uses the image of the chain as a binding force between utterances: "There can be no such thing as an isolated utterance. It always presupposes utterances that precede and follow it. No one utterance can be either the first or the last. Each is only a link in the chain, and none can be studied outside of the chain" (1970 *Notes* 136). Bakhtin's notion points to many more potential dialogues beyond my limited study of Goethe's references to other texts; however, the focus of my study is to explore and examine what Goethe said regarding each of these references outside of *Werther*. By tracing his mentions outside of *Werther* I present a more conclusive, less speculative understanding of them in *Werther* than simply a new interpretation that foregrounds the readers' understanding over the author's intentions. These references also illustrate Goethe's dialogue with these writers and engagements with their ideas and other texts.

This process has revealed that the existing secondary literature on *Werther* does not always reference the original texts to see what Goethe meant. Still, many of these arguments

have become canonical. With the abundance of scholarship on Goethe, however, I have found it invaluable to trace the origins of canonical secondary literary understandings that are now cited in critical editions. These presumably unshakable analyses are no longer questioned. I have found that believable studies have taken on a life of their own, cited in critical editions, without always providing enough explanation on why the findings are credible and what the basis for these new understandings are. I try to show when the canonical interpretations, which have been further promoted by waves of scholars, are questionable.

The majority of *Werther* scholarship starts with the author Goethe, perhaps because of similarities between Goethe's biographical experiences and Werther's fictional ones, and, more importantly, since early scholarship focused on this method of research. Bruce Duncan in his recent review of Goethe scholarship points out how the majority of *Werther* research, regardless of its methodology, at least starts with Goethe's origins of the book (108). The large number of similarities between the author and the protagonist led Goethe's contemporaries to understand the novel *Werther* as a channel for Goethe's personal feelings (Siebers 123). Today those working on psychoanalytical models are mainly interested in Goethe's personal life and ideas. In certain methods of scholarship, such as structuralism, this step is seen as inhibiting readers, since it prevents them from identifying commonalities within a particular genre and classifying them, such as recurring plot elements (Grübel 401). Psychoanalytic elements of interest, in contrast, involve engaging literary expressions that help clarify specific authorial intent. In Bakhtin's view parts of both methods of analysis have meaningful roles, as the text is temporally and culturally bound. In analyzing texts, Bakhtin suggests, readers should try to understand the work as the author did without "exceeding the limits of understanding," namely without transgressing the author's perspective (Bakhtin, *1970 Notes* 145). My findings confirm that much stands to be

learned by returning to the source, and that knowing the author's view does not prevent a more informed reading. According to Bakhtin's view, the “superaddressee” should understand the context in which the text was written.

Bakhtin shows that literary works not only have an addressor (author) and addressee (immediate reader) but “it also has a “superaddressee” in mind – at some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time” (Holquist, Intro xviii). The “superaddressee” has a distinct responsibility that cannot be achieved by the author or the author's contemporary audience: “The author himself and his contemporaries see, recognize, and evaluate primarily that which is close to their own day. The author is a captive of his epoch, of his own present. Subsequent times liberate him from this captivity, and literary scholarship is called upon to assist in this liberation” (Bakhtin, *Novy Mir* 5). Since the writing of *Werther* in 1774 many scholars have taken part in this activity of liberation (Flaschka 12). Bruce Duncan's *Goethe's Werther and the Critics* is a comprehensive overview of literary criticism since 1774, in which he discusses the following secondary literary approaches: ‘First Responses;’ ‘Religious Interpretations;’ ‘Psychological Approaches;’ ‘Political Interpretations;’ ‘Goethe, Werther; Reading, and Writing;’ and ‘Lotte, Sex and Werther.’ I have adopted these categories for discussing scholarly trends of Goethe's novel, in addition to adding an additional one category for nature.

II. OVERVIEW OF TRENDS IN SCHOLARSHIP.

My brief overview addresses only a small percentage of scholarship on *Werther* worldwide. I limit the next several pages to highlighting scholarship to show the trends of research on *Werther* that I have used and read about for my study. My project attempts to address some of the most discussed articles and books as well as the most recent. Additional

information about these studies is available in the individual chapters and in Duncan's book, which makes an excellent reference, extensively covering the vastness and richness of *Werther* scholarship.

The first responses to Goethe's novel are available to us today in large part through letters from Goethe's colleagues and friends. *Werther* enjoyed widespread success with an estimated sale of 10,000 books by 1779 (Henn 276). Most of the initial reception praise the young Goethe's genius, highlighting the biographical connections between Jerusalem and Werther's suicide, but do not delve into Goethe's relationship with Charlotte Buff, then Christian J. Kestner's wife. Throughout the twentieth century the biographical connection was still of interest, as seen for example in Gerhard Sauder in his article "Geniekult im Sturm und Drang" (Sauder 327).

A secondary point of initial interest in the book was its German character. Graf Christian von Stolberg of Copenhagen stated to Johann Heinrich Voß on 31 December 1774 that *Werther* is "ein recht Nationalbuch" ("real national book") (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 102). He was not alone in this assessment, as French first lieutenant Johann Rudolf Frey confirms (123). Christian Friedrich Schubert also interpreted the reference to Klopstock as a way to develop a German national consciousness in his December review of Goethe's *Werther* in his 1774 weekly journal *Deutsche Chronik*, for example (Duncan 9).

In the nineteenth-century the author's biography continued to play an important role in positivist literary studies (Schmiedt 14). Wilhelm Dilthey, who had an active part in determining the German canon, focused on Goethe's contributions to the establishment of the field of German literary studies (Hohendahl 145-147). The German literary canon was developed by the nineteenth century, though Goethe repeatedly stated that it was too soon, given that a German

nation did not yet exist (142, 146).

These more conservative reading trends can be compared to the left-leaning political responses after World War II. Georg Lukács represents the other end of the political spectrum, by cleansing Goethe from the National Socialist misuse of his writings. Lukács's effort attempted to reclaim Goethe as the literary inheritance of the German Democratic Republic. Lukács was not alone in this effort; Peter Müller's *Zeitkritik und Utopie in Goethe's Werther* laid the foundations for East German Marxist research (Farrelly 55). Lukács examines the socioeconomic history and equates Werther's homage to other authors, such as Homer, Klopstock, Goldsmith, and Lessing, to a rebellious act of breaking rules (Tibonov 46). Lukács's view of *Emilia Galotti* as some of the most revolutionary literature cited is part of the justification for his reading (54). It is unlikely though that Goethe had intended revolution from his novel. Writers of *Sturm und Drang* ("Storm and Stress") were interested in freedom for artistic creation: "Unbeschränkte Freiheit bräuchten nur die Wissenschaften zu ihrer vollen Entfaltung. Im Monarchien gebe es daher mehr Dichter, Maler und Musiker, in Republiken mehr Redner, Geschichtsschreiber und Philosophen" (Only the sciences need unlimited freedom for their full development. There are more poets, painters, and musicians in monarchies for this reason, in republics, more orators, historians, and philosophers) (Sauder, *Geniekult* 338). Furthermore, Goethe's own convictions led to his professional involvement as a governmental minister (Karthaus 15).

Religious interpretations also made up a significant part of the early responses. Primarily written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the interest in this area of *Werther* studies still exists today. Astrida Orle Tantillo's "The Catholicism of *Werther*" is entirely unique, as Tantillo herself explains, no one else has looked at Catholic references in the novel (408). The Catholic

Church's initial banning of *Werther*, given Werther's suicide, might help explain why no one else has thought of looking into this area. Karl Goedeke's nineteenth-century literary commentary preceding Cotta's 1866 and also 1893 critical editions of *Werther* in *Goethes Sämtliche Werke* examines the topic of suicide as a literary motif (1-6). In the twentieth century religious research continued. Many scholars have discussed how Goethe and other *Sturm und Drang* writers built on Pietist literature, which was the forerunner to the epoch sentimentality. Goethe displays a master hand in creating a hybrid Pietist, sentimental language that attracted a wide readership (Karthaus 24). Georg Jäger, for example, calls *Werther* an *Umsteiger* ("lateral entry") in his article "Die Wertherwirkung: Ein Rezeptionsästhetischer Modellfall," since it appealed to readers of *Erbauungsliteratur*, who expanded their reading selection to include this form of secular fiction (223). Stuart Atkins in his article "J.C. Lavater und Goethe: Psychologische und Theologische Probleme in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*" is one of the few authors that discusses Lavater's religious role in the novel, though he focuses mainly on the context of the mention of Lavater's sermon on the Book of Jonah during the "üble Laune" conversation Werther has with Lotte and other acquaintances.

Early psychological readings also make up the earliest critical responses to *Werther*: "Besonders intensiv war von Anfang an das Interesse, das der Roman unter psychologischen Aspekten erntete" (The interest, which the novel reaped using psychological aspects, was especially intensive from the beginning) (Schmiedt 8). Goethe furthermore paved the way for psychological analysis of the hero by discussing his own hesitancy personally to revisit the book (Duncan 39). Siebers notes in his psychological, anti-Romantic view of the novel (1993): "First, we stress Goethe's now famous explanation of the origins of *Werther* in which he attributes the novel to his feelings of depression and makes a special point of denying that he was imitating

other books” (120). Siebers is interested in the effects of *Werther* on Goethe and literary history (120). Wolfgang Kaempfer's “Das Ich und der Tod in Goethes-Werther” (1979) discusses Lessing’s reaction to *Werther*. He sees it as a confrontation with Goethe’s psychic self-examination given that the novel delved into Goethe's own individual psychology (266, 283). Lessing's letter from October 26, 1774 called for a moralistically clear ending to the novel (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 79).

Lessing's letter was only one of several early responses that fall into the psychological approach. Helmut Schmiedt in his “Einleitung: Werther und die Geschichte der Literaturpsychologie” to his book *Wie froh bin ich, dass ich weg bin!* presents an overview of early responses, such as Christoph Martina Wieland's review of *Werther* in the *Teutscher Merkur* (1774), Friedrich Daniel Schubert's commentary in *Deutsche Chronik* (1774), and Friedrich von Blanckburg's discussion of *Werther* in his *Neuen Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste* (1775) for their interest in psychological aspects (9). Schmiedt also names P. J. Möbius as the most important literary scholar at the turn to the twentieth century in the field of pathography of Goethe (14).

Important psychological essays were written in the early 1930s, such as Theodore Riek's “Warum verließ Goethe Friederike?” (1930), but psychoanalytic studies of literature soon came to a halt in National Socialist Germany, as Freud's books were destroyed in book burnings (Schmiedt 17). When they resumed in the 1950s and 1960s during the post-Holocaust period, the primary importance of Goethe's biographical details had lost its appeal (18). Schmiedt reviews the development of *Werther's* psychoanalytic reception in the context of the general advancement of psychoanalytic approaches of Carl Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler, and Jacques Lacan (6). His book contains applications of these approaches

Many studies on writing and reading have been helpful to the present investigation. Jochen Schmidt's "Pathologie des genialischen Subjektivismus: 'Die Leiden des jungen Werthers,'" (1985) does not believe that literature has an educational purpose; Werther quotes others when he means it himself (331). Hans Rudolf Veget's "'Die Leiden des jungen Werthers' und seine Leser" (1985) is intertextual in his focus on Werther's interest and failure as an artist and a lover (61). In his research Veget studies Goethe's motivations as a dilettante. Different than my comprehensive study, Veget discusses only the best known intertextual references in Werther: Klopstock, Ossian, Homer, Lessing, and the Bible. Ulrich Karthaus states that critique in *Sturm und Drang* was through analogies (50). For this reason, my project is not limited to the heavily researched intertextual references, but also focuses on underrepresented areas of intertextual references in research, such as Oliver Goldsmith's *Der Landpriester von Wakefield*, Marie Jeanne Riccoboni's book, *Geschichte der Miss Jenny / Histoire de Miss Jenny Glanville écrite et envoyée par elle à milady, comtesse de Roscomond, ambassadrice d'Angleterre à la Cour de Dannemarck* (1764), fairy tales, and eighteenth-century scholars whom new *Werther* readers in North America and Germany alike no longer know. John R. J. Eyck and Katherine Arens in "The Court of Public Opinion: Lessing, Goethe and Werther's *Emilia Galotti*" analyze intertextuality in the historical role of the court in both Lessing and Goethe's works (40). They believe that Goethe writes *Werther* for those marginalized by the court (57). They correctly point out Werther's different set of work values, since he wants to be judged by his heart instead of the quality of his work.

In other twenty-first century research on writing and reading, Thorsten Valk's "Poetische Pathologie: Goethes 'Werther' im Kontext zeitgenössischer Melancholie-Diskurse" (2002) looks at the negative effects of music and poetry in *Werther* (19). Gerhard Neumann in his "Goethes

Werther: Die Geburt des modernen europäischen Romans” (2000) approaches the text much less from the psychoanalytic literary perspective than Valk, through his focus on modernity in Goethe's novel. Neumann focuses on the tension between social contracts and the subject at the end of the eighteenth century (16). Cairiona Ó. Dochartaigh's “Goethe’s Translation from the Gaelic *Ossian*” in *The Reception of Ossian in Europe* (2004) discusses the paramount role Goethe's translation played in popularizing Ossian within Germany (156, 160). Meredith Lee's *Displacing Authority: Goethe’s Poetic Reception of Klopstock* (1999) perceives Goethe's translation of Ossian as Klopstockian in nature (172-173).

In “Geniekult im Sturm und Drang” (1980), Gerhard Sauder discusses how the authors of *Sturm und Drang* did not have a single unifying philosophical agenda: “Sie formulierten ihre ästhetische Konzeption in rhapsodischen Improvisationen, in Literatursatiren und in ihren Werken selbst. Die außerordentliche Funktion des Schaffens und die Bevorzugung des schöpferischen Aktes in den Reflexionen stellen einen bei aller Überschwenglichkeit bedeutsamen Beitrag zur Produktionsästhetik dar” (They formulated their aesthetic conception in rhapsodic improvisation, in literary satires, and in their works themselves. The extraordinary function of production and the preference for the creative act in the [textual] reflections portray a noteworthy contribution to the aesthetic of production despite the broad exuberance) (330). Sauder emphasizes the role the act of production played furthering the image of a genius.

In his study of reading and writing, Victor Lange examines what constitutes the languages of Sentimentalism, Piety, and *Sturm und Drang* in his “Die Sprache als Erzählform in Goethes ‘Werther’” (1964) (193-194). In this same time period Hans-Jürgen Schrader studies Goethe's and other *Sturm und Drang* authors' reception of antiquity in their writing from the 1770s (59). Klaus Scherpe in *Werther und Wertherwirkung* (1970) and Christopher E. Schweitzer's “Who Is

the Editor in Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers?*" (2004) are interested in the narrator's influence on the novel, though they differ in explaining the editor's role as separate from Werther's (Scherpe 26-27; Schweitzer 36). Schweitzer sees the narrator as an opinionated organizer of Werther's materials, who wanted to memorialize Werther (Schweitzer 33, 36). Scherpe focuses on the narrator's objective role in making the novel available to readership (Scherpe 26-27). Fritz Gutbrodt in his article "The Worth of Werther: Goethe's Literary Marketing" (1995) analyzes *Werther's* consumer demand as a product (579).

Many readers have taken interest in interpreting Lotte's Klopstock exclamation. The earliest writing/reading approaches already addressed the issue of gender. Johann Jakob Wilhelm Heinse, the publisher of the women's literary quarterly *Iris*, wrote in his 1774 review of the novel that *Werther* was for young women, who could relate to Werther (210). Goethe's contemporary Jacob Lenz interpreted Lotte's Klopstock exclamation as a joining of public literary hearts (Lenz 673). Richard Alewyn's twentieth-century interpretation has now become canonic. He believes that the reference marks the *Erlebnis* ("experience"), referring to the sentimental experience associated with the name of the poet (361). Though the reference was as unclear in the 1970s as it was in the 1770s, Alewyn suggests that it refers to Klopstock's ode "Die Frühlingsfeier" in "Klopstock!" (1979). In "Goethe's 'Werther': Double Perspective and the Game of Life" (1980), Benjamin Bennett addresses the textual reference to Klopstock's "Frühlingsfeier" in discussing Lotte's lack of literariness (*Double* 65). Meredith Lee in her 1999 chapter "Reading Sentiment: Die Leiden des jungen Werthers" explores Goethe's reception of his literary forerunner Klopstock (161, 162). Goethe's writing activity in some of the same literary genres and with thematic foci similar to Klopstock acknowledges the significance of Klopstock's contributions (Lee, *Displacing* 39-42).

Recently, gender/queer studies have been interested in outing Goethe. Susan E. Gustafson's "From Werther to Amazons: Cross Dressing and Male-Male Desire" (2000) begins by providing a concise overview of sodomy laws in Europe in the late eighteenth-century (167). She is interested in social codes as expressed through the role of male dress, such as literature depicting male-male clothes swapping and terms of endearment in letter writing (173). Gustafson's position, which she tucked away in an endnote, is that "sentimentalism constitutes expressions of male-male desire" (186).

I see the studies of antiquity in Goethe's *Werther* as a hybrid category of 'writing and nature.' I have added 'nature' here as an additional category to those which Duncan addresses, as nature is a central topic in Goethe's *Werther*. Two major new studies in this area are by Volker Riedel and Bernd Witte, who study antiquity's influence on Goethe, and its role in articulating his own awareness (98). Riedel's "*Der Beste der Griechen*" — "*Achill das Vieh.*" *Aufsätze und Vorträge zur literarischen Antikerezeption II* (2002) explores the general role of Homer in the eighteenth century and specifically for Goethe (97). Riedel does not see *Werther* as a modern Odysseus, since the *Werther*'s conception of the idyll collapses in the course of the story (67). Riedel does not offer an alternative of how he sees him instead. In his introduction to *Rückblick auf die Antike: Beiträge des deutsch-italienischen Kolloquiums Rom 1998* (1999), Witte addresses Goethe's development as a writer through his interaction with antiquity (Witte 8). He specifically argues that Homer is *Werther*'s *Urtext* instead of the Bible and that *Werther* misreads Homer (29-31).

Jochen Schmidt's "Pathologie des genialischen Subjektivismus: 'Die Leiden des jungen Werthers'" (1985) interprets *Werther* as the controlling writer, who decides how nature is projected (328). Schmidt and other scholars, such as Conrady, perceive *Werther*'s interest in

nature as only a means to himself (Conrady 220; Schmidt, *Pathologie* 323). Hans Peter Hermann's "Landschaft in Goethes 'Werther: Zum Brief vom 18. August'" (1994) discusses the relationship between Werther and nature in the novel. He analyzes the letter from 18 August 1771, concluding that the first person subject loses itself in a nature, which signifies its own meaning (369): "Die Tätigkeit der Natur hat den Menschen ergriffen und ihn nun seinerseits zum Objekt ihres Handelns gemacht" (The agency of nature has moved man and made him now on his part into an object of its action) (365). According to Hermann the main meaning of *Werther* is a reconciliation between man and nature.

Constanze Güthenke in her *Placing Modern Greece: The Dynamics of Romantic Hellenism, 1770-1840* (2008) does not explore Hellenism in Goethe's *Werther* but instead looks at Hellenism as a European phenomenon. Her general observations are helpful in understanding the impact Hellenism had on Goethe and his contemporaries. For example, Güthenke explains that Hellenism laid the groundwork for the aesthetics of modernity (12, 40): "Landscape and nature, as soon as we actively attribute a naïve character to them, that is, make them an object of our observation, are in fact already a modern cultural phenomenon, and that insight has the potential to guide modernity onwards to a return to nature on a higher, synthesized level" (31). Güthenke's idealist characterization of nature for the period complements other observations concerning nature more specific to *Werther*. The ideal in the period is not tied to heroic acts but to nature, as Gerhard Sauder explains in his discussion of the genius in *Geniekult*, for example (328).

III. TOWARD A DEFINITION OF INTERTEXTUALITY.

Graham Allen's comprehensive overview of the theories of intertextuality provides a

good starting point for my discussion of intertextuality in Johann W. Goethe's novel *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. In *Intertextuality* Allen summarizes the contributions by important linguistic, cultural, and literary scholars, such as Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes, and Harold Bloom who have conceived, shaped, and expanded the theories of intertextuality. I am interested in intertextuality, in so far as it will guide my study of tracing the explicit intertextual references in Goethe's epistolary novel *Werther* to other texts and authors. I use the word *intertextuality*, given the recognition and the openness of the term, as it allows for various contrasting interpretations. I am able to draw solely on Bakhtin's ideas for my understanding of intertextuality, instead of combining Bakhtinian ideas with those of Ferdinand de Saussure, as Kristeva suggested as her original understanding of intertextuality.

Though articles, books, and lectures result from studies meant to refine and describe the phenomenon intertextuality, each new study of it creates a new definition. For this reason, I find it important to return to the source. No discussion of intertextuality is complete without mention of Julia Kristeva, who in the 1960s French literary scene coined the term intertextuality. Kristeva's theory of intertextuality is derived from a mix of structuralist linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's ideas with those of the anti-formalist Russian cultural anthropologist and literary critic Michael M. Bakhtin, and is activated through the help of Freudian concepts concerning the subject (Allen 15). Kristeva introduced intertextuality at the same time as the inception of post-structuralism.

In her 1985 interview with Margaret Waller, Kristeva explains how she built on Bakhtin's concepts by including the syntactic and phonic fields of the utterance and by looking at the intrapsychic or psychoanalytic findings concerning the author (190). The writer places himself or herself at the intersection of the polyphony, where distinctive voices interact within a culture

(190). Kristeva is interested in the “subject in progress” that is “re-created” through the reading of the text (190): “Personally, I found Bakhtin’s work very exciting, particularly his studies of Rabelais and Dostoevsky. He was moving toward a dynamic understanding of the literary text that considered every utterance as the result of the intersection within it of a number of voices, as he called them” (189). Kristeva’s 1960’s understanding of the Bakhtinian notions of linguistics and literary analysis differs from today’s, due to the plethora of studies on Bakhtin and the availability of quality translations of his writings (Allen 16).

In her 1985 interview with Margaret Walker, Kristeva notes that her interpretations of Bakhtin expand on his ideas while remaining true to them: “Whence the concept of intertextuality, which does not figure as such in the work of Bakhtin but which, it seemed to me, one could deduce from his work” (Kristeva, Interview 189). Kristeva’s sentence is footnoted to show that she is referring to his ideas in *Rabelais and His World* and *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (276). Bakhtin did not seem to agree with Kristeva’s idea of intertextuality, though. In his “From Notes Made in 1970-71” Bakhtin rejects the idea that the subjects in dialogue are open to recreating them through a psychological process, an idea which is central to Kristeva’s concept of intertextuality. His disagreement with Kristeva concerns her psychoanalysis of the the speakers: “These dialogues are conducted by unfinalized individual personalities and not by psychological subjects” (151). Kristeva’s concept of intertextuality relies on the ability of the reader and the writer to complete the literary subject through the process of reading (Interview 190).

Bakhtin expressed strong disagreement with the Russian Formalists and structuralists, making Kristeva’s psychoanalytic conglomeration of Bakhtin and Saussure’s ideas troubling (Allen 15). In his 1975 essay “Toward a Methodology of Human Sciences,” Bakhtin

distinguishes himself from the structuralists who narrowly focus on form: “Structuralism has only one subject — the subject of the research himself”(169). Bakhtin argues here that a “true understanding in literature and literary scholarship is always historical and personified” (162). Bakhtin is concerned with dialogue while the formalists focus on language from a linguistic standpoint (Holquist, *Dialogism* 68). His ideas reemphasize authors and cultures during a theoretical movement away from an author centered reading. Bakhtin's ideas challenge the embracement of the popular studies of language codes that belong to no one (Holquist, *Dialogism* 68). Bakhtin’s ideas articulate an alternative to Russian Formalism of the 1920s and then Structuralism in the 1970s (Polubojarinova 58).

Bakhtin equates literary texts as subjects' utterances in context, as they are a way of communicating knowledge (Holquist, *Dialogism* 68). This way of understanding literary texts considers the “social and historical forces at work when the text is produced and when it is consumed” (68). Bakhtin's ideas in this area might be considered hermeneutic, given the importance he places on the author's intentions. In a hermeneutic interpretation the author's intentions play a role (Spörl 132). Bakhtin’s focus on the author elevates the role of the culture in which the author wrote. Bakhtin believes that literature be studied within the originating culture: “Literature is an inseparable part of the totality of culture and cannot be studied outside of the total cultural context” (*1970s Notes* 140). Bakhtin’s idea of novelness (“literariness”) “is the study of any cultural activity that has treated language as dialogic” (Holquist, *Dialogism* 68).

In *Dialogism*, his monograph on Bakhtin, Holquist clarifies how Bakhtin’s ideas specifically concerning the novel provide the foundation for intertextuality. The intertextual characteristics of novels support an intertextual study: “novels are overwhelmingly intertextual, constantly referring, within themselves, to other works outside them” (88). Holquist further

explains intertextuality as a reference to or quote from texts outside of the page: “Novels, in other words, obsessively *quote* other specific works in one form or another” (Holquist, *Dialogism* 88).

Dialogism starts with the assumption that individuals are situated in a “master dialog of existence” (84). In this place, people determine meaning in communication:

Dialogism conceives that environment as a site of constant struggle between chaos of events and the ordering ability of language. The effect of order which language achieves is produced by reducing the possible catalogue of happenings, which at any moment is potentially endless, to a restricted number that perceptions can then process as occurring in understandable relations. What happens in an utterance, no matter how commonplace, is always more ordered than what happens outside an utterance. (84)

We interpret language outside ourselves by making sense of occurrences in narratives and literature. Language is a projection of the structure of self/other relations with the text as well as a tool for us to understand the ordering of the self. We are the other seeing the self of the text (84).

For Bakhtin dialogic components are related: “The main components of dialogism, such as self/other, author/hero, transgression, the utterance, and several others including dialogue itself, can be seen, then as tools for what is essentially an architectonic enterprise” (150).

Architectonics is explained as the study of relationships between entities (150). Bakhtin’s “architectonics of responsibility” is the subject’s time/space organizing perception of himself and of others, which serves as the framing condition of perception, building on Kant’s a priori (169).

Holquist’s observations regarding intertextuality and the literary form of the novel are grounded in Bakhtin’s ideas of texts’ interrelatedness. Bakhtin does not use the word *intertextual*, though he likely knew of intertextuality because of his familiarity with the structuralism. In the German translation of Bakhtin’s “Zur Methodologie der

Literaturwissenschaft” the word *Avantgardismus* is used, pointing to his knowledge of the French intellectual scene of which Kristeva was considered a member (Bakhtin 357). Bakhtin also does not use Holquist's word *dialogism* to explain his theory of dialogic communication, though Holquist applies it to Bakhtin's theories, and it has become synonymous with Bakhtin. *Dialogism* has become *the* word associated with Bakhtin, though Bakhtin names the phenomenon *interrelatedness*.

Bakhtin's concept of interrelatedness highlights the preeminent role of the dialogic relations in a literary work, as opposed to the linguistic links between texts that the word *intertextuality* implies. Bakhtin's notion of interrelatedness allows me to trace Goethe's specific references to outside authors, texts, and genres. I refer to Michael Holquist's standard English translations of Bakhtin's works as well as his accompanying explanations, as he is an authoritative voice on Bakhtin. I have also consulted Rainer Gröbel and Sabine Reese's German translations of Bakhtin.

Bakhtin was less interested in developing a new literary theory than in coming to an understanding of man: "...the questions he seeks to answer in his study are less those that occupy other historians of literature than questions about the nature of human consciousness under particular cultural and historical conditions" (Holquist, Intro, xiv). This is why Holquist explains Bakhtin's ideas on dialogism as: "an epistemology based on the assumption that knowing as entity (a person or thing) is to put that entity into relation of simultaneity with something else, where simultaneity is understood as not being a relation of equality or identity" (157). This is one of the main differences between his ideas and those who followed up on his ideas concerning literature. Holquist further explains: "Dialogism is an attempt to think through relations through human beings and the world, which relatively is a way to think about relations between physical

objects” (157). Bakhtin's interest in relations between literature and historical culture explains why his ideas concerning dialogue are not neatly packaged in one brilliant essay but spread out over several books, essays, and notes throughout his career.

Bakhtin looks at relationships between texts to understand their function. The term *text* is explained by Holquist:

For Bakhtin... literary texts are utterances, words that cannot be divorced from particular subjects in specific situations. In other words, literature is another form of communication... Literary texts, like other kinds of utterance, depend not only on the activity of the author, but also on the place they hold in the social and historical forces at work when the text is produced and when it is consumed. (*Dialogism* 68-69)

In his essay “Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences” Bakhtin expands on the idea of a text, equating it to an utterance. He explains the idea of an utterance, and its role in a textual dialogue:

The text lives only by coming into contact with another text (with context). Only at the point of this contact between texts does a light flash illuminating both the posterior (behind / rear) and anterior, joining a given text to a dialogue. We emphasize that this contact is a dialogic contact between texts (utterance)... (162)

The life of the text exists because of its overlapping dialogue with other texts, and a text's form depends on this interconnectedness. The text joins dialogues. The context of time in which the text exists gives it a temporal and spatial structure. Its beginning and end meet with other texts that precede and follow it. The content of a text is also shaped by the dialogue between it and the other, meaning in part the texts that precede and follow it. The dialogue also links the communication of ideas between the texts and shapes the dialogue. This spatial element is dialogic.

Bakhtin speaks to the novel's intertextual form. The novel's form allows various types of content, making it highly inclusive. He does not attribute the novel to a category of literary

genre, because the form of the novel's roots is borrowed from earlier genres: "The novel deprived of style and setting is essentially not a genre; it must imitate (rehearse) some extralinguistic genre: the everyday story, letters, diaries, and so forth" (1970 *Notes* 132).

Bakhtin's caution against labeling the novel as a genre stems from his view that literary genres are a withdraw from the dialogue.

Holquist recognizes the novel as a genre in *Dialogism*, even stating that while other genres also make explicit reference to other texts that the genre of the novel has its origins in intertextuality: "However, none of these [other genres] is so completely dependent as the novel on intertextuality for its very existence" (88-89). As Holquist implies, the novel is a genre in his comparison of it with other genres. I agree with Holquist. The genre novel is not a form of withdrawal from dialogue, as it encourages dialogue long past its publishing date. A novel's material is impetus for oral and written conversation in the classroom, in book discussion groups virtual and live, and between future readers and the text. Its contents are furthermore stimulus for newspaper articles, online reviews, radio talk shows, film screen scripts, and theater performances. The novel's ongoing life is reintroduced and communicated with each new reading participant. Our use of literary present tense in discussing its plot attests to its presence in dialogue. The novel is dialogue in written form, and we as the "superaddressee" continue dialogue with it.

Bakhtin's openness to readers' understanding allowed his ideas to be further developed by other literary researchers. Researchers' interests in Bakhtin's conception of texts, utterances, and "superaddressee" led to method to be applied to his ideas, and Kristeva's incorporation of Freudian concepts was one of many answers. Other versions of intertextuality range from Renate Lachmann to Gérard Genette and Roland Barthes to Manfred Pfister (Polubojarinova 57-

58). These studies attribute some aspect of acknowledgment to Bakhtin, though they tend to be structuralist or post-structuralist in nature, which is far removed from Bakhtin's original ideas (58): “Bachtins 'Dialogizität und strukturalistisch-poststrukturalistische Intertextualität sind also zwei ziemlich weit auseinanderliegende Dinge und, streng genommen, absolut inkompatibel” (Bakhtin's dialogism and structuralist-poststructuralist intertextuality are two considerably and widely different things and strictly taken, absolutely incompatible) (59). Bakhtin scholars, such as Vitalij Machlin, A. Kusnetzov, Sergej S. Averintzev and Ralf Grüttemeier, have already recognized this in an attempt to correct the incompatible ideas with little recognition (59).

By combining Holquist's and Bakhtin's statements, a basic working definition for my use of intertextuality emerges: intertextuality consists of textual references, which are in dialogue with each other through adjoining utterances and which can illuminate richer meanings with temporal distance. These utterance/texts may contain layered meanings, depending on the origin of the utterance. My method of research mirrors Bakhtin's general method of literary study. To reiterate: his research method involves trying to understand the work as the author did without “exceeding the limits of understanding,” namely without transgressing the author's perspective, and “to take advantage of one's own position of temporal and cultural outsidersness” (Bakhtin, *1970 Notes* 144). My intertextual study attempts to achieve this by 1) examining how Goethe understood his explicit intertextual references through looking at his known utterances about the authors and texts named in *Werther* in the corpus of his other texts; and 2) by drawing on that data to come to an interpretation of *Werther*; and 2) by drawing on that data to come to an interpretation of *Werther*. With my working definition, I devote the remainder of this introductory section demonstrating how Goethe fits into Bakhtin's model of dialogic relations and how Bakhtinian ideas are suited to examine Goethe's *Werther*.

IV. AN INTERTEXTUAL STUDY OF *WERTHER*.

Bakhtin wrote on Goethe, as well as on Dostoevsky and Rabelais. Bakhtin's ideas on the latter two authors are better known, and available in fuller form to readers. As a result, many Bakhtinian scholars have focused on the latter two authors. Bakhtin's writing on Goethe is the missing link, as the only existing manuscript of "The novel of Education and Its Significance in the History of Realism," in which Goethe's texts played a primary role, was destroyed in a World War Two bombing of the publishing house. Two titles have been found for this book, but scholars believe that only one work existed (Tihanov 228). The surviving essay "Bildungsroman and its Significance in the History of Realism of the Novel (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)" is a fragment of Bakhtin's opening section of the book (Holquist, *Intro* xiii). Tihanov also mentions a second Bakhtin work concerning Goethe: "Khudozhestvennaia proza Gete (Goethe's Literary Prose)," but it is unclear how much of it Bakhtin actually completed (Tihanov 228). Bakhtin was also considering writing a comparative piece on Dostoevsky and Goethe, according to data Tihanov discusses in his book (228).

As a bilingual literary critic who wrote in Russian but also taught German in different phases of his life, Bakhtin studied the primary texts of Goethe. Bakhtin's circle was familiar with "Dilthey's psychology and hermeneutics, Gundolf's books on Goethe and George as well as Simmel's Goethe book" (Tihanov 228). Holquist states that Bakhtin considered Goethe a very keen, rational observer who wrote monologic texts, contrasting him with Dostoevsky (*Dostoevsky* 272). With the concept of dialogue as an integral part of intertextuality this description of Goethe's texts could be problematic for my study. However, as Holquist points out in discussing Bakhtin's ideas in opposition to those of Koffka: "Even dialogue needs monologue" (Holquist, *Intro* xx). This shows the integral part monologue has in dialogue.

Furthermore, Bakhtin's interpretation of Goethe is based on his study of different texts other than *Werther*.

Galin Tihanov's *The Master and the Slave: Lukács, Bakhtin, and the Ideas of Their Time* (2002) explains the vital role Goethe had in Bakhtin's thinking. In Tihanov's chapter on Goethe he first addresses Georg Lukács's ideas to show their influence on Bakhtin. Lukács views *Werther* as a variation of a *Bildungsroman*: "The absolute centrality of *Bildung* (education) to Lukács's analysis of Goethe is evident in the fact that all his readings of particular Goethe works (*Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, and *Faust*) see them as variations of the genre the *Bildungsroman*)" (222-223). In his studies of the *Bildungsromane*, Lukács examined limitations on *Bildung* within capitalist systems (227). Bakhtin's disagreement with Lukács's socioeconomic focus of study can be seen in his rejection of studying literature to these ends (*1970 Notes* 140).

Bakhtin looks at Goethe's theme of *Bildung* as visible in the title of his study, "Bildungsroman and its Significance in the History of Realism of the Novel (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)." In this essay fragment he explores the novel's portrayal of the process of becoming. Here he cites many of Goethe's works, including *Italienische Reise*, *Annalen*, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, "Prometheus," "Der Ewige Jude," *Egmont*, *Faust*, both *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* and *Wanderjahre* novels, as well as *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*, though reserving the category of *Bildungsroman* for the *Wilhelm Meister* series (20). *Werther* fits into this scenario by being understood as the first literary example of the Enlightenment trajectory toward Goethe's later works (Vazsonyi 111). Bakhtin perceives Goethe as the main successor of the Enlightenment (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 27). Bakhtin states that in the second half of his book – that is, the section we do not have – he looks at how Goethe handles problems of time and

historical development (27). In the preserved fragment, Bakhtin explains the chronotope and the literary assimilation of time through his examination of Goethe's sense of time (27). Bakhtin believes that Goethe was an observer, as he visualizes historical time (26): “Goethe was averse to words that were not backed up by any actual *visible* experience” (27). Furthermore, “For Goethe the *word* coincided with the clearest visibility” (28). He imbued spatial contiguity with time:

The simple spatial contiguity (*nebeneinander*) of phenomena was profoundly alien to Goethe, so he saturated and imbued it with *time*, revealed emergence and development in it, and he distributed that which was contiguous in *space* in various *temporal* stages, epochs of becoming. For him contemporaneity — both in nature and in human life — is revealed as an essential multitemporality; as remnants or relics of various stages and formations of the past and as rudiments of stages in the more or less distant future (28).

Bakhtin is interested in Goethe's use of time in his texts to show emergence and development (28). Bakhtin explains that Goethe used time to make up for the coexisting multivoicedness, described above as the congruity phenomenon. By including the past, Goethe introduces a temporal multiplicity of becoming and thus formulates a temporal space that transcends epochs. There is an overlapping of the beginning and end, which is not dissimilar to the spatial extension of dialogic phenomenon Bakhtin describes with the overlapping of texts. Bakhtin sees events as connected: texts (utterances) interdependent on time. Bakhtin's existing fragment describes Goethe's general writing style as one which creates a present based on the past. This present furthermore extends to the future through movement. The time in Goethe's works is interrelated (30).

Bakhtin's published ideas about interrelatedness do not exclude an intertextual study of Goethe's *Werther*. The interrelatedness just has a different focus on time. In “From Notes Made in 1970-71,” Bakhtin states that only writers like Dostoevsky can understand the polyphonic struggle in great time (151). From this we may gather that Bakhtin valued the idea of great time,

which he believed that Goethe recorded in his writings. Bakhtin expresses this in his discussion of Goethe's ability to see a wholeness in the world as illustrated in his builder/creator type from his *Bildungsromane*, and in his description of the moving alps in his text *Italienische Reise* (*Italian Journeys*). Goethe's perspective encompasses a great time that captures the moving of mountains. Bakhtin cites Goethe's ability to depict movement in his texts as an example of representing "temporal stages of becoming" (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 28). In this case Goethe records that which is not visible to the eye.

Bakhtin also speaks very positively of Goethe's perception of time and space in his *Bildung* fragment (27-28): "He [Goethe] had an exceptionally keen insight into all visible signs of time in human life – from everyday time that is measured by the sun and the ordinary sequence of man's day, to the time of the whole of human life – ages and epochs of man's emergence" (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 31). Bakhtin values Goethe's skill at seeing time in space above other eighteenth-century writers who were also exceptionally fresh and clear in seeing time (30). He also distinguishes between ordinary time (German time) and organic Italian time, where Roman carnival is celebrated (31-32). Here the cultural context of a text shapes communication. For example, novels centralize language as opposed to multi-languages of carnivals (Kowalski, *Formen* 525). Goethe is able to interweave these times into historical time (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 32). Furthermore, locality is inseparable from this historical time (32). While Goethe did not mechanically connect the past to the present, he did not agree with the present time's estrangement from past times (33): "He wanted to see *necessary connections* between this past and the living present, to understand the necessary *place* of this past in the *unbroken line of historical development*... Everything has its *stable* and *necessary* place in *time*" (33-34). For Goethe, the creative past affects the present, and the past and present predetermine the future

(34). Goethe's vision is tied to place, as “a locality or a landscape in which there is no place for man and his creative activity, which cannot be populated and built up, which cannot become the arena for human history, was alien and unpleasant for Goethe” (34).

Realism is the direction Goethe moved toward, according to Bakhtin, though he did not uncover a fully Romantic component of time in Goethe's early or later works (36). His move to Weimar paralleled his further advancement of the realistic element (36). The future purged Goethe's dislike of past ghosts and even the uncertain present, as best seen in his latter works (36). A locality must be pulsing with human activity, since without it the space is lifeless (38). By *locality* I mean Bakhtin's conception of provinciality in literature. He explains the significance of provinciality as “the uninterrupted, age-old link between the life of generations and a strictly delimited locale—replicates the purely idyllic relationship of time to space, the idyllic unity of the place as locus for the entire life process” (*Forms* 229). Likewise, the human activity must be purposeful (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 39). Goethe's aim, according to Bakhtin, was to unite time with necessity: “An authentic vestige is a sign of history that is human and necessary. In it, space and time are bound together into one inseparable knot” (39-40). Goethe's view of Rome, for example, is a “great chronotope of human history” (40). For Goethe, “Everything in this world is a *time-space*, a true chronotope” (42). Goethe's general perspective, according to Bakhtin, is focused on the grand scheme of things: “Each image must be understood and evaluated on the level of great time. Analysis usually fusses about in the narrow space of small time, that is, in the space of the present day and the recent past and the imagined — desired or frightening — future” (Bakhtin, *Human Science* 167). In this way it distinguishes itself from the smaller interactions that Bakhtin believes are the focus of Dostoevsky and Rabelais's writing. These smaller interactions share similarities with those of sentimentalism.

In “From Notes Made in 1970-71,” Bakhtin mentions the phrase “Rousseau and *Wertherism* in Russian literature” in explaining that sentimentalism is a special case: “There are certain aspects of life and man that can be interpreted and justified only in terms of sentimentalism. The sentimental aspect cannot be universal or cosmic. It narrows the world, makes it small and isolated” (141). Here Bakhtin states how *Werther* is a special case from the ideas he explains in his fragmentary essay on the *Bildungsroman*. It is different than other works of literature and the general rules cannot be applied to understanding it. Bakhtin does not specify here if he means that it is different than other texts by Goethe or different than all other texts. It is unclear whether he means that his rules for Goethe do not apply or the characteristics of other texts do not apply.

In his *Bildungsroman* fragment Bakhtin mentions the “local cult” following *Werther* enjoyed, which he explains as a feature of the second half of the eighteenth century caused by literary works (47). This epoch was tied to a geographic reality for an event that occurred in real time (47). Bakhtin notes that the artistic person is used as a character in sentimentalism (47). The merging of time and space in locality are chronotopic (49):

The world and history did not become poorer or smaller as a result of this process of mutual concretization and interpenetration. On the contrary, they were condensed, compacted, and filled with the creative possibilities of subsequent *real* emergence and development. Goethe's world is a *germinative seed*, utterly real, visibly available, and at the same time filled with an equally real future that is growing out of it (50).

This quote from the *Bildungsroman* fragment shows how Bakhtin believed that provincial-novels were inseparable from development beyond the novel (*Forms* 229). Goethe was not the only chronotope author of the period, Bakhtin states that Rousseau was as well (*Bildung* 50). The essay ends though with homage paid to Goethe’s leading role in the development of real historical time (52).

Bakhtinian scholars S. Averintsev and S. Bocharov, who had first published sections of Bakhtin's prospectus of his destroyed *Bildungsroman* book as well as Bakhtin's sections on Goethe's concept of time and space in 1979, contend that Goethe's rationalist observer role is a necessary component in completing a dialogic evolution of the chronotope (Tihanov 227-228). Bakhtin defines chronotope as "the intrinsic connectiveness of temporal and spatial relationships artistically expressed in literature" (*Form Chronotope* 84). In Bakhtin's dialogic model, Goethe's works represent a rationalistic approach in the chronotope: "He completes the process of structuring of the ideological space begun in the Renaissance with Rabelais, replacing the directions of 'up' and 'down' with those of 'forward' and 'backward' from the 'past to the future' (Vlasow 52-53). Bakhtin describes Goethe's world as having a stable necessary place in time linked to locality that does not confine thoughts in the present but allows it to transverse the past (51).

Goethe's *Werther* is very different from Goethe's other novels named by Bakhtin. Werther's progress is the antithesis of becoming. The editor explains that Werther takes his life because of his inability to achieve professional or personal success (Goethe, *Werther* 211). He does not achieve balance through reevaluating his own ideals according to the standards of the times. Werther is a failure and anti-hero, who watches life pass him by after failed attempts at integrating into society. Werther scrutinizes time space through his reflections on Homer, but fails to advance after the moment to achieve the clarifying characteristic of *Bildung* between romantic ideals and practical realization (Tihanov 223-224; Goethe, *Werther* 151). His failure to accept a new spatial historical reality of an existence outside of the town of W., where Lotte and Albert live, is the opposite of becoming a docile, rational observer. He does not fulfill societal expectations of him, but instead lives the remainder of his life guided by his romantic-based

ideals.

Eduard Vlasov discusses how Goethe's role within the three planes in Bakhtin's model of *slovo* ("discourse") raises a question about the specific place of *Werther* in Goethe's oeuvre (Vlasov 56). *Werther*'s suicide at the end of the story suggests the inability of a rebellious youth to develop into a contributing member of society. It does not seem to present an observer's vision of mankind's evolutionary development, and, thus, is in direct opposition to the concept of *Bildung*. Bakhtin himself implies that *Werther* has a different set of rules than other novels (1970 Notes 141).

Vlasov wrongly downplays the importance of *Bildungsromane* and instead focuses on the prominent role science has in Goethe's work, explaining Bakhtin's understanding of Goethe's attempts to induct ideas of emergence in natural sciences. Bakhtin sees a connection between Goethe's notion of science time and visibility: "Let us simply note that in them as well concrete visibility loses its static quality and fuses with time. Everywhere here the *seeing eye* seeks and finds *time* – development, emergence, and history" (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 29). It sees beyond that which is readily visible.

Vlasov states that Goethe's writing style contrasts with that of Rabelais and Dostoevsky, because Goethe's evolving world differs from Dostoevsky's space of coexistence (50, 51). Many of Bakhtin's ideas on the polyphonic novel concern the style of Rabelais and Dostoevsky, and Goethe forms the third plane of Bakhtinian discourse (Vlasov 56). Vlasov offers a model which explains how Goethe's works compare to those of Rabelais and Dostoevsky, according to Bakhtin. In this model Goethe's works fit into an observer category. Goethe's works make observations on human evolution, which had started with Rabelais's carnival in the Renaissance. Dostoevsky's role in this model depicts *heteroglossia*, which controls *dialogism* and is the

condition that determines meanings in utterances (Holquist, *Imagination* 426, 428).

Vlasov's argument stems from Bakhtin's analysis of Goethe's ability to describe the wholeness in the world. Changes in nature are reflected in the development of man, and the world also develops as a result (Vlasov 50). The transformations within and outside of the hero occur simultaneously (51). For man to develop in nature, productive space is needed, as seen in Bakhtin's emphasis of it in his fragment on *Bildungsromane*; yet this is something that Werther fails to locate for himself (Bakhtin, *Bildung* 37). The message of Werther's lack of sense of locality is found in the implied metaphor of his inability to find a home with his mother and Wilhelm, in Wertheim, or in his travels. *Werther* is unable to shape boundaries for a harmonious experience. Instead the placement of *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* is an attempt to dissolve boundaries of time-space to show the continuity of the common man's challenges to reconcile irreconcilable boundaries. Werther dies, unable to succeed.

Vlasov's description of Goethe focuses on the more mature writer Goethe was to become when he wrote his *Bildungsromane*. Goethe scholars, Bakhtin included, classify the sentimental while rebellious *Sturm und Drang Werther* as much different in character than works composed within Goethe's Weimar period, when his ideas on *Bildung* take shape. From the manuscripts now available, we have little insight into how Bakhtin accounts for *Werther's* rebellious spirit, which is exemplified through Werther's suicide, even though its anti-authoritative actions makes it more similar than different to Rabelais's novels *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*. We also do not know to what extent Bakhtin was concerned with the epistolary character of the novel. Werther claimed a dialogic space for a rebellious voice of the common man, and this voice presented an alternative secular morality that challenged established institutions, such as the authority of the Church on moral issues (Siebers 119).

Goethe's tone in *Werther* rings with a striking similarity to Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*. Neither text voices official discourse and both are from one man's perspective. Werther's letters could be construed as a guide for other rebellious youth of what not to do, as the narrator himself warns in his motto of the second book, the "zweyten ächten Auflage" (second true edition):

Du beweinst, du liebst ihn, liebe Seele,
Rettest sein Gedächtnis von der Schmach;
Sieh, dir winkt sein Geist aus seiner Höhle;
Sei ein Mann, und folge mir nicht nach (original italics). (Goethe, *Werther* 917)

You bemoan him, you love him, dear soul,
You salvage his memory from disgrace;
Behold, his spirit signals to you from his cavern:
Be a man and do not follow after me. (Swales, *Landmarks* 15)

Despite this motto, Werther's anti-authoritative position countered the official positions of the Church and was blamed for leading to more frequent occurrences of suicide. Goethe's exploration of pain in the text also indirectly challenged the Church's stance on extramarital affairs (Maris 119). The novel was deemed as dangerous and officially banned in cities and countries, such as Leipzig and Denmark, at the time of its publication (Duncan 10-11). For example, the Kurfürstlich-Sächsische ("Elector of Saxony's") Book Commission banned Goethe's novel on 30 January 1775 in response to the demands of the Theological Faculty in Leipzig (Kiermeir-Debre 153). The Church's excuse for its condemnation of the novel was the book's influence over women:

Da die Schrift also üble Impressiones machen kann, welche, zumal bei schwachen Leuten, Weibs-Personen, (Eindrücke machen kann, welche) bei Gelegenheit aufwachen, und ihnen verführerisch werden können; so hat die theol. Fakultät für nötig gefunden zu sorgen, daß diese Schrift unterdrückt werde: dazumal itzo die Exempel des Selbstmordes frequenter werde. (Sauder, Intro 786)

Since the text can make a bad impression, which, above all awaken among weak people,

women, (can make impressions, which) sometimes and can become seductive to them; as a result, the theological department found it necessary to arrange that this text will become suppressed: since additionally now the example of suicide supposedly is becoming more frequent.

Werther's suicide functioned as a voice of rebellion against the Church and as such is dialogic: "Zwar gebe es auch in monologischen Gesellschaften verschiedene "Sprachen", doch seien dies durch die zentrale Position einer einzigen Weltanschauung (etwa der katholischen Kirche) hierarchisch geordnet" (Even though there are also different languages in monologic societies, these are but hierarchically ordered through the central position of a single worldview (for instance the Catholic Church's) (Martinez 433). *Werther* advanced dialogue through the locality that Bakhtin describes as typical of the period (*Bildung* 45). The Church was forced to address its message, and its banning of the book did not take hold. By buying and reading the novel, the reading public listened to this alternative voice.

The epistolary novel *Werther* profits from the general populace's favorable attitude of the eighteenth century toward letter writing. *Werther's* success likewise increased the genre's popularity (Mahoney 2). Letter writing became popular in the latter half of the century, as a way to express a culture of personal writers' experiences in their new sense of personal space (2). Letter writing empowered writers to personalize the unfamiliar in the new work space outside of the home (2). This new culture of letters paved the way for the epistolary novel's success, and Goethe's *Werther* appealed to this widespread audience of letter writers.

Despite *Werther's* role in popularizing the form, eighteenth-century scholars also discuss how Goethe's *Werther* went against the conventions of the epistolary novel (Boetcher Joeres, 188-197). *Werther* is one example of the form cited in discussions on the German epistolary novel, even if it is only to describe *Werther* as violating the form of dialogue between two letter

writers. Werther's story is told from the perspective of only one of the letter writers, his own, even though other letter writers presumably exist. Werther's letters respond to various other people, and Wilhelm is the intended recipient for the majority of the letters. Werther addresses subjects that Wilhelm has discussed in his own letters. Does his removal of the recipient of Werther's letters make the letters any less of a dialogue? In considering a more technologically advanced form of dialogic communication more common today, if only one side of a cell phone call is heard, does it mean that the call is monologic? Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres contends that *Werther* is monologic (172). She is not alone in this depiction. Most scholars agree to this term in describing *Werther*. Scherpe, for examples, discusses how *Werther* as an monologic epistolary novel differs from other forms of epistolary novels (26-27)

This depiction should not be confused with Bakhtin's perception of monologic. For him coexisting multiple decentralized world views are dialogic (Martinez 433). The tension between the expression of them is dialogic: "Bachtin meint mit seinem Begriff des Dialogischen also etwas anderes als einen Dialog im gewöhnlichen Sinne eines Zwiegesprächs verschiedener Sprecher. Gewöhnliche Monologe können 'dialogisch' im Sinne Bachtins sein und gewöhnliche Dialoge 'monologisch.'" (By his term *dialogical* Bakhtin means something different than a dialogue in the common sense of term [as a] lively discussion of different speakers. Normal monologues can be dialogic in a Bachtinian sense and ordinary dialogues monologic) (Martinez 433). The novel represents voices of the early Romantic through Werther and of the realist through several characters, such as Albert and Werther's employers.

Werther's irregular epistolary form, I contend, is the result of *Sturm und Drang* philosophy: an intentional break with epistolary convention. Werther's letters may be the only ones shown, but several other texts (utterances) compete with his voice in the novel.

McPherson's Ossian is the most extreme, as it manipulates Werther's own voice during his last meeting with Lotte (231-245). Bakhtin was concerned with the two-voiced word that serves two people at once: "Bakhtin erläutert das zweistimmige Sprechen zumeist am Verhältnis zwischen Autorrede und Figurenrede" (Bakhtin elucidated the idea of speaking in two voices mostly in the relationship between the author's and the character's speech) (Martinez 434). Ossian's violation of the novel concerns not only Werther's voice and Goethe's, but also Ossian/Macpherson's.

The voices of Goethe's sources also compete as intertexts for many of Werther's letters, though scholars have disregarded the functioning of authentic sources as a resonating aesthetic standard of the period (Siebers 120). Johann Christian Kestner's letter to Goethe describing Jerusalem's death from 2 November 1772 is an intertextual reference. The sentences "Von dem Wein hatte er nur ein Glas getrunken... Emilia Galotti lag auf dem Pult am Fenster aufgeschlagen;..." (He had drunk only one glass of the wine. Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* lay open on his desk at the window) are transferred nearly word for word from Kestner's original letter to the last page Goethe's novel (Sauder, Intro 778). The only phrase Goethe removes from the letter is "at the window." At the scene of their suicides, both Jerusalem and Werther have *Emilia Galotti* opened to some page. Lessing's voice is also present through the intertextual reference *Emilia Galotti*, as it creates an intertextual dialogue or *interrelatedness*. Goethe's *Werther* responds to these other speakers, who include writers, friends, and established institutions, such as the Church.

Letter writing was a form of *Bildung* ("education") that crossed boundaries: "letters also blurred the boundaries that were assumed to exist between public and private realms of life" (Boetcher Joeres 162). Boetcher Joeres explains that this has much to do with the event of reading letters aloud to an audience (162). This characteristic of the letter points to a dual role it

had as a messenger as well as a subjective form of expression: “the letter was also viewed as an object of communication as well as of self-expression, a dialogue as well as a monologue. It therefore usefully represents another eighteenth-century interest, namely conversation...” (Boetcher Joeres 162). For this reason, the letter, like the novel, is very close to spoken language and can incite spoken language.

Thus, *Werther* is dialogic in nature through its epistolary form. As the letter writer, Werther expresses his innermost private ideas for readers:

Es offenbart sich im Widerspiel zwischen den immer tiefer ins Dunkel des Seeleninneren sich verlierenden Erörterungen in den Briefen Werthers und den kritischen und befremdet anteilnehmenden Reaktionen des Adressaten von Werthers Briefen, des Freundes Wilhelm – Reaktionen, die zwar im Text nicht explizit werden, da Wilhelm niemals ‘auftritt’, aber jedem Wertherbrief gewissermaßen spiegelbildlich eingeschrieben sind – ein besonderes Kunstgriff Goethes, um die Überschreitung der Grenze zwischen Innen und Außen im Textgeschehen selber im Schreibakt in Szene zu setzen.

(Neumann, *Lichtenbergs Kritik* 13)

It reveals itself in reoccurring tension between the discussions in the letters of Werther, in which he loses himself to the ever deepening darkness of his inner soul, and in the critical and strangely irritating, passionate reactions of the addressee of Werther's letters, his friend Wilhelm's – reactions, which however are not made explicit in the text, since Wilhelm never 'appears,' but each of Werther's letters are in a manner of speaking inversely reflected – a special trick of the trade of Goethe's act of writing the scene to enable the transgression between the interior and the exterior limits of the occurrences in the text.

Werther is dialogic in nature, in that Werther both reacts to Wilhelm's responses and his action follows the practice of standard letter writing. In thinking about the basic form of a letter the following holds true. People write letters to connect to others. The communication stops a sense of alienation. Writing letters is a one-sided affair, though; it can open dialogue with another, but does not necessarily do so, since the communication with the other person is not simultaneous, and the receiver does not normally have to respond. Even the avoidance of a topic is a response, though. In Werther's case, he communicates with Wilhelm as seen in his response to Wilhelm's

letters, addressing subjects raised by Wilhelm and confirming his understanding of what Wilhelm has discussed. We are simply not privy to that information, because the other speaker in the novel, the editor, has chosen not to include Wilhelm's responses.

Goethe followed a basic framework for the epistolary novel to the extent that *Werther's* genre is definable; however, the epistolary form of Goethe's novel *Werther* only allows the readers to access Werther's side of the story. Werther writes the majority of the letters to Wilhelm and a few to Lotte and Albert, but their responses are also not included. Readers can only speculate on Wilhelm's specific messages through Werther's writing. Goethe's alleged rupture of the epistolary form did not change the essence of its form to an extent that the epistolary form becomes unrecognizable.

Werther's first letter from 4 May 1771 shows its dialogic element through its contents. Its four paragraphs can be broken down into the simple following thematic and categorical outline. The first paragraph contains a personal address to Wilhelm, his reason for leaving home, a promise to Wilhelm to better himself, and lastly, philosophical ideas about mankind. Here he establishes himself as a victim, and the tone of his writing flows between resignation and fate in addressing his reason for leaving home. The second paragraph concerns the family business and philosophical ideas about man's nature. The third reports on Werther's current situation, the charm of his new surroundings, and a description of nature. The last one in this letter is a comparison between city and nature and Werther's place in nature. His first two topics address Wilhelm specifically, whereas the last two are more descriptive of Werther's new environment. The letters are from his perspective and dialogic in nature. These characteristics could describe many letters, not just Werther's. Letters are dialogic, as they function as a medium of communication.

Goethe's choice of form in *Werther* differs from the standard for the epistolary novel in several ways:

Gleichzeitig tendierte der Versuch, auch im Roman das große Ich, den großen Kerl, die 'Extremität' vorstellig zu machen, zu einer Verletzung der Regeln des Briefromans: Das außerordentliche Subjekt kann nicht wie bisher mit anderen 'korrespondieren', es stößt allenthalben auf den Widerstand der Konvention, erfährt Widerspruch und schließt sich in den extremen Fällen (*Werther*, 'Allwill') aus dem Zirkel der sympathetischen Kommunikation aus (Sauder, Intro 771).

At the same time, the attempt also tended to breach the rules of the epistolary form in his novel through a presentation of the ego, the bigshot, deviation from social norms: [Werther, as] the exceptional subject can not correspond with others, as up until now, he pushes everywhere against the resistance of convention, experiences conflict, and closes himself in the extreme cases to the circle of sympathetic communication (*Werther*, 'Allwill').

Sauder highlights the style of Goethe's epistolary novel above, citing it as one example of an epistolary novel that it is extreme compared to a more standard form. The novel is written as a self-centered presentation, which Sauder suggests went against convention. Even though Goethe took these liberties with the form, Sauder reports the surge in popularity that followed the publishing of *Werther*; in the 1780s nearly one third of published novels were epistolary novels (Sauder, Intro 771).

Ellis Dye mentions that *Werther's* non-standard epistolary form may contribute to the lasting power of the novel: "There is a consensus that the book is revolutionary, whether in its novel use of the epistolary form (all of the letters are by the protagonist), in its infectious sensibility and rhetorical power, in its protest against class system, or, finally, in its challenges to orthodox theology" (80). The text is considered extraordinary in several ways, and the humanizing aspect of sharing private letters and journal entries contributes to the richness of the text:

From the Editor's account and from Werther's letters we can draw some inferences that

diverge from Werther's own judgments, but neither Werther himself nor the Editor is omniscient or infallible. Both augment the facts with conjectures, or fantasies, about Lotte and Albert and the other characters as well. Yet because there are two narrators and because the events reported by each lend themselves to a variety of interpretations, the reader is afforded a measure of independence, as is generally agreed (Dye 85).

The narrator offers a rational second voice in the novel that contrasts with Werther's ranting. This understated voice responds to Werther on several occasions, but these asides can be easily overlooked given the force of Werther's emotionally-driven messages. For example, the editor adds two footnotes. By choosing to express himself not in the main body of the text, his voice appears as part of the structure of the text. His hand in shaping the text may be less obvious, but it is equally, if not more, important in how the reader understands the content. The editor has chosen which letters to include; the entire story is framed by his editor, as he draws from these various sources to collect and present Werther's story (Hein 41). He may have even left out certain ones. Additionally the editor interjects his own response throughout the novel. Even if the reader chooses to read over the editor's comments, the editor's comments remain, taking some attention away from Werther. The novel's inclusion of a reliable witness contributes an element of fiction. This combined form of narration is additional evidence that the form of the novel is not monologic.

Letter writing was also seen as advancing educational ideals. The function of the letter, Boetcher Joeres states, was to serve the "creation of bourgeois man, an individual, optimistic, autonomous individual who would represent the positive progressive ideas of Enlightenment thinkers" (164). Boetcher Joeres's study points to the unisex nature of the letter: "Both women and young people were encouraged to write letters, for letter-writing was viewed as good training for the maturation process that Kant found so central to his concept of Enlightenment" (161). Women's personal letters in the seventeenth and eighteenth century influenced the shape of the

epistolary novel. Women may have been the primary writers of letters, but men were the ones who borrowed from this feminine form to shape novels to reach and teach them. In the view of Enlightenment writer Christian Fürchtegott Gellert (1715-1769), letters were a tool to educate women (Boetcher Joeres 162). The dialogic form of the epistolary novel speaks to a larger element of gender. It offered an alternative prototype of *Bildung* in the eighteenth-century discussions of education. The epistolary novel offers an alternative less masculine *Bildungsroman*, preceding the more traditional form as exemplified later in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's* series. The epistolary novel is not designed around the builder, who is offered as the ideal male creator image of Goethe's later writings.

In Werther's case, however, all of the letter writing was for naught. Werther is an anti-hero, who portrays an unlikely professional or personal model for success: unemployed and homeless in the town without family, he falls for Lotte, a woman who has already been promised to another (121). He does not grow from the activity of letter writing but instead kills himself. His death criticizes the value of activities shown to be worthwhile in achieving an enlightened stage.

To reiterate Bakhtin's perception of Goethe's *Werther*, *Werther* is distinctively different from Goethe's later *Bildungsromane*, which were the focus of Bakhtin's fragmented study, as seen in his "From Notes Made in 1970-71." Here *Werther* is listed as a text of sentimentalism, not a *Bildungsroman* to be associated with Realism.

Werther's tone shares characteristics with Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, as the story is narrated by one person. Less monologic than Dostoevsky's work, the editor in *Werther* offers an understated second voice in the novel. But Bakhtin does not seem to mean monologic in that way: Dostoevsky as well as *Werther* offer more than one authoritative

perspective, and authority is challenged by the novel *Werther*.

Bakhtin's writings from the 1920s to the 1970s function as the foundation for my concept of intertextuality. According to Bakhtin, the intertextual references are not merely impersonal codes but meta-discourse between *Werther* and authors and other protagonists and texts, and between Goethe and other authors and texts. Whereas leading thinkers in the field accept and promote Bakhtin's philosophical principles concerning dialogue as a part of intertextuality, Bakhtin's ideas alone serve as an appropriate theoretical model for my intertextual study.

CHAPTER 1: KLOPSTOCK'S DECANONIZATION.

The intertextual references in *Werther* to Klopstock on 16 June 1771 and to Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* on 24 December 1772 provide a framework for the story of Werther's relationship with Lotte. Their relationship commences on 16 June 1771, the night of the ball, when Lotte exclaims the name of Klopstock, the most prominent eighteenth-century German poet (Goethe, *Werther* 53). Her mention of Klopstock shapes Werther's feelings for her. At the end of the book, the German eighteenth-century play *Emilia Galotti* is found left open by Werther at his deathbed. His suicide marks the end of their relationship and the close of the story (Goethe, *Werther* 265). Werther and the editor narrate their story in between these references.

Each of the references - *Emilia Galotti* and Klopstock - has its own individual meaning and function in the novel. These two intertextual references also contrast with each other. They speak to larger issues outside of the plot of the novel, specifically the formation of the German literary canon. To argue this point through my discussion of Klopstock in this chapter, I begin by addressing the historical development of the German literary canon. Then I review background information on the now largely forgotten Klopstock before studying the intertextual references in Goethe's novel. I examine references to Klopstock in both the 1774 and the 1787 versions and discuss the difference between the two from a literary standpoint and then in the context of Goethe's statements concerning Klopstock outside of *Werther*. My review of the secondary literature of this intertextual reference shows how Lotte's exclamation of Klopstock has been understood in German studies and how that understanding has actually led to a change in Goethe's novel. In several editions, footnotes have been added to explain the reference from the 1787 version. They explain that Goethe means the ode "Frühlingsfeier," demonstrating how this

interpretation has become canonical. My research has led to a different conclusion and cannot support this generally accepted interpretation.

What Lotte intended by her Klopstock mention remains ambiguous in the original 1774 version of *Werther*. The second *Werther* version from 1787 is interpretable, given the changes Goethe made to the reference; here *Werther* clarifies how readers are to understand what Lotte said. A comparison between the 1774 and the 1787 versions demonstrates the diverging function of the reference to Klopstock. Background information on Goethe's relationship with Klopstock helps to explain the reason for this textual change. Goethe's changes were based on his deteriorating opinion of Klopstock after their falling out in 1776. His subtle criticism of Klopstock in the 1787 version of *Werther*, the one that is commonly read and researched, mirrors his other criticisms of Klopstock in his poetry, letters, and entries from *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.

While the intertextual references to Klopstock and to Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* function in contrast to each other in Goethe's novel *Werther*, the two authors share the distinction of establishing the early German literary canon (Hohendahl 146). Their roles as authors of great German works imbue Goethe's references to them in *Werther* with meaning that transcends as well as elevates Goethe's text. Goethe places *Werther* within this literary framework of renowned eighteenth-century German writers to situate his novel between these already eminent writers. Through writing *Werther*, Goethe, at the age of twenty five, made his shining debut as a novelist in the fragmented German literary scene (Duncan 1).

Goethe was strongly impressed with Lessing's advancement of literature to new heights. In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, third part, thirteenth book, he explains that Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* raised the literary bar: "Den entscheidendsten Schritt jedoch tat Lessing in der *Emilia Galotti*, wo die Leidenschaften und ränkevollen Verhältnisse der höheren Regionen schneidend und bitter

geschildert sind” (Lessing took the most decisive step yet in *Emilia Galotti*, where passions and scheming relations of higher regions of authority are poignantly and bitterly displayed) (619).

The impact of Lessing’s contributions was generally seen alongside the influence that Klopstock and Wieland exerted in the second half of the German eighteenth-century writing (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 12).

Goethe also acknowledged Klopstock as a literary forerunner in his 9 November 1824 discussion with Johann Peter Eckermann: “Unsere Literatur, sagte er, wäre ohne diese gewaltigen Vorgänger das nicht geworden, was sie jetzt ist” (Our literature, he said, would not have become what it is now, had it not been for these powerful predecessors) (Eckermann 122). Many scholars since the nineteenth century have tended to qualify Klopstock’s contributions as a process of development on the path to Goethe’s *oeuvre* (Lee, *Displacing* 4-5). Goethe’s above quote is not to be misread as an attempt to downplay Klopstock’s accomplishments, given that Herder and Klopstock are the other forerunners Goethe refers to in this discussion. Goethe’s inclusion of Herder qualifies Goethe’s statement as praise, as his relationship to Herder was strong (Goethe, *Dichtung* 438-446).

I discuss Klopstock and Lessing together in the current and following chapters, as they chronologically preceded Goethe, and their realm of influence encompassed him and his generation. Both Klopstock and Lessing published belles-lettres in German, contributing to the transition of the German language into an aesthetically sophisticated literary language that critically question social standards: “Und in diesem Grenzgängertum [Grenze zwischen Werk und Autor, Autor und allgemeinem Sprachgebrauch, und zwischen sich, Gott, Welt und Vaterland] ist Klopstock auch Goethe vergleichbar, obwohl es natürlich zum Teil andere Grenzen sind, die dieser Autor überschreitet” (And in this crossing of borders [borders between the work

and author, author and common use of language, and between oneself, God, the world, and the fatherland] Klopstock is comparable to Goethe, although to some extent there are certainly other borders, which this [latter] author crosses) (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock und Goethe* 19). Goethe followed Lessing and Klopstock, distinctively advancing German literary culture (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock und Goethe* 9, 15-16). *Werther* was one of the first literary examples of what to expect from Goethe, becoming not only a literary masterpiece, but also Goethe's first recognized contribution to the early German canon.

Goethe situated *Werther* alongside the Western classics of his youth by referring to these other texts throughout the novel. *Werther* frequently refers explicitly to such authors as Ossian and Homer, while *Emilia Galotti* and Klopstock are each mentioned only once. Precisely for this reason, Klopstock and Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* are remarkably powerful references, which the young Goethe intentionally mentions in *Werther*. As two of the most highly respected German writers of Goethe's generation, Lessing and Klopstock's works were both popular and part of the canon.

The definition of canon from the *Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft* can be summarized as texts deemed noteworthy in their ability to serve as models within a discipline and therefore required reading (Rosenberg 224). According to Rosenberg's longer definition a canon is

In der Literaturwissenschaft der Bestand an literarischen Texten, deren Kenntnis zu einer bestimmten Zeit im Rahmen einer Nation oder eines Kulturkreises als obligatorisch für den Ausweis von (literarischer) Bildung galt (Bildungskanon). (Rosenberg 224)

In literary studies the corpus of literary texts, the knowledge of which functioned, at a specific time in the framework of a nation or a cultural circle, functioned as obligatory for the identification of cultural literacy (educational canon).

The way in which the texts were selected to be part of the initial literary canon is not explored in

detail in the *Reallexikon*, though criticism of the canon from the 1960s is discussed there (226). The word *Literaturwissenschaft* (“literary criticism”) in the above definition implies that the selection process of texts is scholarly (Weimar 485). A scholarly selection of literary texts shapes the consciousness of a cultural community at a moment of historical time, which in turn serves an identification with a cultural nation.

The literary canon in Germany in the mid-eighteenth century was anything but German. It consisted of a list of works from noteworthy Greek Hellenistic grammarians. Later in its development, writers from the Roman late antiquity, the Christian Middle Ages, and Humanism were added (Rosenberg 225). At Schul-Pforta between 1739-1745, when Klopstock attended it, the school taught a literary canon that was void of German writers.

Zu diesem schöpferisch machenden Textfundus gehörten vor allem die Bibel, herausragende lateinische und griechische Dichter und Redner (so Vergil, Homer, Horaz, Demosthenes, Cicero), aber auch ein umstrittenes Hauptwerk der modernen europäischen Literatur, John Miltons Epos “Paradise Lost”, das 1667 in deutscher Übersetzung erschienen war. (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 23)

Included in this inventively constructed corpus of texts were first and foremost the Bible, exemplary Latin and Greek poets and orators (such as Virgil, Homer, Horaz, Demosthenes, Cicero), but also a controversial major work of modern European literature, John Milton’s epic “Paradise Lost,” which in 1667 was published in German translation.

Not until the 1770s were German authors added to the literary canon in some German kingdoms and municipalities: “Allmählich kamen einzelne Werke deutscher Schriftsteller hinzu. In einer kursächsischen Schulordnung wurden schon 1773 auch ‘die besten Werke der Nationalschriftsteller’ zur Lektüre verordnet. Ähnliches sah eine Verfügung von 1775 für die habsburgischen Länder vor” (Gradually individual works by German writers were included in the canon. The best works by national writers were assigned as reading already by 1773 as part of the Electoral Saxon school curriculum. A 1775 directive for Habsburg states was similarly

designed) (Rosenberg 225). This quotation highlights the relationship between what was taught in the schools and the literary canon. Some concept of canonical works existed and was considered important enough to be taught in schools.

Male writers created the texts that consisted of the initial German canon. Men, such as Wilhelm Dilthey, Herman Hettner, Wilhelm Scherer, and Julian Schmidt, determined what would be included in the nineteenth-century German canon (Hohendahl 145-147). Their work led to a classification of quality, as it is an inherent bi-product of the process of literary documentation. Selecting what literary texts to include was the first step in recording them (140). Women were not central to this process of selection, mirroring the lack of significance they were deemed to have as writers. Women writers from Goethe's period were not taken seriously, for example, but instead described by the biographical relationship they had with Goethe (Wallenborn 11). Dilthey, who had considerable influence on the creation of the German canon, allegedly omitted Heine and Forster intentionally, as they did not, in his view, transcend historical determination: "Only texts which are seen as both German and of literary value belong to this canon" (Peitsch 61). Women may not have been intentionally excluded, as their writing was not taken seriously. They also played no role in documenting literary history either as the documented or documenter, despite their role as readers and writers.

In recording this material, Dilthey looked at the relationships between the literary epochs of Enlightenment, Classicism and Romanticism, instead of recommending new authors to be included (Hohendahl 147). Hohendahl explains that the real meaning of Classicism vs. Romanticism was misinterpreted: "The real concern was the establishment of a national literary order, the determination of an independent national tradition clearly set apart from other national traditions" (143). Dilthey grounded the literary canon in historical constructs, in distinguishing

between ‘cultural history’ (*Kulturgeschichte*) which studies how authors and works are ‘historically determined’ (*Bedingtheit*) and ‘history of the spirit’ (*Geistesgeschichte*) which devotes itself exclusively to those works of literature which supposedly “transcend any historical determination” (Peitsch 61). Dilthey’s ideas concerning the canon were persuasive given that they combined history and literature: “Historical explanation and aesthetic evaluation come together in an idea of Germanness which is seemingly derived only from the works of the great poets and philosophers: ‘We grasp what it was that so powerfully and so rightly moved the nation’” (63). However, Goethe consistently denied that Germany was ripe for a literary canon, void of a national unity (Hohendahl 142).

Hohendahl argues that uncertainty existed during Goethe’s times about his impact as well as those of his contemporaries on a developing German literary canon: “Although in the late eighteenth century and even during the time of early Romanticism there was still general uncertainty about the canon of German literature, by about 1850 the tradition had been established” (Hohendahl 146). Goethe even questioned the ability of the Germans to create a literary canon without a cultural center (Goethe, *Sanscülottismus* 322). The cultural urban centers, such as Berlin under Frederick the Great, supported a Francophile orientation (Schmidt 288). Goethe’s efforts in a smaller, developing cultural center like Weimar offered an alternative and counterbalance to the French orientation predominant in Germany.

Klopstock had suggested a plan to make Vienna a cultural center with the intent that writers could achieve financial independence. The Austrian empire did not execute his proposal, which led him to print it in his journal *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 84). Through this journal he achieved a level of artistic independence and established a forum to publish his own articles on art and literature (76). His journal was available through

direct subscriptions. This idea was new and served as an alternative model for writers to lessen their dependence on patronage. Goethe was one of the few writers who recognized the innovation of Klopstock's ideal: "Goethe z. B. gehörte zu den wenigen, die darin die poetologischen Einlagen als Ausdrücke eines verwandten seelenerneuernden Ursprünglichkeitsdenken begeistert aufnahmen" (Goethe, for example, belonged to the few who enthusiastically acknowledged the poetic inserts [literally] as expressions of related spiritually-renewing original thinking) (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock und Goethe* 9). In his 4 July 1774 diary entry Goethe complains how no one recognizes the importance of Klopstock's journal, blaming the readership: "Mit Klopst<ocks> Gel<ehrten> Rep<ublik> ist die ganze Welt unzufrieden, es versteht sie kein Mensch. Ich sah wohl voraus was für eine erbärmliche Figur das herrliche Buch in den Händen aller Welt machen würde" (The whole world is dissatisfied with Klopstock's Gel<ehrten> Rep<ublik>; no one understands it. I certainly saw in advance how the beautiful book would be miserably represented in the hands of the world) (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 377). Goethe's positive reaction to Klopstock's advancement in the realm of artistic freedom confirms Goethe's respect for Klopstock.

Though the Germans may not have had a national cultural center, *Werther* played a role in shaping the concept of a national canon, as attested by its recognition at home and abroad. Graf Christian von Stolberg from Copenhagen wrote to Voß on 31 December 1774 concerning *Werther*: "Das ist ein rechtes National-Buch. Denn wahrlich Niemand als ein Deutscher konnte es schreiben, und kein Anderer kann es nachempfinden" (That is a real national book, because truthfully no one but a German could write it, and no one else can relate to it) (*Zeitgenossen* 102). Men of other nationalities also recognized the important German character of the book. Johann Rudolf Frey, a first lieutenant in the French military, also places *Werther* in the context of

German national literature in his 13 April 1775 letter to Isaak Iselin, a town-clerk in Basel, Switzerland: “Die Deutschen machen große Schritte in der Gattung des Romans. Haben Sie die ‘Leiden des jungen Werthers’ gelesen?” (The Germans are making major progress in the genre of novel. Have you read “The Sorrows of the Young Werther”?) (Frey, *Zeitgenossen* 123). These letters point to how Europeans instantly recognized the importance of the place of Goethe’s *Werther* within the developing canonical national German literature: “Until now the epoch between 1770 and 1830 has been regarded as the peak of German literature, when its most important works were written, works that later became models and acquired canonic status. But the writers of that epoch did not see themselves in this light” (Hohendahl 141). Goethe had to realize the impact of *Werther*, even if he really did not perceive the long standing value that would be attributed to *Werther* as part of the canon. Goethe may not have been confident of *Werther*’s value when he published it anonymously in 1774, but he certainly was during his revisions for his 1787 version.

Arguably, Goethe must have known what wide reaching impact *Werther* had by 1775, when Himburg sent him an unauthorized copy of the novel. Goethe decided to publish his *Schriften* (“the body of preexisting works on a given topic”) in addition to revising *Werther* (Luserke 137-138). Goethe explained in a letter to Kestner from 2 May 1783 that his revisions were taking longer than he had expected given the excitement *Werther* had generated (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 480). Bode’s book, including letters and journal entries of Goethe’s contemporaries concerning *Werther*, also presents an compilation of the dialogues created by the book (*Zeitgenossen* 60-61, 64, 69-70, 72, 76-96). Furthermore, *Werther* was translated into French in 1775 and English in 1779 (Swales, *Landmarks* 11): “It was an explosive success, the first great European best-seller to come out of Germany” (Swales, *Reading* 3). It was the first

German novel to be translated into Chinese (Duncan 1). Goethe certainly saw the long reaching effect *Werther* had during his lifetime, as it created immediate consumer demand: “*Werther* was the first work of German literature to become something like a name brand” (Gutbrodt 579). Goethe benefited from the *Werther-effect*, receiving a residence and a high ranking ministerial post in Weimar for his potential to create other such successes and bring honor to the court.

The name recognition of *Werther* abroad earned it the position of the first of several of Goethe’s novels to be placed within the category of German literature that would become world literature. Goethe’s consideration of how German literature would fit into a world literature was natural, given that the canon in Germany then consisted of world literature, as seen by the books Klopstock had read at Schul-Pforta: “Denn im Unterricht wurde die deutsche Sprache kaum gepflegt, deutsche Literatur nicht gelesen” (German literature was not read, as the German language was barely cultivated in school) (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 25). This is further attested to by Goethe’s own personal library. More than half of his collection consisted of literature of non-German origin; he had 448 titles of German literature by authors other than himself, and 576 titles from European and non-European authors (Ruppert 109-256).

Goethe discussed “Epoche der Weltliteratur” with Eckermann in January and in March of 1827 (Eckermann 193). Goethe did not give a specific definition of the term *Weltliteratur* (“World literature”), though he used the term with frequency to express giving and receiving in intellectual discourse (Shimizu 12, 28). In critical editions editors explain Goethe’s concept of world literature as an exchange process and a dialogue through translations, discussions (including written), and personal contact: “‘Weltliteratur’ im Sinne Goethes meint internationale und interkulturelle Kommunikation” (With “worldliterature” Goethe means international and intercultural communication) (Bohnenkamp, Kommentar 938-939). *Werther’s* worldwide

reception was a form of this international communication. *Werther* became not only a canonic text in the national sphere, but also in world literature. The novel *Werther* is filled with intertextual references to the greatest writers of Goethe's literary period and of bygone eras. Goethe's process of establishing himself among the literary giants begins with the mention of Klopstock and continues past the death of the protagonist. To be sure, these references are more than coincidental name-dropping.

Meredith Lee argues that *Werther* references Klopstock in order to show Goethe as Klopstock's successor (*Displacing* 162). Goethe wrote in some of the same literary genres with thematic foci similar to Klopstock, acknowledging the significance of Klopstock's contributions (Lee, *Displacing* 39-42). Lee sees the text's application of Klopstock as one step by Goethe to become Klopstock's successor. Informed by Klopstock's poetry, Lee analyzes *Werther*, for example, as being a means to an end for Goethe's goal: "Werther's final union with Lotte, like the initial moment of discovery at the ball, is completed in his imagination using Klopstock's poetry" (*Displacing* 168). To examine this claim it is necessary to look at background information on the person of Klopstock before examining Goethe's precise placement of the reference to Klopstock in the novel *Werther*.

Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) was involved with accessibility of the written language on several levels, from linguistic developments, such as standardization of spelling and essays on grammar, to the development of a subjective language in literature. Highly influenced by his education at Schul-Pforta, Klopstock had begun developing his ideas for German epic poetry at the school (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 28). At the time, heroic epic was viewed as the most highly desired and demanding genre (28). One of Klopstock's most noteworthy accomplishments as a writer was his authorship of *Der Messias* (*The Messiah*), an epic poem

combining traditional and modern elements. The last volume of the *Messiah* was published in 1773, the year before Goethe published his first version of *Werther* in 1774 (Sauder, *Klopstock* 395).

Klopstock's writing directly influenced a generation of eighteenth-century young German writers, who later advanced the German language and a modern concept of literature. His patriotic writings were considered ammunition for youth's revolutionary aims in shaping its patriotic dreams. Klopstock tried to develop a national epic based on his knowledge of Greek ancient bards that communicated a sense of glory for a German-speaking people who lacked a shared cultural lineage (Geese 26). Michael Denis (Johann Nepomuk Cosmas), an Austrian scholar, known for his poetry under the alias Sined the Bard as well as his translation of Ossian in German, saw Klopstock's use of the bards as valuable in compensating for the gap that Germans speakers had in a continuous literary heritage (26). Klopstock's poetry instilled pride in civic servants to create laws to protect German territory, who wanted to prevent future foreign influence. The educated youth and young civil servants learned about German greatness through Klopstock's epic poetry.

Klopstock's popularity can also be attributed to his revolutionary subjective use of language. Klopstock's impact was electrifying. His works communicated "...Die Überzeugung von einer fast magischen Kraft der Sprache, die Realität zu formen und zu verwandeln, ja, selbst Realität zu konstituieren" (The conviction that an almost magical power of the language allowed the formation and transformation of reality, even the construction of reality) (Kaiser 193). Klopstock's contributions were likewise grammatical, complementing the larger changes he made in the realm of inner subjectivity (Eibl, *Gedichte 1756-1799* Kommentar 988). He published several essays on linguistic issues, such as "Von der Sprache der Poesie" (1758), "Vom

deutschen Hexameter” (1767), “Ueber di deütsche Rechtschreibung” (1778), and “Grammatische Gespräche” (1794). Klopstock’s innovations led to several changes in the literary language. He created new words for the language, similar to the contribution of other members of language societies who aimed to replace French words with German ones (Hebeisen 22). *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* and his “Grammatische Gespräche” furthermore offered a grammar that had developed from his poetics. He suggested stylistic alternatives as well, such as breaking with standard rhyme in his poetry (Hebeisen 22). His essays, such as “Von der Sprache der Poesie,” were published alongside his collection of odes in 1751 and in 1771, showing the interrelationship between the literary and linguistic developments.

Klopstock was also beloved for his collections of poetry, specifically odes that broke with the traditional hexameter. The verse form narrowed the distance between the spoken and literary language by allowing poets the freedom to write as if they were speaking. Klopstock turned German into a literary language as a vehicle of self-expression, surpassing his predecessors:

Luther hatte mit seiner Bibelübersetzung die deutsche Sprache zur Sprache des Seelenheils gemacht. Klopstock bildete sie durch seine Dichtung zur Sprache des subjektiv zu bewirkenden, das heißt entdogmatisierten Seelenheils. Er schuf eine Sprache anspruchsvoller Innerlichkeit, eine Sprache göttlicher Geistes- oder Herzensfülle – eines erhebenden Ganzheitsgefühls. Die deutsche Sprache wurde ihm in einem Grade, wie bei keinem deutschen Dichter vor ihm, zum mitschöpferischen Lebensorgan der Seelenerneuerung. (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 87)

Luther had made the German language into a language of salvation through his translation of the Bible. Through his poetry, Klopstock cultivated the German language into a language of the instrumental subjective, meaning non-dogmatic salvation. He created a language of demanding inwardness, a language of divine spiritual or cordial abundance – an elevated feeling of wholeness. The German language became for him a co-creating living organ of spiritual renewal in a degree, comparable to no German author before him.

His language of inner subjectivity was spiritually rich, inspired by his feelings for women he had loved, such as Fanny, his cousin. Klopstock’s odes were popular among women, and his efforts

had an impact in the personal realm of self-expression. It shaped the language into a subjective national literary language. Klopstock's literary prototype was distinctively German and subjective.

Klopstock emphasized women's honor. By contrast Goethe presented Lotte as a more complicated individual. She is the feminine ideal in *Werther*, albeit through a filtered lens. Goethe's Lotte was a more inclusive picture of a woman who went along with a taboo love affair beyond familial development. Readers of Goethe's novel *Werther* relive Werther's meeting of Lotte at the ball, and they come to know Lotte through Werther's retelling of the evening. His account illuminates her character. Werther first writes of Lotte in detail to his friend Wilhelm on 16 July 1771, supplying plentiful details about the evening (Goethe *Werther* 37-54). Werther's tone underscores his excitement for Lotte; his account captures her vigor and the freshness of their first encounter.

Lotte is portrayed with a particular brightness. As the senior sibling, she is introduced in the novel as a substitute mother for her brothers and sisters. After she leaves the domain of the house, she is described as an educated woman, interested in German and other European literatures and dance. She enjoys dance, as exhibited at the ball, as well as in a later scene (Goethe *Werther* 45, 65). On the dance floor she expresses herself, displaying her physical attraction to Werther, though engaged to another man. She also exhibits leadership during the storm through her organization of activities to lessen everyone's anxiety (53). Later in the novel she also demonstrates her musical skill, as she plays piano on several occasions. The Klopstock reference is but one expression of her person.

In Lotte's free time she plays piano, reads, and dances. Lotte's desires are subtly expressed through her hobbies and her interactions with others. Lotte has a full range of

qualities, though her primary motivation as a person is caring for her siblings. Lotte is portrayed as selfless; when faced with a choice between her own desires and the needs of her family she elevates her family's needs above her own. We see this for example in her first encounter with Werther, as she is delayed in going to the ball until after she has fed her family (Goethe, *Werther* 41). Her devotion to her siblings is also stronger than her loyalty to her husband. She spends time with Werther alone, though this is improper for an engaged or married woman (231). Werther engages with Lotte on all of these levels. He, more than her husband Albert, celebrates the multifaceted aspects of her personality. Albert does not seem to encourage her to read, does not attend the dance with her, and does not help with the rearing of the children. On 16 June 1771, the night of the ball, readers are offered the richness of Lotte's person, and her mention of Klopstock highlights the complexity of her person.

Klopstock is an important intertextual reference for understanding Lotte, Werther, and Goethe. Werther makes the majority of the intertextual references in the novel, which are to Ossian, *Emilia Galotti*, Homer, and others. Klopstock is the most well known of the references Lotte makes in the novel. On the night she meets Werther, she exclaims Klopstock's name after the dance was interrupted following a loud thunderstorm (Goethe, *Werther* 51). The Klopstock reference follows a string of intertextual references to other authors that she names in the carriage on the way to the ball. In his letter to Wilhelm on 16 June 1771, Werther presents Lotte's stating Klopstock's name as the climax of the evening as well as the apex of the references Lotte makes. In discussing this scene, Duncan points out how Lotte and Werther's enthusiasm for Klopstock is an example of the phenomenon to form a literary public (8). Continuing this line of reasoning, the reference to Klopstock should be understood as a marker for Goethe to guide his readership on how to read his novel *Werther*.

Before her statement, Lotte explains how she, like the others, was scared by the storm, but felt much better after becoming involved in organizing a game to distract their attention from the thunder. In this context Lotte touches Werther's hand and mentions Klopstock, thus associating Klopstock to her emotion that leads her to touch him:

Sie stand auf ihrem Ellenbogen gestützt und ihr Blick durchdrang die Gegend, sie sah den Himmel und auf mich, ich sah ihr Auge thränenvoll, sie legte ihre Hand auf die meinige und sagte – Klopstock!
(Goethe, *Werther* 52)

She stood there, leaning on her elbows, her gaze penetrating the countryside; she looked up at the sky, at me, and I could see tears in her eyes. She laid her hand on mine and said, "Klopstock."
(Hutter 42)

Her physical gesture reinforces the power of her word. Her exclamation also comes across as harmonious with nature and Werther, as they are alone at the window when she speaks. She uses her body, as her eyes search the distance, before they land on Werther. Lotte's eyes tear "...ich sah ihr Auge thränenvoll ..." (52). Lotte's tears are connected to her act of exclaiming Klopstock's name.

Lotte's emotional stance shares a similarity to that of the eighteenth-century audience Klopstock describes in a letter to Maria Sophia Schmidt. As he read from his works, "Man hat mich mit Thränen belohnt" (I was rewarded with tears) (*Goethes Werke* 104). Lee suggests that tears were seen as the correct reaction to strong emotional feelings, and that Klopstock's texts were known to have this effect on women (*Displacing* 164). Lotte's touching of Werther's hand parallels her emotional expression and builds on their earlier physical unity as dance partners. The question must be posed of whether this act is symbolic, sealing an understanding between Lotte and Werther, whether the acts of touch and word functions as a ritual here.

Though readers learn a great deal concerning Lotte through Werther's initial meeting with her, they will never know exactly what she intended by uttering Klopstock's name. They know

that Lotte's mention of Klopstock is personalized; it is her understanding of what Klopstock is. They can only make educated assumptions, as Lotte never discusses Klopstock again, despite the role literature continues to play in her relationship with Werther. Werther and Lotte often read fairy tales to her siblings, and Werther mentions Lavater's sermon on Jonah to her and recites Ossian's lyrics at his last meeting with her.

Werther's reaction provides his interpretation of Lotte's exclamation to readers:

Ich versank in dem Strome von Empfindungen, den sie in dieser Loosung über mich ausgoß. Ich ertrugs nicht, neigte mich auf ihre Hand und küßte sie unter den wonnevollsten Thränen. Und sah nach ihrem Auge wieder – Edler! hättest du deine Vergötterung in diesem Blikke gesehen, und möcht ich nun deinen so oft entweihten Nahmen nie wieder nennen hören! (Goethe, *Werther* 54)

I knew at once of what she was thinking—and was lost in the emotions that this one word aroused in me. I bent down and kissed her hand, and now there were tears in my eyes too as I looked into hers again. Oh, noble poet, if you could have seen the adoration in those eyes! I hope I need never have to hear your name, so oft profaned, spoken again by any other lips! (Hutter 42)

Lotte's influence over Werther is remarkable. Werther is overcome by affection, as he cries while kissing her hand. Their Klopstock moment lingers, becoming preserved in Werther's mind. He now reserves Klopstock's name as a memory of his moment with Lotte, wishing not to hear the poet's name again. This moment caps their evening, making it even more important than their romantic journey home (*Werther* 55).

Goethe must have had a strategy when he had Lotte exclaim the name "Klopstock" above all other poets. Lotte and Werther's interest in Klopstock as a beloved author can easily be traced to young Goethe's inspiration from Klopstock. Goethe's inclusion of the poet's name points to a shared generational and cultural understanding of the famous poet. Benjamin Bennett notes that in the eighteenth-century German literary world Klopstock held a place as prominent as Shakespeare does for us today (*Double* 66). Similar to Goethe's novel *Werther*, which enjoyed a

cult following from the instant it was published, Klopstock's writings had also achieved cult status. Klopstock had a devoted following, which is attributed to his efforts to create a sense of German glory through the use of German for national epic poetry (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 111).

Goethe and his other contemporaries had many reasons to admire and attempt to follow Klopstock's example, not least his ranking as the leading eighteenth-century German writer, his cult status, his independence as a writer, and his overall influence on the language. Klopstock's *Messiah* inspired young people, which led Klopstock to be seen as a cult-like figure. His writing was seen as a marker of a new era of thinking, which sought to integrate the subjective into literature: "Damit war zugleich der Weg gebahnt für die Akzeptanz einer neuen Literatur" (With [*The Messiah*] the way was paved for the acceptance of a new literature) (Pape 582). Klopstock's ability to unify was enormous: "Alles traf in Klopstock zusammen, um eine solche Epoche zu begründen" (Everything came together in Klopstock to establish such an epoch) (*Dichtung* 434).

Well-known Goethe scholars and literary critics in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century offered a variety of interpretations of the scene from the 1774 version. Goethe's contemporary Jacob Lenz, for example, interpreted the Klopstock exclamation as a joining of public literary hearts (Lenz 673). In the nineteenth-century Karl Goedeke's interpretation precedes the *Werther* text in Cotta's 1866 and also 1893 critical editions of Goethe's works in *Goethes Sämtliche Werke* (1-6). While Lenz focuses on their union, Goedeke does not discuss Klopstock at all in his introductory commentary about the novel. The story concerning Werther and Lotte's relationship outside of the institution of marriage goes unmentioned. His introduction in the 1890s shows that domestic infidelity was not a prominent area in *Werther* scholarship.

Christian Friedrich Schubert in his December 1774 review of Goethe's *Werther* in the

weekly journal *Deutsche Chronik* discusses Klopstock. Schubert interpreted the reference to Klopstock as a way to develop a German national consciousness. It unites *Sturm und Drang* agendas with Klopstock's sentiment from his more patriotic writings, such as the trilogy *Hermann Schlacht* (Duncan 9). Schubert, one of Goethe's contemporaries, associated the Klopstock references to the *Messiah*: "Mir wars, als ich Werthers Geschichte las, wie der Rahel im 11ten Gesang des Meßias, wie sie im himmlichen Gefühl zerran, und unter dem Gelispel des mehrenden Bachs erwachte" (For me reading Werther's story was like Rachel in the Eleventh Song of the Messiah, as she dissolved into a heavenly feeling and awoke under the whispering of the expanding creek) (205-206). Schubert's association can be explained by Klopstock's popularity, which at the time was based on the *Messiah*, not his odes. Voß writes about the Klopstock mention in a letter to Ernstine Boie on 22 October 1774: "In Goethes Roman wird Klopstocks...erwähnt: das feinste, seelenvollst Lob, das ich kenne!" (In Goethe's novel Klopstock's... is mentioned: the finest, heart-filled compliment I know) (Voß, *Zeitgenossen* 77). He is vague about which Klopstock text is referenced.

Early reception does not mention a specific connection to Klopstock's ode "Frühlingsfeier," since the word *ode* was not in *Werther* until the 1787 version. A large percentage of twentieth and twentieth-first century Goethe scholars have promoted a connection between Klopstock's ode "Frühlingsfeier" (The Rite of Spring) and *Werther*, though, stating that during Goethe's lifetime the reference to Klopstock was understood to mean the ode "Frühlingsfeier." Letters and reviews written by Goethe's contemporaries do not support this understanding (*Zeitgenossen* 76-146).

In neither the 1774 nor the 1787 version does Goethe mention the poem "Frühlingsfeier." Lee, however, states in two different articles that there is a connection to the mention of

Klopstock and this particular poem. In a footnote, she justifies this association by discussing Goethe's knowledge of Klopstock's poetry: "At the time he wrote *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* Goethe was familiar with the poem in both its original and its revised version" (Lee, *Reception* 9). Goethe was familiar with Klopstock's odes as well as other writings by of Klopstock, and he likely knew of "Frühlingsfeier," even though he does not specifically mention it by name in the 203 online references to Klopstock (*Weimarer Ausgabe*). Goethe does, however, make reference to other specific odes, such as "An Cidli."

Goethe's own poems share thematic imagery with that in Klopstock's odes. Goethe wrote two versions of poems about roses and ribbons and Klopstock has an ode called "Rosenband," for example. Both writers discuss the importance of love in their odes. Klopstock's poems in the collection to which "Frühlingsfeier" belongs discuss death, dance, love, God, and nature. Many of the older poet's odes contain characteristics that mirror those of the ball evening in *Werther* and match general themes of love more closely than "Frühlingsfeier." Given the popularity of Klopstock's odes published in 1771, such as "Ode an den König," "Ode an Gott," "Der Eislauf," and another popular ode, "Das Rosenband," it is difficult to establish which of Klopstock's odes Goethe is referring in the revised *Werther*.

Despite the lack of hard evidence between the "Frühlingsfeier" and the mention of Klopstock, twentieth-century scholarship has promoted this idea. For example, Lee's research indicates that Goethe had meant the ode the "Frühlingsfeier," and that his inclusion of an additional sentence concerning an ode in the 1787 version serves the purpose of reminding readers what the earlier "self-evident allusion" was, given Klopstock's decreasing recognition (Lee, *Displacing* 161). She states that Goethe found it important to insert the word *ode*, because readership was already forgetting Klopstock by the mid 1780s (161).

My research does not support these arguments. First, the allusion was not self-evident; readers did not interpret Lotte's exclamation of "Klopstock!" to mean an ode, as seen from 1774 readers' reactions in letters and journal reviews. If one is compelled to associate the original reference in *Werther* to a text by Klopstock, though the reference in *Werther* does explicitly not allude to it, then, according to eighteenth-century reception, the allusion would have been to the German epic poem the *Messiah*, a work that led Klopstock to be recognized as the poet "par excellence":

Weitere Volkskreise, die durchaus nicht immer literarisch gebildete waren, hatten diese Idealvorstellung vom *heiligen Messias*-Dichter verinnerlicht. (Pape 581)

Broad groups of people, who were not necessarily well read in literature, had internalized this ideal conception of the holy *Messiah*-poet.

The *Messiah* ignited Klopstock's widespread public fame as well as controversy and, at least for Goethe, was memorable for this reason. Because of the *Messiah*, Goethe came to perceive Klopstock as nearly a holy person (*Dichtung* 435).

Klopstock set his sights high. He created the *Messiah* and proposed a plan to Kaiser Joseph in Vienna in 1768 to unite German-speaking lands culturally, thereby advancing German literature and sciences (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 80). This plan included financial support for writers to allow them to concentrate on their work and a subvention for a German theater (82, 84). Klopstock wanted to be remembered for his *Messiah*, as Hurlebusch outlines in *Hamburger Köpfe: Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock*, but instead the German national epic came to be the German medieval *Nibelungenlied*. Furthermore his patriotic trilogy: *Hermann und die Fürsten* (1784), *Hermanns Schlacht* (1769), and *Hermanns Tod* (1787) and his Vienna plan did not lead him to become the German national theater playwright.

Goethe explains in the first section of the first part, second book of *Dichtung und*

Wahrheit that he had to read the *Messiah* in secret, as his father disagreed with its message against traditional form (90). His father did not include it in his own library, although he had Klopstock's early works as a part of his collection, given his preference for Klopstock's lyrics (Goethe, *Dichtung* 90). Nevertheless, the young Goethe obtained and cherished a copy of Klopstock's *Messiah*, which he had received from a family friend, Rolf Schneider (Goethe, *Dichtung* 90-91). This difference in opinion between Goethe and his father concerning the *Messiah* points to a generational gap in its reception. Goethe later addresses this gap in *Werther*, which becomes the prized novel of his generation. Through his experience as a child with familial conflict concerning the *Messiah*, Goethe learned what it meant to write for the general public (Goethe, *Dichtung* 90). Like Klopstock, Goethe also transcended literary borders through his experimental writing form, which began through *Werther* in his early years (Herrmann 1).

In an 18 October 1774 letter from F. A. Werthes to F. H. Jacobi, Werthes remarks on what Goethe said after his initial meeting with Klopstock in late September 1774: "Ich fand einen edlen und großen Mann an ihm; weniger, wie auch Goethe sagte, den Verfasser des Messias als den der Republik" (I found him to be a noble and eminent man; less, as Goethe also said, the author of the Messiah as of the Republic) (Kleßmann 18). Goethe does not mention any association between Klopstock and odes, even though he had just written *Werther*. Instead he questions his own previous association between Klopstock and the *Messiah*. He is surprised by the personal impression Klopstock had on him. Goethe's own remarks immediately after writing *Werther* give further conclusive evidence that Goethe's image of Klopstock was shaped by his epic poem and not his odes. Now after having met Klopstock Goethe saw him more as the author of *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik*. Furthermore, Goethe does not discuss Klopstock's odes in his published letters between 1773-1774, leading up to his writing of *Werther* (Goethe

Briefe 1764 – 1775 282-374). Goethe was a prolific writer and had he meant for Klopstock to be understood in terms of his odes, he would have indicated this. He would have written about it somewhere before the reference 13 years later in his changed version of *Werther*.

The 1787 novel *Werther* revises what Werther had thought of Lotte's reference to Klopstock in the 1774 version. In the 1787 version Klopstock is associated with poetry, specifically an ode, which is "a long lyric poem that is serious in subject and treatment elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanzaic structure" (Abrams 198). The ode prototype is from the ancient Greek poet Pindar, and is encomiastic, or in other words, tributary (198). To reiterate, the original 1774 version does not associate the Klopstock reference specifically to poetry. The Klopstock reference is not qualified by a specific literary genre form, as seen in the original 16 June 1771 letter:

Sie stand auf ihrem Ellenbogen gestützt und ihr Blick durchdrang die Gegend, sie sah den Himmel und auf mich, ich sah ihr Auge thränenvoll, sie legte ihre Hand auf die meinige und sagte – Klopstock!

Ich versank in dem Strome von Empfindungen, den sie in dieser Loosung über mich ausgoß. Ich ertrug nicht, neigte mich auf ihre Hand und küßte sie unter den wonnevollsten Thränen. Und sah nach ihrem Auge wieder – Edler! hättest du deine Vergötterung in diesem Blicke gesehen, und möcht ich nun deinen so oft entweihten Namen nie wieder nennen hören!
(Goethe, *Werther* 52, 54)

She stood leaning on her elbow, her eyes searching the landscape; she looked up at the sky and then at me. I saw her eyes fill with tears; she laid her hand on mine and said: 'Klopstock!' I ... was overcome by the flood of emotions which she evoked in me with this name. It was more than I could bear. I bowed over her hand and kissed it, moved to the happiest tears. And I again looked into her eyes noble— poet! if you had seen the deep reverence in her eyes! May I never hear again from other lips your so often profaned name!
(Mayer 30-31)

In this 1774 version the first paragraph ends with Klopstock's name. The next paragraph describes Werther's reaction to Klopstock's name. We do not know what associations Lotte made to the name Klopstock, as she does not reply to Werther's response.

In contrast to Lotte, Werther discusses odes and Klopstock together. In the 1787 version, Lotte's utterance of Klopstock's name makes Werther think of an ode Klopstock wrote. In this version an extra statement about Klopstock's ode changes the intertextual reference. Below is the new section placed vis-à-vis the original, highlighted by my italics:

Sie stand auf ihren Ellenbogen gestützt; ihr Blick durchdrang die Gegend, sie sah den Himmel und auf mich, ich sah ihr Augen thränenvoll, sie legte ihre Hand auf die meinige und sagte – Klopstock! – *Ich erinnerte mich sogleich der herrlichen Ode die ihr in Gedanken lag und* versank in dem Strome von Empfindungen, den sie in dieser Losung über mich ausgoß. (Goethe, *Werther* 53, 55)

She stood leaning on her elbow, her eyes searching the landscape; she looked up at the sky and then at me. I saw her eyes fill with tears; she laid her hand on mine and said: 'Klopstock!' *I remembered immediately the magnificent ode which she had in mind, and* was overcome by the flood of emotions which she evoked in me with this name. (Mayer 30-31)

At first glance this change may seem insignificant, given that the altered meaning was not a cause for concern when the 1787 version replaced the best selling 1774 edition. The new text is noteworthy, as it shifts the text's focus from Klopstock to Klopstock's ode. With the 1787 version the question becomes which ode Werther means, instead of what is associated with the name Klopstock by eighteenth-century women, as expressed through Lotte. We do not know which ode is meant by Werther, however. This change in the text has been analyzed by scholars. Bernhard J. Dotzler, for example, addressed the change between the two texts in regard to the Klopstock reference in his article "Werthers Leser:" "Denn auch mit dem Hinweis auf 'die' Ode Klopstocks ist immer noch unausgesprochen, daß Die Frühlingsfeier damit gemeint ist" (Even with the reference to *the* ode of Klopstock the text does not say that the "Frühlingsfeier" is meant) (457). The ode mentioned by Werther in the 1787 does not refer back to a title already stated earlier in the text.

Werther's association of Lotte's naming of Klopstock with an ode functions a

commentary on Lotte's voice. This subtle change is a literary example of Werther's (a man's) editing of Lotte's (woman's) voice. Werther's reformulation of Lotte's utterance is glaring, as they are nearly perfect strangers still on the night of their meeting. He can not possibly know what she thinks. Lotte, however, only stated Klopstock's name, leaving the reference open for a wider interpretation in the 1774 version. In the 1787 version, Werther narrows the association of Klopstock to an ode. The inclusion of Werther's cognitive link to his memory of one of Klopstock's odes reshapes the understanding of Lotte's word for all future generations of readers. The inclusion of the word *ode* in the 1787 version may be partially attributed to Goethe's own failure to procure an original copy; instead, he used a pirated version of *Werther* as the basis of his rewrite (Luserke 137).

Lotte exclaims Klopstock's name at the ball on 16 June 1771, before the fall of 1771 when the *Hamburger Oden* collection had been published, meaning before he became famous for them (Lee, *Reception* 3). Lee states that Lotte would have been unfamiliar with Klopstock's odes, given that the *Hamburger Oden* had not yet been published as a collection. Not until after this printed version did readers consider him the most significant poet of his time (Lee, *Displacing* 44, 45). Klopstock did not develop a mass appeal until the 1760s, given that half of his poems were published anonymously or without being clearly identifiable as his work (45, 46). Roughly a third of his poems had been published: two in 1748, another seventeen by 1753, and another seven between 1758 and 1760 (44).

The revision of this section of the novel and the standard acceptance of the 1787 version of *Werther* as the accepted text have reopened the question as to how the reference to Klopstock is to be interpreted. The earlier version, in which Lotte's ideas are less filtered through Werther's interpretation of her statement, is now less used and known, even if by default (Duncan 124).

The change shows that Werther perhaps understands her differently than what she intended.

Lee describes the void of information about specifics of Lotte's gestures. We are not able to access how she gazes at Werther or how she touches him (*Displacing* 163). Lee's analysis shows that Werther's remarks concerning what he thought Lotte meant may have been quite off the mark. Werther's excitement and inability to express how wonderful Lotte is leads him to the Klopstock reference: "Still searching for words adequate to convey to Wilhelm her excellence, Werther finally offers him an image deeply embedded in and indebted to the literary culture of the age – that of a young woman fully appreciative of Klopstock's poetry" (Lee, *Displacing* 164). We may not have more information on how Lotte perceives Klopstock but we have seen how Werther understands it. We also know how Goethe — at least a more mature Goethe thirteenth years later — understood it.

Assuming that Lotte's naming of Klopstock equates to a definitive reference to his "Frühlingsfeier" is one of the most widespread literary canonical fallacies in contemporary *Werther* scholarship. It is, furthermore, taught and even included in a translator's footnote in many of the twentieth-century English translations of *Werther* (Morgan 38). The belief that Goethe had intended "Frühlingsfeier" with his reference has become unquestioned, as scholars and editors of translated texts fail to insert a footnote on where to read more about why this connection has been made between Klopstock's ode "Frühlingsfeier" and *Werther* (Kittler 299). Failing to provide the justification for linking Klopstock's name with the ode "Frühlingsfeier" is a convenient oversight by scholars with no textual evidence to back up such a hunch; Klopstock's ode is not named anywhere in *Werther*.

In "Goethe's 'Werther': Double Perspective and the Game of Life," Benjamin Bennett states that the reference in *Werther* is to Klopstock's "Frühlingsfeier" when arguing a different

point about Lotte's literariness (*Double* 65). Bennett gives evidence for Klopstock's ode "Frühlingsfeier" by stating that Lotte could have "recited the magnificent line 'Und der geschmetterte Wald dampft'" ("And the [previously] loud forest steams") at the climax of the ball, however, she could produce no more than the poet's name, implying that she is not sufficiently well read to recite Klopstock's poetry (65). Like Lee, Bennett accepts that Alewyn's scholarship is correct in claiming that Lotte means the "Frühlingsfeier." "She has read *The Vicar of Wakefield* and Klopstock's 'Frühlingsfeier' well enough to know vaguely what they are about — ..." (65). For him and many other scholars, such as Hurlebusch, there is no question that Goethe refers specifically to the ode "Frühlingsfeier:"

Das eindrucksvollste Zeugnis Goethes von seiner empfindsam-adorativen Klopstock-Nähe in seinem Werther-Roman, Lottes Nennung von Klopstocks Namen als Erkennungszeichen einer augenblicklichen religiösen Seelengemeinschaft nach einem Gewitter, bezieht sich auf eine Hymne, nämlich "Die Frühlingsfeier", insbesondere auf deren zwei letzte Strophen, die die göttlich beruhigte Natur nach einem Frühlingsgewitter feiert. (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock und Goethe* 8)

The most impressive testimony of Goethe's sentimental adoring of Klopstock in his Werther novel, Lotte's naming of Klopstock's name as a recognizable sign of an instantaneous religious spiritual community after a storm refers to a hymn the 'Frühlingsfeier.' It refers especially its last two verses, which celebrates divine nature calmed after a spring storm.

Hurlebusch bases this statement partially on the Alewyn interpretation, and Alewyn's interpretation relies on his own idea of what the reference to Klopstock could mean. The spring storm in *Werther* is important for Alewyn's analysis. Alewyn states that the vagueness of the reference to Klopstock makes it *unlikely* that readers in the eighteenth century would have known what it meant either. Alewyn's literary interpretation from the 1970s has become the seminal work that other well-received scholarship cites, and it is generally named in the critical editions. Erich Trunz in his commentary in the *Hamburger Ausgabe*, for example, references

Alewyn, when he states: “Gemeint ist Klopstocks Ode ‘Die Frühlingsfeier’ in explaining the mention of this “herrliche Ode” (Meant is Klopstock’s ode “The Rite of Spring”) (*Werther, Anmerkungen* 574, 575).

More recently in Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres’s chapter “The German Enlightenment” (1720-1790) from *The Cambridge History of German Literature*, Boetcher Joeres reiterates the commonly accepted view of Goethe meaning “Frühlingsfeier:”

Such a code word [Klopstock] would have been transparent to contemporary readers, who would know that the reference is to Germany’s best known and most revered poet of the day, specifically to his ode ‘Frühlingsfeier’ (‘Celebration of Spring’), which was written and published in 1759 and appeared again in a collection of Klopstock’s odes in 1771, not long before Goethe’s novel burst on the scene. (188)

Unlike Alewyn she states that eighteenth-century readers *would have known* that what Goethe meant. However, the “Frühlingsfeier” did not stand out over Klopstock’s twenty-eight other odes in this collection (Lee, *Displacing* 46). To reiterate, in the eighteenth century Klopstock’s popularity was not associated to one bestselling ode, as we have seen in Lee’s description of his development in becoming an established lyric poet (45).

Bayard Quincy Morgan, the translator for an English edition of *Werther*, has his own reasons for linking Goethe’s naming of an ode to Klopstock’s poem “Frühlingsfeier”:

“Klopstock’s poem in free rhythms, ‘Die Frühlingsfeier’ (the festival of spring), had a sensational appeal in eighteenth century Germany.—*Tr.*” (Morgan 38). But as we have also seen “Klopstock’s poem in free rhythms” was preferred by the older generation of readers, whereas in Goethe’s circle the association with Klopstock was to his *Messiah*. The presumed certainty of earlier translators likely led to later English translations simply inserting the explanation of “Frühlingsfeier” into Goethe’s novel.

Most research on this point refers to the 1787 version in which *Werther* makes the

connection between odes and Klopstock. The 1787 revised version of *Werther* has become the standard for interpretation. Duncan's statement in his overview of scholarly criticism of Goethe's *Werther* highlights this practice: "Werther's and Lotte's shared enthusiasm for the poetry of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (letter of July 16) is an obvious example, but the phenomenon extended beyond *Werther* and constituted a widespread and even self-conscious attempt to form a literary public" (8). A brief overview of secondary scholarship shows how some of the seminal texts as well as a sampling of the lesser known ones have interpreted the Klopstock reference.

Klaus Müller-Salget's 1981 study acknowledges the change in Goethe's *Werther* through the inclusion of the word *ode* and Alewyn's 1979 interpretation "Klopstock!," in his discussion of sources for both versions (336). Deirdre Vincent's book focuses on changes Goethe made between the first and second *Werther* version, though it does not discuss the Klopstock reference within the list of revisions (259). Her lack of discussion shows that she regards the change as insignificant in the overall framework.

Victor Lange believes that the Klopstock reference serves to reinforce the structure of the novel, as an expression of religious feeling (*Erzählform* 195). For him the word memorializes worldly and religious sentiment in Klopstock's poetry and serves to constitute the sentimental in combination with other elements of the book (195). Werther's personal situation represents the collective of the times, and this, in turn, evoked public support for *Werther* (197).

In her article in the *Germany Quarterly*, Astrida Orle Tantillo examines Lotte's participation in this scene. Tantillo explains Lotte's actions as similar to that of a Catholic priest and the ball as a religious experience. The scene is oriented to the religious poet, Klopstock. Through Lotte's powers, Klopstock is elevated to divinity (415). Tantillo does not discern

between the two versions for her interpretation.

Georg Lukács sees the Klopstock reference in relation to Goethe. He associates a revolutionary aim with both Werther and Goethe in his Marxist reading: “Werther und mit ihm der junge Goethe sind Feinde der ‘Regeln’. Aber die ‘Regellosigkeit’ bedeutet für Werther einen leidenschaftlichen großen Realismus, bedeutet die Verehrung von Homer, Klopstock, Goldsmith, Lessing” (Werther and with him the young Goethe are enemies of rules. But the disorderliness means for Werther a passionate extensive realism, means revering Homer, Klopstock, Goldsmith, Lessing) (46). Lukács does not go into the specifics of the textual changes concerning Klopstock.

Dotzler examines what the Klopstock change means for understanding *Werther* (456-457). He is not interested in discovering which ode is meant in the 1787 version of *Werther*, as he sees it as secondary to the change: “So geht es gar nicht darum worauf die Anspielung extern sich bezieht. Bloß die Referenzen zu entschlüsseln heiße nur die Anspielung als Anspielung durchschauen und nicht der ‘Strom von Empfindungen’ begreifen, den sie evoziert. Auf diese Evokation aber ist die ganze Szene bloß hinorientiert” (It is not all about the external text to which the reference refers. To merely decipher the references could mean only to see through the allusion as an insinuation and not realize the “current of sentiments,” which it evokes. The entire scene is purely oriented to this evocation) (457). For him, the reference gives structure to the scene. In summary, while some scholars have read the reference as either an emotional reflex, a religious experience, or as a textual juncture, others draw political connections and explore its function as a polemic reference.

My sentiments concerning the change are most similar to Dotzler’s. If readers knew which text it referred to, the external text would be more important, but without textual evidence

concerning Goethe's intentions, no conclusive text by Klopstock can be identified concerning the reference. Readers are not able to discern what the character Lotte thought, as Lee rightly points out: "The letter pays no real attention to what is going on inside Lotte as she gazes, glances, touches and speaks. Werther takes for granted that she is moved like countless young women before her by the expressive power of Klopstock's poetry" (*Displacing* 163). The suddenness of Werther's reaction to her exclamation prevents her from expanding on her reasons for stating what she did. The change does not help the reader in learning more about Lotte's reason for stating Klopstock's name – it remains ambiguous, as I now show through a review of Goethe's statements concerning what he wrote and said concerning Klopstock at different points in his life.

Lee sees Lotte's exclamation of Klopstock as a tribute to the poet (163). While the first one in 1774 can certainly be interpreted as positive, the second one in 1787 does not function as sincere praise. My research suggests that the change reflects Goethe's altered relationship to Klopstock. Before 1776, Klopstock was a mentor to Goethe. Lee discusses how Klopstock influenced Goethe's development as a writer. She also includes explanations and very helpful examples in her book that cover how Goethe displaced Klopstock. He successfully used the same genres as Klopstock had, reversing changes that Klopstock's models had suggested (37-42). Despite the value of her argument and textual evidence, she does not use this information to revisit Goethe's irony regarding the intertextual reference to Klopstock in the 1787 *Werther* text.

In Goethe's writings aside from *Werther*, he mentions the name Klopstock approximately 203 times (*Weimarer Ausgabe*). Though some are brief, the number is significant in its size, as it points to the dominant role that Klopstock played in Goethe's thinking. In several of these references, Goethe explicitly praises Klopstock, in others, however, his tone is ironic, subtly

revoking the praise.

Goethe began correspondence with Klopstock in 1774, after and because of writing *Werther*. They met as a result of Goethe's naming of Klopstock in the novel (Bode, *Ruhm* 280). Schönborn, a mutual acquaintance of both men, told Goethe after he had written *Werther* about Klopstock's interest in Goethe's work (280). Schönborn had suggested that Boie should contact Klopstock to let him know Goethe would be writing, but Goethe initiated contact directly with Klopstock on 28 May 1774, instead of waiting to be announced (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 535):

Schönborn in einem Brief aus Algier den ich gestern empfangen habe, schreibt mir: 'Klopstock wird sie durch Boie um einige ihrer Arbeiten ersuchen lassen.' Und warum soll ich Klopstocken nicht schreiben, ihm selbst schicken was es auch sey, und was für einen Anteil er auch dran nehmen kann! Soll ich den Lebenden nicht anreden, zu dessen Grabe ich wallfährten würde.' (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 367-368)

In a letter from Algeria, which I received yesterday, Schönborn writes me 'Klopstock will request a few of your works through Boie. And why shall I not write Klopstock directly, to send him directly what it may be, and much enjoyment he can also have from it! Shall I not speak to the living man, to whose grave I would make a pilgrimage.

Goethe's letter to Klopstock was respectful and included a text for Klopstock to read. Goethe promised to send him additional materials, once they had been printed (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 368). Goethe's inclusion of materials for Klopstock points to Goethe's intentions of developing Klopstock as his professional mentor.

Goethe's action of writing Klopstock directly was considered bold at the time, since it circumvented etiquette. Goethe's confident tone in the letter makes his act seem justified. Goethe's certainty in his resolve is confirmed in a letter from 1 June - 4 July 1774 to Schönborn: "Ich habe Klopstocken geschrieben und ihm zugleich was geschickt, brauchen wir Mittler um uns zu kommunizieren?" (I wrote Klopstock and also sent him something along. Do we really

need a middle man to communicate?) (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 374). Goethe used correspondence to build a direct professional relationship with Klopstock (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 534-535). Klopstock was fifty in 1774, when *Werther* was published, making him roughly twice as old as the twenty-five year old Goethe.

Scholarship identifies Klopstock's strong influence on Goethe. As Hurlebusch's book on Klopstock points out, Goethe, the twenty-six year old successful author of *Werther*, spoke more about his respect for Klopstock than for Johann Jakob Bodmer, a writer and Klopstock's professor in history at the Gymnasium in Zurich (*Köpfe* 39-40). Bodmer, who had helped develop Christoph Martin Wieland and Klopstock, was not able to make his mark on Goethe, whereas Klopstock was influential on Goethe to a point that even the themes of his earliest poems demonstrate Klopstock's significance (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 39-40; Lee, *Displacing* 189-215).

Their relations were public. On 18 September 1774 Klopstock and Goethe's first meeting was reported in the newspaper, *Frankfurter Kayserliche Reichs-Ober-Post-Amts-Zeitung*, and included in a letter from J. K. Deinet, the publisher of the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen*, to Ring: "Herr Klopstock, der Liebling teutsch- und ausländischer höchster Fürsten, ist am Dienstag Abend hier-selbst angekommen, tratt bey seinem Freunde, unserem Herrn D. Goethe ab und setzte Donnerstag früh seine Reise nach Carlsruh weiter fort" (Mr. Klopstock, favored by German and highest ranking of foreign princes, arrived here on Tuesday evening, made a stop at his friend's, our Doctor Goethe, and continued his trip early on Thursday to Karlsruhe) (Deinet, *Zeitgenossen* 71). In this newspaper announcement, Goethe and Klopstock are publicly referred to as friends.

This is also clear from Goethe's letter to von Knebel, 28 December 1774, in which he

openly declares his ambitions:

...Empfehlen Sie mich denen Prinzen viel, fühlt Gr. Görz was für mich? – Schreiben Sie mir ich bitte Sie vom Presidenten Hahn einige bedeutende Worte. In Vergleich mit andern Presidenten! Ieden nach seiner Art. Ihre Worte über Klopstock sind herrlich. Lieben Sie mich. Geben Sie meine Sachen nur nicht aus Händen. Es wäre nichts daran gelegen wenn nicht gewisse Leute was daraus machten. Und dann bitt ich Sie sondiren Sie mir wo möglich den Marckgrafen u Presidenten über meinen Schwager den Schlosser. Auch unbedeutende Worte geben Licht.

(Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 420)

Recommend me strongly to those princes, does Graf Görz feel something for me? I ask you to write me concerning some meaningful words from President Hahn in comparison to other presidents! Each according to his style. Your words about Klopstock are wonderful. Dote on me. Just do not let go of my concerns. It would not have been convenient, when certain people could not make something out of it. And then, when possible, I ask you to sound out my name amongst the margrave and President via my brother-in-law the locksmith of the castle. Even meaningless words show something.

Goethe mentions Klopstock in order to help further his own career as he asks von Knebel to speak highly of him to the prince; that is, equal to the way Grand Duke Karl von Baden had spoken of Klopstock. Von Baden had asked Klopstock to work for him, giving him the title of a Court Counsel, because of Klopstock's good name (Goethe, *Dichtung* 562; Sauder, *Klopstock* 392). The ambitious young Goethe wanted to follow Klopstock's lead through achieving an equally favorable reputation within the circles of nobility.

We know from *Dichtung und Wahrheit* that Goethe was frustrated that they spoke of ice skating instead of writing at their initial meeting, though he was generally impressed with Klopstock (710-711). According to Lee, this greatly influenced Goethe's thinking concerning the correct application of vocabulary of ice skating and his interest in the sport (*Displacing* 190). In Goethe's second letter to Klopstock from 15 April 1775, he addressed him with the endearing term *father*, emphasizing his respect for Klopstock's authority. In the letter Goethe writes of his concerns regarding his engagement with Lili Schöneman (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 447;

Hurlebusch, *Klopstock and Goethe* 11). Despite Goethe's respect, after the second meeting of the two men in 1775 in Frankfurt, Klopstock realized that Goethe would never join the group of German poets, specifically the Göttinger Hainbündler, which esteemed Klopstock and saw him as their intellectual leader (*Klopstock und Goethe* 33). Klopstock's realization did not lead to an immediate end of their friendship, though.

Klopstock also took a paternal attitude toward Goethe, as seen when he confronted Goethe about his behavior. Klopstock had heard stories about Goethe's role in promoting undesirable behavior in the Duke, and warned Goethe of encouraging the Duke's overindulgent drinking sprees:

Die Teutschen haben sich bisher mit Recht über ihre Fürsten beschweret, daß diese mit ihren Gelehrten Nichts zu schaffen haben wollen. Sie nehmen itzund den Herzog von Weimar mit Vergnügen aus. Aber was werden andre Fürsten, wenn sie in dem alten Tone fortfahren, nicht zu ihrer Rechtfertigung anzuführen haben, wenn es nun wird geschehen seyn, was ich fürchte, daß geschehen werde? (*Klopstock Briefe 1776-1782* 22)

The German have up until now rightly complained how their princes have not wanted to have anything to do with their educated elite. The educated now gladly take advantage of Duke of Weimar. But what will become of the other princes, when they continue in their traditional ways, not to have to plead for their defense, if it will now happen, what I fear will occur?

Goethe was expected to live up to the image the literary public had of him as an expert in the areas of correspondence and suffering (Wallenborn 25-27). Klopstock expressed his concern for the reputation Goethe was making for himself in his new home in Weimar. Klopstock had briefly held a similar type of position at his Karlsruhe residence for Carl Friedrich, the Margrave von Baden, consisting of Baden-Durlach and what had been Baden-Baden until 1771, when Carl Friedrich inherited it. Klopstock had contributed to the glory of Carl von Baden's reign (Goethe, *Dichtung* 710). He likewise expected the same from Goethe, as his highly critical attitude toward Goethe in his 8 May 1776 letter attests.

In this letter Klopstock accused Goethe of not carrying out his responsibility as a writer, and promoting despotism, instead of an egalitarian society (*Klopstock Briefe 1776-1782* 22-23; Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786 Einzelkommentar* 738). Klopstock alludes to the problems that Duke Carl August would cause his mother, as a more personal reason for Goethe to stop encouraging the Duke's irresponsible actions. He also criticizes Goethe in his role as court poet, as Klopstock believed Goethe was obliged to influence the court positively, given the widespread monarchical abuses.

In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, the mature Goethe portrays himself as knowingly taking advantage of his situation within the system. He uses *Dichtung and Wahrheit* to explain his position:

In dieser Zeit war meine Stellung gegen die oberen Stände sehr günstig, wenn auch im Werther die Unannehmlichkeiten an der Grenze zweier bestimmter Verhältnisse mit Ungeduld ausgesprochen sind, so ließ man das in Betracht der übrigen Leidenschaftlichkeiten gelten indem jedermann wohl fühlte daß er hier auf keine unmittelbare Wirkung angesehen sei. (*Dichtung* 772)

In this time my position in relation to the upper classes was very beneficial, even when in Werther the discomfort of being on the border of two specific spheres is pronounced with impatience. One allowed it with the rest of the impulsiveness, of which everyone felt that it was not aiming for direct results.

In the excerpt Goethe portrays himself as discernible from his fictional character Werther.

Whereas Werther found himself between the classes, Goethe notes his acceptance by the elite.

The aristocracy did not feel threatened by *Werther* and did not attribute the protagonist's discontent to Goethe's life. The nobility accepted the image and, one could argue, promoted such an image, as seen by the court's tolerance of Goethe's behavior.

Klopstock's break with Goethe came after a short, seemingly positive relationship between the two men, and as a direct result of Goethe's response from 21 May 1776 to

Klopstock's letter. Other contemporaries of Goethe and Klopstock had forecast the dissolution of their friendship. Knebel writes Bertuch in his 23 December 1774 letter concerning the literary divide between the two men: "Ich bin versichert und sehe es aus Allem, daß sich Klopstock und Goethe lange nicht so verstanden haben. Goethes Kopf ist sehr viel mit Wielands Schriften beschäftigt; daher kommt es, daß sie sich reiben" (I am assured and see it in everything that Klopstock and Goethe have not understood each other for quite some time. Goethe's head is very much absorbed by Wieland's writings, and therefore, he and Klopstock grate on each other) (Knebel, *Zeitgenossen* 98). Goethe offended Klopstock by asking him to refrain from such accusatory letters in the future (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 41-42). As seen in Goethe's memoirs, this impulsiveness was generally accepted. Goethe must have expected the same reaction from Klopstock, but Klopstock reacted by ending his relationship with Goethe, as he indicates in his following letter from 29 May 1776 (Klopstock, *Klopstock Briefe 1776-1782* 31). Goethe remained a topic of conversation between Stolberg and Klopstock through June 1776 (Klopstock, *Klopstock Briefe 1776-1782* 33-38). In 1784, when Goethe was revising *Werther* for the 1787 version, he tried to revive their relationship through Christian and Friedrich Leopold von Stolberg.

The break in their relationship was discussed by other writers in the community as well. Voß wrote in a letter to his wife Ernestine Boie, 14 July 1776: "Klopstock glaubt, es werde ein blutiges Ende mit Goethe nehmen, denn der Adel ist auf's äußerste gegen ihn erbittert" (Klopstock believes that Goethe will experience a bloody ending, since the nobility is extremely resentful of him) (Voß, *Zeitgenossen* 200). Klopstock's break with Goethe was not the only time something of this magnitude involving Klopstock happened; Klopstock also broke off relations with Bodmer (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 45-46). The ending of Goethe and Klopstock's friendship was

also public. Both men continued to write about each other in poetry as well as in other writings. In the revised version of *Werther* from 1787 Goethe clarified Lotte's incitement of Klopstock to reflect his damaged impression of Klopstock.

Goethe continued to engage with Klopstock's odes beyond Klopstock's death in 1803. For example, Klopstock's poetry served as a form of social entertainment for Goethe's circle of friends. As an accomplished writer in Weimar, Goethe reports in a diary entry from 7 September 1809 that reading Klopstock's works in a public forum was still fashionable thirty-five years after the success of Goethe's novel *Werther*. He gathered together with friends in the evenings at Carl von Knebel's for this purpose (Goethe, *Tagebücher 1809 bis 1812* 67-68)

Goethe's attitude had changed from his reception of Klopstock in his youth. Goethe describes his mixed feelings after hearing Klopstock's poems in a letter he sent to Carl August Böttiger in July 1797: "Die Mittheilung der Klopstockischen Oden macht mir viel Freude. Zusammen werden sie ein herrliches Denkmal eines seltenen Mannes bleiben. Auf mich machen sie immer denselben Effect, es ist alles hoch und tief, aber in der Breite wird mirs eng und bänglich." (The communication of Klopstockian odes bring me much joy. Together they will remain a magnificent memorial of an unusual man. They always have the same effect on me, they all have highs and lows, but in their breadth I feel limited and anxious) (121). Here, Goethe expresses his reaction as a physical response. Though Goethe enjoyed Klopstock's odes throughout his lifetime, here he is slightly negative. While he equates the odes to memorials, showing that they remind him of something lost, his description demonstrates his disappointment with their lack of breadth.

Klopstock remained negative toward Goethe after the ending of their friendship (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock and Goethe* 33). Klopstock attests to his bad feelings concerning

Goethe: “Göthe, du dauerst dich, daß du mich schreibest? Wenn du mich kenntest; Wäre dieß dir nicht Gram: Göthe, du dauerst mich auch” (Goethe, you are feeling sorry for yourself that you wrote me? If you knew me; you would not bear ill-will, Goethe, I feel sorry for you too) (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock und Goethe* 93). This epigram was published 1796 in an addendum to Klopstock’s “Grammatische Gespräche” (Hurlebusch, *Klopstock und Goethe* 35-36).

“Schul-Pforta” is a poem Goethe likely wrote in 1825 after receiving a lithograph from the drawing instructor of the school by C. J. Oldendorf (Eibl, *Gedichte 1800-1832* Kommentar 1337). In the poem Goethe memorializes the school vis-à-vis Klopstock. The material Klopstock learned in his classes became the origin for Klopstock’s writing and lifelong inspiration (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 23). Klopstock learned French, Latin, and Greek – all the languages deemed necessary to study the classics and the Bible.

Ehre, Deutscher, treu und innig
Des Erinnerns werthen Schatz,
Denn der Knabe spielte sinnig
Klopstock, einst auf diesem Platz.
An dem stillbegränzten Orte
Bilde dich, so wie's gebührt,
Jüngling! öffne dir die Pforte,
Die in's weite Leben führt. (Goethe, *Gedichte 1800-1832* 861)

Honor, Germans, true and affectionate
Of the memory of a worthy treasure,
As the boy played meaningfully
Klopstock, in the days of old here.
At this quietly enclosed place
Educate yourself, as is it due to you,
Young man! Open the door,
which leads to a vast life.

Saxonian princes and the societal elite were to school at Schul-Pforta. Besides Klopstock, J. E. Schlegel and J. A. Schlegel, Nietzsche, Ranke, and Fichte all attended school there (Eibl, *Goethes Gedichte 1800-1832* Kommentar 1337; Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 27). The school

had been a seminary, where Lutheran ministers had been trained, and it emphasized religion and the classics (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 23, 26). Goethe chose to give the school a prominent place in the poem, which is in itself telling about how he wanted Klopstock to be remembered. An earlier, innocent stage in Klopstock's life was to be honored. Goethe also emphasizes Klopstock attending the school instead of princes and other prominent people. Through this poem he calls for Schul-Pforta to be a national German memorial, because Klopstock had attended it.

In the poem Goethe portrays the fullness of Klopstock's youth. Klopstock the boy played meaningfully at school and received a traditional education in the classics. This poem serves a German national myth based on literary personalities, instead of political ones. Goethe focuses on a writer who paved the way for his own success. Similar to how he projects the image of the young Klopstock to be the first literary national founding father in this poem, in his 1774 *Werther* Goethe celebrated Klopstock, the poet. In the poem Goethe promotes an image of the German character as true and sincere through his description of Klopstock's youth. Goethe's use of Klopstock's image in German myth building in 1825 is curious, given their falling out in 1776. However, because of Klopstock's widespread popularity and Goethe's larger classical cultural projects in Weimar, Klopstock served Goethe's agenda in creating a cultural center for Germany in Saxony (Korte 16). Schul-Pforta was located within the geographical vicinity of the Saxon court, which Goethe also served from Weimar.

In another poem with the title "Die Kränze [The Crowns]" published 1815, but likely from 1799, Goethe satirically describes Klopstock's intentions of creating a national epoch:

Klopstock will uns vom Pindus entfernen; wir sollen nach Lorbeer
Nicht mehr geizen, uns soll inländische Eichel genügen;
Und doch führet er selbst den überepischen Kreuzzug
Hin auf Golgatha's Gipfel, ausländische Götter zu ehren!
Doch, auf welchen Hügel er wolle, versamml' er die Engel,

Lasse beim Grabe des Guten verlassene Redliche weinen:
Wo ein Held und Heiliger starb, wo ein Dichter gesungen,
Uns im Leben und Tod ein Beispiel trefflichen Mutes,
Hohen Menschenwertes zu hinterlassen, da knieen
Billig alle Völker in Andachtswonne, verehren
Dorn und Lorbeerkrantz, und was ihn geschmückt und gepeinigt.

(Goethe, *Gedichte 1756-1799* 724-725)

Klopstock wants to save us from Pindar; we shall
No longer be sparing with laurel, we shall be satisfied with domestic acorns;
And indeed he leads the über-epic crusade
To Golgotha's summit, to honor foreign Gods!
But on which hill does he wish to gather the angels,
Leave [them] the reasonable weep at the grave of the good;
Where a hero and a saint died, where a poet sang
Us an example of appropriate courage in life and death,
of high human worth, there kneeling
all peoples proper in delight of prayer, adorn
Thorns and crowns of laurel, that decorates and torments him.

Klopstock is presented here as the warrior who wants to save the Germans from Pindar, who wrote irregular verse in odes and in whom Goethe saw the perfect poet (Sauder, *Der junge Goethe* 774). Goethe is critical of Klopstock's action of wanting to rid German soil of Pindar's influence, since Klopstock still allowed his own work to be influenced by other non-German models. Horace's Roman style influenced Klopstock, and it constituted the basis for some of Klopstock's most celebrated poems in German lyric (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 44). Hence, Goethe questions Klopstock's movement away from ancient Greek influence to indigenous German writers. He likewise questions Klopstock's success in his fight against Greek influence. He asks if the German stories will suffice as an alternative to those other ancient heroes at peace with their legends in their graves. Through his reference to Golgotha in the poem, Goethe sarcastically questions Klopstock's decision, implying that Klopstock is only shifting the orientation for German writing to a stronger poetic model.

“Er und sein Name [He and his Name]” points to an interpretation of what Goethe

associated with Klopstock's name. Lee dates this poem from approximately 1780 (Lee, *Displacing* 38). First published anonymously in 1781 in the *Journal von Tiefurt*, Goethe's verse as well as the choice of hexameter show his satirical perspective on Klopstock's fame. Given that Goethe and Klopstock's friendship had ended in 1776, the following poem is seemingly misleading in determining what Goethe meant in 1774 version of *Werther*. In fact, Goethe's mocking tone most clearly marks the change in his feelings from his earlier mention of Klopstock in *Werther*:

“Er und sein Name”

Bei allen Musen und Grazien sagt an mir, ihr Deutschen!

Euren ersten Dichter, den alle Götter geehret,
Der mit Geistesschritten von Sonne zu Sonne gewandelt,
Der in die Tiefen der Liebe sich wie ein Engel gesenket,
Diesen göttlichen Mann, ihr nennt ihn Klopstock? den Namen
Gebt ihr einem Dichter, dem keiner zu sanft und zu hoch wär?
Ja dies ist der Name, den wir verehren und lieben.
Haltet hier, und widmet euch der Feier stiller Betrachtung!
Ach der Gute, hat leider endlich altshändyscher Ahndung
Böse Schuld bezahlt! Aus seinen Höhen und Tiefen
Sich in das Stein- und Gebeinreich der Lettern und Sylben begeben.
Mit dem eignen Sinne, der großen Dingen geziemte,
Heftet er sich an's Kleinste, und so klopstockt er die Sprache.

(Goethe, *Gedichte 1756-1799* 258)

“He and His Name”

With all Muses and mythological figures tell me, you Germans!
Your first poet, whom all gods honored,
Who spiritually wandered from sun to sun,
Who descended in the deepness of love, like an angel.
This godly man, you call him Klopstock? The name
you give to a poet, who was for no one too gentle and elevated?
Yes this is the name, which we honor and love.
Stop here and attend to the celebration of quiet contemplation.
Oh the good man has unfortunately finally
paid off the bad debt of old-Shandy's penalty! From his highs and lows,
gone into the realm of stones and bones, letters and syllables

With his own sense that was fitting for big things
he attaches himself to the smallest, and so klopstocks the language.

Goethe's irony is first signaled by the question at the end of the first sentence "Diesen göttlichen Mann, ihr nennt ihn Klopstock?" (This godly man, you call him Klopstock?). This question shows the critical stance Goethe took toward Klopstock. He implies that a godly man should not be called Klopstock. Goethe mocks Klopstock's name, given the harsh sound of the word *Klopstock* in the pronunciation of his name. His statement on how Germans named him questions their aesthetic taste. Most remarkable about this poem is Goethe's use of the verb *klopstock*, which, as part of the verb *klopstöckeln*, Lavater also used in describing Klopstock's distinctive way of using language (Grimm 1235). Goethe's use of the verb above is negative. Phonologically, the word *Klopstock* is closely related to *Klopfstock*, which is a short stick inserted in the ground and hit by a hammer. Goethe may be building on this image here, where the name Klopstock refers to change at the most basic level, but not in a gentle way (Grimm 1231).

Goethe's fascination with Klopstock's name was expressed throughout his lifetime, even at the height of his career between 1808 and 1810, when he wrote the first part, first book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*: "Im Anfang wunderte man sich, wie ein so vortrefflicher Mann so wunderlich heißen könne; doch gewöhnte man sich bald daran und dachte nicht mehr an die Bedeutung dieser Sylben" (In the beginning one wondered, how such a superior man could be named so strangely; still one soon became accustomed to it and spent no more time reflecting on the meaning of the syllables) (*Dichtung* 89). Lee explains the background to Goethe's poem as a response to Carl Friedrich Cramer's "Klopstock: Er und über ihn" (Lee, *Displacing* 35). A member of the Göttingen Hainbund, Cramer was indignant concerning Goethe's lack of respect

shown to Klopstock in his second letter from 21 May 1776 (Lee, *Displacing* 35). In “Klopstock: Er und über ihn” Cramer discusses Klopstock’s name and how it diminishes Tristran Shandy's concept concerning the influential relationship between names and a person’s character (*Displacing* 36). In Goethe’s poem above, he disagrees with Cramer, suggesting Klopstock’s pettiness is rooted in his own name (*Displacing* 36-37). Goethe suggests that Klopstock was suited to work on larger issues of literary development, but instead he spent his time on insignificant ones, referring to the smaller aspects of the language, including syllables and letters in words.

My research findings support the conclusion that Goethe amended the earlier Werther text, adding the word *ode*, as he wanted Klopstock to be remembered for something so specifically small. We have seen through Goethe’s poetry that he associates Klopstock with minor things, not the great works of literature for which Klopstock became famous and for which Klopstock wanted to be remembered. Lee’s account of how Goethe displaced Klopstock is accurate and persuasive, except that she does not explain the change in the second version of *Werther* in this way. Had Goethe meant praise in his revised 1787 version of *Werther*, he would have included the word *Messiah*, or epic poem, after Klopstock’s name.

Goethe insertion of the word *ode* in 1787 points to something more than a way for readers to remember who Klopstock was. It minimizes the importance of the poet Klopstock, who had worked in his lifetime toward a grand vision of cultural unification of German-speaking people. Klopstock's ambitions were more than that of a lyric poet (*Displacing* 7, 11). Goethe successfully contributed to this minimized remembrance of Klopstock.

Creating a German epic to withstand time was a dream that Klopstock had developed during his years at Schul-Pforta. Klopstock's graduation address was on the heroic epic of

Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, and British author John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Klopstock saw these texts as benchmarks for his own work (Hurlebusch, *Köpfe* 28). Klopstock's *Messiah* was also initially seen as the model for epic poetry in Germany (Goedeke, *Grundrisz* 445).

Klopstock created the German epic *The Messiah*, which through Goethe's own epic creations, such as *Hermann und Dorothea* as well as *Der ewige Jude*, displaced Klopstock's epic (Lee, *Displacing* 19, 27, 30, 39, 40, 41). *Hermann und Dorothea* came to be seen as a more identifiable cultural transmitter of a collective ideal (Korte 18). In the third part, twelfth book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* Goethe criticizes Klopstock. Goethe's summary commences with his early enthusiasm for Klopstock's works and then explains how Klopstock's fall from readers' favor resulted from his journal *Die deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* (*Dichtung* 562-565). This excerpt on Klopstock is cited by Hermann Korte in his study "Aus dem Kanon, aus dem Sinn?" as a famous example of decanonization in German literature and presented as one of the first steps of collectively lowering the rank of how Klopstock's contributions to German literature are remembered (Korte 14).

Scholars, such as Lee, state Goethe's inclusion of the word *ode* in the 1787 *Werther* revision is intended to remind readers who Klopstock was and that he wrote odes, but this explanation is unlikely based on Goethe's description of social gatherings where they read Klopstock's odes as late as 1809 (*Displacing* 161). Klopstock's memory flourished past his death in Weimar circles as well as in the rest of Saxony. In Schul-Pforta, for example, Klopstock's *Messiah* began to be taught in 1800 during Klopstock's lifetime (Korte 14). These two actions show that memory of Klopstock's works was kept alive in the older generation of readers as well as used to new generations of German readers after Klopstock's death in 1803,

and, therefore, much later than 1787, when the revised version of *Werther* was published. Lastly, the grandness of Klopstock's funeral in 1803 attests to the fact that Klopstock and his writings were anything but forgotten.

The death of Goethe and Klopstock's relationship occurred after the publishing of the 1774 version of *Werther* and before the second version appeared in 1787. Klopstock's name in the 1774 version was understood as a tribute to the idealized German poet who had inspired the younger generation, including Goethe and other young writers. They believed that the German language had a spirit that could change reality. In the 1787 *Werther*, Goethe subordinated the praise associated with Klopstock's name to an adjective to denote an ode: Klopstock's ode. Klopstock is depersonalized through this textual amendment.

The change also affects the reading of the text. This example is not, however, the first nor the only time in the text that the effect of a female character's voice is altered. Another textual example of rewriting of a woman's voice occurs earlier in the novel on the ride to the ball. The editor removes the names of the books that Lotte reads in Werther's 16 June 1771 report and even adds a footnote to explain his reason for leaving out the names of the books she likes (Goethe, *Werther* 45). A more detailed discussion of this second example is presented in chapter five, in my discussion of women's reading preferences.

Goethe's 1787 version of *Werther* is the one that now is commonly read in English and German. The popularity of using the later 1787 version may be due in part to its more refined focus (Clements, Intro 15). A footnote to Klopstock's "magnificent ode" in the Signet Classics edition refers not to the change between the 1774 and 1787 versions, but to the "Frühlingsfeier" as the ode mentioned in the book (250). Scholarship has changed the actual text, first copyrighted in 1962 and reprinted in 2005. The scholarly view that Goethe meant the

“Frühlingsfeier” when he added the word *ode* in the 1787 version has led translators to mention the ode “Frühlingsfeier” by name as a textual explanation in English translations. Lee also notes how the reference to Klopstock’s poetry has become part of standard textual notation (167). When readers see it, they believe that Goethe meant the “Frühlingsfeier,” though Goethe did not make this association in 1774 or in 1787. As the majority of twenty-first century German and English readers are unfamiliar with Klopstock, the additional sentence in the 1787 version does not serve to hone in on one particular understanding over an alternative presentation of him.

This shows that while Klopstock was an early model for Goethe and wrote texts that were recognized as part of the early canon, his texts have not withstood time. Lessing, by contrast, as shown in the following chapter, has made a mark not only in the field of German literary studies, but also in other disciplines, such as Jewish Studies. Lessing remains a familiar name in the German-speaking world, his plays are performed in German theaters in the twenty-first century, and his texts have become models of tolerance.

CHAPTER 2: *WERTHER, EMILIA GALOTTI, AND DEATH.*

Goethe's implicit mention of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing through the placement of his play *Emilia Galotti: Ein Trauerspiel in fünf Aufzügen* on the nightstand functions very differently from the overt praise associated with Klopstock's name in the original 1774 *Werther* version. Lotte mentions Klopstock's name the night she meets Werther, in a moment of promise for their future, whereas the reference to *Emilia Galotti* at Werther's suicide reinforces the hopelessness of their situation. In *Werther*, *Emilia Galotti* is associated with Werther's death.

In the suicide scene, no one present during Werther's final hours names the playwright Lessing in conjunction with *Emilia Galotti*. This absence signifies that the reference does not directly concern Lessing, but instead the ideas presented in *Emilia Galotti*: "Von dem Weine hatte er nur ein Glas getrunken. Emilia Galotti lag auf dem Pulte augeschlagen" (He had drunk only one glass of the wine... Emilia Galotti lay open on his desk) (Goethe, *Werther* 265). The reference to Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* is made only once in the text, emphasizing its inclusion. Readers cannot know which pages were open in the book. Therefore, it appears the specific message of *Emilia Galotti* must not have been important for the readers to know.

Goethe includes Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* as an intertextual reference in *Werther* alongside the Bible and fairy tales. Over two hundred years after the publishing of *Werther*, these better known texts do not need the names of the authors to be recognized by a twenty-first-century readership. In these examples, one could argue that the names of the authors have become secondary to their timeless stories. *Emilia Galotti* does not fit into the same category of world literature as the Bible and fairy tales, though.

The intertextual reference to *Emilia Galotti* has been suggested as perhaps the best-

known intertextual reference in German literature (Eyck and Arens 40). But only a small percentage of *Werther*'s readers may be able to attach Lessing's name to a play entitled *Emilia Galotti*, and even a smaller pool of these readers will know of a possible association between Emilia's death and Werther's suicide. In the eighteenth century, Goethe's failure to mention Lessing as the author of *Emilia Galotti* may not have been problematic, given that Lessing's play was published in 1772, just two years prior to Goethe's *Werther*.

Goethe's reference to *Emilia Galotti* is lost on Bakhtin's "superaddressee," as today's readership will not necessarily know of Emilia's will to die at the end of the drama. Bakhtin explained the phenomenon "superaddressee" in an interview published in *Novy Mir* from 1986:

A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue, which surmounts the closedness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise itself; we seek answers to our own questions in it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths. (Bakhtin, *Novy Mir* 7).

For the "superaddressee" to exist an assumption must be made that the text is known and read.

At this point readers have advantages from their temporal distance from the culture in which the author wrote. The distance allows the considerations of new questions.

The considerable scholarship on the intertextual reference of *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* does not explore why Goethe intentionally omits Lessing's name. It is more than a mere oversight, given that Goethe mentioned Lessing's name several times outside of his novel in his other texts and in varying contexts. Many of his statements concerning Lessing in letters are positive, in which Goethe expresses his admiration of Lessing's many accomplishments (Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* Kommentar 696). Goethe was strongly influenced by Lessing, as indicated on 20 April 1825: "Daß Lessing, Winckelmann und Kant älter waren als

ich, und die beiden ersteren auf meine Jugend, der letztere auf mein Alter wirkte, war für mich von großer Bedeutung” (That Lessing, Winckelmann, and Kant were older than me and that the first two influenced me in my youth, and the latter in my old age meant a great deal to me) (Eckermann 158). Goethe exhibited this influence in several ways. For example, he had acted in performances of Lessing’s plays, such as *Minna von Barnhelm* in 1767 (Große, Kommentar 659). He also praised Lessing’s work throughout his life. As early as 1780 he wrote to Charlotte von Stein concerning the value of Lessing’s work (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 696). Goethe recognized Lessing’s success and wanted to achieve the same level of wide-spread recognition for his work.

For Goethe, Lessing’s success not only inspired him to new heights but also spurred feelings of rivalry, as seen in a letter he wrote to Herder during his time in Wetzlar on 10 July 1772: “*Emilia Galotti* ist auch nur gedacht, und nicht einmal Zufall oder Kaprice spinnen irgend drein. Mit halbweg Menschenverstand kann man das warum von ieder Scene, von iedem Wort mögt ich sagen auffinden. Drum binn ich dem Stück nicht gut, so ein Meisterstück es sonst ist, und meinem eben so wenig” (*Emilia Galotti* is also only fiction and not even coincidence or caprice, woven into it. With a reasonable amount of commonsense one locates the reason of each scene, of each word, I would say. For this reason I do not find the play very good, such a masterpiece as it otherwise is, while mine is seen as less so) (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 258). Goethe’s above remarks are a response to Herder's consolation concerning Goethe’s own play, *Götz von Berlichingen*. Goethe was not alone in this criticism. Friedrich Schlegel was also critical of what he called Lessing's example of dramatic algebra (Irmischer 932). Goethe’s comparison of his own play to Lessing’s helps to explain Goethe’s criticism of *Emilia Galotti*. But it does not explain the contrasts inherent in his statements concerning Lessing, which make

his exact feelings about his predecessor difficult to ascertain. Goethe's statements swing between feelings of overt admiration, hesitation, contempt, and jealousy.

Herder thought very highly of *Emilia Galotti*, enough to write several pages on its merits later in his third book of *Briefe zu Beförderung der Humanität* (1792) (Herder 196-200). Herder's discussion is read as a response to Goethe's criticism of Lessing (Irmischer 932). In spite of it, Goethe felt strongly enough about its significance to include it in his novel. Goethe's placement of *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* is a well-thought-out response to Lessing's play, unlike his ambiguous statement both praising and criticizing it in 1772. His inclusion of *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* is calculated along with his motivation not to include Lessing's name.

One way *Emilia Galotti*'s placement in *Werther* has been understood has been as a tactic by Goethe to market himself. In early *Werther* reception, Bodmer wrote to Schinz that the inclusion of *Emilia Galotti* was for Goethe's own self-promotion as a genius (Bodmer, *Zeitgenossen* 89). He also adds that Goethe's inclusion of the play was meant to illicit a dark humor: "Erscheint Lessing hier im Schönen, da Werther mit der 'Emilia Galotti' in der Hand sich erschießt? Cato hat, den Plato in der Hand, zu gestoßen. Aber ich sehe, daß der Autor den Witz hochhält, wenn er bis zur Unart mit dem Stempel des Genies bezeichnet ist" (Does Lessing appear here in a positive light, as Werther shoots himself holding *Emilia Galotti* in his hand? Cato held Plato as he died. But I see that the author maintains the joke, until he is stamped beyond bad behavior as a genius) (Bodmer, *Zeitgenossen* 89). Here Bodmer thinks of Johann Christoph Gottsched's *Der sterbende Cato* (1732), which had been inspired by Joseph Addison's drama, *Cato, a Tragedy* (1713). Gottsched's version of *Cato* became a topic of parody by Bodmer (Bender 3, 44). The story addresses the struggle between individual liberty and government tyranny in eighteenth-century literature's representation of ancient Greek narrative.

Cato commits suicide in a battle, holding Plato's texts in his hand, making it easier for Caesar to defeat Cato's army.

Goethe wrote a short prose piece entitled "Über das was man ist," dated by Lavater 15 July 1774 (Goethe, *Man* 564, Kommentar 1091). The first line of the four-sentence piece states: "Leßing ist nichts und alles was er sein will" (Lessing is nothing and everything that he wants to be) (Goethe, *Man* 564). The other three sentences do not seem to address Lessing directly but instead contemplate acting on one's feelings and friends' ideas; they also express negative feelings for teachers. The Deutscher Klassiker Verlag commentary for this entry explains the short prose piece as *possibly* speaking against the maxim "Man kann, was man will; Man will was man kann!" (One can do, what one wants; One wants what one can do) which originated from Christoph Kaufmann in Lavater's circle of friends (Goethe, *Man* Kommentar 1091). The commentators also add that Goethe's ideas were meant in response to a paper by Baselow concerning pedagogy (1092). Lavater's date of Goethe's comment contributes to the value of this piece, given that it was written at roughly the same time as *Werther*. Commentators are also careful to note that this short prose piece was included in close textual proximity to Goethe's notes from his 1770s fragment "Arianne an Wetty," which, like *Werther* and other European sentimental novels, has a *ménage à trois* constellation (Goethe, *Man* Kommentar 1092). This information is situated in such a way that it seems that all of these ideas are connected. The context suggests this could also be related to the promotion of himself.

Goethe was successful in establishing his image as a genius, situating himself well for future projects in Weimar, such as working toward the national concept of Weimar classicism. Goethe's projected image developed through his work in Weimar and through scholars who sought to create a unified German canon. Hohendahl discusses the development of the German

canon in his book *Building a National Literature: The Case of Germany, 1830-1870* (1989).

Georg Gottfried Gervinus advanced this concept through a common literary heritage of Goethe and Schiller's works in the nineteenth century (Hohendahl 151). Klopstock and Lessing became two of their common literary predecessors.

In Gervinus's study *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, Klopstock was ranked as secondary to Lessing, though the latter's works were characteristically different than Goethe's *Werther* during the *Sturm und Drang* period (Hohendahl 152). Gervinus dealt with this literary divergence of Goethe's and Lessing's orientations during *Werther* through his selection process of which aspects to emphasize. He highlighted shared results of Klopstock's and Lessing's individual literary writings. Gervinus placed particular emphasis on Lessing's aim to establish a bourgeois national theater in Hamburg as well as Klopstock's achievements as a leading representative of sentimentalism and the bourgeois in the eighteenth-century literary revolution (152). In this way, Gervinus was able to present a common lineage leading to Goethe and Schiller. The results of Gervinus's attempts to define the image of specific German authors enjoyed long standing acceptance. His contribution helps to explain why so many interpretations of the role of Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* are political, focusing on the bourgeois.

Gervinus focused on Goethe's late Weimar years, downplaying Goethe and Lessing's early differences (Hohendahl 153). The opposite styles of Klopstock and Wieland met in Goethe, and Lessing's work on antiquity tied in closely to both Goethe and Schiller's writings that built on the Greek literary heritage. But didn't Goethe achieve canonical status through discerning himself from his forerunners? Or does he have men like Gervinus to thank for his prominence today?

Goethe's *Werther* is often seen as a rewriting of *Emilia Galotti*. For example, Eyck and

Arens suggest that Goethe consciously rewrote *Emilia Galotti* in a “reevaluation of the privileges and duties of Enlightenment leader” (41). While I agree that Werther’s reference to the play alters the interpretation of *Emilia Galotti*, it is not for the purpose of reconsidering the court’s position in the newly evolving social structure. Instead, Goethe’s inclusion of *Emilia Galotti* at this textual site marks Goethe’s aesthetic disagreement with Lessing’s ideas concerning pain and beauty in death. Goethe removes *Emilia Galotti* from the origins of its story by placing it at Werther's bedside, much the same way as Goethe removes *The Laokoon Group* from its mythological origins for his analysis. He uses *Emilia Galotti* to tell a different love story. It seemingly functions as the impetus for Werther’s act of suicide, though his resolve was made when he learned that Lotte had sent him her husband’s pistol (Goethe, *Werther* 259). This shows that it serves a different function in the novel. It serves as an additional message for Lotte as well as a more subtle medium for Goethe to criticize Lessing while publicly praising him.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) contributed in several ways to the German cultural and literature scene of the eighteenth century. He worked as a playwright, essayist, theatrical and literary critic, literary editor, dramatist, and the dramaturgical advisor to the first German National Theater Company in 1767. He was highly influential in advancing the development of the German theater and wrote the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*. As a leading figure of European Enlightenment, he wrote texts that address issues of tolerance and despotism.

A friend of Friedrich Nicolai, Moses Mendelssohn, and Christian Ewald von Kleist, Lessing wrote plays that focused on minorities, including women. He reached out to a growing literary public by writing about social groups other than aristocracy. He financially supported his writing mainly through his positions as the Secretary of the General Governor in Breslau and as a librarian in Wolfenbüttel, an appointed post of the Dukes of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. *Emilia*

Galotti was written while Lessing served at Wolfenbüttel. His plays *Emilia Galotti* and *Nathan der Weise* and his literary essay “Laokoon oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie” are among his best-known works. Today outside of German-speaking circles, Lessing is best known for his friendship with Moses Mendelssohn and his literary model of societal tolerance, as suggested by *Nathan the Wise*.

Through his role as a theater critic, Lessing became familiar with Goethe once Goethe had begun to make a name for himself. Lessing wrote between 1748 and 1781, thereby overlapped his productive phase with Goethe’s early period of writing which began in 1770. While Goethe and Lessing never actually met, Lessing came to be seen as one of Goethe’s literary predecessors, much in the same way Klopstock was.

Lessing was considered the father of modern German drama and his theatrical works were part of the early German literary canon (Wiedemann 243). Before Goethe wrote *Werther*, an anonymous review of one of Shakespeare’s plays was published in the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen*, a journal to which Goethe also contributed. In the eighteenth century, German journals were generally intended for an exclusive circle of literary experts (Mahoney 3). In this review the public’s reaction to *Emilia Galotti* as well as Shakespeare are cited as examples of the audience’s poor theatrical judgment (147-148). The anonymous author argues for higher theatrical standards in Germany through staging better German drama and educating the public to appreciate more sophisticated theatrical works, such as *Emilia Galotti*.

Lessing’s interest in changing the direction of German theater is reflected in his theoretical writing *17. Literaturbrief* (1759) (Guthke 69). Lessing influenced the development of several German theatrical companies, and by 1774, more than 14 German theaters existed throughout the 300 German lands (Thomas xxii). Lessing’s contributions to German theater

ranged from creating venues for productions to documentation of theatrical experience, as well as theatrical reviews and the writing of his own plays. Through adopting elements of Shakespearean tragedy for the German stage, Lessing laid the groundwork needed to advance German theater to new heights. Lessing adopted the Shakespearean model of sympathetic protagonists who often had a flawed character, making them capable of good and evil. Lessing's play *Emilia Galotti* (1772) as well as Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) exemplify the shift in orientation.

A closer reading of the suicide scene in *Werther* is a good place to start to better understand Goethe's intention of including *Emilia Galotti* as the last book that Werther reads before his death. Only the narrator seems concerned with Lessing's play, as no one in the room discusses it. The placement of it in Werther's chamber is narrated to us, which adds to the depersonalization of Werther's process of dying. The interaction in the room describes an intimate scene. It shows Werther's weakness, emphasizing his humanity. He turns to alcohol and reads *Emilia Galotti*.

Readers do not know which page in the play is open, leaving uncertainty as to why Werther selects *Emilia Galotti* as his last story. However, it is certainly more than coincidence that he chooses a play in which the heroine, involved in a love triangle, decides to commit suicide at the end of the story. In the second to last scene of Lessing's play, Emilia is at the prince's residence in Dosalo with her father, Odoardo, who unsuccessfully requests to take her to a convent. Emilia asks her father for his dagger, as she would rather die than return to Grimaldi to be seduced by the prince (Lessing, *Emilia Galotti* 369). Ironically, it is only through her death that Emilia lives up to the moral expectations her father has of her.

Werther's choice of *Emilia Galotti* demonstrates that he prefers to take his life over

continuing its current status. He presents himself as a willing victim who, like Emilia, chooses death as a way out of a situation in a love triangle that cannot continue (Goethe, *Werther* 225). He sacrifices himself for Lotte and their love (251). Like Emilia, for Werther the decision is personal. Werther could not be true to himself and limit their relationship to a friendship after becoming physically involved with Lotte during their last meeting (245, 247). Werther also shows this through his suicide. Through the placement of *Emilia Galotti* at Werther's suicide, Goethe rewrites *Emilia Galotti*, offering a love story (251).

In *Werther*, the mysterious, anonymous narrator impersonally reports the facts from the suicide scene. He fulfills the role of reporting, as Werther can no longer tell the story. The narrator breaks Goethe's form of the epistolary novel to conclude the story. The extent of the narrator's influence on the novel is not limited to this scene, however. He organizes Werther's letters for publication, introduces the novel, and interjects his own opinion on several occasions, including ironic remarks about Lavater (Schweitzer 36). Scholars differ in describing the narrator's role and to what extent it varies from Werther's point of view (Scherpe 26-27; Schweitzer 36). The narrator is omniscient, as he knows Lotte's as well as Werther's thoughts (Goethe, *Werther* 199, 227, 229, 231). The mystery surrounding the identity of the narrator alienates the readers from his voice in the text.

The distance created by the unknown narrator shifts the focus from the human connection to dying to material trinkets in the room. These objects become memorial objects, since only a few of Werther's belongings are still present (259, 261). Schweitzer raises a very good point that the editor of the letters is someone who wanted to "create a memorial to Werther" (33). This memorial marks a change from what had been the prevailing aesthetic model for death. Goethe's counterexample to Lessing's ideas on death and beauty is presented at the end of *Werther*, as I

will now begin to explain.

Lessing's essay on the *The Laokoon Group* was an eighteenth-century aesthetic and semiotic study of lasting international importance. *The Laokoon Group* is an ancient sculpture, which has been primarily housed at the Vatican since its recovery in 1506. Writings on the *Laokoon Group* show the eighteenth-century aesthetic interest in how pain functioned in creating beauty. This sculpture served as the object of aesthetic debate of the real vs. ideal, as Simon Richter explains in his book *Laokoon's Body and The Aesthetics of Pain* (1992).

Richter states that none of the five German contributors to the debate on *Laokoon* explicitly address the problem of the representation of pain; instead they wrote in tropes (Richter 33). They studied the human body, vis-à-vis the *Laokoon Group*, even as their studies led them to discuss other poetic and artistic aspects of depicting pain (185). *Laokoon* was the focal point for a range of aesthetic ideas. *Laokoon* served many sub-fields of aesthetics, including discussions of the sublime, realism vs. idealism, autonomy of artistic objects, and symbols vs. allegory (19). As a representation of the "imposing muscularity" of the male body struggling against the serpents in ancient art, *Laokoon* served as the ideal for imitation in eighteenth-century literary and visual art (16).

In Greek and Roman mythology, three accounts of the Laokoon story exist with Virgil's as the best known (Richter 24-25). Lessing discusses Virgil's account of the myth. In book two of the *Aeneid*, Neptune's priest Laokoon warns other Trojans that they will lose the war against the Greeks. He implores them to defend the city by not allowing the Trojan horse inside the city walls or accepting any other gifts from the Greeks (Virgil 34). As punishment for warning the Trojans, the Greek goddess Minerva sends serpents to kill and silence Laokoon and his sons. The ancient statue of Laokoon depicts this act of revenge by the gods.

Lessing and Goethe were two of the writers in this *Laokoon* debate, offering very different interpretations. Lessing responded to Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), a German art historian and archeologist, who initiated the debate on the sculpture through his essay “Gedancken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Mahlerey und Bildhauerkunst [Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture]” (1755). Winckelmann posed the initial question on why *Laokoon* does not cry out, explaining that *Laokoon*'s noble simplicity and quiet grandeur guides his managing of the intense pain (Richter 44). Winckelmann saw *Laokoon* as central for developing German culture (Richter 16): “Der einzige Weg für uns, gross, ja, wenn es möglich ist, unnachahmlich zu werden, ist die Nachahmung der Alten” (Winckelmann 4) (The only way for us to become magnificent and inimitable, when possible, is by copying the ancients) (Heyer 5). Winckelmann's ideas have continued to set the benchmark for masculine beauty today (Forth 74).

Lessing's essay is a response to Winckelmann's 1755 interpretation of the sculpture. “Laokoon: Oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie [Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry]” (1766) was published previous to his involvement in the “National Theater” in Hamburg in 1767, and before his most famous plays (*Minna von Barnhelm* 1767, *Emilia Galotti* 1772, *Nathan der Weise* 1779) (Wiedemann 242). In his *Laokoon* essay, Lessing compares visual vs. textual forms of representation. Lessing ascertained rules of beauty for other forms of artistic expression: “Die Schönheit, deren Begriff wir zuerst von körperlichen Gegenständen abziehen, hat allgemeine Regeln, die sich auf mehrere Dinge anwenden lassen; auf Handlungen, auf Gedanken, sowohl als auf Formen” (Lessing, *Laokoon* 13) (Beauty, a concept which we first derive from physical objects, has general rules applicable to a number of things: to actions and thoughts as well as forms) (McCormick 3). He examines the rules and

limitations of genres though his study of ancient Greek and Roman art and mythology.

“Laokoon leidet, wie des Sophokles Philoktet.' Wie leidet dieser?” (“Laocoön suffers like the Philoctetes of Sophocles.” But how does Philoctetes suffer?) is Lessing’s initial question of his essay, which serves as his point of departure for his comparison of Virgil’s story of Laokoon to its famous sculpture (*Laokoon* 18; McCormick 8). His perspective gave a new shape to the debate. Lessing’s question allows him to outline the stylistic differences of physical beauty in the Greeks’ media of poetry and painting (*Laokoon* 27-30; McCormick 16-18). In the essay, Lessing refers to the German words *Malerei* as 'plastic arts' and *Poesie* to include 'temporally progressive texts' (*Laokoon* 16; McCormick 6). He specifically uses Homeric epic poetry and mythology as poetic examples throughout his essay.

In contrast to Winckelmann’s description of Greek visual arts as noble simplicity and quiet grandeur, Lessing looks specifically at how heroes from different cultural traditions meet their death (Lessing, *Laokoon* 17-19; McCormick 7-9). In Homer’s *The Iliad* dying heroes and wounded soldiers in the Trojan War vocally articulate the severity of pain: “Schreien ist der natürliche Ausdruck des körperlichen Schmerzes. Homers verwundete Krieger fallen nicht selten mit Geschrei zu Boden” (Lessing, *Laokoon* 19) (Screaming is the natural expression of physical pain. Homer’s wounded warriors fall frequently to the ground yelling) (McCormick 8-9). Here, Lessing equates Homer’s Greek model of suffering to nature. Crying out as the Greek expression of *Leiden* (“suffering”) presents an opposite image to the Nordic heroes, who laugh in the face of fear, death, and loss: “Alle Schmerzen verbeißen, dem Streiche des Todes mit unverwandtem Auge entgegensehen, unter den Bissen der Nattern lachend sterben, weder seine Sünde noch den Verlust seines liebsten Freundes beweinen, sind Züge des alten nordischen Heldenmuts” (Lessing, *Laokoon* 19-20) (To stifle all signs of pain, to meet the stroke of death

with unaverted eye, to die laughing under the vipers' sting, to weep neither over our own sins nor at the loss of the dearest of friends, are traits of the old northern heroism) (Frothingham 4). Lessing's depiction of the fearless Nordic, Barbarian, heroic type is an extreme opposite to Homer's model.

Lessing additionally describes a third possible type of suffering experienced by the stoic hero, who dies silently, enduring his pain. This category of death stems from the sophisticated Europeans: "Ich weiß es, wir feinern Europäer einer klügern Nachwelt, wissen über unsern Mund und über unsere Augen besser zu herrschen. Höflichkeit und Anstand verbieten Geschrei und Tränen" (Lessing, *Laokoon* 19) (I know that we refined Europeans of a wiser posterity better know how to control our mouths and eyes. Courtesy and decency forbid cries and tears) (Frothingham 4). In this description Lessing is critical of the European, who hides his feelings for the sake of etiquette and is also critical of the uncaring Barbarian type hero who challenges suffering.

Lessing's *Laokoon* discerns beauty by considering ugliness in poetry and painting. He distinguishes between these media in the last third of his twenty-nine chapter essay. Each medium has laws that govern its limitations (Lessing 14-15; McCormick 4). Pain then becomes secondary to beauty in visual art. Artists misrepresent the feeling in order to maintain balance between beauty and gruesome expressions: "Die alten Bildhauer übersahen es mit einem Blicke, daß ihre Kunst hier eine gänzliche Abänderung erfordere" (Lessing, *Laokoon* 42) (The ancient sculptors ignored that their art required a complete modification) (McCormick 37). Pain is de-emphasized for aesthetic purposes.

Lessing observes that artists make a choice not to reveal the extreme extent of pain and to maintain a degree of beauty, while a sculpture based on demonstrations of human pain cannot be

completely devoid of unsightliness. Lessing explains that the artist had to include some of the ugliness of the pain that Laokoon felt when the snake killed him; however, the artist could not express it to the extent Laokoon experienced it in epic poetry, because of visual art's traditional exclusion of the unattractive and the overly shocking effect it would have on the viewer (Lessing, *Laokoon* 32; McCormick 19-20). Furthermore painting can focus only on one moment and, hence, does not represent pain to the full extent (Lessing 116; McCormick 77):

Es gibt Leidenschaften und Grade von Leidenschaften, die sich in dem Gesichte durch die häßlichsten Verzerrungen äußern, und den ganzen Körper in so gewaltsame Stellungen setzen, daß alle die schönen Linien, die ihn in einem ruhigern Stande umschreiben, verloren gehen. Dieser enthielten sich also die alten Künstler entweder ganz und gar, oder setzten sie auf geringere Grade herunter, in welchen sie eines Maßes von Schönheit fähig sind. (Lessing, *Laokoon* 26)

There are passions and degrees of passion whose expression produces the most hideous contortions of the face, and throws the whole body into such violent positions as to destroy all the beautiful lines that transcribe it when in a state of greater repose. The old artists either refrained altogether from representing these passions, or softened them into emotions which were capable of being expressed with some degree of beauty. (Frothingham 11-12)

Alternatively, literature provides a more complete picture, as its aesthetic value is not dependent on one moment, but a series of moments through narrative time. Poetry is composed of actions, or objects following other objects, and uses more narrative images than painting (Lessing, *Laokoon* 110; McCormick 72). These different temporal components of the genres shape what version of a story is told. For example, Lessing describes how the sculptors of *Laokoon* changed the snake for dramatic effect from the way Virgil had described it. In Virgil's narrative, Laokoon's hands are intertwined, coiled in the snake so that he cannot move, whereas the sculpture shows his hands up in the air. Description of objects is exchanged for action in literature, and demonstrated through the reaction of witnesses (Lessing 26-28; McCormick 15-16). In this way, poetry has the ability to draw out disturbing descriptions over a longer period of

time.

Lessing believes that Laokoon's death serves only as an introduction to the destruction that follows. He argues that *Laokoon's* scream is minimized for aesthetic purposes to hide the extent of the pain and to maintain the momentum of the story's progress. According to Lessing, the pain of the story should not be overly graphic too soon, so as not to minimize a more serious event that follows. For example, had Virgil over-emphasized Laokoon's last moment, it would have taken readers' attention away from the pain caused by the destruction of Troy. Literature cannot become fixed on one moment of time; it should be transitory, as the story must lead to the next moment.

Art is important for Lessing's idea of the aesthetics of death in literature. Lessing believed drama should be seen as a living painting and the rules of visual art should be applied to drama: "Das Drama, welches für die lebendige Malerei des Schauspielers bestimmt ist, dürfte vielleicht eben deswegen sich an die Gesetze der materiellen Malerei strenger halten müssen" (Lessing, *Laokoon* 36) (The drama, which is designed as the living painting of an actor, should therefore perhaps conform more strictly to the laws of material painting) (Frothingham 20-21). Literature can learn from the centrality of a moment in visual art, as it is precise, self-contained, while allowing for the viewer to imagine what follows (Lessing, *Laokoon* 31-32 and McCormick 19). Drama should follow voluntary rules of self-restraint in the depiction of pain, since the imaginative process of the viewer that follows the transitory moment would be ruined without restraint (Richter 168-169). Lessing selected the moment immediately before the most immense pain, as he believed that the audience should be allowed the freedom to imagine what happens after the transitory moment.

Richter analyzes Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*, drawing parallels between the events and

painting, as described by Lessing in *Laokoon*. Like art, Emilia sacrifices herself becoming an *Opfer* (“Victim”):

If Emilia’s status in the play is that of the aesthetic object, then Lessing has succeeded in representing the myth of the victim that welcomes and encourages her own victimage, who assumes the responsibility for her violation on her assailant’s behalf. If Emilia represents painting, the visual arts, then, according to Lessing, she, in so far as she desires moral propriety, willingly submits to the restrictive rule of beauty, sacrificing herself, fearing her own fragility just as Emilia is represented as doubting her ability to withstand the powers of Eros. Painting is a willing victim. (Richter 67-68)

Does Emilia represent painting and victimization though? Might she be better seen as a literary example of the rules that Lessing discusses in *Laokoon*, in which he suggests that literature be more closely restricted to the rules of painting? Does she die quietly to take away the focus from the real climax of the story? How does Lessing’s literary example in *Emilia Galotti* of death compare to this theoretical one in *Laokoon*?

Neil Flax believes that Lessing’s primary concern in *Emilia Galotti* was a working prototype for the aesthetic ideals and semiotics that he had discussed in *Laokoon* (40). Flax argues that the “relations of the arts in *Laokoon* may be directly pertinent to the dramaturgical innovations Lessing then carried out in *Emilia Galotti*” (41). He believes that Lessing wanted to initiate an aesthetic model that realized Denis Diderot’s idea of a picture theater.

Diderot (1713-1784) was a French philosopher and writer, who opposed the stilted French classical stage. Lessing had become familiar with Diderot through translating his works in the 1760s and had learned of the ancient Roman Virginia ballad by translating Diderot (Flax 46, 50). The ballad depicts a plebeian girl who was killed by her father to save her from the ruler Appius Claudius. Claudius’s forcing himself on her led to his overthrow and the reestablishment of the Roman Republic. The ballad’s narrative shaped Lessing’s *Emilia Galotti*, and specifically the famous pictorial death scene, which Emilia recounts (Flax 43, 45, 46, 49).

Flax bases this argument on the question why the portrait of Emilia has such a prominent role in the beginning of the play; it functions as its framework, which is later negated at the end of the play by Emilia's death (53). Her death is conceived along the lines of the literary model that Lessing developed in his earlier *Laokoon* essay:

As Odoardo and Emilia perform the ultimate sacrifice and at the same time assume the form of familiar painting, pictorial art is instilled with the conceptual force of language, and the abstract language of morality is imbued with instantaneous visibility. The climax of the play therefore marks the fulfillment of the semiotic project as it was conceived by German Enlightenment philosophy: the complete integration of the two orders of human sign-use. (52)

Emilia changes in character from passive, dutiful daughter to self-assertive individual (53). For Lessing, Emilia's death is natural, given that it follows in the sequence of events (51).

Lessing's essay *Laokoon* speaks to the applicability of rules from the classical concept of beauty to plots, ideals, and aesthetic forms, and his treaty on the aesthetics of pain influenced his writing of Emilia's death. I interpret Emilia's death as unnatural, as it is the opposite of the highly charged emotional Homeric deaths that Lessing explains as natural: "Schreien ist der natürliche Ausdruck des körperlichen Schmerzes" (Lessing, *Laokoon* 19) (A cry is the natural expression of physical pain) (McCormick 8). Lessing's transitory moment in Emilia's death is brief, subtly depicted, leaving her pain to be imagined by the reader. Emilia maintains a heightened sense of beauty in the process of death in the arms of her creator, her biological father. She calmly welcomes it, thereby restoring a sense of honor to her family, as her father carries out her wish to kill her: "Eine Rose gebrochen, ehe der Sturm sie entblättert. – Lassen Sie mich sie küssen, diese väterliche Hand" (Broken a rose, ere the storm scattered its petals.—Let me kiss it, this, my father's hand) (Lessing, *Emilia Galotti* 369; Aesch 135). She dies quietly, much like a rose. Absent a loud shriek to the ground, her death resembles neither the Greek

ideal, nor the Nordic image of a protagonist laughing hauntingly as she challenges death, instead she stays in character and dies with a whimper: “Ah – mein Vater – (Sie stirbt, und er legt sie sanft auf den Boden.)” (Ah— my father— (She dies and he lays her gently on the floor) (Lessing, *Emilia Galotti* 369; Aesch 135). Emilia’s subtle death contributes to her role as a heroine of virtue.

Her death preserves beauty. Her quiet death de-emphasizes her pain. One is left with the more powerful image of her father assisting her in her death, rather than her last moments. Thus, her death points to Lessing’s disagreement with it. Lessing's message that she was not ready for death, an act all the more heinous because it took place on what should have been her wedding day. A community in which fathers feel morally justified to assist their daughters in dying on their wedding day highlights Lessing’s criticism of the sociopolitical system, especially given its relation to the political subtext of the ancient Roman Virginia ballad. Emilia’s quiet passing leads to the moral of the story. Lessing’s ideas as exhibited in *Laokoon* are literary portrayed in Emilia’s quick and quiet death.

Goethe’s ideas on the subject of pain differed greatly from those of Lessing, who followed voluntary self-restraint in depicting Emilia’s death. Emilia’s death is soft, whereas Werther’s body fights death. It holds on for hours long after his nearly failed attempt; yet, he does not call out. Neighbors only attest to hearing the gun shot (Goethe, *Werther* 265). Goethe depicts every twitch and jerk of Werther's body until his last breath. Werther’s suicide lingers at this gruesome moment, drawing it out to half a day from midnight until noon the following day. Bennett suggests that Werther’s twelve-hour death points to the uselessness of the act of suicide (*Double* 73).

Goethe does not draw moral conclusions after Werther’s death the way that Lessing does

in *Emilia Galotti*. Werther's death challenges preexisting norms and explores the concept of what it means to die (Goethe, *Werther* 249, 251). Werther's long death advances an alternative German model of beauty. Given Goethe's developing aesthetic of death, it is more likely that the death lingers for the sake of beauty. The reference to *Emilia Galotti* is made at Werther's most extreme moment of pain, his death. It points to Goethe's disagreement with Lessing on the aesthetics of death.

Eighteenth-century readership saw a connection between ugliness and beauty in literature. Lessing examines the association between these opposites in his study of the *Laokoon* in chapter 24. Here the displeasing and desired are connected, as one's unpleasant feelings toward an object can be transformed into a pleasant experience by realizing that it is an illusion (Lessing, *Laokoon* 169; McCormick 126). Through this process, fear and desire are combined. Margravine Auguste Stolberg describes *Emilia Galotti* in her letter to Boie, 14 November 1774: "Der erste Teil insonderheit hat ganz göttliche Stellen, und der zweite ist schrecklich schön" (The first part especially has entire heavenly [textual] places and the second half is dreadfully beautiful) (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 87). Here she sees a connection between the dreaded and beauty.

Goethe's ideas concerning pain and death in literature were initially formed in the early 1770s. During his studies in Leipzig, he read Lessing's *Laokoon* essay (Riedel 65). Goethe admits to the power of Lessing's influence on him: "Man muß Jüngling sein, um sich zu vergegenwärtigen, welche Wirkung Lessings *Laokoon* auf uns ausübte, indem dieses Werk uns aus der Region eines kümmerlichen Anschauens in die freien Gefilde des Gedankens hinriß" (One has to be in one's youth to realize the effect that Lessing's *Laokoon* exerted over us. This work carried us away from the region of a lean perspective into the unrestrained fields of ideas) (Goethe, *Dichtung* 345-346). Despite Lessing's influence, Goethe developed his own distinctive

style and point of orientation. Richter claims that in the eighteenth century *Laokoon* was seen as classical unity, but it was really a story of fragmentation (23).

Goethe's essay on *The Laokoon Group*, "Über Laokoon" appeared first in 1798 in Goethe and Heinrich Meyer's Journal *Die Propyläen*. Previously, Goethe's early examples of literary death had been expressed through drama and novels, such as his 1773 play *Götz von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand* and his 1774 novel *Werther*. *Werther* is one of Goethe's early aesthetic models of pain, which culminates in a gruesome death. By comparison, in *Götz* the protagonist dies from wounds that were inflicted before his capture (Goethe 388). *Götz* is a victim, who turns to God in his last moments, surrounded by his sister Marie and his wife Elisabeth, calling out for the freedom that he cannot attain on the earth (388). Different from *Götz*, *Werther* is a quiet, powerful model of pain, void of the political element, despite its revolutionary appeal.

In his essay Goethe discusses his impressions of *The Laokoon Group* statue, a copy of which he had seen in Mannheim in 1769 and then the original on his trip to Italy in 1786/7 (Richter 163-164). He initially drafted his response to Lessing's essay between January and March 1770 (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 191). Here he disagrees with Lessing's premise that the ancients tried to avoid the expression of ugliness for the maintenance of beauty: "Lessings Laock. p. 16. 'Wuth und Verzweiflung schändete keines von ihren Wercken. Ich darf behaupten, dass sie nie eine Furie gebildet haben'" (Lessings Laokoon p. 16 'Anger and despair does not violate their works. I may suggest that they never built a fury.') (191). Goethe believes that one should be able to emphasize more strongly the extreme pain, distress, and anger (191). Goethe's 1787 *Laokoon* essay builds on these concepts while also responding to the art historian Aloys Ludwig Hirt, whom Goethe had met in Rome. Hirt's essay, which was printed in 1797 in

Schiller's journal *Die Horen*, argues that Laokoon is close to death and unable to scream after the snake's bite (Richter 164). *Laokoon*, therefore, is an example of *Characteristik*, as the entire statue displays the climax of energy before death.

Goethe also discusses the snake's bite in his essay. He examines how pain and beauty are connected, explicitly contrasting Lessing's theory on the difference between poetry and painting through his own approach to the depiction of pain (Richter 21). Goethe's essay equally addresses issues brought up by past writers who have analyzed the sculpture group (165). Goethe removes *Laokoon* from its mythological foundation by describing the sculpture of the naked father and his two sons coiled by the snakes; Goethe does not address the background of how Laokoon arrived at this predicament (168).

His concentration on an autonomous individual moment differentiates him from Lessing's concept of how the artist decides on which moment to portray from the scene: "... Goethe sees art to be most challenged when it undertakes to represent the most violent, most extreme moment, the moment Lessing abhorred" (Richter 169). For Goethe the beauty is in the impact of the snake's bite; this sudden moment of force is graceful, Goethe concedes. He borrows the word *Reiz*, in the sense of stimulus from Sulzer's theory of art, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Kunst* (172-174). Haller used the word *Reiz* "to designate the painful stimulus that makes the body visible" (33). For Goethe, *Reiz* is related to the electric shock that comes from the snake's bite, which leads to an *anmutig* ("graceful") beauty (172, 175). Goethe's application of Haller's medical discourse as aesthetic terminology allowed him to show how the concepts of pain and beauty are connected (33). Goethe's aesthetic perspective shapes not only what is told, but also how it is told.

An example that illustrates this last point can be found in the material Goethe used for the

novel *Werther*. Goethe selected details from the story of Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem's suicide to be used for Werther's suicide. Jerusalem and Goethe had met in Leipzig, and the two went on to become legal colleagues in Wetzlar (Reuter 249). The following description of Jerusalem's suicide is from Johann Christian Kestner's letter to Goethe on 2 November 1772 (Sauder, Kommentar 778-786):

Von dem Wein hatte er nur ein Glas getrunken. Hin und wieder lagen Bücher und von seinen eignen schriftlichen Aufsätzen. Emilia Galotti lag auf einem Pult am Fenster aufgeschlagen; daneben ein Manuskript ohnegefähr Fingerdick in Quart, philosophischen Inhalts, der erste Teil oder Brief war überschrieben: *Von der Freiheit*, es war darin von der moralischen Freiheit die Rede. Ich blätterte zwar darin, um zu sehen, ob der Inhalt auf seine letzte Handlung einen Bezug habe, fand es nicht; ich war aber so bewegt und konsterniert, daß ich mich nichts daraus besinne, noch die Szene, welche von der Emilia Galotti aufgeschlagen war, weiß, ohngeachtet ich mit Fleiß darnach sah.

(Sauder, Kommentar 785)

He had drunk only one glass from the wine. Here and there scattered around were books and his own articles. *Emilia Galotti* lay open on a desk at the window; next to it a manuscript approximately a finger thick in quarto of philosophical contents. The first section or letter had been titled: *On Freedom*, in it moral freedom was discussed. I leafed through it to see, if the content had a connection to his last action, I did not find it. I was so moved, however, and dismayed ---- that I do not remember anything from it nor which scene from *Emilia Galotti* lay open, although I looked at it actively.

Especially noteworthy is that Goethe lifted only two sentences from the letter, which appear only slightly altered in *Werther*: "Von dem Wein hatte er nur ein Glas getrunken... Emilia Galotti lag auf dem Pult am Fenster aufgeschlagen;..." (He had drunk only one glass of the wine... *Emilia Galotti* lay open on his desk at the window) (Goethe, *Werther* 265). In *Werther* the phrase *am Fenster* is omitted and the information in between these two sentences from the letter is not included his novel. This change creates a causal effect between drinking wine and Lessing's play: "Von dem Weine hatte er nur ein Glas getrunken. Emilia Galotti lag auf dem Pulte aufgeschlagen" (265) (He had drunk only one glass of the wine. Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* lay open on his desk) (Mayer 167). This new association leads the reader to believe that Goethe

wants to stress that Werther was not intoxicated when he committed suicide: he made his decision with sound mind.

What Goethe does not include in *Werther* from this letter is that the writer, in this case Kestner, did not remember which page of *Emilia Galotti* was open. Goethe's narrator casually describes the placement of Lessing's play, leading the text to seem mysterious in Goethe's retelling. He gives no additional specific detail to the readers, which stands in direct contrast to the explicit details about Werther's death. The reference to *Emilia Galotti* is left to the readers' imaginations both the 1774 and the 1787 versions.

The retention of the reference shows that Goethe was certain which intertextual reference to use for Werther's suicide scene, despite the message it conveyed concerning the power of the text. Whereas many people might turn to a religious text in their last moments, Werther turns to an eighteenth-century German play. That Werther read Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* instead of a religious text shortly before his suicide suggests that Lessing's drama is equal to, if not more powerful than, a religious text in providing moral authority in situations of life and death (Goethe, *Werther* 265). This is a high form of praise. At the same time, Goethe's placement of Lessing's play here points to the ineffectiveness of Lessing's moral at the end of story. The moral of *Emilia Galotti* is lost on Werther. Werther does not learn from it, and kills himself.

In *Emilia Galotti* honor is linked to marriage. Had she lived, Emilia would have acted dishonorably in a relationship outside of marriage with the prince. Only through Emilia's virtue can honor be maintained in her family. Goethe could have made this same association, but instead Werther further negates such a connotation through his suicide notes concerning value judgments of extramarital affairs. He does not spare Lotte's virtue, as he speaks openly about their mutual feelings for one another and their intimate moment (Goethe, *Werther* 251). Lotte's

secret is out. He even asks Albert for forgiveness (261). Werther does not see what he did as wrong, even though Albert is her husband (251). Werther's feelings raise questions concerning such norms.

Goethe chose not to mention the hand-written title *Von der Freiheit* (On Freedom) of the philosophical manuscript from Kestner's letter. *Von der Freiheit* is the first part of Martin's Luther's title "Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen [On the Freedom of a Christian]" (1520), which served as the third of Martin Luther's major religious pamphlets and marks a point between the middle ages and the early modern period (Beutel 11). The person of Martin Luther evokes religious and spiritual freedom, as well as linguistic progress in the German language, while Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* depicts the abuses of European despotism. Goethe could have drawn the association between Werther's suicide and the idea of freedom expressed through the title *Von der Freiheit*, but by not including it, Goethe decisively toned down a potential political voice of the novel. Goethe's choice of intertextual references for this scene shows that Werther's death is not meant as a tool of protest that leads to salvation. Goethe stripped this potential revolutionary reading of it, implying the hopelessness of Werther's situation.

Georg Lukács read *Werther* as a revolutionary ideological novel with *Emilia Galotti* as its testimony, however: "Und in der Nacht des Selbstmordes ist das letzte Buch, das Werther liest, der bisherige Gipfelpunkt der revolutionären bürgerlichen Literatur, die 'Emilia Galotti' Lessings" (And on the night of his suicide, Werther reads Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*, as his last book, which up until this point had been the high point of middle-class revolutionary literature) (54). Lukács's reading is historically based in the eighteenth century, when in German-speaking territories few people had a channel for publicly expressing their frustrations: "There was dissatisfaction in the middle classes at the way absolute authority was wielded by the various

princes and dukes in Germany, but it was not uniformly experienced, and there was no central authority against which to rebel” (Thomas xiv). Goethe does not discuss rebellion and *Emilia Galotti* together, though. His choice of intertextual references does not suggest that direction and it is highly questionable that Goethe meant his reference to *Emilia Galotti* in this way. Goethe did not personally have reason to rebel, given his own direct contact to an established merchant class and then later to powerful government authorities.

Martin Swales states that Goethe's reference to *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* is an “imprint of its age” (*Landmarks* 4). His reading of the intertextual reference is also political: “Moreover, it is a play that pits against the scandal of princely absolutism the moral seriousness and dignity of bourgeois life. We can assume that *Werther* aligns himself with the play’s perception of class differences, and with its sympathies” (5). Swales’s interpretation is not based on what Goethe has said about the play, though. Goethe does not discuss *Emilia Galotti* in this manner, as further demonstrated below. Swales’s argument supports the myth Gervinus created in the nineteenth century to align Lessing and Goethe during Goethe’s early period, when their work, in fact, did not share a common orientation. Goethe’s reference to *Emilia Galotti* at *Werther*’s suicide does not praise Lessing as the messenger. Lessing himself also read the ending of *Werther* differently than Swales.

Lessing’s reaction to *Werther* had been mixed, as seen in his discussion of *Werther*’s death in a letter to Eschenburg on 26 October 1774. Lessing found *Werther* an enjoyable book that needed a different ending (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 78):

Wenn aber ein so warmes Produkt nicht mehr Unheil als Gutes stiften soll; meinen Sie nicht, daß es noch eine kleine kalte Schlußrede haben müßte? Ein paar Winse hinterher: wie *Werther* zu einem so abenteuerlichen Charakter gekommen; wie ein andrer Jüngling, dem die Natur eine ähnliche Anlage gegeben, sich dafür zu bewahren habe. Denn ein solcher dürfte die poetische Schönheit leicht für die moralische nehmen und glauben, daß

der *gut* gewesen sein müsse, der unsre Teilnahme so stark beschäftigt.

Und das war er doch wahrlich nicht; ja, wenn unseres Jerusalems Geist völlig in dieser Lage gewesen wäre, so müßte ich ihn fast — verachten. (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 78)

But if such a warm product shall produce not more misfortune than good, don't you think, that it must have additional small cold conclusive remarks? A couple of explanations at the end: how Werther became such an adventurous character, how another young man could protect himself, to whom nature gave a similar situation. Because such a person may take poetic beauty easily for morality and believes that the one must have been good, with whose situation we so strongly engage.

And that he was surely not. Certainly, if our Jerusalem's soul had been completely [absorbed] in this situation, then I would had had almost to hate him.

Here Lessing questions Goethe's intentions in *Werther*. He does not see Goethe as promoting his own writing practices. He contends that Goethe's conclusion does not reflect a healthy morality, and criticizes Goethe for not using aesthetics to this end. Lessing's criticism here points to his own reading of how to interpret the reference to *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther*. Lessing reads Goethe's intertextual reference to *Emilia Galotti* as lacking a moral teaching and a connection to reality. Lessing was right. Goethe was demonstrating his disagreement with a possible inclusion of moral teachings at the end.

Wolfgang Kaempfer discusses Lessing's letter to Eschenburg from a psychological perspective. He sees Lessing's reaction in his Eschenburg letter as a confrontation with Goethe's psychic self-examination, since he believes that the novel explores Goethe's own individual psychology (266, 283). Lessing calls for a document of realism and an extension of an older literary tradition of representing death (283).

Lessing contributed to the speculative association between Jerusalem and Goethe's *Werther*. Lessing, who had met Jerusalem in Wolfenbüttel, became the editor of Jerusalem's writings for posthumous publication in 1776, two years after the success of Goethe's *Werther* (Große, *Kommentar* 787). Much of the initial reception viewed *Werther* as the fictional

representation of Jerusalem's suicide. A sampling of the initial epistolary responses shows this interpretation in Bode's *Zeitgenossen* (Gräfin von Stolberg 87; Merck 69; Gleim 79-80; Sulzer 81-82; Kestner 82-86; Bodmer 70). The nineteenth-century readership demonstrates a continuum in this line of thinking. For example, Goedeke focuses on the parallels between Goethe's life and Werther's story (Goedeke 1-6). These early interpretations show that suicide as a literary motif was a topic open for discussion, though it remained primarily a religious concern (Goedeke 6).

Lessing's letter to Eschenburg from 26 October 1774, also points to Goethe's different way of thinking about suicide from the Greek and Roman models:

Glauben Sie wohl, daß je ein römischer oder griechischer Jüngling sich *so* und *darum* das Leben genommen? Gewiß nicht. Die wußten sich vor der Schwärmerei der Liebe ganz anders zu schützen; und zu Socrates' Zeiten würde man eine solche ἐξ ἔρωτος κατοχη [aus Liebesraserei], welche τι τολμαν παρα φυσιν [etwas gegen die Natur zu wagen] antreibt, nur kaum einem Mädclen verziehen haben. Solche kleingroße, verächtlich schätzbare Originale hervorzubringen, war nur der christlichen Erziehung vorbehalten, die ein körperliches Bedürfnis so schön in eine geistige Vollkommenheit zu verwandeln weiß.

Also, lieber Goethe, noch ein Kapitelchen zum Schlusse; und je zynischer, je besser!
(Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 79)

Do you believe that ever a Roman or Greek young man has taken his life in such a way and for this purpose? Certainly not. They knew other ways to protect themselves from infatuation; and in Socrates's times, one would have excused only a few girls such a rage of love, which rushes to dare something against nature. Bringing forth such small-minded originals, contemptible [but] treasured, were only reserved for the Christian rearing, which knows so well [how] to transform a bodily need into a spiritual perfection.

So, dear Goethe, another chapter is needed at the end! The more cynical, the better!

The Greeks acted in a different way than Werther does in dealing with romantic frenzy. They did not act against nature by choosing willed deaths. Lessing accuses Goethe of supplanting classical examples with an alternative model of how to deal with feelings of passion. Lessing's comparison of Goethe's model of death to Greek tradition shows that Lessing interpreted

Werther as an example of a larger aesthetic discussion, politically unrelated.

Hans Rudolf Vaget sees *Emilia Galotti's* position in *Werther* as speaking to the socio-historical tragedies of the monarchical political system: "Es ist somit wohl diese markante Stelle, die den geheimen Punkt der größten Affinität zwischen dem Text der bürgerlichen Tragödie und dem Text von Werthers Leiden bezeichnet" (It is hence probably this distinctive location, which marks the secret point of the strongest affinity between the text of bourgeoisie tragedy and the text of Werther's sufferings) (46). Here Vaget links Werther's personal pain to his role as a common man. He believes that the reference in *Werther* to *Emilia Galotti* is not coincidental, nor are *Werther's* earlier letters, which precede the publishing date of *Emilia Galotti* (*Leser* 47). His argument highlights Werther's interest in art and his double failure as an artist and a lover (61). In his essay, Vaget studies Goethe's motivations by connecting the *dilettante* actions of the fictive protagonist Werther's to autobiographical writings by Goethe. He establishes Werther's actions as dilettante, a dabbler in art, and then examines Goethe's own life as described in his correspondence and *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, stating that Goethe had to kill the artist, through Werther's suicide, for the poet to live (66). Vaget makes the connection between Conti, as the artist in *Emilia Galotti*, and *Werther*, stating that Werther is a more radical version of Conti *als gesteigerter Conti* ("as the more extreme Conti") (46-47).

Goethe's exploration of pain in the text offended many, not only because of the association to Jerusalem's suicide, but also because it indirectly challenged the Christian stance on suicide and extramarital affairs. Joh. August Ernesti, the Dean of the Theological Faculty in Leipzig, responded with a condemnation of the novel, warning the public of *Werther* in 1775:

Da die Schrift also üble Impressiones machen kann, welche, zumal bei schwachen Leuten, Weibs-Personen, (Eindrücke machen kann, welche) bei Gelegenheit aufwachen, und ihnen verführerisch werden können; so hat die theol. Fakultät für nötig gefunden zu

sorgen, daß diese Schrift unterdrückt werde: dazumal itzo die Exempel des Selbstmordes frequenter werde. (Sauder, Kommentar 786)

As the text can make a harmful impression, which, especially with weak people, women, (which can make an impression) on occasion awaken, and could seduce them, the theological faculty has found it necessary to take action that the text be suppressed, especially now that the example of suicide is becoming more frequent.

Individual pastors also spoke out against the novel, such as in Hamburg. The religious and the older social orders were some of the earliest groups involved in politicizing *Werther*. Banning the novel led to exactly the opposite results that these groups were trying to achieve. They highlighted the potential power of *Werther* by addressing taboo topics of love and death.

Women's magazines also played a role in promoting the novel. Heinse, the publisher of the women's literary quarterly *Iris*, wrote that *Werther* was for mature women, who could empathize with *Werther's* feelings (210).

Werther's reading choice suggests that *Emilia Galotti* contains an extra message, that supplements his suicide notes (Goethe, *Werther* 217). *Werther* spoke of death openly and often throughout the novel, such as on 12 August 1771, 3 November 1772, and additionally in the 1774 *Werther* version on 8 December 1772 (93, 177, 196). We know from his suicide notes on 20 and 21 December 1772 to Wilhelm, his mother, Albert, and Lotte that he was already seriously considering suicide (217). Reading *Emilia Galotti*, however, does not determine *Werther's* resolve to take his life. Lotte's handing over the pistol is the deciding factor (259). Goethe's toning down of the polemic associated with *Werther* reading *Emilia Galotti* leaves the reader more uncertain about the role of the intertextual link to *Emilia Galotti*.

Throughout their relationship, Lotte and *Werther* share a common interest in discussing books (Goethe, *Werther* 43-45, 103, 157, 163, 231-245). The last night they are together Lotte suggests *Werther* read aloud his translation of *Ossian*, as she wanted to hear him read it to her

(231). His recitation of the epic poem drives him to passion, taking her in his arms, and she is physically unfaithful to her husband. Following this climax of the story, the next piece of literature that Werther shares with Lotte concerns death. Lotte does not go to Werther at his death, but is sure to hear the story of the events surrounding Werther's suicide from her family and members of the community who were present. What does *Emilia Galotti* say that he has not already conveyed?

First it seems clear that Werther does not blame Lotte for any of her actions, instead he is worried about her well being (Goethe, *Werther* 263). Lotte's innocence in Werther's suicide is questionable, however. Her last action of handing over her husband's pistol to Werther's servant for Werther's use on his journey was her greatest contribution to his decision-making process, but was certainly not the only one (259). Lotte arouses him through her seductive piano playing and her flirtatious demeanor. She also instigates their passionate moment, as I later discuss in Chapter Four. Werther himself even complains about her actions in the canary kissing scene on 12 September 1772, for example (167).

By contrast, Werther's actions can be more clearly read. He decides to visit Lotte daily, whereas she does not go to see him, not even to pay her last respects. Werther is also responsible for losing himself, as Goethe expressed in his letter from 1 June to 4 July 1774 to Schönberg:

Eine Geschichte des Titels: die Leiden des iungen Werthers, darinn ich einen iungen Menschen darstelle, der mit einer tiefen reinen Empfindung, und wahrer Penetration begabt, sich in schwärmende Träume verliert, sich durch Spekulation untergräbt, biss er zuletzt durch dazutretende unglückliche Leidenschafften, besonders eine endlose Liebe zerrüttet, sich eine Kugel vor den Kopf schießt.

(Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 374-375)

A story with the title: the Sorrows of the Young Werther, in which I present a young person, who is talented with a deep pure sensitivity and a true introspection, who loses himself in passionate dreams, and undermines himself through speculation, until at last he is ruined by an additional unrequited passion, notably an eternal love, shooting himself

with a bullet through his head.

In this paragraph Goethe does not mention Lotte's involvement in Werther's demise. Goethe does not specifically mention Lotte, though in the novel he attributes guilt to her actions, as seen in her response to Werther's death.

If *Emilia Galotti* serves as Werther's private goodbye to Lotte, it does not help to comfort her. Lotte's health breaks in anticipation and in response to hearing about Werther's death – she had previously sensed that he would kill himself with her husband's pistol (257, 259). Leading up to the news, her body shakes and then she faints on its delivery (Goethe, *Werther* 265). The novel ends with the following description regarding her condition: “Man fürchtete für Lottens Leben” (267) (One feared for Lotte's life) (167). Her physical response shows her feelings of pain associated with Werther's death. No one else is so painfully affected by his suicide, even as people swarm around to help and be with him as he passes (265, 267). He receives attention and recognition that he rarely enjoyed before this moment.

There are two texts associated with Werther's death: his suicide notes and *Emilia Galotti*. His suicide note is personal, addressing his feelings, his last will, and his philosophical struggle with the idea of death (Goethe, *Werther* 249). To illustrate this concern he tells an anecdote concerning a love from his adolescence who passed away. After her death, he watched her being buried, but his experience and reaction did not help him to better understand death better (249). Werther does not name his girlfriend who had passed away. In the beginning of the novel, though, he speaks of something vague that had happened to Leonore. His first letter was presumably to Wilhelm, since he addresses him as a friend from home (11). Werther questions whether to blame himself for the pain Leonore experienced from spending time with her sister (11). Now Lotte is in a similar position in which he found himself then. He had promised to be

better by not following the evil side of fate (11). But the ending of the book suggests he has learned nothing at all.

In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, third part, book thirteen, Goethe addresses general criticisms concerning *Werther's* larger didactic goals. He believes that its plot and the fundamental beliefs teach and illuminate the message (639, 644, 645).

Eigentlich ward nur der Inhalt, der Stoff beachtet, wie ich schon an meinen Freunden erfahren hatte, und daneben trat das alte Vorurteil wieder ein, entspringend aus der Würde eines gedruckten Buchs, daß es nämlich einen didaktischen Zweck haben müsse. Die wahre Darstellung aber hat keinen. Sie billigt nicht, sie tadelt nicht, sondern sie entwickelt die Gesinnungen und Handlungen in ihrer Folge und dadurch erleuchtet und belehrt sie. (641)

Essentially only the content, the material was considered, as I have learned from my friends, and besides that, old prejudices reoccurred, originating from the dignity of a printed book, that it should have a didactic purpose. The real account does not have one, though. It does not approve, it does not reprimand, instead it develops the fundamental beliefs and the actions in their sequence and thereby illuminates and teaches them.

Goethe explains that his new emphasis was on the plot's development. *Werther* offered a break from the old preconceptions that books were to teach morality (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 258). At the same time he benefited from precisely these expectations. Starting with Richardson, epistolary novels were able to make a lateral transition from Pietist literature to fiction, given that Enlightenment didactic novels eased the transition (Jäger 223). *Werther* successfully follows this development, addressing the expectations of his reading audience while not offering a Pietist moral conclusion.

In an undated conversation with the Weimar writer Johannes Daniel Falk, likely from 1824, Goethe is more specific about what he likes about Lessing's style in *Emilia Galotti*. He first compliments Lessing's challenge to the standard practice of borrowing from the French. Like Lessing, Goethe disagreed with the direction of Friedrich the Great, Voltaire, and

Gottsched, who rooted the German aesthetic in French traditions (727-728). He describes Lessing's style as consisting of strong, traditional German characters, which quickly advance the action. In this context Goethe discussed *Emilia Galotti's* advancement of the German theatrical landscape, given its pace and style:

In der "Emilie Galotti" sei ebenfalls das Motiv meisterhaft und zugleich höchst charakteristisch, daß der Kammerherr dem Prinzen Emilie Galotti sicher auf seinem Wege zugeführt haben würde; daß aber der Prinz dadurch, daß er in die Kirche geht und in den Handel hineinpfuscht, dem Marinelli und sich selber das Spiel verdirbt. Nicht immerdar schön sei die Art, wie Lessing das Schicksal in der "Emilie Galotti" einführt. Ein Billet, das der Prinz an seine ehemalige Geliebte, die Gräfin Orsina, schrieb, und worin er sich ihren Besuch auf morgen verbittet, wird eben dadurch, daß es zufällig liegen blieb -- wenn Zufall, wie die Gräfin selbst sogleich hinzusetzt, in solchen Dingen nicht Gotteslästerung genannt werden müßte -- die gelegentliche Ursache, daß die gefürchtete Nebenbuhlerin, weil man ihr nicht abgesagt, gerade in demselben Augenblicke ankommt, wo Graf Appiani erschossen, die Braut in das Lustschloß des Fürsten durch Marinelli eingeführt und so dem Mörder ihres Bräutigams in die Hände geliefert wird. Dies sind Züge einer Meisterhand, welche hinlänglich bezeugen, wie tiefe Blicke Lessing in das Wesen der dramatischen Kunst vergönnt waren. Auch seid versichert, wir wissen recht wohl, was wir ihm und seinesgleichen, insbesondere Winckelmann, schuldig sind. (728)

In *Emilia Galotti* the motif is as well masterly, and, at the same time, highly characteristic: that the chamber servant would have led the prince assuredly on his way to Emilia Galotti; that the prince goes to the Church, however, and, through this action, meddles in the strategy of Marinelli, which ruins Marinelli and the prince's game. The way in which Lessing introduces fate in *Emilia Galotti* is not always beautiful. The prince wrote a response to his former lover the margravine Orsina, in which, he forbids her to visit the next day, and then by chance forgets the note, -- even when accidental, [is] the true cause: the margravine herself immediately remarks that the coincidence in such situations must be called blasphemy -- the feared rival to arrive just in the same moment, because one has not canceled the appointment with her. She arrives when margrave Appiani is shot, the bride is led by Marinelli in the castle of the prince and, through which, is delivered to the hands of bridegroom's murder. These are traits of a master hand, which sufficiently document, how profound Lessing's insight was bestowed in the form of dramatical arts. Also, be assured, we must certainly know, how indebted we are to him and his equals, especially Winckelmann.

Goethe retells *Emilia Galotti* above, mirroring the brisk tone of Lessing's play. Different than his earlier statements on *Emilia Galotti*, here he praises Lessing for his transitions. He notes

Lessing's structured scenes, connected by quick dialogues that present a unified moment of time, achieving aesthetic balance. Lessing develops the story swiftly and leads the characters to a general sense of helplessness in their efforts to resolve the situation. The pace provides the atmosphere in which Emilia's plans for the future spiral out of control, and the whirlwind sense of time in Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* leads to Emilia's unraveling. An example of this stylistic accomplishment can also be seen in the prince's actions, which are only possible through the quickened temporal development of events. The above passage displays Goethe's appreciation of Lessing's transitions and style. It is an analysis of Lessing's literary style, not of the political ramifications of the play. Goethe was uninterested in Lessing's moral conclusions. He studied the play to see how the story is told.

Many of Goethe's remarks underscore his preoccupation with the way in which stories are told. For example, in a discussion with Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer concerning monarchical power relations on 20 February 1809 Goethe approaches the ideas concerning tyranny from the sense of how a master is portrayed, instead of the impact it has on the population. Riemer was Goethe's employee, who was responsible for questions of editing and philology and who had published conversations with Goethe in 1841 as *Mitteilungen über Goethe 1841* (Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* Register 1234): "Der reine wahre Despotismus entwickelt sich aus dem Freiheitssinne; ja, er ist selbst der Freiheitssinn mit dem Gelingen. (sic) ... Aus der Sklaverei geht nur der eigentliche dominus hervor, niemals der Despot oder, wie er auch heißt, der Tyrann" (Pure, true despotism develops from the sense of freedom. Yes, it itself is the sense of freedom with the successful outcome... From slavery comes forth only the actual master, never the despot or the tyrant, as he is also called) (444). Here Goethe does not mention *Emilia Galotti* within this context. Though he speaks of how despotism stems from freedom, his

concern is not the political outcome, but the style of story telling.

Whereas many people read the presence of *Emilia Galotti* from a political perspective, Goethe did not. He interpreted *Emilia Galotti* as a love story, as seen by his suggestion to Riemer in their conversation on 4 March 1812 (Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786 Einzelkommentar* 1066). In his letter to Duke Carl August on 28 October 1784, Goethe arrives at the conclusion that the central motif of *Emilia Galotti* is love, based on a comparison he draws between the Prince of Dessau's action and the prince's act of talking to Emilia in Lessing's play (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 546). While this letter appeared a full decade after the first version of *Werther* from 1774, it nevertheless preceded Goethe's 1787 revision. The intertextual reference to Emilia Galotti is the same in both versions (Goethe, *Werther* 264, 265).

Goethe believed that Emilia's love for the prince both leads her to end her life and drives the plot: she is to blame, given her unresolved feelings for the prince. Goethe's reading implies that she is ultimately in charge. Goethe concludes that the prince gives in to his feelings for Emilia (Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786 Einzelkommentar* 1066).

Some scholars have explained death as Emilia's preferred choice, because of her religious beliefs: "In her voluntary death, alone, she sees the possibility of escaping from eternal damnation, hence it becomes for her a religious duty" (Diamond 205). Diamond implies that Emilia has feelings for the prince, but that acting on them would cross her religious teachings. This reading likewise supports Goethe's interpretation of Emilia's actions. Given that *Werther* does not see his feelings for Lotte as a sin, Goethe likely did not perceive Emilia's feelings as questionable (Goethe, *Werther* 251).

In his conversation with Eckermann on 7 February 1827, Goethe concluded that the strength of specific characters, such as the devious role of the prince in *Emilia Galotti*, allowed

Lessing to address issues pertinent to the period:

Wenn man, sagte er, die Stücke von Lessing mit denen der Alten vergleicht und sie schlecht und miserabel findet, was soll man da sagen! - Bedauert doch den außerordentlichen Menschen, daß er in einer so erbärmlichen Zeit leben mußte, die ihm keine besseren Stoffe gab als in seinen Stücken verarbeitet sind! - Bedauert ihn doch, daß er in seiner *Minna von Barnhelm* an den Händeln der Sachsen und Preussen Teil nehmen mußte, weil er nichts besseres fand! - Auch daß er immerfort polemisch wirkte und wirken mußte, lag in der Schlechtigkeit seiner Zeit. In der *Emilia Galotti* hatte er seine Piquen auf die Fürsten, im *Nathan* auf die Pfaffen. (Eckermann 234-235)

When one compares the plays of Lessing with those of the ancients and finds them bad and miserable, what shall one then say! Pity then the exceptional person, who had to live in such an abject time, which had given him no better material, than what is processed in his plays! Pity him indeed, that he had to participate in the actions of the Saxons and the Prussians in his “*Minna von Barnhelm*,” since he could not find anything better! Also that he evermore had a polemic effect and had to have that effect, can be explained by the bad times. In the *Emilia Galotti* he rebuffed the princes, in “*Nathan*” the priests.

According to Goethe, Lessing wrote polemically through his characters during a time of poor sources for theatrical material. His characters' actions spoke to the abuses of the period.

Goethe's restrained praise of Lessing's work points to how Lessing's work would no longer suffice in the new era.

Goethe again later stresses the generational gap between young and old writers, such as between himself and Lessing, in his 27 March 1830 letter to Zelter (*Goethe Briefe 1823-Tod* 245-247). Goethe first praises Lessing for his accomplishment, as Lessing was among those who laid the groundwork away from translations of French classical plays in the 1750s, before laying out his critique (Guthke 61):

Dein reines eignes Verhältnis zu *Emilia Galotti* soll dir nicht verkümmert werden. Zu seiner Zeit stieg dieses Stück, wie die Insel Delos, aus der Gottsched-Gellert-Weissischen pp. *Wasserfluth*, um eine kreißende Göttin barmherzig aufzunehmen. Wir jungen Leute ermutigten uns daran und wurden deshalb Lessing viel schuldig.

Auf dem jetzigen Grade der Kultur kann es nicht mehr wirksam sein. Untersuchen wir's genau, so haben wir davor den Respect wie vor einer Mumie, die uns von alter hoher Würde des Aufbewahrten ein Zeugniß gibt. (*Goethe Briefe 1823-Tod* 246)

Your own pure relationship to Emilia Galotti shall not be spoiled. During his time the play rose like the island Delos, from the Gottsched-Gellert-Weiss flood to welcome a circling merciful goddess. We young people were encouraged by it and, for this reason, owed Lessing much.

At the current state of culture, it is no longer effective. When we examine it exactly, we have the respect as for a mummy, who gives us a sign from the old, high dignity of the preserved.

Goethe implies that Lessing's writing was at the time an alternative to what had become the standard flood of mediocrity through the adoption of French Classicism. Gottsched was an enthusiastic supporter of the transmittance of French works into the German literary scene (Conrady 148). He belonged to earlier generation of German playwrights than Goethe's. He had been Goethe's teacher in Leipzig and maintained a good relationship with him. Alternatively, Lessing is described as believing that French classicism had a negative affect on the German theater and public (Hohendahl 126). Lessing's accomplishments included developing new aesthetic ideas that differed from the import of French culture and encouraged the continued progress by a new generation of writers.

To show the impact of Lessing's achievements, Goethe compares the writing of *Emilia Galotti* to the growth to the Island Delos, where in Greek mythology Zeus's child Apollo is born. In the myth, the sea god Poseidon helps his brother Zeus find a floating rock to grow into the Island Delos, providing a birthing place for Leto; Hera, the long-suffering and vengeful wife of Zeus, decreed that Leto could not have her baby on land. Metaphorically, Goethe's comparison of Lessing's play *Emilia Galotti* to the Island Delos is a way to honor Lessing for his extraordinary creation amidst the sea of mediocrity of German drama. Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* served as the birthing space for modern German theater and gave young people courage to develop a German theatrical culture.

Goethe pursued a different course than Lessing, while nevertheless building on Lessing's

developments of virtuous aesthetic polemics: “Whereas Lessing’s attacks were primarily intended to have a moral effect, Goethe and Schiller sought through their polemical utterances to make the concept of aesthetic autonomy prevail over the Enlightenment” (Hohendahl 126). Although he also did learn from studying Lessing's style, Goethe was interested in making his own way.

Goethe equally achieves a balance of time in his novel *Werther*, as time, plot, and form are interconnected. The results of leaving out the responses to Werther’s letters is a technique of writing that Goethe uses to develop a sense of tension. This technique lends itself to Werther’s expression of unrestrained feelings for Lotte (Garbe, *Zeitgenossen* 91). It builds into an uncontrollable obsession that guides his daily existence and which is only quieted through his suicide. Lessing’s example helped Goethe to develop into the writer he became. Once he achieved recognition for his talent he questioned a continued focus on Lessing’s example for future writers.

Despite such rhetoric, Goethe continued to stage Lessing’s plays throughout his lifetime. Goethe was the director and designer of court theater productions in Weimar. His involvement with the theater was one of his administrative responsibilities for his patrons Duchess Anna Amalia and her son Duke Carl August. Goethe was offered the court position because of *Werther’s* enormous popularity (Wallenborn 23).

During Goethe's involvement in the Weimar theater between 1793-1816, Lessing’s plays *Emilia Galotti*, *Minna von Barnhelm* and *Nathan der Weise* were each shown between 12 and 15 times in Weimar, totaling 42 performances (Lyon 117). Goethe's ongoing objective was to educate the theater public and to improve the overall quality of the theater; he invited well-known performers like Friederike Unzelmann of Berlin to cast her as Emilia in *Emilia Galotti* in

1801-1802 (Carlson 159-160). By comparison, performances of the young playwright Christian Kotzebue's plays totaled 410 in Weimar (117). Though Goethe was involved with raising the standards in both the areas of audience appreciation of classics and actor performance, he did not exclusively stage plays of the caliber of Lessing and Shakespeare. This could be accounted for through Goethe's criticism of the German audience (*Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 281-283).

Goethe was no great admirer of Kotzebue, however. Tension even existed between the two men, perhaps because of the age difference, as Kotzebue was a generation younger than Goethe. Despite their differences, Goethe staged Kotzebue's dramas because of the actors' ease of performing them and the public's continued support for them (Eckermann 59; Carlson 171-173). Furthermore, Lessing lived in northern Germany, and theatrical rivalry existed between the northern and the southern regions of Germany (Kleßmann 180). It is also possible that Goethe could have staged Kotzebue's plays more than Lessing's due to the challenge of finding high quality actors. Lessing's plays are demanding for actors, as they are quick and rely on dialogue to maintain the pace (Dronke 4). The absence of German theatrical schools prevented more complex dramas from being staged.

C.G. Beck relays Schopenhauer's remarks concerning Goethe's efforts in training actors from a visit at Schopenhauer in March 1857 (Kleßmann 158). Goethe is described as unwavering in his expectations of his actors at the rehearsal of Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* on 20 November 1813 (158). Staging complex pieces by Lessing, such as *Emilia Galotti*, made the Weimar theater more competitive with other cultural communities, such as in Berlin.

Given the fewer productions of Lessing's plays in Weimar, Goethe should have been more compelled to incorporate Lessing's name in the second version of *Werther* had he wanted his local readership to recognize the association between the intertextual reference and Lessing.

His choice of not including the direct reference may be explained by the prominent role Lessing still had in Goethe's own thoughts in 1786; Goethe did not consider it important to add Lessing's name in the last scene of *Werther* to help future readers make sense of the reference since they would not need it. It also reinforces the idea that Goethe intended the reference in *Werther* to be associated with the ideas in *Emilia Galotti*, instead of Lessing's prominent name. The irony of this situation is interesting, as scholars argued that the public's lack of remembrance of Klopstock was the impetus for Goethe adding the word *ode*.

At Lessing's death Goethe did not fail to pay his respects to the famous author. Goethe wrote to Charlotte von Stein on 20 February 1781 that he had been planning a trip to meet Lessing before he had heard of his death and that he was severely disturbed by his loss: "Mir hätte nicht leicht etwas fatalers begegnen können als daß Lessing gestorben ist" (Nothing could have affected me more fatally than Lessing's death) (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 330). Goethe also expresses his devastation in a letter to Lavater on 18 March 1781: "Hast du des alten Königs Schrift über die D(utsche) Litteratur gelesen und was sagst du dazu. Lessings Tod hat mich sehr zurückgesetzt, ich hatte viel Freude an ihm, und viel Hoffnung auf ihn. Nun weis ich bald nichts mehr" (Have you read the writing of the old king on German literature, and what do you say to it? Lessing's death really set me back; I received much pleasure from him and I had much hope in him. Now I will soon not know anything any more) (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 339-340). Lessing's death in 1781 occurred six years before Goethe's 1787 *Werther* version. He maintained this positive attitude concerning Lessing years past his death (Eckermann 162).

Goethe's new aesthetic model presented through *Werther*'s death helped him to produce a powerful novel that, through the help of hierarchical literary studies, such as Gervinus's,

confirmed Goethe as Lessing's successor. Emilia's wish to die did not cause the scope of controversy that Werther's later did: "What disturbed these critics most was Goethe's effective depiction of suicide from within, a portrayal that could arouse similar feelings in his readers" (Duncan 12). The power of Werther's death scene, which captures the twelve hours in which Werther dies, originated in Goethe's aesthetic ideas. Whereas Lessing focuses on the moment before the actual physical climax of death, Goethe concentrates on capturing the energy of the moment of most intense feeling in his writing. For this reason, readers do not see the actual act of Werther pulling the trigger.

Goethe's style of depicting death, as he expresses Werther's excruciating pain, contrasts with Lessing's ideas of beauty. Werther does not die in his mother's arms or with Lotte at his side. Instead, his death is gruesome and impersonal. Werther's story of pain is marked by the blood on the chair, floor, and wall from his imprecise shot to the head (265). His body convulses for a half a day after the shooting, and only slightly functions when he is found the following morning by his hired help. He cannot talk to communicate his last thoughts, and he can no longer be saved. Goethe creates a sense of beauty through the gore of Werther's death; as readers, we are repulsed by it and drawn to it.

Werther's suicide establishes Goethe on a very different aesthetic plane than Lessing. Goethe explicitly articulates his aesthetic preference of depicting pain at the moment of excruciating pain later in his essay on *Laokoon*, written nearly twenty-five years after *Werther*. His essay reflects on his style, offering not only a blueprint for his other literary deaths, but also an essay reflecting on his preexisting ones.

The intertextual reference to *Emilia Galotti* in *Werther* was a literary response to Lessing's essay on *Laokoon*, given that *Emilia Galotti* was an example of Lessing's model.

Werther promotes a decisive literary counterexample. Lessing realized and disagreed with Goethe's ideas, as seen in Lessing's attack on *Werther's* conclusion in his letter to Eschenburg. Lessing did not see the point of Werther's death, since Goethe was not trying to make it morally didactic, as Lessing achieved in the conclusion of *Emilia Galotti*.

Their aesthetic differences separated them, despite what the early creators of the German canon, such as Gervinus, promoted. Goethe did not need to address Lessing specifically to make his point, as his message was for Lessing. Lessing realized it and responded to it. The dialogue between the two authors through *Laokoon*, *Emilia Galotti*, and *Werther* was possible, despite Goethe's failure to name Lessing as the addressee in *Werther*.

One of Goethe's most substantial comments concerning both Lessing and Klopstock is from *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, second part, seventh book.

Bei diesem Umgange wurde ich durch Gespräche, durch Beispiele und durch eigenes Nachdenken gewahr, daß der erste Schritt, um aus der wässerigen, weitschweifigen, nullen Epoche sich herauszuretten, nur durch Bestimmtheit, Präcision und Kürze gethan werden könne. Bei dem bisherigen Stil konnte man das Gemeine nicht vom Besseren unterscheiden, weil alles unter einander in's Flache gezogen ward. Schon hatten Schriftsteller diesem breiten Unheil zu entgehen gesucht, und es gelang ihnen mehr oder weniger. Haller und Ramler waren von Natur zum Gedrängten geneigt; Lessing und Wieland sind durch Reflexion dazu geführt worden. Der erste wurde nach und nach ganz epigrammatisch in seinen Gedichten, knapp in der Minna, lakonisch in Emilia Galotti, später kehrte er erst zu einer heiteren Naivetät zurück, die ihn so wohl kleidet im Nathan. (...) Klopstock, in den ersten Gesängen der Messiad, ist nicht ohne Weitschweifigkeit; in den Oden und anderen kleinen Gedichten erscheint er gedrängt, so auch in seinen Tragödien. Durch seinen Wettstreit mit den Alten, besonders dem Tacitus, sieht er sich immer mehr in's Enge genöthigt, wodurch er zuletzt unverständlich und ungenießbar wird. (295)

In this process I became aware through discussions, examples, and my own reflection that the first step of saving the epoch from becoming a diluted, long-winded nil could be accomplished possible only through certainty, precision, and brevity. Up until now, one could not distinguish between the ordinary from a more sophisticated style, because it was all mottled and lowered in style. Writers have already sought to escape this widespread harm, and they were more or less successful. Haller and Ramler were inclined by nature to a concise style; Lessing and Wieland were led to it by reflection.

The first [Lessing] became little by little completely epigrammatic in his poetry, brief in *Minna*, laconic in *Emilia Galotti*, later he returned to a cheerful naivety, which clothed him so well in *Nathan*. (...) Klopstock, in the first songs of the *Messiah*, is not without circumlocution; in the odes and other small poems, he appears terse, as well as in his tragedies. Through his competition with the elders, especially Tacitus, he became more and more narrowly constrained, through which he at last became incomprehensible and unenjoyable.

For Goethe the extreme display of feelings was important in developing discernible literary examples. His distinction from his predecessor is intended to emphasize the concerns of a new generation. In the above quote, Goethe reviews Lessing and Klopstock's development as writers with Lessing's skills ranging from naïve to constrained, and Klopstock from verbose to a concise poet and dramatist, who eventually became incomprehensible.

Goethe's discussion of the writers illustrates that Goethe saw an opportunity to develop his own style and shape a new direction in the German literary scene. Goethe's *Werther* began this advancement, and his readership welcomed the change, making *Werther* one of Goethe's most beloved works. Though forgotten in the early German canon in the nineteenth century, the novel has resurfaced again today as a German classic (Hohendahl 153). Now after the revamping of the German canon in the twentieth century, the novel's inclusion is no longer indebted to the influences by Gervinus's and other earlier studies on the canon.

Werther is a book of sorrow, concerning many deaths — the death of Goethe's colleague Jerusalem, the death of the fictional character Werther, the death of Goethe's childhood idealization of Klopstock, as well as that of his brief friendship with him, and the death of past uncertainty concerning German literature. "In the context of German literature, Goethe may be part of an increasingly 'past' era, but he is timelessly instrumental in bringing about the emergence of 'modern' German literature — and however problematically, he and his works

remain at the center of the German canon and its story” (Kohl 179). As a book of death *Werther* made its mark (Dye 79-96). Through these deaths Goethe established himself as an esteemed writer in the new literary world, which he centered in Weimar.

CHAPTER 3: THE IDYLLIC HOMERIC EPICS.

Werther reads in his free time, specifically Homeric epic poetry. In the eighteenth century he had many other reading choices and could have read one of over thirty weekly papers available in German-speaking territories, or one of the books from the over two-thousand writers trying to earn a living from writing at the end of the eighteenth century (Mahoney 7). His reading choice of Homeric texts seems odd, as they concern men going to and returning from battles, strategies of war, the interrelationships among the leaders of each side of the Trojan war, and the effects on their aristocratic families and their contributing populations. Are we to understand Werther as living vicariously through his readings?

Goldhill's reader-response approach offers a form-orientated perspective on how to think about Werther's reading of epics. He addresses how the reader's expectations shape a text's functions. Readers look to epics as sources for gender tradition, for example, given their traditional ideals of masculinity: "Epic, as a genre, for example, encodes – explores, debates and projects – models of heroism and masculinity, models which have their own history" (Goldhill 187). Idealized maleness is associated with battle (Strasburger 59). The violent content of epic poetry is juxtaposed with the tender traits of Werther's character, making his choice of reading material remarkable. Werther successfully tends to children – specifically, Lotte's younger siblings – throughout the novel, yet he reads Homeric epics to relax. He thinks of specific Homeric passages to reflect on his own personal development, making his style of interacting with Homeric texts in the outdoors oxymoronic. The contrast is striking, and the question must be raised how Werther's seemingly harmonious existence in nature and in Lotte's home can initially be reconciled with the violent epics that Werther spends his time reading.

The novel *Werther* is progressive in its speech, content, and form, as Karthaus discusses in his book *Sturm und Drang: Epoche-Werke-Wirkung* (183). *Werther* represents youth and revolts against the literary tradition in content and form. However, the Homeric epics are anthropological treasures of a quasi-reality from the eighth century B.C. (Strasburger 48). Why would Goethe shift its orientation back to ancient stories, steeped in tradition? Does Goethe's inclusion of the distant past through Homeric texts thus serve to make *Werther* a polyphonic novel, leading to temporal interrelatedness? Bakhtin suggests that Goethe achieves interrelatedness through a sense of becoming in his later texts, such as *Italienische Reise* (Holquist, *Dialogism* 84). If true, then what does that mean for the standard classification of Goethe's *Werther* as a monologic epistolary novel? If not, then how do we explain these other narratives and textual voices?

Homeric text enjoys a prominent role among *Werther*'s mentions of intertextual references. Homeric text is explicitly mentioned seven times in the novel, of which the four letters of 26 May, 21 June, 28 August 1771, and 15 March and 9 May, 1772 also discuss the idyllic in nature. The locations, in which *Werther* describes the references, contribute to an enhanced engagement with the rustic in Homeric epic. References to Homer are almost evenly split between the two sections of *Werther* and are uttered solely by the protagonist *Werther*. *Werther* mentions Homer four times in the first and three times in the second half. *Werther* speaks of several writers, genres, and books in the novel, but mentions of Homer are by far the most numerous of any intertextual reference in *Werther*. By comparison, most other intertextual references occur only once, for example, the reference made to the author Klopstock at the ball, and to Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* at the end of the novel. Simon Goldhill's explanation of how an intertext of a novel interacts with many texts is helpful in addressing this compilation of voices

in *Werther*:

The novel, as Bakhtin knew, is a polyphonic text. It draws other voices into itself, and makes us read other texts differently. The very porousness of its form means that if we are to give the novel a cultural context and understand its social and intellectual forces as a genre, then we need to read novels not just as a genre but also as texts in constant and dynamic interaction with the intellectual and social life around them. (Goldhill 199)

Through the multi-voicedness of novels, we can infer that Goethe's inclusion of Homer alone does not set out a diagram for the interpretation of *Werther*, despite Bernd Witte's argument that Homer acts as an *Urtext* for understanding *Werther*, replacing the Bible (31).

Werther's placement of Homer alongside other intertextual references in the novel reflects the shifting attitude toward the epic's reception in eighteenth-century Germany. Homeric epic is losing its status as *the* authoritative text to imitate and becoming one of many literary examples: "Die Griechen und Römer galten nicht mehr als *Muster*, sondern als *Beispiele* für das künstlerische Schaffen" (The Greek and Romans no longer served as models, but as examples for artistic creation) (Riedel 92). Though Homer is Werther's preferred reading choice during the course of the novel, it is not the only book he intimately knows. He is well read as demonstrated on several occasions through his mention of other texts and authors. Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, third part, twelfth book also reflects this changing societal sentiment in discussing the relation between modern and past literary periods:

Glücklich ist immer die Epoche einer Literatur, wenn große Werke der Vergangenheit wieder einmal auftauen und an die Tagesordnung kommen, weil sie alsdann eine vollkommen frische Wirkung hervorbringen. Auch das Homerische Licht ging uns neu wieder auf, und zwar recht im Sinne der Zeit, die ein solches Erscheinen höchst begünstigte: denn das beständige Hinweisen auf Natur bewirkte zuletzt, daß man auch die Werke der Alten von dieser Seite betrachten lernte. (585)

A literary epoch is always fortunate when major works of the past resurface and land on the agenda, because they thereupon generate an entirely new effect. Even the Homeric light newly arose for us, and indeed at the right moment in time that was favorable for such an appearance, because the constant references to nature finally caused one to learn

to consider the works of the ancients from this side as well.

Goethe insinuates that the best of new epochs draw on the past literatures, as well, and reinterprets them from a modern perspective. The changing attitudes of his time allowed his generation to reconsider how the Homeric epics address such issues as nature.

Through his study of the Greeks and his own literary expression, Goethe came to an understanding of his own view of modernity: “In seiner Jugend dominierte die schöpferische, originäre, eigenwillige Annäherung an die ‘Alten’, und auch in den ersten Weimarer Jahren ging er primär von modernen Fragestellungen aus die Antike heran” (In his youth, the creative, original, idiosyncratic approach to the ancients dominated and also in the first years of the Weimar years, he primarily approached antiquity on the basis of modern questions) (Riedel 81). Goethe's fresh approach in his Homeric reception was one way to excel beyond past literary achievements. Goethe's interaction with antiquity helped him to find his own voice (Witte 8). The next step was to surpass the successes of antiquity, as for Goethe the Greeks' literary creations were the finest examples of literary expression: “Auch die Poesie der Griechen – allen voran die Homerische Epen – war ihm höchster Ausdruck dichterischen Schaffens...” (Even the poetry of the Greek – with the Homeric epics at the front – was for Goethe the highest expression of poetic creation...) (Riedel 97). This advancement became part of the genius identity: “Das Genie muß entweder den Erwartungshorizont durchbrechen oder es bleibt Nachahmer” (The genius has to either break through the horizon of expectations or remain an imitator) (Sauder, *Geniekult* 328). In *Werther*, Goethe is very successful in moving beyond the past examples of achievement: “Bezeichnenderweise macht der Schriftsteller aber auch deutlich, daß Werther *kein* 'neuer Odysseus' ist, und läßt die Idylle scheitern” (Significantly, the author clearly shows that Werther is no new Odysseus and allows the idyllic collapse) (Riedel 67).

The Odyssey is the oldest text amongst other intertexts in the novel. At the same time, the authority of *The Odyssey* is decreased through its placement next to other texts, which calls it into question, and even usurps its message. *Werther's* mélange of intertexts is multidimensional as it comprises a range of canonic to lesser-known references from antiquity to modernity, crossing traditional boundaries of language and national divide, pointing to the literary mix that makes up Germany's literary tradition. This allowed Goethe to go beyond the literary achievements of the past.

On 12 October 1772, over a year into the plot of the novel, Werther turns away from Homer, casting Homeric texts aside for Ossian. This necessary development must occur because of the Werther's reading of Homer. Unlike Odysseus, Werther will not find a home on earth. Werther fails to locate or create a harmonious existence for himself, which ultimately shatters the idyllic that he encounters through reading Homer. The happy end between Odysseus and his wife Penelope, as well as his revenge on the criminal suitors who have robbed him of his wealth by feasting on his cattle during his journey home, does not transpire in *Werther*. Werther alleviates his alienation by substituting the familiar, rustic in Homeric epics for human intimacy that gives him a sense of security that is unsustainable.

The Odyssey is the Homeric text to which Werther refers, though it is not explicitly named in *Werther* (Riedel 125). Werther reads *The Odyssey*, which contrasts Goethe's own reading of *The Iliad* (Witte 29-30): "Mehrfach kommt der Titelheld auf seine Homer-Lektüre zu sprechen und schildert Wahlheim als eine harmonische, natürliche, idyllische Welt im Anklang an einige Gesänge der 'Odyssee'" (The protagonist comes to speak of his Homer reading multiple times and depicts Wahlheim as a harmonic, natural, idyllic world, echoing several of the songs of *The Odyssey*) (Riedel 67). I agree with Witte and Riedel's assessment that Werther

refers to *The Odyssey*, given his reference to scenes involving the domestic, nature, and travel. This can be seen, for example, when Werther writes about Penelope and the suitors in the 21 June 1771 letter, about Ulysses' (Odysseus') visit to the swine herd in his letter from 15 March 1772, and about Ulysses' perspective of nature in his 9 letter from May 1772 (Goethe, *Werther* 59, 143, 153). While it is likely that Werther reads both Homeric epics, given his possession of two Homeric volumes as stated in his 28 August 1771 letter, as well as his consideration of fighting in a war in his 25 May 1772, he does not mention anything specifically related to *The Iliad* (111 and 155).

Werther's frequent mentions of Homer reflect the novel's significance within Goethe's early works: "Höhepunkt von Goethes früher Homer-Rezeption ist der Roman 'Die Leiden des jungen Werthers' (1774), dessen Beziehungen zur 'Odyssee' (die kriegerisch-aristokratische Welt der 'Ilias' bleibt außer Betracht) zu den zentralen Aussagen des Werkes gehören" (The high point of Goethe's early Homer reception is the novel 'The Sorrows of the Young Werther' (1774), whose relations to *The Odyssey* (the warlike-aristocratic world of *The Iliad* is not considered) belong to the central messages of the work) (Riedel 125). From the 1770s to the 1790s Goethe's orientation was *The Odyssey* (27). As with his protagonist Werther, Goethe's references to Homer were many.

Goethe made over 500-recorded mentions of Homer throughout his lifetime of writing, and my study focuses on those from his early years as a writer: "Wir sollten, allerdings nicht übersehen, daß viele dieser Äußerungen situationsbedingt sind" (We should, however, not overlook that many of these statements are dependent on the situation) (Riedel 97). For this study, the quality of the reference depends on the context in the novel *Werther*. Goethe's ideas regarding Homer began developing early in his childhood and continued throughout his life. My

study is limited to Goethe's early ideas concerning Homer up through his revision of *Werther*, completed in the fall 1786, before leaving for Rome in October (Luserke 140; Ringleben 109).

Goethe's exposure to antiquity was multifaceted. He first became acquainted with antiquity through his father's pictures of Roman architecture, which had been in his childhood home since the 1740s (Riedel 64). At age seven Goethe started learning Latin, and at nine years of age, he began with Greek (64). In the first part, first book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe discusses his introduction to Homer at his aunt's house, where he was introduced to *The Iliad* (49). He first read *The Iliad* as a child, in a German translation by Johann Michael von Leon. The pastor Stark, Goethe's uncle by marriage, had a library that contained a prosaic translation of Homer with the title *Homer's Description of the Conquest of the Trojan Reich (Homers Beschreibung der Eroberung des Trojanischen Empire)*:

In einem ruhigeren, aber auch ihrer Natur angemessenen Zustande befand sich eine zweite Tante, welche mit dem bei der St. Catharinen-Kirche angestellten Pfarrer Stark verheiratet war. Er lebte seiner Gesinnung und seinem Stande gemäß sehr einsam, und besaß eine schöne Bibliothek. Hier lernte ich zuerst den Homer kennen, und zwar in einer prosaischen Übersetzung, wie sie im siebenten Teil der durch Herrn von Loen besorgten neuen Sammlung der merkwürdigsten Reisebeschreibungen, unter dem Titel: Homers Beschreibung der Eroberung des trojanischen Reichs, zu finden ist, mit Kupfern im französischen Theatersinne geziert. Diese Bilder verdarben mir dermaßen die Einbildungskraft, daß ich lange Zeit die homerischen Helden mir nur unter diesen Gestalten vergegenwärtigen konnte. Die Begebenheiten selbst gefielen mir unsäglich; nur hatte ich an dem Werke sehr auszusetzen, daß es uns von der Eroberung Troja's keine Nachricht gebe, und so stumpf mit dem Tode Hectors endige. Mein Oheim, gegen den ich diesen Tadel äußerte, verwies mich auf den Virgil, welcher denn meiner Forderung vollkommen Genüge tat. (Goethe, *Dichtung* 49)

In a calmer state, however according to her nature, was a second aunt, who was married to pastor Stark appointed at St. Catharine Church. He lived a very lonely existence according to his fundamental beliefs and condition, and owned a beautiful library. Here I learned of Homer for the first time, and even though in a prosaic translation. Found in the seventh part, it was entitled: "Homer's Description of the Conquest of the Trojan Empire," adorned with copper engravings in the French theater sense, and was [in] a new collection of the strangest travel history, which Mr. von Loen had compiled. These pictures ruined my ability to imagine Homeric heroes to such an extent that I could only

envision these images of the characters for a long time. The incident itself satisfied me inexpressibly. The only critique I have is that it did not provide any news on the conquest of Troy and ends so suddenly with the death of Hector. My uncle, with whom I shared my disappointment, led me to Virgil, which then perfectly satisfied my demands.

This book formed his understanding of the characters in Homer's texts, and its pictures of the characters made a lasting negative impression on him, as they limited his imagination. He was disappointed by the inclusion of pictures, the lack of information on the conquest of Troy, and the ending of the story (Riedel 123). Goethe does not give specific details here on what his own image of Homer's characters were. On his great uncle's advice, Goethe turned to Virgil to help him resolve questions that arose from reading Homer (Goethe, *Dichtung* 50).

His childhood exposure to antiquity led him to consider studying classical and ancient studies at the university. However, his father would not allow him to study classical philology in Göttingen, and he studied law at the University in Leipzig instead. Here he made efforts to keep abreast of developments in the field of research on antiquity. His drawing teacher Adam Friedrich Oeser (1717-1799) in Leipzig introduced him to Winckelmann and Lessing's ideas on antiquity (Riedel 65). While he was back in Frankfurt between 1768 and 1770, he studied Greek philosophy and traveled to Mannheim to visit its *Antikensaal* ("Hall of Antiquities"), where he saw a cast of *The Laokoon Group* (65). Goethe's acquaintance with Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) in Strasbourg in the 1770s coincided with becoming more serious about the Greek language and his study of Homer (Riedel 65, 123).

Goethe's preoccupation with Homeric texts was not unusual. In the late eighteenth century, Germans were involved in the study of antiquity and succeeded in contributing to Hellenic studies on several levels, including translation, scholarship, and Greek literary reception (Bernofsky 2, 5, 41). Constanze Güthenke in her book *Placing Modern Greece: The Dynamics*

of Romantic Hellenism, 1770-1840 speaks of Hellenism in Germany as but one example of a European phenomenon (12). She defines Hellenism as a “positive investment of ancient Greece as a cultural system, the political Philhellenism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the imagination of modern Greece, or neo-Hellenism, both outside and within Greece” (11). The German educated population was familiar with ancient literature, as it was taught in schools until the 1770s (Rosenberg 225). German literature started to be taught as a school subject thereafter. Given this widespread exposure, antiquity became the frame of reference German writers in the late eighteenth century. It helped them to recognize the modern period in which they lived, composed of technological and scientific advances (Riedel 63). Understanding ancient models helped to define the aesthetics of modernity:

‘Modern’ is seen in opposition to two notions: that of the complete or harmonious or not fragmented, which is its lost origin and in an altered shape its driving goal, and, secondly, that of the past or ancient, especially at a time when artistic debate redefined or at least still remembered the normative character of ancient models. The difference from the past becomes the condition of modernity, and it is the artists, and the philosophers who give art a prominent function in their philosophical understanding, who feel this bestows on them a privileged position. Here Greece enters. (Güthenke 40-41)

In *Werther* Goethe portrays modernity as a break from the past. He does not have to redefine ancient writing, he merely selects specific aspects of *The Odyssey* to highlight. Goethe focuses on the rustic in his retelling of *The Odyssey*. In the epics noblemen handle cattle and heroes work with their hands make wooden objects (Strasburger 57). Homeric heroes are depicted as great in battle as well as farming (62-63). In the epics, people fight their fellow man for food and living and farming space. The plunder of cattle that follows fighting results in a new era of nomadic farmers (68). In *Werther* a reversal of modernity is not possible. Despite his travel Werther cannot find a harmonious existence in nature, and he has no estate to return to that resembles what he reads about in Homer’s *The Odyssey*.

In his twenties, Goethe read Homer as a reflection of an ancient society; he no longer concentrated on the heroic traits of the characters and the action that had so impressed him as a young boy: “Die frühen siebziger Jahre waren die Zeit von Goethes innigster Beziehung zu den Griechen – doch der Enthusiasmus bedeutete keine Verherrlichung schlechthin, keine Neubeschwörung, sondern der Autor reflektierte durchaus die Unterschiede zwischen Antike und Gegenwart” (The early seventies was the time of Goethe’s innermost connection to the Greeks. However the enthusiasm meant no glorification per se, no new adjuration, but instead the author thoroughly reflected the differences between antiquity and the present) (Riedel 126). Writers' engagement with antiquity was also tied to the concept of the young genius. This image was an integral part of the *Sturm und Drang* era (Wiethölter 119).

Edward Young’s “Conjectures on Original Composition” (1759), translated in 1760 into German, argued that ancient writers needed to be copied as part of one’s development to becoming a distinctive writer (Schrader 63). The engagement of authors with antiquity led them to rethink it on various levels. As in the young Goethe's case, he reviewed the message of the literature and focused on the role of the rustic and nature in Homer. Goethe's ideas are seen in Werther, whose ideal is found in nature. Homeric epics do not function as battle cries, thrusting Werther into action in the courtly world to produce heroic deeds by fighting valiantly in battles. Nor does he return home as a respectable, successful man from his voyage, paralleling Odysseus. Werther looks to the guidance of *The Odyssey*, which shares timeless knowledge and simulates familial advice and comfort, when he is confronted with lifestyle choices regarding his profession, education, and home. He finds epics comforting, like a lullaby (Goethe, *Werther* 17).

In addition to the message of Homeric texts the value of classical texts was also considered: “Bis weit ins 18. Jahrhundert hinein waren die überlieferten Werke und Lehren oft in

einer ausschließlichen, starren und formalen Art als musterhaft betrachtet worden, galten die klassischen Autoren als gleichsam naturgegebene Autoritäten” (Far into the eighteenth century, the passed-down works and teachings were often considered exemplary in an exclusively rigid and formal manner, the classic authors served as as natural-given authorities) (Riedel 92). This reverence changed with the new generation of writers. The new culture of the genius writers began to shape a disdain for knowledge, following the ideas of Young: “Young stellt die kühne These auf, das Genie gewinne seinen größten Ruhm durch Verachtung der Gelehrsamkeit” (Young proposes the bold thesis that the genius attains his largest glory through the disregard of learnedness) (Sauder, *Geniekult* 328). Originality grew in importance in this new intellectual climate and was then achieved through the allusion to nature. The young genius writer was perceived as a creation of nature, allowing him to create a persona that is built on knowledge of a higher authority; God channeled his speech through the young genius (328). This act of creation also reflected back positively onto the image of the artist: “Durch Selbsterkenntnis und Selbstachtung könne sich auch der ‘moderne Mensch’ aus eigener Kraft zum Genie erheben” (Through self-recognition and self-esteem even the modern person could be exalted to a genius through his own power) (328). The result was a change in perception of the literature of ancient Greece to being *one* literary example, as well as German literature becoming its own (Riedel 63).

Goethe’s evolving interpretation of Homeric texts followed exciting developments in the field. British Undersecretary of State and archeologist Robert Wood (1717-1771) wrote the *Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer* (1769). Wood’s essay highlighted Homer’s genius and sparked an eighteenth-century scholarly debate concerning whether Homer’s *The Iliad* was written or oral. This led to the further question on the originality of the written text. For example, Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824), professor of philology and pedagogy at Halle,

wrote the 1795 study *Prolegomena ad Homerum*, questioning the likelihood that Homer could have written the epics in their current state (Joost 396). He questioned the period in which they were written, the existence of Homer, and the epics' origin as oral stories (K. Reinhardt 218). Excerpts from the anonymous, scholarly debate concerning the scholarship of Wolf, Wood and other classicists appeared in the 1772–1773 edition of the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen*, when Goethe was an editor of the journal (Mahoney 3). Wolf's study came to be understood as the beginning of a new era, which prized historiography (K. Reinhardt 218). The *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* published the literary discussions of *Sturm und Drang* (Baasner 40).

Homer was Goethe's preferred reading material in 1772, when he worked in the legal field as an intern in Wetzlar. We know this from his letter on 28 January 1773 to Kestner (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 288; Bode 70). Goethe grew as a writer through his engagement with the Classics. It allowed him to express his personal experiences: "Sosehr er ein Verehrer des Altertums war – es ging ihm nicht um eine Neubeschwörung der Antike, sondern darum, sie für die Bewältigung aktueller Anliegen, für die Artikulation des eigenen Lebensgefühls zu nutzen" (As much as Goethe was an admirer of antiquity – for him, it was not a matter of adjuration, instead, antiquity was a way for coming to terms with current concerns, to use for the articulation of one's own awareness of life) (Riedel 98). Goethe's writing of *Werther* was inspired by occurrences and people in Wetzlar, where he read Homer and visited Charlotte Buff, similar to how Werther visited Lotte in the novel. Goethe's engagement with antiquity in Homer helped him to reflect on events in his own life.

Charlotte Buff (1753-1828) and her husband Johann Georg Christian Kestner (1741-1800) were sources for two of the three main characters in the novel *Werther*: Charlotte and Albert (Karthaus 181). Though Goethe attempted to deny the connection between the novel and

history, the fictional Lotte shares several biographical similarities with Charlotte Buff (Purdy 54). As with the fictional Lotte, Charlotte was also promised to another man. In the novel, Werther meets Lotte by going to a ball, which is not unlike how Goethe met Charlotte Buff. Both Lotte and Charlotte were the daughters of a “Deutschorden-Amtmann” (Bailiff of the Teutonic Order), and both of their mothers were deceased. In short, Goethe wrote literature that reflected his own background and experiences.

Several German writers, including Goethe, Johann Heinrich Voß, and Gottfried August Bürger all attempted Homeric translations into German in the latter half of the eighteenth century (Riedel 64). They were responding to Germans’ interest in other literature, which created a need for accurate translations into German (Bender 44). A debate emerged during the period concerning the characteristics of a good translation (Bernofsky 5). The Germans displayed a strong preference for Greek writings, such as Homeric epics, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

A split had also emerged in the perception of classical antiquity, meaning a stronger emphasis than before on the distinction between Greece and Rome. As is well known, that differentiation went hand in hand with a new polarization, cultural and geographical, in which Germany identified strongly with a purely Greek and, so the assumption went, more purely spiritual and ‘idealizing’ heritage, whereas the French were professing a strong affinity, not least political, with the Roman tradition of republic and, later, empire. (Güthenke 26-27)

The British-led Europe with successful translations of Homer. The English writer Alexander Pope (1688-1744) translated Homer’s *The Iliad* (1715-1720) and also *The Odyssey* (1725-1726) into English. Johann Jakob Bodmer is said to have produced the best German translation of Homer, before Winckelmann and Herder’s versions (Bender 48). Voß’s complete translation of Homeric epics was well regarded for its verse form (Bernofsky 10-11). Like many writers, Goethe had even started a translation of Homer a few years before writing Werther: “Regen

Anteil nahm Goethe an den in den siebziger Jahren sich verstärkenden Versuchen, Homer ins Deutsch zu übersetzen” (Goethe was actively engaged in the widespread attempts to translate Homer into German in the seventies) (Riedel 126). He translated sections of Homer for his sister, as he wanted to share the new world of *Weltpoesie* he had discovered in Homer (Riedel 124 and Dichtung 601). He did not finish a Homeric text translation, however.

In the novel, Werther reflects the interest of the period through his interest in Homeric epic. He first discusses Homer in his letter from 13 May 1771, in which he states that he does not want to read any other books besides Homeric epic (Goethe, *Werther* 17). This letter is the fourth of the novel, giving Homer a prominent place. In this first statement concerning Homer, Werther establishes the framework for understanding Homeric text. Homer comes up in his response to Wilhelm’s question whether he wants any of his books sent from home (16-17).

With the exception of Homer, Werther does not want to be encouraged and inspired by his books:

Du fragst, ob du mir meine Bücher schicken sollst? – Lieber, ich bitte dich um Gotteswillen, laß mir sie vom Halse! Ich will nicht mehr geleitet, ermuntert, angefeuret seyn; braust dieses Herz doch genug aus sich selbst; ich brauche Wiegengesang und den habe ich in seiner Fülle gefunden in meinem Homer. Wie oft lull’ ich mein empörtes Blut zur Ruhe, denn so ungleich, so unstät hast du nichts gesehen als dieses Herz.
(Goethe, *Werther* 17)

You ask me if you should send me my books? – My dear fellow, I implore you, for God’s sake, do not bother me with them. No longer do I wish to be guided, excited, stimulated; my own heart storms enough in itself. What I need are cradlesongs (sic), and I have found plenty of these in my Homer. How often do I lull my rebellious blood to rest, for you cannot imagine anything so erratic, so restless as my heart.
(Mayer 7)

Werther wants to follow his heart, instead of others’ guidance. As stated above, Homeric epic does not lead, encourage, or excite Werther, but instead it comforts similar to a lullaby. Sture Packalén points out that Werther associates stability and authority with Homer: “Der alte Grieche ist für Werther der imaginäre Stabilisator seiner Seele, der ihm Harmonie und ‘stille,

wahre Empfindung' einflösst. Zugleich ist er eine bewunderte Autorität, die ihn von selbstzerstörerischer Reflexion über die eigene Situation abhält" (The ancient Greek is for Werther the imaginary stabilizer of his soul, which instills harmony and 'silent, real sensitivity' in him. At the same time he is an admired authority, which prevents him from self-destructive reflection over his own situation) (190). I agree with Packalén and read the tenderness in Werther's depiction of Homer's literary presence as simulating a loving mother. Though Werther does not mention his mother in this context in the above quote, lullabies are normally associated with mothers in the universal image of motherhood, according to its definitions.

The Grimms' dictionary contains four definitions for the German word *lullen*. The first two refer to breastfeeding "saugen, wie ein kind an der brust, lutschen" (suck, sucking like a child on the breast), and the second "eine melodie leise vor sich hinsingen" (singing a melody softly to oneself) (1287, 1288). Goethe's use of *lullen* in *Werther* is also given as an example of the Grimms' second definition (1288; Merker 295). Today, the word *lullen* refers to *einlullen*: 'to lull a baby to sleep' (Kluge 527). Parental figures - usually parents or grandparents - are the ones who sing their young children to sleep. A mother is often portrayed with a baby in her arms, cradling it. This image is easily transferable to an image of women singing bedtime songs as they rock their babies to sleep. The meanings of the word *lullen* strongly suggest an implied maternal presence and deserves attention.

Werther's association with Homer as something that calms him is odd, since Homeric texts are heroic epics with vivid descriptions of battles and death, in which male activities are directed toward duty and glory (Schadewaldt 133). Idealized manliness is associated with battle, and epics are situated in patriarchal societies of subservience of a servile class to the ruling aristocracy (Strasburger 49, 59). This association contrasts starkly the gentle qualities Werther

affiliates with Homer in the novel. It also points to Werther's deviation from the standard norm of associating the image of mother with peaceful, bedtime song. In the novel, ancient tales of battle quiet Werther.

Werther is comforted by Homer and receives solace from the texts. Werther's mother is noticeably absent from the novel. She is not there to soothe his worries, and his pathway is not prescribed. In his search for self, Werther is open to the lessons from Homer's texts. In his letter from 13 May 1771, Werther shows his lack of self-confidence. He is concerned with how others will think of him and wants to protect himself from their criticism (Goethe, *Werther* 17; Mayer 8). This is seen in his letter by asking Wilhelm not to tell anyone about his vulnerability from his fragile heart: "Sage das nicht weiter; es gibt Leute, die mir es verübeln würden" (Goethe, *Werther* 17) (Do not tell this to anyone; there are those who would strongly disapprove) (Mayer 8). The it (das) he refers to is his lifestyle of following his heart's desires, instead of allowing societal and familial pressure to shape his decisions (17). This first letter in the novel shows his determination in his struggle to make his own lifestyle choices without parental guidance.

In his letter from 26 May 1771 Werther introduces the idyllic area of Wahlheim, roughly an hour outside of the city, where he goes to a hillside inn to read Homer: "So vertraulich, so heimlich hab' ich nicht leicht ein Plätzchen gefunden, und dahin laß ich mein Tischchen aus dem Wirthshause bringen und meinen Stuhl, trinke meinen Caffee da, und lese meinen Homer" (27) (I have seldom found a place so intimate and charming, and often have my little table and a chair brought out from the inn, and there drink my coffee and read my Homer) (Mayer 13). This reference to Homer is secondary to the description of his surroundings, as Homer is listed as only one aspect that contributes to the relaxing scene in Wahlheim. Riedel calls this description a trivial expression of irony, while Witte discusses this scene as an example of parody through

“Verniedlichung des Heldenepos durch eine falsche Idyllik,” (belittlement of the heroic epic through a misplaced idyllic) which he uses to create an “urdeutsche Gemütlichkeit” (essentially German sociability) (Riedel 126; Witte 29). Werther seems sincere in talking about nature within the context of the reference, though. Here in the outdoors he reasons that nature is the origin of all; those who use it as a guiding principle are on more certain grounds than those who follow societal rules (Witte 29). He compares how nature is handled with care, comparable to what is expected from loving a woman (29). His values contrast noticeably with evolving German societal values of a strong work ethic (29). Werther argues that the promoters of such ideas are guarding their insecurities, by diverting danger from their house and gardens (29).

Werther’s language underscores his perspective of Homer. His use of the word *mein* (“my”) in the above quote, preceding the name Homer, indicates Werther’s identification with Homer. He desires to keep Homer for himself. In approximately half of his mentions, Werther refers to the Greek poet as *mein* Homer, indicating the closeness, even possessiveness, he feels. Packalén understands *mein* here to mean that Werther’s Homer is subjective: “Aber die Werthersche Darstellung des menschlichen Alltagslebens ist doch nicht ganz ursprünglich Homerisch, sie ist eher durch den Filter ‘Seines Homers’ gesehen und zu einem nichtrationalistischen ‘ästhetisch aufgefassten Gegenstande’ geworden” (But Werther’s portrayal of the human everyday life is not however entirely of Homeric origin. This account is rather seen through the filter of ‘his Homer’ and becomes an irrational ‘aesthetically conceived object’) (190). Packalén’s argument does not take into account that Werther focuses on the rustic, the role of family and home, instead of on Odysseus’s dangerous adventures.

Goethe’s ideas were publicly known and available in literary journals. In the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen*, Goethe’s review is highly critical of the philologist Daniel Christoph

Seybold's interpretation of Homer in his book *Schreiben über den Homer* (Riedel 65-66, 124-125). Goethe does not agree with Seybold's analysis of the importance of heroic courage among the Greeks (Goethe, *Rev* 355; Riedel 125). Goethe criticizes Seybold for focusing on his own interests instead of on Homer's material (354).

Packalén's argument is also very general, whereas the *mein* Werther is very specific to Homer and not to the other intertextual references. Homer is not shared with other characters in the novel, as compared to other of the intertextual references, such as Ossian, Klopstock and *Emilia Galotti*. The pronoun *my* shows possession, and can also be understood as an adjective of endearment, since Werther speaks only fondly of the poet. For this reason, I see the word *mein* as showing an intimacy that is reserved for the dearest of people, as when placed before a name. Werther refers to Homer in a similar fashion to how a child would refer to a parent, a husband to a wife, a girlfriend to a boyfriend as *mein*. Werther finds comfort in Homer's ideas, since he perceives them as ones close to his own, and this gives him a sense of security in an insecure situation. The perceived intersection of Werther's ideas with Homer's leads the protagonist to feel a private bond with Homer.

In Werther's next letter to Wilhelm on 21 June 1771, the first after his encounter with Lotte on 16 June 1771, the association between Homer and nature continues. Here Werther recalls distinct passages of the ending of Odysseus's sufferings, specifically Odysseus's arrival home to his wife Penelope, where animals are butchered and prepared for the feast:

Wenn ich des Morgens mit Sonnen-Aufgange hinaus gehe nach meinem Wahlheim und dort im Wirthgarten mir meine Zuckererbsen selbst pflücke, mich hinsetze, sie abfädne und dazwischen in meinem Homer lese; wenn ich in der kleinen Küche mir einen Topf wähle, mir Butter aussteche, Schoten an's Feuer stelle, zudecke, und mich dazu setze, sie manchmal umzuschütteln: da fühl' ich so lebhaft, wie die übermüthigen Freyer der Penelope Ochsen und Schweine schlachten, zerlegen und braten. Es ist nichts, das mich so mit einer stillen wahren Empfindung ausfüllte, als die Züge patriarchalischen Lebens,

die ich, Gott sey Dank ohne Affectation in meine Lebensart verweben kann.

(Goethe, *Werther* 59)

When I walk in the morning at sunrise to my Wahlheim and pick my own dish of green peas in the garden of the inn, sit down and shell them while I read my Homer, and then choose a pan in the kitchen, cut off some butter and put the peas on the fire, covering the pan and sitting down so that I may shake them from time – I feel vividly how Penelope's wanton suitors slaughtered oxen and swine, cut them up, and roasted them. There is nothing that fills me with more quiet, genuine emotion than the draws of patriarchal life, which I can, thank God, weave without affectation into my own way of living.

(Mayer 33-34)

Here, Werther expresses his well-being to Wilhelm. The passage depicts how he feels at home cooking at the Wahlheim inn. In this idealized domestic setting he likes to read Homer. His reference to Penelope is meant to evoke the oneness with nature by focusing on the simple beauty contained in everyday life, culminating in food.

Werther draws on the inviting aspect of the preparation of food to show his preference for the rustic. Cooking is not the type of work Wilhelm and his mother expect of him, but it is what he enjoys. Lotte does not seem to have expectations of him professionally, as the subject does not come up between them, but she certainly welcomes his help with the children (Goethe, *Werther* 59, 71, 103). This picture of Werther working harmoniously in a kitchen is contrasted with his frustration later of working for the envoy of the court, as discussed in his letters from 24 December 1771 and 17 February 1772 (127, 139). Because it is performed at home, preparing food is also portrayed as a job closer to nature than the diplomatic profession he attempts after leaving his position at the court.

Jochen Schmidt in his book, *Die Geschichte des Genie-Gedankens in der deutschen Literatur, Philosophie und Politik 1750-1945*, discusses how Werther, as the letter writer, easily controls which images of nature are projected and that he manipulates its portrayal (328, 331). Likewise, Werther only refers to the poetry that is in alignment with his own ideas (331).

Schmidt's suggestion that there is a correlation between Werther's happiness and the mentions of Homer does not align however with what is presented in Werther's letters. Werther turns to Homer, thinking of him not only during his happy moments in his letters from 26 May 1771 and 21 June 1771, but also after being publicly humiliated at the count's party on 15 March 1772 and again on the way home from his failed professional attempts on 9 May 1772 (Goethe, *Werther* 143, 153).

Schmidt also looks at the role of nature in the novel, arguing that it is a self-serving projection of Werther's feelings: "‘Allein an die Natur’ will er sich halten. Da ihm die Natur, wie sich alsbald zeigt, nur als Projektionsgrund seiner eigenen Gefühle dient, stellt er sich damit unbewußt einen Freibrief für subjective Willkür aus" (He wants to adhere only to nature. He unconsciously issues himself a carte blanche for subjective arbitrariness, because, as it turns out, nature serves only as the background on which to project his own feelings) (Schmidt, *Pathologie* 323). Like Schmidt, Conrady also interprets Werther's association with nature as a means for expressing himself (Conrady 220). Werther is focused on his heart, since feelings, passion, discoveries are the highest values of the *Sturm und Drang* period. This is attested to in his letter from 9 May 1772 (Schmidt 328). The only areas outside of himself of which he takes notice of are nature and literature, since they provide paths into himself (328). Schmidt states that one can see in nature what one wants to see: "So ist die Natur durchgehend nur ein Spiegel der Subjektivität" (In this way nature is constantly only a mirror of subjectivity) (328). Werther's description of nature derives from Homer's statements about the rustic. Werther does decide what to focus on in Homer, but the material of Homeric epics is not simply a mirror of Werther's own subjectivity.

German historian Ian Hermann Strasburger addresses the presentation of the rustic vs.

courtly in Homeric epics in his 1952 Marburg lecture, first published 1982, on “The Sociology of the Homeric Epics” (47). He interprets the action of the aristocracy in Homeric epic as a way for the ruling class to achieve ideals and deeds in *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* (69). Homeric heroes are not only great in battle but also in farming; they have three characteristics: honor, a sense of economy, and heroic nobility (63). The writers of these stories, which draw on even older and simpler narratives, downplay the rustic elements of the epics to achieve the courtly ideals at the time (69). Through the main characters’ involvement with courtly matters, the rustic element is restricted: “Expressed in terms of cultural history: in the class of lords, the tendency of the time is to depart from old fashioned rusticism towards courtly ideals; it is true that it does not try to eliminate the rustic element from itself entirely because it is its basic form of existence, but it tries to suppress it socially, in the exclusiveness which we may without exaggeration call courtly” (69). The work of the aristocrats of ancient Greece satisfied their desire to be useful in country life and included what we think of today as farm labor (57, 66). Strasburger’s scholarship informs a new reading of *Werther*, whereby Goethe’s writing focuses on the rustic in Homer, highlighting it as the ideal. Werther’s ideal is found in nature, not in the courtly world of the political decision-making. He is comfortable in this smaller social setting whereas he does not fit in the larger social world of the court. Werther associates Homer with the rustic, and he comes to this understanding through nature.

The context of Werther’s intertextual reference to Homer in his letter from 28 August 1771 differs from the other mentions of the ancient poet. Werther normally discusses why, when, and where he reads Homer. But in this instance Homer is mentioned in Werther’s description to Wilhelm of the birthday present that Albert, Lotte’s husband, has given to him. Werther and Goethe have the same birthday. They share birthdays, and interest in Homer, for different

reasons, however.

Goethe owned a copy of Johann August Ernesti's large academic edition of *The Iliad* in Latin (Witte 29-30). Not by coincidence, Werther also had an Ernesti. Goethe was familiar with Ernesti's scholarship from his studies in Leipzig, when he visited his lecture on Cicero's "De Oratore" (Riedel 64). Though he was disappointed with the lecture, Goethe had read the Latin translation of Homer by the Cambridge philologist Samuel Clark and published by Ernesti between 1756 and 1764 while he was a student in Strasbourg in order to teach himself Greek (Witte 22): "Er lernte durch sein Homer-Studium Griechisch, übersetzte mehrere Verse und verfaßte Auszüge aus der 'Ilias'; er nahm Anteil an der regen Übersetzungstätigkeit und den wissenschaftlichen Diskussionen seiner Zeit" (He learned Greek through his Homer studies, translated multiple verses, and composed excerpts of *The Iliad*. He took part in the widespread translations and the scholarly discussions of his time) (Riedel 123). Goethe's method of learning was an independent self study, which he described in his letter to Sophie von La Roche (1731-1807) on 20 November 1774: "Sagen Sie dem hochwürdigen Schüler zum Troste, Homer sey der leichtste Griechische Autor, den man aber aus sich selbst verstehn lernen muss" (Tell the highly dignified student as consolation that Homer is the easiest Greek author, whom one must but learn to understand on one's own) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 404). Unlike Goethe, Werther does not read Homer to learn Greek. He already knows Greek, as attested to in his letter on 17 May 1771 (21, 23). Werther receives an additional edition of the Homeric epics on his birthday, and is moved by the presents from Lotte and Albert:

Es ist wahr, wenn meine Krankheit zu heilen wäre, so würden diese Menschen es tun. Heute ist mein Geburtstag, und in aller Frühe empfangen ich ein Päckchen von Alberten. Mir fällt beim Eröffnen sogleich eine der blaßroten Schleifen in die Augen, die Lotte vor hatte, als ich sie kennen lernte, und um die ich sie seither etlichemal gebeten hatte. Es waren zwei Büchelchen in Duodez dabei, der kleine Wetsteinische Homer, eine Ausgabe,

nach der ich so oft verlangt, um mich auf dem Spaziergange mit dem Ernestischen nicht zu schleppen. Sieh! So kommen sie meinen Wünschen zuvor, so suchen sie alle die kleinen Gefälligkeiten der Freundschaft auf, die tausendmal werter sind als jene blendenden Geschenke, wodurch uns die Eitelkeit des Gebers erniedrigt.

(Goethe, *Werther* 111)

One thing is certain; if my disease could be cured, these people would cure it. Today is my birthday, and very early in the morning I received a little parcel from Albert. When I opened it I saw immediately one of the pink ribbons Lotte had been wearing when I first met her and which I had often implored her to give me. The parcel also contained two books in duodecimo: the small Homer printed by Wetstein, which I had often wished to possess, so that I should not have to drag about with me on my walks the large volume edited by Ernesti. You see! that is how they anticipate my wishes, how well they select the small tokens of friendship which are a thousand times more precious than the dazzling presents which humiliate us, betraying the vanity of the giver. (Mayer 68)

Werther writes about Lotte and Albert's birthday gifts to show his mother and Wilhelm how well he is doing. He justifies the time he spends with the couple through his discussion of how well his friends treat him on his birthday. He is remembered and honored in his new home.

This passage also contains insightful information on Werther's relationship to Albert and Lotte, as well as their relationship with each other. Albert's gift giving demonstrates his acceptance of Werther's friendship with him and his wife. Albert's gift publicly displays Werther as a friend as well as encourages Werther's continued interest in Homer. Albert's acceptance of Lotte's relationship with Werther equally displays the amount of freedom he allows Lotte, though at the time it was highly inappropriate for Werther and Lotte to spend such excessive amounts of time together, given that she is Albert's fiancée and becomes his wife in the course of the story.

We know Werther sees the gift as appropriate, as he discusses the general importance of gifts being in good taste. Werther uses the diminutive form of the words *package* and *books*, showing his pleasure. Witte reads Werther's use of the diminutive as ironic, in arguing that Werther misreads Homer (Witte 29-30). But the idea that an appropriate present maintains a

person's distinction while excessive ones endanger it, is as old as the Homeric epics themselves.

Benjamin Sammon discusses the association between esteem and gift giving in *The Iliad*. He explains how material objects symbolically represent one's "immaterial honor" in the ancient Greek value system (Sammon 353). Ethical rules govern the transaction of goods in ancient Greece, and excessive gifts can violate a person's respect (355). In the context of his birthday gift, Werther uses the diminutive not for ironic effect, but instead to express his agreement. Werther likes Homer, exclusively reads Homer, and he expresses pleasure regarding the way his friends surprise him. This is the best material present they could have given him, and he shows his endearment and gratitude. The gift is not so great as to harm anyone's honor, but instead perfectly sized to meet all of Werther's material wishes without violating his sense of self.

Werther is excited about the gift of the Homeric books, but Albert's gift pales in comparison to Lotte's gift of her ribbon. The ribbon, which functions as a wrap for the present, holds symbolic meaning for Werther, as Lotte adorned herself with it on the night she met him. In his letter from 16 June 1771, Werther mentions the ribbon in his initial description of Lotte: "In dem Vorsaale wimmelten sechs Kinder von eilf zu zwey Jahren um ein Mädchen von schöner Gestalt, mittlerer Größe, die ein simples weißes Kleid, mit blaßrothen Schleifen an Arm und Brust, anhatte" (Goethe, *Werther* 41) (In the entrance hall six children, between the ages of eleven and two, were swarming around a handsome young girl of medium height, who wore a simple white dress with pink bows on her arms and breast) (Mayer 22). Lotte's appearance on the night of the ball made a lasting impression on Werther, as we see in his reaction to her ribbon, when he opens the birthday present (Goethe, *Werther* 111). Her inclusion of the ribbon denotes something more than just a tie for the package; the ribbon binds more than just the books. Lotte knows it, as does Werther: "Ich küsse diese Schleife tausendmal, und mit jedem Athemzuge

schlürfe ich die Erinnerung jener Seligkeiten ein, mit denen mich jene wenige, glückliche, unwiederbringliche Tage überfüllten” (Goethe, *Werther* 111) (I kiss the ribbon over and over again and drink in with every breath the memory of the few blissful moments in those happy and irretrievable days) (Mayer 68). Lotte’s gift ignites the happy memory of their initial meeting, and, I would argue, the memento promises a binding hope for a return of those times.

Albert’s gift, by comparison, does not stand the test of time. Werther later loses interest in Homer as seen through his shift in reading material to Ossian, however, he never discards the ribbon, not even at death: “Die Schleife soll mit mir begraben werden; An meinem Geburtstage schenktest du mir sie! Wie ich das alles verschlang! – Ach ich dachte nicht, daß mich der Weg hierher führen sollte!” (Goethe, *Werther* 263) (Let this ribbon be buried with me; you gave it to me on my birthday. How eagerly I accepted all this! – Ah, I did not think the way would end here!) (Mayer 165). His choice of words here to show his enthusiasm for the present and what it denotes is expressed through *Verschlang* from the verbs *verschlingen*. *Verschlingen* also has the meaning, “an einander knüpfen, mit etwas zusammenhangend” (to tie to one another, to connect with something) (Grimm 1111). Werther accepted and was surprised by the situation of his tie to Lotte through her ribbon. He also contextually ties the ribbon to his death. He accepts the consequences of the ribbon, whatever they may be. It binds him, leading him to the state in which he finds himself. He longed for her fetish, and he readily conforms to her binding of him.

Through this example we see how Werther regularly compensates for his human needs through objects. He does so with the ribbon as well as with Homer. Werther turns to material goods out of frustration of not being able to have a more physically satisfying relationship with Lotte. These material goods simulate a type of compensation for his physical needs. He kisses the ribbon every day, as she does not willingly kiss him. He also makes the *Schattenriß*

(“silhouette”) to look at in his room, since she cannot always be with him (Goethe, *Werther* 83).

At the end of the novel, he even shoots himself wearing a substitute for the outfit that he had worn to the ball when he met her (167, 265). He substitutes objects for the experience, similar to the way he substitutes letter writing for an actual relationship (Swales, *Reading* 69). In this way, Homeric epics, specifically *The Odyssey*, is one of several material substitutes in his reach.

Güthenke includes an aspect of the material side of nature in her discussion of the convergence of individuality, modernity, and nature in the ideal of Greece. In her argument Romantic logic relates to Greece’s antiquity. Through nature reflection becomes possible (Güthenke 22). She offers a contrasting image of nature as a general framework for analysis of this period, to be used “alongside historical, social and political factors” (4):

Against the backdrop of this forceful logic, the value attributed to fragmentation and to the necessary oscillation between the part and the whole expressed in the symbol becomes particularly pertinent in images of the Greek land, in more than one way. As a site, it merges the real and authentic with the ideal or symbolic. In its representation, on the German as much as on the Greek side, we can therefore single out three ways in which the land of Greece became significant: as nature it refers to the relation between man and the world around him, which is one of correspondence. Secondly, as landscape, it introduces an aesthetic element that shows up the artistic process and a related process of emancipation. Thirdly, as locality, Greece offers specific, historic, material sites, whose survival is a mark of continuity and authenticity, which is given a positive value. Its historicity allows emancipation, while at the same time it promises presence. Greece becomes paradigmatic for a state of fragmentation while alluding to a preserved ‘naturalness’ that distinguishes it from its Western European spectators. It provides a powerful material symbol, a topos, which stimulates and contains speculation, beyond its geographical limits. As a material symbol it displays at the same time the workings of the symbolic relation that is prevalent in Romantic writing: a dynamic relation of insufficiency, longing, and elusiveness, which renders disappointment a structurally necessary component, rather than an expression of tyrannical or myopic idealism.

(39-40)

Here we see that nature is more than a shortsighted, mirror image of one’s feelings; Greece as a symbol is a universal forum allowing for human expression of desire. The material aspect of nature is a literary theme that holds promise for liberation to an elevated state of being.

Werther's association of nature with Homer is hence not a malleable image of self-reflexivity, but instead an established, universal symbol of promise of human development.

In his letter from 15 March 1772 Werther finds comfort in nature, after expressing his frustration with his situational status as a junior member of the count's staff. The tension between him and his supervisor becomes overwhelming and carries over to affect negatively his personal life and build divisions between him and the count, in whom he believes he has a dear friend, and Fräulein B, the only woman who compares to Lotte in his admiration. Werther, following the count's gesture to leave the party, reads Homer after his departure:

--Der Graf drückte meine Hände mit einer Empfindung, die alles sagte. Ich strich mich sacht aus der vornehmen Gesellschaft, ging, setzte mich in ein Kabriolett und fuhr nach M., dort vom Hügel die Sonne untergehen zu sehen und dabei in meinem Homer den herrlichen Gesang zu lesen, wie Ulyß von dem trefflichen Schweinehirten bewirtet wird. Das war alles gut. (Goethe, *Werther* 143)

The count pressed my hand with a warmth that expressed everything. I turned my back on the illustrious company, slipped away and took a cabriolet to M., to see the sunset from the hill, while reading in Homer the magnificent passage which describes how Odysseus is entertained by the faithful swineherd. All this was perfect. (Mayer 90)

He reads Homer in nature. He reads the specific the passage when Odysseus, disguised as a beggar, is served dinner by Eumaeus, the swine herd. This Homeric passage from *The Odyssey* addresses the ability to maintain harmonious relations outside of one's social stratum and create welcoming feelings associated with home.

Eumaeus entertains Odysseus as a welcomed guest, though Odysseus appears as a beggar, when the disguised hero first returns to his property (Homer 208). Following the laws of Zeus to honor all guests, Eumaeus treats Odysseus with the warmest welcome by not turning him away, slaughtering suckling pigs, and giving him a warm bed and clothes (209). Eumaeus does not know or suspect that the beggar is his master, but he treats the shabbily dressed man with respect

and kindness (211). Eumaeus's treatment of the beggar in *The Odyssey* stands in direct opposition to the lavish overindulgence of the court, past and present.

This section of *The Odyssey* stands in stark contrast to Werther's experience at the party, where he is socially slighted by the count's guests (Goethe, *Werther* 143). Werther's turn to this particular passage of ancient Greek knowledge shows his reaction. He leaves the world where he does not fit in and returns to the idyll of nature, far removed from the artificial social rules of etiquette. Werther's reaction parallels how Riedel describes Goethe's early relationship to the Greeks:

In den ersten Hälfte der siebziger Jahre hatte Goethe ein starkes inneres Verhältnis zu den Griechen, seine größte und intimste Griechennähe. Sie beruht weniger als in späteren Phasen auf Bewunderung und bedeutet auch keinesweg eine Verabsolutierung; wohl aber gelten die Griechen als beispielhaft für ein natürliches Leben, für kraftvolle Äußerung des eigenen Lebensanspruchs für rebellische Haltungen. (Riedel 67)

In the first half of the seventies, Goethe had a strong inner relationship to the Greeks; it was his grandest and most intimate period of closeness to the Greeks. It is less due to the admiration as seen in his later phases and is also not meant as an absolute idealization, but instead the Greeks are exemplary for a natural life, for a powerful expression of one's entitlement to a rebellious attitude.

Goethe associated the Greeks with nature and rebellion, as seen in *Werther*.

In his discussion of the so-called *Sattelzeit*, a name for the transformative period spanning European culture 1770-1830, Karthaus focuses in on the 1770s in Germany, stating that the writers were not politically organized, as they did not have the ability to collect information and experience (27). Goethe was the exception, although his ministerial position in Weimar did not begin until after writing the original 1774 version of *Werther*. Many German writers had been raised Lutheran, which valued obedience to the authorities. Their value system led these writers to personalize abuses of power rather than labeling the entire aristocracy as corrupt (27). This may explain the unfavorable presentation of Werther's coworker during his employment for the

count. It also explains why organizing politically was not Werther's response to mistreatment by the members of the court. Werther willingly walks away from the party and reflects on his ideal presented in the Homeric text.

John R. J. Eyck and Katherine Arens in "The Court of Public Opinion: Lessing, Goethe and Werther's *Emilia Galotti*" analyze the historical role of the court in Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* and Goethe's *Werther* (40). Their work provides a broader historical and social context in eighteenth-century German speaking lands. They indirectly address how the etiquette of high society was not transparent to those outside the court, such as Werther, or the farmer; "Goethe writes *Werther* for those left behind" (Eyck and Arens 57). In discussing Werther's work ethic, they refer to Werther's letter from 8 January 1771 to explain why Werther cannot value his work, either because of Albert or because it is not emotionally satisfying (55). They compare Werther to Lessing's prince, by stating that Werther's sentimentalism is his tragic flaw; this is also implied as the reason for his failure at the court.

In Werther's later letter from 9 May 1772, readers see through his statement that he wants to be judged by his heart and not by the quality of his work: "Auch schätzt er (Fürst **) meinen Verstand und meine Talente mehr als dieß Herz, das doch meine einziger Stolz ist, das ganz allein die Quelle von allem ist, aller Kraft, aller Seligkeit und alles Elendes. Ach, was ich weiß kann jeder wissen – mein Herz habe ich allein" (155) (Besides, he (Prince**) admires my intelligence and my talents more than my heart, which is, after all, my only pride, and the fountainhead of all – all strength, happiness and misery. Anyone can know what I know. My heart alone is my own) (Mayer 97). Eyck and Arens are very accurate in their analysis. Werther has a different set of values from those at the court. His pride originates from his heart instead of professional success. He emphasizes the sentimental feelings between him and his superior over

the quality of his work or climbing the social ladder in his letter from 15 March 1772 : “ Der Graf von C... liebt mich, distinguirt mich, das ist bekannt, das habe ich dir schon hundertmal gesagt” (Goethe, *Werther* 141) (Count C. is very fond of me and singles me out, as is well known, and as I have written you many times) (Mayer 88). Werther values personal relationships and an idyllic lifestyle to a lavish one filled with heroic deeds. He reaches back to a tradition that is older than Homer, a system that values farming culture over the socially organized lifestyle of modernity. In this way, *Werther* is written for the one left behind.

The most insightful, though not final, mention of Homer is in his letter from 9 May 1772. It grapples with questions he faces in his development as an adult. During Werther’s visit to the prince, after having left service at the court, Werther writes to Wilhelm about the poetry of the ancients and compares their experiences to his own journey (Goethe, *Werther* 153). Werther stops at a river where he used to skip rocks on the water with friends. He interprets his trip home as a pilgrimage. He seeks the sense of his life’s purpose by reflecting on his childhood thoughts, knowing what he does now as a disillusioned young adult. During this visit, he comes to an understanding of his own situation by thinking about Odysseus’s voyage:

Ich that keinen Schritt der nicht merkwürdig war. Ein Pilger im heiligen Lande trifft nicht so viele Stätten religiöser Erinnerungen an, und seine Seele ist schwerlich so voll heiliger Bewegung. — Noch eins für tausend. Ich ging den Fluß hinab, bis an einen gewissen Hof; das war sonst auch mein Weg, und die Plätzchen wo wir Knaben uns übten, die meisten Sprünge der flachen Steine im Wasser hervorzubringen. Ich erinnerte mich so lebhaft, wenn ich manchmal stand und dem Wasser nachsah, mit wie wunderbaren Ahnungen ich es verfolgte, wie abenteuerlich ich mir die Gegenden vorstellte wo es nun hinflösse, und wie ich da so bald Gränzen meiner Vorstellungskraft fand; und doch mußte das weiter gehen, immer weiter, bis ich mich ganz in dem Anschauen einer unsichtbaren Ferne verlor. —Sieh’ mein Lieber so beschränkt und so glücklich waren die herrlichen Altväter! so kindlich ihr Gefühl, ihre Dichtung! Wenn Ulyß von dem ungemessnen Meer und von der unendlichen Erde spricht, das ist so wahr, menschlich, innig, eng und geheimnißvoll; Was hilft mich's, daß ich jetzt mit jedem Schulknaben nachsagen kann, daß sie rund sey? Der Mensch braucht nur wenige Erdschollen um drauf zu genießen, weniger um drunter zu ruhen. (Goethe, *Werther* 153)

Every single step I took stirred up memories. No pilgrim in the Holy Land could come across so many places of religious memory, or have a soul more filled with pious emotion. — Another example among thousands: I went down along the river to a certain farm, where formerly I had often walked. This was the place where we boys used to compete, skipping flat stones along the surface of the water. I clearly remembered how often I stood there, following the river with my eyes, with strange presentiments in my heart; how colorfully my imagination painted the countries through which the river flowed, and how soon I discovered that my imagination had limits. Still I knew that the river ran on and on, and I completely lost myself in the vision of an unseen far country. — You see, dear friend, how limited and how happy were the glorious Ancients! how naïve their emotions and their poetry! When Ulysses speaks of the immeasurable sea and the infinite earth, everything is true, human, deeply felt, intimate, and mysterious. What is the use of my present knowledge, which I share with any schoolboy, that the earth is round? Man needs only a few clods of earth whereon to enjoy himself, and even fewer for his last rest. (Mayer 96-97)

This passage offers the climax of Werther's devotion to Homer in the novel. It is a sublime, dreamlike moment that attempts to thrust Werther into adulthood. Werther's criticism of modernity reaches its pinnacle at the riverbed. The final mention of Homer is a brief declaration on 12 October 1772 of Werther's decision to stop reading Homer, although his decision has already been made by then (Goethe, *Werther* 171). This moment at the water has changed him profoundly. Up until this point *The Odyssey* had sustained him, yet in this transformative moment, he recognizes his own limitations vis-à-vis nature.

This experience causes Werther to realize the value of his youth. His ability to reflect on his childhood transpires because of his engagement with Homer in nature. Werther's realization sounds much like the process Güthenke explains regarding nature's ability to help one come to a fuller understanding: "Landscape and nature, as soon as we actively attribute a naïve character to them, that is, make them an object of our observation, are in fact already a modern cultural phenomenon, and that insight has the potential to guide modernity onwards to a return to nature on a higher, synthesized level" (31). The passage at the river is rich with insight into Werther's

philosophy of favoring nature over scientific advancement.

The outdoor space is imbued with memories of Werther's childhood and emphasizes its simplicity. This familiar space allows him to reflect on his personal experiences. His tone is melancholic, as he remembers the outdoors surrounding his former childhood home. He has been drawn to nature since that time, when he dreamed of going to far-off places. Nature seemed limitless, an idea which Güthenke explains as part of the Romantic landscape: "Nature is a sign system, and in the images of nature making up the Romantic landscape the dynamic of the sign is transformed into an environment marked by disappearance of boundaries. Just as the spiritual (rational, moral, etc.) is something transcending phenomenal reality, the representation of landscape obeys the same inherent process" (38). His memories are mixed with events from *The Odyssey*. In Werther's visit to his childhood neighborhood, he recognizes the difference in himself now from his happy childhood (Goethe, *Werther* 151). There he grew by recognizing his own boundaries and then surpassing them. His reminiscing flows to his interpretation of the experiences of characters in Homeric texts. He presents the ancient dreamers as happy, although limited in their knowledge.

Jochen Schmidt argues that literature does not have an educational purpose in Goethe's *Werther*: "Die Dichtung hat also keine kompensatorische oder regulative Funktion. Vor allem wirkt sie nicht bewußtseinbildend. Sie dient nur der Identifikation – aber der Identifikation dessen, der 'hors de lui' ist und unter dem Zwang steht, Fremdes zu zitieren, wenn er Eigenes meint" (Poetry has no compensating or regulative function. Above all it does not function to cultivate self awareness. It serves only for identification – but the identification, of that which is outside of him and under pressure to quote the unknown, when he means his own) (331). In the case of Homeric texts, Werther's comparison of his own existence with that of Odysseus allows

him to consider his past from an objective standpoint, though. He comes to a higher awareness through the teachings of literature. He is clearer here than in many other places in the text, and it is arguably because he has *The Odyssey* as an objective point of orientation. It shapes his thinking. By comparing antiquity to modernity, Werther implies that the type of knowledge about the outer world that results from modernity does not lead to happiness. This passage additionally speaks to Werther's fractured sense of family, which can be seen as a result from changes in the modern era.

The young Goethe's ideas concerning nature and education are near to those of the German Romantics. Werther connects the ideal to nature and questions the benefit of education, as seen, for example, in his letter of 9 May 1772 (Goethe, *Werther* 143). Goethe was the focal point of German literary Romanticism because of his idealized philosophy of nature, although he did not want to be seen as part of the movement (Hoffmeister 25-26, 42). Güthenke describes Goethe's idea of Romantic based on his reflections:

It is an aesthetic based on the heritage of the sublime, which arises in the awareness of the past and connects to the experience of solitude and absence. Although most of his experience of a 'romantic region' is abstracted from that of traveling in the Alps, the elements he identifies also informed the aesthetic perception and representation of the Greek land in Germany. (42)

Goethe's inspiration was different from that of the Romantics. Whereas Goethe's *Werther* looked to the ancient Greeks, and specifically to Homer, the German Romantics turned to a vague German literary past from Nordic, and also Indian origin (Witte 37). As a literary response to the scientific and technological progress of the European Enlightenment, the Romantic period drew on an earlier, simpler Germanic time of communal oral storytelling. In Güthenke's use of the word *Romanticism*, she refers to Greece, specifically Romantic Hellenism, which is "an awareness of Greece, ancient and by implication also modern, that has its

foundations in the logic of an idealist Romanticism and its modes of representation; a Romanticism whose concerns appear particularly well mirrored in its relation to Greece and the images chosen to grasp its enabling nature” (40). In Güthenke’s view “romanticism entails an understanding of the aesthetic representation of physical reality that makes the present land of Greece a privileged object, since both, the act of representation and the object of Greece, conform to a shared strategy of defining the modern individual” (40). Whereas the German Romantic movement did not adopt Greek ideals for German literature, it benefited from Goethe’s expansion of the literary canon to include Homer (Witte 37; Karthaus 34).

Werther’s critique of modernity was new to Germany, but these ideas had already had their debut in France. The Swiss philosopher and writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau's (1712-1778) *Discours sur les sciences et les arts* (1750) questions the benefits of advances in knowledge for civilization, since developments in sciences and art do not contribute to one's sense of well being. Advancement only corrupts customs (Karthaus 25). Werther’s quote on 9 May 1772 subtly critiques modernity and the scientific advances that came to be associated with the Enlightenment (22).

Tobin Siebers believes that *Werther's* aesthetic success can be attributed to Rousseau's ideas: “Werther is an esthetic expression of Rousseau’s ethical system: Goethe’s Romanticism defines itself by reproducing esthetically the basic elements belonging to the scenes of persecution that Rousseau describes his writings” (121). Werther’s romanticizing of traditions from Greek antiquity describes an unobtainable ideal, since humans cannot reverse knowledge acquired over the centuries to return to a childlike innocent bliss. In this passage, Goethe aligns himself with ideas from Rousseau’s essay as well as his novel, *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761), which, at least in part, *Werther* closely resembles thematically and structurally

(Böschenstein 201).

Despite these shared philosophical ideals and Goethe's dialogue with Rousseau which Bernhard Böschenstein identifies in his article, "Rousseau und die deutschen Dichter um 1800," Böschenstein states that Goethe did not identify with Rousseau (200). Böschenstein bases his argument on Goethe's overall reception of Rousseau, which he maintains plays a less prominent role in later novels and in comparison to three other German authors (201, 219). Goethe himself held various attitudes about the literary impact of ancient Greeks, depending on the period in his life (Riedel 97-98).

Güthenke likewise speaks to the phenomenon of general estrangement and how the observation of Greece allows for several layers of reflection. In Werther's case, he is able to discern between the past and modern: separation from his childhood and separation from antiquity through Homeric literature. Observation of nature provides a space for questioning modern issues and helps him to differentiate between the now and then. This venue of discourse allows for his individual growth:

...the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a key period of attention to Greece ancient and modern across Europe, are, as is well known, preoccupied with the complex, estranged relation of man (or, by extension, artist, scholar, or society) vis-à-vis nature. Such estrangement from nature finds a parallel feeling of separation from the past. At the same time both kinds of estrangement are understood to be conditions of modernity and of its possibilities to express itself. Greece, as a material, physical, present place, is the intersection of those trends and discourses; it is a place where questions about unity can be articulated: whether unity is understood in a political sense, that of temporal continuity, that of subjectivity, or that of representation. Materiality infused with meaning becomes the lens through which Greece is viewed, while nature imagery is prominently used to include the spectator in the act of observation. The result is an authority of nature that has reverberations and consequences to this day. At the same time, it is an authority that demands distance and that 'runs', so to speak, on the ambivalence of that nature. Like a visually ambiguous figure, it can foreground disunity or disillusionment as much as correspondence or continuity, progress as much as violent onrush. (Güthenke 5)

In the end, home is the central issue of the passage from his letter of 9 May 1772. Werther does

not think of his family members, but instead of Odysseus in the natural setting Werther describes in the letter. Here, he compares himself to Odysseus, who also experiences a sense of longing on his way home to his family. Werther expresses home as a material thing: a clod of dirt. His home is no longer there. Werther is sentimental about his former home, where he once experienced an intact family, but he realizes here that a home can be made anywhere. Werther is alone at his former home, he is equally alone in the prince's hunting lodge, estranged from the crowd (153). Werther presents himself as having a fractured spirit, longing for a home.

In the immediately preceding letter from 5 May 1772 readers learn that his mother moved from his childhood home right after his father's death (Goethe, *Werther* 151). As readers notice from his letters, Werther's home consists of Wilhelm and Werther's mother, as a destination for his letters, as he has no permanent home of his own. The May 5 letter demonstrates that he does not claim her home as his and that he does not think highly of it (151). This shows that he is adrift. When not traveling for work to the count's or the prince's, he lives at an inn in Wahlheim, although he also has an aunt in the area (13, 57, 59). Werther does not write to his mother, not even from their former home, despite his regular, self-indulging letters to Wilhelm.

There is little conclusive information about Wilhelm, though readers see that he is in contact with Werther's mother, as his letters contain messages for her (Swales, *Landmarks* 86). In his letter from 28 August 1772 Werther addresses Wilhelm, as his brother, but he is only a friend, as seen from Werther's use of the possessive pronoun *meiner* instead of possessive plural pronoun *unserer* to describe his mother in his letter from 4 May 1771 (Goethe, *Werther* 13, 113 and *Zur Deutung* 943). Werther's form of communication increases the importance of Wilhelm's role in the novel: "Während Werther sonst seine Briefe an den zu Hause im bürgerlichen Geschäft gebliebenen Freund richtet, steigert er hier die Anrede zur Apostrophierung einer

größeren, gleichgestimmten Allgemeinheit – der ‘Freunde’” (While Werther otherwise directs his letters to his friend at home in a bourgeois occupation, he apostrophizes the address here to a larger, like-minded audience of 'friends') (Schmidt, *Pathologie* 323). Wilhelm comes to represent his fractured sense of home, especially since Werther’s letters illustrate a geographical as well as an emotional distance between himself and his mother. Werther does not want his mother to interfere with his professional situation through her network. She is acquainted with the minister. Despite his feelings against her involvement, he is quick to pass on blame to his mother and Wilhelm, as seen on 24 December 1771 (Goethe, *Werther* 129). Werther concludes that reading Homer is a better influence on him than his family. He cannot blame Homer for his professional failures, however.

Werther does not treat his mother and Wilhelm as part of his life, despite his letters. For one, he is not with them during the Christmas holiday, which is traditionally a time of celebration with family (Goethe, *Werther* 127, 129). In the second year, he kills himself before celebrating the holiday with Lotte and her family. Lotte had asked him to wait to visit her again until Christmas, but he had no intention of celebrating the holiday with Lotte and her family (261, 263). Werther only directly addresses his mother in his suicide note after he says goodbye to Wilhelm (259). His suicide shows his inability to develop an independent home apart from his mother’s.

Analogies were a common stylistic form used to express critique during the *Sturm und Drang* period (Karthaus 50). In *Werther*, the mention of Odysseus’s travel offers the analogy, and Werther’s idea of home allow a comparison of his own situation to Odysseus’s experiences. Werther’s concept of home is imagined here and built on what he learns from *The Odyssey*. Werther’s pilgrimage to his childhood home allows him to reflect on Odysseus’s travels. In this

way, Werther's letters might also be seen in a broader context as a travel log of his journey to become an adult. To complete his journey he needs to establish his own home.

The last mention of Homer marks the shift between Werther's reading of Homer and his turn to Ossian in his letter on 12 October 1772 (Goethe, *Werther* 171). In his diary entry for 10 October 1772, which immediately precedes his last mention of Homer, Werther writes a short notation of only two sentences concerning his feelings for Lotte's dark eyes, and his feelings of jealousy toward Albert (171). In the letter immediately following his turn from Homer to Ossian on 19 October 1772, he is again brief in his two-sentence entry (173). Here he describes a void in his heart from his physical longing for Lotte. One can surmise from this placement that he associates Ossian with his forbidden desire for Lotte in his letter from 12 October 1772. Furthermore, the short entries both before and after the 12 October letter with its long description of Ossian intensify its meaning.

At the end of the novel, in his last mention of Homer on 12 October 1772, Werther makes a decisive turn from Homer to Ossian (171). He does not read both authors at the same time. Werther dismisses Homer on 12 October 1772: "Ossian hat in meinem Herzen den Homer verdrängt" (171) (Ossian has taken the place of Homer in my heart) (Mayer 110). The mentions of Homer are the same in both the 1774 and the 1787 versions, in which Werther starts the letter with this line and then continues by expanding on what the Ossian bard means (170, 171). By December 1772, Werther had translated Ossian, confirming that his focus had shifted (231-245). Different than his reading of the rustic in Homeric epics, Werther's focus in Ossian is on violence and war. Werther specifically refers to the story of the wandering son of Fingal, who returns to the country of his fallen ancestors to die alone with the memories of his beloved maiden and of by-gone glorious battles (173).

Werther's reading about the rustic in Homeric epics only allows simulation. It does not take the place of the real. Homeric epics do not thrust him into action to acquire that which he desires. He finds epics comforting, like a lullaby, which prevent him from working toward what he wants. He learns from Homer, even if what he learns does not satisfy his real desires or help him to understand occurrences in his life. He learns through his interaction with nature that the solutions in the epics and from his childhood are no longer meaningful in facing the complex set of societal difficulties in the modern era. He needs to explore other strategies.

Goethe's mere act of including Homer speaks to the value of the Greek poet's message for modernity. It also makes the text polyphonic. The texts help readers in modernity, if only to realize that traditional answers from a simpler past are no longer sufficient. Werther's casting Homer aside does not raise questions about his literary worth. By incorporating Homeric texts, *Werther* represents the collective youthful aspirations of the time. Throughout the majority of the novel, Homer functions as a guiding force for Werther, as indicated in his letters. Albert also encourages his continued reading of Homer. Ultimately this does not serve Werther well, since it does not help him to achieve success in the areas of his life that are dearest to him. He seeks a home. Through reflecting on Odysseus's experience he realizes that he has grown since the beginning of his journey. He sees a difference in himself between his childhood and his adulthood. He is not happy with what he has become. This time of becoming, or in other words, temporal stage is addressed by Bakhtin:

The simple spatial contiguity (nebeneinander) of phenomena was profoundly alien to Goethe, so he saturated and imbued it with *time*, revealed emergence and development in it, and he distributed that which was contiguous in *space* in various *temporal* stages, epochs of becoming. For him contemporaneity — both in nature and in human life — is revealed as an essential multitemporality; as remnants or relics of various stages and formations of the past and as rudiments of stages in the more or less distant future.

(Bakhtin, *Bildung* 28)

Werther dismisses the multitemporal moment on 9 May 1772. In doing so, he fails both to heal his wounds and to develop into a functioning member of society. His failures to obtain a relationship with Lotte and to secure a lasting profession leads him to look elsewhere for help, turning to messages from other books. Ossian leads him to look to the afterlife for his satisfaction.

CHAPTER 4: REWRITING OSSIAN.

One of the main literary questions in eighteenth-century Germany was how contemporary authors situated their works vis-à-vis ancient texts. Literature from antiquity conveyed a standard of excellence that contemporary writers used in judging their own work: “Die ‘Querelle des anciens et des modernes’, die am Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts in Frankreich geführt wurde, wollte eine Entscheidung darüber herbeiführen, ob die ‘Moderne’ die dichterischen, philosophischen und wissenschaftlichen Leistungen der Antike übertreffen könne” (The ‘Querelle des anciens et des modernes,’ [the literary and artistic debate about the antiquity and the modernity], that was conducted at the end of the seventeenth century in France, had wanted to bring about a decision, on whether the modern could excel beyond the poetic, philosophical and scientific achievements of antiquity) (Sauder, *Geniekult* 327). The related debate in Germany took a specific shape to address concerns of German writers. They discussed whether they should translate works to transmit perfected texts written in other vernaculars or use past literary masters as inspiration for their own artist development (327). Responses oscillate between two poles. Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813) believed that the ancient works were a model of literary perfection (Schrader 81). While Goethe’s ideas represented the other end of the spectrum, his own literary production activities varied from his words. Goethe's ideas initially were closely shaped by Herder and intertwined with the question of how ancient past should function as literary tradition.

Goethe’s attitude followed the trend of his contemporary German authors, who admired Homer, Ossian, and Shakespeare. In his speech “Zum Schakespears Tag” (October 14, 1771) given to a gathering of friends at his parents’ home in Frankfurt, the twenty-one-year-old Goethe

discusses how Shakespeare's dramas are tasteful in comparison to classical French theater and how Shakespeare's writing is powerful and influential (Goethe, *Ästhetische 1771-1805* 9, 10, 11). For the celebration in honor of Shakespeare, Goethe asked for Herder's essay on Shakespeare, which Karthaus notes may be considered the most important art theoretical text of the *Sturm und Drang* movement, but it did not arrive in time (66). As a result, Goethe related many of its main points from memory (Apel 1054).

In the speech, Goethe spoke of his aim to create something equally successful as the literary master within the context of a newly emerging German culture. Goethe focused on his own ambitions instead of Shakespeare's accomplishments, declaring his own intention to surpass Shakespeare's achievements (*Ästhetische 1771-1805* 9,11). Goethe acknowledges that Shakespeare may have achieved the most advanced form in his field, but it is not sufficient for the modern era: "Unser verdorbener Geschmack aber umnebelt dergestalt unsre Augen, daß wir fast eine neue Schöpfung nötig haben, uns aus dieser Finsternis zu entwickeln" (Our ruined taste however befogs our eyes to such an extent that we almost need a new creation to emerge from this darkness) (11). The darkness here was the state of literature, and for it to develop the individual had to advance. Previously this advancement had been prevented by his collision with the group (11). The focus of his speech was that one should not imitate, but instead seek to surpass the literary masters (Schrader 63-64).

This eighteenth-century pro-British attitude in Germany was a reaction to negative French sentiment: "Wie schon bei Lessing steht Shakespeare gegen die übermächtige Modellfunktion des französischen Dramas mit seinen Rückversicherungen bei den 'anciens'" (As already seen in Lessing[']s texts], Shakespeare stands against the dominant function of the French dramas with his backing by the 'anciens') (Schrader 61). Johann Gottfried Herder

promoted the ancient English literary heritage that was initially believed to have served as the basis for Germanic folk stories.

Goethe's interest in Ossian also developed because of Herder's influence. Goethe met Herder during his studies in Strasbourg, while Herder was there for an eye operation (Lewis 38). The height of Goethe's focus on Ossian was from 1771 to 1774 (Dochartaigh 157). Goethe's statements allow his interest in Ossian to be categorized into three distinct phases: reserved admiration (1769), then enthusiasm (1770-1773), and finally a long period of disinterest (1774-1829). In the years leading up to publication of the first version of *Werther*, Goethe positively assessed Ossian's literature in reviews and letters. He also attempted to translate Ossian in the early 1770s (Gaskill/Schmidt, *Norden* 735). In the period between 1770-1771, Goethe associated Ossian with nature, grouping him alongside other canonic writers such as Homer. In 1773, Goethe helped reproduce an unauthorized English version of Ossian with the German publisher Johann Heinrich Merck (1741-1791). Goethe's last notable reference to Ossian in this period was his intertextual reference to Ossian in his novel *Werther* (1774). The scholarly context for reference in *Werther* appeared only a little after the realization in the early 1770s that the Germanic and Celtic distant pasts were unrelated (Trunz 589): "Erst im *Briefwechsel über Ossian* (1771/1773) unterscheidet Herder die keltische von der germanischen Tradition" (Not until the *Briefwechsel über Ossian* does Herder differentiate the Celtic from the Germanic tradition) (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 646). Herder's essay did not diminish the importance of Ossian, as Herder continued to engage himself with his songs until his death in 1803. He did not live to find out that Macpherson had written the Ossian texts himself.

Ossian's songs have both a prominent and yet negative placement as an intertextual reference in *Werther*. *Werther* reads and translates Ossian during his escalating madness in the

latter part of the novel, and he employs its language, which corresponds to his state of mind. The reference in *Werther* to Ossian marks a distinctive change in Goethe's publicly expressed view of the poet Ossian. Goethe's skepticism can be traced back to a private letter to Friederike Oeser from 1769, when he critically questioned the role of Ossian in the German literary scene. There he discusses Ossian in the context of theatrical disguise, while also admiring its beauty (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 159-160).

In the novel *Werther*, Goethe inserts translations of Ossian absent of detailed commentary. Given this void and his earlier elaborate assessment of Ossian in letters and in journal reviews, Goethe's reference to Ossian is not neutral. Werther learns of educated society's enthusiasm for Ossian early in the novel, on 10 July 1771 (Goethe, *Werther* 75). By this time, he also knows of Lotte's interest in literature (43-45). Werther occupies himself with Ossian's songs in order to come closer to Lotte. At the end of the novel Werther is finally able to break through the physical boundaries that had separated them by reading Ossian aloud to Lotte. This passionate scene can in no way be seen as a positive development in their relationship. Lotte is unfaithful to her husband, Werther and Lotte's harmonious existence is destroyed, and Werther takes his life within days of this climatic scene.

Like his fictional protagonist Werther, Goethe benefited from his turn to Ossian. Goethe's negative portrayal of Ossian in *Werther* forces the question whether he believed that Ossian belonged to the group of canonic literary writers, as Herder steadfastly maintained throughout his lifetime (Schrader 62). Goethe had also adopted this Herder position between 1771-1773. Goethe's engagement with Ossian helped him to advance professionally. For example, Goethe developed a good friendship with Herder because of their shared interests. Also, his translation of Ossian developed into a business opportunity for him. To understand

Goethe's early interest in Ossian, I first explore Goethe's engagement with Ossian before writing *Werther*, which provides the context for the intertextual references in *Werther*. The last half of the chapter specifically investigates the primary text and Goethe's reflections about Ossian after having written his novel.

Herder's ideas offer the context for analyzing Goethe's involvement with Ossian, given Herder's strong influence on Goethe in this area (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 729-730). Herder did not find it important to limit eighteenth-century literary influences only to German texts (Karthus 145). He believed that the Greek antiquity was only one source of original poetry and energy. These characteristics could also be found in *Volksdichtung* ("folk poetry") as well as in other European literatures (142). Other original sources were Shakespeare and Ossian (Schrader 62). In the realm of English literature, Herder had a strong research interest in Ossian, and was able to make a connection between modern lyric and its nearly forgotten sources through Ossian's songs (Karthus 143). For Herder, Ossian was tied to folk poetry. Myths and sagas, work and battle songs connected folk songs to lyrical poetry (143).

The Ossian's songs "Fingal" and "Temora" were perceived to be the first epics written in a vernacular language, although they were not epic but rather semi-anonymous ballads heroic in character (Leerssen 112). Ossian's *Volksdichtung* lent itself to the modern expression of sentimentality, as it encompasses the feelings and the spirit of self discovery (Trunz 588). *Empfindsamkeit* ("Sentimentality") has been defined as the internal enlightenment of an individual (Karthus 24). The movement to collect folk stories did not advance poetic expression from the shared general private feelings of family to the common feelings of the self, however. Instead, the shift to industrialization inspired an interest in the collection of folk stories as stories symbolic of earlier economic times.

Herder did not realize, nor did he want to realize, how much of Ossian's songs had been a fictional creation by James Macpherson (1736-1796) (Karthaus 144). The true extent of the falsification was not proven until 1805 after Herder's death (144). Herder did not accept that the Ossian songs were written by Macpherson, and he was not alone in his disbelief, even though, as early as the 1760s the authenticity of the songs was in question (144). The leading scholarship on Ossian had been written by Macpherson's supervisor in Edinburgh Professor Hugh Blair (1718-1800). Blair promoted the argument that Macpherson's Ossian findings were original fragments of two older epics (Trunz 589). Blair's study *Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian* spoke to Ossian's validity and was included at the end of the second published volume of the Ossian songs. Blair had also initially published his thesis separately (Gaskill, *Hand* 213). The Ossian myth persisted, and eighteenth-century literary models in German-speaking lands remained foreign in origin, though no longer French. They were Greek through Homer and English through Shakespeare and Ossian, a fictitious Gaelic writer.

Goethe already knew of Ossian before meeting Herder, but his interest in Ossian was renewed through their contact in Strasbourg (Dewitz 1200). Hoffmeister suggests Goethe came to know of Ossian through Herder, which would have been 1770-1771 (12). However, Goethe's first mention of Ossian is in a letter to Friederike Oeser, whose father Adam Friedrich Oeser (1717-1799) had been Goethe's art teacher in Leipzig. The letter of 13 February 1769 demonstrates that he was already interested in Ossian and discusses several topics, including truth in pictorial depictions of rural innocence:

Und was an einem Gemälde am unerträglichsten ist, ist Unwahrheit. Ein Mährgen hat seine Wahrheit, und muss sie haben, sonst wär es kein Mährgen. Und wenn man nun das Sümet so chiffonirt sieht, so wird's einem bang. Da meynen die Herren das fremde Costume sollte was thun! Wenn's Stück schlecht ist, was sind des Ackteurs schöne Kleider! Wenn Ossian im Geiste seiner Zeit singt, so brauche ich gerne Commentars,

sein Costume zu erklären, ich kann mir viele Mühe darum geben; nur wenn neuere Dichter sich den Kopf zerbrechen, ihr Gedicht im alten Gusto zu machen, dass ich mir den Kopf zerbrechen soll, es in die neue Sprache zu übersetzen, das will mir meine Laune nicht erlauben. Gerstenbergs Skalden hätt ich lange gern gelesen, wenn nur das Wörterverzeichnis nicht wäre. *(Goethe Briefe 1764-1775 159)*

And what, in a picture, is most insufferable is want of truth. A fable has its truth, and must have it, else it would be no fable. And when the subject is so hashed up one grows afraid. Then our friends think the outlandish costume must produce effect. If the piece is bad, of what use are the fine clothes of the actor? When Ossian sings in the spirit of his times, I can willingly make use of a commentary to explain his costumes, and can take great pains about it; but when modern poets strain their wits to present their poems in an old dress, it does not suit my humour to strain my wits to translate it into modern language. Gerstenberg's "Skalde" I should long ago have gladly read, but for the glossary. *(Early 40)*

Goethe speaks of the possibility of poetic truth in a new language, which could be inspired by songs of the past. He sees language as a prerequisite for this truth and speaks of a costume as a metaphor to communicate his reservations about foreign influences. He explains how good writing has more value than actors' costumes. This passage demonstrates Goethe's preference for the written word over the picture, as the words help explain that which is disguised. He is willing to expend such effort, once writers make the decision to focus their language.

Goethe uses the costume metaphor to challenge poets to reach new heights in their writing, as he believed that the literary scene was misguided. Goethe felt poets should not mimic ancient poetry, but instead create a new language. Goethe's comments can be read as criticism of seeing ancient works as models of literary perfection. Time and energy should be spent on advancing German literature, instead of focusing on the beauty of yet another foreign culture through the preoccupation with Ossian.

The story of Ossian can be summarized as a memorial song of the dead, lost in battle: "In Ossian's tale the bard prophesies his own and his friends' deaths and to the wind alone he leaves the task of announcing them" (Tonussi 40). Colma, Ryno, and Alpin sing of their own grief from

the loss of their families. Other singers include Ullin and Minona. Two love stories are also spoken of within the passage. In the first story, Colma sings of her love for Salgar at his grave after Salgar was killed by her brother (due to family rivalry). Alpin sings for Armin, the chief of Gorma. In the second love story, Daura grieves for her love and her brother before her own death. Daura's death is then also mourned. Another noteworthy character is Morar, who is compared to the king Fingal and to Oscar in his spirit and in battle. Oscar was the first of mortal men, who sought revenge. The song is written to preserve Fingal's name, since he has no mother or lover to preserve his memory. The ghosts of the dead children appear at dusk (Goethe, *Werther* 231-245). The role of twilight is the framework for the opening and closing of Goethe's translation in *Werther*.

Goethe had said in his letter from early 1769 to Friederike Oeser that beauty is found in this natural in-between moment of twilight (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 160). I interpret Goethe's reference to dawn as also critical, pointing to how the lines between truth and culturally promoted falsehoods are blurred. Goethe does not use the costume metaphor as a transition to expose the truth of Macpherson's Ossian, but instead implies that there is a secret behind Ossian. Ossian's songs disguise the real. Goethe recognizes deception in Ossian, though, he does not explicitly define it. His mention of Heinrich Wilhelm von Gerstenberg (1737-1823) suggests that Goethe questioned the authenticity of Ossian. Gerstenberg, along with others such as Samuel Johnson, doubted the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian (Apel 1104). Gerstenberg attempted to look at antiquity as expressed in his "Gedicht eines Skalden" (1766), which followed his earlier study on Scandinavian's literature, mythology, and history (Gerecke 142).

Goethe's introduction to Ossian may have also preceded his time in Leipzig. Goethe's father had a copy of the *Works of Ossian, the Son of Fingal* (1765), in the library, which he not

only used, but also lent to Herder (Dewitz 1203; Dochartaigh 157; Gaskill, *Hand* 214). Goethe's letter to Herder, presumably from October 1771, confirms this: "Wenn Sie keinen Ossian kriegen können, steht meiner zu Diensten, aber ich muss ihn wieder haben. Melden Sie's bald, denn ich kann oh[n]möglich sehen, dass Sie noch lange sind ohne so viel Freude zu haben, als ich, denn es geht doch nichts drüber" (If you are unable to obtain a copy of Ossian, you are welcome to use mine, but I will need to have it back. Let me know soon, because I cannot tolerate that you have not had so much enjoyment in a long time, as I have had, because there is nothing like it) (Gaskill/Schmidt, *Norden* 37). Herder kept the copy for a year and used it for his essays on Ossian (784). Later Herder also used Goethe's translation of Ossian as the basis for "Fillans Erscheinung und Fingals Schildklang" as well as "Erinnerung des Gesanges der Vorzeit" in his *Volkslieder* (Gaskill, *Hand* 215). Herder's own translation was written during his time in Strasbourg between July and November of 1771 (Karthaus 141). Herder and Goethe's exchange benefited Herder in his own development into an Ossian authority.

Goethe's letter to Herder conveys a very different perspective of Ossian than he has expressed in his 1769 mention to Friederike Oeser. Goethe's attitude concerning Ossian before and after Herder is striking (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 729-730). After meeting Herder Goethe was quick to write about the merits of Ossian, and signifying a change in attitude. Goethe then realized he should spend time translating and analyzing Ossian, an attitude shared by his circle in Strasbourg, which preferred Ossian to Homer (730). Before this time, however, Goethe's ideas about Ossian contrasted with those of Herder's, which were published in his "Auszug aus einem Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder alter Völker [Excerpt from a Correspondence on Ossian and the Songs of Ancient Peoples]" (1773).

Goethe's letter might alternatively be read as sign of his loyalty to Herder and his ideas;

although, Goethe never came out as strongly in favor of Ossian's songs, as did Herder (Trunz 590). Goethe mentions Ossian here near the end of his letter from October 1771, where he also announces his feelings of admiration for Herder: "Adieu lieber Mann. Ich lasse Sie nicht los. Ich lasse Sie nicht! Jakob rang mit dem Engel des Herrn. Und sollt ich lahm drüber werden! Morgen soll Ihr Ossian gehn. Jetzt eine Stunde mit Ihnen zu seyn wollt ich mit / bezahlen" (Goodbye, dear man. I am not letting you go. I will not leave you! Jacob wrestled with the angle of God. And I shall become crippled because of it! Tomorrow your Ossian shall be sent. I also want to pay for an hour we can be together) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 247). The placement of these ideas together point to a connection between Herder and Ossian in Goethe's thinking.

Goethe's shift in perspective can be further seen in his review from 1771 in the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* "Über den Werth einiger deutschen Dichter und über andere Gegenstände, den Geschmack und die schöne Literatur betreffend [On the Value of Several German Writers and Other Matters Concerning Taste and the Beautiful Literature]." Here he discusses Ossian among the literary models of Shakespeare, Klopstock, and Milton, who set the standards for Goethe and his contemporaries:

Gellert ist bei ihnen ein *mittelmäßiger* Dichter *ohne einen Funken von Genie*: das ist zu hart! Gellert ist gewiß kein Dichter auf der Scala, wo Ossian, Klopstock, Shakespear und Milton stehen, nach dem Maßstab, womit Warton mißt, und wo selbst Pope zu kurz fiel, wenn er den Briefe seiner Heloise nicht geschrieben hätte; allein hört er deßwegen auf, ein angenehmer Fabulist und Erzähler zu sein, einen wahren Einfluß auf die erste Bildung der Nation zu haben, und hat er nicht durch vernünftige und oft gute Kirchenlieder Gelegenheit gegeben, den Wust der elendesten Gesänge zu verbannen, und wenigstens wieder einen Schritt zu einer unentbehrlichen Verbesserung des Kirchenrituals zu thun?
(198)

Next to them Gellert is a mediocre poet without a spark of genius: that is too much! Gellert is certainly not a poet who stands on the same scale as Ossian, Klopstock, Shakespeare and Milton, according to the criteria with which Warton measures, and where even Pope himself fell short, had he not written his Heloise the letters. He quits being exclusively a pleasant fabulist and a story teller to have a true influence on the first

education of the nation, and has he not given opportunities to ban the tangled mass of the most vile songs through reasonable and often good Church songs, and, at the very least, to make a move to an indispensable improvement of the Church rituals?

In this review, Goethe's focus is on the German poet Gellert, specifically his writing of *Erbauungsschriften* ("edifying texts"). Goethe comes to Gellert's defense in an attack made on his writing abilities, and, in this appeal, Ossian is mentioned. Goethe implies that writers cannot all be judged the same, as they have different levels of national influence. Goethe believed that Gellert was not as good a poet as Ossian, but that Gellert should be recognized for his accomplishments, particularly in liturgical music.

Goethe was involved in assessing authors' work on a regular basis through his reviews in journals, and in this process he frequently noted literary masters. In the early 1770s he grouped Ossian among the great writers. For example, he discussed the three major non-German literary models – Ossian, Shakespeare, and Homer – in his review of Robert Wood's *Versuch über das Originalgenie des Homer* in the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* (1773):

In das Genie dieses Dichterpatriarchen einzudringen, können uns weder Aristoteles noch Bossu Dienste leisten. Vergeblich würde man daher hier den Regelkram suchen, den Blair zur Erläuterung des Ossian, und eine Dame zur Apologie des Shakespeare angewendet haben. Wenn man das *Originelle* des Homer bewundern will, so muß man sich lebhaft überzeugen, wie er sich und der Mutter Natur alles zu danken gehabt habe. (314)

Neither the services of Aristotle nor of Bossu can help us to penetrate in the genius of the poet patriarch. Therefore, one would seek here in vain the ordinary formula which Blair used in explaining Ossian and a lady used to the apology of Shakespeare. When one wants to appreciate the *originality* of Homer, then one needs to convince oneself actively how he [Homer] would have had to be thankful to himself as well as to mother nature for all that he had.

In this passage, Goethe relates the almost-unexplainable inner qualities and natural abilities of geniuses. For this reason, Goethe does not believe that there is value in using the works of geniuses to help others improve their skills. Goethe's frame of reference to Ossian in this

passage is similar to what he wrote to Friederike Oeser in 1769: Writers should not waste their time looking at models of the masters, since geniuses create themselves. This idea originated in England in the late 1750s, as I will demonstrate below.

In 1759 British writer Edward Young (1681-1765) called the new generation of writers to concern themselves with original texts instead of the translation of master works, such as the English poet Alexander Pope's (1688-1744) translation of Homer (66). Several authors besides Goethe, Herder, and Denis published partial translations of Ossian in response to their engagement with the original texts. The literary reception of Ossian is as extensive as its translation attempts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Müller-Salget suggests that part of Ossian's popularity was based on the tendency to imitate in order to achieve originality during the *Sturm und Drang* period, as promoted in *Werther*: "Man verhielt sich zu Werther wie dieser zu den Helden Homers und Ossians; man gewann Originalität, indem man imitierte" (One's relationship to Werther is similar to Werther's relationship to Homeric and Ossianic heroes; one achieved originality by imitating) (Müller-Salget 336). Corinna Laughlin clarifies that the originality that resulted from Ossian was a by-product of trying to understand better the emotionally charged language of the text. The translations ranged from anonymous versions "Darthula, ein Gedicht Ossians" (1766) to early translation attempts made by Johann Georg Jacobi (1775-1776), and Gottfried August Bürger (1779). Christian Felix Weiße, Ludwig Theoboul Kosegarten, Friedrich Ludwig Wilhelm Meyer, Friedrich Leopold Graf zu Stolberg, and Christian Wilhelm Ahlwardt also translated Ossian. Translators had much leniency. The border between translation and the creation of new texts was blurred.

Individual connections to other European countries, such as the dynastic relation of Hannover to England, eased the transmission of literature for translation: "Eins der

Haupteinfallstore für englische Literatur und zugleich eins ihrer wichtigsten Wirkungszentren war im 18. Jahrhundert das hannoversche, also dynastisch mit England verbundene Göttingen, das durch seine 1734 gegründete Universität rasch zu einem bedeutenden Ort auf der Landkarte des literarischen Lebens avancierte” (One of the main inroads for English literature and at the same time one of its most important centers in the eighteenth century was Hanoverian Göttingen, which was dynastically connected with England, which through its university founded in 1734 quickly became an important place on the map of literary life) (Guthke 195). The standard practice of translating foreign texts in the eighteenth century is the context for Werther’s translation of the Ossian text in the novel. Goethe’s Ossian response in the novel *Werther* was arguably the most important response (Laughlin 528). Not until much later in his life did Goethe articulate his own translation philosophy. Despite the flexibility translators enjoyed, Goethe’s own translation of Ossian focused on the rhythm and syntax of the language to capture that sound of the speech: “Remaining as close as possible to the original syntax is part of Goethe’s methodology throughout, regardless of the effect this has on the target language. Maintaining the rhythm of the original is paramount to him” (Dochartaigh 160). In *West-östlicher Divan* (1819) Goethe discusses the historical eras of translation (Bernofsky 28, 142).

At the end of the eighteenth century *Nachdichtungen* (“free adaptation”) were common: “The translator was at liberty to alter the tone, style, diction, or form of a work, even to delete certain passages or add new ones of his own if he thought it would improve the final product” (Bernofsky 1). It was not seen as an act of imitation, but instead as one form of artistic creation. By working on Ossian writers produced new texts: “Macpherson’s Ossianic poetry both demands and resists adaptation; its slippery language resists containment, and yet, for these writers, cries out for it” (Laughlin 522). The challenge of translating Ossian was one of its main draws, and

the act of translating it heightened the connection Ossian offered between past eras and modernity, owing to the freedom translators had at the time: “If the primitivism of Ossian drew authors to the work, it was its modernism that forced them to respond” (522). The practice of literary rewritings happened during the transition of modernism. It was discontinued by the final decades of the eighteenth century, as a new standard emerged that centered on the intent of the original author (Bernofsky 2).

Another form of imitation was Macpherson's act of creating pseudo-ancient Celtic poetry. Laughlin emphasizes how the effect of Macpherson's falsifying poetry from a fictitious Ossian created originality: “What Macpherson has done in his Ossianic poetry, far more, than imitate the genuine language of antiquity, is to invent a new language: a language of sensibility. That language is highly impressionistic. It never analyzes; and yet it is obsessed with emotion, the more delicate and obscure, the better” (Laughlin 514). Macpherson's inclusion of sentimental elements constituted its attraction for other eighteenth-century writers. Laughlin states that Macpherson's Ossian poetry shows his preference for the process of speaking, instead of for the selection of the words spoken: “What Macpherson does is foreground language itself, suggesting that the fact of speech is more important than its content” (533). For Macpherson to have had this impressionistic effect, he must have been highly selective of the words, even if it was only to capture the right tone.

Authors themselves monitored the newly evoking standards through book reviews. In Goethe's review of the seventeenth volume of the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* in the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* (1772), he addresses the sections XIX, XX, and XXI of Ossian's epic translated by Jesuit Austrian writer Johann Nepomuk Cosmas Michael Denis (1729-1800). Under the pseudonym *Sined der Barde*, Denis published *Die Gedichte Ossians, eines alten*

celtischen Dichters, aus dem Englischen übersetzt, which became the first complete translation of Ossian's works into German in 1768-1769 (Dochartaigh 157). Before Denis's version only individual sections of Ossian had been translated, with the first partial translation appearing 1762 in *Bremisches Magazin* (157). Denis translated from Melchior Cesarotti's (1730-1808) Italian version of "Fingal" (1763) and from a copy of Ossian he had found in 1767 in Prague (157). Goethe uses Ossian to launch into a discussion of the Germans' lack of an epic tradition, exploring the mixed German reaction to Macpherson's finding of the bard. He does not use the word *Germans*, but instead refers to territory of *Deutschland*, as a geographical location. His choice of words points to an intellectual leap he makes from Gaelic tradition to the Germans' lack of an epic. Ossian gives impetus Goethe's consideration of concepts of nationhood:

Die Denis'sche Übersetzung von Oßian, und das ganze Barden-Unwesen bis auf unsre Zeit. Wir setzen diese Beurteilung als eine Arbeit von Meisterhand über alles, was wir von Blair und Macpherson über diese Materie schon besitzen. Traurig aber war es für uns, wann wir den lauten Beifall überdachten, den diese Übersetzung oder Travestierung Oßians, nebst allen Rhingulphischen Nachgeburten in Deutschland so allgemein erhalten hat, daß bei aller Einfuhre fremden Geistes, doch nichts als die Hülle zu uns übergeht, und daß wir leider alles auf Tradition loben oder tadeln. (*Ästhetische 1771-1805* 105)

The Denis translation of Ossian, and the entire Bard- nuisance until our time. We position this appraisal as a work of a master over all that we already have on this material from Blair and Macpherson. It was sad for us when we reconsidered the clear acclaim that this translation or travesty of Ossian next to all the Rhinegulf-afterbirths in Germany so popularly received to an extent that the introduction of a foreign spirit, nothing but the exterior is transmitted, and that we unfortunately compliment or rebuke everything according to tradition.

Goethe saw Denis's translation as a grotesque imitation. His critique reflects Herder's influence on him and Herder's disapproval of the translation (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 730). Herder argued that Denis's translation went against the style and voice of 'bardic' poetry. Denis's translation in hexameter differed from Ossian's style (Sasse 548).

Herder had also reviewed Denis's translation in 1769 in Nicolai's *Allgemeine deutsche*

Bibliothek, and three years later in 1772 Denis's 2nd and 3rd volumes. Initial negative reception prompted Denis to publish a revised version *Lieder Ossians und Sineds* in 1784 as well led to as increased public interest in Ossian (Sasse 549): "Moreover, the wide influence and repercussions of Ossian on German literature, notably on the *Sturm und Drang*, was if anything aided by the controversy on his [Denis's] use of hexameters – a controversy so celebrated and widespread that ironically and indirectly it gave yet a further impetus to the growing wave of Ossianic enthusiasm" (552). Herder's review of Denis's translation occurred at roughly the same time he wrote the essay "Auszug aus einem Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder alter Völker," which was published in *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773) (Gaskill, *Hand* 212; Sasse 549). Herder's ideas in this essay contained several of the values of *Sturm und Drang* (Gaskill, *Hand* 210).

Compared to his early review of Denis, here Goethe offers a fuller and less harsh explanation of Denis's translation in his 1773 review "Die Lieder Sineds des Barden, mit Vorbericht und Anmerkungen von M. Denis aus der G.J. Trattner":

Wir sind wider die Bardenpoesie nicht eingenommen. Rechtschaffenheit und Patriotismus wird in diesem, oder dem Tone der Gleimischen Kriegslieder am besten vorbereitet; und der Dichter selbst setzt sich lieber in die Zeiten der Sittenunschuld und der starken Heldengesinnung zurück, als daß er unsere tändlenden Zeiten besänge. Wo sind denn die schönen Thaten, die ein deutscher Ossian in unsern Zeiten besingen könnte, nachdem wir unsern Nachbarn, den Franzosen, unser ganzes Herz eingeräumt haben? Einem Patrioten singt kein Dichter in diesem Tone fremd, und antike griechische Schilderungen mit deutschen Sitten verbrämt, sind doch ja wohl eben der Fehler, oder wohl ein größerer, als Bardenpoesie in unserm Zeitalter. (243)

We have nothing against bardic poetry. Righteousness and patriotism is best prepared in this or in the tone of Gleim's war songs; and the poet himself rather returns to the innocent times of past convention and the strong heroic state of mind, rather than singing about our trivial times. Where are then the beautiful deeds, which a German Ossian could sing about in our times, after we have conceded our entire hearts to our neighbors the French? No poet sings to a patriot in a foreign tone or sings classical Greek accounts, embellished with German conventions. These are certainly a mistake or even a larger

mistake, than bardic poetry in our time.

In this passage, Goethe focuses on the role of the Germans instead of Denis's translation, showing that it was accurate enough for him to focus on the content. Goethe believed that Germans needed their own stories, their own Ossian, and their own songs, and, in this context, he then comes closer to defining what he means by his term a *German Ossian*. Goethe blames the Germans for placing too much hope in the imitation of literary development of their neighbors. As a remedy, he suggests that Germans prepare military songs in the style of the popular German Enlightenment poet Johann Wilhelm Gleim (1719-1803).

Gleim's war songs *Preußische Kriegslieder in den Feldzügen 1756 und 1757 -von einem Grenadier* (1757/1758) served as a model for the genre of patriotic poetry: "Gleims Kriegslieder gehören zu den wichtigsten Texten der patriotischen Dichtung, die während des Siebenjährigen Krieges entstanden sind, und markieren den Beginn einer neuen politischen Lyrik überhaupt" (Gleim's war songs belong to the most important texts of patriotic poetry that were produced during the Seven Years' War and even mark the beginning of a new political lyric) (Gerecke 142). Gleim's songs were focused on wars that had recently occurred in German-speaking lands. Goethe doubted Germans' ability to appreciate Gleim's contributions, since he believed their contemporary taste in ballads had been ruined. He presents Ossian's songs as a model of perfection and a marker to show the state of German artistic appreciation:

Nun kommen wir auf die Gedichte selber: 1) An Ossians Geist. Ein Stück, Ossians vollkommen würdig. Es enthält den Hauptinhalt der Ossianischen Gedichte, und zuletzt eine Klage über den verderbten Geschmack unsrer Zeit in einem sanften klagenden Ton gesagt:...

Doch Seelen dem Liede geschaffen
Empfindende Seelen, wie deine,
Mein Lehrer! und sind sie schon wenig,
Die schließen bei meinen Gesängen sich auf (*Denis Rev.* 243)

Now for the poetry itself: 1) To Ossian's spirit. A piece completely worthy of Ossian. It consists of the main content of Ossianic poetry, and concludes with a lament about the ruined taste of our times, said in a soft lamenting note...

Indeed the souls for the song created
Sentimental souls, like yours,
My teacher! And they are only a few,
That unlock themselves in my songs.

Goethe sees that Germans could learn from Ossian's sentimentality, as it unleashes a longing for an earlier time with presumably higher literary standards. Goethe speaks to both the general content of Ossian's songs and the merit of Denis's translation. His review is markedly positive both of Ossian and of Denis, as he concludes that he read Ossian's songs with joy (246). This second review, written a year before *Werther*, shows an initial subtle distancing of himself from Herder's disagreement with the quality of Denis's Ossian translation. He compliments Denis on his translation of Ossian (243-246).

Some scholars claim that Denis's translation of Ossian was the most influential and discussed German version (Sasse 547): "Few German writers of note in the last decades of the eighteenth century escaped the influence of Ossian, and virtually all got to know Ossian through Denis" (552). Sasse's assertion must however be qualified, given Denis's limited audience.

Denis's version was highly discussed in academic and intellectual circles, but it did not have the wide reach that Goethe's novel *Werther* enjoyed (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 723). Goethe's fragment of Ossian in his novel *Werther* introduced the majority of German readers to Ossian (Dochartaigh 156).

Denis's relationship to Klopstock is important to this discussion, since Denis insisted on using hexameter, a stylistic choice much influenced by Klopstock's preferred verse form (Sasse 551-552). Denis was one of Klopstock's many literary followers. Klopstock's interest in Ossian

was grounded in his national cultural and literary activities (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 646). Sasse notes how the changes Denis made to the revised translation of Ossian are Klopstockian in style: “Echoes of Klopstock’s *Messias* seem at first sight singularly inappropriate and out of place in the melancholy twilight world of Ossian and Fingal, of Swaran and Cuthullin” (Sasse 551). Denis is seen as imposing a Klopstockian structure in his translation of Macpherson’s Ossian (551-552). According to Meredith Lee, not only was Denis’s translation of Ossian influenced by Klopstock’s general style, but Goethe’s translation was as well (172).

Lee compared Goethe’s early 1772 translation of Ossian to that which appeared in the 1774 version of *Werther*. She found that syntax as well as diction were altered between Goethe’s two translations. In comparison to his earlier translation, in *Werther* Goethe uses dynamic verbs and adds present participles (Lee 173). Lee points out these changes to argue that *Werther* has been implicitly translating poetic texts into occurrences throughout the novel until the Ossian scene: “The language he uses is indebted to Klopstock’s example of how words can become an enhanced vehicle for poetic sentiment” (174). Her findings suggest that Goethe’s later Ossian translation in *Werther* is Klopstockian in style (172-173). His changes can be attributed to Denis’s revised translation, which Goethe read and positively reviewed. Denis may have provided technical influences, while Herder provided the impetus for Goethe’s engagement with Ossian.

Goethe acknowledges Herder’s mentoring of his translations in his letter of October 1771 to Herder: “So viel können Sie heraus sehen dass ich mich, mit Ihnen, für Sie, eine Zeit her beschäftigt habe, und dass ich keiner von den letzten binn für die Sie schreiben” (You can see so much from it that I have spent time working on it along with you, for you, and that I am not going to be the last one for whom you are writing) (Gaskill/Schmidt, *Norden* 37). This letter

includes a partial translation of Ossian's seventh book as well as several remarks concerning the effects of Ossian's songs on Goethe's mood and his indebtedness to Herder for his interest in Ossian: "Sie werden sehen ob Sie mit mir einig seyn können, wenn ich sage die Relicks und Ossians schottisches machen ganz verschiedne Würckung auf Ohr und Seele" (You will see if you can agree with me when I state that the Reliques and Ossian's Scottishness have a very different effect on the ear and the soul) (36). Goethe demonstrates his ability to discern the differences in Scottish poetry. In his analysis he specifically mentions the English writer Bishop Thomas Percy's (1728-1811) *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry: Consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, and other Pieces of our earlier Poets, (Chiefly of the Lyric kind.)* (1784). While Goethe never finished his translations, revised sections of them appeared in *Werther*. Working on Ossian under Herder's guidance also led Goethe to see other literary Ossian opportunities.

Goethe's lending of his father's copy of Ossian to Herder demonstrates that there was an insufficient supply of copies of Ossian. Herder, who was to become one of the imminent authorities on Ossian, had trouble procuring a copy to use in his scholarship. This imbalance in supply and demand led to business opportunities for the young Goethe. Goethe and Merck published a pirated English version in Germany in 1773 (Dochartaigh 157). Goethe wrote his positive review of Denis in the same year as he worked with Merck on an unauthorized English version of Ossian. The change in his attitude concerning Denis's translation from 1772 to 1773 reflects his own close engagement with the preparation of this unauthorized English edition.

Goethe's next three letters give insight into his role in making the English text available to the German market. At the time there were no copyright laws in Germany, making Goethe's business venture with Merck not illegal. It is furthermore questionable that it was seen as an ethical issue, given the still standard practice of rewriting other texts at the time. In his 7

December 1772 letter to Herder, Goethe speaks of Merck's publishing: "Merck versifizirt und druckt" (Merck sets to verses and is printing) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 275). Goethe seems to be referring here to the *Works of Ossian*, which J.G. Fleischer printed in four volumes in Frankfurt and Leipzig. The first volume appeared in 1773, and Goethe etched its vignette (Leuschner 414). Goethe also responds to Herder regarding something Herder had sent him concerning Ossian: "Ich danke dir für deine Briefe und den Seegenswunsch überbracht von Ossian. Wir sind die Alten, ein wenig hinüber modifizirt thut nichts zur Sache" (I thank you for your letter and good wishes delivered through Ossian. We are the ancients, a little over modified does not matter) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 275). Goethe's change in heart is ironic, as he names himself and Herder the ancients, showing a full understanding of the results of his actions. His calls to his contemporaries for a new language in reviews and in his Shakespeare speech have now transformed, out of convenience, into blatant but improved imitation. Goethe's English version of Macpherson's Ossian was published a year too late for Herder to use in working on his own Ossian essay. Without access to an English edition, Herder also had no other English textual point of comparison for his analysis of Denis's translation of Ossian (Gaskill, *Hand* 212).

Goethe's involvement in the unauthorized publishing of Ossian is also documented in his letter in May 1773 to Kestner: "Sagt ihm, von unserm Nachdruck Ossians ist Fingal ausmachend den ersten Teil fertig, kostet 36 Kr wenn er ihn will schick ich ihn mit dem übrigen und bitte mir meinen Ossian zurück" (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 306) (Tell him [Kielmansegge] that, of our edition of Ossian, the first part, consisting of Fingal, is ready, and costs 36 kreuzers (sic); if he wants it I will send it [to] him with the remainder and beg for my Ossian back) (*Early* 137). Here Goethe gives Kestner the job of relaying a message about the logistical details of selling his Ossian version.

Goethe also wrote to Sophie von La Roche in May 1773 and included twelve copies of his English version of Ossian for her and presumably other customers: “Ich schreibe Ihnen diesmal nur in Handlungs Speditions Sachen, Merck und Comp. Hier sind zwölf Exemplare Ossians. Das eine der gehefteten bittet er Sie anzunehmen” (I am writing you this time concerning only the commercial act of dispatching the property of Merck and Company. Here are twelve copies of Ossian. The bound one he asks you to accept) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 307). The business tone of Goethe’s letter to La Roche points to her involvement in making the text available to customers (Nenon 66). Goethe did not specify in the letter for whom the copies were intended or if she needs to find potential customers. He also presents himself as a middle man between the company and her.

Goethe did not appear involved with Ossian for purely commercial reasons, nor was it merely a way to befriend Herder. He seemed genuinely fond of Ossian's aesthetic value. In the following 1772 review of J.G. Purmann’s book “*Zufällige Gedanken über die Bildung des Geschmacks in öffentlichen Schulen* [Coincidental Ideas about the Education of Taste in Public Schools],” Goethe continues his argument that the relationship between genius and nature is equal, since they both create: “Wir glauben überhaupt, daß das Genie nicht der Natur nachahmt, sondern selbst schafft wie die Natur” (We generally believe that the genius does not imitate the nature, but instead creates, similar to nature) (*Ästhetische 1771-1805* 61). In his discussion of the relation between genius and nature, Goethe states that Ossian, Klopstock, and Homer expressed what they felt and these ideas were not the product of nature, determined by their surroundings:

Man muß nur Natur und historische Wahrheit nicht miteinander vermischen. Wann ein *Oßian*, der selbst Held und Sänger war, von Schlachten singt, so sagt er nicht nach, was die Natur andern in dem Fall eingibt, sondern was er selbst fühlt. So singt Homer,

Theokrit, Anankreon und die Besten – so singt Klopstock meist. Ohne Hirten oder Helden zu sein, fühlen und reden sie wie Helden und Hirten. Malen sie hier und da, so ist malen nicht nachahmen. Die Hütte, die im Bache widerscheint, ist so ein natürliches *Bild*, als die, die am Ufer steht, natürliche Hütte ist. Das ist nicht kritische Kleinigkeit.
(*Ästhetische 1771-1805* 61-62)

One should not mix nature and historical truth. When an Ossian sings about battles, who was himself a hero and singer, he does not imitate what nature otherwise prompts in others [to sing] that situation, but instead about what he feels. Homer, Theocritus, Anacreon and the best also sing in this way, Klopstock usually does too. Without being herdsmen or heroes they feel and speak like heroes and herdsmen. When they paint here and there, painting is not imitation. The cottage, which is reflected in the river, makes such a natural picture, as the natural cottage located on the banks. That is not a critically insignificant detail.

Here Goethe discusses Ossian in an essay concerning beauty in response to the school curriculum. As a teacher, Purmann selected six essays of various thematic content to use for testing material in the *Gymnasium* (“high school”) (Goethe, *Ästhetische 1771-1805* 60-63). Goethe saw commonality between these writers’ wills and intentions: they write to present a believable imitation of their own perspectives through their characters’ feelings. Not only does his review actively promote Ossian as one of the best writers, placing him once again among other writers in the western classical canon, but it also shows how Goethe was concerned with models of canonic writing.

Goethe’s explanation of the relationship between the genius and nature differs from what he espouses later in *Werther*. There, the genius is subject to the rules of nature alone. In the letter 26 of May 1771 from *Werther*, nature is reported as creating the genius: “Sie allein ist unendlich reich und sie allein bildet den großen Künstler” (29) (Nature alone is illimitably rich, and nature alone forms the great artist) (Mayer 14). Before speaking of the genius, Werther expounds on the advantages of following nature, and then shifts his focus to male-female relationships:

O meine Freunde! Warum der Strom des Genies so selten ausbricht, so selten in hohen Fluthen hereinbraus't und eure staunende Seele erschüttert? Liebe Freunde, da wohnen die gelassenen Herren auf beyden Seiten des Ufers, denen ihre Gartenhäuschen, Tulpenbette und Krautfelder zu Grunde gehen würden, die daher in Zeiten mit Dämmen und Ableiten der künftig drohenden Gefahr abzuwehren wissen. (Goethe, *Werther* 29)

O my friends! Why does the stream of genius so seldom break out as a torrent, with roaring high waves, and shake your awed soul? —Dear friends, because there are cool and composed gentlemen living on both banks, whose garden houses, tulip beds and cabbage (sic) fields would be devastated if they had not in good time known how to meet the threatening danger by building dams and ditches. (Mayer 15)

Here Werther critically discusses how humans use mechanical processes to shape and guide nature. Without this intervention nature threatens the average people in their reliance on the earth to feed themselves. A comparison of these two passages suggest that humans' intelligence shapes their relationship to nature. The genius is created by nature, whereas the common people mechanically intervene in nature to shape it to their advantage. The latter portrayal is negative and implies that less intervention is the ideal relationship between humans and nature. This passage in *Werther* demonstrates a nuanced development in Goethe's thinking about nature. The geniuses have a specific relationship to nature which the average people can not understand.

The references to Ossian in *Werther* are an extension of Goethe's new attitude toward this poetry. Different from all other intertextual references in the novel a large section and a short section of two of Ossian's songs are reproduced in the body of the text. There are three Ossian references: one on 10 July 1771, the second on 12 October 1772, and the last on 20 December 1772. In the last mention in *Werther*, Goethe's translation is included (75, 171, 231-237). Until this point, Homer had been Werther's sole source of reading through much of the novel.

Werther's preference for reading Homer alone is explicitly stated in his 13 May 1771 letter (17). The comfort Werther finds in Homer is reinforced in his letter from 26 May 1771 (27). He is at peace with the world through his reading. Werther learns of Ossian very early in the novel, but

his excitement for it is not expressed until much later. Readers are not privy to the moment when he discovers his enthusiasm for Ossian, though we do know when he stops reading Homer. The reading of Ossian during the last meeting between Werther and Lotte lasts over six pages in the novel, giving this intertextual reference one of the quantitatively most significant positions in the novel (231-245). Ossian's prominent placement makes it stand out in the novel (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 723). Though not to be missed, the reference is difficult to understand.

Examining the contexts in which Ossian is referred to throughout the novel provides the basis for understanding the prominent reference in the 20 December 1772 scene. How Werther learns about Ossian is vague: "Neulich fragte mich einer, wie mir Ossian gefiele!" (Goethe, *Werther* 75). (The other day someone asked me if I "liked" Ossian!) (Mayer 44). We do not know who asked him about Ossian, as Werther speaks in a passive construction to present the information. The mention appears on 10 July 1771. Sometime in the next fifteen months, Werther starts reading Ossian. In this initial conversation concerning Ossian, Werther reacts very negatively, however:

Die alberne Figur die ich mache wenn in Gesellschaft von ihr gesprochen wird, solltest du sehen! Wenn man mich nun gar fragt, wie sie mir gefällt? – Gefällt! das Wort hasse ich auf den Tod! Was muß das für ein Mensch seyn, dem Lotte gefällt, dem sie nicht alle Sinnen, alle Empfindungen ausfüllt! Gefällt! Neulich fragte mich einer, wie mir Ossian gefiele!
(Goethe, *Werther* 75)

You should see what an absurd figure I cut when people talk about her in company! Even more so if they ask me how I like her—like! I hate the word like poison. What sort of a person is he who likes Lotte, whose heart and mind is not completely possessed by her! Like! The other day someone asked me if I "liked" Ossian!
(Mayer 44)

This passage from the 1787 version contains subtle word usage distinctions from the 1774 version of *Werther*, but they both directly relate to the sentence in which Ossian is mentioned. For example, in the 1774 version the word *Kerl* is used instead of *Mensch*. Also the

prepositional phrase *in Tod* in the 1774 version is changed in 1787 to *auf den Tod* (74, 75).

According to the Grimms' dictionary, the latter prepositional phrase in combination with *Tod* reinforces the meaning (Grimm 541).

Werther speaks tersely and efficiently, making his critique of language clear. He complains about how others use language through his discussion of the word *Gefallen*. He comes across as an intellectual who does not want to be confined by the limitations of the average person's use of the German language. Werther expresses that the language is not abundant enough to articulate his ideas and feelings adequately. He disagrees with the word *gefallen* being used to encompass readers' response to literary works as well as his feelings for Lotte. In contrast to Ossian, Lotte possesses him. The word *Gefällt* shifts Werther's thematic focus away from his feelings for Lotte to his intellectual response to Ossian.

The combination also points to a strong disapproval of Werther's interaction with the person who asks. His framing of the passage points to how he perceives himself as distinct from society: "Die alberne Figur die ich mache wenn in Gesellschaft von ihr gesprochen wird, solltest du sehen!" (75) (You should see what an absurd figure I cut when people talk about her in company!) (Mayer 44). The sentence shows that it is more than dislike of the person, though. Werther feels uneasy talking about his feelings so openly, becoming self-critical of his own reaction. He lacks self-confidence and finds fault in other people. Not until he meets Lotte on 16 June 1771 does he even enjoy speaking to others about literature. Before then, he does not engage in discussion about literary topics, as seen in his letters to Wilhelm, for example, on 17 May 1771.

In the letter from 17 May 1771 Werther reports a conversation he had with a young educated man V., who drops names of literary critics, and of art and music scholars (21). As an

educated individual who knows Greek and is well read, Werther's response is strikingly odd. He refuses to engage in conversation concerning leading thinkers from Batteaux to Heyne and Winckelmann: "Ich ließ das gut seyn" (Goethe, *Werther* 23) (I let that pass) (Mayer 10). The aforementioned scholars studied Greek art and writing, and Homer's texts are the only ones Werther currently reads. Werther does not like to be influenced in his thinking by others, as he has already demonstrated on 13 May 1771 (Goethe, *Werther* 17). In his reaction to the naming of Ossian we see that he generally demarcates literary conversations to those people who mean something to him.

The first intertextual reference to Ossian is not to be underestimated. This passing reference provides an abundance of information about Werther's person and the beginning of his plan to use Ossian to his advantage in satisfying his desire with Lotte. Werther's association of death, Ossian, and Lotte in this passage is noteworthy, especially given that the Ossian reference appears remarkably early in the novel on 10 July, which is less than a month after Werther and Lotte meet. The reference is easily overlooked, yet it foreshadows the connection Werther later makes between Lotte and Ossian.

Laughlin suggests that Werther's feelings for Ossian and Lotte are somehow intertwined (530). Werther's entry records his initial consideration of using Ossian as the first step to approach Lotte. Hermann argues that given Lotte's status in society, Werther would have to belong to the same social stratum in order to get closer to her (375). So while Werther may not like Ossian, his conversation with the young V. begins his association between Ossian and Lotte. He learns first hand of Ossian's popularity and the likelihood that Lotte would appreciate it. Tempted by the chance to get close to Lotte, Werther engages with the popular text.

Whereas Werther refers to Homer and Ossian independent of each other several times

throughout the text, he does not declare his replacement of Homer with Ossian until relatively late in the plot. Werther chooses Ossian's texts over Homer's on 12 October 1772: "Ossian hat in meinem Herzen den Homer verdrängt" (Goethe, *Werther* 171) (Ossian has taken the place of Homer in my heart) (Mayer 110). Lotte and Werther do not discuss Homer's epics. Werther associates Homer to Lotte's husband Albert due to his birthday gift to Werther of the Homeric epics. This marks Werther's first sign of a loss of his interest in Homer. At the gift giving, Werther becomes more interested in the pink ribbon from Lotte than in Homer (Goethe, *Werther* 111). Werther had declared Homer as his sole guide in the beginning of the novel but now his attention shifts to a pink ribbon that Lotte used to tie the gift together. This ribbon was the one that Lotte wore on the night of the ball. Tobin Siebers states that: "it is obvious why Werther adores Ossian: the text overflows with desolate images and outcries of suffering" (135). It seems possible that Albert has partially ruined reading Homer for Werther and that Werther shifts to Ossian since it is his opportunity to near Lotte.

Werther clearly explains what he finds appealing about Ossian:

Welch eine Welt in die der Herrliche mich führt! Zu wandern über die Haide, umsaust vom Sturmwinde, der in dampfenden Nebeln die Geister der Väter im dämmernden Lichte des Mondes hinführt. Zu hören vom Gebirge her im Gebrülle des Waldstroms halb verwehtes Ächzen der Geister aus ihren Höhlen und die Wehklagen des zu Tode sich jammernden Mädchens, um die vier moosbedeckten, grasbewachsenen Steine des Edelgefallnen ihres Geliebten. Wenn ich ihn dann finde den wandelnden grauen Barden, der auf der weiten Haide die Fußstapfen seiner Väter sucht, und ach! ihre Grabsteine findet, und dann jammernd nach dem lieben Sterne des Abends hinblickt, der sich in's rollende Meer verbirgt, und die Zeiten der Vergangenheit in des Helden Seele lebendig werden, da noch der freundliche Strahl den Gefahren der Tapferen leuchtete, und der Mond ihr bekränzt siegrückkehrendes Schiff beschien. Wenn ich den tiefen Kummer auf seiner Stirn lese, den letzten, verlaßnen Herrlichen in aller Ermattung dem Grabe zuwanken sehe, wie er immer neue schmerzlichglühende Freuden in der kraftlosen Gegenwart der Schatten seiner Abgeschiedenen einsaugt, und nach der kalten Erde, dem hohen, wehenden Grase niedersieht und ausruft: Der Wanderer wird kommen, kommen! der mich kannte in meiner Schönheit und fangen: Wo ist der Sänger, Fingals trefflicher Sohn? Sein Fußtritt geht über mein Grab hin und er fragt vergebens nach mir auf der Erde

— O Freund! ich möchte gleich einem edlen Waffenträger das Schwerdt ziehn, meinen Fürsten von der zückenden Qual des langsam absterbenden Lebens auf einmal befreyen und dem befreyen Halbgott meine Seele nachsenden. (171, 173)

What a world this sublime poet has opened to me! I wander with him over the heath, where the gale howls on all sides and sweeps along with it the spirits of our ancestors in the flowing mist and in the darkling light of the moon. I hear from the mountains, and in the roar of the torrent the faint groan of spirits in their caverns, and the lament of the maiden who pines for death beside the four moss-covered and grass-grown stones that mark the grave of her fallen hero, her lover. I then come upon the wandering gray bard who searches for the footsteps of his fathers on the vast heath and finds alas! only their tombstones; and then laments as he gazes at the lovely evening star reflected in the rolling waves of the sea. And I see past ages glow into life in the soul of the hero, when the friendly beam shone on the adventures of the brave, and the moonlight illuminated their ships, homeward bound and hung with wreaths of victory. When I read deep sorrow on the bard's brow, and see the last and lonely great one stagger exhausted toward his grave, drinking in everfresh, agonizing joys among the helpless shades of his dead companions, and then look down upon the cold earth and the tall waving grass, crying out: "The traveler will come, will come, who knew me in my beauty, and he will ask: 'Where is the bard, Fingal's great son?' His footsteps tread on my grave, and he will seek for me on this earth in vain." - O friend! I wish I could draw my sword like a noble paladin, and free my lord from the stabbing agony of a slowly ebbing life with one stroke; and then let my soul follow the liberated demigod. (Mayer 110-111)

Werther's earlier sentence: "Ossian hat in meinem Herzen den Homer verdrängt" combined with the concluding passage comprises the contents of the entire letter from 12 October 1772. The entire paragraph concerns Ossian, though Ossian is only specifically named in the first line. Werther implies that he likes Ossian because he leads him to fantasize about a sleepy natural setting where he meets heroes of ancient times and shares in their stories. He is tempted to follow their path to a world of glory. He dreams of Fingal's son the wanderer, whom Werther welcomes so that his life will also end in glory and that he too will then be bemoaned by beautiful women. Through death Werther can achieve freedom, like the heroes of Ossian's battles. In this passage Werther does not highlight loneliness, but instead is drawn to the commonality he would have with these heroic figures.

Alternatively, Siebers does not understand why Lotte would like Ossian (135). Lotte and

Werther's interest in Ossian follow a literary trend that Gérard Genette describes in *Palimpsests*. Neoclassical writers continued to give honor to Homer for his brilliance, even though Homer's style was on its way out of fashion (Genette 20). For example, the eighteenth-century writer Solomon Maimon also discusses Ossian and Homer together and indicates a preference for Ossian over Homer in his autobiography (Maimon 235). The general trend to favor Ossian might be best summarized by a sentence from the anonymous essay "Homer und Ossian" (1783) published before Goethe's 1787 revision of *Werther*: "Nach dem, was ich bisher gesagt habe[,] hoffe ich, wird man mich einigermaßen entschuldigen, daß ich *Ossian* für reizender und angenehmer zu lesen halte, als *Homern*" (After what I have said, I hope, one will excuse me to some extent that I find Ossian to be more exciting and pleasant to read than Homer) (Gaskill/Schmidt, *Norden* 460, Kommentar 813). The anonymous German writer's preference for Northern over Greek epic mirrors the attitude toward Ossian in Goethe's novel. People were talking about Ossian at the time in literary reviews and at social gatherings, and Goethe depicts his fictional Lotte, also a well read person, as familiar with these discussions. Werther's statement sets up a juxtaposition of Homer and Ossian in the novel at this juncture, and after this, Werther does not mention Homer again. Werther gives up on Homer as he nears his death in the novel.

The changes in this passage from the 1774 version of *Werther* concern grammar, spelling, punctuation, and word choice. The most significant additions are the exclamation points added in the first sentence above after the word *führt!* and after the second word *kommen!* in the sentence "Der Wanderer wird kommen, kommen!," the change of the word *gejammerten* in the 1774 version to *sich jammern* in the 1787 version, and two deletions of the words *so* in line 12 (171, 173). The word *gejammerten* is the past tense of *jammern* 'to lament or moan,' used

here as a participle attribute, functions as an adjective, and it shows that the girl has completed bemoaning. The changes to the 1787 version show that the action is still taking place. The additional exclamation points emphasize Werther's emotion and intensify the urgency of the action.

In the last passage concerning Ossian in *Werther* the protagonist has given a translation of Ossian's poetry to Lotte (231). Goethe incorporates his translation, specifically a revised version of the "*Gesänge von Selma* (The Songs of Selma)," which he had initially completed for Friederike Brion (Gaskill, *Hand* 215; Lee 172). The *Gesänge von Selma* was the only one of the seven songs of Ossian that Goethe had finished translating (Gaskill, *Hand* 215). By 1771 he had finished his translation of *Gesänge von Selma* (Dewitz 1201). This section was then later reworked and included along with a translated section of *Berrathon* in *Werther* (1201). Goethe translated Macpherson's Ossian from the English and started a translation of Macpherson's Gaelic version of "Temora" and "Fingal" from the 1765 edition of the *Works of Ossian* (Dochartaigh 156-157). For this project, Goethe used the Welsh scientist and humanist Edward Lhuyd's (1660-1709) study of comparative vocabulary in *Archaeologia Britannica* (Oxford, 1707) and Bishop John O'Brien's (1701-1767) posthumously published *Focaloir Gaoidhilge-Sax-Bhéarla or an Irish-English Dictionary* (1768) (Dochartaigh 158).

As an intertextual reference in *Werther*, the intertextual reference to Ossian is also extraordinary, not only because it is the only text Werther attempts to translate, but also because whole sections of the songs appear in the novel:

In den *Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774) werden die Gedichte des keltischen Barden – ungeachtet vieler anderer markierter und unmarkierter Referenzen – geradezu zum poetischen Subtext. Dies ist insofern interessant, als Goethes Faszination für *Ossian* zu diesem Zeitpunkt bereits rückläufig ist, was sich auch in der nicht unkritischen Kontextualisierung der Gedichte zeigt. (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 723)

In the *Sorrows of the Young Werther* (1774) the poetry of the Celtic bard virtually becomes the poetic subtext – many other marked and unmarked references go unnoticed. This is interesting to the extent that Goethe's fascination for Ossian at this time was already in decline, as exhibited in the not uncritical contextualization of the poetry.

Werther turns to Ossian late in the novel, after several failed attempts to establish himself, and this placement of the intertextual reference shows Goethe's disagreement with Ossian. Goethe's critical position toward Ossian in the novel completes his short lived active engagement with Ossian.

Werther does not directly report to Wilhelm on this last mention of Ossian. The editor narrates Werther's reading of it to Lotte. The editor's involvement alienates the reader, who already is intimately familiar with Werther's feelings. This distance foregrounds the reading experience. The fictional narrator has taken over Werther's role as the narrator of in the story after the 6 December 1772 letter in the 1787 version and after the 17 December 1772 letter in the 1774 version (193, 196). The narrator's involvement alters the reader's experience at Ossian's most important inclusion in the novel.

As a point of clarification in examining the two versions of Werther, the content concerning Ossian of some of these letters shifts between the two versions. The date of the letter from 8 December 1772 in the 1774 version is changed to 12 December 1772 in the 1787 version (194, 196, 213, 215). This letter recycles much of the natural imagery used to describe Ossian in Werther's 12 October 1772 letter. For example, the *Qual* ("agony") and *Mond* ("moon") create a similar *schauerlich* ("eerie") feeling in his discussion of longing for death (171, 173, 194, 196). Werther does not name Ossian directly in either letter. The 17 December 1772 letter from the 1774 version is backdated to 14 December 1772 in the 1787 version (196, 215). In this letter he talks about his fantasy of kissing Lotte. Ossian is not involved in this dream either time (196,

215).

Werther reads his translation of Ossian aloud to Lotte during their last meeting on 20 December 1772 (231). Laughlin suggests Lotte requests Ossian to ease the tension between the two during their meeting (531). The question must be raised, however, whether Lotte's request can be understood as innocent. Laughlin herself incorporates Patricia Meyer's ideas on the dark side of sensibility in her argument to show that the relationship between female victimization and sensibility does not pertain to *Werther* (523). Goethe portrays Lotte as an actor in control in this scene and not as the victim of unwelcomed advances by Werther. Lotte is equally involved in selecting Ossian as is Werther. He chose to translate it, and Lotte selects it in this moment for him to read to her:

Haben Sie nichts zu lesen? sagte sie. Er hatte nichts. Da drin in meiner Schublade, fing sie an, liegt Ihre Übersetzung einiger Gesänge Ossians; ich habe sie noch nicht gelesen, denn ich hoffte immer, sie von Ihnen zu hören; aber seither hat sichs nicht finden, nicht machen wollen. Er lächelte, hohlte die Lieder, ein Schauer überfiel ihn als er sie in die Hände nahm und die Augen standen ihm voll Thränen als er hinein sah. Er setzte sich nieder und las. (231)

“Don't you have anything to read to me?” she asked. He had nothing. “In my drawer over there,” she began, “is your translation of some of the songs of Ossian. I have not yet read them because I always hoped you would read them to me. But lately there has never been any time or occasion.” He smiled and took out the songs; a shudder ran through him as he took them in his hands, and his eyes filled with tears as he looked at the written pages. He sat down again and read [...]. (Mayer 145)

This passage demonstrates Lotte's instrumental role in setting the intimate atmosphere that leads to their shared affection. She wants Werther to read to her and has waited for the right occasion, a night like this one, when they are alone. She is determined to maintain the intimate mood between them, and thus decides not to ask her maid to join her (231). She is also instrumental in maintaining the mood. More than half way through the reading, Werther takes a break, resting with Lotte and holding one of her hands. His tears electrify her and her body shudders from his

touch. As the organizer of this shared reading experience and in the security of her home, she has the power to withdraw at this moment, but she insists he continue (245).

Reading together, an activity which Lotte instigates, marks a new shared experience in their relationship. Werther has not reported in any of his letters until now about reading to Lotte, although he has read and told many stories to the children, such as reported in his letter from 12 August 1772 (103). He physically shudders at the task that awaits him and tears well during his reading (231). In *Werther* the word *Schauer* (“shudder”) is used to explain Werther’s reaction to touching his translation of Ossian: “...Schauer überfiel ihn” from the sentence: “Er lächelte, hohlte die Lieder, ein Schauer überfiel ihn als er sie in die Hände nahm und die Augen standen ihm voll Thränen als er hinein sah” (Goethe, *Werther* 231) (He smiled and took out the songs; a shudder ran through him as he took them in his hands, and his eyes filled with tears as he looked at the written pages) (Mayer 145). His shudder here is a response to picking up the page. Given Herder’s literary influence on Goethe, Herder’s interpretation of Ossian as *schauderhaft* helps to understand Goethe’s word choice of *Schauer*. Here the word is associated to something mysterious.

Karthus explains that the feeling was intentionally left ambivalent: “Und vielleicht erregt es auch deshalb Schauder, weil die Motive der miteinander redenden Menschen ungenannt bleiben: was unausgesprochen und namenlos bleibt, entzieht sich dem Zugriff einer Theorie, die es beherrschen könnte...” (And maybe it provoked a shudder because the motives remain unnamed by the people speaking with each other: what remains unsaid and without a name eludes the access of a theory, which could dominate it) (Karthus 153). The word *Schauer* is not exclusively used to explain Werther's reaction to the book. It also describes Lotte's reaction to Werther’s touch when he takes a break during the reading: “Die Lippen und Augen Werthers

glühten an Lottens Arme; ein Schauer überfiel sie; sie wollte sich entfernen und Schmerz und Antheil lagen betäubend wie Bley auf ihr” (245) (Werther’s lips and eyes burned on Lotte’s arm, and a shudder ran through her body. She wanted to escape, but grief and pity weighed upon her with leaden force) (Mayer 153). The use of the word *Schauer* here means to shudder: “Die übertragene Bedeutung 'Schauer' ist wohl von dem unverwandten Schauder (schaudern) beeinflußt” (The modified meaning 'Shudder' is probably influenced by the unrelated word shudder (to shudder)) (Kluge 795). The Grimms’ *Deutsches Wörterbuch* from 1893 also makes note of this definition of *Schauer* (“to shiver”), proving additional examples from literature (2324): “schauer, erschütterung des menschlichen körpers, schnell vorübergehende zitternde bewegung der haut, in folge von äuszern anlässen, besonders von kälte oder in folge von seelischen empfindungen” (to shudder, the vibration of a human body, quickly passing trembling movement of the skin, resulting from outside causes, especially from the cold as well as emotional sensations) (2324). These definitions indicate how the word *Schauer* was used to express the idea of *Schauder*, though the two words were etymologically unrelated. Goethe associated *Ossian* with a feeling of *Schauer*.

Lotte is not immediate in reacting to the physical stimulation from Werther’s nearness during the reading. She stays in character and is not spontaneous:

Ein Strom von Thränen, der aus Lottens Augen brach, und ihrem gepreßten Herzen Luft machte, hemmte Werthers Gesang. Er warf das Papier hin, faßte ihre Hand und weinte die bittersten Thränen. Lotte ruhte auf der andern und verbarg ihre Augen in’s Schnupftuch. Die Bewegung beyder war fürchterlich. Sie fühlten ihr eignes Elend in dem Schicksale der Edlen, fühlten es zusammen und ihre Thränen vereinigten sie. Die Lippen und Augen Werthers glühten an Lottens Arme; ein Schauer überfiel sie; sie wollte sich entfernen und Schmerz und Antheil lagen betäubend wie Bley auf ihr. Sie athmete sich zu erhohlen, und bath ihn schluchzend fortzufahren, bat mit der ganzen Stimme des Himmels! Werther zitterte, sein Herz wollte bersten, er hob das Blatt auf und las halbgebrochen. (245)

A flood of tears which rushed from Lotte's eyes, giving relief to her oppressed heart, interrupted Werther's reading. He threw down the paper, took her hand, and broke into bitter sobs. Lotte rested her head on her arm and covered her eyes with her handkerchief. Both were in a terrible emotional state. They felt their own misery in the fate of the noble Gaels, felt it together and their tears mingled. Werther's lips and eyes burned on Lotte's arm, and a shudder ran through her body. She wanted to escape, but grief and pity weighed upon her with leaden force. She took a deep breath in order to control herself and, sobbing, asked Werther, in a lovely voice, to continue. Werther trembled; he thought his heart would break, but he took up the paper and read, his voice shaking with emotion: [...]. (Mayer 153)

The reading of Ossian eventually creates in Lotte and Werther a similar emotional response, though Lotte's response is delayed (245). Lotte wants to escape, but grief and pity keep her there. Werther takes advantage of this moment to start kissing Lotte's body, as his lips rest on her arm.

The discussion of other authors did not lead them to this wholly passionate state. Werther becomes aware of Lotte's interest in reading on the night of the ball (43 45, 53). He realizes through her conversation with her close relative that she is selective in her reading choices and can distinguish between well written and trivial literature (43). She is also aware of bestsellers, such as Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* from 1766 and Klopstock's texts from the late 1740s and early 1750s. Lotte's mention of Klopstock on 16 June 1771 was another moment of understanding between the two, at least from Werther's perspective. Since Lotte's mention of Klopstock on the night of the ball, they had not shared a similarly intimate moment until reading Ossian together. The romance associated with the authors Klopstock and Ossian frames their meeting and parting.

After a pause, Werther stops reading from the seventh book of Ossian's "The Songs of Selma," and continues with the opening lines of "Berrathon." At the mention of the wanderer's return, he interrupts his reading for a second time to make a sexual advance toward Lotte (247).

From Werther's recounting of the moment, Lotte allows his advance, putting his hand on her breast, moving closer to him, cheek to cheek: "Ihre Sinnen verwirrten sich, sie drückte seine Hände, drückte sie wider ihre Brust, neigte sich mit einer wehmüthigen Bewegung zu ihm, und ihre glühenden Wangen berührten sich" (247) (A tumult rose in her; she took his hands, pressed them against her breast and, bending towards him with a mournful gesture, their glowing cheeks touched) (Mayer 154). After they kiss, she scolds him, looking to him with love as well as indignation. She insists that he leave, sending him another passionate glance, before turning away from him to leave him alone in the room (247). Ossian is no longer a topic after this physical interaction between Lotte and Werther. Ossian has served its purpose. Werther does not explicitly mention Ossian again in the novel.

Georg Jäger believes that the Ossian scene is symmetrical to the earlier Klopstock scene (23). Jäger's ideas are close to those of Meredith Lee's, as they both make a connection between Klopstock and Ossian (Jäger 23; Lee 173-174). He sees that the actual characters are living out a literary fantasy: "Der doppelte literarische Bezug wird in der Ossian-Szene noch greifbarer: Das Buch ist zum einen der Verführer, zum anderen sind die Handelnden selbst Figuren eines literarischen Verführungstopos, d.h. in zeitgenössischer kritischer Wendung: 'sie spielen einen Roman'" (The double literary reference becomes more concrete in the Ossian-scene: On the one hand, the book is the seducer and, on the other, the action of the characters themselves a literary topos of seduction. This means in the contemporary critical turn: 'they are acting out a novel') (23). In Jäger's view, Ossian's book has more control than the characters themselves. Lotte and Werther become powerless against Ossian's draw. Few books have such power, though. Jäger's reading suggests that Ossian's songs had a cult-like appeal, adding that Ossian's bards become a "komplexe Seelenlandschaft" ("complex spiritual landscape") (24).

Laughlin sees it differently. She interprets Werther's reading of Ossian as a way to express himself when he cannot otherwise articulate his feelings: "The long description of Ossian is therefore doubly inexpressible – to stand in for the feelings Werther's own language cannot convey" (530). Given Werther's choice of translating Ossian for Lotte and her choice to have him read it to her during a moment when they can be alone confirms Laughlin's thesis that Ossian speaks through Werther. Werther and Lotte are not powerless. During the break of reading, Lotte considers leaving but decides to stay. The fact that she remains underscores the characters' power over the text.

The Ossian text may not necessarily convey Werther's feelings, but it does function as a voice while Werther is busy reacting to Lotte's physical presence: "And yet, the presence of Ossian at this point in the novel does more than simply reflect the hero's situation. It takes over the language of the novel at a point when Werther can no longer speak for himself (more for reasons of propriety than anything else); it represents feelings that are the more powerful for being extremely delicate" (Laughlin 531). Werther's language and actions show that he is unconcerned with the acting proper throughout the novel. Being with Lotte in this moment even goes against propriety. She told him not to come over until Christmas Eve, but he is there anyway. Werther's existence speaks against Laughlin's description of him. And yet, Laughlin is keen in her observation of the Ossian text replacing Werther's voice in the novel.

Werther does not reflect on Ossian in this scene or at any other point in the novel. This powerful intertextual reference is presented without commentary, creating another layer of distance between the author and reader. The translation of Ossian usurps the language of the novel. Before Werther had been the primary speaker with brief interjections of the narrator. Now Macpherson's Ossian speaks. Lotte and Werther have invited a new foreign voice to

control the novel. Its aggressive presence goes without commentary.

Goethe does not explain the reference to Ossian until later in *Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1808-1831), in the third part, book thirteen. Immediately before this passage in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe writes about Shakespeare's text *Hamlet*, specifically how Hamlet's monologues remain ghost-like (633). Goethe uses the Hamlet reference as a framework for his discussion of *Ossian*, making a connection to Shakespeare as one of the models of the era of *Sturm und Drang*. He had wanted his readers to memorize, recite, and feel the melancholy of his protagonist Werther (633). To explain his decisions, he reverts back to the feelings and language associated with Ossian:

Damit aber ja allem diesem [hamletischen] Trübsinn nicht ein vollkommen passendes Lokal abgehe, so hatte uns *Ossian* bis ans letzte Thule gelockt, wo wir denn auf grauer, unendlicher Heide, unter vorstarrenden bemoosten Grabsteinen wandelnd, das durch einen schauerlichen Wind bewegte Gras um uns, und einen schwer bewölkten Himmel über uns erblickten. Bei Mondenschein ward dann erst diese caledonische Nacht zum Tage; untergegangene Helden, verblühte Mädchen umschwebten uns, bis wir zuletzt den Geist von Loda wirklich in seiner furchtbaren Gestalt zu erblicken glaubten.
(*Dichtung* 633)

In order, as it were, to supply this pervading gloom with a thoroughly suitable location, Ossian lured us off to Ultima Thule, where we roamed about on the infinite gray heath amidst protruding mossy gravestones, looking around us at the grass blown by a chill wind, and above us at the heavily clouded sky. Only by moonlight did this Caledonian night really become day: perished heroes and vanished maidens hovered about us, and we actually began to believe that we had seen the ghost of Loda in its feared form.
(*Poetry* 428)

In this passage Goethe uses the word *gelockt* to emphasize the allure of including Ossian in *Werther*. Instead of seeking originality through a new language, Goethe imitates Ossian at the climax of his book. This decision follows the path he has been pursuing with Ossian since the early 1770s.

In the paragraph immediately following his mention of Ossian, Goethe emphasizes his

association between nature and Ossian. It expresses support for the perspective that humans have the freedom to choose death when life does not work to their favor:

In einem solchen Element, bei solcher Umgebung, bei Liebhabereien und Studien dieser Art, von unbefriedigten Leidenschaften gepeinigt, von außen zu bedeutenden Handlungen keineswegs angeregt, in der einzigen Aussicht, uns in einem schleppenden, geistlosen, bürgerlichen Leben hinhalten zu müssen, befreundete man sich, in unmutigem Übermut, mit dem Gedanken, das Leben, wenn es einem nicht mehr anstehe, nach eignen Belieben allenfalls verlassen zu können, und half sich damit über die Unbilden und Langeweile der Tage notdürftig genug hin. Diese Gesinnung war so allgemein, daß eben Werther deswegen die große Wirkung tat, weil er überall anschluss und das Innere eines kranken jugendlichen Wahns öffentlich und faßlich darstellte. Wie genau die Engländer mit diesem Jammer bekannt waren, beweisen die wenigen bedeutenden, vor dem Erscheinen Werthers geschriebenen Zeilen:

To griefs congenial prone,
More wounds than nature gave he knew,
While misery's form his fancy drew
In dark ideal hues and horrors not it own. (*Dichtung* 634)

It was in this element and environment and while given to this sort of favorite pursuit and study that we, who were tormented by unfulfilled desires and bereft of any external stimulus to significant actions, who had no other prospects than that of being struck in a tedious, spiritless civil routine, embraced the thought, in something like an exhilaration of depression, that we could abandon life at will, if it no longer pleased us; and thus we had at least a scanty defense against the injustice and boredom of those days. These sentiments were universal enough to give *Werther* its great effectiveness, for the book went to the heart of the matter and gave an open, comprehensible portrayal of the innermost workings of a morbid youthful folly. How very familiar the English were with this misery is proved by the following notable lines written before the appearance of *Werther*...

(*Poetry* 428)

In the above passage, Goethe acknowledges that *Werther's* success relied on the character's ability to mirror and articulate this general feeling of the populace. Readership wanted the ability to act on one's feelings. This passage also explains why Werther commits suicide, and his suicide is explained as a solution to his sickness. Werther's suicide is very clearly related to Ossian, because Goethe mentions Werther's sickness at the end of the passage in which he talks about the reason for placing Ossian in *Werther*. Additionally, the next paragraph explores how

suicide has been used in the literature of Montesquieu (634). Furthermore, Ossian plays a role when Werther is sick, not during his calm period at the beginning of the novel.

Goethe quotes a section of English poet Thomas Warton's (1728-1790) ode, "The Suicide." According to Laughlin, the message of Warton's entire poem centers on the disadvantages of suicide, and Warton's position on suicide is clearer when reading his entire ode (529, 536, 537). Goethe thus cites Warton out of context. Within the framework of Laughlin's discussion, Goethe's re-articulating of Werther's sickness within this context shows it to be representative of the times.

Goethe also discusses the results of Werther's sickness, addressing suicide as a natural event: "Der Selbstmord ist ein Ereignis der menschlichen Natur, welches, mag auch darüber schon so viel gesprochen und gehandelt sein als da will, doch einen jeden Menschen zur Teilnahme fordert, in jeder Zeitepoche wieder einmal verhandelt werden muß" (Suicide is a natural human occurrence, which may have also already been so widely discussed and dealt with as one will, nevertheless challenges every person to empathize, something that in each epoch must be reexamined) (*Dichtung* 634). Goethe sees suicide not as a new topic but one that has must be discussed and reconsidered in each era in a new way.

Social changes resulted from the discussions of suicide in the eighteenth century. Institutions were created for the mentally ill, as mental illness was then perceived as a result of *non compos mentis* ("not in his or her right mind"), and more respectable forms of burial were permitted for people who had committed suicide: "The old practices of desecrating the corpses of suicides went out of use" (Maris 119). Goethe's raising the issue, through Ossian and more directly through Werther's suicide, places *Werther* as a literary document among a historical canon of Western works that address the topic of suicide. *Werther's* message also reached the

public as a *Volksbuch* (“chapbook”) in 1806 (Jäger 229). Thus, Goethe did raise the question of suicide not only in belles lettres, but also variations of *Werther* posed the question to the common public.

The right to take one’s life was a pan-European discussion. The Dutch publicist Jacob Weyermann (1677-1747) argued in a weekly magazine for the individual’s right to end one’s life through the story of a young merchant in Bristol who killed himself after suffering from melancholy (Maris 119). A debate was staged following the man’s suicide: “For Weyerman as a representative of 18th-century common sense, putting an end to one’s life is an act of courage (i.e., a moral virtue)” (119). Weyerman along with others questioned the Church’s position on suicide (119).

Writers' involvement in this discussion was perceived by the Church as a debunking of its authority, as seen through the Church's response to Goethe’s *Werther* (Maris 119). The Kurfürstlich-Sächsische (Elector of Saxony’s) Book Commission banned Goethe’s novel on 30 January 1775 in response to the demands of Leipziger’s Theological School to do so (Kiermeir-Debre 153). The action demonstrates how Goethe’s *Werther* was perceived as advocating the right to take one’s life (Maris 119).

Goethe wisely took advantage of the Ossian craze to promote himself, his professional network, and his book *Werther*. Though Goethe also remained silent concerning Macpherson's fraud, he was explicit in explaining his negative contextualization of Ossian in *Werther*. At the same time, Goethe maintained a varying degree of respect for Macpherson’s Ossian after the news of Macpherson's fraud was made public.

Goethe's two reflections on Ossian from *Dichtung und Wahrheit* addresses Ossian’s heroes as well as nature. In the third part, twelfth book, Goethe also associates Ossian with

nature, darkness, and ice. His attitude here represents a change from other mentions of Ossian. There is a serenity about the description of Ossian's name as an adjective used to describe the nocturnal ice skating scene. The mention of Ossian does not evoke an eerie feeling, but one of calm solitude (*Dichtung* 569). In the thirteenth book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* he discusses Ossian within the context of impressions that mythological gods made on him:

Götter ließ ich überhaupt nicht viel auftreten, weil sie mir noch außerhalb der Natur, die ich nachzubilden verstand, ihren Wohnsitz hatten. Was hätte mich nun gar bewegen sollen, *Wodan* für *Jupiter*, und *Thor* für *Mars* zu setzen, und statt der südlichen genau umschriebenen Figuren, Nebelbilder, ja bloß Wortklänge in meine Dichtungen einzuführen? Von einer Seite schlossen sie sich vielmehr an die Ossianschen gleichfalls formlosen Helden, nur derber und riesenhafter an, von der andern lenkte ich sie nach dem heiterern Märchen hin: denn der humoristische Zug, der durch die ganze nordische Mythe durchgeht, war mir höchst lieb und bemerkenswert. Sie schien mir die einzige, welche durchaus mit sich selbst scherzt, einer wunderlichen Dynastie von Göttern abenteuerliche Riesen, Zauberer und Ungeheuer entgegengesetzt, die nur beschäftigt sind, die höchsten Personen während ihres Regiments zu irren, zum Besten zu haben, und hinterdrein mit einem schmachvollen, unvermeidlichen Untergang zu bedrohen. (584)

I was generally reluctant to use gods, because I still felt they were domiciled outside of nature, which was what I knew how to imitate. What, then, should have moved me to replace Jupiter with Odin, and Mars with Thor, and to introduce such misty images, really nothing more than verbal music, into my poems instead of those precisely circumscribed figures from the south? In one respect they were quite close to the equally formless Ossianic heroes, only more robust and gigantic; in another, I associated them with fairytales of the cheerful kind, for there was a humorous strain through all of Nordic myth that I liked extremely well and considered noteworthy. It was the only myth I knew that refused to take itself seriously and let its curious dynasty of gods be opposed by fantastic giants, sorcerers, and monsters whose sole purpose is to thwart the governance of these supreme personages, to trick them, and to threaten them at last with an ignominious, inevitable downfall. (*Poetry* 396-397)

In this passage of the third part, thirteenth book, Goethe discusses a spectrum of mythological literary characters from the Greek and Roman gods to heroes from Ossian. In this context he speaks highly of giants, witches, and monsters in fairy tales and myths, drawing a distinction between Ossian's and the classical mythological gods. In his earlier references to Ossian he had

placed him alongside other masters and focused on creating a mystical mood through the stories of lamenting characters. Here Goethe compares Ossian's heroes to humorous fairy tale figures. Goethe had respect and a lifelong engagement with fairy tales. (See section of last chapter on fairy tales). His comparison of them to Ossian here demonstrates that he still thought highly of Ossian's songs, while realizing that they were based in fantasy.

Later in life, Goethe had also explained his intentions of including Ossian to English diarist Henry Crabb Robinson (1775-1867). Over 50 years after publishing *Werther*, Goethe discussed Ossian in their conversation on 2 August 1829, when Robinson visited Goethe in Weimar, accompanied by the German historian Johannes Voigt (1786-1863). The context for the mention of Ossian was a discussion of British poetry, which they had started earlier that day. Ossian comes up after a discussion on the connection between the British poetry by Lord Byron and Burns and the German character. The importance of nature in German poetry is then reinforced, before the discussion shifts to Ossian:

This evening I gave Goethe an account of de Lamennais, and quoted from him a passage importing that all truth comes from God, and is made known to us by the Church. He held at the moment a flower in his hand, and a beautiful butterfly was in the room. He exclaimed: "No doubt all truth comes from God; but the Church! There's the point. God speaks to us through this flower and that butterfly; and that's a language these *Spitzbuben* don't understand." -- Something led him to speak of Ossian with contempt. I remarked: "The taste for Ossian is to be ascribed to you in a great measure. It was Werther that set the fashion." He smiled and said: "That's partly true; but it was never perceived by the critics that Werther praised Homer while he retained his senses, and Ossian when he was going mad. But reviewers do not notice such things." I reminded Goethe that Napoleon loved Ossian. "It was the contrast with his own nature," Goethe replied. "He loved soft and melancholy music. 'Werther' was among his books at St. Helena." (105)

Goethe implies that Werther's reading of Ossian reflects his deteriorating state of mind as well as affects his well being. This nuanced explanation shows that not only did Werther read Ossian when he was ill but that it made his condition worse.

Goethe's comment also reflects the status of medical practices in the eighteenth century, when literature as well as music were seen as viable healing methods. Just as in the prescription of medical drugs today, in that period, the correct dosage of music and literature was deemed as vital for recovery: "Dichtung und Musik werden von der psychotherapeutischen Praxis des 18. Jahrhunderts zwar als überaus wirksam Heilmittel geschätzt, bei falscher Auswahl oder ungeschickter Dosierung drohen sie jedoch zu abträglichen Ergebnissen zu führen und die Melancholie in erheblichem Maße zu verschärfen" (Poetry and music were valued by the psycho-therapeutic practice in the eighteenth century as an effective remedy, yet a wrong selection or uncertain dosage of them threaten to lead to detrimental effects and an exacerbation of melancholy to a considerable extent) (Valk 19). Valk furthermore discusses how these negative effects from music and poetry are expressed in *Werther* through the protagonist's choice of reading: "Solange sich Werther an Homer halt, erfüllt die Dichtung ihre therapeutische Funktion. In dem Augenblick aber, da er seine Begeisterung für Ossian entdenkt, entfesselt sie ihre unterminierenden Kräfte" (As long as Werther continues to read Homer, poetry fulfills its therapeutic function. But the moment when he discovers his enthusiasm for Ossian, it unleashes its undermining energy) (19). Valk's reading helps us to better understand Goethe's comments to Voigt and Robinson, in which a mature Goethe explicitly explains his motivation for the change from Homer to Ossian. Other scholarly explanations for Werther's change in preference refer to the embarrassment caused by Ossian's falsehood (Gaskill, *Hand* 217). That explanation does not account for why Ossian *is* so negatively positioned in the text.

Goethe states that he knew how *he* was the one who started the trend to read Ossian. His own understanding has also been supported in scholarship: "Trotz eines Klopstock, Denis und Herder erweist sich Goethe als *der* wesentliche Popularisator *Ossians* innerhalb der deutschen

Rezeption” (Despite Klopstock, Denis and Herder Goethe proves himself to be *the* essential one who popularized Ossian in the German reception) (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 723). Schmidt’s interpretation of Goethe’s *Werther* as a key source for popularizing Ossian in Germany is furthermore readily backed up by the sheer numbers of the novel’s sales. *Werther*’s widespread success and sale has been estimated as 10,000 copies within the first five years of its 1774 release (Henn 276). *Werther* helped to widely popularize Ossian.

The masses misunderstood the novel *Werther*, as readers of both *Erbauungsliteratur* (“edifying literature”) as well as *Trivallliteratur* (“popular (trash) fiction, such as dime novels”) were drawn to *Werther*, given its characteristics of both genres (Jäger 223-224). Lee also notes how *Werther* “did not find the critical audience it sought to create” (184). Not only did they misunderstand the text at large, they also misunderstood the meaning of Ossian. Goethe’s intentions only become clear in tracing his engagement with Ossian elsewhere.

In *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* Ossian plays a different role in form and function than the canonical writers that *Werther* mentions. Initially influenced by Herder’s pro-British attitude, Goethe presents a variation of this attitude concerning Ossian in the novel. On the one hand, Ossian earns a very prominent position through the translations of his texts in *Werther*. On the other hand, Ossian’s placement in the novel reflects Goethe’s criticism of the text. Ossian functions in the novel as a clear signal of *Werther*’s increasingly fragile psyche. This criticism might be interpreted as Goethe’s process of achieving originality. By translating Ossian, Goethe became immensely familiar with the text, and through his inclusion of it in *Werther*, he was able to advance the plot of the novel. While *Werther* is one of the main examples of *Weltliteratur*, a concept that Goethe discussed later in life, Ossian no longer fits into the same category. Despite the current resurgence of Ossian within academic circles, the twenty-first century reader has long

forgotten the influence of Ossian once had in eighteenth-century Germany.

CHAPTER 5: GENDERED EXPECTATIONS.

I. INTRODUCTION AND GENRE

Ellis Dye states that Goethe's greatness stems in part from his creation of a nineteenth-century German philosophy to assimilate and re-articulate cultural heritage (11). Goethe's activity in this area started with his earliest works in the second half of the eighteenth century, however. *Werther* is one example of his engagement with and reworking of cultural inheritance. In *Werther*, the young Goethe's intertextual references to specific authors and literary texts demonstrates his selectiveness in the development of a new literary canon. Raymond Prier suggests that the tales told in *Werther* are a reason for its success as it bonds the audience to the author (285): "His [Goethe's] juxtaposition of imploding and cultivating worlds create narrative conflicts within the novel that continually cry in vain for resolution" (296). Goethe's decisions concerning which heritage to emphasize suggested a direction for readers. Not everyone could take part in this debate.

Women were seen as unworthy contributors due to their gender. As women, they were seen, for example, to have problems mastering the rules that well written texts required. The excuse that women had not been schooled in many classical ideas that shape our Western canon was not considered as a viable explanation for their presumed lack of ability. For this reason, there was a perception that women readers of *Werther* would have likely missed the nuances of the intertextual references in the novel.

In the eighteenth century, women were often identified as needing a different type of schooling that would better prepare them to manage the house, despite the fact that a general mandatory school requirement began in the eighteenth century (Steinbrügge 18; Becker-

Cantarino 410). Women were not normally judged on their ability to persevere in their studies. Women's natural place was considered to be the home (Fronius 61). In 1771 public schools did not exist for women. Daughters of wealthy families attended convent and private schools, while other women attended religious instruction to memorize the catechism and learn devotional songs. Sometimes reading and writing were taught (Becker-Cantarino 409). The emphasis in women's education was placed on domestic skills.

Correspondence also shows that women's lack of schooling made women intellectually dependent on men, who were distinctly varied in their support and treatment of female educational advancement. As letters from Goethe show, formally educated male friends and family could help women with their writing. This dependence subsided gradually as more schools were open for girls in the nineteenth century. During the period of sentimentality, German women writers were treated with disrespect and often ignored (Fronius 60). The women who were active on the literary scene were seen as curiosities, since writing was not included in the construct of femininity (53). Women literary pioneers, such as Sophie von La Roche, set examples for future generations.

The references in *Werther* demonstrate that certain texts that were written by men were privileged over women's. Furthermore educated women in the novel are either censured when they present their ideas or portrayed as extremely unlikable characters, for example. This chapter examines several lesser-researched intertextual references in *Werther* to show how they could be understood within their context in the book, what Goethe wrote concerning them elsewhere, and how and which references are presented. Goethe's choices on how and which cultural inheritance to present contributed to the construct of female and male ideals.

Considering Goethe's choice of genre first, the novel itself had been associated with

women and sentimentality (Goodman x). In the eighteenth century the novel was viewed as a lesser genre by the educated public. Literary readership did not know how to measure the genre's quality, since it did not follow the standards set by classical literature (Skinner 4). It was not a canonized form, which led writers to use criteria from dramatic theory for its conceptualization (Moravetz 2, 3). A number of critics tried to discourage the expansion of the novel's readership, since it was feared that the novel would ruin the demand for classical literature (Wolfgang 1). The presumed truth of both the *histoire* and the epistolary novel was a highly popular dimension of the novel. The genre as well as the language of the novel in the vernacular helped make the novel accessible to a broader public (Skinner 21, 22, 29). The genre became synonymous with sentimentality, the supposedly imperfect style of the epistolary novel added to the authenticity of the document, and its narrative technique was very inviting to readers (Moravetz 3, 4, 5).

This choice of genre is intriguing, given its role in educating women. The epistolary novel form helped women learn how to write and read letters (Goodman x). Goethe's own correspondence attests to women learning to write from reading epistolary novels. In a letter from 7 December 1765 he states that he knows that his sister Cornelia reads epistolary novels to improve her writing, before suggesting a another exercise to help her become a better writer:

Allein ich muß dich auch lesen lernen. Nichtwahr das kommt dir wunderlich für, daß ich so rede. Ich kenne dich ich weiß wie und warum du liesest. Siehe so must du es machen. Nimm ein Stück nach dem andern, in der Reihe, ließ es aufmercksam durch, und wenn es dir auch nicht gefällt. Ließ es doch. Du must die Gewalt antuhn. |: Ich sage es noch einmal: wenn du haben willst daß ich für dich sorgen soll; so must du mir folgen, und nicht nur Vergnügen beym Lesen suchen.:| Wenn du es gelesen hast; so mach das Buch zu, und stelle Betrachtungen darüber an. Im Anfange wird es dir schwer fallen, aber bald wird es leichter gehen, wie mit dem Schreiben. Fange damit an aber balde. Schreibe wie er dir gefällt, deine Gedancken über einzelne Stücke. Manchmahl werde ich Stücke aussuchen, und dein Urtheil darüber erforschen. Dieses ist besser und dir nützlicher als wenn du 20 Romanen gelesen hättest. Diese verbiete ich dir hiermit völlig,

den einzigen Grandison ausgenommen den du noch etlichemahl lesen kannst, aber nicht obenhin, sondern bedächtig. (Goethe Briefe 1764-1775 29)

Exclusively I must teach you to read. Isn't it so? You are surprised that I talk to you like this. I know you, know how and why you read. See this is the way to do it. Take one book after another in a row, read it attentively all the way through, even if you don't like it. Read it. You must force [yourself]. I will tell you again: if you want me to look after you, then you need to obey me, and not only seek pleasure in reading. When you are finished reading, close the book, and make observations about it. In the beginning it will be difficult, but soon it will become easier, similar to writing. Start now and do it immediately. Write how you like the book, your thoughts about individual pieces. Sometimes I will pick out a text and then investigate your opinion. This is better and more useful to you than when you have read twenty novels. I completely forbid you to read novels with the exception of the single Grandison novel, which you can still read several times, but not superficially, instead thoughtfully.

Goethe forbids her to read epistolary novels with the exception of Samuel Richardson's third epistolary novel *History of Sir Charles Grandison* (1753). He was likely not referring to the German author Johann Karl Musäus's (1735-1787) three-volume epistolary parody, titled *Grandison der zweite, oder die Geschichte des Herrn von N**** (1760-1762), since Musäus was critical of the genre. In contrast, Richardson had set the standard for the genre with his *Pamela*.

The example of Goethe's sister Cornelia shows how women may have been dependent on men for their intellectual development. Some educated women were autodidacts, such as La Roche, who followed her literary interests (Becker-Cantarino 383). Goethe's letter to J. D. Salzmann on 12 June, likely from 1771, speaks of the lack of women's incorrect use of grammar, indirectly attributing their mistakes to their nature instead of their lack of formal training: “Es ist schwer gute Perioden, und Punckte zu seiner Zeit zu machen, die Mädgen machen weder Komma noch Puncktum, und es ist kein Wunder wenn ich Mädgen Nature annehme” (It is difficult to make good periods and points in one's time, the girls do use neither commas nor periods, and it is no wonder if I adopt girls' nature) (Goethe Briefe 1764-1775 230). Goethe's above remark follows his observations on his own writing. He continues his letter with a

description of how he is learning Greek on his own in order to read Homer. Goethe's promotes a gender hierarchy through his order of ideas: first, by first addressing that women in general cannot master grammar because of their nature, and then following with an implied message of what men are capable of through his personalized example of his ability to teach himself Greek. He does not specify which age group the *Mädgen* are, but at the time of this letter he is still a young man. At the age of 22, Goethe is more likely referring to young women his own age. At the time his usage of *Mädgen* for young women was not necessarily pejorative, however. For example, in *Werther*, Lotte is described as a *Mädchen*, the first time Werther sees her, even though she is a young woman (41).

Without formal training, women writers wrote in the language that they naturally knew. Their literary speech mirrored conventionally promoted speech patterns, which in turn, made their works widely accessible (Wolfgang 5,6). Their texts were reportedly not without flaws, which was deemed an authentic element to be emulated. Women's lack of formal training was regarded as positive trait for letter writing. Their speech was perceived as being more natural and even well suited for the epistolary form for this reason: „A woman's 'way of writing' became a new aesthetic ideal, imitated by men and women of all educated classes throughout the next century“ (13). To capture the natural language, or in other words, imitate women's letter style, men discussed examples and learned about their style (Runge 14).

The university was one male venue for learning about the etiquette of letter writing. Gellert taught stylistics at the university in Leipzig, starting in 1751 as Professor for *Poesie, Beredsamkeit und Moral* (“Poetry, Eloquence, and Morals”). He also published *Briefe, nebst einer praktischen Abhandlung von dem guten Geschmacke in Briefen* (1751) that provided examples on how to write letters. These examples set norms which Goethe would have learned

in Gellert's seminars, which he attended when he was a student there (Große, Kommentar 582).

Adopting the feminine voice was seen as a financially wise decision by a male writer in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Irish author Goldsmith (1728-1774) for example is said to have adopted a feminine voice to make his writing more lucrative (Wolfgang 5). By impersonating women's voices men experienced distance in the authorial voice that made their texts well written. Women were not seen as accomplishing the same level of quality in their writing, even though they wrote letters: "In the seventeenth century, when the love letter was first theorized and defined as feminine, women might write love letters and novels but would not combine the two" (Jensen 127). The letter was not considered literary and therefore acceptable to be classified as a woman's (xii). In spite of the association of women with letter writing, women had little control over their texts. Women's love letters became marketable wares and were passed around and sold for publication (9-10). In some countries at the end of the eighteenth century, such as in France, women were also not allowed to publish without their husbands' consent and their husbands then became legally responsible for their wife's works (Jensen 158). Women's legal limitations did not prevent their fictional stories from being told. Even when women themselves were welcomed in the literary field, men handled it for them through impersonating women's voices.

Before *Werther*, the best known European epistolary novels were female impersonations written by male authors, as seen in Rousseau's *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) and Samuel Richardson's (1689-1761) *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded* (1740) and *Clarrisa* (1748). Richardson's *Pamela* marks the beginning of the genre of sentimental novels (Steinbrügge 93). Richardson later did write a male epistolary novel, but it has not received the long lasting recognition achieved by his earlier ones with female protagonists. Recalling the advice Goethe

gave to his sister, Richardson's *Grandison* novel about the male protagonist is the only epistolary novel that Goethe allows his sister to read. Furthermore, Rousseau's Wolmar of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) had feminine traits much as did the protagonist in *Émile, ou De l'éducation* (1762) (Steinbrügge 77).

Rousseau did not believe that women could express passion perfectly (Jensen xiv). Though they had strong sentimental feelings, they supposedly lacked reason. Such generalizations were not exclusive to leading French writers. For example, Goethe explains that his sister's faults are due to her gender in a letter written between the 12 - 14 October 1767: "Du hast zwar feine Empfindungen, wie jedes Frauenzimmer das dir ähnlich ist, aber sie sind zu leicht gefühlt und zu wenig überlegt" (Although you have delicate sentiments as every young woman like yourself, your perceptions are too easily felt and too little considered) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 89). In this literary climate men became the authorities of the feminine voice owing to legal and social norms that male writers continued to promote.

Goethe's *Werther* marks the transformation of the genre in more ways than one. Goethe transformed the voice of the novel for men. Werther writes his letters primarily to another male friend about his feelings for a woman. Scholars, such as Alice Kuzniar and Susan Gustafson, have questioned Werther's maleness (Gustafson 173, 186). Even though Werther's preferred genre for expression consists of diary entries and letters, which were seen as feminine, Goethe gives men a male voice through his novel *Werther*. This masculine voice is fueled by passionate emotion that erupts in violence. *Werther* differed from a female author narrating the female voice, such as in French writer Marie Jeanne Riccoboni's epistolary novels, whose protagonists' problems are resolved in a more peaceful method than death.

Male writers were acknowledged as great artists when they wrote the story of a typical

heroine, who was seduced and left to suffer. When women writers wrote a similar story, they were seen as autobiographers (Wolfgang 4). A different tendency emerges in the reception of Goethe's *Werther*. Much of the initial reception of Goethe's *Werther* focused on the biographical similarities between Goethe and Werther. For example, Lavater wrote in his diary on 24 June 1774: "Goethe las mir nach dem Nachtessen aus „Werthers Leiden“, eine Sentimental-Geschichte in Briefen, vor. - O Szenen – voll, voll wahrer, wahrester Menschennatur – ein unbeschreiblich naives, wahres Ding!..." (Goethe read to me after dinner from *Werther's Sorrows*, a sentimental story in letters – Oh scenes – full, full of true, the truest human nature – an indescribable naïve, true thing...) (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 59). Despite Goethe's well-documented semi-autobiographical sources, his novel was equally perceived as a great work of art.

Goethe's novel *Werther* incorporates a variation of sentimentalism with *Sturm und Drang* characteristics (Willim 62). Noted for his unsystematic openness to a variety of configurations and arrangements, Goethe prefers the *Kraftkerl* in his early *Sturm und Drang* dramas (Dye 13-14). Francis Lamport suggests this is an untranslatable term that members of the movement applied to themselves and their literary heroes (126). Götz von Berlichingen would be an example of this *Kraftkerl*, whose story proposes that the government serves free individuals and that a person comes to a deeper meaning in life by breaking bonds of society (Dye 18).

Another notable characteristic of Goethe's novel is the absence of Wilhelm's responses, which leads Dye to interpret Goethe's epistolary style as revolutionary. Its form allows Werther's point of view to stand without correction (Dye 83). In addition to the lack of exchange that normally accompanies letter writing, Schiffman also points out the length of Werther's letters (422, 435). An epistolary novel with one-way correspondence had already been used by

Riccoboni, however.

Werther's revolutionary spirit has also been attributed in part to Goethe's revolt against the perceived threat of women writers and as an attack on effeminate French culture: “The Sturm und Drang, I would argue can be seen as a pronounced attempt by younger writers – remember that it was the first youth movement in German literature – to establish their dominance against a movement that they increasingly associated with femininity or, at least, with a lack of virility” (Wilson 780). In French literature prior to the 1770s men and women were creating an idealized female voice through stylistics, intertextual references, imitation, and parody in the novel (Wolfgang 2). Rousseau's style is seen as an example in which men have feminine virtues, although capturing the feminine aspects were not limited to the French; Richardson also demonstrated skill in imitating female narratives (Steinbrügge 93; Jensen 159). The novel *Werther* arguably claims the genre for the male voice both by having the story told by a man and by suppressing information concerning women's reading and the de-emphasis on womanhood. *Werther* is a male version of the epistolary novel.

II. THE EDUCATIONAL DIVIDE

An early discussion within the first month of Werther's letters marks a gender divide in knowledge. In Werther's letter from 17 May 1771, men are portrayed as being knowledgeable about Hellenism. A young, confident man, V strikes up a conversation with Werther on Greek antiquity: “Eighteenth-century gentlemen, at least, might have had similar reservations about reading anything as trivial as a novel rather than a more mentally exacting philosophical treatise, or culturally significant essay in natural history” (Skinner 29). The young V. does not try to make an impression by talking about Klopstock's poetry or the latest epistolary novel, instead he

wants to discuss the current scholarship in classical studies. The young V. speaks of contemporary Greek scholars: Wood, Piles, Winckelmann, Batteux, Sulzer, and Heyne:

Vor wenig Tagen traf ich einen jungen V... an, einen offenen Jungen mit einer gar glücklichen Gesichtsbildung. Er kommt erst von Akademien, dünkt sich eben nicht weise, aber glaubt doch, er wisse mehr als andere. Auch war er fleißig, wie ich an Allerley spüre, kurz er hat hübsche Kenntnisse. Da er hörte, daß ich viel zeichnete und griechisch könnte, (zwei Meteore hier zu Lande), wandte er sich an mich und kramte viel Wissens aus, von *Batteux* bis zu *Wood*, von *de Piles* zu *Win[c]kelmann*, und versicherte mich, er habe *Sulzers* Theorie, den ersten Theil, ganz durchgelesen und besitze ein Manuscript von Heynen über das Studium der Antike. Ich ließ das gut sein.

(Goethe, *Werther* 21)

A few days ago I met a young man by the name of V., an open-hearted youth with pleasant features. He has just left the university and does not consider himself a sage but thinks, nevertheless, that he knows more than other people. He was also industrious, as I can tell from many indications; in short, he has a pretty store of knowledge. As he has heard that I sketch a good deal and know Greek (two unusual phenomena in these parts), he came to see me and displayed all sorts of learning, from Batteux to Wood, from De Piles to Winckelmann, assuring me that he had read the whole first part of Sulzer's "Theory," and that he possessed a manuscript of Heyne's on the study of antiquity. I let that pass.

(Mayer 10)

This passage depicts the knowledge base of eighteenth-century university educated men.

Classical texts played an important role in a university education, as Goethe describes in a philosophical letter to Hetzler the Younger – probably from 14 July 1770 – concerning his studies in Strasbourg: “Literarische Kenntnisse erwerben sich durch Zeit und Fleis, und wegen beyder muss ein Jüngling einem Manne nachstehen“ (Literary knowledge can be attained through time and hard work, and because of both a young man is inferior to a man) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 212). This passage depicts Goethe's reaction to reading the classics on his own after having been disappointed with Müller's teaching style in his introduction course on the classical poets during Goethe's earlier studies in Leipzig. Here Goethe identifies not only classical texts but also the act of working with literature as gendered male. He suggests that literary development is part of a young man's development into a man, which further implies that

education was different for men and women.

In the novel, the young man V was drawn to Werther by the common knowledge they shared, but Werther was not interested in demonstrating this side of himself. Werther adamantly declines to take part in the conversation. However, Sture Packalén interprets the passage as evidence for Homer's role in orchestrating a *Miterlebnis* ("shared experience"), since knowledge of Homer binds educated people (190). The passage in the novel shows that Werther's study of Homer is anything but a common experience, though. First, knowledge of Homer could only be shared in this period among educated men who read ancient Greek. Women, and many uneducated men, would have been excluded from this mix. Furthermore, this moment is not harmonious, despite the common education possessed by Werther and the young V. The passage points to discord. Werther may be capable of carrying out a conversation concerning scholarship on antiquity, but he rejects it, ending the conversation shortly after it has started. From his description of the young man's features and disposition, Werther seems to like him, showing that Werther's reasons for his indifference in the conversation lie elsewhere.

One reason for Werther's rejection of the conversation might be found in Goethe's own response to Sulzer's theory that the young man mentions. Johann Georg Sulzer (1720-1779) was a Swiss philosopher and aesthetic critic, who saw art as a means to promote morals and virtue during the Enlightenment. Sulzer's aesthetic theory, *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste* (1771-1774), was part of a two-volume work, containing over 900 articles on the aesthetics of art, literature, music, dance, architecture, and rhetoric. The volumes categorize high and low forms of artist expression. Goethe was critical of Sulzer's study, since it was not comprehensive in its explanation (128-129). Goethe's literary review of Sulzer's study, "Die schönen Künste in ihrem Ursprung, ihrer wahren Natur und besten Anwendung" (1772), in the *Frankfurter*

Gelehrte Anzeigen is said to have signaled the end of the Enlightenment aesthetic (Wohlleben 67). Goethe disagreed with Sulzer's description of nature as well as with the part of Sulzer's theory in which he discusses his intention to transfer nature to art (129-130): "Und die Kunst ist gerade das Widerspiel; sie entspringt aus den Bemühungen des Individuums, sich gegen die zerstörende Kraft des Ganzen zu erhalten" (And the art is exactly the opposite; it arises from the efforts of the individual to protect itself against the destructive force of the whole) (130). Goethe explains that man tampers with nature when he captures it as art and displays it in a castle behind glass walls to enjoy (130-131). Goethe focused on the individual artist's relationship with art and promoted a similar aesthetic in *Von deutscher Baukunst* (Conrady 164, 168). He believed that art should adapt to nature instead.

Besides Sulzer, the young man also mentions several other names, including Winckelmann. Winckelmann worked on Greek art, significantly contributing to the development of eighteenth-century aesthetics, specifically through his discussion of *The Laokoon Group*. He published *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke (Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture)* (1755) and *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums (History of Ancient Art)* (1764) (Wiethölter, Kommentar 963). Although Goethe did not read Winckelmann's *History of Ancient Art* until 6 January 1787, he credits Winckelmann with having a significant meaning in his youth (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1786-1794* 209-210). If Werther's rejection of the conversation about Sulzer is in any way linked to Goethe's own feelings, then Werther's rejection of talking about Winckelmann must stem from something else.

Goethe's teacher in Leipzig, Oeser, who exerted significant influence on the development of Goethe's ideas in the *Laokoon* debate, agreed with the ideas of his friend Winckelmann concerning *Laokoon* (Albrecht 163). Goethe saw Winckelmann as a source of inspiration for

him and his colleagues. In a conversation between Eckermann and Goethe on 16 February 1827, Eckermann said that he did not always find Winckelmann clear in his writing about objects. Goethe acknowledged Eckermann's perspective but added: “Man *lernt* nichts, wenn man ihn lieset, aber man *wird* etwas” (One does not learn from reading him, but one becomes something) (Eckermann 235). Goethe further illustrated this by citing how Johann Heinrich Meyer (1760-1832) was more advanced than Winckelmann and that his success is due to Winckelmann: “Da sieht man abermals, was ein großer Vorgänger tut und was es heißt, wenn man sich diesen gehörig zu Nutze macht” (Here one sees once again what a great predecessor does and what it means when one utilizes him with proper respect) (Eckermann 235). Meyer was a lecturer for painting and art history, and a friend of Goethe's, who initially taught at *Fürstliche freie Zeichenschule* (*Weimar Princely Free Drawing School*), before becoming director of the school from 1807-1832. Goethe's respect for Winckelmann continued late in his life, as he points out to Eckermann on 9 July 1827 (Eckermann 252).

The other names mentioned in this party scene are Batteux, Heyne, Wood, and de Piles. Each of them contributed to the study and the debates concerning the art and literature of antiquity. Charles Batteux (1713-1780) was the professor of rhetoric at the Collège Navarre in Paris and then chair of Greek and Roman philosophy at Collège de France. He wrote *Le beaux arts réduits à une même principe* (1746), in which he argued that pleasure obtained from a work of art determines the quality of its imitation of nature. He also believed that ancient beauty set the standard for the fine arts (Porter 8, 9). Batteux's text was translated into several languages and Karl Wilhelm Ramler translated it into German between 1756 and 1758.

Robert Wood (1716-1771) was an English scholar who published “Essay on the Original Genius of Homer,” London 1769 (Herder 1519). Christian Friedrich Michaelis translated Wood's

essay as “Versuch über das Originalgenie des Homers” (1773) (Wiethölter, Kommentar 963; Herder 962). Christian Gottlob Heyne (1729-1812), a German classic philologist in Göttingen and a friend of Herder's, had commented on Wood's essay in the *Göttinger Gelehrte Anzeigen* in August 1772. Heyne was interested in beauty and its relation to nature, but not the moral aspect of beauty (Heidenreich 115). He mainly concentrated on Vergil in his teaching and writing, publishing an edition of Vergil's writings with commentary, *excursus*, prefaces, and essays (Atherton 132-133). Heyne was interested in explaining the cultural context of the poems, so that it would “shape the soul of the modern through the soul of the ancient” (140). Heyne likewise edited and contributed to the revised German translation of the *General History of the World* (1764-1767) by W. Guthrie J. Gray with the title *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte* (1765) (Butterfield 48). Heyne was responsible for parts six and seven, in which the histories of the Arabs, the Persians, the Ottoman Turks, and the Mongolians were described (Heidenreich 150). He is described as a Neo-Humanist who, along with Ernesti and Johann Mattias Gesner (1691-1761), aimed to keep the treasures of antiquity alive through renewed textual engagement (Atherton 141).

Lastly, Roger de Piles (1635-1709) was a French art critic, who addresses the theory of painting in his book *Œuvres diverses* (1767), focusing on Ruben (Wiethölter, Kommentar 963). De Piles believed in progress of the arts and also accepted a variation of the standard of beauty from antiquity in the *Querelle des anciens et des modernes* discussions (Rubin 157). These ideas were published in 1668 in his annotated translation of Charles-Alphonse Dufresoy's *De Arte Graphica* and in its revised 1673 version, which was followed by his *Dialogue sur le coloris* (157). His focus on the practical aspects of painting shaped his perspective and allowed him to criticize painters' practice of imitating masters' colors. He believed that imitating antiquity

helped to train artists, but that the modern artist could improve on the replication of nature in her perfect state through advanced methods of modernity (Rubin 159-160). He gave equal weight to color and drawing, which could be seen as rebellious since traditionally color had not been elevated to this status (160). He claimed that color made the difference, allowing modern painters the ability to deviate from the beauty of the ancient sculptures (160).

With each of these men representing various ideas, one cannot conclude that Werther's rejection of the conversation points to a specific disagreement with one of them. Werther disagrees with the entire discussion. Werther's response makes the young man seem as if he were proposing a topic of conversation on trivial matters. Though Werther is educated he does not want to demonstrate his knowledge. This scene can be seen as a rejection of the gendered expectations placed on him as an educated man.

III. RICCOBONI

Lotte carries on a literary conversation with Werther and others in the carriage on the way to the ball on 16 June 1771. In this scene she shows that she has read enough to have literary preferences through the opinions she expresses about them. Unlike their initial meeting in Lotte's house, where she is portrayed caring for and serving her siblings before leaving for the evening, this scene shows a different side of Lotte. The carriage scene confirms that she is not only functional in the domestic sphere, but also well read. She is familiar with several European authors and spends time only on those books that help her find her own world (Goethe, *Werther* 45).

Lotte mentions Miss Jenny on the way to the ball:

Wie ich jünger war, sagte sie, liebte ich nichts so sehr als Romane. Weiß Gott wie wohl

mir's war, wenn ich mich Sonntags so in ein Eckchen setzen, und mit ganzem Herzen an dem Glück und Unstern einer Miß Jenny Theil nehmen konnte. Ich läugne auch nicht, daß die Art noch einige Reize für mich hat; Doch da ich so selten an ein Buch kommen, so müssen sie auch recht nach meinem Geschmack seyn. (Goethe, *Werther* 45)

'When I was younger,' she continued, 'I liked nothing so much as novels. God knows how happy I was if I could sit in a corner on Sundays and share with heart and soul the fortunes and misfortunes of some Miss Jenny. And I won't deny that his sort of book still has some attraction for me; but, as I have so little time now for reading, whatever I read has to be to my taste.' (Mayer 24)

Price correctly suggests that Lotte speaks apologetically of her former literary preferences (*Riccoboni* 3). Lotte speaks apologetically of her tastes, since, as Goethe knew, epistolary novels were not thought of as high literature.

As a discerning reader, her concluding statement – that she still likes similar books – implies that she knows epistolary novels are not highly esteemed, but she likes them nevertheless. She expresses her past preference for them through the name Miss Jenny, which represents a stock character in the type of novel she reads. She does not identify it as an epistolary novel but instead as a 'Miss Jenny' book. The choice of the word *einer* before the name Miss Jenny points to how a specific Miss Jenny is not necessarily meant, but instead any character like Miss Jenny; the name Miss Jenny functions here as a type.

The Miss Jenny Lotte mention is not further described in *Werther*. Neither the name of the author nor the complete title of the work is included. Given the fictional editor's censorship of Lotte's words, critical editions of *Werther* suggest that Lotte refers to the French writer Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni's (1714-1792) epistolary novel *Histoire de Miss Jenny Glanville* (1764) (Trunz 572; Wiethölter, Kommentar 963). Christian Leberecht Heyne also states that Lotte means Riccoboni's novel in the introduction to his translation of *Miss Jenny*, and Riccoboni's *Miss Jenny* is the title associated with this reference in scholarship as early as 1929 (Price, *Riccoboni*

3, 2). Before that several scholars connected Lotte's statements to the heroine in Pastor J. T. Hermes' *Geschichte der Miss Fanny Wilkes* (1766) (Price, Riccoboni 2).

The mention of Miss Jenny was general enough for readers to know what kind of book Lotte meant without pinpointing a particular novel. Few epistolary novels in the eighteenth century had been written about men, perhaps because the genre was deemed feminine. Epistolary novels do not belong to the category of classical texts, which included epics, odes, and dramas in both Greek and Latin (Skinner 35-36). These genres constitutes the literary canon, which French writer and literary theorist Nicholas Boileau (1636-1711) had codified in *L'Art Poétique* (1674) (Martinez 2). *Werther* gives cryptic acknowledgment to his French female predecessor. The absence of Riccoboni's name could also be attributed to her French heritage.

Riccoboni's two-volume novel, *Histoire de Miss Jenny, écrite et envoyée par elle à Mylady, comtesse de Roscomonde, ambassadrice d'Angleterre à la cour de Dannemark*, is supportable as a choice for the reference. Goethe knew of the writer, as seen from his mention of Riccoboni in a letter to his sister as early as 11 May 1767, in which he compares Cornelia's writing to Riccoboni's (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 71). This shows that he knew Riccoboni's writing well enough for it to function as a standard for his sister. In his earlier correspondence with his sister in 1766 Goethe had compared Cornelia's writing to Mademoiselle Marguerite Lussan (1682-1758), who wrote fairy tales. Comparing it here to Riccoboni now indicates that Cornelia's writing has reached new heights (Maas 21). Riccoboni was lauded for her style: "Like Marivaux, Riccoboni's expression has a kind of graceful ease that encapsulates the confluence of simplicity, clarity, and beauty of eighteenth-century French" (Silva 18). Goethe, familiar with Riccoboni's quality, praises his sister Cornelia's writing style by stating that she writes in the spirit of Riccoboni (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 71).

Johann G. Gellius translated the novel into German as *Geschichte der Miss Jenny* in the year of its publishing in 1764 (Price, *Riccoboni* 2). Riccoboni was a very popular eighteenth-century French author, who wrote seven sentimental novels. Riccoboni's style is seen as heavily influenced by Samuel Richardson's novels and stylistically close to that of the French author Pierre Carlet de Marivaux (1688-1763) (Price 32; Silva 18). Her earlier novel *Lettres de Mylady Juliette Catesby* (1759) was one of the most frequently published eighteenth-century novels (Stewart vii). Today Riccoboni is one of the female authors in a reconsidered French Enlightenment literary canon (Bostic 21).

The novel *Histoire de Miss Jenny* tells the life story of Miss Jenny until the moment of letter writing (Stewart, *Novels* 83). Miss Jenny writes her side of a controversy and how she is managing (84). Stewart perceives *Miss Jenny* as a memoir of letters because of the inclusion of the word history in the title (83). The form of the novel is epistolary, written by a young heroine, and is composed of two letters. The longer letter contains the body of the story and shorter one a concluding note (84).

In current scholarship, the *Histoire de Miss Jenny* is described as bleak with the worst male villain of all of Riccoboni's works until then (Stewart Intro ix). The plot of the novel concerns a poor, illegitimate Jenny, who is fooled into a sham wedding to Lord Danby. She escapes when she realizes the truth, becomes engaged to someone else, but then Lord Danby kills her new fiancé. At the end of the story she decides voluntarily to leave the Comte de Clare, the only man of the three she has loved, as her closest friend is engaged to him. She spends the rest of her life in solitude. Her attempts at gaining wealth and societal status through marriage to men she does not love backfires on her (Stewart, *Novels* 149).

Riccoboni's style shares similarities with Goethe's novel *Werther*. Riccoboni was one of

the earliest writers to have a main character commit suicide for love; Mme de Raisel's suicide in Riccoboni's *Histoire de Monsieur le Marquis de Cressy* preceded that of Goethe's *Werther* by sixteen years (Stewart, *Novels* 108). This was not the only similarity. The form of correspondence was also similar. In five of Riccoboni's novels one female letter writer sends letters to a distant third party about events (39). In the majority of Riccoboni's novels the male voice is only included when the female letter writer quotes something from him: "In all but one of the epistolary works, the correspondence of the woman alone appears and the reader has access to the man's words only insofar as they are quoted in her letters; thus it is exclusively through the eyes of the female that men are viewed" (101). Occasionally a letter will be finished by someone else, giving a second voice to the novel, but the addressees' return letters are not included (39, 45). In *Werther* the story is told from Werther's perspective, with only occasional quotes from Lotte and void of Wilhelm's responses. The end of the novel is finished by the narrator.

Thematically there are also similarities. Both novels address the tension caused by contract marriages to varying degrees. In both cases the active decision maker is the female parent: Lotte's mother and Jenny's mother. The young women do not play a role in the matchmaking. In both stories parental influence becomes central to the plot development. *Miss Jenny* provides several examples of how the parents' economic interests are placed before their children's feelings and the strain places on generational relations (Thomas, *Soeur* 13). Parents in both novels explicitly play minor roles, however. They just make the decisions that drive the plot. The absence of families heightens the role of friends in both *Miss Jenny* and *Werther*. In both novels, peers substitute for families.

Riccoboni's novels develop differently than Goethe's *Werther*; though. Her novels are

cited as being a feminist representation of eighteenth-century European writing, since they address men's duplicity and its negative consequences for women (Stewart, *Novels* 110). Also, while Goethe's *Werther* and Riccoboni's *Miss Jenny* address some of the same issues, each novel contains a very different outcome through a difference in thinking about the problems. Jenny perceives the role of friendship differently than Werther. She sacrifices that which she loves to enhance her friend's happiness. At the end of the novel, she decides to wander the world on her own rather than hurt her friend in the love triangle in which she finds herself (Thomas, *Soeur* 16). Riccoboni's *Histoire de Miss Jenny* ends on a melancholic note with Jenny wandering, filling her time with books and memories (16). Werther unsuccessfully attempts a similar self-sacrifice, but out of despair returns to his peers in Wahlheim. He does not return to his mother and Wilhelm, leaving Lotte in peace to rebuild her life with her husband. Werther concludes with the horror and violence of suicide and the pain of loss from the community.

In the carriage scene, Werther does not react to the mention of Miss Jenny. Even though Goethe did not include Riccoboni's name, he clearly knew of the writer and of the protagonist's name from one of Riccoboni's lesser known novels.

IV. WAKEFIELD

The role of parents is more explicitly described in other eighteenth-century novels, such as Oliver Goldsmith's *Der Landpriester von Wakefield (The Vicar of Wakefield)* (1762). Johann G. Gellius (1732-1781) first translated Goldsmith's novel into German as *Der Landpriester von Wakefield: ein Märchen, das er selbst soll geschrieben haben* in 1767. Johann Joachim Christoph Bode (1731-1793) also translated the novel as *Dorfprediger von Wakefield* in 1776 (Price, *Goldsmith* 481). Though English editions of Goldsmith's novel appeared in Germany as

early as 1769, Herder had already written his wife in 1770 that he was reading Goldsmith's novel for the fourth time (Höfener 1). He introduced Goethe to Goldsmith's writing in Strasbourg, and Goethe likewise told others about the novel (1). For example, in September 1775 he wrote to Charlotte von Stein that he was planning on sending her a copy of Goldsmith's *Wakefield* (*Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 62). The German literary response to Goldsmith's novel was the quickest and most positive of initial European reception, as reflected by its imitations (Höfener 8). J. E. Jester's 1792 play "*Der Dorfprediger, ein Schauspiel in fünf Aufzügen, nach dem englischen Roman: 'Der Landpriester von Wakefield'*" and Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz's short prose piece *Der Landprediger* are two of the literary responses (Rousseau 24).

The story is about the Primrose family who moves to a small village in the countryside, where the father becomes the vicar. They have several children whom they try to raise based on their moral expectations. While the Primrose parents have some common universal traits they want to see in their children, regardless of gender, such as generosity, credibility, and simplicity, they also encourage gender distinctive qualities. They have specific expectations of what makes successful young men and reputable young women: "my sons hardy and active, my daughters dutiful and blooming" (Goldsmith 20). From this sentence we see that their sons should be robust in spirit and body as well as engaged in work, while their daughters obedient and full of vigor as well as attractive. These gender-distinctive characteristics help to preserve the norm; the girls' beauty, playfulness, and passivity will make them attractive wives.

The parents in *Wakefield* possess different levels of engagement in managing their children's future. Whereas Mrs. Primrose has definite ideas of how she would like to see her children grow up, Mr. Primrose takes a more distant approach. His energy and time are invested in saving souls: "The temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's

management, as to the spiritual, I took them entirely under my own direction” (Goldsmith 22).

As a preacher he does not try to control the destiny of his children, though ironically he leads the community in spiritual matters.

Mrs. Primrose's role seems to follow what was expected of parents in finding potential husbands for their daughters during the late eighteenth century. She wants to see her daughters marry into economically stable or well-to-do families. She tries to protect her daughters, but is unsuccessful with Olivia, who does not marry the man her mother has chosen for her, runs away, and unknowingly enters into a sham wedding. Like in *Wakefield*, Miss Julie from Riccoboni's novel is also nearly a victim of a similar hoax. In contrast, Werther questions the validity of Albert as Lotte's husband after Werther's passionate moment with Lotte (Goethe, *Werther* 251). This is not the focus of *Werther*, however, and in fact Lotte's mother's contract with Albert in the letter of 10 September 1771 is easily overlooked. Readers are not privy to the role Werther's mother plays, if any, in matchmaking for her son. No intended match for Werther is mentioned in the novel.

Mothers are portrayed in literature as more or less successful matchmakers for their daughters, but not for their sons. In reality both parents were responsible for selecting a suitable partner for their children until 1794 in parts of Germany, such as Prussia. New legislation then allowed their children to have more influence in choosing in their future spouses (Mooser 138). This information helps explain Lotte's mother's active intervention in arranging Lotte's engagement to Albert on her deathbed, as Lotte explains in her monologue on 10 September 1771 (Goethe, *Werther* 121). Lotte would not have had the authority to question her dying mother's will of selecting Albert as her future husband. As a result, Lotte's obligations to her mother and her immediate family prevent her from following her own interests that develop after

her mother's death.

In Lotte's description of her literary preferences, she also states she likes *The Vicar of Wakefield*. It is the only full title of a book mentioned in the carriage on the way to the ball on 16 June 1771. Goldsmith's novel was a worldwide success, influenced other national literatures, and translated into numerous languages (Höfener 7). It was seen to be one of five eighteenth-century proto-canonic works, and is noted for its sentimentality embedded in everyday life, leading to the embodiment of the Christian family idealization as a private and public community (Skinner 46; Mehl 166).

The Vicar of Wakefield is one of both Lotte's and Werther's favorite books:

Das ging freylich nicht weit: denn da ich sie mit solcher Wahrheit im Vorbeygehen vom Landpriester von Wakefield, vom* - reden hörte, kam ich ganz außer mich, sagte ihr alles was ich wußte, und bemerkte erst nach einiger Zeit, da Lotte das Gespräch and die anderen wendete, daß diese die Zeit über mit offenen Augen, als säßen sie nicht da, da gesessen hatten. (Goethe, *Werther* 45)

I did not, it is true, succeed very well; for when I heard her speak casually, but with much truth, about *The Vicar of Wakefield* and about —, I lost all my reserve and told her everything I wished to tell, and only noticed, after some time, when Lotte directed the conversation to the other two, that they had been sitting all the while with wide-open eyes, as if they were not there at all. (Mayer 25)

Werther becomes excited when *Wakefield* is mentioned, whereas the women in the carriage do not continue the conversation (Goethe, *Werther* 45). Lotte's silence here makes her appear as a socially sensitive person, since she waits until later to continue their literary conversation, when they share a private moment away from the others at the ball.

In this scene Werther is struck by Lotte's charm: “Ich fand so viel Charakter in allem was sie sagte, ich sah mit jedem Wort neue Reize, neue Strahlen des Geistes aus ihren Gesichtszügen hervorbrechen, die sich nach und nach vergnügt zu entfalten schienen, weil sie an mir fühlte daß ich sie verstand” (43-45) (I was struck by the show of character in everything she said; every

word revealed fresh attractions, and her flashes of intelligence showed in her face, which seemed gradually to light up with pleasure when she felt that I understood her) (Mayer 24). He is attracted to her since she reads, can name the authors and books she enjoys, and is eager to articulate why. Price alternatively has suggested that the naming of Goldsmith's novel is less connected to Lotte's preference as to Goethe's own preferred reading, however (Price, *Riccoboni* 4).

Goethe thought highly of Goldsmith's novel *Wakefield*, and literary scholars have acknowledged Goldsmith's influence on Goethe: "Several of Goethe's works reflect the influence of Goldsmith and there can be no doubt about the force of Goldsmith on his creative imagination and general mental development" (Rousseau 277). Despite this influence Goethe decided not to mention Goldsmith's novel in his conversation with Friederike Brion in the 1770s (Goethe, *Brion* 118):

Ein anderes Frauenzimmer, das sich zu uns gesellte, fragte nach einigen Romanen, ob Friederike solche gelesen habe. Sie verneinte es; denn sie hatte überhaupt wenig gelesen; sie war in einem heitern sittlichen Lebensgenuß aufgewachsen und dem gemäß gebildet. Ich hatte den *Wakefield* auf der Zunge, allein ich wagte nicht ihr ihn anzubieten; die Ähnlichkeit der Zustände war zu auffallend und zu bedeutend. -- Ich lese sehr gern Romane, sagte sie; man findet darin so hübsche Leute, denen man wohl ähnlich sehen möchte. (Goethe, *Dichtung* 491)

A different woman, who joined us, asked about some novels, whether Friederike had read them. She denied it, because she had not read much overall; she was raised in a happy traditional enjoyment of life and educated accordingly. *Wakefield* was on the tip of my tongue, only, but I did not venture to volunteer it to her; the similarity of the situations was too recognizable and too meaningful. – I very much like to read novels, she said; one finds in them so many lovely people, whom one would like to resemble.

During one of Goethe's visits to Friederike, the question of what she has read proves to be embarrassing for him. Here he does not recommend *Wakefield* to her, though he wanted her to start reading more. He implies that he does not want to be responsible for the consequences of

Friederike reading *Landpriester von Wakefield*, because of the similarity between her and the Primrose daughters. The Primrose daughters (Olivia and Sophia) have been raised in a family in which reading was not emphasized for girls. Goodman suggests that the characters' situations had a pedagogical potential, whereas the female readers could grow from heroine's successes they could as well as learn from her mistakes: "The shortcomings of all characters can be instructive, and the reader can grow in experience with the heroine" (Goodman x). Goethe's stance concerning *Wakefield* seems odd, though, since in *Werther*, Lotte is strongly influenced by Goldsmith's book.

In *Werther*, Lotte mentions Goldsmith's novel, though she is also from the country and has a simple life. As a well-read person Lotte's interest in *Wakefield* thus identifies her as different from Friederike and the Primrose daughters. Goldsmith's character Olivia is tricked into a path of destruction. Goethe's inclusion of *Wakefield* in *Werther* does not signify Goethe's change of heart from an earlier position on Goldsmith in the 1770s. He thought highly of Goldsmith throughout his life and pays him respect by including his name in *Werther*. While Goethe was most interested in the 'Vicar' character, as my research shows, including this novel allows a side of Lotte to be revealed that otherwise would have been unknown.

In Lotte's youth she had more time to read, but now with less time her reading is more directed, since her life is full of other family responsibilities. Her experience as the caregiver for her siblings contrasts her memory of her earlier years when she was carefree with leisure time to read on the weekends: "Und der Autor ist mir der liebste, in dem ich meine Welt wieder finde, bey dem es zugeht wie um mich, und dessen Geschichte mir doch so interessant und herzlich wird, als mein eigen häuslich Leben, das freylich kein Paradies, aber doch im Ganzen eine Quelle unsäglicher Glückseligkeit ist" (Goethe, *Werther* 45) (And the author whom I like most of

all is the one who takes me into my own world, where everything happens as it does around me, and whose story, nevertheless, becomes to me as interesting and as touching as my life at home, which is certainly not a paradise but is, on the whole, a source of inexpressible happiness to me) (Mayer 25). Lotte explains that her reading decisions are based on what is familiar to her through her own domestic situation, now that she is an adult. Reading about the lifestyle of the Primrose daughters in *Wakefield* may remind Lotte why she has the life she does. The family is a source of happiness, discretion, sincerity, and humility (Mehl 166). To achieve this ideal domestic life, Lotte's mother makes the choice of whom she should marry, much like the Primrose daughters' choices were made for them. This passage is one of the few reflective moments in the novel which helps the reader to better understand Lotte.

Through this self reflection Lotte marks her understanding of her development into adulthood. In Goethe's era, life was categorized into four general periods: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age (Hagestedt 258). Lotte's remarks demonstrate a melancholic description of her youth, when she had more freedom. Now she is the matriarch of the family, and as such she lives in the shadow of her mother's will. Lotte's digression highlights that young women can be responsible and dutiful to the family or responsible to oneself, but not both.

Mrs. Primrose expects her daughters to learn skills for managing a family. The daughters spend their time performing domestic chores, such as making clothes for their younger brothers and also learning how to dance and sing for the family's entertainment. The Primrose daughters' education is reinforced by Mr. Primrose's explanation of characteristics of a good wife on the novel's first page. He explains why Mrs. Primrose is a desirable wife, and her example functions as a paradigm for their daughters. He focuses on his wife's abilities as a domestic manager of the family property, thus highlighting the women's role in managing the household (Goldsmith

19). He also valued his wife's ability to read; however, Mrs. Primrose valued her domestic ability far more (19). Goldsmith's novel is an example of the gender divide in education in the eighteenth century. In the novel, the Primrose boys are trained to read regardless of age, while the girls sing, performing for family and friends. The girls' skills are similar to Lotte's. Lotte prepares and serves meals, takes care of the children, dances, and plays the piano. Little emphasis is placed on reading in her daily activities, even though she likes it.

Lotte's reading in Goethe's *Werther* is hence different from how women had been portrayed in Goldsmith's *Vicar*. The varying degrees of the Primrose parents' attitude toward reading reflects changing societal sentiments regarding women's intellectual abilities from the late seventeenth to the mid eighteenth century. In the late seventeenth century equality of the sexes was argued (Steinbrügge 13).

Reading was seen as a less important skill for women, since the middle class placed its value on women who could give birth and raise children (Steinbrügge 18). This idea was promoted in mid to late eighteenth-century books, such as in Goldsmith's novel. Rousseau also advocated that all women were to be mothers and housewives (Becker-Cantarino 409). Women's ability to read well enough to enjoy novels did not sufficiently elevate their position to be seen as the intellectual equals of men; instead, women were restricted to the private sphere and their position at home was glorified (Steinbrügge 17-18). Though the question of women's ability to reason had been debated and written about in France since the end of the seventeenth century, women nevertheless were still seen as different and intellectually inferior to men. A stark reminder of this is their continued lack of education and scholarship during this time (14, 17).

Raymond Prier's study from 1997 looks at the gendered role of narration in the two novels. He suggests that Goethe's *Werther* had many conflicting voices: Lotte, the narrator, and

Werther's, and through these voices he achieves irony (286). Goethe's own voice for *Werther* was developed in Sesenheim: "As the reader of Goethe's *Werther* understands these voices and their relationships and as that reader becomes aware of the place of the allusions to Goldsmith's *Vicar* and, for that matter, the other extraneous texts, he too will become aware of that irony Goethe understood emitting from those fictively real voices in Sesenheim" (286).

Goldsmith is seen to achieve irony through Mr. Primrose, the narrating father of the novel (Mehl 167). Mr. Primrose writes on the importance of monogamy, which is ironic, given his daughter Olivia's situation as a concubine. He also perceived the world as ironic, which was a reflection on his own humorously tragic situation as a struggling, disadvantaged Irish writer: "Der Autor legt die Geschichte in den Mund seiner Zentralfigur, des Landpfarrers Dr. Primrose, der seiner und seiner Familie Leiden in einem bestimmten Lebensabschnitt erzählt" (The author puts the story in the mouth of the central character, the Vicar Dr. Primrose, whose own, along with his family's, suffering in a certain phase in life is told) (Wolff 137). Wolfe explains how for Goldsmith the world presents an amusing play: "Für ihn war die gesellschaftliche Welt nicht mehr eine von strengen Idealen beherrschte, exklusive Provinz, sondern ein unendlich großes und buntes Schauspiel, an dem der Betrachter stets von neuem überrascht und amüsiert teilnehmen konnte" (For him the social world was no longer ruled by rigid ideals, exclusive to a province, but an eternally large and colorful play, in which the observer could take part, always surprised and amused anew) (Wolff 136). He has also been recognized for his individual role in cultivating high culture by Eckermann in a conversation with Goethe on 9 February 1831 (Eckermann 430-431).

Goethe had been influenced by Goldsmith's characters, as he tells Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758-1832) on 25 December 1829. Goethe talks about Goldsmith's fictional character Mr.

Primrose as well as his indebtedness to Goldsmith for his development as a writer:

An welchem Bilde du denn den treuen Schüler des Doktor *Primrose* erkennen wirst. Warum ich aber diesen wertigen Namen gerade hier nenne und meinen Zustand nach dem Bilde seiner Familie symbolisiere, will ich mit wenigem erklären: In diesen Tagen kam mir von ungefähr der Landprieester von Wakefield zu Händen, ich mußte das Werklein vom Anfang bis zu Ende wieder durchlesen, nicht wenig gerührt von der lebhaften Erinnerung wieviel ich dem Verfasser in den siebziger Jahren schuldig geworden. Es wäre nicht nachzukommen, was Goldsmith und Sterne gerade im Hauptpunkte der Entwicklung auf mich gewirkt haben. Diese hohe wohlwollende Ironie, diese Billigkeit bei aller Übersicht, diese Sanftmut bei aller Widerwärtigkeit, diese Gleichheit bei allem Wechsel und wie alle verwandte Tugenden heißen mögen, erzogen mich auf's löblichste, und am Ende sind es denn doch diese Gesinnungen die uns von allen Irrschritten des Lebens endlich wieder zurückführen.

(Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1828-1832* 206-207)

On which picture you will then recognize the loyal student of Dr. Primrose.

The reason why I just now mention the worthy name here and symbolize my circumstances according to the picture of his family circle, I will briefly explain to you. In those days I accidentally came across *The Vicar of Wakefield*, I had to read the dear book again from cover to cover, not little affected by the lively reminder how much I owed the author in the the seventies [1770s]. I would not be able to estimate the influence Goldsmith and Sterne had on me specifically during the high point of my development. This high, benevolent irony, this equity in seeing, this gentleness in all vileness, this parity despite every change, and whatever else all the related virtues may be called, nurtured me laudably and at the end these are the attitudes, which finally lead us back from all the mistaken steps of life.

The above passage speaks to the great extent to which Goldsmith has shaped Goethe's writing.

In addition to Goethe's attributions to Goldsmith in this passage, Goethe's experimentation with various genres might also be related to his influence. Goldsmith used a gamut of genres from classic civic-realist novel to popular and trivial literature (Reinhold 159). Carl Hammer suggests that Goethe's indebtedness has been discussed often in scholarship, such as Levy's comparison of Goethe's writing to Goldsmith's, for example (131). Few have framed the question in terms of gender, however.

The long-standing tradition of the 'good preacher' character in English literature is embodied in the *Vicar of Wakefield's* Mr. Primrose (Höfener 5). The story's popularity was not

only based on the vicar, though. Many of the novel's characters built on characters from other popular English stories, which led to accusations of plagiarism against Goldsmith (5).

Goldsmith's novel likewise served as a model for Goethe: "Goethe hat damit eine Reihe charakterischer Züge herausgestellt, die auch im Rückblick als wichtige Neuerungen in der Geschichte des Romans zu sehen sind" (Goethe had emphasized a number of characteristic traits, which are also to be seen in retrospect as important innovations in the history of the novel) (Mehl 166). For example, Prier suggests that Lotte's father is similar to Mr. Primrose as the patriarch of the family and that Albert along with Lotte's father is the upholder of a moral and ethical world in which Werther is displaced (286, 292). Prier's statement concerning actions by Lotte's father does not hold true, since Lotte's father does not discourage Werther's morally questionable daily visits. She does not tell Werther to come less often until Albert pressures her (Goethe, *Werther* 209). She certainly does not act swiftly enough to discourage Werther's feelings from developing as she seems to accept him as a companion to help with her work and to share in her familial experiences. However, she does not develop a physical relationship with him, as Olivia does with the Squire in *Wakefield*.

Lotte's interest in *Wakefield* could be arguably her shared experiences with the Primrose daughters. Her lack of control over her situation as a young woman is no different than the Primroses, even though she appears to be well read and is thus different than them. The circumstances of her domestic life have limited the potential power of fiction in her daily existence. Her novels can no longer carry her away, as they did during her adolescence. She now reads about other women who face similar situations, as the text implies. Though Goethe himself stated that he knew the consequences of having young women identify with the young Primrose daughters, this was of no consequence for Lotte. Her fictional statements differentiate

her from Goethe's factual ones concerning Goldsmith outside of *Werther*. Here Goethe draws a line between the fictionality of the novel and his own opinions.

V. FOOTNOTES

There are two footnotes in the 16 June 1771 letter which address the omission of book titles and authors mentioned by Lotte (Goethe, *Werther* 43, 45). In the first one, the anonymous fictional editor gives a reason for removing this information:

Man sieht sich genöthiget diese Stelle des Briefes zu unterdrücken, um niemand Gelegenheit zu einiger Beschwerde zu geben. Obgleich im Grunde jedem Autor wenig an dem Urtheile eines einzelnen Mädchens, und eines jungen unstäten Menschen gelegen seyn kann. (*Werther* 43)

It has been found necessary to suppress this passage in the letter, in order to give no one any occasion for complaint. Although, ultimately, no author can care much about the judgment of an individual girl and an unstable young man. (Morgan 32)

The changes in this first footnote from the earlier 1774 version to the later 1787 one are purely orthographical. This footnote explains that authors should not take Lotte's ideas seriously since they express only the opinions of a single girl, instead of those of the woman that Lotte perceives herself to be. Readers discover Lotte's impression of herself in her monologue on the next page. Lotte has no problem with her stability; she is simply described as not being a good judge because of her gender. Werther, on the other hand, is noted as being young and unstable. This remark is curious, since Werther speaks of many authors and texts throughout the novel, which have been left in the novel. The footnote explains that the text should not cause injury to other writers and this makes sense. Goethe, in his debut as a novelist, would not have wanted to offend the other writers, with whom he aspired to be a colleague.

The second footnote is on the next page. Here we learn that the names removed referred

to stories written in German or by German authors. The editor in *Werther* explains in this footnote why he withdrew the names of the stories Lotte likes:

Man hat auch hier die Nahmen einiger vaterländischen Autoren weggelassen. Wer Theil an Lottens Beyfalle hat, wird es gewiß an seinem Herzen fühlen, wenn er diese Stelle lesen sollte, und sonst braucht es ja niemand zu wissen. (Goethe, *Werther* 45)

Here too the names of some native authors have been omitted. Whichever of them enjoys Lotte's approval will surely feel it in his heart if he should read this passage, and of course no one else needs to know. (Morgan 33)

This second footnote, like first one, is easily over looked. People read over footnotes, as they are not in the central text. In the body of the text of Werther's letter, asterisks denote the presence of footnotes, which are found at the bottom of the page. The footnotes themselves are in small print. This separation of text shows that this removal did not originate with Werther but another voice of the novel, the fictional editor. This second footnote referring to the letter is also included in both the 1774 and the 1787 version of *Werther* and it nearly the same with the exceptions of a change from a period to a comma to create a compound sentence, orthographical changes, and a change of the word from *ausgelassen* to *weggelassen*, which both basically mean to omit (Goethe, *Werther* 44, 45). The changes do not lead to a difference in meaning.

Only the partial titles and protagonists of non-German books remain in this section, while the names of German writers that Lotte speaks of have been completely omitted. The editor's act has powerful consequences on the book. *Wakefield* may not be Lotte's favorite book, but it is the only certain traceable intertextual literary source left in the section, which suggests that Goethe wanted this title to be known, as opposed to the other surrounding information removed.

Some scholars have suggested that the editor's intervention has opened up ample room for reader interpretation:

From the Editor's account and from Werther's letters we can draw some inferences that

diverge from Werther's own judgments, but neither Werther himself nor the Editor is omniscient or infallible. Both augment the facts with conjectures, or fantasies, about Lotte and Albert and the other characters as well. Yet because there are two narrators and because the events reported by each lend themselves to a variety of interpretations, the reader is afforded a measure of independence, as is generally agreed. (Dye 85)

Dye focuses on the freedom this interjection allows the reader. Generally this is true for the overall novel, but in this specific case the independence granted through the editor's action here is a facade. Now readers are left to struggle to feel what Lotte had meant, as the editor instructs (Goethe, *Werther* 45).

Men were typically described during the eighteenth and nineteenth century as humans of reason instead of feeling, even if they did adopt feminine conventions in their writing. Feelings were associated with women, who were perceived as not being able to think rationally. They felt, while men thought. This gender distinction posed a problem within Enlightenment philosophy; women could not be studied as their mysterious bodies could only be felt or experienced (Steinbrügge 46-47). This background leads the footnote to be read quite differently now. The method to uncovering the mystery of Lotte's reading preferences is through feeling. To know Lotte one has to experience her, not listen to her words and judge them, but try to understand her on the private level of feeling where her and other women's bodies naturally operate. This furthermore helps us understand why Lotte has a limited voice in the novel. We are left to feel Lotte through Werther's portrayal of her.

Lotte's success, Willim explains, has nothing to do with how she thinks and who she is, but instead how she is portrayed by Werther: "Allerdings: ein Ruhm aus zweiter Hand. Ohne Werthers Liebe, ohne seine damit verbundenen Leiden und ohne sein tragisches Ende hätten rote Schleifen eines weißes Ballkleides und ein Schattenriß niemals zum Fetisch unerfüllter Liebe schlechthin werden können" (Admittedly: a second-hand renown. Without Werther's love,

without his connected suffering and without his tragic end, a red ribbon from a white ball gown and a silhouette portrait would never had been able to become a fetish of unfulfilled love) (43). Werther's descriptions of Lotte are shaped entirely by his feelings for her. Willim suggests that only Werther's passion for Lotte makes her so desirable. I would have to agree, since it is the only likely explanation, given we have no access to Lotte without Werther. The access we could have had into her opinions concerning literature is removed by the fictional editor, making us focus on Werther's explanations to understand her monologue on the way to the ball.

Dye argues that Lotte's thoughts were unimportant for aesthetic reasons: "Unlike previous writers in the epistolary form, Goethe provides no explicit corrective to Werther's point of view. Our independence as readers might be enhanced, but the subtlety of the work diminished, if we were given direct access to Lotte's thoughts and feelings" (Dye 85). The subtlety may also add to the success of her character: "Es gibt nur wenige Frauengestalten der Literaturgeschichte, die so berühmt geworden sind wie die Lotte aus Goethes erstem Roman" (There are only a few female figures of literary history, who have become so famous as Lotte in Goethe's first novel) (Willim 43). The novel's indirect representation of her character was well received.

Besides Dye, other scholars see Goethe providing a corrective to Werther's point of view through the actions of the editor. Typically editors in the eighteenth-century epistolary novels provide internal commentary as well as authoritative moral judgment (Abbott 23). The editor's role is in *Werther* subdued: "The editor has no real presence as a character up until his late moment of entering the novel, in the middle of Book Two, when only a quarter of the novel remains" (Schiffman 426). The editor's style makes his actions go unnoticed, despite the powerful consequences.

Much scholarship aligns the fictional editor with Goethe. Stuart Atkins believes that

Goethe plays the fictional role of the editor and is responsible for the changes (*Psychology* 521). Goethe does not play Werther, making it important to distinguish Goethe from Werther, as Goethe did not commit suicide (547). Atkins also speaks directly to the act of Goethe's censorship, implying that Goethe edits out names to keep the focus on the novel *Werther* (*Psychology* 549).

Tantillo likewise connects the editor to Goethe, concluding that his removal of information and explanation in the footnote appeals to both the rationalist and the sentimentalist (457). She states that the explanation is often disregarded by readers in interpreting the book, since the editor's entry into the novel at these key but subtle moments are missed when studying the novel (457). Tantillo suggests that the information was left out as a tease to the readership and that "When Lotte and Werther discuss literature, the Herausgeber leaves out the titles of the works they criticize because neither a young woman or an unsteady man are proper judges of literature" (457). The action of removing certain names is more than a tease of the readers; although it may also function as such in the novel. The omitted information is an act of suppressing Lotte's voice. The editor's action here is a form of self-censorship to remove Lotte's ideas. This is the only place in the book that the names of authors and books are removed. Prier also mentions that Lotte's answer is removed. We are told that she cites other unnamed books by the fictional editor, and Werther tells us she likes *Wakefield* (289). In *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture* (1996), Sherry Ortner aligns woman to nature and man to culture in her examination of why women is perceived worldwide as secondary to man (Ortner 21). Women were deemed as being made to reproduce, instead of becoming active contributing members to the world of ideas. *Werther* offers one example of how women's ideas are received as inferior to the judging eye of the male editor.

Abbott adds that the editor carries out the author's strategy to keep our attention focused on the story of the protagonist Werther (Abbott, 23). Price also equates the fictional editor's suppression of information with the author (*Riccoboni* 3). Price's focus is on what the editor deleted. He makes a number of suggestions of what the other deleted stories could have been, such as La Roche's *Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim* (*Riccoboni* 4). This suggestion is noteworthy, since La Roche's prototypical female characters are distinctively different from Riccoboni's Miss Jenny.

Whereas Miss Jenny is concerned with her victimization and self perseverance, La Roche's heroines are active: "Unlike scores of other heroines of the period, Sophia von Sternheim's choices are not virginity, harlotry, or death. The salvation of Sophia's soul does not lie in any passive state of being; it lies in action, in 'doing'" (Goodman xi). Goethe's particular choice of which novels by female authors to include has made an impact on the type of woman Goethe portrays as an ideal.

The deletion of the names is a legitimate concern and more than a question of aesthetics, given that Goethe's inclusion of certain authors, texts, and genres has been interpreted as an action of cannon building (Schiffman 428). In "Wert, Kanon und Zensur" Rainer Grübel discusses the reasons censoring occurs; implementing and fostering a particular canon is one of the reasons (620):

Wer Zensur ausübt, hat eine Intuition oder sogar eine genaue Vorstellung vom Kanon desjenigen, was gemäß stillschweigender oder ausdrücklicher sozialer Übereinkunft in einem bestimmten Redezusammenhang gesagt oder veröffentlicht werden darf, sowie vom Gegenkanon desjenigen, was dem eigenen Urteil oder der Ansicht Dritter zufolge unterbleiben muß. (Grübel 601)

He who practices censoring has an intuition or even an exact idea of the canon of that which subsequently, according to an implied or explicit social understanding, which may be said or printed in a certain speech context, as well as the contrary canon of

that, which must remain omitted according to one's own judgment or the perspective of a third.

The editor in *Werther*, as the censor, had a particular reason to repress the alternative German canon, which competed with Goethe's work: "Ein Teil der nichtkanonischen Literatur wird mit Hilfe der Zensur zum Negativkanon verbotener Texte umgeprägt" (A portion of noncanonic literature is anewed as negative canon of forbidden texts through the help of censorship) (Grübel 619). Women initially relied heavily on men for publishing and editing, and they worked closely with men writers, reading their manuscripts and delivering copies, as seen for example in Goethe's letters to La Roche on 12 May 1773 (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1774* 307, 366-367).

La Roche developed as a writer with the guidance of her cousin Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813), who edited and published her first novel *Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim*. Wieland's actions can be attributed to both professional standards and personal interests. Wieland and La Roche were engaged for a time before her father broke it off. Wieland is noted as having seen a correlation between the existence of women writers and the state of cultural development (Fronius 79).

La Roche's first novel was published anonymously. Initial reviews in 1771 do not mention La Roche, though some writers such as Lenz realized it was likely a woman author (Becker-Cantarino 371). Though La Roche certainly may not have needed the extra support for book sales, a mention of a German woman's book in *Werther* would have helped at the time to promote a social acceptance of women's literary engagement and to remind readers for centuries to come that La Roche was a major eighteenth-century German author as well as the first German woman novelist of note. Even today she is barely known to the educated German public.

Goethe's choice of which history to re-articulate is most noticeably treated in these two footnotes. An author always makes decisions on which items to address in texts, and in this way, Goethe is no different than any other who leaves out certain pieces of information. The text supports and promotes a particular German cultural inheritance, and it has a gender bias. Readers are told by the fictional editor that Lotte's gender strips her of the ability to have her voice heard on literary matters. German women's epistolary novels may be left out as well for this reason. As the one text written by a woman and mentioned in *Werther*, Riccoboni's novel is only referred to by the name Miss Jenny. *Werther* does not properly recognize the author by name. By way of *Werther* and his fictional editor Goethe insures that only a correct literary inheritance will get passed on to the next generation.

VI. LAVATER

Goethe had contact to Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801) before the completion of the first version of *Werther* in 1774, but his most intensive work with him was after 1774 on their *Physiognomische Fragmente*. Lavater was a reformed Swiss preacher, theologian, philosopher, and writer from Zurich, whose early writing concerned religion and politics. He had a revolutionary spirit as seen in his stance against the Zurich aristocracy as well as his engagement with *Sturm und Drang* writers and thinkers (Atkins, *Psychology* 527).

Goethe was familiar with Lavater by the fall of 1772, as seen by his review of the third volume of Lavater's *Aussichten in die Ewigkeit* in the *Frankfurter Gelehrte Anzeigen* on 3 November 1772. Goethe also critically reviewed Lavater's *Historische Lobrede auf Johann Jakob Breitinger, ehemaligen Vorsteher der Kirche zu Zürich* (1771) in 1772, stating what he believed should have been Lavater's style and focus (*Ästhetische* 32). Despite Goethe's criticism,

Lavater was impressed by Goethe's *Zwo wichtige bisher Unerörterte biblische Fragen* (1773) as well as with Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand*, as he had written to Deinet in the summer of 1773 (Atkins, *Psychology* 521; Huppert 48). Correspondence between Goethe and Lavater began in 1773 and lasted ten years (Große, *Briefe an Lavater Kommentar* 547). They also visited each other at least four times. Their final visit was in Weimar in 1786, before the 1787 edited version of *Werther* was published.

Goethe and Lavater's opinions differed, especially concerning religion. These differences were not reconciled throughout their friendship and were often a topic of discussion in their letters. Goethe defends his ideas in his letter to Lavater and another preacher from Zurich, Johann Konrad Pfenninger (1747-1792), on 26 April 1774, for example (547; *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 358). Their differences did not affect Goethe's mentions of Lavater in the novel *Werther*, though. They are the same in both. Goethe's inclusion of Lavater in his novel *Werther* is within a religious framework: the Book of Jonah from the Old Testament of the Bible and the reading preferences of the morally-suspect preacher's wife, who reads contemporary religious canonical discussions.

Goethe's inclusion of Lavater in *Werther* can be attributed to his personal feelings of admiration for Lavater. Outside of the novel Goethe critiqued Lavater's religious ideas in his professional reviews and in his letters, marking a distinction between Goethe and Werther's views. In the novel, Werther defends Lavater's excessive enthusiast style of religion in a discussion of the new preacher's wife. Lavater's ideas are furthermore gender specific to men. Neither Lotte nor the preacher's wife is portrayed as being aware of Lavater's ideas.

Lavater is mentioned twice by name on 1 July 1771 and 15 September 1772, which is noteworthy since he was then the only living person named twice in the novel. Many living

authors were not stated by name; in fact, their names were removed. Those that were named, such as Klopstock, were only named once. Furthermore, Goethe's mentions of Lavater in *Werther* both seem positive. Lavater is initially mentioned in a footnote in the letter from 1 July 1771. The relationship between illness and its remedies is the context for the discussion among the old preacher, his wife, their daughter Friederike, her boyfriend Herr Schmidt, Werther, and Lotte: "Ich bemerkte daß der ehrliche Alte sein Gehör anstrengte, um an unserm Discurse Theil zu nehmen, ich erhob die Stimme, indem ich die Rede gegen ihn wandte: Man predigt gegen so viele Laster, sagte ich: ich habe noch nie gehört, daß man gegen die üble Laune vom Predigtstuhle gearbeitet hätte" (Goethe, *Werther* 67). (I noticed that the honest old man struggled to hear to take part in our discussion. I raised my voice, by turning to him to speak: One preaches against so many vices, I said, I have not ever heard that one had wrought against ill humor from the preacher's pulpit). The Lavater footnote is inserted by the editor at the bottom of the page and corrects Werther's statement concerning how preachers do not address the issue ill humor: "Wir haben nun von Lavatern eine treffliche Predigt hierüber, unter denen über das Buch Jonas" (Goethe, *Werther* 67) (We now an excellent sermon from Lavater among others concerning the book Jonah). The sentence does not change from the early 1774 to the later 1787 version of *Werther* with the exception of an additional comma, and this change in punctuation does not change the meaning. This annotated footnote stands in contrast to the two footnotes in the letter from 16 June 1771, in which the editor explains why he has censored Lotte's remarks concerning her literary preferences. In this third footnote, the editor adds information, remarking that ill humor had actually been addressed in Lavater's homily concerning the book of Jonah.

The book of Jonah is an anonymous story of the battle of wills between Jonah and God that took place on Jonah's trip to Ninive somewhere between 400-300 B.C. in today's Iraq.

Yahweh tells Jonah he should go to Ninive to warn its residents to change their behavior, but Jonah does not want to go, since the people of Ninive are his enemies. Jonah leaves Israel with a boat in the other direction to Tharsis, but is thrown overboard, since the others on board see him as responsible for the storm. Jonah is then swallowed by a large fish in which he spends three days, praying and promising to follow God's will. After he is released, he goes to Ninive to warn of the destruction of the city if the residents do not change their behavior. The people pray and fast and repent their sins, and the city is then saved. Dissatisfied, Jonah leaves the city, constructs a dwelling place outside of the city, waiting for its destruction, when he becomes ill. God then speaks to Jonah, asking him why he should not feel sorry for those in Ninive, a large city of residents, who cannot distinguish between right and wrong (Buch Jonas 1051).

This story was the topic of Lavater's homilies in 1772. The editor's footnote refers to Lavater's "Predigten Ueber das Buch Jonas," preached in Zurich in 1772 and published in 1773 (Jördens 198). Goethe is believed to have read it either before or during writing *Werther* (Atkins, *Psychology* 526). Lavater's work contains fourteen sermons, which are separated into two parts with the second half focusing on everyday applications of the message of the story (552). The message of Jonah's story was preached on certain obligatory days of worship during the famines throughout Germany in the early 1770s (Atkins, *Psychology* 531-532; Vasold 113):

Each section of the story of Jonah, taken separately, is made to furnish vivid illustrations of ever-repeated patterns of human conduct from which moral lessons can be drawn and of problems for which religious-theological solutions can usually be suggested with little inappropriateness. The constant emphasis upon the all-too-human character of Jonah gives the sermons a more fundamental unity than that already partly achieved by the mere choice of a single, well-knit narrative as framework within which to present a given interpretation of Christian doctrine.
(Atkins, *Psychology* 530)

Of the fourteen sermons, Atkins considers three as associated with *Werther*: "Jonas

Menschenfeindliche, Ehrgeizige, Unzufriedenheit,” “Mittel gegen Unzufriedenheit und üble Laune,” und “Von dem Ueberdresse des Lebens” (549). This background information concerning Lavater's sermons is not available in *Werther*, though:

For Goethe's editorial note is like no other footnote in *Werther*; it does not explain that identifiable names have been disguised or that irrelevant material has been suppressed. Since it deliberately directs the reader's attention away from the immediate world of Werther and from his story, it would seem to be what the few critics who have given it any thought have suggested—an inept attempt of Goethe to introduce a realistic touch of a type very common in the eighteenth-century epistolary novel. (Atkins, *Psychology* 527)

Lavater's sermons were popular enough to be published (Jördens 198). Goethe's eighteenth-century readers would have known of the famines and of Lavater, which poses the question why Werther and the others, especially the old preacher, are unfamiliar with the example of Lavater's sermons. No one in the discussion made the association to them, causing the fictional editor to step in to correct their oversight. The editor's intervention established his authority. The editor's choice of the pronoun *wir* (“we”) instead of *ich* (“I”) is interesting in the footnote: The *we* may include Werther, showing that he did know of Lavater's sermons; it may be *we* in the general acceptance of the word as speaking to the eighteenth-century society; but it also includes us as *we*, the readers. From Goethe and Lavater's recorded remarks, Lavater did not seem to find fault with no one being familiar with his sermons except the fictional editor. He may have also saw Goethe as the editor in the novel, who in this case corrected Werther's mistake.

Goethe made sure that Lavater read the novel before it was released to the public. In a letter from 26 April 1774 addressed to Lavater and J. F. Pfenninger, Goethe said he would get Lavater a manuscript of *Werther* before it went to print (Goethe *Briefe 1764-1775* 359). It seems from Lavater's excitement concerning his reading of *Werther*, as reported in his journal in July 1774, that he did not have access to the novel until his initial meeting with Goethe on the Rhine.

Lavater spent the two days reading *Werther* on 15 and 16 July 1774 while he was with Goethe in Ems (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 61). Goethe met Lavater then, accompanied by the educator Johann Bernhard Basedow (1723-1790). He reported as having returned to the novel every chance he had throughout the day, staying up with it until the early morning hours (61).

Lavater was one of the first to read *Werther*, as Goethe did not send out two of his three printed copies until 19 September 1774 to La Roche and a second to the Kestners on 23 September 1774. He asked La Roche to circulate the copy after reading it (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 397-399). Goethe had sent his finished manuscript to Weygand in May 1774, and the novel was publicized in 1774 at the Michaelismesse (Wiethölter, *Werther* Kommentar 915, 916). St. Michael Day festival, which in Miltenberg started being held on the archangel's day September 29 in 1425, is still celebrated annually in German towns and includes a trade fair. It is held in August and September in Miltenberg and in October in Wertheim. Merck and Lavater started writing about Goethe's novel at the end of August. The majority of readers did not make *Werther* a topic of their letters until the end of the second week of October 1774, thus showing the publicity that the novel received at the respective fairs (Bode, *Zeitgenosse* 67, 69).

Lavater was impressed by Werther's story and contributed to the hype of the novel. He told the Swiss doctor and writer Johann Georg Zimmermann (1728-1795) about his enthusiastic response to Goethe's *Werther* in a letter on 27 August 1774: “Goethes 'Leiden des Werthers' wird Dich entzücken und in Tränen schmelzen...Goethe: Du würdest ihn vergöttern! Er ist der furchtbarste und liebenswürdigste Mensch” (Bode, *Zeitgenossen* 67) (Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther* will enchant you and leave you melting in tears... Goethe: You would adore him. He is the most shocking and the most agreeable person). Lavater also passed on Goethe's novel to Bodmer to read (Huppert 83). Goethe knew of Lavater's practice of spreading news, as seen

through his complaints in his December 1773 and 28 September 1775 letters (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 342, 481). In this case, though, Lavater's sharing the news about Goethe's novel helped.

Many of Goethe's letters in which he mentions Lavater speak of his anticipation of seeing him, such as letters to La Roche in the first half of June, 1774 and on 16 June 1774, as well as to H. Chr. Boie on 22 June 1774 (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 370, 372, 373). After their visit, Goethe's correspondence with Lavater intensified (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 383). They sent articles to one another, such as on 4 July 1774, when Goethe sent Lavater a copy of *Der Deutsche Merkur* with the promise to send more writing and drawings, and in the middle of August 1774 when Goethe wrote how he enjoyed their visit and asked him to return his texts (382, 387). Shortly after Goethe's visit with Lavater, Goethe talks about his initial positive impression to the Danish Consulate Secretary Gottlieb Friedrich Ernst Schönborn (1737-1817), in a letter written between 1 June and 4 July 1774:

Lavater war fünf Tage bey mir und ich habe auch da wieder gelernt, dass man nicht persönlich gesehen hat; wie ganz anders wird doch alles. Er sagt so oft daß er schwach sey, und ich habe niemand gekannt der schönere Stärcken gehabt hätte als er. In seinem Elemente ist er unermüdet thätig, fertig, entschlossen, und eine Seele voll der herzlichsten Liebe und Unschuld. Ich habe ihn nie für einen Schwärmer gehalten und er hat noch weniger Einbildungskraft als ich mir vorstellte. Aber weil seine Empfindungen ihm die wahrsten, so sehr verkannten Verhältnisse der Natur in seine Seele prägen, er nun also iede Terminologie wegschmeisst, aus vollem Herzen spricht und handelt und seine Zuhörer in eine fremde Welt zu versetzen scheint, indem er sie in die ihnen unbekannte Winckel ihres eignen Herzens führt; so kann er dem Vorwurf eines Phantasten nicht entgehen. (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 377)

Lavater was with me for five days and I have learned again there that one had not seen personally; how completely different everything becomes. He said so often that he is weak, and I have met no one who had more beautiful strengths than he has. He is in his element untiringly busy, complete, determined, and a soul full of cordial love and innocence. I have never considered him a dreamer and he has even less imagination than I had expected. But because his sensitivity impresses him with the truest, so very underestimated relationship to nature in his soul, he now throws away

every terminology, speaks and acts from his entire heart and seems to take away his audience into a foreign world by leading them in an unknown spiral of their heart; so he can not be opposed to the accusation of being a dreamer.

In this quote, we see that Goethe expresses his admiration for Lavater, finding him to be one of the strongest people he knew. He appreciated Lavater's sentimental character and was surprised by Lavater's lack of imagination. Given that Goethe and Lavater's earliest correspondence from 1772 and 1773 has not yet been found, Goethe's initial impression of Lavater is insightful to their relationship.

Because their earlier letters are missing, Lavater's diary entry in June is included in Goethe's letters, presenting a clearer picture of how harmonious their friendship was. Lavater describes his impressions of Goethe from their first trip. Lavater reports on 28 June 1774 that their mornings were warm and included trips through the city and fields, discussing religious ideas (Lavater, *Briefe 1764-1775* 381). He also goes into detail about Goethe's disagreement with prophecies and Goethe's suggestion that he himself is a prophet: “Er habe die Prophezeiungen bestritten, u. sei selbst ein Prophet gewesen” (He had contested the prophecies and was a prophet himself) (*Briefe 1764-1775* 381). Their conversations also included politics. Lavater reports how Goethe spoke of an unbelievable idea of future governmental changes (381).

Among other topics, their missing letters are thought to address religious ideas, which could be potentially very helpful for this study of Lavater. The missing letters have been partially reconstructed based on Lavater's responses (Große, *Briefe an Lavater Kommentar* 547). These reconstructions are minimal sketches of Goethe's letters but suffice in showing his disagreement with some of Lavater's religious beliefs. Lavater valued Goethe's letters, as shown by his diary entries from their first trip in which he contends that Goethe's letters are interesting

enough to be a book (Lavater, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 381). Whereas in his first letter from November 1773 Goethe is thought to have addressed aspects of science, in another lost letter to Lavater in the second half of November 1773 scholars believe that Goethe denies that he is Christian “Ich bin kein Christ” (I am not Christian) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 330, 331; Conrady 142, 235). Along these same lines at the end of December on either Christmas day or New Year's Eve, 1773, Goethe is believed to have written: “<...> Gehe behutsam mit deinen Briefen um <...> <...> Wenn du einen Meßias brauchst, so halte dich an dem, der dir von immer quellendem Waßer versprochen hat <...>” (Handle your letters cautiously When you need a Messiah, so abide by him, who promised you continual flowing water....) (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 342). This letter shows Goethe's concern with the privacy of their letters. Later on 28 September 1775, Goethe tells Lavater not to show everyone his letters (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 481). His last partially reconstructed letter is the most critical of Lavater's religious ideas, and stands in direct contrast to the warm personal feelings he develops one month later for Lavater on this trip: “<...> das *Eine* Wort, darinn wir verschieden sind <...> Wir haben einen Meßias <...> Es ist ein Meßias <...>” (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 360) (...The one word, in which we differ... We have a messiah... There is a messiah...). Their religious disagreements did not stop Goethe from attending Lavater's sermons, as we see in Goethe's invitation to La Roche on 19 July 1774 to join him (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 384).

The second reference to Lavater in *Werther* concerns his sermons. In the letter from 15 September 1772, similar to the earlier intertextual reference to Lavater, this reference is made at the pastor's but outside in the courtyard, where the walnut trees had grown. Here Werther thinks of Lavater. This reference shows that Werther knows about Lavater and omitted the reference to his sermon in his earlier discussion. During Lotte and Werther's previous visit there on 1 July

1771, the old preacher sits under the shade of the nut trees in the courtyard and explains how the trees represent important milestones in his and his wife's life. One was planted the day the daughter of the former pastor was born. He had then met her under these trees during his studies and she became his wife (63).

On this second visit, Werther talks about how the tree had been cut down, no longer providing shade for the courtyard. During Werther's subsequent rampage due to the chopped-down trees and the new pastor's wife, Lavater's ideas are mentioned as something that would not have interested her:

Das ganze Dorf murrte, und ich hoffe die Frau Pfarrerin soll es an Butter und Eyern und übrigem Zutrauen spüren, was für eine Wunde sie ihrem Ort gegeben hat. Denn *sie* ist es, die Frau des neuen Pfarrers (unser Alter ist auch gestorben) ein hageres kränkliches Geschöpf, das sehr Ursache hat an der Welt keinen Antheil zu nehmen, denn niemand nimmt Antheil an ihr. Eine Närrinn, die sich abgibt gelehrt zu seyn, sich in die Untersuchung des Kanons melirt, gar viel an der neumodischen moralischkritischen Reformation des Christenhumes arbeitet, und über Lavaters Schwärmereyen die Achseln zuckt, eine ganz zerrüttete Gesundheit hat und deswegen auf Gottes Erdboden keine Freude; So einer Kreatur war es auch alleine möglich, Freude. (Goethe, *Werther* 169-170)

The whole village grumbles; and I hope that the present pastor's wife will notice, in regard to butter, eggs, and other presents, how much she has hurt the feelings of the whole place. For it is *she*, the wife of the new pastor (our old one is dead), a thin and sickly creature who has every reason not to take any interest in the world, as no one takes any interest in her: a foolish woman who pretends to erudition, pokes her nose into an examination of the Canon, works a great deal at the new-fangled critico-moralist reformation of Christianity, and shrugs her shoulders at the excessive enthusiasm of Lavater. Her health is completely shattered, and for this reason she cannot find any pleasure in anything on God's earth. (Mayer 108)

The wife of the new pastor is described as an unsympathetic character because of her apathy toward the villagers and Lavater's ideas about religion. Werther criticizes her aloofness and her interest in canonical discussions. He mentions a few other names in his rampage: "Stelle dir vor, die abfallenden Blätter machen ihr den Hof unrein und dumpfig, die Bäume nehmen ihr das

Tageslicht, und wenn die Nüsse reif sind, so werfen die Knaben mit Steinen darnach, und das fällt ihr auf die Nerven, und das stört sie in ihren tiefen Ueberlegungen, wenn sie Kennicot, Semler und Michaelis, gegen einander abwägt” (170) (Just imagine, the falling leaves made her yard damp and dirty; the trees deprived her of sunlight; when the nuts were ripe, the boys pelted them with stones, and this made her nervous, this disturbed her profound meditations when she was weighing the merits of the differing arguments of Kennicot, Semler and Michaelis) (Mayer 109). Werther critically mentions the theologians Johann Salomo Semler (1725-1791), the Hebrew scholar Johann David Michaelis (1717-1791), and the English Hebrew scholar Benjamin Kennicot (1718-17683), who furthered biblical canonical research in the eighteenth century (Trunz 587).

Kennicot attempted to reconstruct an original version of the Hebrew Bible in England (Ruderman 23). Semler was a professor at Halle, who was a leading spokesman in the Enlightenment and wrote extensively on theological discussions, including biblical exegesis, church history, and textual criticism (Carlsson 3-4). He was most interested in looking at theology from a historical vantage point (4). Michaelis created a new secular method of study for the Hebrew Bible that attempted to place it within a historical trajectory based on the declining importance of religions (Legaspi 4). Werther's tone in this passage shows that he did not think highly of these scholars.

Scholarship describes Goethe as especially leery of the dangers of mixing history and religion: “Goethe fühlte, daß diese neue historische Richtung der Religiosität — auch in ihrem allgemeinsten Sinne — gefährlich werden könne; deswegen seine Zurückhaltung da, wo er fürchtete, man könne zerstören, ohne zugleich etwas anderes, Gleichwertiges aufzubauen” (Trunz 587) (Goethe felt that the new historical direction of religiousness – also in its most

general meaning – could become dangerous, which is the reason for his distance there, where he feared, one could destroy without establishing some other equivalent at the same time).

Werther's criticism of the new pastor's wife makes him appear as having shared Goethe's concerns. The new pastor's wife is the point of contention. She is educated enough to know about contemporary debates concerning the biblical canon, but she is not portrayed as being progressive in a positive way, since she is unaware of or uninterested in the new spiritual movements that Lavater represents.

Werther's dislike of the woman creates an impression of her as an unsympathetic character. The entire passage is negative; without the trees, the serenity of the first visit to the courtyard is lacking. Werther's outburst over the cut-down trees and the woman's behavior concludes with Werther dreaming of how things would be different if he were in charge. Werther associates the injustices in society against common people and nature with the role of the monarchy: “O wenn ich Fürst wäre! Ich wollt die Pfarrern, den Schulzen und die Kammer – Fürst! – Ja wenn ich Fürst wäre, was kümmern mich die Bäume in meinem Lande” (171) (Oh, if I were a prince! I would know what to do—with the pastor's wife, the magistrate, and the Board of Revenue!—Prince! Indeed, if I were a prince, would I really worry about the trees of my country?). The passage is placed after the passage on the cut down trees, showing that it should be read as Werther's criticism of princes.

One of Goethe's own personal letters presumably from the second half of August 1774 concerns Lavater's actions against governmental corruption:

Beschreibe mir mit der Aufrichtigkeit eines Christen, aber ohne Bescheidenheit – Gerechtigkeit ist gegen die, was Gesundheit gegen Kränklichkeit – Deine ganze That wider den Landvogt Grebel, was Deine Schrift – damit ich Dich mit Deiner That messe, du braver Geistlicher! du theurer Mann! Eine solche That gilt hundert Bücher, und wenn mit die Zeiten wieder auflebten, wollte ich mich mit der Welt wieder

aussöhnen. Schreib mir's ganz, ich beschwöre Dich – um Deinertwillen... (391)

Describe for me with the sincerity of a Christian, but without modesty – justice is against those, what health is against sickness – your entire deed against the Landvogt Grebel, what your writing – so I measure you by your own deed, you good clergyman! You dear man! Such an act is worth a hundred books, and when revived again with time, I would want to be re-reconciled with the world. Write me all, I swear to you – for you.

In this letter Goethe praises Lavater for his engagement in addressing the corruption of Swiss Landvogt Felix Grebels. Together with Johann Heinrich Fübli, Lavater had written an anonymous piece that led to Grebels' dismissal (Große, Kommentar 901). This article had appeared in the book *Der von J. K. Lavater glücklich besiegte Landvoigt Grebel* (1769) without Lavater's knowledge, and the book had been advertised in the *Journal in Frankfurt am Mayn* (901). Lavater's article in this case is one reason why he would have been perceived as a rebel. Taking a stand gave him the reputation as an upholder of rights of the common man. Lavater's involvement in the matter helps explain why Werther ends his letter with a political conclusion. As with Goethe, Werther also associates Lavater with his challenge to questionable practices of the ruling class.

Gonthier-Louis Fink effectively describes Werther's attitude in his discussion of Werther's political statements:

Wenn man aber genauer hinsieht, wird deutlich, daß Werther nicht die Gesellschaft und ihre hierarchische Struktur angreift, erkennt sie vielmehr an; was er aufs Korn nimmt, ist vielmehr die Unzulänglichkeit der Vertreter dieser beiden Gesellschaftsschichten, ihre geistige Beschränktheit, den Adelsstolz der einen, die rationalistische und moralische Arroganz der andern; die Engstirnigkeit aller schafft ein soziales Problem! (Fink 44-45)

When one looks more precisely, it becomes clear that Werther does not affront society and its hierarchical structure, but rather recognizes it. What he attacks instead is the shortcoming of the representatives of both these societal classes, their intellectual limitations, the lordliness of the one [group], the rational and moral arrogance of the other; the closed-mindedness of all creates a social problem!

Fink's portrayal of the church as spiritually limited is correct if one counts the new preacher's wife among the new generation of spiritual leaders. We see that the older generation of leaders, in this case the old preacher, lived harmoniously in nature, whereas the new generation of leaders seem to have lost an interest in community tradition and are poorly informed about new movements within the church.

In *Werther* Goethe defends Lavater's *Schwärmerei* ("excessive enthusiasm"). Werther's ideas, however, differ from Goethe's own actions in which Goethe had tried to get Lavater to become less enthusiastic. On 3 May 1775 Goethe wrote to Zimmermann concerning a letter that Lavater had sent him (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 449-450). Goethe refers in the letter to Zurich Professor Johann Jakob Hottinger's (1750-1819) assault on Lavater's excessive religious enthusiasm (Große, Kommentar 955). Here Goethe asks for Zimmermann's assistance in convincing Lavater to become less concerned with the attacks against him. This shows that despite their differences, Goethe was interested in him as a person, as has been noted in other scholarship on their relationship (Niekerk 10).

According to the Kluge etymological dictionary, the verb *schwärmen* in the eighteenth century meant "sich auf wirklichkeitsferne Weise für etwas begeistern" (to be unrealistically excited about something) (659). A specific definition is not given for the noun *Schwärmerei*. According to the examples in the Grimms' dictionary, when the word is used in the context of a sick person its meaning takes on a more negative connotation to include delirium and insanity ("Schwärmerei" 2292). We know, however, from Goethe's description of Lavater that Goethe does not see him as a fanatic.

Goethe met Lavater for the second time in Switzerland, during Goethe's first trip to the country. During this trip from May to July 1775, Goethe wrote several people concerning his

interaction with and feelings for Lavater (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 452-459). For example, Goethe mentions his enthusiasm about their visit on 7 June 1775 in his letter to Johanna Fahlmer (1744-1821). Fahlmer became Johann Georg Schlosser's wife in 1778 after the death of Goethe's sister Cornelia in 1777 (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 454). He also wrote to La Roche from Lavater's desk during the trip on 12 June 1775, expressing his true admiration for and inspiration from Lavater (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 455).

Following this trip the focus of their correspondence was on the *Physiognomische Fragmente*, of which the first volume was published in the fall of 1775 (*Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 549). Goethe and Lavater had been discussing the project in their correspondence since 1774 (Große, *Briefe an Lavater Kommentar* 549; Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1764-1775* 406, 412-413, 461-462, 466-468, 481-482). During their work on the project and even thereafter in Goethe's Weimar period their letters also continued to address religion. For example in an unmarked post script Goethe wrote at the end of his letter to Lavater on 8 January 1777 concerning his belief in God: “Dein Durst nach Christ<us> hat mich gejamert. Du bist übler dran als wir Heiden uns erscheinen doch in der Noth unsre Götter” (Your thirst for Christ agitates me. You are worse off than we heathens [;] in times of need our gods appear) (79). Despite these differences, Lavater also still praised Goethe to others, as Gleim confirms in his letter to F. H. Jacobi at the end of June 1777. They also continued to see each other (*Briefe 1775-1786* 90).

On Goethe's second trip to Switzerland, on 28 September 1779 Goethe wrote to Charlotte von Stein to mention that he was greatly anticipating a visit to Lavater in Emmendingen, Switzerland (*Briefe 1775-1786* 194). Goethe sent then a series of letters expressing his delight in his ability to see Lavater on 8 October, 28 October, and 2 November 1779 (*Briefe 1775-1786* 198, 213, 221). After they met on 20 November 1779, Goethe wrote to Knebel on 30 November

1779 as well as to von Stein concerning his joy from seeing Lavater (*Briefe 1775-1786* 224, 225). This was their third meeting.

Differences in opinion eventually ended Lavater and Goethe's relationship (Große, *Briefe an Lavater* Kommentar 549). These differences affected their working relationship as well. This is seen, for example, in Goethe's distancing from the *Physiognomik* project in 1776 (Niekerk 11). The final break reportedly occurred because Goethe did not appreciate being mentioned by Lavater in the dedication section of *Nathanael*, as Goethe expressed in his letter from December 1783 (549). In 1786 they saw each other one last time in Weimar (Große, *Briefe an Lavater* Kommentar 549)

Toward the end of his life on 18 January 1830, Goethe spoke overall positively in his reflections concerning Lavater to Eckermann: “Es ist zu bedauern, fügte er hinzu, daß ein schwacher Mystizismus dem Aufflug seines Genies so bald Grenzen setzte” (It is to regret, he added, that a weak version of mysticism set limitation to the flight of his genius so soon) (Eckermann 686). Even here he states his opposition to Lavater's religious ideas through his choice of the word *mysticism*. Goethe had generally spoken positively of Lavater throughout his life, despite their religious differences. Goethe reported that Lavater became too religiously intrusive (*Dichtung* 660). Their differences, which existed previous to their acquaintance, did not significantly alter Goethe's positive portrayal of Lavater in *Werther*. *Werther*'s failure to mention Lavater's sermon is the only area of question, but the editor corrects the mistake, turning it into a positive recognition of Lavater. Despite the two clearly marked intertextual references to Lavater in the novel, Goethe's own reflections on *Werther* later in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* do not mention Lavater (Atkins, *Psychology* 521). By that time, Goethe's friendship with Lavater had long ended.

VII. MELUSINE AND 1001 NIGHTS

Fairy tales played a role in Goethe's life, as early as his childhood. In *Dichtung und Wahrheit* he reflects on what he learned from his parents and is thankful to his mother for teaching him how to invent fairy tales during the telling (*Dichtung* 486). He told and wrote fairy tales for his acquaintances. In his early years as a writer he spoke of these tales in his letters. Goethe spoke of Melusine's story during a trip to Sesenheim, where he recited the story to his friends (*Dichtung* 485). In Goethe's letter to Sophie von la Roche on 19 January 1773, he calls himself a story teller, specifically of fairy tales (*Briefe 1764-1775* 286). In his letter to Betty Jacobi on 10 September 1773 he writes about a tale he was unable to finish: "Ich kann Ihnen das Märchen nicht schaffen, und habe nichts, als das Ding da das Sie vielleicht nicht interessirt" (I can not create a fairy tale for you, and I have nothing but that thing which you might not be interested in) (*Briefe 1764-1775* 317). Werther shares this talent for telling and creating fairy tales. On 15 August 1771, Werther tells a story of telling fairy tales to the children, Lotte's siblings:

Heute war ich hinaus gegangen, Lottens Clavier zu stimmen, denn die Kleinen verfolgten mich um ein Märchen, und Lotte sagte selbst, ich sollte ihnen den Willen thun. Ich schnitt ihnen das Abendbrod, das sie nun so gern von mir als von Lotten annehmen und erzählte ihnen das Hauptstückchen von der Prinzessin die von Händen bedient wird. Ich lerne dabey das versichre ich dich, und ich bin erstaunt was es auf sie für Eindrücke macht. Weil ich manchmal einen Incidentpunct erfinden muß, den ich beym zweytenmal vergesse, sagen sie gleich, das vorigemal wär' es anders gewesen, so daß ich mich jetzt übe, sie unveränderlich in einem singenden Sylbenfall an einem Schnürchen weg zu recitiern.
(*Werther* 103, 105)

I went out there today to tune Lotte's clavichord but I did not get around to this task, for the children followed me everywhere, asking to be told a fairy tale, and Lotte herself begged me to do as they wished. I cut the bread for their supper, which they now take from me as eagerly as from Lotte, and told them their favorite story of the princess who was served by ghostly hands. I am learning a good deal from all this, I assure you; and I am amazed what an impression I make. When I sometimes have to invent a small detail which I forget the next time, they at once tell me that the story was different at the

previous telling; so now I practice reciting it without alterations from beginning to end,
like a chant. (Mayer 63)

Here Werther implies how fairy tales became a way for him to connect to Lotte's siblings. He proves himself to be domestically equipped to feed children and tell them bed time stories.

Werther specifically speaks of two tales in *Werther: Melusine* and *1001 Nights*. They can be understood in conjunction with each other. The reference to Melusine is made very early in the novel, as Werther's spirits are high. He enjoys his new surroundings away from home. Everyday he gladly goes to the water to experience the idyllic surroundings in the outdoors. He sits for an hour. It is picturesque place to watch the women of the city collect water. It is here that he thinks of Melusine. In the summer he no longer goes to the water but now to Lotte's everyday, even though he tries to stay away. The calmness he possessed in his May letter in which he mentioned Melusine is now gone and his choice of *Der Magnetenberg* from *1001 Nights* mirrors his state.

The name Melusine is mentioned in Werther's letter from 12 May 1771, the third letter in the novel. The context for the reference is Werther's visit to the fountain. He states that the area is like a fantasy: "Da ist gleich vor dem Orte ein Brunnen, ein Brunnen, an den ich gebannt bin wie Melusine mit ihren Schwestern" (17) (Near the entrance to the town is a fountain, a fountain which holds me spellbound like Melusine with her sisters) (Mayer 6). This quote shows Werther's familiarity with the story of Melusine as well as the impact it had on him.

Prier mentions how Goethe includes the name *Melusine* in *Werther* (285). He suggests that Goethe does not include the tale in *Werther*, though he had already told an earlier version of it in *Sesenheim*, since it would have ruined the idyllic in *Werther* (285). Goethe did not tell any other stories in *Werther* completely, though. The most comprehensive reference he makes to any

is a sentence or two. His description of the *Melusine* story is not lacking. The one sentence description is more than he allots to many of the texts and authors he mentions. For several references, such as Klopstock or *Emilia Galotti*, he offers no summary at all.

The Melusine reference here is to the German *Volksbuch* from 1474. In this early version of Melusine, she is a nymph, who bathes with her sisters in a spring (Wiethölter, Kommentar 962). The story is thought to originate in the twelfth century. There are also earlier Melusine stories that have a similar water scene. Gervasius von Tilbury's (1150-1235) *Otia imperialia* (1211/1214) includes a Melusine motif. Here Raymund from Castrum Rassetum meets a beautifully dressed woman at the river (1023). She agrees to marry him, so long as he agrees to never see her bathing. When he breaks his promise she disappears into the bath water. Goethe knows of this version, as he briefly mentions Raymond and Melusine in describing the reactions of a group in Sesenheim to his reading of *Wakefield* (*Dichtung* 496-497).

Goethe's plans for his novella *Die Neue Melusine* originated in 1782 (Mommsen 159). He mentions that he is working on a fairy tale in a letter to von Stein on 17 September 1782, which is considered to be *Die Neue Melusine* (Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* Kommentar 993). He also wrote to her about Melusine in his letter from 17 November 1782 (Goethe, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* 457). Goethe presents Melusine here as having a different meaning than the one he presents in *Werther*. Instead of thinking of Melusine bathing with her sisters, he associates her with the inability to return home. Being able to return home is also a theme in his *Neue Melusine*.

Goethe's *Die Neue Melusine* was published in two parts with the first part in the *Taschenbuch für Damen auf das Jahr 1817* and then the remainder in an 1819 edition (Mommsen 148/149). It later appeared in full form in *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre oder die*

Entsagenden (1821) as well (Reinhardt, *Goethe Briefe 1775-1786* Kommentar 994). In Goethe's version Melusine does not have any sisters and does not bathe in the spring. She turns into a tiny princess, which is her true form, and her prince is a common man. Goethe address themes of love, magic, otherness, wish fulfillment, and the role of money in relationships. He also explores the problems of loyalty in relationships, marriage, and cultural identity. It has been described as a collage of fairy tale and saga motifs (Schmitz-Emans 332).

On 26 July 1771, Werther describes how he finds himself walking to Lotte's daily, though he tries not to visit as often. From these thoughts, he slips into a memory from his childhood: "Meine Großmutter hatte ein Märchen vom Magnetenberg, die Schiffe die zu nahe kamen, wurden auf einmal alles Eisenwerks beraubt, die Nägel flogen dem Berge zu, und die armen Elenden scheiterten zwischen den übereinander stürzenden Brettern" (*Werther* 85) (My grandmother knew a fairy tale about the Magnetic Mountain. Ships which sailed too close to it were suddenly deprived of all their iron; all the nails flew toward the mountain, and the poor sailors were shipwrecked among the collapsing planks) (Mayer 51). Werther incorporates the story in his letter from 26 July. It highlights the doom he feels as a result of his daily visits to Lotte. He does not specifically comment on the fairy tale, and his summary ends his letter. The shipwreck in the tale can be interpreted as an early foreshadow of Werther's destruction. He suspects that the daily visits are not good for him, but he cannot stop them. The incorporation of this tale stands in stark contrast to the section of the Melusine tale he discusses.

This summary of the story *Der Magnetenberg* (*The Magnetic Mountain*) was a part of *1001 Nights*, a collection of 1000 fairy tales that are tied together through the stories Scheherazade as the wife of the King Schahriyâr told her husband every night. Previous to their marriage the king had many other wives, whom he had killed after his honeymoon night. This

ritual had begun as a result of his first wife's unfaithfulness. Scheherazade tells a story to the king every night to prevent her own death.

The narrative poem was also in the popular medieval chapbook *Herzog Ernst (Duke Ernest)*, written by an anonymous author (Blamires 1). It is categorized as a *Spielmannsepos* (“minstrel epic”) from the latter half of the twelfth century (2). Goethe had used the French Orientalist Antoine Galland's (1646-1715) version *Les Mille et une Nuit: Contes arabes* (1704-1717) (Bohnenkamp, Kommentar 1399). Goethe later wrote schematic notes for a new version of *1001 Nights* that was to be different from Galland's version. Goethe's notes were written in December 1824 or May 1825 (*Schriften* 1824-1832 655).

Werther's discussion of Melusine and *Der Magnetenberg* reflects his future problems - problems that ultimately lead to his complete loss of self. This brief examination of the tales in the novel show that fairy tales played a role throughout Goethe's life. They were told to him by his mother in his childhood; he then mastered the art of altering fairy tales in his oral delivery of them in his young adulthood, and incorporated them in his literary texts to help establish a frame of reference for his characters' state of mind. Each of these tales had a significant impact on Goethe, as we see in his publication of *Die Neue Melusine* in 1816 and his plans for reviving *1001 Nights* in 1824.

VIII. CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

Men had access to all areas of literature. Greek scholarship and theological debates are two examples. These subjects were male-dominated fields. Women, in contrast, focused on specific genres because of their education. Women aristocrats in the seventeenth century wrote in the fairy tale genre, partook in literary conversations, and painted portraits (Wolfgang 12):

“Aristocratic women's styles of speech and writing brought together the oral and the literary in new ways; they inspired women and men alike to experiment with modern, accessible, and expansive forms of literature“ (13). Women's focus on more accessible genres and fields led to development in the genres of letter writing and epistolary novels. It was their contributions that helped establish the epistolary novel, and ultimately the novel itself, as a serious genre. They received little recognition for these contributions, as we see through the examples of what goes unsaid in *Werther*. Even those young male writers who were considered progressive, such as the young Goethe, did not use their resources to help women gain visibility for their achievements.

Women authors go unnamed in *Werther*, for example. Though Riccoboni may not have been mentioned because she is French, Werther does not react to the reference. By comparison, Werther is very excited by Lotte's mention of *Wakefield*. By itself Werther's reaction may not seem curious, but combined with the actions of the editor silencing Lotte, women are stripped of their ability to have their voices heard on literary matters. As men, Werther, the editor, and Goethe have the authority to prepare a correct German literary inheritance void of the feminine voice. Based on the gender specific editorial deletions in the text, the fictional editor could only have been male.

We also see from this study that educated women were demonized, such as the portrayal of the new preacher's wife demonstrates. Interested in biblical canonical debates, she is portrayed as a very unlikable person and as opposed to someone who would be interested in Lavater. Werther may not have thought very highly of her interests, but could have presented her in more amiable terms, as he does for example with the Young V. Werther does not seem very interested in talking about scholarship of antiquity either, but he does not denigrate the Young V as a result. Instead Werther makes many perhaps unfounded generalizations about the new

preacher wife's involvement in destroying nature and hurting the feelings of the community.

Imaginary, seductive women are presented as an ideal through Werther's reference to *Melusine*. This tale helps shape a very different atmosphere than the one created by the reference to *Der Magnetenberg*. Werther thinks of it at a reflective moment concerning his destructive impulses. *Sturm und Drang* form emphasizes a strong masculinity, but the choice of letter writing for *Werther* is closely associated with women. Goethe's use of the form reshaped the epistolary novel, making it a more gender neutral genre for future generations.

CONCLUSION.

In this dissertation I have examined the explicit intertextual references in Goethe's *Werther*. Goethe's intertextual references, which vary from canonical works to texts that are now forgotten, show a dynamic relationship between ideas from antiquity to modernity. Rather than a static text, the novel incorporates a network of voices. *Werther* is not monologic from a Bakhtinian perspective. The novel is composed of contrasting perspectives of the characters and of other authors and their texts. The text, which transversed boundaries of language and national divide, helped to create the ensemble that constitutes Germany's literary heritage. At the same time, certain texts have more prominence than others. Some are easily missed, such as the second reference to Lavater, while others, such as Klopstock, function as the climax to the ball evening. Through this Klopstock example we see how these intertextual references have shifted away from the actual wording of Goethe's text. Goethe's altered feelings for Klopstock are reflected in the 1787 revised version of text. After the end of Goethe's friendship with Klopstock, Goethe no longer celebrated the poet Klopstock. The praise for marvelous Klopstock shifts to Klopstock becoming an adjective to describe the genre ode. Goethe's changes from the earlier 1774 version to the later one in 1787 are particularly helpful for examining how the intertextual references function in the text. Goethe's correspondence with his contemporaries expresses the general attitude of the eighteenth-century German speaking literary scene concerning these references.

Goethe helped shape the face of modern German literature through placing his *Werther* at a literary intersection between early German canonic and modern literature. *Werther* was one step in the turn away from past aesthetic models. Goethe highlights a masculine expression of

emotion, a tone that vibrates through the entire novel, which erupts in pain and violence. Lessing is an example of a past aesthetic model. Lessing's ideas concerning the portrayal of death shaped the ending of his play *Emilia Galotti*. Her passing occurs softly and swiftly, which emphasizes the beauty of the scene. Whereas the moment of pain is skipped in Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*, it is drawn out for half a day by Goethe in *Werther*. Werther who has told us his most private thoughts, wishes, and fears can no longer communicate his most intense feelings. His death is a struggle and in this way no different than the other challenges he had faced from every other failed decision. His past strategy of moving on to the next town and activity when he did not find happiness and stability is no longer an option. Werther is not alone in his inability to reconcile the differences between that which is expected of him to become a functioning member of society and his own desires; Emilia in Lessing's play also fails to adapt.

The larger message of Goethe's placement of *Emilia Galotti* in his *Werther* is that Lessing's model of Enlightenment texts is antiquated. Goethe does not see the need for texts to have a larger didactic purpose, as Lessing expects. *Werther* offers a set of standards for novels and thereby new literary guidelines for a modern German literature. Until this time the novel either borrowed structural elements from drama or conceived the structure from autobiographies (Moravetz 3). No standard had been set by Boileau in his *L'Art Poétique* on how to judge this relatively new genre (2). Epistolary novels were viewed as a literature of entertainment instead of as a serious genre. Goethe successfully combined fact and fictionality in *Werther*. Werther's composition of subjective reports achieves distance in the novel through the fictional editor, behind which Goethe's personal ideas lie (Picard 34, 35, 36). Through this new mode of writing Goethe names himself as Lessing's successor, which he cunningly expresses through the placement of Lessing's drama at Werther's bedside. Lessing's moral ending did not help Werther

to learn to become a functioning, respected individual in society.

Werther does not throw out all tradition, though. Goethe decided on which items to address and in what light. Goethe portrays Homer in a positive way, depicting interest in Homer as generational, for example. Both Albert and Werther believe that Homer is worth reading. Werther explicitly refers to Homeric text seven times and Albert gives Werther the Wetstein editions of Homeric epics for his birthday. Werther engages with Homeric texts throughout the majority of the novel, and then, out in nature, where Homeric epics help him to reflect on his own situation. Through this intertextual reference, Goethe can be seen as taking a stance on the *Querelle des anciens et des modernes* debate, even if it is long after the actual debate in France at the end of the seventeenth century. Taking a late stance on aesthetic debates is something that Goethe did in the eighteenth-century aesthetic debate on *Laokoon* as well. Whereas Lessing's essay on the *Laokoon* was written in 1766, Goethe did not publish his until 1798. To reiterate, Goethe aimed to create something fresh and better than the ancient masters and he believed that the best way to achieve this was through the efforts of the individual. Furthermore, Goethe himself approaches antiquity on the basis of modern questions (Riedel 81).

Werther's leisure reading of Homer does not help him to advance professionally or personally, which is the fictional reason why he casts it aside for Ossian on 12 October 1772. Werther's romanticizing of Greek antiquity describes an unobtainable ideal. Ultimately, unable to find a home on earth, Werther shatters the idyll that he encounters through reading Homer. The larger message from the novel is that Homeric epics do not provide a model for modernity.

Werther is unable to learn from Homer, whereas reading Ossian helps him to advance to a more physical relationship with Lotte. Ossian functions primarily to advance the plot between Lotte and Werther. Incorporating the reference also contradicts Goethe's own stance against

imitating the masters. Ossianic passages engulf the language of the novel and lead to Werther's seduction of Lotte, the end of their relationship, and the end of his life. Once the passages serves their purpose of fulfilling Werther's desire to be closer to Lotte, Ossian is not mentioned again in the text. This too mimics Goethe's own passing interest in Ossian. Despite the help that Ossian affords Werther, Ossian is negatively placed in the novel. Werther's reading of Ossian parallels the deterioration of his mindset and lessens his ability to take care of himself. Including Ossian in *Werther* put Macpherson's Ossian on the literary agenda in Germany (Schmidt, *Rezeption* 723). Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about women's literature.

One can not conclude that male genres were valued over female ones in the novel, however. We see for example that Werther rejects a typical male literary discussion on classical as well as theological scholarship. Werther's actions in the scenes with the Young V. and the new preacher's wife also lend themselves to the dismissal of a heightened role of classical texts in the modern world. This is furthermore seen in discussion at the old preacher's house when no one suggests Lavater's discussion of the Book of Jonah as way to remedy ill humor. Lavater has already been forgotten in the fictional time of 1771-1772 by those engaged with the canonical debates on the Bible. Dancing is suggested as an alternative remedy by Lotte instead. Neither Greek scholarship nor theological writings interest Werther. He would rather be judged by his heart (*Werther* 155). Adopting this set of effeminate standards, Goethe does not need to imitate the woman's voice, which was the standard European practice of men writing epistolary novels. Goethe adversely completely silences it, while claiming the female genre letters as a vehicle for male agony.

The male fictional editor not only intervenes to correct the record on Lavater but also to omit an alternative canon. The female voice was silenced, despite the progress that *Sturm und*

Drang promised. Women's considerations were not part of the agenda, as Goethe's *Werther* demonstrates. The sentimental utterances as well as the association between women and letter writing in the novel are neutralized to communicate masculine concerns. The women who had helped advance this form were not given credit by Goethe in *Werther*. They were only obscurely addressed through the female character's name Miss Jenny. Had Lotte been allowed to have her voice heard in her monologues then the epistolary tradition would have been better served.

Progress in *Sturm und Drang* was tied to creation, and men created ideas. Women's concerns are not illuminated, and women are judged by traditional standards of womanhood.

The young Lotte does not become a blood mother though in the course of the novel, pointing to dis-accord within her marriage. In her position as a wife she is expected not only to care for her siblings, but also to procreate with Albert. This does not happen; though she is ironically posed as an idealized mother figure through her very first appearance (41). The irony of Lotte's character might be seen as a result of Goldsmith's influence on Goethe. Besides Lotte, the other idealized woman is the imaginary fictional character Melusine. In some version of the tale, Melusine is a mother, but this is not the *Melusine* version that Werther refers to in the novel. Werther's Melusine is associated with paradise. She is a creature of nature, bathing in the springs, as Werther imagines her. This image of femininity contrasts starkly with the idyllic moment of Lotte feeding her siblings. From his first evening with Lotte forward, Werther's ideal shifts from the seductive Melusine to the motherly Lotte, who sets her own interests aside to serve her family. Werther's daily trips to the fountain where he dreams of Melusine is replaced by his daily visits to Lotte's to help her with the children. Of sound mind, Werther realizes the danger in this shift, as he illustrates through his reference to *Der Magnetenberg*.

Goethe's *Werther* successfully conveyed the sentiment of his eighteenth-century

readership, which was ready for jolted change (*Dichtung* 634). Goethe's reexamination of taboo subjects in the novel, such as suicide, not only expresses the varying attitudes toward it, but it also provides one more piece of evidence of how this novel is polyphonic. It is yet to see whether the young Goethe went beyond the literary achievements of the past masters. However, *Werther*'s *mélange* intertext created a masterpiece that still arouses the interest of a twenty-first century German audience in its literary heritage, as seen through the 2010 film *Goethe!*. This renewed interest in the creation of *Werther* is an indicator of the text's resonance.

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