

REFRAMING RELIGION:
PAINTING AND SECULARIZATION IN GERMAN REALISM

Bethany Bowen-Wefuan

A dissertation submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Department of Germanic and Slavic Languages and Literatures.

Chapel Hill
2018

Approved by:

Eric Downing

Ruth von Bernuth

Stefani Engelstein

Gabriel Trop

© 2018
Bethany Bowen-Wefuan
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

ABSTRACT

Bethany Bowen-Wefuan: Reframing Religion: Painting and Secularization in German Realism
(Under the direction of Eric Downing)

This dissertation examines literary depictions of painting in novels and novellas of German Realism in light of recent theories of modern secularization. While traditional understandings of realism emphasize mimesis and disenchantment as its primary aim, the texts at hand suggest a more complicated relationship between realism and secularization. Indeed, painting as depicted in German Realism often resists secularization by engaging and deploying religious discourse. Framing close readings within theories of secularization by philosopher Charles Taylor and sociologists David Martin and Peter Berger, the four chapters of this dissertation examine Theodor Storm's *Im Schloß* (1862), Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854/55), Adalbert Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften* (1864), and Theodor Fontane's *L'Adultera* (1882). These works not only reflect many aspects of secularization, but they do so in good part through their portrayals of painting. As a result, depictions of painting become inseparable from questions of the sacred in ways that fundamentally refigure and enrich our understanding of the secular in German Realism.

Recent theories of secularization allow for new readings of German Realist texts by unsettling many of the assumptions that shape the scholarship on it, which by and

large relies on a theory of secularization espoused by Enlightenment thinkers. That model assumes that human reason will replace religious belief, and has given rise to two broad currents of criticism. The first focuses on German Realism's relationship to a distinctly modern world, often lamenting its apparent reluctance to engage that world. In response to that failure, the second examines instead German Realism's distinctive aesthetic strategies. Alternative models of secularization and modernity, in contrast, reveal the worlds depicted in German Realism to be thoroughly modern in ways the Enlightenment model overlooks. Three aspects of nineteenth-century secularization, as identified by Taylor, Berger, and Martin, are particularly relevant to this project: the status of religion as an option for the modern subject, rather than a given; her feeling of alienation from the ordinary world; and the coexistence of secular and sacred discourses for understanding the world. By examining painting in light of secularization theories, new possibilities emerge for understanding the relationship between realist aesthetics and the sacred.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Now that this project is complete, I am grateful for the space to thank the people who made it not only possible, but also enjoyable (mostly). Many times throughout the past few years, I've been struck by how fortunate I am to work under Eric Downing's guidance. I want to thank him for his expertise and kindness—an invaluable combination in an advisor. Our conversations about German Realism were fruitful and fun. Many thanks go to my committee: to Jonathan Hess for his rare ability to demystify academic writing; to Ann Marie Rasmussen, for her down-to-earth feedback on my chapters and her energy for the writing process; to Gabriel Trop for his encouragement to persevere at a precarious juncture in my graduate studies; to Ruth von Bernuth, for her enthusiasm for my project, which I found so refreshing in the final stages of my writing; and to Stefani Engelstein, whose help extends all the way back to my undergraduate studies at the University of Missouri, where she introduced me to the ever-surprising Adalbert Stifter. Thank you.

Few things are more exciting than intellectual engagement in the context of friendship, so I am extremely grateful for the graduate students who facilitated such an experience during my time at Carolina-Duke German. Thank you to my CDG colleagues; especially, to Annegret Oehme, Lindsay Brandt, Holly Eades, Heidi Hart, Sandra Niethardt, John White, and Emma Woelk for the conversations, coffees, and laughs. Thanks to Jessica Drexel and Ashley King for exploring faith and literature with me. Our

reading group gave me a new appreciation for the gift of literature. To Meggan Cashwell and Deon Dick, thank you for your friendship.

Speaking of friendship, I want to thank the dear people whose presence and prayers strengthened me, and who reminded me of the world beyond the academy and of the God above everything. Thank you to my long-time friend and interlocutor, Syneva. Our conversations energize me. To the members of my church families in both Durham and Wilmington, especially Ginny, Amy, and Tracy. To my parents: your encouragement and counsel have meant more than I can say. Thank you for supporting me, even when you didn't understand what all of those little yellow books were about. To my siblings, Sarah, Nathan, Hannah, and Josiah. I laugh the hardest with you. Finally, to my sweet Dieter. Your optimism, humor, and love lift me up. I cannot imagine a better companion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER ONE: The Secularization Thesis: Theodor Storm's <i>Im Schloss</i> (1862).....	35
CHAPTER TWO: Ordinary Disenchantment in Keller's <i>Der grüne Heinrich</i> (1854/55).....	74
CHAPTER THREE: The Festival Sketch: Harmonizing a Plurality of Discourses In Stifter's <i>Nachkommenschaften</i> (1864).....	116
CHAPTER FOUR: Painting, Ritual, and Christian Discourse In Fontane's <i>L'Adultera</i> (1882).....	160
CONCLUSION.....	199
WORKS CITED.....	203

INTRODUCTION

Ich kenne nur zwei Bilder, und zwar von Niederländern, die mir einen Eindruck gemacht hätten wie das Neue Testament: das eine ist, ich weiß nicht von wem, Christus und die Jünger von Emmaus. Wenn man so liest, wie die Jünger hinausgingen, es liegt gleich die ganze Natur in den paar Worten. Es ist ein trüber, dämmernder Abend, ein einförmiger roter Streifen am Horizont, halbfenster auf der Straße; da kommt ein Unbekannter zu ihnen, sie sprechen, er bricht das Brot; da erkennen sie ihn, in einfach-menschlicher Art, und die göttlich-leidenden Züge reden ihnen deutlich, und sie erschrecken, denn es ist finster geworden, und es tritt sie etwas Unbegreifliches an; aber es ist kein gespenstisches Grauen, es ist, wie wenn einem ein geliebter Toter in der Dämmerung in der alten Art entgegenträte: so ist das Bild mit dem einförmigen, bräunlichen Ton darüber, dem trüben stillen Abend.

- Lenz, Georg Büchner¹

A moment of startled recognition is at the heart of Lenz's understanding of realist art. In this portion of the famous *Kunstgespräch*, the poet's version of the biblical narrative depicted in a Dutch painting highlights the tension between the familiarity of Christ and the shock of his disciples when they finally recognize him after his resurrection. Although he is a friend who appears "in der alten Art" – walking with them, talking, eating – at first they mistake him for an "Unbekannter." The turning point to sudden recognition illustrates the potential of realist art to capture familiarity without becoming trite or mundane; Paul Fleming describes realism as "attuning itself to prosaic life [familiar] while trying to escape prosaic quality [unfamiliar]." ² To capture the

¹ Georg Büchner, "Lenz," In *Georg Büchner Werke und Briefe*, (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1988): 145-146.

² Paul Fleming, *Exemplarity and Mediocrity. The Art of the Average from Bourgeois Tragedy to Realism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009): 3.

ordinary without becoming ordinary. Lenz compares the experience of the realist artwork to meeting a deceased friend: “wie wenn einem ein geliebter Toter in der Dämmerung in *der alten Art* entgegenträte: so ist das Bild...” (my emphasis). The work of art is surprising, but also familiar, welcome – a tension that will reappear throughout this dissertation.

That Christ exemplifies the realist paradox is no coincidence, nor is this the only time he appears in connection to ekphrastic reflections on German Realism. Both *menschlich* and *göttlich*, he embodies familiarity coupled with Otherness. Indeed, in Theodor Storm’s *Im Schloß* (1862), *Viola tricolor* (1874), and *Aquis submersus* (1877) and in Theodor Fontane’s *L’Adultera* (1882), Christ appears in connection with painting. The relationship between literary depictions of art and religion is notable at a time when many accepted the Enlightenment’s narrative about a secularization in which all modes of knowledge—foremost, religious modes—would eventually be subject to human reason. In contrast to this narrative is the implicit suggestion in the literary texts at hand that like religious faith, art is a mode of understanding beyond the purview of reason. It cannot be fully explained by or translated into other discourses.

The claim that German Realism somehow compares itself to a religious discourse may be surprising given the commonplace contrast many scholars make between German Realism and Romanticism. The transition from Romanticism’s interest in the supernatural to German Realism’s ostensibly objective depiction of familiar reality appears to adhere neatly to the conception of secularization that much of the work on German Realism takes for granted. Ritchie Robertson, for instance, contrasts the

significance of “reality” in German Realism over against the waning religiosity that undergirds Romanticism:

in the mid-nineteenth century ‘reality’ had a particular set of associations. It signified a reaction against the unsatisfying fantasies of Romanticism and also against the supernatural assertions of a Christianity that was ceasing to be credible. By contrast with such false promises, reality itself had something salvific about it.³

Realism reflects a shift from the Romantic world of mystery to the everyday. In the absence of ‘fantasies and supernatural assertions,’ which the Christian faith rendered plausible and relevant, a “reality” from which Christianity was increasingly excised gets thrust to the fore. A familiar world replaces a mysterious one. In this dissertation I claim that, in contrast to this common understanding of secularization, recent alternative theories of secularization enable a very different characterization of German Realism. Rather than a product of religion’s slow fade from Western culture, such secularization theories reveal German Realism to be highly aware of an exchange – fraught though it may be – between the mundane and the spiritual.

In order to consider how German Realists conceive of their work, *Reframing Religion* examines literary depictions of painting in novels and novellas of German Realism within the context of theories of secularization. It poses the question: What do the paintings portrayed in the texts at hand reveal about the relationship between German Realism and secularization? Other questions include: What aspects of secularization, as identified and defined by philosopher Charles Taylor and sociologists of religion David Martin and Peter Berger, does each text reflect? What is the relationship between these aspects of secularization and the paintings portrayed in the texts? Finally, what does the

³ Ritchie Robertson, “Keller and Ariosto: The Seductive Imagination in *Der grüne Heinrich*,” *English Goethe Society* 80 (2011): 128.

relationship between secularization and painting reveal about the German Realists' understanding of the role of literature? Framing close readings within the context of theories of secularization by Charles Taylor, David Martin, and Peter Berger, the four chapters of this dissertation examine Theodor Storm's *Im Schloß* (1862), Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854/55), Adalbert Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften* (1864), and Theodor Fontane's *L'Adultera* (1882). The theme of visual representation is pervasive in German Realism—there are many texts one might turn to in order to explore the function of painting in this literary period. The four texts that this dissertation examines engage a breadth of paintings, fictional and non-fictional: *Im Schloß* focuses on fictional portraits, *Der grüne Heinrich* and *Nachkommenschaften* depict fictional landscape paintings, and *L'Adultera* centers on an historical biblical painting by Tintoretto. In each text, painting highlights various aspects of the secularization theories espoused by Taylor, Martin, and Berger, through characters who engage the challenges and changes in their modern worlds *as* painters and viewers of painting.

By way of preparation for my close readings, this introduction fleshes out some of my key terms and concepts. First, I present a brief history of German Realism's scholarly reception, with an eye to the particular conception of modernity assumed by many scholars, which has given rise to perennial comparisons between German Realism and its European counterparts. To further explain the view of modernity that undergirds the scholarship, I then offer an account of modernity as framed by the "secularization theory," followed by contrasting snapshots of recent alternative theories of secularization. The next section introduces the third term of this project, painting, both within the

context of modern understandings of art's function and of its appearance in German Realism. I conclude with an overview of each chapter.

GERMAN REALISM: NOT REAL ENOUGH?

Echoing in the background of much of the current scholarship on German Realism are the voices of its early critics. Influential claims that German Realism fails to address the most pressing aspects of modernity as it should – that is, as other European realists do—assume a historical narrative of progress with an emphasis on urbanization and industrialization. Spearheading the critique were literary scholars Erich Auerbach in his book *Mimesis* (1946) and Georg Lukács. Auerbach sums up his perception of German Realism when he states,

None of the men between 1840 and 1890—from Jeremias Gotthelf to Theodor Fontane—displays, fully developed, all of the major characteristics of French realism, that is, of the nascent European form of realism: namely, ... a serious representation of contemporary everyday social reality against the background of a constant historical movement.⁴

The language of maturity and development native to the secularization theory is present here in the words “fully developed” and “nascent.” For Auerbach, the definition of a “serious realism”⁵ is based on a very narrow understanding of modernity. When he identifies “contemporary everyday social reality” as the fabric of a “fully developed” realism, he is distinguishing between the “provincial, much more old-fashioned, much less ‘contemporary’” worlds depicted in German Realism,⁶ and the “bustle of

⁴ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask, (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1968): 518.

⁵ Ibid., 519.

⁶ Ibid., 516.

contemporary history, ... the modern life of the world, politics, business, money matters, professional concerns” depicted in French Realism.⁷ This distinction is not simply between urban and rural life, but between what Auerbach believes is a more advanced version of reality and an outmoded one. Using similar language about “serious realism,” Lukács claims that,

Die ernsten Realisten wollen das gesellschaftliche Leben ihrer Zeit rücksichtslos wahrhaft wiedergeben und verzichten deshalb in ihrer künstlerischen Zielsetzung auf jede Harmonie des Menschlichen, auf jede Schönheit der harmonischen menschlichen Persönlichkeit.⁸

The Industrial Revolution gave rise to a host of “ernsten” European realist authors such as Charles Dickens (1812-1870) in England, Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) in France, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) in Russia, to name only a few, whose novels foreground the casualties of modernity. Orphans, prostitutes, and criminals take center stage in critical representations of capitalism, urbanization, and industrialization. German contemporaries of the European realists such as three of the authors examined in this dissertation –Gottfried Keller (1819-1890), Adalbert Stifter (1805-1868), and Theodor Storm (1817-1888) – did not focus extensively on the sociopolitical upheaval of their time.⁹ Instead, many of them prefer depictions of the village to the city, the family to the

⁷ Ibid., 518-519.

⁸ Georg Lukács, “Das Ideal des harmonischen Menschen in der bürgerlichen Ästhetik,” *Essays über Realismus*, (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1948)

⁹ In the final chapter, I examine a novel by Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) whom, unlike the other three authors under consideration, many scholars have found comparable to the European Realists. This is due to his depictions of urban settings, especially Berlin, and his works’ critical focus on social issues such as class and the societal norms of marriage. Jeffrey L. Sammons notes the favor Fontane’s works have enjoyed, calling him “the author who has come to be regarded as the savior of the prestige of German realism.” See “The Nineteenth-Century German Novel,” In *German Literature of the Nineteenth Century, 1832-1899*, edited by Eric Downing and Clayton Koelb (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005): 200. This is not to say, however, that Fontane has gained the same level of recognition that European realists have, as Peter Uwe

outcast, and tradition to innovation. But because the gritty social realism of England, France, and Russia was the standard by which German Realism was evaluated, many viewed it as a failed realism.

Auerbach's and Lukács' claims constitute an inviting challenge for many German Studies scholars. An array of fine scholarship has been the result, branching into two broad lines of inquiry. Some have argued that German Realism does, in fact, tackle more "modern" problems, but obliquely. Others focus on the unique aesthetic qualities of German Realism, claiming that we should approach German Realism on its own terms, rather than on those of the European realists.¹⁰ Among the scholars who are returning to the question of modernity's presence in German Realism is John B. Lyon, who has used spatial theory's distinctions between "place" and "space" to show very persuasively that German Realism is aware of the changes accompanying urbanization in the cities of German lands in the nineteenth century.¹¹ Another example is Catriona MacLeod, who

Hohendahl and Ulrike Vedder observe: "Allerdings ist festzuhalten: Im Vergleich mit Gustave Flaubert oder Emile Zola, ja selbst mit Charles Dickens, George Eliot und Henry James fehlt Fontanes Gesellschaftsromanen bis heute die internationale Anerkennung." See "Herausforderungen des Realismus: Theodor Fontanes Gesellschaftsromane. Zur Einleitung," *Herausforderungen des Realismus. Theodor Fontanes Gesellschaftsroman* (Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2017): 8. Nor have Fontane's works escaped unfavorable comparison to that of European realists. Hikmet Tan, for example, goes so far as to claim that Fontane's realism was behind the times: "[Fontane bleibt] hinter Möglichkeiten zur Darstellung der Wirklichkeit zurück, die in der europäischen Literatur schon erreicht sind." See *Die Romanpoetik Theodor Fontanes: Seine Romane Effi Briest und Der Stechlin im sozioliterarischen Überblick*, (Aachen: Shaker, 2013): 34-35.

¹⁰ Gail Finney, "Poetic Realism, Naturalism, and the Rise of the Novella," In *German Literature of the Nineteenth Century, 1832-1899*, ed. Eric Downing and Clayton Koelb (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005): 119.

¹¹ Perhaps the most concise definition Lyon identifies for the difference between place and space—a difference upon which his whole project rests—is Yi-Fu Tuan's definition: "What begins as undifferentiated space, ends as a single object-situation or place ... When space feels thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place. In *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977): 6. Lyon sees a loss of place

examines depictions of sculpture in German Realism within the context of industrialization and mass production.¹² Similarly, Geoffrey Baker claims that German Realism, in its focus on domestic settings and situations, is a largely untapped source for examinations of the quiet influence of colonialism within German lands.¹³ He does so, however, while recognizing the need to problematize a reading that might “pigeonhole... or stereotype... [German Realism] as rigidly secular, empirical, scientific, rational, and so on.”¹⁴ And thus he notes that “...canonically realist authors regularly amplify their texts’ own claims to empiricism and secularism while simultaneously—and often explicitly and self-consciously—troubling those very claims.”¹⁵

The second line of inquiry in the scholarship on German Realism is largely concerned with identifying the aesthetic qualities that are distinctive to German Realism. Prominent themes in this vein of research include the self-reflexivity of many texts, the formal characteristics of the realist novella – the trademark genre of German Realism¹⁶ –

depicted in much of Poetic Realism, a sense that the familiarity, identity, and connectedness of place is lost in the wake of the “industrial metropolis” which gave rise to the “rootless urban proletariat.” In *Out of Place. German Realism, Displacement, and Modernity* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013): 10.

¹² See MacLeod’s chapter entitled “Foreign Bodies: Of Sculpture and Cacti in Adalbert Stifter’s *Der Nachsommer*” for a discussion on how mass production influences perceptions of the visual arts. In *Fugitive Objects. Sculpture and Literature in the German Nineteenth Century* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2014).

¹³ Geoffrey Baker. *Realism’s Empire: Empiricism and Enchantment in the Nineteenth-Century Novel* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ The status of the novella as a distinctive feature of German Realism is widely accepted among Germanists; see the introduction to Eric Downing’s *Double Exposures. Repetition and Realism in Nineteenth-Century German Fiction* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000) in which he identifies the novella as German realism’s “dominant mode of expression”, in contrast to the

and German Realism's engagement with its literary forerunners. One of the early influential scholars that steered the research in this direction was Richard Brinkmann, who emphasized the centrality of subjectivity in German Realism.¹⁷ Following in Brinkmann's footsteps, G.H. Hertling states that instead of political, theoretical, or philosophical, the German Realists become "self-critical and acutely conscious of their narrative styles as well as of their structural and linguistic techniques."¹⁸ It is this self-awareness that sets German Realism apart from its contemporary literary movements. Self-reflexivity is also integral to Robert C. Holub's understanding of German Realism,¹⁹ and to Eric Downing's. According to Downing, a characteristic of the German Realists is their self-consciousness about the function of realism, a quality most apparent in their thematization of repetition; he refers to this as a "poetics of repetition: [realism] re-presents an original reality anterior to it. And yet in the very act of repetition and representation, the realist enterprise thus comes to defeat itself, because it fails to recognize the essential difference between its two spheres."²⁰

realist literature of England and France which was overwhelmingly dominated by the novel (14). See also Gail Finney's essay "Poetic Realism, Naturalism, and the Rise of the Novella." In contrast to Downing and Finney, Jeffrey Sammons holds that, like its contemporary realist movements in Europe, German Realism's primary genre is the novel, not the novella. However, he takes issue with the notion that the *Bildungsroman* is uniquely German. In "The Nineteenth-Century Novel." In *German Literature of the Nineteenth Century, 1832-1899*, ed. Eric Downing and Clayton Koelb (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005).

¹⁷ Robert C. Holub, *Reflections of Realism. Paradox, Norm, and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century German Prose*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991): 13.

¹⁸ G. H. Hertling, "Reflections on the 'Poetic Real': The Transcendent in Nineteenth-Century German Realism," *Pacific Coast Philology* 31, no. 2 (1996): 137.

¹⁹ See Holub.

²⁰ See Downing, 135.

Both branches of scholarship—whether focused on aesthetics or on the sociopolitical problems of modernity—trace their roots to the claims of Lukács and Auerbach, showing either that German realists are doing something entirely different than European realists aesthetically or that they are broaching the same topics in sometimes harder-to-recognize ways. This is not to say that examinations of secularization and worldview are altogether absent from the scholarship, but that the conception of modernity that most of the scholarship is responding to—even as it consciously departs from it in some cases—is narrow in its focus on social issues related to urbanization, industrialization, capitalism, and colonialism.

My examination of literary depictions of painting in this dissertation, while it echoes the interest of Brinkmann, Hertling, Holub, and Downing in German Realism's self-reflexive aesthetic, is also a way of examining how German Realists understand the function of art within the mostly mundane worlds that they portray. And more specifically, what the role of art is within the context of nineteenth-century secularization. Explaining the function of literary depictions of works of art, Mack Smith states that in realism, "the description of a work of art serves the intertextual function of realistic self-definition."²¹ Examining descriptions of art within realist texts yields insight into the authors' understanding of their own texts. This ekphrastic understanding of descriptions of art is at the foundation of my approach to painting in German Realism. Coupled with my focus on theories of secularization, understanding the functions of paintings within the texts enables greater clarity about the role of German Realism within a context of changing ideas about religious faith. What is clear again and again is that, rather than

²¹ Mack Smith, *Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition*, (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995): 10.

conforming to the patterns of secularization within the text, painting resists secularization.

THE SECULARIZATION THEORY

The backdrop against which this dissertation must be understood is what I will refer to as the “secularization theory,” although scholars have used other terms to denote this narrative.²² In popular usage secularization is understood to be an ongoing process in which religious belief gradually fades in significance within a modern culture.

Delineating oft-cited reasons for the “close linkage between the modernization of society and the secularization of the population,”²³ Jürgen Habermas notes that,

The [secularization] hypothesis rests on ... initially plausible considerations. First, progress in science and technology promotes an anthropocentric understanding of the “disenchanted” world because the totality of empirical states and events can be causally explained; and a scientifically enlightened mind cannot be easily reconciled with theocentric and metaphysical worldviews. Second, with the functional differentiation of social subsystems, the churches and other religious organizations lose their control over law, politics, public welfare, education and science; they restrict themselves to their proper function of administering the means of salvation, turn exercising religion into a private matter and in general lose public influence and relevance.²⁴

²² Charles Taylor, for example, labels it the “subtraction narrative”, since it posits a gradual process of subtracting religious belief from a modern society. In *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007). David Martin refers to the theory as the “enlightened myth of supersession” (176), for it assumes successive states of history in which religion is eventually replaced by scientific and rational modes of thinking. In *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005). Peter Berger notes that the term “secularization theory” was first used by social scientists in the 1950s. In *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*, (Boston: De Gruyter, 2014): 18.

²³ Jürgen Habermas. “Notes on Post-Secular Society,” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2008): 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, we will encounter the first consideration Habermas delineates: the idea that rational thought and scientific discovery either reveal the claims of religion to be false or, because rational and scientific discourses render the world less mysterious, decrease the need for supernatural explanations. The second point that Habermas makes, a concept often referred to as “differentiation,”²⁵ is foundational to the third chapter. In both cases, the developments that have taken place in modernity appear to replace religious faith. The secularization theory posits the demise of religious faith as part and parcel of the progress of modernity in which Western society matures out of its childish superstitions.²⁶ It is a narrative that at least two of the literary texts at hand assume; Keller and Storm couple it with the literary themes of *Bildung* and coming-of-age. In Keller’s *Der grüne Heinrich* and Storm’s *Im Schloss*, both of which trace the growth of a child protagonist (Heinrich Lee and Anna, respectively) into young adulthood, the rejection of Christian orthodoxy occurs as the protagonists gain experience and transition from childhood to adulthood. Although the sources and final results of their respective educations vary, *Bildung* and maturity dampens their faith in what the texts depict as superstition. Physical, experiential, and intellectual maturity correspond to decreased religiosity.

²⁵ Berger defines differentiation as the redistribution of societal functions, once the primary responsibility of the church, to a variety of other institutions (X). Sociologist of religion Detlef Pollack defines it as an assumption of “differentiation of religion and the secular, of religion and politics, of religion and science, or of religion and morals.” In “Response by Detlef Pollack: Toward a New Paradigm for the Sociology of Religion?” In *The Many Altars of Modernity*, 120.

²⁶ Helmut Walser Smith and Chris Clark note that German historiography has seen an increased interest in the influence of religion on German history and like Taylor, is increasingly skeptical of “linear concepts of secularization.” In “The Fate of Nathan.” In *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2001).

There are good reasons this theory has lodged so firmly in popular imagination. The nineteenth century, the period under consideration, is a century in which the seismic changes in Western thought appear to confirm the secularization theory. Gordon Graham identifies Enlightenment philosophy, evolutionary biology, and biblical criticism as the primary factors credited with propelling secularization.²⁷ Together, it is supposed, they contributed to the movement of Western society away from religious belief. It is important to note that, regardless of whether these factors actually gave rise to secularization as it is traditionally understood, they had great impact on nineteenth-century German lands, and each appears in the texts at hand. Moreover, in Storm's *Im Schloß* and Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*, there is a strong link between the individual secularization of the protagonists and their contact with one or more of these three developments.

Charles Taylor observes that the secularization theory is the story that Enlightenment philosophers told about themselves, and it is a story that took deep root in nineteenth-century thought.²⁸ They identified individual human reason as the impetus for humanity's development and freedom. In his famous answer to the question "What is enlightenment?" Immanuel Kant stated,

Aufklärung ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbstverschuldeten Unmündigkeit. Unmündigkeit ist das Unvermögen, sich seines Verstandes ohne Leitung eines anderen zu bedienen. Selbstverschuldet ist diese Unmündigkeit, wenn die Ursache derselben nicht am Mangel des Verstandes, sondern der Entschließung und des Mutes liegt, sich seiner ohne Leitung eines andern zu

²⁷ Gordon Graham. *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Art Versus Religion*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): 50.

²⁸ See Taylor, 273.

bedienen. Sapere aude! Habe Mut, dich deines eigenen Verstandes zu bedienen!
ist also der Wahlspruch der Aufklärung.²⁹

The declaration that immaturity (“Unmündigkeit”) and dependence (“das Unvermögen, sich seines Verstandes ohne Leitung eines anderen zu bedienen”) will finally give way to reason (“Verstand”) and independence is the battle cry of the Enlightenment. Among the structures that humanity has leaned on—the “Leitung eines andern”—is the guidance and authority of religious doctrine and structures. According to Kant, independence from these authorities is not a matter of intellectual development, but of courage: *Sapere aude!* Dare to think for yourself! G.E. Lessing outlines a similar process of development in *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (1780) when he posits a maturing of mankind towards Enlightenment thinking. Using the language of childhood and maturation, he identifies the Bible as an “Elementarbuch... sowohl für Kinder, als für ein kindisches Volk.”³⁰ He also describes an eventual supersession of reason over religious revelation: “Die Offenbarung hatte seine Vernunft [des Volks] geleitet, und nun hellte die Vernunft auf einmal seine Offenbarung.”³¹ Independent reasoning will be the judge of what was once considered authoritative revelation.

What Enlightenment philosophy claimed about the intellectual maturation of man – a long progress of intellectual maturation – echoed in Darwinian evolution’s claims about biological development. Taylor observes that although Darwinism should not be identified, as it often is, as the primary shaker of faith in the nineteenth century, it did

²⁹ See “Beantwortung auf die Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?” In *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 2 (1784): 481.

³⁰ Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, “Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts,” *Gotthold Ephraim Lessing Werke 1778-1781*, Vol. 10 (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2001): 88.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 84

indeed give an “important push towards a materialist, reductive view of the cosmos, from which all teleology was purged (because explained away on a deeper level).”³² The “deeper level,” which rendered the process of death and struggle more palatable, situated it in a movement forward, an “Entwicklung”: “War die vernichtenden Konkurrenz die eine, wenn man will, die rückwärtige Seite der Darwinischen Theorie, so ist dies Panorama der Entwicklung die andere und die angenehmere Vorderansicht.”³³ As we will see in the first chapter, Theodor Storm picks up the motif of evolution, linking the protagonist’s growth into adulthood with her first encounter with evolutionary biology.

The third important development is the emergence of Higher Criticism in the late eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth century – a movement that changed the way many read the New Testament. The influential trend among leading protestant theologians in nineteenth-century German lands towards the application of a scientific framework to the Christian scripture gave rise to a host of new interpretive moves to “demythologize” the text. The effect was a re-categorization of the Bible in response to the growing dependence on scientific inquiry. Among the most significant aspects of a

³² See Taylor, 379. Taylor notes that Darwin’s impact is often presented within the context of an erroneous understanding of religious experience in nineteenth-century Europe: “...I am deviating from what is often seen as the standard story of the Victorians’ loss of faith. Somewhat oversimplifying, this is thought to have been caused by the impact of Darwinian evolution, which is held so directly to have refuted the Bible. This created an agonizing conflict for many people of devout upbringing, which was in the end resolved by many, often with a poignant sense of loss, by the abandonment of their faith. There is some truth in this story.... But it leaves out something crucial: that evolutionary theory didn’t emerge in a world where almost everyone still took the Bible story simply and literally; that among other things, this world was already strongly marked by the ideas of impersonal order, not to speak of the dark abyss of time...” (378).

³³ Dolf Sternberger, *Panorama oder Ansichten vom 19. Jahrhundert*, (Hamburg: Claassen Verlag, 1955): 101.

“purely scientific exegesis”³⁴ of the sacred text was a re-interpretation of the Bible’s claims about miraculous events and supernatural powers. Johann Salomo Semler (1725-1791), for example, claimed that references to demons and spirits and to future-oriented eschatological statements were meant to accommodate the views of the original audience, who wrongly assumed the existence of spirits and a future spiritual reality.³⁵ Thus although the apostles, Jesus, and the author of John’s gospel did not themselves believe that the supernatural aspects of their teaching and writing accurately reflected reality, according to Semler, they accommodated their language to the views of their audience.

Applying a scientific discourse necessitated that biblical scholars such as David Friedrich Strauss (1808-1874) reclassify its parts – the gospels receive the most attention in this respect – recasting what was once understood to be historical record as literary metaphor.³⁶ Strauss insists that supernatural elements have no place in historical record. The “Uebernaturlichen” that the gospels “berichten” are incompatible with the “Natürlichen” that constitutes a “geschichtliche Behandlung.”³⁷ Similarly, of the figure of Jesus as portrayed in the gospels, Strauss states,

Eine Persönlichkeit, die nach einer Seite wohl ein Mensch, nach der andern aber ein höheres Wesen, ein Götter- oder Gottessohn, wohl von einer menschlichen

³⁴ Todd H. Weir, *Secularism and Religion in Nineteenth-Century Germany: The Rise of the Fourth Confession*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 56.

³⁵ Roy A. Harrisville, *Pandora’s Box Opened: An Examination and Defense of Historical-Critical Method and its Master Practitioners* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014): 110-111.

³⁶ David Jaspar claims that Strauss’s *Das Leben Jesu* (1835) is “the single greatest text in the nineteenth century to change attitudes towards how we read and understand the Bible.” In *The Sacred and Secular Canon in Romanticism: Preserving the Sacred Truths* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998): 3.

³⁷ David Friedrich Strauss, *Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk, zweite Auflage* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1864): 25.

Mutter geboren, aber von keinem menschlichen Vater gezeugt wäre, ein solches Subject werden wir der Fabel und Dichtkunst überlassen, aber nie daran denken, es im Ernste zum Gegenstand einer geschichtlichen Darstellung zu machen.³⁸

In Strauss's claims we can observe a shift that takes place not only in biblical interpretation but in literature more broadly in which, as the veracity of the supernatural comes into question—here the notion of the divinity of Jesus—not only Christian doctrine, but also the contours of literary genre must be reconfigured to accommodate it. As a determining factor for historical texts (“geschichtliche Darstellung”), scientific inquiry relegates representations of the supernatural to literary fiction.

The criterion for historical texts made the Gospel of John especially challenging for Strauss to make sense of, for it is the only Gospel whose author claims to be an eyewitness of the events he records. For Strauss's biography of Jesus, empirical observation was paramount, so an eyewitness that claims to have seen miracles is puzzling. Strauss alleviates this tension in part by claiming that within the Gospel of John there is no indication that John was the author. Strauss's approach drastically affected not only readings of the Gospels, but also the metanarrative of the Christian scripture: “the turning points of Christian sacred time (i.e., creation, fall, resurrection, and last judgment) were reduced to metaphors, and human progress in secular time was raised to a theological principle.”³⁹ Strauss and other writers, such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Friedrich Schleiermacher, read the Bible as “part of a great ‘secular’ literature” in which

³⁸ Ibid., 3-4

³⁹ See Weir, 74. In Chapter 4, I will show how Fontane evokes these “turning points” in his depictions of paintings in *L'Adultera*.

the “distinction between sacred and secular literature” dissolves as the religious text loses its sacred status.⁴⁰

How do Enlightenment philosophy, Darwinian evolution, and Higher Criticism—systems of thought which many believe gave rise to secularization—affect the production and reception of art? Max Weber’s concept of “disenchantment” is integral for understanding the relationship of secularization to art. Weber believed that the developments of modern society, particularly of capitalist societies, created a situation in which “magical elements of thought are displaced.”⁴¹ As spiritual (“magical”) modes of understanding disappear, the significance of art changes dramatically. Gordon Graham claims that, in light of the losses that developments such as those outlined above have imposed on the modern subject, the function of literature (and art more generally) becomes almost a spiritual one:

If part (perhaps a large part) of the importance of religious storytelling lies in this connection with meaning, and if it is true that science and rationalism have disenchanted the world by rendering religious belief impossible for the ‘modern’ mind, and if it is further true that disenchantment is a cause of anxiety because it threatens the meaningfulness of human life, then a crucial task confronting any artistic endeavour to re-enchant the world will be the provision of alternative stories.⁴²

Below I show how alternative secularization theories challenge Graham’s claim that science and rationalism have rendered religious faith “impossible for the ‘modern mind’,” but for now, I am interested in his claim that “a crucial task confronting any artistic endeavour” is the re-enchantment of the world. Graham is by no means the first to

⁴⁰ See Jasper, 2, 5.

⁴¹ Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. Hans Gerth and Charles Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958): 51.

⁴² See Graham, 74.

identify that role for art. Nietzsche, for example, sees an inverse relationship between art and religion when he states that “Art raises its head where religions decline.”⁴³ As “magical” or religious thinking recedes, art serves as a sort of secular religion, a site of re-enchantment, or at least it provides an experience that resembles re-enchantment, so the argument.

ALTERNATIVE THEORIES OF SECULARIZATION

As widely-accepted as the secularization theory is, it is not the only narrative of religion in modernity. Several alternative models have been proposed as explanations for the shifts in religious belief that have taken place since the Enlightenment. While these theories acknowledge that the factors discussed above, Enlightenment thinking, Darwinism, and Higher Criticism, have had a significant impact on religious belief and practice in Western cultures, they reject a definition of modernity that necessarily results in a recession of religious faith. Instead, both David Martin and Peter Berger build on Schmucl Eisenstadt’s idea of “multiple modernities”; Eisenstadt rejects a monolithic understanding of modernity in favor of one that acknowledges the existence of multiple versions of modernity.⁴⁴ Fundamental to Eisenstadt’s theory of “multiple modernities” is the observation that advances in science and technology do not change societies in identical ways. For Martin’s and Berger’s engagement with Eisenstadt’s claims, the accent falls on religion: advances in science and technology do not alter societies’ relationships to religion in identical ways. As an illustration, Berger recalls his visit to a

⁴³ Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Human, all too Human: A Book for Free Spirits*, trans. Marion Faber and Stephen Lehmann (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984): 105.

⁴⁴ See Berger, 68.

Buddhist temple in Hong Kong: “In front of a large statue of the Buddha stood a middle-aged Chinese man in a business suit, bowed in a posture of devotion. In one hand he held an incense stick, in the other hand a cell phone.”⁴⁵ Robust religious devotion and modernity exist side by side.

Of the scholarship on secularization, Charles Taylor’s *A Secular Age* has received the most widespread attention and acclaim, both within the academy and beyond it. Taylor argues that the secularization theory overlooks at least two important facts. First, he argues that Enlightenment thought, with its emphasis on human reason and benevolence, cannot be divorced from the Christian values from which it grew. Far from stripping away religious faith, the Enlightenment could not have emerged apart from Christian faith and dogma. Second, modernity in the West, rather than eliminating religious and superstitious belief, is characterized by a plurality of faiths, not the absence of religious faith. The modern subject’s acknowledgement of this plurality, of religion *as a choice* among many, is at the heart of his understanding of secularization. In Western societies, it is no longer possible to hold to religious faith apart from the awareness that it is one choice among many: “Naiveté is now unavailable to anyone, believer and unbeliever alike.”⁴⁶ Taylor calls this phenomenon – the multiple religious options that exists side by side *as choices* – the “nova effect.”⁴⁷ The nova effect is evident in the texts at hand, which portray characters in milieu composed of multiple shades of belief and unbelief. Heinrich Lee, for example, grows up among people who share his mother’s

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁷ See Taylor, 299.

Zwinglian Protestantism, but also among a mixture of heterodox Christians, deists, and atheists. Similarly, in Fontane's *L'Adultera* Berlin is portrayed as a mixture of Catholics, Jews who have converted to Protestantism, and Protestants whose religious observance is minimal, such as the protagonist Melanie who "seit ihrem Einsegnungstage... keine mehr [Predigt] gehört hatte."⁴⁸

Although secularization as Taylor explains it does not denote a triumph of modern developments over religion, it has led to a "disenchantment" in our perception of the world. Similar to Weber's view of "disenchantment," Taylor's primary emphasis on how the modern subject *experiences* "the end of spirits respondent to humans, and the coming of the impersonal order defined by the moral code."⁴⁹ The modern subject's understanding of religious faith as a choice rather than a given, though it distances and protects her from the mysterious forces that pre-modern subjects took for granted, produces a sense of

emptiness, or non-resonance.... It can come in the feeling that the quotidian is emptied of deeper resonance, is dry, flat; the things which surround us are dead, ugly, empty; and the way we organize them, shape them, arrange them, in order to live has no meaning, beauty, depth, sense.⁵⁰

Even in religious believers, those deemed "superstitious" by the ostensibly enlightened, Taylor observes an accompanying sense of loss and emptiness vis-à-vis mundane surroundings. In *The Malaise of Modernity* he states that in light of the disenchantment of ordinary experience, the challenge for the modern subject is to find or infuse meaning

⁴⁸ Theodor Fontane. "L'Adultera." In *Theodor Fontane. Sämtliche Werke*, Vol. IV (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1959): 115.

⁴⁹ See Taylor, 364.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 309.

into it. The artist is sometimes thought to embody this quest for meaning: “The artist becomes in some way the paradigm case of the human being, as agent of original self-definition. Since about 1800, there has been a tendency to heroize the artist, to see in his or her life the essence of the human condition, and to venerate him or her as a seer, the creator of cultural values.”⁵¹ Bringing Taylor’s observations about the modern experience of ordinary life to bear on German Realism reveals that, rather than avoiding more pressing issues, as Auerbach and Lukács claim they do, German Realists’ representations of the ordinary is not only relevant, but even ambitious in the face of disenchantment.

Like Taylor’s “nova effect,” Peter Berger’s understanding of secularization replaces the idea that religious faith is waning in modern cultures with a concept of the plurality of worldviews in modern cultures. Berger defines pluralism first as the proliferation and interaction of differing worldviews and life options. He states that pluralism is a “social situation in which people with different ethnicities, worldviews, and moralities live together peacefully and interact with each other amicably.”⁵² Again, rather than a gradual decrease in religious faith, Berger posits a multiplication of worldviews in ongoing contact with each other: “dinner conversations and/or pillow talk.”⁵³ The result is “cognitive contamination” and relativization – the ongoing influence of the interacting worldviews on each other.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Taylor, Charles. *The Malaise of Modernity* (Toronto: Anasi, 1991): 62.

⁵² See Berger, 1.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 2.

Berger also proposes a second definition of the term “pluralism.” This second sense posits the co-existence of the sacred and the secular discourse, rather than the replacement of the former with the latter. He defines secular discourse using a phrase from the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius (1583-1645): *etsi Deus non daretur* – as if God did not exist.⁵⁵ This definition suggests that, whether one is an atheist or not, many situations require a “practical or methodological atheism.”⁵⁶ A pilot’s approach to flying does not differ depending on whether or not she is a religious believer; believer or not, she will use the same “secular” mode of understanding to fly. Multiple secular modes of understanding exist alongside sacred discourse in the thinking and experience of one person, and thus a modern believer uses both secular and sacred modes of understanding, depending on the situation. Although this plurality of discourses create friction at times, their co-existence can be harmonious.

Finally, David Martin posits a theory of secularizations, a plurality of localized processes. He claims that secularization is activated by the dialectical relationship between what he calls “the world” and “the kingdom,” a secular culture and the Christian faith.⁵⁷ The spread of ‘the kingdom’ into ‘the world’ is followed by an eventual “recoil” of the faith in which the expression of Christianity in that culture “mutates,” but it does not disappear.⁵⁸ The particular path of the recoil varies according to the qualities of the process of Christianization – the characteristics of the culture that was Christianized and

⁵⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 53.

⁵⁷ David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2005): 3.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 3, 11.

the form of Christianity that has taken root in it. Whether the faith is Protestant or Catholic, whether it is imposed on the masses by converted monarchs or begins from below with the conversion of the people, whether the faith is linked to national identity or religious subcultures – these factors determine the nature of the secularizations.

PAINTING, REALISM, RELIGION

Having briefly considered the historical conditions that gave rise to the secularization theory and several recent challenges to it, I now turn the focus to visual art. The relationship of visual art in realism and the religious connotations it carries offers many possible angles for examination, but two are especially germane to this project: mimesis and individualism. In this section, my intent is to lay out some scholarly and historical context for clarifying why the theme of painting is relevant to an exploration of religion and secularization in nineteenth-century German literature.

Mimesis

As an aesthetic aim, mimesis draws on priorities at the heart of both art and intellectual life in the nineteenth century. It is a mode of representation, in visual and literary art, which caters to the belief that truth is accessible to the objective observer, and thus it strives to mimic observable reality. Lilian R. Furst aptly sums up the realist project thus: “It stakes its claim to special authenticity by accenting its primary allegiance to experience over art, thus purporting to capture truth. In keeping with this view, the role played by observation in the realist novel is proportionately greater than that of artistic

convention.”⁵⁹ Bolstering the illusion of a faithful rendering of the world takes precedence over artistic expression and creativity in realist art, a theme that Stifter playfully engages in the central text of Chapter 3, *Nachkommenschaften*.

For Stifter and other German Realists, the visual arts are a means of expressing and problematizing the claims of realist literature to mirror the world beyond the text. For example, Stifter also problematizes the mimetic approach to artistic production in his novel *Der Nachsommer* (1857), where—as in *Nachkommenschaften*—visual representation is a means of precisely recording the appearance of various items. The protagonist Heinrich Drendorf produces many drawings and sketches for cataloguing and categorizing elements of nature and mechanical instruments. Artistic interpretation plays no role in these drawings whatsoever. Another character, the painter Eustach, however, offers an alternate view when he states that, “die Seele müsse schaffen, das Auge soll ihr dienen.”⁶⁰ Although the artist’s “Seele” must lead his eyes, the role of observation is still paramount.

Despite this give and take between the “Seele” and “Auge,” according to Robert C. Holub, Stifter’s conception of realism art is first and foremost as an imitation of life similar to a scientific discourse, for both purport to observe nature and to allow it to speak for itself. Because the focus is on nature rather than on art, “the art object itself does not contain value independent of the reality it imitates. Art is not autonomous in the strict sense of the word. Rather, it has value as a commemoration and reproduction of an

⁵⁹ Lilian R. Furst, *All is True. The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995): 6.

⁶⁰ Adalbert Stifter. “Der Nachsommer.” In *Adalbert Stifter Werke und Briefe. Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 4,2 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1999): 37.

‘object of our love and reverence.’ ”⁶¹ Realism’s prioritization of the world beyond representation over the work of art resonates with the burgeoning reliance on empirical observation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The aim of both is to reveal truth by minimizing the role of the viewer’s subjective vision. As a visual medium, painting evokes the possibilities of human observation while revealing its limitations.

While an emphasis on objective observation recalls the scientific method, mimesis often has religious overtones for landscape painting, for to imitate nature in art is to imitate God’s creative work. In my examination of *Der grüne Heinrich* in Chapter 2, for example, we see Heinrich Lee making the case for painting based on this understanding of art as a means of finding and worshiping God in nature:

Warum sollte dies nicht ein edler und schöner Beruf sein, immer und allein vor den Werken Gottes zu sitzen, die sich noch am heutigen Tag in ihrer Unschuld und ganzen Schönheit erhalten haben, sie zu erkennen und zu verehren und ihn dadurch anzubeten, daß man sie in ihrem Frieden wieder zu geben versucht?⁶²

Here the religious argument is meant to give legitimacy to a profession that many consider frivolous; the artist is a worshiper privy to spiritual knowledge and experience through his close contact with nature. As such, his artworks become acts of devotion. This line of reasoning also provides a strong argument for a precise mimetic approach, which in *Nachkommenschaften*, the landscape painter Friedrich Roderer articulates thus:

Ich aber sage: warum hat denn Gott das Wirkliche gar so wirklich und am wirklichsten in seinem Kunstwerke gemacht, und in demselben doch den höchsten Schwung erreicht, den ihr auch mit all euren Schwingen nicht recht schwingen könnt? In der Welt und in ihren Teilen ist die größte dichterische Fülle und die herzgreifendste Gewalt. Macht nur die Wirklichkeit so wirklich wie sie ist, und verändert nicht den Schwung, der ohnehin in ihr ist, und ihr werdet

⁶¹ See Holub, 72-73.

⁶² Gottfried Keller, *Der grüne Heinrich* (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985): 239.

wunderbarere Werke hervorbringen, als ihr glaubt, und als ihr tut, wenn ihr Afterheiten malt, und sagt: Jetzt ist Schwung darinnen.⁶³

Here the artist's role takes on the force of a moral imperative. Friedrich even speaks with imperatives: '*Macht* nur die Wirklichkeit so wirklich wie sie ist, und *verändert* nicht den Schwung.' He suggests that failing to represent nature exactly implies an attempt to alter or improve on God's perfect creation—if nature is good enough for God, it should be good enough for the artist. On the other hand, the perfection of God's creation is an unparalleled resource for the artist, who only needs to imitate nature to produce great works of art: "ihr werdet wunderbarere Werke hervorbringen, als ihr glaubt, und als ihr tut, wenn ihr Afterheiten malt." Here Friedrich borrows language from the Gospel of John in which Jesus tells his disciples to imitate him: "Wer an mich glaubt, der wird die Werke auch tun, die ich tue, und wird größere als diese tun."⁶⁴ Similarly, the painter is an imitator of God's work.

The Artist and the Viewer

While an aesthetic based on verisimilitude reflects the nineteenth-century value for objectivity, in Chapters 2 and 3 we encounter an image of the *Zeitgeist* in the figure of the artist, an embodiment of estrangement and authenticity. Not unique to German Realism, both the Romantic and Realist versions of the artist shared an outsider status. Goethe's Wilhelm Meister and Werther, Mörike's Maler Nolten, Büchner's Lenz, Keller's Heinrich Lee, Storm's Edde Brunken and Herr Valantin, and Stifter's Friedrich

⁶³ Stifter Adalbert, "Nachkommenschaften." In *Adalbert Stifter Werke und Briefe. Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 3,2 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2003): 65.

⁶⁴ Johannes 14:12.

Roderer – all artists on the fringes of society – struggle and mostly fail to find a place within the middle class while maintaining their identities as artists. To varying degrees, every character is an outsider within his own community and family. Heinrich Lee, for example, dies when he fails to achieve recognition as an artist and integration into his social milieu. Friedrich Roderer, on the other hand, appears successful in starting a family and bolstering relationships among his extended family, but only at the cost of his painting career, which he completely abandons. This is due to the fact that art and the normalcy of domestic family life are portrayed as mutually exclusive modes of existence – two discreet realms that rarely overlap.

Taylor claims that it is the artist's status as outsider that make him an appealing and relatable figure for the modern subject, for he incarnates both the aspirations to "authenticity" and the experience of disenchantment of many people in modern society. The painter, as a figure whose lifestyle and creative vision marks him as distinctive within his community, typifies authenticity, which according to Taylor, "involves originality, ... demands a revolt against convention."⁶⁵ A desire for authenticity automatically puts the individual in tension with societal conventions. The fraught relationship of the individual to social convention is a pervasive one in German Realism.⁶⁶ Furthermore, an individualism defined by authenticity necessitate an intimate self-understanding that often appears native to the fictional artist:

⁶⁵ See *The Malaise of Modernity*, 65.

⁶⁶ This is true too for texts that do not include artists. For example, in Gottfried Keller's *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe* (1875), two young lovers commit suicide when they are unable to find a means of being together within the socially acceptable boundaries delineated by their social milieu.

[Authenticity] accords crucial moral importance to a kind of contact with myself, with my own inner nature, which it sees as in danger of being lost, partly through the pressures towards outward conformity, but also because in taking an instrumental stance to myself, I may have lost the capacity to listen to this inner voice.⁶⁷

The modern subject's drive to foster individuality necessitates a separation from the "pressures towards outward conformity" which social convention relentlessly exerts; but it also requires the ability to identify understand the self and how it differ from others around it. This self-knowledge assumes a level of self-reflexivity and pensiveness that is, again, a common feature of the artists we find in the texts at hand.

While the artist's authenticity makes him an appealing figure to the modern reader, the estrangement he faces—often due to his resistance to social conformity—also reflects what Taylor identifies as the modern's subject's experience of her surroundings, where there is "the sense of the world around us, as we ordinarily experience it, as out of joint, dead, or forsaken."⁶⁸ Often, for the fictional artist this sense of disconnection and death is expressed as "being cut off from ordinary fulfillments, ... cut off from other people, on the margins of society, misunderstood, despised."⁶⁹ Charles I. Glicksberg attributes this phenomenon directly to a traditional, even exaggerated understanding of secularization:

Without the presence of God, even if only immanent in the heart of creation, without the horizon of the absolute, the dimension of the eternal, the writer beholds a world no longer held together and transfigured by the sense of the divine. It is changed, alas, into a bare alien, desolate universe of sense data and

⁶⁷ See *The Malaise of Modernity*, 29.

⁶⁸ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989): 422.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 423-424.

quantum mechanics. By eliminating the realm of the supernatural, science intensified the perception of the absurd.⁷⁰

Glicksberg suggests that for the artist—here, the writer specifically—a lost sense of meaning in the world is both a challenge personally and artistically, for it demands that the artist create meaning where he experiences none. Whether due to secularization as Glicksberg claims, technological and intellectual changes that strip the world of magic, as Max Weber claims,⁷¹ or to the loss of naïve belief in the supernatural, as Taylor claims,⁷² the experience of the world as “out of joint, dead, or forsaken” makes the artist’s alienation a compelling parallel to the modern subject.

The plight of the modern subject also influences the experience of viewing art by raising the stakes significantly, for the sense of alienation and the lack of meaning found in mundane experience give rise to the viewer’s expectation that through art, the artist may supply that missing meaning: “Since about 1800, there has been a tendency to heroize the artist, to see in his or her life the essence of the human condition, and to venerate him or her as a seer, the creator of cultural values.”⁷³ As a source of “cultural values”, art takes on a weight of significance akin to religion. As such, we often find the experience of viewing art described in religious terms. This is certainly true in *Im Schloß*, where paintings are an integral part of the protagonist’s faith, and in *Der grüne Heinrich*,

⁷⁰ Charles I. Glicksberg, “Modern Literature and the Death of God.” In *Religion and Modern Literature. Essays in Theory and Criticism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975): 139.

⁷¹ See Weber. In Chapter 3 I engage more fully with Weber’s understanding of disenchantment.

⁷² See *A Secular Age*. In Chapter 2 Taylor’s conception of disenchantment is my primary lens for analyzing the painter Heinrich Lee and the particular form of realism that his painting exemplifies.

⁷³ See *Sources of the Self*, 62.

in which Heinrich compares his first encounter with an art exhibition to the experience of participating in a Catholic mass. Philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff observes this modern experience of art in his description of the East Wing of the National Gallery in Washington, where “to observe the hushed tones and reverential attitudes of those who trudge through those halls is to be put in mind of a precession through the ambulatory of one of [the medieval] cathedrals.” He observes that in a secular society, “works of art have replaced relics.”⁷⁴ Because of the striking resemblance between art and religion in modern experience, any examination of art in German Realism is only a short step away from examinations of both religion and the related idea of secularization.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

In the first chapter I examine Storm’s novella *Im Schloss* as an illustration of the “secularization theory” – a theory that claims that the progress of Western modernity leads to a decline in religious belief. This chapter provides a backdrop for the subsequent examinations of literary texts in light of alternative theories of secularization. The plot of Storm’s novella follows a trajectory almost identical to the secularization theory. Briefly stated, the protagonist Anna’s development is largely defined by leaving behind her childish religious beliefs to embrace the more mature deism of her lover. Religion is portrayed as a symptom of her desire for love, her father’s coldness towards her, and her imagination. Her mature years are defined by her rejection of religion, which is deeply

⁷⁴ Nicholas Wolterstorff. “Art, Religion, and the Elite: Reflections on a Passage from André Malraux.” In *Art, Creativity, and the Sacred. An Anthology in Religion and Art* (New York: Crossroad, 1984): 268.

connected to her love for Arnold, a young working class man whose intellectual abilities propel him into the respected ranks of the intelligentsia.

Painting, however, disrupts the novella's progress toward secularization. Closely associated with Anna's religious childhood, particularly through their association with the Christian doctrine of incarnation, the portraits described in the novella give rise to Anna's embodied, human experience of love. One portrait in particular strongly resembles Arnold, who incarnates the love Anna looked for in religious experience. Although the portrait points to redemption in the embodied world, rather than in the spiritual world, in the final pages of the novella, the narrator turns our attention to the portrait again and suggests that, despite the protagonist's rejection of the religion that first animated the portrait, it exudes a power independent of her desire and imagination.

In contrast to the secularization narrative introduced in the first chapter, Charles Taylor defines secularization in terms of the plurality of religious options that have multiplied in modern Western societies. He further claims that religious plurality gives rise to an experience of disenchantment – a sense that ordinary life is flat, meaningless. This chapter looks at Keller's novel *Der grüne Heinrich* with an eye to Taylor's observations about the disenchanted world. In the novel, the death of Heinrich's father is coupled with Heinrich's sense of alienation from his own home. His home is a place of disenchantment rather than familiarity and belonging.

Painting is Heinrich's response to the alienating experience of the disenchanted world, his attempt to re-enchant his home. Nonetheless, his art increasingly reinforces his alienation from his home. I compare the function of painting in the novel to Feuerbach's conception of religion: it is a projection of Heinrich's inner life and a distraction from his

actual surroundings, rather than a means of accessing a true reality. Painting becomes an imaginary realm, but does not give him the experience of familiarity in the world that he desires. Thus visual representation magnifies the disenchantment of the world by creating an escape from it, similar to Feuerbach's religion, or by merely reflecting disenchantment.

The third chapter uses a second theory of secularization to analyze Stifter's novella *Nachkommenschaften*. Sociologist of religion Peter Berger claims that modernity is not only defined by a plurality of options for faith, but a plurality of secular and sacred discourses that believers and non-believers alike employ. A doctor, for example, employs the secular discourse of medicine whether or not she is religious. In the painter Friedrich Roderer, Stifter offers a character who, although he is narrow in his use of a single secular discourse – he tries to apply an empirical mode of understanding to his landscape paintings – his paintings become an opportunity to harmonize multiple discourses. Whereas modernity sees a multiplication of religious choices and discourses, painting offers a harmonization, unification, bringing together. The painting, an ekphrastic analog of German Realism, gestures towards a unity that withstands the fracturing of modernity. In *Nachkommenschaften*, it is Friedrich's sketch of a village harvest festival – a celebration of both ordinary life and the sacred – that offers a model for an art that weaves the sacred and secular together.

While the focus of Chapter 3 is on Peter Berger's notion of a plurality of discourses, the final chapter takes a longer look at the idea of sacred discourse using the idea of Christian ritual and language in Fontane's *L'Adultera*. My aim is to understand the relationship of the titular painting to the events in the novel that resemble it, and to

understand how this might inform the relationship of the reader to the text. I examine the paintings in *L'Adultera* using two conceptions of Christian ritual: philosopher James K.A. Smith's "cultural liturgy" and David Martin's understanding of Christian ritual and language. Smith's concept of cultural liturgy allows me to offer an explanation for Fontane's portrayal of the relationship between the paintings described in the novel and the events that they appear to conjure up. I argue that as characters view paintings with fervor similar to that of a religious believer, paintings exert a formative power on their desires and actions, similar to the effect Smith attributes to religious ritual. Martin's discussions of the related topics of Christian ritual and language provide a basis for understanding how those same literary portrayals of painting facilitate the reader's experience of the novel. His observations about the paradoxes of Christian discourse offer a compelling model for explaining the role of painting in the reader's experience of the text.

CHAPTER ONE

The Secularization Thesis: Theodor Storm's *Im Schloss* (1862)

Mein Wissen mußte meinen Glauben töten.
- Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, "Am dritten Sonntage nach Ostern"

Storm's novella *Im Schloss* traces the contours of what has become known as the "secularization thesis" – a narrative that posits the progression of Western society away from naïve religious faith towards enlightened reasoning. In *Im Schloss* Storm shapes the secularization narrative into a coming-of-age love story. This literary transformation is not, however, far afield of the rhetoric that often surrounds the secularization thesis.

David Martin notes that a common metaphor of secularization "contrasts [religious] faith in the childhood of humanity with secular reality in its maturity."⁷⁵ Lessing describes the progression of mankind in *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (1780) in terms of a maturation out of childhood and Kant used it in his famous definition of the Enlightenment: "Aufklärung ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbstverschuldeten Unmündigkeit."⁷⁶ Ushering humanity into a new and greater phase of thought and experience was the Enlightenment's bold ambition.

As the first chapter of my dissertation, this chapter seeks to introduce the foundational themes and the guiding framework of the whole project through a close

⁷⁵ David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005): 127.

⁷⁶ See "Beantwortung auf die Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?" In *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 2 (1784): 481.

reading of *Im Schloss* framed in terms of the secularization thesis. By way of introduction, I offer a brief look at the role of the secularization thesis in literature and also an overview of the approaches scholars have taken to *Im Schloß*. Against that backdrop, I examine the text with an eye to Anna's growth from childhood to adulthood as illustrative of the process of secularization. In the first section of my close reading, the focus is on Anna's childhood; I examine the role of her father, of Christianity, and of painting. Each of these three elements is inextricable from her unfulfilled desire for love. In the second section, the unfulfilled desire for love is fulfilled as the same three elements take on new forms and new meaning. Arnold replaces the father, deism replaces Christianity, and painting gives way to lived reality. While the transformation of these elements appears to bespeak a straight-forward progress, the final section explores how ambiguous supernatural elements of the portraits complicate this thesis. In this section I thus return to painting to look more closely at how the two narrators, the anonymous third-person narrator and Anna, offer two competing perspectives on painting. I argue that the tension between them suggests that while the character Anna experiences secularization at an individual level, the world in which she lives does not mirror this process – indeed, painting is a discourse that resists and withstands secularization.

As mentioned above, Storm's novella is exemplary of what scholars such as Martin call the "standard model of secularization"⁷⁷ and what Charles Taylor terms the "subtraction stories" of secularization.⁷⁸ Taylor defines the secularization thesis as a

⁷⁷ See Martin, 123.

⁷⁸ Taylor defines these as "stories of modernity in general, and secularity in particular, which explain them by human beings having lost, or sloughed off, or liberated themselves from certain earlier, confining horizons, or illusions, or limitations of knowledge. What emerges from this process—modernity or secularity—is to be understood in terms of underlying features of human

‘master narrative’ that “relegated religion to the pre-modern phase of human development, and saw it as eventually headed for at best marginal status in the society of the future.”⁷⁹ Often, proponents of the secularization thesis identify developments in science as the greatest driving force behind the diminishing relevance of religion in modern western societies.⁸⁰ The extent to which this narrative of modernity has become an assumed background, both in popular and academic thinking, is difficult to overstate. From theology, to social science, to literature, the privileged place of empiricism in the secularization thesis has influenced every field of thought and study. In literature, for example, T.S. Eliot proposed a three-phase understanding of modern literature that assumed secularization. He claimed that the first phase of modern literature assumes that the reader shares the author’s Christian beliefs and does not necessarily make religion into a theme of his or her work. He categorizes Dickens in this phase. The second phase thematizes religious faith by doubting it, worrying over it, or contesting it. George Eliot is an example. Finally, the third phase assumes no knowledge of the faith and thinks of it as an “anachronism.”⁸¹ To use Taylor’s language, religion is progressively “subtracted” from literature in Eliot’s model.

In addition to the language of growth, maturity, and subtraction, the secularization theory also assumes a struggle of opposing forces, as seen in the introduction to

nature which were there all along, but had been impeded by what is now set aside.” In *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007): 22.

⁷⁹ See Charles Taylor’s “Forward” in *On Secularization*, ix.

⁸⁰ See Martin, 9.

⁸¹ T.S. Eliot, “Religion and Literature.” In *Religion and Modern Literature. Essays in Theory and Criticism*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975): 24.

philosopher Richard Rorty's influential work *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. He states,

At the beginning of our century [20th]... philosophers...were concerned to keep philosophy 'rigorous' and 'scientific.' But there was a note of desperation in their voices, for by this time the triumph of the secular over the claims of religion was almost complete. Thus the philosopher could no longer see himself as in the intellectual avant-garde, or as protecting men against the forces of superstition... Descartes, Locke, and Kant had written in a period in which the secularization of culture was being made possible by the success of natural science.... Poets and novelists had taken the place of both preachers and philosophers as the moral teachers of the youth.⁸²

Rorty posits a set of binaries – religion versus natural science, preachers and philosophers versus artists – and the giving-way of the former to the latter. Beyond a sense of progress, there is also the sense of an averted danger, a safely-resolved conflict: the secular “triumphs” over religion since superstition necessitates “protection”, and natural science achieves the “success” of secularization. These binaries are also present in Storm's novella, in which the protagonist's first encounter with evolutionary biology is cast as a conversion of sorts, in which she awakens to a higher understanding of nature than her Christian faith allowed for. Furthermore, as I will demonstrate, the novella also resonates with Rorty's claim that artists ('Poets and novelists') replace preachers and philosophers, for we find painting outlasting the religious faith of the protagonist at the end of the novella.

However entrenched the secularization thesis may be in the modern imaginary, sociologists and historians are reckoning with the data: far from “marginal status,” religion in varying forms continues to play a significant role in modern life. This is where literary depictions of painting come in for the present chapter and for this dissertation as a

⁸² Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009): 4-5.

whole: the plot development of *Im Schloss* is largely predicated on the secularization thesis, except for the vital role of painting to undermine, though subtly, the secularization process that propels the narrative forward. Painting disrupts what otherwise appears to be a “unilateral process.”⁸³ Like the ongoing influence of religious faith in modernity, the paintings in *Im Schloss* – and in the other texts that this dissertation examines – call for alternative narratives that can better describe the state of things. In the coming chapters, our attention will shift from the “secularization thesis” itself, to several aspects of modernity depicted in German Realism that have shaped more recent paradigms for understanding religion in modern western societies. But first *Im Schloß*.

The story unfolds in five short chapters narrated from three perspectives: an anonymous villager narrates the first chapter; a third-person narrator narrates the second, fourth, and fifth chapters; and the protagonist Anna narrates the third, centrally located chapter. As the coming-of-age story of the noblewoman Anna, the novella presents her growth from childhood, a time great loneliness, to adulthood, in which she is finally united to her lover Arnold. Although the novella spans only several months of Anna’s adulthood, we learn about her childhood through her journal—the third chapter of the novella—in which she reflects on her early years of isolation, her love for the tutor Arnold, her unhappy marriage to a nobleman, and the loss of her child. Wolfgang Tschorn and Irmgard Roebeling, although with slightly different emphases, observe that this five-chapter structure uses a spatial approach to Anna as a metaphor for gradually revealing the novella’s central problems.⁸⁴ As we approach the center of the novel –

⁸³ See Martin, 3.

⁸⁴ Tschorn states that, “Storm arbeitet sich an den Konflikt-Kern der Novelle heran, indem die handelnden Personen aus immer näher rückenden Perspektiven betrachtet werden - von der

Anna's journal – we move spatially from the outside of the castle in the first chapter, to the inside in the second, and then finally we hear from Anna herself in the third. I would add that by zooming in on Anna, we discover what *she* believes is her greatest problem. That is: she casts her childhood in the pall of her father's inalterable coldness towards herself and her brother. Although she admits some respite from this loveless existence in her relationship with her kind uncle and her younger brother, her emphasis is on a mostly solitary childhood.

Looking back on her early years, Anna depicts herself as highly imaginative—spending hours reading, contemplating the portraits hanging in the castle's great hall, and experiencing God's presence almost tangibly. She is constantly aware of unseen realities, especially when it comes to nature and art. As the narrator, she demonstrates that these encounters with art and the divine take place under the pressure her strong desire for love and her childish immaturity. She thus attributes her experiences of God and of the life-like paintings to her psychological state, not to an actual transcendental reality. When Arnold arrives at the castle to tutor Anna's brother, it becomes clear that he embodies what she, in her desire for love, had imagined to find in books, paintings, and religion. In fact, he strongly resembles her favorite portrait and offers her the friendship and affection she first looked for in her father and then in God. He incarnates the love that art and

öffentlichen Meinung des Dorfes bis zu den Gedanken der Anna selbst." In *Idylle und Verfall: Die Realität der Familie im Werk Theodor Storms*, (Bonn: Bouvier, 1978): 100. Similarly, although with a slight difference in emphasis, Roebeling's feminist approach focuses on Anna: "[d]ie Annäherung an die weibliche Erzählform vollzieht sich – als Annäherung an die Person Annas – ... insofern zunächst vom Dorf her und dann von Annas näherer örtlicher, sozialer und menschlicher Umgebung ... erzählt wird." She claims that the three narrators contribute to Anna's final freedom from the patriarchal system of the nobility. In *Theodor Storms Ästhetische Heimat: Studien zur Lyrik und zum Erzählwerk Storms*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2012): 237.

religion only suggested. Arnold also introduces her to a Darwinian understanding of nature in place of her spiritual view of it, an event that corresponds to a notable transition in her narrative: the imaginative and religious experiences cease once she falls in love in love with Arnold and embraces his view of nature. However, they part ways. Arnold leaves for university and Anna, following the dictates of the *noblesse oblige*, reluctantly marries a member of the nobility. As a rising star among the intelligentsia, Arnold eventually gains the respect of Anna's husband, who, unaware of Anna and Arnold's history, welcomes him into their home. An affair ensues and Anna separates from her husband amid rumors of infidelity. She returns to an empty castle, for her father and brother are both dead. Finally, she hears word of her husband's death. She immediately contacts her uncle, who comes accompanied with Arnold. The novella ends as the couple begins their new life together. The third-person narrator offers a final glimpse of them through the eyes of Anna's favorite portrait. Despite the happy ending, the portrait of the boy looks down on them "stumm und schmerzlich."

The scholarship on *Im Schloss* tends to fall into two categories: examinations that foreground the social, religious, and political content of the novella and those that attempt to understand the elements reminiscent of Romanticism. Regarding the former category, critics emphasize the distaste for organized religion and for the aristocracy in *Im Schloß* that is present in few of Storm's other novellas. For example, David Artiss observes that Storm "reserved his bitterest hatred for the aristocracy and the church. *Im Schloß* is in many ways a thinly veiled polemic against these institutions."⁸⁵ Along the same lines, David A. Jackson notes that: "At the beginning of the 1860s...Storm's patently polemical

⁸⁵ In *Theodor Storm: Studies in Ambivalence: Symbol and Myth in His Narrative Fiction*. (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1978): 27.

works against Christianity begin with *Veronika*...and *Im Schloß*.”⁸⁶ In approaching the religious aspects of the novella, the secularization thesis is sometimes implicitly assumed, but never considered as an object of study, as it is in the present chapter. For example, Dorothee Römhild characterizes Anna’s conflicts as “zwischen Tradition und Fortschritt, Gottesglauben und Diesseitsorientierung.”⁸⁷ The language of ‘progress’ (‘Fortschritt’) is endemic to the secularization thesis, and similarly the supposed progression from religion (‘Gottesglauben’) to non-religion (‘Diesseitsorientierung’). Todd H. Weir sheds light on the word Römhild uses here: *Diesseitsorientierung*. Weir notes that “Jenseits” and “Diesseits” became loaded words in the nineteenth century because they respectively denoted belief in an afterlife and a belief in a material existence only.⁸⁸ For Römhild, the transition from one to the other is binary – the choice is between the sacred and secular, tradition and progress, with no middle ground. Similarly, Patricia M. Boswell sees Anna as a representative for the religious and social shifts taking place during the nineteenth century: “Durch seine Frauengestalt Anna will Storm das fundamentale Erlebnis der Gebildeten im neunzehnten Jahrhundert veranschaulichen, nämlich die Vereinzelung und

⁸⁶ In “Storm at the Foot of the Cross.” *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 59, no. 3 (1984): 82–89. Jackson makes a similar statement in his article on the role of taboos in Poetic Realism: “...*Im Schloß* (1862) depict[s] individuals liberating themselves from the tutelage of the church and discovering true fulfillment in the love and support of [an] understanding husband.” In “Taboos in Poetic-Realist Writers.” In *Taboos in German Literature*, (Providence: Berghahn Books 1996): 61.

⁸⁷ Dorothee Römhild, “Der Hund als Falke. Zur poetologischen und kulturgeschichtlichen Funktion des Löwengelben in Storms Novella *Waldwinkel*.” In *Die Zoologie der Träume. Studien zum Tiermotiv in der Literatur der Moderne*, (Opladen/Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999): 31.

⁸⁸ Todd H. Weir, *Secularism and Religion in Nineteenth-Century Germany: The Rise of the Fourth Confession*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 80.

Vereinsamung des Individuums als Resultat des Glaubensverlustes.”⁸⁹ Boswell posits a causal effect between a loss of religious belief and the experience of isolation in the nineteenth century, a theme that I examine more closely in my chapter on *Der grüne Heinrich*. For now, my focus and interest is on the concept of a movement away from religion, which Storm assumes in *Im Schloss* and which scholars such as Römheld and Boswell have assumed in their readings of Storm.

Several significant studies of the novella have taken a biographical approach. David Jackson is the author of a much-quoted biography of Storm, which couples Storm’s biography with textual analyses of his works to reveal the influential role of Storm’s political leanings, attitudes towards religion, family life, and the literary market on his work.⁹⁰ A more recent example is Heinrich Detering’s *Kindheitsspuren. Theodor Storm und das Ende der Romantik*⁹¹ which examines the role of children in Storm’s work in light of his political and religious views, dubious love life, and interest in Romanticism. In his reading of *Im Schloß* Detering argues that within the novella, three competing worldviews emerge: the romanticized perspective that the protagonist Anna holds, the rationalism of her uncle, and a synthesis of these two, which Anna’s lover Arnold represents. Drawing on Storm’s correspondence with Eduard Mörike, in which Storm relates an inexplicable, seemingly supernatural experience from his childhood similar to one that appears in *Im Schloß*, Detering comes to the conclusion that in the

⁸⁹ “Theodor Storms heiligenstädter Novelle: ‘Im Schloß.’” *Schriften der Theodor-Storm-Gesellschaft* 40 (1991): 25.

⁹⁰ David A. Jackson, *Theodor Storm: The Life and Works of a Democratic Humanitarian*, (New York: Berg, 1992)

⁹¹ Heinrich Detering, *Kindheitsspuren. Theodor Storm und das Ende der Romantik* (Heide: Boyens, 2011)

novella, Storm promotes a synthesis of romantic and rationalist *Weltanschauungen*, maintaining the possibility of a supernatural realm.⁹²

In addition to historical and biographical readings in Storm scholarship, there is an even stronger interest in understanding the eerie and sometimes supernatural aspects of his work within the contexts of literary and cultural history. Attempting to reconcile Storm's penchant for the ghostly with his cultural and literary context in which "es scheint keinen literarischen Ort mehr für unerklärliche, wunderbare und unheimliche Phänomene"⁹³ has been a fruitful quest for many scholars. Thomas Bilda focuses his reading on the tension between a fantastical experience that Arnold recalls from his childhood, and Arnold's own value for empirical evidence. Bilda draws a parallel between other unusual phenomena in the novella (e.g. paintings that appear to have life) and the realist aesthetic.⁹⁴ Because of the ghostly aura surrounding the paintings in Storm's works, the question of how they function is often situated within broader discussions about the role of memory, the uncanny, and Romanticism in his novellas. In several texts Storm's paintings exude an unsettling life of their own, as in the case of the portrait of the dead wife in the novella *Viola tricolor* (1874). Eric Downing posits *Viola*

⁹² Arnold recounts a surreal experience from his childhood that the uncle's rationalism cannot explain. Of this moment in the novel Detering states, "Die Frage, die sich mit dieser Szene stellt, lautet: Wie wirklich ist die Wirklichkeit? In ihr kulminiert die Erfahrung der Möglichkeit, dass es in der Welt wahrhaftig Erfahrungsbereiche geben könnte, die auf keiner Landkarte der ordnenden Vernunft eingezeichnet sind" (255). A synthesis of worldviews emerge: "Storms Text gibt sich nun, nachdem diese beiden Weltsichten etabliert sind, alle erdenkliche Mühe, die quälenden Gegensätze aufzulösen in eine *optimistische Synthese*" (261).

⁹³ Christian Begemann, "Figuren der Wiederkehr. Erinnerung, Tradition, Vererbung und andere Gespenster der Vergangenheit bei Theodor Storm." In *Wirklichkeit und Wahrnehmung. Neue Perspektiven auf Theodor Storm*, (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2013): 13.

⁹⁴ Thomas Bilda, *Figurationen des "ganzen Menschen" in der erzählenden Literatur der Moderne: Jean Paul - Theodor Storm - Elias Canetti*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2014)

tricolor as exemplary of the fraught relationship between Romanticism and Poetic Realism. That is, that the struggle to overcome the past that takes place on the thematic level of *Viola tricolor* can be understood as a metaphor for the relationship between Romanticism and Poetic Realism in which “realism is not something given but rather something that only gradually emerges, or strives to emerge, in the struggle against the given” of Romanticism.⁹⁵ According to this reading, the painted portrait in *Viola tricolor* represents an aesthetic past (i.e. Romanticism) that must be overcome in order for realism to take shape.

Like Downing, Christian Begemann foregrounds the centrality of the past in Storm’s work, but with an emphasis on nineteenth century intellectual history rather than literary history. Specifically, Begemann observes that the ghostly elements in Storm’s works (including many ghostly paintings) contradict “den weltanschaulichen Prämissen wie der Poetologie der realistischen Literatur.”⁹⁶ Beginning with this assumption, that the ghostly has no place in realist literature, Begemann reads instances of the ghostly metaphorically, turning them into memory-laden objects that awaken the past and allow it to invade the present: “Erinnerung konzeptualisiert [Storm] so, dass sie in die Gegenwart einbricht und diese gleichsam usurpiert.”⁹⁷ Thus painting is one of several vehicles for

⁹⁵ Eric Downing, *Double Exposures. Repetition and Realism in Nineteenth-Century German Fiction*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000): 133.

⁹⁶ See Begemann, 13.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 18. Begemann’s claims are very similar to Geoffrey Baker’s, who identifies strategies that German Realists use to negate the possibility of immanent supernatural forces in the worlds they depict: “all events of questionable veracity—that is, events with supernatural implications—are offered only framed within stories told by characters, so that the narrator’s and the novel’s empirical sympathies are never tested. This strategy has its precedents in German fiction the nineteenth century.... Empirically dubious events are embedded within the characters’ tales and gossip, safely isolated from a determinately objective and empiricist narrator.” Part of my task here is to show that the paintings described in German Realist texts unsettle the objectivity of an

memory in Storm's work, all of which dissolve the boundaries separating the past from the present: "Das 'Ahnensbild' konnte durchaus etwas Unheimliches bekommen, denn in ihm lösen sich die Grenzen zwischen Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft auf."⁹⁸

Paintings function as a means by which the past is resurrected in the present. In the secularization theory and alternative models of it, the present chapter offers an unexplored context for understanding painting in *Im Schloss*. Amid the narrative of progress from immaturity to maturity, ignorance to reason, religion to science, Storm's portraits offers a quiet resistance that makes complete consummation of the story and the secularization theory on which it rests, impossible.

The two men most prominent in Anna's life, her father and her lover Arnold, represent the two poles of her secularization: the father is linked to her sad childhood, her Christian faith, and an old social order; Arnold becomes her companion in adulthood, ostensibly corrects her mystical beliefs by teaching her about advances in science, and as a member of the intelligentsia, he is part of a new social order defined by an ascending middle class. From her perspective as the adult narrator, Anna portrays her childhood faith as symptomatic of her desire for love and of her immaturity. Her faith resembles a highly mystical form of Christianity in which many natural objects and ordinary experiences bespeak spiritual realities.

Of Storm's penchant for depicting broken families, Eckert Pastor observes that "Storm... verstand es ja auch meisterhaft, Heim und Familie in ihrem Scheitern ...

"empiricist narrator" and throw the hierarchy of discourses that secularization assumes into question. Baker, Geoffrey. *Realism's Empire: Empiricism and Enchantment in the Nineteenth-Century Novel*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009 (159-160)

⁹⁸ See Begemann, 8.

darzustellen.”⁹⁹ In *Im Schloß*, the particular form that the family’s ‘Scheitern’ takes is a pervasive, alienating silence that originates with her father: “der Vater sah mich meistens nur bei Tische, wo wir Kinder schweigend unser Mahl verzehren mußten.”¹⁰⁰ She looks for love to be embodied in her father, but he remains silent and loveless, and love remains unexpressed, an abstract ideal. The problem of a disembodied love is not philosophical in Storm’s novella, but mundane in that he portrays it as problem that warps childhoods and fractures families. This silence carries over into the third chapter, in which she recalls her childhood and young adulthood in a journal entry. Here, in a brief description of her father, we encounter the epicenter from which the silence emanates. Anna’s father is dead at the time of her writing, but she reflects on her childhood desire to receive affection from him and his resolutely silent response to her:

Wie oft habe ich heimlich in seinen Augen geforscht, was wohl im Grund der Seele ruhen möge, aber ich habe es nicht erfahren; mir war, als hielten jene ausgeprägten Muskeln seines feinen Antlitzes gewaltsam das Wort der Liebe nieder, das zu mir drängte und niemals zu mir kam.¹⁰¹

The significance of this passage cannot be overstated, for it is the key to understanding the relationship between silence and the many images that appear throughout the text. It reveals that the separation of the visual (the father’s face and portraits) from the verbal (the “Wort der Liebe”) is a problem that must be overcome. Similarly, her desire to hear a *word* from her silent father necessitated a *visual* examination of his face. Anna’s

⁹⁹ Eckart Pastor, *Die Sprache der Erinnerung: Zu den Novellen von Theodor Storm* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1988): 66.

¹⁰⁰ Theodor Storm, “Im Schloß.” In *Theodor Storm. Gedichte. Novellen. 1848-1867*, vol. I in *Theodor Storm Sämtliche Werke in vier Bänden*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987): 491.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

language is charged with energy, illuminating her intense emotional desire to experience her father's love: the words "oft" and "forschen" denote her earnest, continual search for a sign of love; "ausgeprägte Muskeln" underscore the force with which he withholds the word of love from her. More than her father representing a separation between the visual and verbal, his silence leads to a foregrounding of the visual. Anna states that her father's silence drew her attention to his eyes and the muscles of his face, where she unsuccessfully searched for an indication that love was trapped within him. His silence foregrounds the visual world—his face and the paintings—and the visual demands her interpretation. Her language of a violent ("gewaltsam") suppression of love reveals her childhood hope that, despite his silence, her father harbored a 'word of love' for her. However, there is a clear difference between her childhood perspective and the mature perspective from which she writes that "*mir war als hielten jene ausgeprägten Muskeln seines feinen Antlitzes gewaltsam das Wort der Liebe nieder das zu mir drängte.*" She switches from the imperfect tense to the subjunctive mood to convey that the optimistic interpretation of her father's silence, indicated by the subjunctive mood ("hielten"), is no longer feasible because her father died without expressing love to her.

If we extend the quote to the next sentence, we find that Anna creates a parallel between her father's silence and the portrait gallery, and this sheds even more light on the motif of painting. Without beginning a new paragraph, the Anna moves from describing her father to the portraits:

Wie oft habe ich heimlich in seinen Augen geforscht, was wohl im Grund der Seele ruhen möge, aber ich habe es nicht erfahren; mir war, als hielten jene ausgeprägten Muskeln seines feinen Antlitzes gewaltsam das Wort der Liebe nieder, das zu mir drängte und niemals zu mir kam. – Droben im Rittersaal hängen noch die Bilder; die stumme Gesellschaft verschollener Männer und

Frauen schaut noch wie sonst mit dem fremdartigen Gesichtsausdruck aus ihren Rahmen in den leeren Saal hinein.¹⁰²

The description of the paintings is a logical extension of Anna's memory of her father. This connection is reflected in the similar vocabulary used to describe the father and the paintings: The "Wort der Liebe" came from the father "niemals"; then in the next sentence, the portraits hang "noch." The word of love *never* came, and the paintings are *still* hanging. Both adverbs refer to a reality that began in past extends into the present and both denote a perpetual silence. The silence of the father is echoed in the "stumme Gesellschaft" of portraits whose faces are as alienating and inscrutable ("fremdartig"), just as his was.¹⁰³ Whereas in Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854/55) the father's death gives rise to Heinrich's feeling of alienation from his home, the alienation portrayed in Storm's novella originates with the father. As Anna writes, those faces look at her "noch wie sonst," a reminder of the silent past. Thus the paintings are laden with memory for Anna, albeit not the memories for which they were originally produced, but of her silent father. Paradoxically, the parallels between the portraits and Anna's father result in a transfer, whereby the portraits become associated with the absent "Wort der Liebe." Although images, they are reminders of the missing 'word of love,' of love's status as an abstract idea, rather than an embodied experience for Anna. As images of people they point to her desire to encounter the 'word of love' *incarnate*.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Stephen Cheeke notes that the "silence/speech" paradox is common in ekphrasis – the writer "breaks the silence" by speaking for the "mute object." The paradox comes up again in the final chapter on Theodor Fontane's *L'Adultera* (1882), in which a painting becomes the impetus for characters' different modes of discourse. *Writing for Art: The Aesthetics of Ekphrasis*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008): 45.

The father is also a symbol and a representative of a way of life that Storm depicts as outmoded and nearing extinction. Indeed, except for her uncle, everyone in Anna's family dies over the course of the novella – her father, brother, aunt, husband, and infant child. The silence associated with the father's lack of love becomes the hush of funerary silence. Once her family has all but died out, Anna returns to live in the castle alone. She moves through it "mit leichtem Schritt, daß nur kaum die Seide ihres Kleides rauschte" and lays her hand on her dog's head "im stillen Einverständnis."¹⁰⁴ The narrator uses vocabulary that underscores the theme of silence: "halblaut," "stumm," "ruhig," "leise," "still," and "schweigend" all appear in the span of five pages.¹⁰⁵

Storm's depiction of the castle inheres within the decaying, outmoded system to which the father belongs. Thus Anna's development into adulthood includes a spatial movement:¹⁰⁶ her early years are spent within the ancient castle, while in the final pages of the novella she tells Arnold that they will forge a new path beyond the castle: "Nun, Arnold, mit dir zurück in die Welt, in den hohen, hellen Tag!"¹⁰⁷ It is ironic that in the novella's opening sentences, an anonymous villager offers an *outside* perspective of the castle – *Im Schloß* begins beyond its walls.¹⁰⁸ The description of the titular castle, the

¹⁰⁴ See Storm, 485.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 486-490.

¹⁰⁶ Kathryn Ambrose observes the correspondence between the spatial and social barriers that women face in Storm's writing: "threshold barriers (particularly windows, walls and doors) can signify social and moral barriers within the text that female characters must not cross." In *The Woman Question in Nineteenth-Century English, German and Russian Literature*, (Leiden: Brill Rodopi, 2016): 102.

¹⁰⁷ See Storm, 528.

¹⁰⁸ The lack of particularity in the place named in the novella's title is significant, given the tendency of many realists to use actual place-names in their titles (e.g. Keller's *Die Leute von Seldwyla*, Stifter's *Immensee*, Storm's *In St. Jürgen*). Lilian R. Furst claims that the ubiquity of

family portraits lining the walls of its gallery, and the aristocratic family that inhabits it contain traces of the silence that characterizes the father and the fading system he represents:

Vom Kirchhof des Dorfes, ein Viertelstündchen hinauf durch den Tannewald, dann lag es vor einem: zunächst der parkartige Garten von alten ungeheueren Lindenalleen eingefast, an deren einer Seite der Weg vom Dorf vorbeiführte; dahinter das große steinerne Herrenhaus, das nach vorn hinaus mit den Flügelgebäuden einen geräumigen Hof umfaßte. Es war früher das Jagdschloß eines reichsgräflichen Geschlechts gewesen; die lebensgroßen Familienbilder bedeckten noch jetzt die Wände des im oberen Stock gelegenen Rittersaales, wo sie vor einem halben Jahrhundert beim Verkaufe des Gutes mit Bewilligung des neuen Eigentümers vorläufig hängen geblieben und seitdem, wie es schien, vergessen waren. – Vor etwa zwanzig Jahren war das Gut, dessen wenig umfangreiche Ländereien zu den Baulichkeiten in keinem Verhältnis standen, in Besitz einer alten weißköpfigen Exzellenz, eines früheren Gesandten, gekommen. Er hatte zwei Kinder mitgebracht, ein blasses, etwa zehnjähriges Mädchen mit blauen Augen und glänzend schwarzen Haaren und einen noch sehr jungen kränklichen Knaben, welche beide der Obhut einer ältlichen Verwandten anvertraut waren.¹⁰⁹

Notice the narrator's visually-oriented description. He emphasizes the physical appearance of the castle and family, revealing knowledge based on observation rather than interaction with the family. The narrator begins by describing the winding path from the village and the castle. This spatial distance corresponds to a rigid division of classes. The nobility does not mix with the villagers. The separation is overcome in the final pages of the narrative, but from the outset, distance and minimal communication

actual place-names in realist texts is a strategy for supporting the claim to realism: "The intimate connection between localization and plausibility is one of the cornerstones of realism" (100). In *All Is True. The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995). In contrast, the ambiguity of the title *Im Schloß* and other places named in the novella contributes to the romantic, fairy-tale quality that scholars have observed in Storm's work. Christiane Arndt, for example, has called Storm's work *Schauerrealismus*. In "Theodor Storm's Schimmelreiter or Gothic Realism in the Family Periodical." In *The German Bestseller in the Late Nineteenth Century*, (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012)

¹⁰⁹ See Storm, 480.

characterize the stratified society. The narrator, perhaps the village schoolmaster,¹¹⁰ has knowledge of the castle and its aristocratic inhabitants, but his knowledge is impersonal and distant. In fact, he later states that the noble family has little contact with members of the village community. Upon meeting a farmer during his occasional strolls, Anna's father "pflegte...wohl mit einer leichten Handbewegung [den scheuen Gruß] zu erwidern."¹¹¹ This is one of several examples in the text in which the father avoids conversation with the villagers. The portraits further emphasize the barrier between the village and castle in that they reinforce the dual themes of the visual and verbal. The silence that surrounds them is later underscored with the characterization "schweigende Gesellschaft" which appears several times throughout the novella. Christiane Arndt offers a similar interpretation of the paintings in Storm's *Aquis submersus* (1877) which is just as applicable to *Im Schloss*: "The picture frame symbolizes this distinction: it frames the portraits of family members and sets them apart from their surroundings. The family is shown as an inner unity, distinguished from the public by the concept of the frame."¹¹² In *Im Schloß* the distinction or barrier between the family and the public beyond it is even stronger, for the portraits do not represent Anna's family, but the 'reichsgräflichen Geschlecht...' that once owned and inhabited the castle, but are now probably all deceased. The portraits therefore place Anna and her family in the position of outsiders

¹¹⁰ The final sentence of this section is a short dialogue between a forester and the schoolmaster, in which the narrator records the forester as saying, "nun, Gevatter, Ihr seid ja ein Schulmeister, mach Euch den Satz selber zu Ende!" (484). It is unclear whether he is addressing the narrator as *Schulmeister*, or whether the narrator is recording a conversation that he overheard between the two parties.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 481.

¹¹² In "On the Transgression of Frames in Theodor Storm's Novella *Aquis Submersus*." *Monatshefte* 97, no. 4 (2005): 599.

within their own home – an experience that Anna feels the full weight of. But as we shall see, the extinction of the family portrayed in the portraits frees the paintings from their original purpose for new meaning and function.¹¹³

For young Anna, the silence of her father and the loneliness that results give rise to a spiritual interpretation of the portraits and paintings she encounters. As the narrator, she describes her fantastical viewing as a thing of the past – a phase she has outgrown. Her childhood faith resembles a highly mystical form of Christianity in which many natural objects and ordinary experiences bespeak spiritual realities. In a description of her childhood superstition that comes on the heels of the description of her silent father, Anna explains the context in which her faith in God came into being and its counteraction of her loneliness:

Spielgenossen hatte ich keine.... Aber ich war nicht allein; weder in den weiten Räumen des Schlosses noch draußen zwischen den Hecken des Gartens oder den aufstrebenden Stämmen des Tannenwaldes; der “liebe Gott”, wie ihn die Kinder haben, war überall bei mir. Aus einem alten Bilde in der Kirche kannte ich ihn ganz genau, ich wußte, daß er ein rotes Unterkleid und einen weiten blauen Mantel trug; der weiße Bart floß ihm wie eine sanfte Welle über die breite Brust herab. Mir ist als sähe ich mich noch mit dem Oheim drüben in den Tannen; es war zum ersten Mal, daß ich über mir das Sausen des Frühlingswindes in der Krone eines Baumes hörte. “Horch!” rief ich und hob den Finger in die Höhe. “Da kommt er!” – “Wer denn?” – “Der liebe Gott!” – Und ich fühlte, wie mir die Augen groß wurden; mir war, als sähe ich den Saum seines blauen Mantels durch die Zweige wehen. Noch viele Jahre später, wenn abends auf meinem Kissen der Schlaf mich überkam, war mir, als läge ich mit dem Kopf in seinem Schoß und fühlte seinen sanften Atem an meiner Stirn.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ A similar distancing of the painting from its original purpose takes place in Fontane’s *L’Adultera* (1882), in which Fontane introduces the titular painting, Tintoretto’s “L’Adultera”, first as a copy, then finally as a copy of a copy. In both Storm’s and Fontane’s texts, the reader is encouraged, by virtue of the paintings’ distance from their origins, to consider the role of painting – and of art more generally – not in strictly mimetic terms nor in terms of original intent. I will discuss this further in Chapter 4.

¹¹⁴ See Storm, 492.

Once again, the familiar pairing of wordlessness and images appears. Although she appears to be alone often, enveloped in a silent home, she experiences God's presence in the images and in the appearance of the world around her. Furthermore, the absence of words activates her imagination and she sees images that are not really there: "mir war, als sähe ich." She imagines that she has fallen asleep in the lap of God; his physicality is so tangible that she can feel his breath on her forehead. The passage is reminiscent of Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* in which Heinrich recalls the formative role of an image in his childhood understanding of God.¹¹⁵ However, whereas Heinrich's early belief in God is shaped by the religious education that his parents give him and the images that surround him, Storm suggests that it is the father's absence – not physical, but emotional – that gives rise to Anna's strong sense of God's existence and involvement in her surroundings. God is an idealized version of her father.

The absent father motivates Anna's *viewing* of paintings in Storm's novella, much like, as we will see in the next chapter, the absent father motivates the artist's *painting*. In both texts, religious belief and art are bound up in the father. The physical, visible world around Anna – paintings and nature – become the image of God in one sense, as she sees God in trees and hears him in the wind, but more fundamentally, her world bears the image of her father. This is evident in the phrase "mir war," which introduces both her childhood experience of God's presence and her belief – discussed above – that some

¹¹⁵ Heinrich records his childhood conclusion that the rooster-shaped weathervane on the top of the church steeple was God: "Auf diesem Dache stand ein schlankes, nadelspitzes Thürmchen, in welchem eine kleine Glocke hing, und auf dessen Spitze sich ein glänzender goldener Hahn drehte. Wenn in der Dämmerung das Glöckchen läutete, so sprach meine Mutter von Gott und lehrte mich beten; ich fragte: Was ist Gott? Ist es ein Mann? und sie antwortete: Nein, Gott ist ein Geist! ... Eines Abends fand ich mich plötzlich des bestimmten Glaubens, daß dieser Hahn Gott sei." In *Der grüne Heinrich*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985): 75. I examine this passage more closely in the second chapter.

trace of fatherly love existed in her father (“mir war, als hielten jene ausgeprägten Muskeln seines feinen Antlitzes gewaltsam das Wort der Liebe nieder”). Furthermore, Anna draws attention to a subtle resemblance between her father and the religious painting, just as she did when describing the silence of her father and the silence of the gallery portraits: the man portrayed in the church painting has white hair, just as her father does.¹¹⁶ In contrast to her father’s distance, her experience of God is intimate (“mir war, als läge ich mit dem Kopf in seinem Schoß und fühlte seinen sanften Atem an meiner Stirn”). Thus the shared vocabulary between the two passages, the resemblance of the religious painting to Anna’s father, and the ways in which Anna’s belief in God’s nearness counterbalances her father’s distance indicate that her father and her faith are inseparable elements of her *Weltanschauung*.

In addition to the images that seem to emerge from the missing “Wort der Liebe”, Anna tries to compensate for the absence of love by immersing herself in literary texts and narratives. Like paintings, she describes her childhood interest in narratives as a response to silence: “ich wußte [den Onkel] *zum Sprechen* zu bringen; ich ließ mich nicht abweisen, bis er mir das Märchen von der Frau Holle oder die Sage vom Freischützen erzählte” (emphasis added).¹¹⁷ There is one text in particular that echoes her desire for incarnate love. More than fairy tales and books, a hymn that Anna memorizes reinforces the inextricability of her silent father, her desire for love, and her faith in God. The familiar “Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern” was written by the Lutheran pastor Philipp Nicolai in 1597. Of the hymn’s 70 lines celebrating the deity and incarnation of

¹¹⁶ The village narrator describes Anna’s father as an “alt[er] weißköpfig[er] Exzellenz.” (480)

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 493-494.

Jesus, the three that Storm includes in the novella describe an intense experience of divine love: “Geuß sehr tief in mein Herz hinein, / Du heller Jaspis und Rubein, / Die Flammen deiner Liebe.”¹¹⁸ In contrast to the ‘Wort der Liebe’ that Anna never receives from her father, this Christian text suggests that the believer can deeply experience the “Flamme” of God’s love. Christian love is here a compensation for the failure of familial love. Furthermore, the association of the hymn with fairy tales should not be overlooked, for it reinforces my observation that Storm draws a clear connection between Anna’s immaturity and childhood with her religiosity.

Nicolai’s hymn does more than reinforce the theme of love; its emphasis on Jesus as the *word incarnate*, like the portraits, suggests that the absence of loving communication in Anna’s world can be mended by an embodiment of the ‘Wort der Liebe.’ In the fourth stanza of the hymn we see the themes of love, word, and incarnation converge:

Von Gott kommt mir ein Freudenschein,
Wenn du mit deinen Äugelein
Mich freundlich tust anblicken.
O Herr Jesu, mein trautes Gut,
Dein Wort, dein Geist, dein Leib und Blut
Mich innerlich erquicken!
Nimm mich freundlich
In dein’ Arme, daß ich warme
Werd’ von Gnaden!
Auf dein Wort komm’ ich geladen.¹¹⁹

The reference to Jesus’s body in the words “Leib und Blut” and “Arme” and the physical touch that the speaker longs for (“Nimm mich freundlich / In dein’ Arme”) speak to incarnation, while “Dein Wort” is an allusion to St. John’s language regarding Jesus’s

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 508.

¹¹⁹ Philipp Nicolai, “Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern.” Bach Cantatas Website, 6/8/2017, <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Texts/Chorale015-Eng3.htm> (accessed 3/26/2018).

deity: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”¹²⁰ As the word made flesh, the figure of Jesus resembles the object of Anna’s desires. Thus we see that the portraits and the texts that appear in response to the father’s failure to love all suggest a need for an incarnation of love, an embodiment of the “Wort der Liebe.”

Anna’s adolescence and adulthood, and the process of maturation she experiences, is shaped by her relationship with Arnold, a character who embodies several of the key tenets of the secularization thesis: he becomes a respected member of the academy despite his humble origins in the working class,¹²¹ and promotes a scientific understanding of world, rather than a religious one. He is the modern man, *par excellence*. In many ways, he also comes to occupy the role of Christ for Anna. Arnold is the Word (of love) made flesh, embodying the love for which Anna yearns. And as Christ had John the Baptist as his forerunner, Arnold too has a forerunner: a portrait that captures Anna’s attention and affection, and is later shown to resemble Arnold in several ways. It is to this portrait, as a precursor to Arnold, that we now turn our attention.

In addition to his role as the “Word made flesh” in his resemblance to a painting that Anna loves, he takes on another association with Christ as the “image of the invisible.” As already noted, a result of the silence of Anna’s father is that Anna becomes more aware of the images that surround her. His silence gives rise to a foregrounding of the visual world. In this vein, Anna becomes fascinated with the castle’s portraits. One that particularly captivates her attention portrays a group of children, including a boy who

¹²⁰ John 1:14 (ESV)

¹²¹ See Storm, 521: “Sein Name war damals schon ein vielgenannter; er war ein Mann von ‘Distinktion’ geworden, und auch hochgestellten Personen schmeichelte es, ihn unter ihren Gästen nennen zu können.”

stands slightly removed from the others. Immediately apparent in Anna's description of the painting is her awareness of the discrepancy between the boy's social standing and that of the other people portrayed, not just in the gallery, but particularly in the painting of the children in which he is represented. To further examine the painting's significance, I have divided an extensive passage about Anna's fascination with the painting into three smaller sections:

Um dieselbe Zeit [when Anna's religious belief and imagination were vivid] war es, daß eine seltsame Schwärmerei von mir Besitz nahm. Im Rittersaal auf dem Bilde oberhalb der Tür befand sich seitab von den reichgekleideten Kindern noch die Gestalt eines etwa zwölfjährigen Knaben in einem schmucklosen braunen Wams. Es mochte der Sohn eines Gutsangehörigen sein, der mit den Kindern der Schloßherrschaft zu spielen pflegte; auf der Hand trug er, vielleicht zum Zeichen seiner geringen Herkunft, einen Sperling.¹²²

The composition of the painting reflects his status as a member of the "Gutsangehörigen" rather than the "Schloßherrschaft," for his location is removed from the other children ("seitab von den reichgekleideten Kindern"). Similarly, Anna observes the difference in the boy's "schmucklosen braunen Wams" and those of the "reichgekleideten Kindern" as proof of his low station, and the sparrow he holds as a symbol to that effect. Despite the fact that Anna has more in common with the "reichgekleideten Kindern" because of their shared social status, she nonetheless is drawn to the boy. It is the beginning of a process of awakening to the ugly presence of prejudice and division that permeates her life.

The painting also facilitates a comparison between the boy and Anna's father, and thus between Arnold and Anna's father. In the next few sentences of the paragraph, it is notable that, although the boy portrayed appears to be of a lower station than Anna and her family, her viewing of the painting strongly resembles the passage in which she

¹²² See Storm, 495.

examines her father's face in search of the "Wort der Liebe." The boy in the painting receives the same scrutiny that she directed toward her father:

Die blauen Augen blickten trotzig genug unter dem schlicht gescheitelten Haar heraus; aber um den fest geschlossenen Mund lag ein Zug des Leidens. Früher hatte ich diese unscheinbare Gestalt kaum bemerkt; jetzt wurde es plötzlich anders. Ich began der möglichen Geschichte dieses Knaben nachzusinnen; ich studierte in bezug auf ihn die Gesichter seiner vornehmen Spielgenossen. Was war aus ihm geworden, war er zum Manne erwachsen, und hatte er später die Kränkungen gerächt, die vielleicht jenen Schmerz um seine Lippen und jenen Trotz auf seine Stirn gelegt hatten? – Die Augen sahen mich an, als ob sie reden wollten; aber der Mund blieb stumm.¹²³

Just as Anna examined her father's eyes and face to discover what might be lie behind his silent exterior, she examines the eyes, mouth, and forehead portrayed in the portrait and imagines the events that might have given ride to his sorrowful exterior. Like her father, who never voiced the "Wort der Liebe," the boy's image appears determined in his own silence; his wordlessness is emphasized twice: his mouth is "fest geschlossen" and "blieb stumm." Again, as with her father, Anna has the feeling that, despite his silence, "Die Augen sahen mich an, als ob sie reden wollten." Although she does not realize it, the questions about the child's future foreshadow her own future with Arnold, who will embody the painting in his resemblance to the boy and by speaking the 'word of love' that Anna is waiting to hear.

The painting also bears a strong physical resemblance to Arnold. Upon first meeting Arnold when he comes to the castle to tutor Anna's brother, Anna recalls "Das blasse Gesicht mit den raschblickenden Augen kam mir bekannt vor; aber ich sann umstonst über eine Ähnlichkeit nach."¹²⁴ Like the boy, Arnold's hair is described as

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 499.

“schlicht.” It is only much later than Anna realizes that the *Ähnlichkeit* she detected was between Arnold and the portrait:

[Arnold] sah mich wieder mit jenen resoluten Augen an, als da ich zum ersten Mal ihm gegenüberstand; und jetzt plötzlich wußte ich es, was mich so vertraut aus diesem Antlitz ansprach. Ich schwieg; denn mir war, als fühlte ich das Blut in meine Wangen steigen. Dann aber, als er mich fragend anblickte, suchte ich mich zu fassen und wies mit der Hand nach jenem alten Familienbilde oberhalb der Tür. “Sehen Sie keine Ähnlichkeit?” fragte ich. “Der eine von jenen Knaben muß Ihr Vorfahr sein?” ...

“Den Prügeljungen? – Das wäre möglich; meine Familie ist ja hier zu Haus.”¹²⁵

As a member of the family that had served the castle in years past, Arnold now returns, in a sense, as the *Doppelgänger* of the whipping boy. However, he now represents a new phase of history. In terms of the secularization thesis, Arnold represents the progress of modernity.

In the final section of the description of the boy’s portrait, the status of the portrait as a precursor to Arnold’s appearance is intensified by Anna’s sense that the painting is somehow alive. Of the texts that this dissertation examines, the sense that painting is imbued with life and transcendental power is nowhere more overt than in *Im Schloß*. But this is true of Storm’s oeuvre in general. In his *Waldwinkel* (1874), for example, a painted figure turns to face its viewer. In *Im Nachbarhause links* (1875), the protagonist is stunned to discover that the portrait of a beautiful young woman depicts his wizened, reclusive neighbor who has lost all resemblance to her own portrait. The discovery is followed by her death and her transformation into a ghost. Anna believes that the painting is not merely anchored in the past, but actually has significance and even a life—a

¹²⁵ Ibid., 515.

phenomenon we will see again in Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*—beyond its original setting and purpose:

Ein schwermütiges, mir selber holdes Mitgefühl bewegte mein Herz; ich vergaß es, daß diese jugendliche Gestalt nichts sei als die wesenlose Spur eines vor Jahrhunderten vorübergegangenen Menschenlebens. Sooft ich in den Saal trat, war mir, als fühle ich die Augen des Bildes auf meinen Lidern, bis ich emporsah und den Blick erwiderte; und abends vor dem Einschlafen war es nun nicht sowohl das Antlitz des lieben Gottes als viel öfter noch das blasse Knabenantlitz, das sich über das meine neigte.¹²⁶

The narrator's emphasis on the boy's transience belies the painting's numinousness. The difference between Anna's childhood perspective of the painting as enchanted and her adult perspective as the narrator is notable: as the mature narrator, she calls the painting a "wesenlose Spur eines vor Jahrhunderten vorübergegangenen Menschenlebens." Her definitive words "wesenlose" and "vorübergegangen" serve to highlight the opposite experience that she has of them as a child: far from *wesenlose* and *vorübergegangen*, she experiences it as alive—the portrait "erwiderte" her gaze—and changes her experience of loneliness. Integral to the painting's numinous quality is the way it replaces the image of God that Anna once found so comforting. Earlier I noted the resemblance between the painting of the white-haired man portrayed in the church, which Anna identified as God, and her white-haired father. Here we find yet another substitute in her imagination: the portrait of the boy replaces her image of the divine. Peter Brandes observes that the connection between animated paintings and faith in supernatural realities is common in early nineteenth-century texts:

Sind aber die frühen Vorstellungen von bildlicher Lebendigkeit vor allem durch religiöse Praktiken bestimmt, so erzeugt der literarische Diskurs um 1800 eine Anschauungsform der lebendigen Bilder, die sich von der kultischen und

¹²⁶ Ibid., 495-496.

religiösen Sphäre der Bildmagie und des Animismus mehr und mehr löst - ohne jedoch den Bezug zu seinen Ursprüngen zu verlieren.¹²⁷

This holds true for Storm's novella too, for the close relationship between the divine, the father, and the portraits, and their resemblance to Arnold prepares the reader to see Arnold as the embodiment of the 'Wort der Liebe.'

Indeed, in the figure of Arnold, the motif of silence is transformed from a sign of distance and indifference, to a sign of love and understanding. Describing her feelings while viewing nature with him, Anna recalls:

... kaum ein Wort wurde gewechselt; es war still bis in die weiteste Ferne; nur mitunter sank leise ein Blatt aus dem Gezweig zur Erde, und oben über den Wipfeln war das stumme, ruhelose Blitzen der Sterne.... [W]ir sprachen nicht; wir fühlten, glaub ich, beide, daß dieselben Gedanken uns bewegten.... Es war ein Gefühl ruhigen Glückes in mir; ich weiß nicht, war es die neue bescheidenere Gottesverehrung, die jetzt in meinem Herzen Raum erhielt, oder gehörte es mehr der Erde an, die mir noch nie so hold erschienen war.¹²⁸

In addition to the change in which silence bespeaks love and happiness instead of distance, nature also takes on new meaning for Anna. Whereas she once interpreted the elements of nature as expressions of God's presence, here she makes no such suggestion. Nature's beauty is part and parcel of her new-found love for Arnold. I believe the final sentence in the quotation functions like a redundant question in which the answer is that a "Gefühl ruhigen Glückes" is no longer dependent on a "Gottesverehrung" that emerged from her loneliness. The world now appears "so hold" because of human love. In contrast, we will see in the chapter on *Der grüne Heinrich* that there is no solution for the protagonist's loneliness and alienation.

¹²⁷ Peter Brandes, *Leben die Bilder bald? Ästhetische Konzepte bildlicher Lebendigkeit in der Literatur des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*, (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2013): 10.

¹²⁸ See Storm, 511-512.

Arnold represents changes in social structures in German lands that had been underway for several centuries, as feudal systems deteriorated and the middle class's influence grew. In contrast to the inherited power that Anna's father represents, Arnold, as a member of the intelligentsia, earns his position of influence in his work at the university. Their comparative ages – the father is old, Arnold is young – bespeak two moments in history, past and present. Unlike Anna's family, which all but dies off during the course of the novella, we see that Arnold's family is healthy and growing. Of the flourishing of Arnold's working-class family, Patricia M. Boswell states: "Diese Familie ist nicht im Absterben begriffen. Im Gegenteil, sie wächst und gedeiht. Hier in der unteren Gesellschaftsschicht ist Kraft zur Erneuerung des Lebens reichhaltig vorhanden, die dem Adel fehlt."¹²⁹

Anna's transition into adulthood is defined in part by a dramatic shift in her worldview that corresponds to her growing love for Arnold. Her first encounter with a naturalistic framework should be understood as a loss of innocence, for it almost devastates her. In stark contrast to Anna's mysticism, her uncle's naturalism provides a very different interpretation for the observable world. Marking a clear contrast with her worldview, the uncle states the world is "etwas anders doch, als es dort in deinem Katechismus steht."¹³⁰ Detering labels the uncle's perspective an "aufklärische Weltsicht" and Anna's a "romantische."¹³¹ I prefer to contrast the uncle's *naturalist* worldview with Anna's *Christian* worldview because this allows for clearer distinctions

¹²⁹ See Boswell, 24.

¹³⁰ See Storm, 508.

¹³¹ See Detering, 261.

between the uncle's perspective and Arnold's deism, which could accurately be termed "aufklärerisch" too. It further provides a path to considering how Arnold's view mediates between the uncle's and Anna's opposing views. By comparing his version of naturalism with Anna's Christian faith, the uncle has a very specific aspect of her faith in mind. He recognizes that her religious belief is evidence of her desire for incarnational love, and posits instead a very different sort of love. Echoing Charles Darwin's concept of "natural selection," he describes "mit unerbittlicher Ausführlichkeit die grausame Weise," "wie der Carabus den Maikäfer frißt"; in other words, "dies gefräßige Insekt sich von andern seinesgleichen nährt." In the "ewigen Kriege in der Natur,"¹³² love is nothing more than the natural reaction to fear of death: "Und das, mein Kind...ist die Regel der Natur. – Liebe ist nichts als die Angst des sterblichen Menschen vor dem Alleinsein."¹³³ He explains love in naturalistic terms.

According to the uncle's view, love has no significance beyond its natural origin in self-preservation and fear. It is a perspective I explore further in my chapter on Adalbert Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*, in which an objective, scientific understanding of nature is expressed in aesthetics of landscape painting. From descriptions of natural processes the uncle extrapolates a system of meaning in which fear is the primary motivation of human action and emotion. Although similar to the uncle's view of "nature, red in tooth and claw,"¹³⁴ Arnold's worldview allows for a level of mystery that the uncle's perspective lacks, and which Anna finds appealing. While Arnold too echoes

¹³² Dolf Sternberger, *Panorama oder Ansichten vom 19. Jahrhundert*, (Hamburg: Claassen Verlag, 1955): 94.

¹³³ See Storm, 508.

¹³⁴ Alfred Tennyson. "In Memoriam A.H.H." (1849)

the language of Darwinian evolution, he preserves a belief in God, although he tells

Anna, “Es gibt noch einen anderen Gott”¹³⁵ than the one in which she believes:

Dann sagte [Arnold]: “In der Bibel steht ein Wort: So ihr mich von ganzem Herzen suchet, so will ich mich finden lassen! – Aber sie scheinen es nicht zu verstehen; sie begnügen sich mit dem, was jene vor Jahrtausenden gefunden oder zu finden glaubten.” – Und nun began er mit schonender Hand die Trümmer des Kinderwunders hinwegzuräumen, das über mir zusammengebrochen war; und indem er bald ein Geheimnis in einen geläufigen Begriff des Altertums auflöste, bald das höchste Sittengesetz mir in den Schriften desselben vorgezeichnet wies, lenkte er allmählich meinen Blick in die Tiefe. Ich sah den Baum des Menschengeschlechtes heraufsteigen, Trieb um Trieb, in naturwüchsiger ruhiger Entfaltung, ohne ein anderes Wunder als das der ungeheuren Weltschöpfung, in welchem seine Wurzeln lagen.... [I]ch horchte regungslos auf diese Worte, die wie Tautropfen in meine durstige Seele fielen.¹³⁶

In addition to the presence of “Geheimnis” and “Wunder,” which is lacking in the uncle’s worldview, another significant difference between the two perspectives is the deistic element of Arnold’s view. Aware of Anna’s religious faith, Arnold frames his theory in terms that are familiar and comforting to her. He bridges the gap between her religiosity and the deistic evolution he espouses by beginning his lesson with a quote from the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah¹³⁷ and ending with creation. The result is a replacement of her belief in a God whose presence is so immediate that, as Anna states, “Ich habe bisher noch immer den Finger des lieben Gottes in meiner Hand gehalten,”¹³⁸ for a sense of the “Tiefe” and “Wunder” of nature. Furthermore, as the narrator, Anna presents her own acceptance of Arnold’s conception of deistic evolution as a part of her own “Entfaltung” from childhood into adulthood. The image of the tree transforms with her new outlook,

¹³⁵ See Storm, 510.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Jeremiah 29:13

¹³⁸ See Storm, 510.

taking on new significance in Anna's thinking. Similar to the Tree of Life, the "Baum des Menschengeschlechts" recalls human origins, but instead of being sealed off from human contact, its growing branches symbolize the continued progression of human development. The tree also recalls her childhood, when she perceived a tree as clear evidence of God's presence ("es war zum ersten Mal, daß ich über mir das Sausen des Frühlingswindes in der Krone eines Baumes hörte. 'Horch!' rief ich und hob den Finger in die Höhe. 'Da kommt er!' – 'Wer denn?' – 'Der liebe Gott!'"¹³⁹). It symbolizes evolution – both the Darwinian evolution that Arnold presents to her and her individual evolution as she matures into adulthood.¹⁴⁰

Central to Storm's depiction of each position – Christianity, naturalism, and deism – is the question of human love. Indeed, Storm positions human love as the foundational issue to be reckoned with. *How does this worldview actually express the desire for human love?* – that seems to be the question he tries to answer. Bassler draws a connection between the centrality of love in Storm's fiction, and his aversion to Christianity, which – like Keller – was influenced by Feuerbach's philosophy: "An der

¹³⁹ Ibid., 492.

¹⁴⁰ There is some debate about which of the two worldviews, the uncle's or Arnold's, the novella's implicit framework most resembles, if either. Moritz Bassler identifies the uncle's pessimistic statement that, "Liebe ist nichts als die Angst des sterblichen Menschens vor dem Alleinsein" as an expression of the novella's underlying message. In "Die ins Haus heimgeholte Transzendenz' Theodor Storms Liebesauffassung vor dem Hintergrund der Philosophie Ludwig Feuerbachs." *Schriften der Theodor-Storm-Gesellschaft* (1987): 58. Detering, on the other hand, believes that Arnold's deism represents a melding together of the uncle's naturalism and Anna's Christianity. He identifies this synthesis as exemplary of the text's foundational assumptions: "Storms Text gibt sich nun, nachdem diese beiden Weltansichten etabliert sind, alle erdenkliche Mühe, die quälenden Gegensätze aufzulösen in eine *optimistische Synthese*... Zunächst schlägt der geliebte Hauslehrer Arnold die Brücke zwischen Gottesglauben und Naturwissenschaft" (261).

Stelle des Glauben an Gott steht vielmehr schon...der Glaube an die Liebe.”¹⁴¹ This rings true of Anna’s faith, which is largely a response to her father’s indifference. Jackson also draws the connection between Feuerbach’s teaching and Storm’s focus on a human love that replaces God, observing that Storm displayed an “eagerness to reject Christian notions of salvation and replace them with the gospel of human love.”¹⁴² Karin Tebben describes the opposition between religion and love in Storm’s thinking in even stronger terms when she claims that Storm believed that religion produces “beschädigte liebesunfähige ... Individuen.”¹⁴³ Human love does not simply replace the divine in Storm’s worldview, but faith in the divine actually renders believers incapable of love. Although I agree that human love and divine love do not co-exist in this narrative, the role of the father, as I have shown, suggests that the divine love that Anna experiences is not separate from human love. Rather, it is symptomatic of the desire for human love.

The path from Anna’s childhood to adulthood maps perfectly onto the path that the secularization thesis traces for western culture from the highly religious pre-modern world to the ostensibly scientific modern one. The father is a representative of the latter, while Arnold represents the former. The motif of painting has proven flexible up to this point, echoing the silent stoicism of Anna’s father, providing images for her childhood

¹⁴¹ Bassler shows the similarities between Ludwig Feuerbach’s philosophy and Storm’s personal belief system and poetry. Although there is no evidence that Storm read Feuerbach, or that he was particularly interested in contemporary philosophy, Bassler argues that Feuerbach’s writings were part of mainstream culture and thus likely influenced Storm’s thinking (58). Ian Cooper makes a similar observation about Feuerbach’s influence on Storm in “Theodor Storm and Disenchantment.” *German Life and Letters* 68, no. 4 (2015).

¹⁴² See “Storm at the Foot of the Cross”, 88.

¹⁴³ Karin Tebben. “‘Wo keine Göttinnen sind, da walten Gespenster’: Dämoninnen und Philister im Werk Theodor Storms.” *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 79, no. 1 (2004): 9.

faith in God, and finally giving way to a solid reality in Arnold, who incarnates the love that Anna projected onto the portrait of the whipping boy especially. Storm highlights Arnold's function as a sort of Messiah: whereas Anna spoke of "der liebe Gott"¹⁴⁴ as a child, she later refers to " 'der liebe Arnold' ";¹⁴⁵ whereas she once believed that she walked hand in hand with God ('Ich habe bisher noch immer den Finger des lieben Gottes in meiner Hand gehalten'¹⁴⁶), she walks "Arm in Arm"¹⁴⁷ with Arnold in the final scene of the novella. Arnold offers the love her father withheld, embodies the tangible presence she sought in religion, and incarnates the portrait of the whipping boy. Similarly, he resembles the whipping boy, who suffered unjustly for the misdeeds of others, as Christ did. And like Christ, Arnold is the hero who comes from obscurity. However, Storm's secular Messiah does not complete the ostensible progress of secularization. A closer examination of the paintings suggests a complication to the tidy conclusion of the story and to the secularization thesis on which it depends.

In considering more closely the relationship of painting to the novella's parallels to the secularization thesis in this final section, it is vital to return to the novella's structure. First, it should be noted that the number of mentions of paintings decreases drastically throughout the story. More specifically, while there are nine mentions of painting in the 27 pages before Anna falls in love with Arnold and shifts from a religious to primarily scientific view of the world, there are only two mentions of painting in the

¹⁴⁴ See Storm, 492.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 511.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 510.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 528.

15 pages following that event. Paintings appear – at first glance – to become less relevant as Anna matures. There is also a difference between the depictions of paintings by the anonymous third-person narrator in the second, fourth, and fifth chapters and Anna’s handling of it in the third. For while Anna’s voice echoes Arnold’s enlightened worldview, for she writes as an adult who has adopted his worldview, the third-person narrator represents a perspective that is independent of the characters and which offers the final word about the story’s conclusion. Each narrator offers a different take on the significance of painting. Anna’s autobiographical text is framed by this third-person narrator. It is typical of Storm to subvert the progress of an inner narrative in the framing narrative, and this is certainly the case in *Im Schloss*. Jackson makes this observation about Storm’s *Der Schimmelreiter* (1888), and it also applies to *Im Schloß*: “the framework...reinforces doubts about any belief in progress and increasing rationality.”¹⁴⁸ The progress towards “rationality” in *Im Schloß* is similarly undermined by the perspective that frames Anna’s narrative.

An examination of Anna’s narrative voice reveals that her view of the portraits is ambivalent. At times she maintains objective distance from her childhood experience of the paintings, indicating that she looks at them differently as an adult than she did as a child. For example she often attributes the life-like power of the portraits to her fanciful childhood imagination, rather than to the paintings themselves. When describing her interest in the portrait of a knight whose face appeared to change the longer she looked at him, she uses the phrase “wie es mir schien” to preface his altered expression.¹⁴⁹ Of a

¹⁴⁸ See “Taboos in Poetic-Realist Writers”, 71.

¹⁴⁹ See Storm, 493.

painting of several children she states, “wenn ich unter dem Bilde durch die Tür lief, *war es mir*, als blickten sie alle aus den kleinen begrabenen Gesichtern”¹⁵⁰ (emphasis added). She describes her experience of the whipping boy’s portrait similarly: “So oft ich in den Saal trat, *war mir*, als fühlte ich die Augen des Bildes auf meinen Lidern, bis ich emporsah und den Blick erwiderte”¹⁵¹ (emphasis added). Here she emphasizes her own perception, not a strange quality of the paintings. Even in her adolescence, Anna remains fascinated with the portraits. At age 17, she returns to the castle after living for three years with her aunt; again, she emphasizes her affective response to the portraits: “*es war mir* doch fast unheimlich, daß sie [the portraits] nach so langer Zeit noch ebenso wie sonst mit ihren grellen Augen in den Saal hineinschauten”¹⁵² (emphasis added). Despite these often-repeated attributions of the portraits’ life to her own imagination, Anna occasionally implies that they do indeed have dormant life. She describes them as “stumm” and “schweigend,”¹⁵³ suggesting their potential for communication. As already mentioned, she states that the portraits “schaut noch wie sonst mit dem fremdartigen Gesichtsausdruck aus ihren Rahmen in den leeren Saal hinein.” Far from lifeless objects, they are perpetually *looking* according to Anna.

The third-person narrator’s descriptions of the portraits serve at least two functions: they establish continuity with Anna’s point of view, and they underscore the impression of permanence that the portraits create. First, continuity between the third-

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 496.

¹⁵² Ibid., 498.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 491, 492.

person narrator and Anna is established through a shared vocabulary. A good example is found in the second chapter, where the narrator describes Anna's return to the castle for her father's funeral. When the narrator states that as Anna enters the portrait gallery, "nur die Bilder verschollener Menschen standen wie immer schweigend an den Wänden," it is unclear whether this is Anna's perception, as perceived and stated by the omniscient narrator, or merely the narrator speaking. The word "schweigend" is one that Anna uses many times in her journal, suggesting that perhaps the narrator is revealing her thoughts, and borrowing her vocabulary to do so. But the shared vocabulary also establishes a sense of agreement between Anna's view of the paintings and the third-person narrator's.

Second, the narrator echoes Anna in portraying the portraits as objects that remain unchanged in contrast to their evolving surroundings. The final sentence of the novella is uttered from the narrator's perspective, and reminds the reader that the portrait of the whipping boy belies the monumental changes, depicted positively as progress, in the protagonist's worldview and circumstances: "Über ihnen [Anna, Arnold, and the uncle] auf dem alten Bilde stand wie immer der Prügeljunge mit seinem Sperling, ... und schaute stumm und schmerzlich herab auf die Kinder einer andern Zeit."¹⁵⁴ Again, we find continuity with Anna's perspective in the narrator's use of vocabulary identical to Anna's in the words "stumm" and "schmerzlich" (Anna wrote that the portrait was "stumm" and that she sees "Schmerz um seine Lippen"¹⁵⁵). Moreover, this sentence contains the final instance of the oft-repeated refrain about the portraits' apparent immutability. The repetition of the words "stand wie immer" recalls the scene discussed

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 528.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 495.

above from the novella's second chapter. It also echoes Anna's repeated description in her journal of the portraits stability and persistence: "die stumme Gesellschaft verschollener Männer und Frauen schaut *noch wie sonst* mit dem fremdartigen Gesichtsausdruck aus ihren Rahmen in den leeren Saal hinein";¹⁵⁶ the portraits "[schauten] nach so langer Zeit *noch ebenso wie sonst* mit ihren grellen Augen in den Saal hinein"¹⁵⁷ (emphases added). The contrast between Anna's happy ending and the suggestion via the boy's portrait that 'some things never change' is unsettling. But what is it, exactly, that never changes? To answer this question, I would like to focus on the portrait of the whipping boy since it is the one that I believe most fully encapsulates all of the work that painting does in this novella and the one which, literally, "stand wie immer" at the end of the novella. I argued in an earlier section of this chapter that the portraits in *Im Schloß* are multivalent – they successively reflect the alienation of Anna's childhood, her desire for embodied love, and the fulfillment of that desire in Arnold, who resembles the whipping boy. The portrait of the boy exhibits each function. One might expect the painting, as a sort of prophetic forerunner of Arnold, to become irrelevant after Arnold appears. The progress of the plot leads the reader to expect that embodied reality replaces painted representations. The persistence of the portrait to the final sentence of the novella, however, shows that this is not the case. The final mention of the portrait throws the reader back to earlier moments in the text, subverting the sense of forward motion. It does not adhere to the same logic of progress that controls other elements of the story.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 491.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 498.

The question of the portraits' significance is closely related to the worldviews represented in the story. Detering, for example, sees the portraits as an expression Anna's childhood religion. I agree with his claim that, although Anna's education includes a turning away from her "religiöse Kinderglaube,"¹⁵⁸ the text actually affirms some aspects of her childhood faith:

der Text [teilt] die Kinder-Perspektive immer wieder auf zweideutige Weise – dass er die erzählte Welt immer wieder so drapiert, als träfe die Weltsicht dieser Kinder am Ende doch zu, and als seien die Aufklärer ihrerseits im Irrtum. Das gilt schon für die Verlebendigung der gemalten Figuren.¹⁵⁹

Although she appears to outgrow her childhood faith in the supernatural world, Detering believes the text itself does not; at least not entirely, for he adds that it does not fully embrace Anna's perspective: "Storms Text gibt sich nun, nachdem diese beiden Weltsichten etabliert sind [Anna's and Arnold's], alle erdenkliche Mühe, die quälenden Gegensätze aufzulösen in eine *optimistische Synthese*... Zunächst schlägt der geliebte Hauslehrer Arnold die Brücke zwischen Gottesglauben und Naturwissenschaft."¹⁶⁰ Arnold's deism, which brings a belief in the supernatural and a scientific approach to the world together, is representative of the text's perspective. My aim is not to classify the worldview that the text espouses so much as to draw attention to a pattern that the following three chapters will further explore; namely: art's resistance to secularization, and its close affinity with the sacred.

¹⁵⁸ See Detering, 260.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 253.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 261.

CHAPTER TWO

Ordinary Disenchantment in Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854/55)¹⁶¹

We are not at the beginning of any endless and expanding dawn, but only of the ordinary daily dawns each followed by its own darkness.

- G.K. Chesterton, "My Six Conversions"¹⁶²

The pencil is conscious of a delightful facility in drawing a griffin—the longer the claws, and the larger the wings, the better; but that marvelous facility which we mistook for genius is apt to forsake us when we want to draw a real unexaggerated lion.

- George Eliot, *Adam Bede*¹⁶³

After his career as a landscape painter has failed, Heinrich Lee meets the art collector who owns all of his paintings. The collector offers this insightful reading of Heinrich's *oeuvre*:

Erst als ich sah, daß hier ein ganzer wohlbeordneter Fleiß [Heinrich's *oeuvre*] stückweise zum Vorschein kam, vielleicht die heiteren Blütenjahre eines unglücklich gewordenen Menschen, gewann ich ein tieferes Interesse an den Sachen und sammelte sie sorgfältig auf, seltsam bewegt, wenn ich sie so beisammen sah und alle die verschwendete Liebe und Treue eines Unbekannten,

¹⁶¹ The first version of the novel was published in 1855, and is the object of the present reading. However, Keller revised it and it was republished in 1880. Some of the most notable revisions were made to the narrative voice and to the ending. While in the first version, Heinrich narrates the story of his childhood and young adulthood (*Jugendgeschichte*) and a third-person narrator conveys the rest, in the second version, Heinrich narrates the entire story. Keller also altered the ending of the novel significantly. Instead of returning to Switzerland from Germany and discovering that his mother has just died, in the revised version Heinrich returns to Switzerland from Germany in time to make amends with his mother before her death. Furthermore, instead of dying himself, Heinrich pursues a career in public service, having left his painting career, and re-establishes his friendship with one of his childhood sweethearts.

¹⁶² G.K. Chesterton, "My Six Conversions." In *The Well and the Shallows*, (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2006): 37.

¹⁶³ George Eliot, *Adam Bede*, (London: Dent, 1966): 173.

die Luft eines schönen Landes und verlorener Heimat herausföhlte; denn man sah wohl, daß dies nicht Reisetudien waren, sondern ein Grund und Boden vom Jugendlande des Urhebers.¹⁶⁴

The collector traces a development in the experience of home as portrayed the paintings; he speculates about the ‘unglücklich gewordenen Menschen,’ ‘verschwendete Liebe und Treue,’ and ‘verlorener Heimat.’ A sad progression of loss. Even the words ‘Jugendlande des Urhebers’ suggest a place that the artist has somehow left behind as he matured into adulthood. Home is elusive in his interpretation. On the one hand, it seems ephemeral: ‘die Luft eines schönen Landes’. On the other hand, solid: ‘ein Grund und Boden’. The painted depiction of home in *Der grüne Heinrich* is the focus of this chapter. And as the quote above indicates, Heinrich’s depiction of home exudes a sense of loss and is fraught with both alienation and familiarity. Many scholars have characterized this tension as a struggle between revenants of Romanticism and Classicism and the burgeoning German Poetic Realism.¹⁶⁵ Certainly, traces of both Romanticism and Classicism are plentiful in Keller’s novel and appear to hinder Heinrich from successfully developing a realist aesthetic of landscape painting.¹⁶⁶ As a daydreamer, an avid reader of Goethe and Jean

¹⁶⁴ Gottfried Keller, *Der grüne Heinrich*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985): 772.

¹⁶⁵ Because of its indebtedness to Romanticism, Hugo Aust identifies *Der grüne Heinrich* as a pre-realist text. See *Realismus. Lehrbuch Germanistik*, (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2006): 168.

¹⁶⁶ The claim that Heinrich fails as a realist artist is a reoccurring theme in the secondary literature. See Gail Finney, “Poetic Realism, Naturalism, and the Rise of the Novella,” *German Literature of the Nineteenth Century, 1832-1899*, (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005); Günter Hess, “Die Bilder des grünen Heinrichs. Gottfried Kellers poetische Malerei,” *Panorama und Denkmal. Studien zum Bildgedächtnis des 19. Jahrhunderts*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011); Todd Kontje, “Der gescheiterte Realist im Zeitalter der Abstraktion. Gottfried Kellers *Der grüne Heinrich I* (1855),” *Medialer Realismus*, (Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2011); Ernst Osterkamp, “Erzählte Landschaften,” *Der grüne Heinrich. Gottfried Kellers Lebensbuch - Neu Gelesen*, (Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009)

Paul, and a “sonderbarer Bursche,”¹⁶⁷ Heinrich himself appears at times to be a revenant of an earlier aesthetic tradition. However, the dreams that most occupy his creative mind are not fantastical, but rather ordinary: above all, he desires friendship with his father who died when Heinrich was a young child. In the death of his father, Heinrich loses his feeling of belonging in his own home, giving rise to a homesickness that transcends his physical location: “so haben mich auch die langen Erzählungen der Mutter immer mehr mit Sehnsucht und Heimweh nach meinem Vater erfüllt, welchen ich nicht mehr gekannt habe.”¹⁶⁸ Whereas in the first chapter we saw that the absence of love and belonging depicted in Storm’s *Im Schloß* (1862) is filled when the protagonist falls in love, for Heinrich, the sense of belonging is only revived in the imaginary realm of his landscape paintings, but never in his actual experience.

In the first chapter I claimed that painting offers resistance to the demystification that accompanies secularization. *Im Schloß* includes characters whose embrace of a primarily empiricist understanding of the world is thrown into question by the presence of paintings that do not adhere to the same logic. In the present chapter I take up the dichotomy between painting and secularization again, and argue that painting is comparable to religion, for it becomes the protagonist’s means of combatting the alienating effects of secularization. In the first section of this chapter, I lay out the alternative theory of secularization that Charles Taylor posits. It differs from the Enlightenment theory in several ways, but most importantly for my argument, Taylor takes into account the experiential reverberations of secularization. Namely: that for

¹⁶⁷ See Keller, 25.

¹⁶⁸ See Keller, 69.

people in modernity, ordinary life often feels meaningless, even alien – borrowing from Max Weber, Taylor calls this experience “disenchantment.” Here I show that, as a perpetual outsider, Heinrich is a paradigm of Taylor’s modern subject. Having this understanding of the modern subject as a foundation, I turn to the role of painting in the novel. First I examine its religious function to reckon with the challenges of disenchantment. I demonstrate that in many ways, painting resembles the characterization of religion espoused by Ludwig Feuerbach, who influenced Keller profoundly. Finally, I show how this Feuerbachian understanding of painting as religion sheds light on the aesthetic phases of Heinrich’s career.

Scholarly discussions about painting in *Der grüne Heinrich* generally revolve around interpreting the aesthetic conventions that characterize Heinrich’s works of art. Andrea Meyertholen has recently argued that, although Keller does not advocate for unconventional art forms in this novel, *Grüner Heinrich* reveals important preconditions for the emergence of abstract art.¹⁶⁹ Focusing on the paintings that reflect Romantic and Classical conventions, other scholars identify what appears to be Heinrich’s struggle to achieve a realist aesthetic. Günter Hess claims that the phases of Heinrich’s painting correspond to the state of visual art in the mid nineteenth century in which there was no dominant visual aesthetic.¹⁷⁰ Gail Finney, however, identifies the multiple conventions as evidence of a struggle between idealism and realism within the text.¹⁷¹ Similarly, Ernst Osterkamp claims that Heinrich’s preference for Romantic and Classical conventions

¹⁶⁹ Andrea Meyertholen, “It’s Not Easy Being Green: The Failure of Abstract Art in Gottfried Keller’s *Der Grüne Heinrich*,” *German Studies Review* 39, no. 2 (2016): 241–58.

¹⁷⁰ See Hess.

¹⁷¹ See Finney.

leads to his downfall as a realist painter.¹⁷² While Martin Swales also identifies a struggle between Romanticism and realism in Heinrich's paintings, he believes that Heinrich fails on both counts.¹⁷³ Eric Downing's analysis departs notably from these approaches, in that – rather than examining the conventions that characterize the paintings – he examines their function within the text and concludes that painting taps into a magical force inherent in realist representation.¹⁷⁴

Claims that Heinrich fails to achieve a realist aesthetic have not fully accounted for the religious subtext that undergirds his artistic output, and particularly for the response to Ludwig Feuerbach's philosophy that the paintings express. Furthermore, by focusing on the differences and the ostensible tension between the aesthetic traditions represented in Heinrich's painting, scholars have overlooked an important factor that unifies them; namely: Heinrich's desire to experience the ordinary world *as familiar* helps explain his perpetual attempts to join the ranks of an aesthetic tradition – to belong somewhere, even within a community of artists. The role of convention in the experience of belonging will be further problematized in the next chapter on Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften* (1864), but here one of its primary functions is to further demonstrate Heinrich's ongoing attempt to become a familiar part of his community. Thus, while my approach will consider the aesthetic conventions that Heinrich's paintings use, my claim is that the conventions are not primarily indicative of an *aesthetic*

¹⁷² See Osterkamp.

¹⁷³ Martin Swales, "The Need to Believe and the Impossibility of Belief. Romantic and Realistic Strategies in Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*," *Realism and Romanticism in German Literature*, (Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2013)

¹⁷⁴ Eric Downing, "Binding Magic in Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*." *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 90, no. 3 (2015)

struggle, but of a *religious* and *social* one that emerges from his experience of his “disenchanted” world.

DISENCHANTMENT

This section seeks to understand the world of Keller’s novel and Heinrich’s experience of it in terms of the “disenchanted” world of modernity that Charles Taylor describes in *A Secular Age*. It answers the question: How does Keller conceive of “disenchantment”¹⁷⁵ in *Grüner Heinrich*? First, I outline Taylor’s definition of “secularization” and his description of how secularization affects the modern subject’s experience of the world. The novel is rife with examples that illustrate Taylor’s claims. Central to Taylor’s project is his awareness of a pronounced shift in how secularization alters the modern subject’s attitude toward and experience of ordinary life. In this section, I argue that, while much of Taylor’s understanding of secularization is present in the novel, Keller portrays the father’s death as the source of Heinrich’s experience of the world as disenchanted.

Before we can arrive at a clearer understanding of what is meant by “disenchanted,” I need to lay the groundwork of Taylor’s theory of secularization. *A Secular Age* offers an approach to secularization that, while it challenges the widespread assumptions about secularization that we examined in the previous chapter, is striking in its close observation of lived experience. The conception of secularization that Taylor has

¹⁷⁵ The term “disenchantment” was used by Max Weber in his articulation of the secularization thesis discussed in the previous chapter. According to Weber, as rational thinking gains ground, belief in the supernatural is gradually snuffed out. Naturalistic modes of understanding replace spiritual and religious modes. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. Hans Gerth and Charles Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958): 51.

in view does not recognize a *decrease* of spirituality in modernity – a teleological movement away from religious belief and towards greater scientific knowledge and technological development. At the heart of Taylor’s definition is an increasing plurality of religious beliefs and forms of spirituality coupled with the spatial proximity of people of many different faith commitments. Peter Berger agrees with Taylor, stating that true plurality is “a social situation in which people with different ethnicities, worldviews and moralities live together peacefully and interact with each other amicably.”¹⁷⁶ There must be interaction between people of differing beliefs in order for plurality to take place, according to Taylor, for this interaction gives rise to a sense that faith is one among many lifestyle options. In a pluralistic society, religious belief, whether embraced or rejected, is not a given, but a *choice*. Taylor calls this the “nova effect.”¹⁷⁷

Grüner Heinrich offers us glimpses of what the “nova effect” looks like, for Heinrich grows up surrounded by various shades of Christian faith and spirituality. While his mother is a devout Protestant who embraces Zwinglian dogma, his father—although Protestant—expresses a “Freiheitssinn” that appreciates aspects of both Protestantism and Catholicism.¹⁷⁸ Perhaps just as integral to Heinrich’s early understanding of religious faith as his parents is his neighbor, Frau Margaret, an old woman whose syncretistic beliefs meld aspects of Catholicism, folk religion, and early Christian heterodoxy, a stark

¹⁷⁶ Peter L. Berger, *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*, (Boston: De Gruyter, 2014): 1.

¹⁷⁷ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007): 309.

¹⁷⁸ See Keller, 365.

contrast to his mother's strict orthodoxy.¹⁷⁹ Frau Margaret surrounds herself, and thus Heinrich, with a diverse collection of believers and non-believers, including atheists, Christians, and Jews, who want "sich durch Gespräche und Belehrungen über das, was ihnen nicht alltäglich war, zu erwärmen und besonders in Betreff des Religiösen und Wunderbaren eine kräftigere Nahrung zu suchen, als die öffentlichen Culturzustände ihnen darboten."¹⁸⁰ In search of something beyond their mundane experience ("nicht alltäglich"), this hodgepodge of religiously-curious people gather to exchange ideas. Heinrich's understanding of religion takes shape in this highly variegated milieu of religious expression and non-conformity. Heinrich, for whom religious belief does indeed turn out to be a deliberate choice and an expression of his individuality, settles into an understanding of God that closely resembles Ludwig Feuerbach's religious philosophy. I will say more about Feuerbach later.

Ostensible benefits accompany the modern shift from understanding religious faith as a given to a choice, according to Taylor. The modern subject feels a sense of agency because she can choose to believe in the supernatural. Even if she believes that the supernatural may intrude on her ordinary routine, Taylor claims she has a sense of safety in knowing that belief is her choice. The choice is a "buffer" between the modern subject and the supernatural, a distance between her and the world beyond. The novel portrays this buffer against the supernatural, for example, when Heinrich cannot find a way to further his artistic training and he prays for God's help: "Es wurde mir angst und bange, ich glaubte jetzt sogleich verzweifeln zu müssen, wenn es mir nicht gelänge, und

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 96-100.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 100-101.

seufzend bat ich Gott, mir aus der Klemme zu helfen.”¹⁸¹ Within minutes of praying he meets the artist Römer, who soon becomes his mentor – an answer to his prayer! However, Heinrich decides not to tell his mother about the prayer and its speedy answer: “da sie viel zu schlicht und bescheiden war, um ein solches Einschreiten in solchen Angelegenheiten von Gott zu erwarten.”¹⁸² The proximity and *Einschreiten* of the spiritual world into the mundane is in conflict with Frau Lee’s understanding of the spiritual world as distant, not near.

Mundane experience is central to Taylor’s conception of secularization, for as the distance separating the modern subject from the supernatural world widens, the ordinary world loses its deeper sacred significance. The ordinary becomes “disenchanted” and the modern subject perceives it as flat, empty, even meaningless. In *Sources of the Self* Taylor describes the modern subject’s “sense of the world around us, as we ordinarily experience it, as out of joint, dead, or forsaken.”¹⁸³ Similarly, Berger claims that there is an experiential destabilization in pluralistic societies, for pluralism “relativizes and thereby undermines many of the certainties by which human beings used to live. Put differently, certainty becomes a scarce commodity.”¹⁸⁴ Berger furthermore states that the scarcity of certainty explains “why so many modern people are anxious, and incidentally why the calm certainty of pre-modern societies is attractive and becomes a utopia for a

¹⁸¹ See Keller, 434.

¹⁸² Ibid., 439.

¹⁸³ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989): 422.

¹⁸⁴ See Berger, 9.

lot of nervous moderns.”¹⁸⁵ Although the ordinary world is no longer fraught with the dangers it once was when the intersection of the mundane and spiritual worlds was assumed – as Taylor puts it, “naiveté is now unavailable to anyone, believer and unbeliever alike”¹⁸⁶ – finding a sense of deeper meaning in the ordinary becomes difficult. The ordinary world becomes problematic.

Although an examination of the ordinary in German Realism is by no means unique to my project, framing it in terms of theories of secularization is. The prominence of ordinary reality is a trademark of German Realism. It is the subject of Paul Fleming’s recent monograph *Exemplarity and Mediocrity. The Art of the Average from Bourgeois Tragedy to Realism*¹⁸⁷ which examines the strategies authors employ to wed art to the ordinary. For Fleming, the synonymous ideas of “average,” “mediocre,” “quotidian,” “everyday,” “prosaic,” and “common” denote the “the nonheroic, unexceptional world of ordinary life with its ever-expanding network of utilitarian relations” exemplified by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’ ascendant bourgeoisie.¹⁸⁸ Fleming identifies the proliferation of middle-class writers and readers as a factor in the rise of the ordinary in realism, both in the content of literary fiction and in the milieu in which it was produced. It was literature about average people and places written by average (bourgeoisie) authors. Fleming calls this proliferation of the average “The Werther Complex,” by which he means that it was increasingly common “to be passionate about art [like

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ See *A Secular Age*, 21.

¹⁸⁷ Paul Fleming, *Exemplarity and Mediocrity. The Art of the Average from Bourgeois Tragedy to Realism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009)

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 1.

Goethe's character Werther], to actively participate in it, but ultimately to lack the spark of genius that would first allow one to be an artist."¹⁸⁹ Fleming's focus on the middle class in his definition of the ordinary sheds light on some aspects of *Grüner Heinrich*, as we will see.

David Martyn's explanation for why the ordinary emerged as a dominant theme of German Realism differs markedly from Fleming's. Martyn observes a correlation during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries between a desire to observe and discern the 'truth' of humanity in empirical terms. In the creative expressions of those centuries, Martyn notes a desire to strike a balance between statistical norms of beauty – the average – and the particularity central to art.¹⁹⁰ Ordinary life thus becomes important because, statistically, it is the norm of human experience. Fleming's emphasis on the middle class and Martyn's on a statistical approach to reality both find their corollaries in *Grüner Heinrich*, which is set in the bourgeoisie society of Switzerland. The experiences and people portrayed do not run far afield of the average. Indeed, even Heinrich, although an outlier by virtue of his desired profession, is mediocre in his abilities, a quality that belies his alienation from his ordinary surroundings. Regarding Fleming's understanding of the ordinary, Heinrich exemplifies the "Werther Complex" beautifully: the "passion" he has for art is undercut by his sore lack of "genius."

To sum up: in Taylor's conception of secularization and ordinary experience, the modern subject, embedded in a plurality of religious and spiritual beliefs, has come to understand belief in the supernatural as a choice. One among many. As a result, she feels

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 8.

¹⁹⁰ David Martyn, "The Picturesque as Art of the Average: Stifter's Statistical Poetics of Observation." *Monatshefte* 105, no. 3 (2013)

a safety from the threat of supernatural phenomena that previous ages did not experience. She is “buffered” from the intrusion of the spiritual world into her mundane reality. However – and for the present chapter this the most important aspect of Taylor’s theory – ordinary reality becomes both prominent and problematic in Taylor’s account. It rises in significance precisely because it no longer has the deep spiritual resonance that it once had. Instead, it seems meaningless, empty. The challenge for the modern subject is to find a means of infusing it with meaning. The chapter at hand looks at the ordinary world and experience in *Grüner Heinrich* with an eye to Taylor’s theory. For although the novel exemplifies conceptions of the ordinary that frame it in terms of middle class values, as Fleming does, and the statistical approach to reality that emerged during the nineteenth century, as Martyn does, Heinrich is in many ways a paragon of Taylor’s modern subject, who struggles to find meaning in mundane experience.

Taylor’s characterization of ordinary life as “emptied of deeper resonance, ... dry, flat[,] ... dead, ugly, empty”¹⁹¹ is a helpful description of how the narrator portrays Heinrich’s perception of his surroundings. A chasm opens for Heinrich between what is *ordinary* and what is *familiar*, for his world is ordinary and yet it feels foreign to him. The strangeness of ordinary reality inheres in a theme that Rosa Musignant observes is common in nineteenth-century novels: “Because in modern novels adventure rarely exceeds the limits of the known world it becomes more and more similar to its contrary, the everyday.”¹⁹² The everyday and the extraordinary unite in Heinrich’s experience insofar as the narrator maintains a balanced emphasis on the ordinariness of Heinrich’s

¹⁹¹ See *A Secular Age*, 309.

¹⁹² Rosa Musignant, *Realism and Space in the Novel, 1795-1869. Imagined Geographies*, (Surry: Ashgate, 2013): 38.

surroundings and his inability to find a settled place in them. As already noted, Taylor attributes this lost of resonance with the ordinary world as arising from a lost sense of deeper, spiritual meaning. While the conditions that Taylor presents are present in *Grüner Heinrich* –the close proximity of diverse religious beliefs –there is an additional factor that gives rise to Heinrich’s struggle with ordinary reality. In Keller’s novel, the divide between the ordinary and the familiar is traceable to the death of Heinrich’s father, which shapes the trajectory of Heinrich’s short life, as he searches for a sense of belonging that even the ordinary place of home does not offer him:

Ich kann mich nicht enthalten, so sehr ich die Thorheit einsehe, oft Luftschlösser zu bauen und zu berechnen, wie es mit mir gekommen wäre, wenn mein Vater gelebt hätte und wie mir die Welt in ihrer Kraftfülle von frühester Jugend an zugänglich gewesen wäre; jeden Tag hätte mich der treffliche Mann weiter geführt und würde seine zweite Jugend in mir verlebt haben. Wie mir das Zusammenleben zwischen Brüdern eben so fremd als beneidenswerth ist und ich nicht begreife, wie solche meistens auseinander weichen und ihre Freundschaft außerwärts suchen, so erscheint mir auch, ungeachtet ich es täglich sehe, das Verhältniß zwischen einem Vater und einem erwachsenen Sohne um so neuer, unbegreiflicher und glückseliger, als ich Mühe habe, mir dasselbe auszumalen und das nie Erlebte zu vergegenwärtigen.¹⁹³

An attempt to make the “täglich” “zugänglich,” to transform what is mundane into the familiar drives Heinrich forward. His development as an artist, his pursuit of friendships, etc. are motivated by these *Luftschlösser* of an ordinary experience: friendship with his father. Because of the father’s death, ordinary reality, even his home, is alien. Capturing the same tension between the familiar and the alien, Clifford Albrecht Bernd observes that although Heinrich is “a native of this world” he “is not entirely at home in it.”¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ See Keller, 70-71.

¹⁹⁴ Clifford Albrecht Bernd, *Poetic Realism in Scandinavia and Central Europe. 1820-1895*, (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995): 176.

Ultimately, he seeks friendship and reconciliation with the ordinary reality that is now “fremd” and “unbegreiflich.”

But what does it mean for Heinrich to be estranged from ordinary experience aside from the feeling of distance from his surroundings? A passing reference to the watch that Heinrich inherited from his father offers an image of Heinrich’s alienation: “überdies hing die goldene Uhr meines Vaters, die ich ererbt, aber nie recht in Ordnung zu halten verstand.”¹⁹⁵ The order, productivity, and discipline that the clock suggests are associated with his father. However, without his father’s help, Heinrich is never able to bring the clock or his own life “recht in Ordnung.” This is also true of his family and his community. His relationship with his mother is perpetually strained, as she tries to be both father and mother to him. Heinrich’s relationship to his community is no better. In contrast to the conventions of the *Bildungsroman* genre, Heinrich does not become a successful member of his society, by the middle class standards represented in the novel. He dies prematurely, having failed as an artist, having failed to care for his mother, and having failed to start a family. Chris Cullens observes that, because Heinrich’s “Bildung” does not result in his integration into society, the novel should be understood as an “anti-Bildungsroman.”¹⁹⁶ Although the failure to thrive in bourgeois society is an important aspect of the novel, here my focus is on the family, specifically the father, as the epicenter of alienation: because of his father’s death, Heinrich is “nie recht in Ordnung,” and the ordinary is perpetually unfamiliar to him.

¹⁹⁵ See Keller, 253.

¹⁹⁶ In “Marginality and Melancholia,” *A New History of German Literature*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004): 582.

PAINTING THE FAMILIAR, AND FEUERBACH

Keller picks up the literary trope of the alienated artist established in works such as Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774) and Büchner's *Lenz* (1839) in which artistic expression and conformity to the conventions of society and family are irreconcilable. It is a trope we will return to in the chapter on Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*. As in the case of Werther and Lenz, estrangement and art go hand in glove for Heinrich. His interest in painting rises out of his estrangement from his society and community. Taylor helps understand the relationship between estrangement and art when he describes the mythic conception of the alienated artist in literature thus:

Being cut off from ordinary fulfillments can also mean being cut off from other people, on the margins of society, misunderstood, despised. This has been a recurring picture of the fate of the artist in the last two centuries, whether presented in forms of maudlin self-pity, as a successor to Wertherian *Weltschmerz*, or seen steadily and without self-dramatization as an inescapable predicament.¹⁹⁷

The artist and the ordinary are like oil and water. However, “being cut off from ordinary fulfillments” has its benefits, according to Taylor’s reading of the trope. He identifies the artist as a metaphor for the modern ideal of individuality and insight: “The artist becomes in some way the paradigm case of the human being, as agent of original self-definition. Since about 1800, there has been a tendency to heroize the artist, to see in his or her life the essence of the human condition, and to venerate him or her as a seer, the creator of cultural values.”¹⁹⁸ The artist possesses abilities that others lack. Returning to Taylor’s characterization of the disenchanted world as “emptied of deeper resonance,” it is the artist who as “seer” and “creator” can bring meaning to ordinary reality. In Keller’s

¹⁹⁷ See *Sources of the Self*, 423-424.

¹⁹⁸ Charles Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, (Toronto: Anasi, 1991): 62.

novel, familiarity in the ordinary world is the motivation for the artist—it is the elusive ideal that promises to fill the empty ordinary world with meaning, resonance, and beauty. Painting thus potentially *creates* the sense of belonging that Heinrich lacks.

A few more words of clarification about the familiar before turning to several passages on Heinrich's painting. While the death of Heinrich's father leads to Heinrich's alienation from his home, it sharpens his ability to see and value the experience of belonging. Eventually, his clear perception of familiarity forms the basis of his painting aesthetic. In a passing but poignant observation, Heinrich recalls an interaction with his cousin that struck him because of the familiarity it conveyed. At the celebration of his cousin Margot's wedding, Heinrich sits next to his sweetheart Anna's father, a schoolmaster whose kindness Heinrich describes in terms of familiarity: "Als ich mich nachlässig hinter Anna's Stuhl lehnte, bot mir der Schulmeister, während er mit den Nachbarn sprach, leichthin das Glas, wie man einem Angehörigen thut, den man oft sieht."¹⁹⁹ The moment passes quickly and seems inconsequential at first glance, but to Heinrich, it lights up as significant. He takes note of being treated as one who belongs, as an *Angehöriger*. Warmth, informality, belonging as a given – all of this is conveyed in a simple gesture. The familiar is ordinary experience infused with the warmth of friendship and belonging.

Heinrich's attraction to familiarity is apparent from the first time that he attempts to paint, for it was his own experience of familiarity and recognition as the viewer of a painting that inspired him to pick up a brush:

Ogleich das Bild unter dem Mittelmäßigen steht, schien es mir ein bewundernswerthes Werk zu sein, denn ich sah die mir *bekannte* Natur um ihrer

¹⁹⁹ See Keller, 386.

selbst willen mit einer gewissen Technik nachgeahmt. Stundenlang stand ich auf einem Stuhle davor und versenkte den Blick in die anhaltlose Fläche des Himmels und in das unendliche Blattgewirre der Bäume und es zeugte eben nicht von größter Bescheidenheit, daß ich plötzlich unternahm, das Bild mit meinen Wasserfarben zu kopieren. Ich stellte es auf den Tisch spannte einen Bogen Papier auf ein Brett und umgab mich mit alten Untertassen und Tellern; denn Scherben waren bei uns nicht zu finden. (emphasis added)²⁰⁰

Despite the painting's mediocrity, Heinrich is drawn to the sense of familiarity ("mir bekannte Natur") mediated through a "gewissen Technik." It is not the masterful skill of the artist that elicits his wonder, but the celebration of something familiar as an object of value. This sparks a mimetic impulse in him, and he tries his hand at copying the painting. We will see that Heinrich's mimetic response to the painting will become characteristic of his theory of landscape painting. Beyond an attraction to the familiarity of the subject matter, Keller gives the reader a similar experience of familiarity when he depicts the young aspiring artist surrounded by household items that he transforms into the artist's tools: paper and a board make due as a canvas, while saucers and plates serve as a painter's pallet. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan says that "the home place is full of ordinary objects,"²⁰¹ and here we find Heinrich at work trying to capture the familiar with the ordinary objects in his home. Heinrich discovers the familiar in painting and the reader discovers it in Keller's description.

Heinrich's sensitivity to the familiar births his realist aesthetic, which similarly aims to celebrate ordinary places for their familiarity. It is not enough that the landscapes he represents correspond to true locations in the world outside of painting; rather, he strives to create a sense of the familiar for his viewer in his representations of real places

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 174-175.

²⁰¹ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977): 137.

– a response that he has to this first painting. Heinrich is highly articulate about the role that landscape *ideally* plays in his paintings. For example, when his cousin assumes that a landscape painter reproduces “merkwürdige Städte, Gebirge und Weltgegenden,”²⁰²

Heinrich explains what his own vision of landscape painting entails:

[Die Landschaftsmalerei] besteht nicht darin, daß man merkwürdige und berühmte Orte aufsucht und nachmacht, sondern darin, daß man die stille Herrlichkeit und Schönheit der Natur betrachtet und abzubilden sucht, manchmal eine ganze Aussicht, wie diesen See mit den Wäldern und Bergen, manchmal einen einzigen Baum, ja nur ein Stücklein Wasser und Himmel... Warum sollte dies nicht ein edler und schöner Beruf sein, immer und allein vor den Werken Gottes zu sitzen, die sich noch am heutigen Tag in ihrer Unschuld und ganzen Schönheit erhalten haben, sie zu *erkennen* und zu verehren und ihn dadurch anzubeten, daß man sie in ihrem Frieden wieder zu geben versucht? (emphasis added)²⁰³

Heinrich’s rejection of “merkwürdige,” “berühmte” locations for the “stille” beauty of nature is a sharp contrast to the work of Romantic painters such as Caspar David Friedrich, who did indeed portray nature as spectacular and sometimes strange.

Heinrich’s aesthetic is much more modest in terms of the scale of the objects it represents (“manchmal eine ganze Aussicht,... manchmal einen einzigen Baum, ja nur ein Stücklein Wasser und Himmel”). His criterion for selecting objects to represent is not fame or spectacle, but origin: they are “Werken Gottes.” For Heinrich, representing God’s creation becomes a means of recognizing (“erkennen”) and honoring (“anbeten”) God himself.

Although his description of the “stille Herrlichkeit und Schönheit der Natur” as “Werken Gottes” appears to suggest that Heinrich is interested in representing parts of nature that capture and reflect a sublime, transcendental Whole, even God himself, the

²⁰² See Keller, 239.

²⁰³ Ibid.

particular example he provides points to a very different conception of nature. He narrows the scope of his wide-ranging aesthetic, when he informs his cousin that someday he hopes to paint the landscape surrounding his cousin's home:

Ich hoffe noch, Euch diesen See mit seinem Dunklen Ufer, mit dieser Abendsonne so zu malen, daß Ihr mit Vergnügen diesen Nachmittag darin *erkennen* sollt und selbst sagen müßt, es sei weiter hierzu nichts nötig, um bedeutend zu sein, d.h. Wenn ich ein Maler werden kann und etwas Rechtes lerne! (emphasis added)²⁰⁴

This quote and the previous one reveal several notable aspects of Heinrich's artistic project. First, although he views nature as a product of God's creative power, human beings also infuse natural settings with meaning. Heinrich identifies a particular place ("diesen See") and even a particular moment ("dieser Abendsonne," "diesen Nachmittag") that are meaningful to his cousin because of his cousin's relationship to the place ("daß Ihr mit Vergnügen diesen Nachmittag erkennen sollt"). He plans to paint the setting surrounding his cousin's home, *because* it is his cousin's home. It is not only God, but also people – the cousin's family – who give the landscape significance. His emphasis on the centrality of human presence to foster an experience of an ordinary place as familiar recalls the central role of Heinrich's father, whose absence has left him in search of a sense of belonging.

The second point is closely related to the first: Heinrich aims to elevate particular, ordinary places through his painting. He does not simply reject "merkwürdige" and "berühmte" places as unsuitable objects for his paintings, but instead he identifies a particular, obscure landscape as a "bedeutend" place to represent. According to spatial theorist Edward S. Casey, paintings of particular places were uncommon before the

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 240-241.

Western art of the nineteenth century; previously, landscape paintings were almost always idealized depictions of “any place, that is, no particular place at all.”²⁰⁵ But Heinrich plans to paint this particular landscape because of its personal significance. His cousin is surprised by the value that Heinrich places on settings he assumed were inconsequential: “Also dieser kleine See z.B., diese meine holdselige Einsamkeit würde ein genugsamer Gegenstand sein für die Kunst, obgleich Niemand den Namen kannte...?”²⁰⁶ This question identifies a core tenant of realism: to grant “monumental scope” to ordinary objects.²⁰⁷ Heinrich’s aesthetic elevates places which are nameless (“Niemand den Namen kannte”) and seemingly inconsequential but which human experience identifies as important. In the hypothetical landscape painting that Heinrich describes, the “ordinary objects” are those natural objects (“dieser kleine See”) that are familiar and thus easily overlooked.

Finally, the act of recognition is key to Heinrich’s aesthetic. In the passage above, Heinrich uses the word “erkennen” to denote the viewer’s recognition *vis-à-vis* the painting (“daß Ihr mit Vergnügen diesen Nachmittag darin *erkennen* sollt”). The viewer should recognize a particular place at a particular moment – to recall a memory that is primarily spatial. For the viewer, a landscape painting becomes a means by which place becomes apparent. Such landscape paintings raise ordinary settings such as the cousin’s little lake in the viewer’s estimation. In summary, Heinrich’s alienation from his ordinary surroundings gives rise to his keen awareness of the fine difference between

²⁰⁵ Edward S. Casey, *Getting back into Place. Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*, (Bloomington: Indiana University, 2009): 92.

²⁰⁶ See Keller, 240.

²⁰⁷ See *Sources of the Self*, 432.

what is *ordinary* and what is *familiar*. As a result, the realist aesthetic that he espouses addresses the problems posed by the ordinary world as Taylor characterizes it; that is: painting acknowledges ordinary settings as significant objects of representation because those who inhabit them infuse them with meaning. Lilian Furst claims that in realist literature, “The real and the fictive are reciprocally permeable” because the reader’s lived experience influences her reading of a text, and the text “reciprocally” influences her view of her world.²⁰⁸ This understanding of art describes Heinrich’s aesthetic, for the primary goal is that his representations of particular, ordinary places capture a sense of familiarity that alerts his viewers to the beauty of home.

In addition to Heinrich’s desire to experience the world as familiar, his perspective on religion also sheds light on his understanding of painting. It is no coincidence that his rejection of orthodox Protestant Christianity parallels the emergence of his interest in painting, and in many ways, painting comes to resemble religion in the novel. An interesting inversion takes place in Heinrich’s development, similar to the one I observed in Storm’s *Im Schloß* (1862), in which his maturation includes a rejection of Christian orthodoxy. Heinrich embraces a deism that is ostensibly free from the “reizlose and grauer Nüchternheit” of Christianity.²⁰⁹ It is notable that Heinrich’s rejection of Christianity does not reflect the same sort of skepticism towards Christian doctrine that the German theologians of Higher Criticism espoused only a few years before *Grüner*

²⁰⁸ Lilian R. Furst, *All is True. The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995): 115.

²⁰⁹ See Keller, 344.

Heinrich was published;²¹⁰ namely, the move towards a “purely scientific exegesis” of the Christian scripture which gave rise to a host of new interpretive moves to “demythologize” the Bible.²¹¹ The characters in *Im Schloß*, reflect this form of interpretation that subjects the Christian scripture to scientific modes of understanding. Heinrich, by contrast, rejects Christianity because he sees it as too systematic and rational.

Painting replaces religion for Heinrich. As painting becomes a means by which he hopes to capture and experience the ordinary world as familiar, it also rises to the level of religious significance, and assumes some of the same functions that religion once did for him. Keller often uses religious language to describe Heinrich’s identity and experience, not as a believer, but as an artist. For example, the narrator dubs Heinrich a “Pilger” as he travels on Easter morning to Germany to continue his education in painting.²¹² Heinrich similarly uses religiously inflected language to describe his first visit to a traveling art show. He dresses “als ob es in die Kirche ginge”²¹³ and visits—not a church—but the exhibit:

es [erglänzte] von allen Wänden und von großen Gestellen in frischen Farben und Gold. Der erste Eindruck war ganz traumhaft, große klare Landschaften tauchten von allen Seiten, ohne daß ich sie vorerst einzeln besah, auf und schwammen vor meinen Blicken mit zauberhaften Lüften und Baumwipfeln, Abendröthen brannten, Kinderköpfe, liebliche Studien, guckten dazwischen hervor und Alles

²¹⁰ David Jasper goes so far as to claim that *Das Leben Jesu* (1835/6) is among the most influential books of the nineteenth century. See *The Sacred and Secular Canon in Romanticism: Preserving the Sacred Truths*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998): 3.

²¹¹ Todd H. Weir, *Secularism and Religion in Nineteenth-Century Germany: The Rise of the Fourth Confession*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 56.

²¹² See Keller, 39.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 278.

entschwand wieder vor neuen Gebilden, so daß ich mich ernstlich umsehen mußte, wo denn dieser herrliche Lindenhain oder jenes mächtige Gebirge hingekommen seien, die ich im Augenblicke noch zu sehen geglaubt? Dazu verbreiteten die frischen Firnisse der Bilder einen sonntäglichen Duft, der mir angenehmer dünkte, als der Weihrauch einer katholischen Kirche, obschon ich diesen sehr gern roch.²¹⁴

Heinrich emphasizes the sensual experience of the museum—the rich colors, the aroma of the varnished paintings—which remind him of a cathedral. As the narrator, he invokes the Romantic conception of Catholicism as mysterious to describe the spiritual experience, associating his childhood enthusiasm for painting with religious fanaticism. However, Heinrich deflates the religious tropes and reminds the reader of the solid reality behind them with the curt statement about his preference for the smell of varnish over incense: “Dazu verbreiteten die frischen Firnisse der Bilder einen sonntäglichen Duft, der mir angenehmer dünkte, als der Weihrauch einer katholischen Kirche obschon ich diesen sehr gern roch.” The incense produces a pleasant aroma, but not an experience of any transcendental significance. Furthermore, with the words ‘Eindruck’ and ‘dünkte’ he implies that his youthful perception of the place as sacred did not reflect reality. Just as the protagonist of *Im Schloß* depicts her mystical experiences of portraits as childhood fantasies, Heinrich too distances himself from the magical encounter with the paintings at the exhibit. Painting replaces religion in this passage, but as Heinrich’s narrative voice demonstrates, his *Bildung* includes learning that painting is grounded in the ordinary, disenchanted world, not in the transcendental.

Before turning our attention to the paintings that Heinrich creates, I want to emphasize again that his vision for painting is shaped by two impulses: first, his strong desire to experience the ordinary world as a place where he belongs, as familiar. Second,

²¹⁴ Ibid., 278-279.

his career as a painter comes into being in tandem with his rejection of Christianity; as Nietzsche observes: “Art raises its head where religions decline.”²¹⁵ Through his short career as a painter, we will see these two impulses in a tug-of-war: The desire for the familiar and an expression of spiritual belief.

AESTHETIC TRADITIONS

The two impulses of Heinrich’s art give rise to an aesthetic experience that resembles Feuerbach’s philosophy of religion. And as we observe his painting over the course of the novel, from his early phases, which reflect Romantic and neo-Classical aesthetics, to his final paintings that are highly symbolic and finally non-representational, we see an ever-increasing resonance with Feuerbach’s philosophy.²¹⁶ Keller makes little distinction between Romantic and Classical aesthetics in terms of their potential to create distance rather than familiarity between the subject and the material world. Both aesthetic traditions resemble what Feuerbach identifies as the function of religion: they are imaginative versions of ordinary life that ultimately draw Heinrich away from the ordinary world and into a fictional reality. Allusions to Feuerbach’s philosophy are scattered throughout the novel, but the philosophy is most fully embodied in Heinrich’s painting career. Heinrich never experiences the familiar in his own home, *Vaterstadt*, or *Vaterland*, but his most vivid experience of the familiar is located in the landscapes of his painting. Belonging is thus a purely imaginary experience that never moves beyond his

²¹⁵ Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human, I*, trans. Gary Handwerk, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997): 116.

²¹⁶ Several scholars interpret the aesthetic phases of Heinrich’s painting as evidence of a failed realist aesthetic. See Finney, Hess, Kontje, and Osterkamp.

canvas. Indeed, rather than facilitating an experience of the familiar in the world beyond representation, Heinrich's painting draws him further and further from his home.

As we examine his paintings, we find two trajectories: on the one hand, although he begins by painting the landscapes surrounding his home in Zurich, the places he depicts become further and further removed from Zurich. Heinrich's experience of home increasingly loses its moorings in the material world and moves exclusively into the world of representation and convention. Finally, when his painting is no longer recognizable as a landscape, he gives up his painting career. While he does experience a feeling of familiarity, this only occurs when he paints a foreign landscape far removed from his home. The feeling of familiarity is truly abstract, existing only in his imagination; a fact that we will see resonates with Feuerbach's claims.

Keller attributed his own rejection of Christianity to the instruction he received in Heidelberg from Ludwig Feuerbach, one of the most influential religious philosophers of the nineteenth century. Although some scholars incorporate this biographical information into biographical analyses of the novel, here it serves to show that, of the religious philosophers of Keller's time, Feuerbach had the most immediate influence on Keller's thinking and writing.²¹⁷ Most relevant for my purposes here are Feuerbach's claims that Christianity is not a means of truly knowing God and overcoming death, but rather Christian faith is always the believer's imaginative enhancement of ordinary reality. The central claim of his famous work *Das Wesen des Christentums* (1841) is that the object of all religious faith is not an actual transcendent deity, but the person exercising faith: "Die

²¹⁷ Hans Dünnebier, for example, identifies moments in *Der grüne Heinrich* that reflect the spiritual and philosophical aspects of Keller's biography. In *Gottfried Keller und Ludwig Feuerbach*, (Zürich F. Ketner: 1913)

Religion ist das bewußtlose Selbstbewußtsein des Menschen. In der Religion ist dem Menschen sein eigenes Wesen Gegenstand, ohne das er weiß, daß es das seinige ist; das eigene Wesen ist ihm Gegenstand als ein anderes Wesen.”²¹⁸ This claim appears in many forms throughout the work in which Feuerbach shows the central doctrines of Christianity to be expressions of human experience – more specifically, ordinary experience. For example, he says that heaven is “das verschönerte Dießseits.”²¹⁹ Indeed, Feuerbach will go so far as to say that religion constitutes an alternate reality of images that overshadows ordinary reality. Images become more significant to the Christian than the thing itself: “Das Wesen im Bilde ist das Wesen der Religion. Die Religion opfert die Sache dem Bilde auf.”²²⁰ Heinrich’s painting illustrates this literally, for in his quest to experience his home as a place of familiarity and belonging, the images he paints draw his attention away from his home, becoming more important to him than the ‘thing itself.’ The ordinary world surrounding him remains alien while his paintings facilitate an imaginary experience of familiarity.

Keller represents this coupling of imagination and the ordinary that Feuerbach describes as characteristic of Heinrich’s early childhood, years before he made a decisive break with the church and pursue painting. The clearest example is his childhood attempt to understand his mother’s lessons about God, which become an “embellished” interpretation of his surroundings in his imagination. Looking out on Zurich from a window in their home, Heinrich and his mother discuss the identity of God:

²¹⁸ Ludwig Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841): 37.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 243.

²²⁰ Ibid.

Auf diesem [Kirchdach] stand ein schlankes, nadelspitzes Thürmchen, in welchem eine kleine Glocke hing, und auf dessen Spitze sich ein glänzender goldener Hahn drehte. Wenn in der Dämmerung das Glöckchen läutete, so sprach meine Mutter von Gott und lehrte mich beten; ich fragte: Was ist Gott? Ist es ein Mann? und sie antwortete: Nein, Gott ist ein Geist! ... Eines Abends fand ich mich plötzlich des bestimmten Glaubens, daß dieser Hahn Gott sei.²²¹

The word *Gott* rings hollow to young Heinrich. As though to put his mother's knowledge of the catechism to the test, he asks for clarification: "Was ist Gott?" His mother replies by offering another term: "ein Geist." Dissatisfied with this answer, he turns to the landscape for help, where he sees the weathercock – the highest point of the tallest building in the city. He concludes that this object, close to the church bells and yet above them, is what his mother means by God. He answers his own weighty question with the conclusion that "dieser Hahn [sei] Gott." Noting the resemblance to Feuerbach's philosophy, Ursula Amrein proposes that Heinrich's association of the weathervane with God reverses what he has been taught about God's relationship to man: "Nicht mehr der Mensch ist das Geschöpf Gottes, vielmehr erweist sich Gott selbst als Produkt des Menschen, er wird hervorgebracht durch den Blick, ist definiert über die Sprache und die Vorstellungswelt des Menschen."²²² That is: rather than God being the creator, man is the creator of God. Religion is revealed here to be the pairing of ordinary experience with human imagination.

For Feuerbach, one of the greatest problems with religion's ostensible imaginary embellishment of the world is that it elides the beauty of ordinary reality. In the final chapter of *Das Wesen des Christentums* he argues that a result of religious faith is

²²¹ See Keller, 75.

²²² In "Atheismus—Anthropologie—Ästhetik. Der 'Tod Gottes' und Transformationen des Religiösen im Prozess der Säkularisierung," *Der grüne Heinrich. Gottfried Kellers Lebensbuch - neu Gelesen*, (Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009): 121.

discontent with the ordinary world it re-imagines. Like Heinrich, who tells his cousin that ‘dieser kleine See z.B., diese ... holdselige Einsamkeit würde ein genugsamer Gegendstand sein für die Kunst, obgleich Niemand den Namen konnte,’ Feuerbach wants his reader to see that the ordinary experiences undergirding religion are worthy of praise, rather than sacred embellishment; he closes his work by stating that the losses which take place in everyday experience open up possibilities for appreciating ordinary reality. Holy Communion is the example he uses. Having argued that Communion is not a supernatural experience, but an embellishment of the ordinary acts of eating and drinking, Feuerbach makes a case for recognizing the beauty of ordinary human experience stripped of religious imagination by its sudden removal:

Und willst Du darüber lächeln, daß ich das Essen und Trinken, weil sie gemeine, alltägliche Acte sind, deswegen von Unzähligen ohne Geist, ohne Gesinnung ausgeübt werden, religiöse Acte nenne; nun so denke daran, daß auch das Abendmahl ein gesinnungsloser, geistloser Act bei Unzähligen ist, weil er oft geschieht, und versetze Dich um die religiöse Bedeutung des Genusses von Brot und Wein zu erfassen, in die Lage hinein, wo der sonst alltägliche Act unnatürlich, gewaltsam unterbrochen wird. Hunger und Durst gestören nicht nur die physische, sonder auch geistige und moralische Kraft des Menschen, sie berauben ihn der Menschheit, des Verstandes, des Bewußtseins. O wenn Du je solchen Mangel, solches Unglück erlebtest, wie würdest du segnen und preisen die natürliche Qualität des Brotes und Weines, die Dir wieder Deine Menschheit, Deinen Verstand gegeben!²²³

In his reference to “eating and drinking,” Feuerbach appears not only have Communion in mind, but also St. Paul’s command that assumes a link between the ordinary and spiritual world: “whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”²²⁴ According to St. Paul mundane activities are spiritually significant, but for Feuerbach the “common everyday” and “daily acts” of the average person—eating and

²²³ See Feuerbach, 380.

²²⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:31

drinking—require no imaginative enhancement, no religious façade, no reference to a spiritual realm to be beautiful and valuable.

Because he is convinced of the beauty of the ordinary world, Feuerbach has a highly optimistic understanding of loss, in that he makes a case for recognizing the beauty of ordinary human experience stripped of religious imagination by its sudden absence: “if thou shouldst ever experience such want, how wouldst thou bless and praise the natural qualities of bread and wine, which restore to thee thy humanity, thy intellect!”²²⁵ In a letter to Wilhelm Baumgartner, Keller himself described the resulting clarity of the ordinary world after his loss of religious belief in similar terms: “es wird alles klarer, strenger, aber auch glühender und sinnlicher.”²²⁶ The loss of ordinary experiences and the stripping away of religious belief reveal their great value.

As much as Heinrich’s realist ideal echoes Feuerbach’s celebration of ordinary reality uncluttered by religious discourse, his actual practice is inconsistent with his ideal. The first phase of his painting career cloaks ordinary reality in strange conventions. Nonetheless, traces of his home appear within his paintings while he studies under his first master Haberstaat. Habersaat is a “Maler, Kupferstecher, Lithograph und Drucker in Einer Person,” who mass produces engravings of “viel-besuchte Schweizer-landschaften”²²⁷ – the sort of landscapes that Heinrich rejected when he informed his cousin that painting ‘besteht nicht darin, daß man merkwürdige und berühmte Orte aufsucht und nachmacht.’ The lack of structure in Heinrich’s fatherless *Vaterhaus*

²²⁵ See Feuerbach, 380.

²²⁶ Quoted in Amrein, 124.

²²⁷ See Keller, 279-280.

reoccurs in Haberstaat's art school, where Heinrich has freedom to pursue landscape painting with little guidance, a fact best attributed to Haberstaat's preoccupation with the financial return of the landscapes he produces.²²⁸ Heinrich's unstructured apprenticeship becomes fertile ground for cultivating his interest in the strange aesthetic to which Habersaat introduces him. Habersaat is intrigued by unusual and even grotesque paintings that, because there is no significant market for them, he does not produce. But he encourages Heinrich to take up this tradition. Although it appears to be the antithesis of Heinrich's philosophy of painting, which celebrates landscapes as places of belonging, the Romantic tradition offers a fitting visual vocabulary for his *actual* experience of his home in Zurich as a place of alienation:

[Habersaat] wies mich an, hohle, zerrissene Weidenstrünke, verwitterte Bäume und abenteuerliche Felsgespenster aufzusuchen mit den bunten Farben der Fäulnis und des Zerfallens, und pries mir solchen Dinge als interessante Gegenstände an. Dies sagte mir sehr zu, indem es meine Phantasie reizte, und ich begab mich eifrig auf die Jagd nach solchen Erscheinungen. Doch die Natur bot sie mir nur spärlich, sich einer volleren Gesundheit erfreuend, als mit meinen Wünschen verträglich war, und was ich an unglücklichen Gewächse vorfand, das wurde meinen überreizten Augen bald zu blöde und harmlos, wie einem Trinker, der nach immer stärkerem Schnapsee verlangt. Das blühende Leben in Berg und Wald fing daher

²²⁸ In addition to the landscape prints, he also produces items such as visiting cards and baptism certificates, demonstrating that practical, financial concerns outweigh aesthetic ones. With much irony, Heinrich emphasizes the extent to which Habersaat orients his artistic production towards his bourgeois cliental: "Wenn dazwischen ein Unkundiger gekommen wäre und [Habersaat] gesagt hätte: Könnt Ihr mir ein Bild malen, so schön es zu haben ist, das unter Kennern zehntausend Thaler werth ist? ... So würde er die Bestellung unbedenklich angenommen und sich, nachdem die Hälfte des Preises zum Voraus bezahlt, unverweilt an die Arbeit gemacht haben" (280). Stripped of creativity and independence, the artist now fills orders rather than following his own artistic sensibilities. In his analysis of this passage, Swales notes that Keller displays an insightful awareness of the changes taking place in art because of industrialization. The description of the artistic reproductions in Habersaat's workroom gives us a glimpse into the changes that Walter Benjamin claims lead to a loss of the auratic quality of art. As Swales observes: "In this case an industrializing society employs technological means to produce and re-produce images of a pre-industrial, pre-technological world" (386). Indeed, Heinrich recognizes that, although Habersaat is also invested in representing Swiss landscapes, his approach to art is a far cry from his own artistic aspirations to create a sense of intimacy and familiarity in his own landscape paintings.

an, mir gleichgültig zu werden im Einzelnen, und ich streifte vom Morgen bis zum Abend in der Wildniß umher, ohne etwas zu thun, und überließ mich einem träumerischen Müßiggange.²²⁹

Heinrich's memory of this phase from the point of view of a somewhat more mature artist reveals his preference for the vibrant elements of nature that he rejected as an apprentice. His childish affinity for outlying natural objects should be understood in light of his own status as a fatherless outsider. The dying elements in nature activate his 'Phantasie,' just as his father's death gave rise to his imagined 'Luftschlösser.' The contrast that Heinrich emphasizes between the beautiful and the diseased elements of nature corresponds to distinctions between Classicism and late Romanticism. He inflects his description of a healthy, vibrant landscape with Classical tropes that foreground 'Durchsichtigkeit,' 'Reinlichkeit,' and 'Gesundheit,' but his youthful fascination with an aesthetic that celebrates 'hohle, zerrissene Weidenstrünke, verwitterte Bäume und abenteuerliche Felsgespenster,' recalls that death and alienation were the original impetuses for his imaginative pursuits. So while he expressed a desire to capture his cousin's home as a familiar place, Heinrich represents his own home as a strange one.

Within the context of his aesthetic of the familiar, the 'hohle, zerrissene Weidenstrünke, verwitterte Bäume und abenteuerliche Felsgespenster' lose their affinity to a mysterious reality that the Romantic tropes suggest, and they remain firmly rooted in the material world. To clarify his appropriation of a Romantic aesthetic, consider the shared aspects of Heinrich's description of the forest and Joseph von Eichendorff's concise representation of Romantic sensibilities in his poem "Wünschelrute" (1835): "Schläft ein Lied in allen Dingen, / Die da träumen fort und fort, / Und die Welt hebt an

²²⁹ See Keller, 293-294.

zu singen, / Triffst du nur das Zauberwort.”²³⁰ Here Eichendorff presents the physical world as a gateway to another world. For those who possess secret knowledge (‘das Zauberwort’), every object is a potential conduit of magic: ‘Und die Welt hebt an zu singen, / Triffst du nur das Zauberwort.’ Heinrich appears to be in search of the ‘Zauberwort’ as he scavenges the forest for ‘Erscheinungen’ in strange, sickly, and decaying natural objects. He even borrows the Romantic notion of *träumen* in this scene: ‘ich... überließ mich einem träumerischen Müßiggange.’ However, he turns *träumen* on its head, robbing it of magical potency; for Heinrich, dreams are not an interface between the natural and supernatural worlds, but a frustrating result of his disillusionment with home.

Although the Romantic conventions no longer point to a metaphysical reality, they constitute an imagined world that Heinrich begins to accept: “ich glaubte nun wie ein verstockter Lügner beinahe selbst daran.”²³¹ His familiarity with this convention threatens to displace his interest in the ordinary world he earlier praised as ‘ein genugsamer Gegenstand ... für die Kunst.’ The transition from discontent with his surroundings to belief in the world represented in his paintings is subtle. At first he alters natural objects in his art just enough to convince Habersaat of their reality. Habersaat, who prefers to paint within the confines of his studio rather than painting *en plein air*, believes that these paintings are accurate depictions of rare but real objects: “ich [brachte] so Dinge hervor, die ich Herrn Habersaat als in der Natur bestehend vorlegte und aus

²³⁰ Joseph von Eichendorff, “Wünschelrute,” *Joseph von Eichendorff. Gedichte*, (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1993)

²³¹ See Keller, 296.

denen er nicht klug werden konnte. Er gratulierte mir zu meinen Entdeckungen.”²³²

Heinrich veers increasingly from realistic representations into truly imaginary objects and eventually, even Habersaat is not fooled. But Heinrich becomes convinced by his own painted images, as the bizarre world of his painting increasingly becomes the familiar world he inhabits. His aesthetic conventions not only identify him as an outsider, they also reinforce this identity by alienating him from the world beyond his representation.

The potential of the image to further estrange Heinrich from the world beyond his painted representations is reiterated in his engagement with a Classical aesthetic. More than ever, we find that the *feeling* of belonging is divorced from the actual place of Heinrich’s home as he becomes more familiar with the Classical aesthetic than his own surroundings. In “Brief über die Landschaftsmalerey” (1770), landscape painter Salomon Geßner’s offers a concise characterization of Classical landscape painting as beautiful, harmonious, and “ohne Verwirrung.”²³³ The beauty and harmony found only partially in nature is found fully in (Classical) art. This idealized version of nature is key to understanding what Heinrich’s Classical phase communicates about his home: art offers what the true world cannot – an experience of home as a place of belonging. The opposition between Romanticism and Classicism bespeaks the contrast between Heinrich’s experience of alienation after his father’s death – conveyed in his Romantic phase – and his ongoing attempt to capture what his home could be if his father were alive – conveyed in his Classical phase. Romanticism conveys the dark reality of his broken home, while Classicism casts an idealized vision of it. During this phase Heinrich

²³² Ibid., 294.

²³³ In *Salomon Gessner’s Schriften*, (Zürich: Geßnersche Buchhandlung, 1824)

withdraws into the world of representation more than ever.

Just as he nearly believed the facticity of his Romantic paintings ('ich glaubte nun wie ein verstockter Lügner beinahe selbst daran'), he comes to feel more and more at home in the world portrayed in his Classical paintings. This phase begins under the tutelage of the landscape painter Römer, whose name reflects his almost exclusive production of Italian landscape paintings. As a father figure, Römer provides the discipline and structure that is missing from Heinrich's training with Habersaat and from his home. Römer imposes a strict, Classical aesthetic on Heinrich's fanciful Romantic landscapes:

Auf dem Wege, so lange wir noch im Freien waren, zeigte mir Römer allerlei gute Dinge in der Natur, sei es in Licht und Tönen, sei es in Form und Charakter. Aufmerksam begeistert sah ich hin, wo er mit der Hand fein wegstreichend hindeutete; ich war erstaunt, zu entdecken, daß ich eigentlich, so gut ich erst kürzlich noch zu sehen geglaubt, noch gar nichts gesehen hatte, und ich staunte noch mehr, das Bedeutende und Lehrreiche nun meistens in Erscheinungen zu finden, die ich vorher entweder übersehen, oder wenig beachtet. Jedoch freute ich mich, sogleich zu verstehen, was mein Begleiter jeweilig meinte, und mit ihm einen kräftigen und doch klaren Schatten, einen milden Ton oder eine zierliche Ausladung eines Baumes zu sehen, und nachdem ich erst einige Male mit ihm spaziert, hatte ich mich bald gewöhnt, die ganze landschaftliche Natur nicht mehr als etwas Rundes und Greifliches, sondern nur als ein gemaltes Bilder- und Studiencabinet, als etwas bloß vom richtigen Standpunkte aus Sichtbares zu betrachten und in technischen Ausdrücken zu beurteilen.²³⁴

Although they are viewing the landscape surrounding Heinrich's hometown, Heinrich and Römer's vision of his home is a far cry from the aesthetic of familiarity he articulated to his cousin. His words echo Geßner's: "Mein Auge war noch nicht geübt, die Natur wie ein Gemählde zu betrachten."²³⁵ Instead of a particular place, Römer points to generic 'gute Dinge in der Natur' that cohere within an aesthetic agenda but have no personal

²³⁴ See Keller, 436.

²³⁵ See Geßner.

significance to the artist or viewer. Convention replaces the actual place in Heinrich's vocabulary, as lakes, mountains, and trees become 'Licht und Tönen,' 'Form und Charakter,' 'Dinge in der Natur,' and finally a 'gemaltes Bilder- und Studiencabinet.' The landscape is reduced to the technical terminology and standards of visual representation, which identifies what elements of nature are good ('gute Dinge in der Natur') and the correct perspective from which to view them ('vom richtigen Standpunkte'). Although Heinrich is thrilled at his new-found knowledge of convention ('aufmerksam begeistert sah ich hin,' 'ich war erstaunt, zu entdecken,' 'ich staunte noch mehr,' 'Jedoch freute ich mich, sogleich zu verstehen'), like his brief Romantic phase, this conventional understanding of nature distances him from his home because it replaces unpainted reality with convention. The tangibility of nature ('Rundes und "Greifliches'), in which people live and experience the sense of familiarity that Heinrich once aspired to convey in painting, has become a mere storehouse of possible paintings, abstract aesthetic ideals.

In addition to the shift in Heinrich's perception of true landscapes under Römer's guidance, his experience of Römer's painted landscapes of Italy becomes more immediate than his experience of his own home. Whereas he once spoke with enthusiasm about portraying his cousin's home, here that emotional warmth is directed at a foreign landscape that has been subjected to the strict conventions of a Classical aesthetic. He experiences Italian landscape paintings as though they were familiar places. In fact, he feels more at home with them than with the Swiss landscape that surrounds him as his sense of home migrates to the landscapes that he knows only in paintings. This replacement of true place with represented place is most vivid when Heinrich begins

copying Römer's paintings of Italy. Describing the sense of intimacy he gains through the process of copying, he claims that,

Durch diese Beschäftigung war ich wunderlicher Weise im Süden weit mehr heimisch geworden, als in meinem Vaterlande. Da die Sachen, nach welchen ich arbeitete, alle unter freiem Himmel und sehr trefflich gemacht waren, auch die Erzählungen und Bemerkungen Römer's fortwährend meine Arbeit begleiteten, so verstand ich die südliche Sonne, jenen Himmel und das Meer beinahe, wie wenn ich sie gesehen hätte, wußte Kakteen, Aloe und Myrthensträucher besser darzustellen, als Disteln, Nesseln und Weißdorn, Pinien und immergrüne Eichen besser als Föhren und nordische Eichen, und Zypressen und Ölbäume waren mir bekannter als Pappeln und Weiden. Selbst der südliche Boden war mir viel leichter in der Hand als der nordische, da jener mit bestimmten glänzenden Farben bekleidet war und sich im Gegensätze zu der tiefen Bläue der mittleren und fernen Gründe fast von selbst herstellte, indessen dieser, um wahr und gut zu scheinen, eine unmerkliche aber verzweifelt schwer zu treffende Verschiedenheit und Feinheit in grauen Tönen erforderte. Am See von Nemi war ich besser zu Hause, als an unserem See, die Umrisse von Capri und Ischia kannte ich genauer, als unsere nächsten Uferhöhen.²³⁶

The more familiar Heinrich becomes with the conventions of landscape painting, the less familiar the physical world appears to him. Whereas 'bekannte Natur' was once his impetus for painting, here the process of painting produces a sense of being 'heimisch' in an unknown foreign landscape. Painting these landscapes fosters a familiarity in which Heinrich is more at home ('besser zu Hause') in representations of Italian landscapes than in his own *Vaterland*. Not only do the natural elements of an Italian landscape become familiar to him, but he also thinks that southern landscapes are better suited to painting than northern landscapes. For example, he claims that in contrast to the grey shades of the Swiss landscape, whose nuances are challenging to reproduce, the vibrant colors of the Italian landscape seem to paint themselves. In short, he feels most at home in a place he only experiences in representation. Switzerland is no longer the familiar place it once was, but just a potential painting. As enthusiastic as Heinrich is when Römer introduces

²³⁶ See Keller, 444.

him to the Classical tradition, this phase foregrounds a sober reality that wherever the experience of belonging and of home may lie, it is far removed from Heinrich.

The final two phases of Heinrich's painting career suggest that even the façade of belonging that he achieved in painting – in images, conventions, and imagination – is no longer sustainable. More than ever, in these final phases his paintings reflect his alienation from home, but there is also a very clear abdication of the hope of belonging, both within the ordinary world and in the realm of the image. The familiar is a lost cause, in image and reality. In Heinrich's symbolic phase there is no longer any pretense to focusing on his home. Whereas his Classical phase of painting centered on painting a place far away, in this symbolic phase Heinrich is far from home in Munich. Neither the city nor his paintings bear any resemblance to his ideal of the familiar. His relocation from town to the city constitutes a shift in his relationships, his experience of nature, and in his painting. Whereas in Zurich he enjoyed friendships within the context of families, his relationships in Munich are with people who, like himself, are far from their families and places of origin. In Munich he is removed from natural settings and immersed in a community of painters who evaluate art in purely economic terms. Heinrich's life in the city reflects changes that John B. Lyon addresses in *Out of Place. German Realism, Displacement, and Modernity* in which Lyon claims "... an intimate connection to place disappeared from embodied experience and was relegated to the realm of representation."²³⁷ Lyon also observes that some German Realists, including Keller, conveyed resignation toward the loss of an intimate experience of place in their works. In

²³⁷ Bringing the historical and social changes of nineteenth century German lands to bear on novels by Wilhelm Raabe, Theodor Fontane, and Gottfried Keller, Lyon shows that these authors critically engage the social concerns of their day through their literary representations of place. *Out of Place. German Realism, Displacement, and Modernity*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2013)

either case, place becomes a central concern for German Realists due to its evolving status in their lived experience. In *Grüner Heinrich*, it is painting, particularly the final phases of Heinrich's painting career, which suggests that a place of belonging is beyond reach.

Heinrich's lost connection with his home transforms his identity and painting. The nickname *grüner Heinrich* takes on new meaning in Munich, shedding light on his symbolic painting. He originally received the title when he began dressing in green as a boy, just as his father had: "Die erste männliche Kleidung, welche ich erhielt, war grün, da meine Mutter aus der Schützenkleidung des Vaters eine Zwillingsstracht für mich schneiden ließ, für den Sonntag einen Anzug und für die Werktage einen."²³⁸ *Grün* also highlighted his childhood affinity for the green forests near his home. Even on the day he leaves for Munich, for example, his mother complains about his preoccupation with the woods "Ich sehe nicht ein, warum Du nicht selbst Deine Sachen in Ordnung halten solltest, während Du sonst Stunden lang in die Berge hineinstarrst."²³⁹ Once in Munich, Heinrich's moniker remains, but its significance changes: at first his friends use it to refer to the green trees in his paintings, rather than the green of true landscapes. However, even this use of "grün" loses its relevance as the color drains from his work. The third-person narrator describes the anemic paintings Heinrich produces in Munich as *geistreich* und *symbolisch* because the trees and other natural objects portrayed in his work look like 'bloße schattenhaften Symbolen' and 'gespenstige Schemen' rather than actual trees:

Da [Heinrich] seine Jugendjahre meistens im Freien zugebracht, so bewahrte er in seinem Gedächtnisse, unterstützt von einer lebendigen Vorstellungskraft und

²³⁸ See Keller, 124.

²³⁹ Ibid., 21.

seinen alten Studienblättern, eine ziemliche Kenntniss der grünen Natur, und dieser Jugendschatz kam ihm jetzt gut zu Statten; denn von ihm zehrte er diese ganzen Jahre. Aber dieser Vorrath blaßte endlich aus, man sah es an Heinrichs Bäumen; je geistreicher und gebildeter diese wurden, desto mehr wurden sie grau oder bräunlich, statt grün; je künstlicher und beziehungsreicher seine Steingruppirungen und Steinchen sich darstellten, seine Stämme und Wurzeln, desto blasser waren sie, ohne Glanz und Thau, und am Ende wurden alle diese Dinge zu bloßen schattenhaften Symbolen, zu gespenstigen Schemen, welche er mit wahrer Behendigkeit regierte und in immer neuen Entwürfen verwandte. Er malte überhaupt nur wenig und machte selten etwas ganz fertig; desto eifriger war er dahinter her, in Schwarz oder Grau große Kartons und Skizzen auszuführen, welche immer einen bestimmten, sehr gelehrten oder poetischen Gedanken enthielten und sehr ehrwürdig aussahen.²⁴⁰

Heinrich's nickname becomes an empty symbol, just like his paintings. Childhood memories of nature become the storehouse for his work in Munich. Drawing on the images of Switzerland from his memory and portfolio, he continues to draw and paint, but not the forest itself. Rather, he produces art based on memory and other images; that is, based on abstractions. The inventory of images that Heinrich brings with him from Switzerland is soon depleted, and the emptiness of his *Vorrath* results in the emptiness of the images he creates. More than ever, Feuerbach's characterization of religion rings true for Heinrich's relationship to painting: "Das Wesen im Bilde ist das Wesen der Religion. Die Religion opfert die Sache dem Bilde auf."²⁴¹ Like his name, Heinrich's paintings have become disconnected from the "die Sache"—home—to such an extent that he is now painting images of images that bear less and less resemblance to his true home.

As self-referential images, Heinrich's paintings lack the substance of his previous Romantic and Classical paintings. The narrator describes an inverse relationship in the apparent erudition ('sehr ehrwürdig aussehen') of Heinrich's sketches and their actual

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 523.

²⁴¹ See Feuerbach, 243.

meaning: they are *geistreich*, *symbolisch*, *gebildet*, *künstlich*, *beziehungsreich*, *gelehrt*, *poetisch*, and *ehrwürdig*. However, this overtly intellectual style drains his works of color, detail, and verisimilitude. In this paradox, the suggestion of (unspecified) meaning grows stronger as the colors fade: ‘je geistreicher und gebildeter diese wurden, desto mehr wurden sie grau oder bräunlich, statt grün.’ The vibrant green that was once integral to Grüner Heinrich’s persona fades into grays, browns, and black. The images shrink away from the physical world, fading in color and losing their resemblance to it: ‘desto eifriger war er dahinter her, in Schwarz oder Grau große Kartons und Skizzen auszuführen, welche immer einen bestimmten, sehr gelehrten oder poetischen Gedanken enthielten und sehr ehrwürdig aussahen.’ Although these sketches appear significant, the narrator offers no direct indication of their meaning. But this apparent separation between the symbol and its meaning foregrounds Heinrich’s absence from home. The result is a loss of meaning in the paintings and a loss of identity for Heinrich. Like the conventions of his previous paintings, this symbolic convention points to his disappointing experience of home.

When Heinrich’s art loses all semblance of reality, reflecting his “almost hopeless entanglement in unreality,”²⁴² it is evident that the divide between ordinary reality and familiarity is unbridgeable. He creates a massive scribbled image (*Kritzelei*), “die sonderbarste Arbeit von der Welt,”²⁴³ which the narrator condemns as evidence of Heinrich’s failure as an artist. The narrator compares the image to “ein ungeheures graues Spinnennetz,” “ein unendliches Gewebe,” and “ein Labyrinth.” In his reaction to the

²⁴² Ritchie Robertson, “Keller and Ariosto: The Seductive Imagination in *Der grüne Heinrich*,” *English Goethe Society* LXXX (2011): 133.

²⁴³ See Keller, 617.

painting, Heinrich's friend Erikson states that the painting's web-like appearance is a visible expression of Heinrich's tumultuous inner state: "Dein Gekritzel da auf dem Rahmen zeigt mir, daß Du Dich übel befindest und nicht mit Dir einig bist; sieh, wie Du aus der verfluchten Spinnwebe herauskommst, die Du da angelegt hast."²⁴⁴ Todd Kontje reads the non-representational *Kritzelei* as evidence of the impossibility of realist representation, because the *Kritzelei* demonstrates that visual art is merely a system of signs, closed off from non-represented reality.²⁴⁵ My reading is similar: I see the *Kritzelei* as a representation of Heinrich's entire *oeuvre* of landscape paintings. His disastrous non-representational finale reveals that all of his paintings of home and belonging were futile: they corresponded to nothing that he can access in the physical world. However, the web-like image does capture the essence of his actual home: the web he weaves on his canvas alludes to the endless threads that have passed through his mother's hands as she sews to raise money to support him. She constitutes the familial home in which he is entangled, and from which painting cannot free him. Although the *Kritzelei* bears no resemblance to the idealized familiar home that Heinrich desires, nor to the aesthetic conventions he previously appropriated, it reveals the only true home he has.

Keller's novel offers a picture of the disenchanted world as a place of permanent alienation, in which the realities of friendship, home, and family, though common enough, are always just out of reach. The death of Heinrich's father gives rise to a widespread feeling of being on the outside of the relationships and communities that everyone else seems to find a place of belonging in. The landscape paintings that

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 621.

²⁴⁵ See Kontje, 84-86.

Heinrich creates frame our understanding of the disenchanted world in terms of deserted places – foreign lands, strange natural settings, distant countries, abstract ideas. Within the text, we find that painting serves at least two important functions. From Heinrich's perspective, painting serves an almost religious function, in that it is meant to facilitate his search for belonging – his reconciliation to an ordinary but alienated world. His ambitious aesthetic of familiarity aims to foster greater familiarity between the viewer and mundane reality. However, as this aim fails repeatedly, the reader can discern another function that painting plays in the text, especially in light of Feuerbach's philosophy. With each painting the reader receives insight into the growing cleft between the protagonist and his world – painting, like Feuerbach's religion, purports to offer access to a higher reality, but in fact, it constitutes a separate reality altogether, experienced only in imaginary landscapes.

CHAPTER THREE
The Festival Sketch:
Harmonizing a Plurality of Discourses in Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften* (1864)

Denn freilich regt sich in jedem Menschen ein gewisses unbestimmtes Verlangen, dasjenige was er sieht, nachzuahmen; aber dieses Verlangen beweist gar nicht, daß auch in uns die Kraft wohne, mit dem, was wir unternehmen, zu Stande zu kommen.

- Wolfgang von Goethe, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*²⁴⁶

The story of the painter Friedrich Roderer in Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften* follows the fault lines of a common literary trope, the ostensible opposition between art and life.²⁴⁷ It is a trope that appears throughout eighteenth- and nineteenth-century German literature, and beyond.²⁴⁸ Perhaps the most famous example in German literature is the protagonist of Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774). Although one would be hard-pressed to find Werther actually painting in the novel, the work participates in the discourse of the artist whose genius renders him unfit for domestic life and whose passionate love for a woman deters his artistic pursuits. Art and ordinary life

²⁴⁶ Johann Wolfgang Goethe, "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre," *Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung. Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre. Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1992): 434.

²⁴⁷ Barbara Neymeyr refers to this pattern as the "tradierte Opposition von Kunst und Leben" in "Die Aporie der Epigonen. Zur kulturhistorischen Bedeutung der Identitätsproblematik in Stifters *Nachkommenschaften*," *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft*, 48 (2004): 192.

²⁴⁸ For example Thomas Mann's *Tonio Kröger* (1903) and Rainer Maria Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910). This includes works of other national literatures too, such as Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Oval Portrait" (1850) and James Joyce's first novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1914/15).

do not mix. In the previous chapter, we saw that Gottfried Keller takes up the same motif in *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854/55), which depicts an artist whose perpetual attempts to achieve a sense of belonging in his own home fail. The ordinary world is inalterably disenchanted and alien to him. Indeed, in most examples, the division of art and the ordinary world bespeaks two incompatible realms. In *Nachkommenschaften*, the complicated relationship between the painter Friedrich Roderer and the world beyond his landscape painting is indicative of a highly fragmented view of the world, in which art and family, subjectivity and convention, nature and human community, sacred and secular, are seemingly at odds. From Friedrich's perspective, the world seems full of mutually exclusive modes of understanding: either you embrace art or ordinary life, isolation or conformity, radical subjectivity or extreme objectivity.

In order to clarify the plurality of discourses present in this novella, I draw on Peter Berger's conception of modernity's "plurality" of discourses, both sacred and secular. Berger argues that sacred and secular ways of thinking and living coexist, not only within a modern community, but within the modern subject. Being part of modern societies involves something like code switching, primarily between secular and sacred discourses. Here I claim that painting offers a means of harmonizing what appear to be contrasting discourses. Indeed, within the novella, painting provides the only means of unifying otherwise competing discourses.

The story can be thought of in two phases that pivot on Friedrich's friendship with his cousin Peter Roderer. Both figures are like caricatures in that Stifter represents them as ridiculous in their completely unrealistic views of art and life. Friedrich exemplifies a hyperbolic conception of realism. Before meeting Peter, he devotes his adult life to

landscape painting, striving to reach a maximum level of verisimilitude between the natural world and his canvas; he aims, but repeatedly fails, to make his paintings indistinguishable copies of their corresponding objects. Far from valuing originality in his art, he tries to eliminate all traces of his own subjectivity from his landscape paintings. His aims are more scientific than artistic. This obsession with mimesis gives rise to personal eccentricities. He is reclusive, avoiding interpersonal interaction and thinking of his paintings as substitutes for a family. As the first-person narrator, his voice in the first part of the novella reflects his unique persona. When he meets Peter, Friedrich is consumed by his greatest project – a grand painting of a marshland called the Lüpfig Moor, a marsh that Peter owns and is draining for use as farmland.

Upon meeting Peter, a shift begins to take place in Friedrich's art and life. Peter gradually convinces Friedrich that the replication and conformity he is pursuing in painting is best accomplished by creating a new Roderer family. Friedrich succumbs to Peter's narrative, marries Peter's daughter Susanna—who is Friedrich's cousin—and fully conforms to the Roderer-family conventions and characteristics. He not only forsakes painting, but in so doing sacrifices his individuality to convention. The painted mimesis of the natural world is thus compared to the mimicry of conventions and natural reproduction—an aesthetic that is best realized not *in* art but *beyond* it.

However, just as the paintings described in *Der grüne Heinrich* reveal much about Heinrich, so Friedrich's painting alerts the reader to realities that the characters are unaware of, including the relationship between the sacred and the secular. Between these two caricatures – Friedrich's mimetic realism and Peter's conformity – is a third conception of representation. It is neither constrained by a stringent mimetic impulse, nor

laden with conventions. Rather, sacred practice, human love, and community – although they will eventually calcify into conventions – temporarily coalesce to transform Friedrich’s art and narrative voice. We gain a more nuanced understanding of realism as uniting otherwise differentiated discourses of art and human experience.

Regarding the theme of representation, most of the scholarship on *Nachkommenschaften* focuses on understanding the relationship between art and the bourgeois family, and particularly the repetition that characterizes them. Barbara Neymeyr frames art and family in terms of Robert Prutz’s claims about the epigonic quality of art after Goethe and Schiller. She observes that, like his art, Friedrich’s family life is based on repetition rather than originality.²⁴⁹ Also noting the resemblance between Friedrich’s aesthetic of mimesis and the mimesis of the homogenous Roderer family, Marianne Schuller identifies genealogy as shaping, not only the resemblances between the characters, but also Friedrich’s approach to painting, for Stifter draws strong parallels between the realist penchant for creating resemblance between painting and the world and the Roderer family’s resemblances to each other across generations.²⁵⁰ Stefan Willer echoes Schuller’s explanation of repetition and resemblance in terms of genealogy.²⁵¹ The repetition central to Stifter’s story thus becomes synonymous, in the end, with unoriginal impulses towards convention and conformity. Britta Herrmann takes a

²⁴⁹ See Neymeyr.

²⁵⁰ Marianne Schuller, “Familienähnlichkeit. Zur Krise der genealogischen Poetik beim späten Stifter,” *Biologie, Psychologie, Poetologie Verhandlungen zwischen den Wissenschaften*, (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2005)

²⁵¹ Stefan Willer, “Grenzenlose Zeit, schlingender Grund. Genealogische Ordnungen in Stifiers ‘Nachkommenschaften,’ ” *Figuren der Übertragung. Adalbert Stifter und das Wissen seiner Zeit*, (Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009)

different tack by examining art and family in the context of the modern experience of individualism and “homelessness.” She claims that the aims of Friedrich’s realism are finally accomplished in his family.²⁵²

Others, such as Dominik Müller, focus less on the role of the family, and more on Stifter’s portrayal of the intersection of visual and literary representation.²⁵³ Still, repetition is a central concern. Michael Wild, for example, sees the repetition that permeates the novella, not primarily in genealogical terms, but as the single aesthetic principle guiding both Friedrich’s art and his narrative style.²⁵⁴ Christian Begemann, in contrast, identifies two conceptions of realism in the depiction of visual and literary representation in *Nachkommenschaften*: the “falsche” “Abbild” that mirrors, and the “wahre” “Wesenrealismus” which portrays the essence of reality. Begemann concludes that Friedrich attains the latter in his narrative, though he fails in his painting.²⁵⁵ In

²⁵² Britta Herrmann, “Verweigerte Ich-Ausdehnung, historische Kontinuitätsbildung und mikroskopierte Wirklichkeit: Familienroman im 19. Jahrhundert,” *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 84, no. 2 (2010)

²⁵³ Müller has examined *Nachkommenschaften* on at least three occasions: “ ‘Adalbert Stifter’sche Malermittel’: Beobachtungen zur malerischen Qualität von Adalbert Stifters Landschaftsschilderungen.” *Informationen zur Deutschdidaktik: Zeitschrift für den Deutschunterricht in Wissenschaft und Schule*, (2005); “Des gezähmten Widerspenstigkeit. Gegenläufige Deutungsperspektiven in Adalbert Stifters Erzählung ‘Nachkommenschaften,’ ” *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft*, (2000); and “Self-Portraits of the Poet as a Painter: Narratives on Artists and the Bounds between the Arts (Hoffmann--Balzac--Stifter),” In *Text into Image, Image into Text: Proceedings of the Interdisciplinary Bicentenary Conference Held at St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth (the National University of Ireland) in September 1995*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997)

²⁵⁴ Michael Wild, *Wiederholung und Variation im Werk Adalbert Stifters*, (Königshausen & Neumann, 2001)

²⁵⁵ Christian Begemann, “Roderers Bilder—Hadlaubs Abschriften. Einige Überlegungen zu Mimesis und Wirklichkeitskonstruktion im deutschsprachigen Realismus,” *Die Dinge und die Zeichen: Dimensionen des realistischen in der Erzählliteratur des 19. Jahrhunderts*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2008)

examining the relationship between painting and writing, many take a biographical approach to the novella, foregrounding the tension between Stifter's disappointment in his limited success as a painter and, in contrast, his greater success as an author. In his psychoanalytic reading of the novella, Lawrence A. Rickels traces what he sees as the fraught relationship between painting and writing to Stifter's insecurities about his "almost illegitimate" birth.²⁵⁶ Gunter H. Hertling similarly reads the novella as an "autobiographical confession," noting, however, a discrepancy between the pessimism about art that Friedrich's failed painting career suggests and Stifter's own hope in the potential of art to educate and "humanize" mankind.²⁵⁷ The focus on the failure of Friedrich's painting career tends to distract from the interesting potentials that painting reveals, for although it is indeed eventually forsaken for family life, painting unites the seemingly antithetical aspects of the artist and the ordinary world.

Throughout this dissertation, I show that recent theories of religion and secularization shed light on depictions of painting in German Realism. This chapter does so by returning to the topics of the ordinary, convention, and religious plurality that the previous chapter explored. It will be recalled that I referred to Charles Taylor's concept of the "nova effect" to explain the protagonist Heinrich's exposure to many forms of religious and non-religious belief. He is an ideal example of a thoroughly modern subject in regard to his experience of religious pluralism and of religious faith as a choice, rather

²⁵⁶ Laurence A. Rickels, "Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*: The Problem of the Surname, the Problem of Painting," *MLN* 100 no. 3 (1985): 589.

²⁵⁷ G. H. Hertling, "Adalbert Stifter," *Major Figures of Nineteenth-Century Austrian Literature*, (Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1998). See also Hertling's *Adalbert Stifters Erzählkunst im Spiegel seines humanistisches Erbes*, (Berlin: Weidler Buchverlag, 2012).

than a given.²⁵⁸ According to Taylor, religious pluralism is often accompanied by the modern subject's feeling that mundane life is flat and empty, devoid of the meaning and mystery that a "naïve" belief in the spiritual world afforded.²⁵⁹ The ordinary world becomes disenchanted, meaningless. Like Taylor's modern subject, Heinrich experiences a sense of loss vis-à-vis the ordinary world around him; he feels like an outsider in his own home. Creating paintings that reflect the conventions of several aesthetic traditions, Heinrich tries to achieve the sense of the familiarity lacking in his experience. The result is that his alienation from the ordinary world intensifies. Painting and its conventions fail to re-enchant the world.

Peter Berger offers a second meaning for "pluralism." While he echoes Taylor's claims about modernity being characterized by numerous religious options, he adds that there is also a plurality of discourses, both sacred and secular. "Discourse" refers to a mode of behavior or knowledge. To define "secular,"²⁶⁰ Berger offers a statement made by Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) who believed that law could and should be practiced without any reference to God – *etsi Deus non daretur*.²⁶¹ The language of

²⁵⁸ In characterizing faith as optional for the modern subject, Taylor challenges what he calls the "subtraction theory" of secularization; namely, that modern developments necessarily lead to the decrease and eventual extinction of religion. I examine this theory in the first chapter where I claim that the "secularization theory" sheds light on the assumptions undergirding the storyline of Theodor Storm's novella *Im Schloß* (1862) in which a young woman's education and maturity corresponds to her rejection of orthodox Christian faith.

²⁵⁹ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007): 21.

²⁶⁰ Berger gives far more attention to defining and explaining secular discourse than he does to sacred discourse. In the final chapter, I turn my attention to understanding sacred discourse in Theodor Fontane's novel *L'Adultera* (1882) using David Martin's essay entitled "What is Christian Language?"

²⁶¹ Peter L. Berger, *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*, (Boston: De Gruyter, 2014): 52.

religion and the language of law are – or at least can be – independent discourses, according to Grotius and Berger. This is true not only for law, but for a myriad of fields of knowledge and behavior. A Protestant Christian, Grotius was not advocating the abdication of religion, but what Berger calls a “practical or methodological atheism.”²⁶² Berger concludes that, “For most religious believers faith and secularity are not mutually exclusive modes of attending reality; it is not a matter of either/or, but rather both/and.”²⁶³ In many settings, believers “bracket” sacred discourse,²⁶⁴ thus Berger’s wry observation that, “even great mystics may have difficulty being ecstatic in the midst of a marketplace.”²⁶⁵ Berger’s description of the co-existence of secular and sacred discourses helps explain the few discourses present in *Nachkommenschaften*. Painting is a means by which those discourses blend.

DIVIDED DISCOURSES

The purpose of this first section is to identify the several discourses at play in the novella and highlight the sense of friction and irreconcilability between the multiple discourses that Friedrich engages. In the first phase of the novella, the tension is embodied in the fraught relationship between strict mimesis and subjective expression in realist representation. Far from striking a balance, Friedrich applies an empirical mode of understanding to his painting aesthetic to the exclusion of more subjective, creative

²⁶² Ibid., 53.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 72.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 56.

modes. In the subsections of that follow, I discuss first the discourse that characterizes Friedrich's early aesthetic; Stifter offers a humorous caricature that exposes the limitations of empirical thought for aesthetic expression. Second, I show how Stifter depicts a translation of that narrow discourse into Friedrich's everyday interactions; the elimination of subjectivity and convention in painting extends to his isolated lifestyle, for his interpersonal interaction is minimal. The third section draws out the contrasts and similarities between Friedrich's visual aesthetic and the literary aesthetic of his narrative voice. Finally, drawing on Max Weber's concept of *Veralltäglicung*, I examine the conventional discourse that supersedes all others at the end of the novella.

Empirical Painting

Berger's description of a "radical secularist" for whom "rational thought... is the only valid form of knowledge" is helpful in understanding Friedrich's inflexible approach to painting.²⁶⁶ Berger explains that the difficulty with such a perspective is that it is a one-size-fits-all approach that does not give room for any modes of understanding that cannot be explained rationally. Although not rational per se, Friedrich's aesthetic is similarly narrow, even radical; defined by precise verisimilitude, his aesthetic lacks emotion and creativity. This conception of realism, however unfeasible, is not without precedent. Friedrich appears to take his cues from Plato's *Republic* in which Socrates explains the task of the painter thus: "...get hold of a mirror and carry it around with you everywhere. You'll soon be creating everything I mentioned a moment ago—the sun and

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 74.

the heavenly bodies, the earth, yourself, and all other creatures, plants, and so on.”²⁶⁷

Representation is a mirror. At the heart of Socrates’s and Friedrich’s aesthetic is the assumption that painting’s primary aim is a strict visual resemblance of the world. This can only be accomplished by eliminating the artist’s subjectivity from the representation and the influence of aesthetic conventions. Unlike Keller’s painter, Heinrich Lee, who is highly imaginative and adopts several aesthetic traditions over the course of his development as a painter, Friedrich rejects convention as a distortion of true reality (“die wirkliche Wirklichkeit”). Marianne Schuller describes Friedrich’s aims thus: “Die Malerei also zielt auf die Ununterscheidbarkeit zwischen Vor- und Abbild ab. Erst in dem Moment, in dem ... alle Differenz zusammengeschmolzen, verschmolzen ist, ist die Kunst vollkommen. Es wäre eine Kunst ohne Übersetzung.”²⁶⁸ Visual verisimilitude, rather than creative expression, is his priority.

Both Friedrich and Heinrich Lee want their paintings to elicit the viewer’s recognition, but they have very different versions of recognition in view. Heinrich Lee aims to facilitate the viewer’s emotional recognition of a familiar place and to highlight the beauty of an obscure, but personally significant, landscape. Although he never fully achieves it, his aesthetic program celebrates the human experience of a landscape, not simply its physical appearance. His art is not rational, but emotional and at times magical.²⁶⁹ For Friedrich, however, recognition is more cerebral than emotional. He

²⁶⁷ Plato, “Republic,” *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010): 65.

²⁶⁸ See Schuller, 226.

²⁶⁹ For more on the relationship between German Realism and magic, see Eric Downing’s examination of *Der grüne Heinrich*. Downing sheds light on the resemblance between realism

wants the resemblance between his painting and nature to be so complete that it confuses the viewer, who momentarily cannot distinguish the original landscape from the painted one. It is a distorted understanding of realism, but similar to the one that Theodor Storm also alludes to in *Aquis submersus* (1876): “Indem ich aber eintrat, wäre ich vor Überraschung bald zurückgewichen; denn Katharina stand mir gegenüber... Ach, ich wußte es nur zu bald; was ich hier sahe, war nur ihr Bildnis, das ich selber einst gemalt.”²⁷⁰ When the painter Johannes sees the portrait of his lover, which he himself had painted, he briefly mistakes it for her. Such a “faithful” rendering of reality, which can be mistaken for the thing it represents, relies on a “thinness” of the medium,²⁷¹ or as Friedrich insists, a disappearance of the medium altogether.

To appreciate just how radical Friedrich’s aesthetic is,²⁷² it will be helpful to compare it to the description of realist painting expressed by German landscape painter Carl Gustav Carus (1789-1869). Like Plato, he uses the language of mirroring, but rejects the mirror as a suitable model for the painter. In contrast to a mirror, Carus claims that landscape painting conveys additional meaning that cannot be found directly in nature. In *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei. Zuvor ein Brief von Goethe als Einleitung* (1819–1831), he explains that the truth expressed in painting lies in the painter’s ability to create a sense of harmony and wholeness within a landscape painting,

and ancient magical practices in “Binding Magic in Gottfried Keller’s *Der grüne Heinrich*,” *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 90, no. 3 (2015).

²⁷⁰ Theodor Storm, “Aquis Submersus,” *Theodor Storm. Novellen. 1867-1880*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987): 452.

²⁷¹ Darío Villanueva, *Theories of Literary Realism*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997): 15.

²⁷² Neymeyr goes so far as to label Friedrich’s aesthetic a “radikale[r] Realismus” (191).

which a true landscape lacks:

versuche es nur, betrachte die landschaftliche Natur im Spiegel! Du siehst sie mit allen ihren Reizen, allen Farben und Formen wieder abgebildet, und doch, wenn Du nun dieses Spiegelbild festhältst, und es vergleichst mit dem Eindruck, welchen ein vollendetes landschaftliches Kunstwerk Dir gewährte, was bemerkst Du? Offenbar ist das letztere an Wahrheit immer unendlich zurück; das Reizende schöner Naturformen, das Leuchtende der Farben wird im Bilde nie auch nur zur Hälfte erreicht; allein zugleich fühlst Du das rechte Kunstwerk als ein Ganzes, als eine kleine Welt (einen Mikrokosmos) für sich und in sich; das Spiegelbild hingegen erscheint ewig nur als ein Stück, als ein Theil der unendlichen Natur, herausgerissen aus seinen organischen Verbindungen und in widernatürliche Schranken geengt, und nicht, gleich dem Kunstwerke, als die in sich beschlossene Schöpfung einer uns verwandten, von uns zu umfassenden geistigen Kraft.²⁷³

Although the painting lacks the “Wahrheit” of true nature, since it cannot fully capture the colors and forms of natural objects, it offers something quite different from unpainted nature. The landscape artist creates meaning from the fragment in nature insofar as the landscape painting is “ein Ganzes,” “eine kleine Welt,” and a “Mikrokosmos” which has its origin in the painter. The artist infuses it with a meaning that is absent from the true landscape, which – unlike the painting – appears as “ein Theil der unendlichen Natur.” Carus’s underlying assumption is that the world appears fragmented (“ein Stück” and “ein Theil”) apart from the interpretive framework of representation. The artist creates wholeness from a fragment. Because the painting has meaning independent of the object it represents, Georg Gadamer calls it an “ontological event [that] occupies the same ontological level as what is represented.”²⁷⁴ The claim that nature may appear as disjointed fragments resonates with Taylor’s characterization of the disenchanted world

²⁷³ Carl Gustav Carus, *Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei*, (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1972): 39.

²⁷⁴ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, (New York: Crossroad, 1989): 140.

as seemingly “emptied of deeper resonance”²⁷⁵ – both Carus’s nature and Taylor’s disenchanted world suffer from a lack of meaning. Similar to Heinrich Lee’s (unfulfilled) desire to imbue his landscape paintings with a sense of familiarity and home that the viewer may overlook in nature, Carus has high expectations for the artist’s ability to give a meaningful shape to nature in the work of art.

In stark contrast to Carus, for whom the artist’s interpretive vision is key, Friedrich believes the greatest hindrance to fulfilling his aesthetic ideal is his own subjectivity and the aesthetic conventions he observes in the work of other artists, for they distort the mirrored image he envisions for his work. In order for a painting to be indistinguishable from the external world, Friedrich attempts the impossible task of becoming an impersonal mediator of nature. His determination is matched by his naivety:

als ich Menschen und Städte, und Bildersammlungen und Bilderausstellungen angesehen hatte, und als ich in den Alpen oft vielmal kreuz und quer, hin und wieder gewandert war, sagte ich: soll es denn gar nicht möglich sein, den Dachstein gerade so zu malen, wie ich ihn oft und stets vom vorderen Gosausee aus gesehen habe? Warum malen [Landschaftersmaler den Dachstein] alle anders? Was soll denn der Grund sein?²⁷⁶

In his travels, Friedrich has encountered a plurality of aesthetic discourses, but even after exposure to the aesthetic traditions and the subjective expression displayed in art museums and art exhibits, his question remains: Why do paintings of the same object look so different from that object and from each other? This question highlights Stifter’s ironic portrayal of realism throughout the novella. At first glance, the question “Warum malen sie alle anders?” may appear redundant to the reader – of course every painter

²⁷⁵ See Taylor, 309.

²⁷⁶ Adalbert Stifter, “Nachkommenschaften,” *Adalbert Stifter Werke und Briefe. Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2003): 28.

produces a unique representation because every painter has a unique subjectivity! But the question is not redundant to Friedrich at all, because his conception of painting is narrow in its fixation on the physical appearance of nature. Rejecting the notion that individual painters at different moments in history may see and interpret the same object differently, or that there is any reality beyond the material world to capture, Friedrich insists that representation mirror material reality.

His perspective completely discounts what distinguishes art from other discourses. David Jackson observes that in the nineteenth century, amid discourses that were gaining in prominence and authority, it was important that literature maintain its distinctive quality. This can be said too of art more generally:

At a time when photography was beginning to pose a threat to literature in terms of its capacity to record all aspects of contemporary life, and when the sciences and history were claiming to have replaced theology and philosophy in interpreting and analysing the world, literature, it was claimed, could communicate a deeper, truer vision of reality. In order to do this though it had to be true to its own peculiar, unchanging essence.²⁷⁷

The “peculiar, unchanging essence” of art is what Friedrich fails to identify in his attempt at photographic precision. He further fails to see his perspective *as a perspective*, mistaking it for the only means of discovering a deeper truth; in doing so, he falls for what Lillian Furst identifies as the realist illusion. She observes that the realists were aware that this purported mirroring of the world was a deception:

The realists’ insistence on equating truth with illusion means that they could achieve their aims only on the level of pretense, by prevailing upon their readers to accept the validity of their contentions and to believe without reservation in the reality of the fictive worlds they created.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁷ David Jackson, “Taboos in Poetic-Realist Writers,” *Taboos in German Literature*, (Providence, RI: Berghahn Books, 1996): 64.

²⁷⁸ Lillian R. Furst, *All Is True. The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995): 9.

In *Nachkommenschaften*, the artist is held captive by the misconception that art actually can capture “reality.” Stifter thus cleverly thematizes realism’s illusory aims in his depiction of Friedrich who, in contrast to the realists that Furst describes, has been duped by the “pretense” of a realist aesthetic into thinking that art and nature are subject to one and the same mode of understanding.

Though exaggerated, Friedrich’s dilemma touches on the perennial question of realism: what characterizes the relationship of art to the world beyond it? In Stifter’s *Der Nachsommer* (1857) the precarious balance between the artist’s subjectivity and the realist impulse for mimesis is also at stake. The novel’s first-person narrator describes an unusual, perhaps even abstract landscape painting – a product of the painter’s imagination, not resembling any true landscape. According to the narrator, the painting fails to adequately reflect the unpainted world. He describes the painting thus:

Auf diesem wüsten Raume waren nicht Berge oder Wasserfluthen oder Ebenen oder Wälder oder die glatte See mit schönen Schiffen dargestellt, sondern es waren starre Felsen da, die nicht als geordnete Gebilde empor standen, sondern wie zufällig als Blöcke und selbst hie und da schief in der Erde staken, gleichsam als Fremdlinge.²⁷⁹

In contrast to Friedrich’s ideal of mirroring, the landscape painting described here is unfamiliar because it does not resemble anything the viewers have ever seen. The narrator claims, “Ich hatte nie etwas Ähnliches gesehen,”²⁸⁰ a statement that another character echoes: “[Der Maler] hat sich die Aufgabe eines Gegenstandes gestellt, den er

²⁷⁹ Adalbert Stifter, *Der Nachsommer. Eine Erzählung. Dritter Band*, (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2000): 118.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

noch nicht gesehen hat.”²⁸¹ First-hand knowledge is paramount to this conception of realism. The painting is evaluated, not based on the artist’s creative handling of the natural setting he depicts, but based on the degree to which it approximates the material reality that he has seen. And he must have *seen* it. The eye’s perception of nature—rather than the imagination’s—should guide artistic production. In the previous chapter, we saw that the strange *Kritzelei* in *Der grüne Heinrich* similarly baffles, even agitates viewers because it veers so far from a mimetic aesthetic. Instead of visual mimesis, a creative expression of Heinrich’s inner state informs the strange work. In contrast, Robert C. Holub describes the realist artist thus: “for the sake of realism, the artist becomes a medium, a mediator between object and representation, world and sign. His own personality and wishes are reduced to nothing; he is taken up totally in faithful reproduction.”²⁸² Holub’s statement perfectly captures Friedrich’s empirical aesthetic: the precise copying of nature in art, stripped of subjectivity and convention.

Beyond Painting

The perceived opposition between something like an empirical mode of understanding and other more subjective modes is reiterated in Friedrich’s lifestyle. I observed above that, according to Berger, the modern subject is capable of engaging and employing multiple discourses, sacred and secular. One discourse does not necessarily exclude another. In Friedrich’s case, however, there is strong resistance initially to non-empirical modes of understanding. Consistent with his attempt to eliminate his

²⁸¹ Ibid., 119.

²⁸² Robert C. Holub, *Reflections of Realism. Paradox, Norm, and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century German Prose*, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991): 144.

subjectivity from his painting is his decision to avoid portraying people and to avoid interacting with them. He appears determined to systematically exclude human presence – in the form of friendship, creativity, social and aesthetic conventions – from both his art and life. His proprietor observes the absence of human beings in his paintings and daily routine when she says, “zu andern Leuten müßt Ihr auch gehen, daß Ihr nicht so allein seid, man sieht auch keine Menschen, die Ihr malt, statt daß Ihr Bäume und Kräuter malt.”²⁸³ Not only does he stifle his own subjectivity, he does so by eliminating the presence of other subjectivities.

For Friedrich, a rejection of human subjectivity is closely related to a rejection of the conventions that facilitate communication. Because he keeps his distance from other people, Friedrich is socially awkward, even in everyday situations. For example, when he meets his cousin Peter Roderer for the first time, Friedrich fails to greet him properly. He describes their awkward meeting thus:

[Peter] setzte sich zu einem der Tischchen, lüftete das graue Häubchen und wischte sich mit einem weißen Tuche ein wenig Schweiß von der Stirne. Dann lüftete er das Häubchen noch einmal und grüßte mich. Ich erschrak, stand auf und dankte sehr artig; denn es wäre eigentlich an mir, dem Jüngeren gewesen, zuerst zu grüßen.²⁸⁴

Alarmed by his own failure to observe basic etiquette, Friedrich tries to compensate by thanking Peter ‘artig,’ a word that suggests his sense of duty to convention rather than sincerity. But this minor *faux pas* is only one example within a whole system of social norms from which Friedrich attempts to extract himself, from the proper form of greeting to weightier choices. Of marital expectations he says, “Ich werde aber gar niemals ein

²⁸³ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 69.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

Weib bekommen, weil mir an einem solchen gar nichts liegt.”²⁸⁵ And of his family’s expectation that he produce offspring, he states, “Mögen sie sich ausdehnen, ich dehne mich nicht aus....”²⁸⁶ His rejection of conventions – aesthetic and social – and his self-imposed isolation is evidence of an unwillingness to employ discourses that are not in conformity with his aesthetic.

Subjective Writing

The discourse that characterizes the early pages of Friedrich’s writing is markedly different than his realist aesthetic. Stifter inflates the irony of Friedrich’s mimetic aesthetic and isolation by emphasizing, by way of contrast, his subjectivity through his first-person narrative, demonstrating that even an ostensibly “realist” artist cannot eliminate his subjective perception. We might expect that Friedrich’s narrative would reflect an attempt at objectivity, given his desire to exclude human presence from his painting and life. On the contrary, from the first sentences of the novella, the narrator’s identity and personal experience are central: “So bin ich unversehens ein Landschaftsmaler geworden. Es ist entsetzlich.”²⁸⁷ Rather than impersonal, his tone is almost conversational in its abrupt beginning with the word ‘so.’ ‘Unversehens’ highlights his subjective experience of his identity as landscape painter. As the novella’s narrator, Friedrich’s conversational tone, the personal content of his narrative, his narrative’s ambiguous structure, and his unconventional use of verb tense all suggest an

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 30-31.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 32.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 25.

individual whose written expressions of subjectivity contradict his aesthetic of visual art. Instead of mirroring nature, as he aims to do in painting, he mirrors his own subjectivity in his writing. Furthermore, Stifter punctuates the individuality of Friedrich's narrative with contradictions: Friedrich contradicts his own surprising claim that being a landscape painter is 'entsetzlich' by stating that, "Das Malen ist mir lieber, als die ganze Welt; es gibt gar nichts auf der Erde, was mich tiefer ergreifen könnte, als das Malen."²⁸⁸

Although his approach to realist painting may resemble an empirical discourse, Friedrich is a walking contradiction. Emotional fluctuations color his narrative; he unabashedly communicates his ideas and experiences through the lenses of his skepticism, scorn, embarrassment, passion, and love. He does not identity his writing with any particular genre, but in many ways, the first half of the novella resembles a journal rather than a story. The highly inflected and variegated narrative is a vastly different project than his precisely composed, ostensibly objective paintings.

There is, however, a characteristic that Friedrich's writing shares with his painting and life: a rejection of convention. Friedrich's writing does not adhere to the dictates of one genre, nor to any rigid principles of orderly composition; rather, his writings are a fairly free-wheeling conglomeration of themes and genres, all centering on his life and expressing his thoughts, plans, and experiences. Dirk Oschmann describes the eclectic quality of Friedrich's narrative voice and structure as "nicht nur... durch einen sehr uneinheitlichen Stil geprägt, sondern auch durch eine eigentümliche, gattungs- und erzähltheoretische Unentschiedenheit, insofern der Text zwischen Erzählung und einer

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 29.

Art Tagebuch zu oszillieren scheint.”²⁸⁹ The descriptive terms that Oschmann uses to characterize Friedrich’s style of writing – *uneinheitlich*, *Unentschiedenheit*, *oszillieren* – reveal a vastly different project than his focused (though unfeasible) aesthetic of visual representation. The chaotic style and generic ambivalence bespeak an author who employs writing to think through encounters and explore ideas; that is, his narrative – although unfamiliar in structure – mirrors both his inner and outer life.

The lack of organizational and stylistic unity within the first half of the narrative is intensified by haphazard changes in verb tense, resulting in a cacophonous expression of Friedrich’s day-to-day experience. The first few pages of his narration include sentences in the present tense (“Ich bin jetzt sechsundzwanzig Jahre alt”²⁹⁰), perfect tense (“Ich habe nie daran gedacht, ein Landschaftsmaler werden zu wollen.”²⁹¹), and imperfect (“Ich malte nun auch”²⁹²). Because the imperfect tense is the preferred tense for literary narratives, the narrator’s frequent use of the less formal perfect tense supports the claim that Stifter’s narrator is not aware that he is writing a story, at least not in the early pages of the novella. Furthermore, Friedrich’s temporal distance from the events that he records varies, as one might expect to find in a journal: he sometimes writes within a day or two of the experiences he records (“Als es gestern seit den drei Tagen, die ich im Lüpflhause bin, zum ersten Male ein wenig wärmer geworden war”²⁹³), at other times he records

²⁸⁹ Dirk Oschmann, “Absolute Darstellung—Zur Metapoetik von Stifters ‘Nachkommenschaften,’” *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* 50 (2009): 139.

²⁹⁰ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 26.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 33.

ongoing events (“Ich male jetzt wieder daran”²⁹⁴). However, as the story progresses, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine how far removed he is from the events he records, and by the end of the novella, this temporal proximity is impossible to calculate. Stefan Willer claims that these temporal inconsistencies obscure the boundaries between the narrator and his story,²⁹⁵ and indeed, the early pages of Friedrich’s narration appear almost to achieve the unmediated representation he desired for his early landscape paintings, except that his inner life is the object of representation.

As in a journal, Friedrich’s record of daily, personal experiences, rather than the conventions of any literary genre, propel the early pages of the narrative forward. Thus the early pages lack a clear structure and teleological arc. Organized by no other system than his own whim, Friedrich addresses many themes, moving from one to the other without a discernible system – the history of his artistic development, past projects, his hopes for his career as a painter, his own philosophies of art, his plans for painting the moor, his meals and eating habits, his conversations with Peter and the other Roderers and with his proprietor. Katharina Grätz argues that these “alltägliche” themes create a “Verfremdungseffekt” because, although seemingly unremarkable in themselves, Friedrich makes them the central concern of his narrative:

Zu beachten ist die paradoxe Wirkung, die von dieser Aufwertung des Marginalen, des herkömmlich nicht Beachtete ausgeht: Die ausführliche Schilderung des Alltäglichen und Gewöhnlichen bestätigt dieses nämlich keineswegs in seiner Gewöhnlichkeit. Im Gegenteil hat die detaillierte narrative Erschliessung banaler Alltagshandlungen und — Gegenstände einen

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 32.

²⁹⁵ Willer believes that these temporal inconsistencies “verwisch[en] die Grenze zwischen erzähltem und erzählendem Ich.” In “Grenzenlose Zeit, schlingender Grund. Genealogische Ordnungen in Stifters ‘Nachkommenschaften,’ ” *Figuren der Übertragung. Adalbert Stifter und das Wissen seiner Zeit*, (Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009): 55.

Verfremdungseffekt zur Folge: Indem das Gewöhnlich-Alltägliche in den Mittelpunkt der literarischen Darstellung tritt, verliert es den Anschein des Vertrauten und Gewöhnlichen.²⁹⁶

She claims that ordinary objects and occurrences lose their familiarity (“den Anschein des Vertrauten und Gewöhnlichen”) when represented as though they are remarkable. While I agree that Friedrich’s attention to ordinary objects and events is noteworthy, the supposed contrast between their ordinariness and their centrality in the narrative is not alienating, especially given, as already noted in the previous chapter, the wide-spread emphasis on the ordinary in nineteenth-century German literature. Ordinary reality is a hallmark of realism, especially German Realism. Taylor notes that the ordinary is granted a “monumental scope” in realism.²⁹⁷ It is not the “Aufwertung des Marginalen” and “ausführliche Schilderung des Alltäglichen” that make the early pages of Friedrich’s writing unusual, but the lack of a narrative arc – of narrative conventions – to give them a recognizable form. Again, Taylor expresses this well when he claims that realism “gives the meaningless ... the closure and shape of fate”²⁹⁸; in the first part of Friedrich’s story, the sense of ‘shape’ and movement toward ‘closure’ is missing.

Veralltäglichung

This section examines the transformation in both Friedrich’s life and art that takes place when he decides to abandon painting to start a family with Peter’s daughter, Susanna. Peter Roderer embodies the conventional discourse that Friedrich will

²⁹⁶ “Erzählte Rituale—ritualisiertes Erzählen: Literarische Sinngebungsstrategien bei Adalbert Stifter,” *Ordnung—Raum—Ritual*, (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007): 48.

²⁹⁷ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989): 432.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 431.

eventually embrace, and as if to emphasize the extent to which conventions are woven into the fabric of the Roderer identity, Stifter blurs the lines between the physical, biological traits that the Roderers share, and the conventions that they follow. For example, one of the ways that the Friedrich is shown to be part of the Roderer family is through his brown eyes and hair, traits he shares with Peter, Peter's wife Mathilde (who is also Peter's cousin!), and Susanne.²⁹⁹ So before Friedrich reveals to Peter that his last name is Roderer, Peter has already recognized that he is a Roderer because of the resemblances Friedrich bears to his family. However, Peter makes no distinction between their physiological resemblance and similarities in their behavior and preferences. Specifically, he identifies the similarities in the way they trim their beards as evidence of a shared identity. Peter asks Friedrich:

“Und haben Sie nicht auch, wie unser Geschlecht einen kurzen braunen Vollbart?”
 “Das ist ein Zufall”, sagte ich, “jetzt ist es in vielen Männerkreisen Sitte, einen kurzen Vollbart zu tragen...”
 “Daß Ihnen diese Sitte gefällt, zeigt schon, daß Sie mit unserem Geschlechte gleich fühlen”, sagte Roderer, “wir trugen den Bart, da er noch nicht Sitte war.”³⁰⁰

For Peter, the choice of how Friedrich and other Roderer men wear their beards reveals a shared temperament (‘daß Sie mit unserem Geschlechte gleich fühlen’), the source of the ‘Sitte.’ The shared temperament is also expressed in the shared conventions of the Roderer narrative in which the tangible work implied by the word *Roderer* (*roden* means ‘to uproot’ or ‘to clear’) replaces artistic productivity.

²⁹⁹ Peters eyes are described as “braun und klar” (34); Mathilde has “bedeutend große braune Augen” (57); Friedrich calls Susanna “die Braunäugige” (42); Peter says of Friedrich, “daß er braune Haare und braune Augen hat” (86).

³⁰⁰ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 56.

Because of his physical resemblance to the Roderers and the ways in which his behavior conforms to the Roderer narrative, Friedrich finds himself an already familiar member of an extensive family and history that he does not even know, because of his resemblance to them:

Alle Nachkommen unseres Ahnherrn, auf den wir noch zurückzählen können, haben fast wie mit Eigensinn ohne erhebliche Ausnahmen braune Haare and braune Augen bei freundlicher Farbe des Angesichts. Sie besitzen diese Merkmale auch, als sollte Ihr Körper mir auch noch die Anzeige geben, welche mir Ihr Geist gegeben hat.³⁰¹

Here the physical resemblances signal a more intricate web of resemblances and shared behaviors among the Roderers. The physical features that constitute visual resemblances are merely ‘Anzeige’ of deeper resemblances of ‘Geist.’ Friedrich’s experience of belonging and familiarity within the Roderer family is striking in its juxtaposition to Heinrich Lee’s alienation in *Grüner Heinrich*. As I noted in the second chapter, despite Heinrich’s resemblance to his father, the death of his father marks him as an outsider permanently. There is, however, a clear loss for Friedrich too, for his assimilation into the Roderer family eventually costs him his painting career. Just as he excluded human presence to facilitate his realist aesthetic, he approaches conventional Roderer identity as a zero-sum game that precludes artistic expression.

Roderer identity excludes aesthetic representation by definition. Peter offers his own biography as an example of the Roderer narrative, what he describes as a progression in which artistic representation gives way to the deeper meaning found *in* the conventions of life beyond painting and poetry. Peter recounts the history of the Roderer family – a story of ambition, failure, and repetition: “es lebt seit Jahrhunderten ein

³⁰¹ Ibid., 51.

Geschlecht, das immer etwas anderes erreicht hat, als es mit Heftigkeit angestrebt hat. Und je glühender das Bestreben eines dieses Geschlechtes war, desto sicherer konnte man sein, daß nichts daraus wird.”³⁰² Peter’s family and business ventures replaced his youthful passion for becoming a great poet. He describes his own experience of the Roderer narrative thus:

Ich beschloß, alle Heldendichter zu übertreffen, und die wirkliche Wahrheit zu bringen, und da sehr viele Zeit mit Sprachenlernen und Lesen vorübergegangen war, und ich mein Ottolied wieder las und das Makkabäerlied, welche beide Entwürfe meine besten Arbeiten waren, reichten sie nicht an das Vorhandene, und da ich mit Anwendung aller meiner Zeit und Kraft Neues dichtete, und dasselbe nicht größer war als die bestehenden Lieder, und die wirkliche Wahrheit nicht brachte, dichtete ich nicht mehr und vertilgte alles, was ich gemacht hatte.³⁰³

He puts his literary skills to use in business: “wie ich früher mit der größten Ausdauer und mit allen Entbehrungen für meine Dichtungsarbeiten gekämpft hatte, so kämpfte ich jetzt für Erlernen und Fruchtbarmachen der Handelsgeschäfte.”³⁰⁴ The word “Fruchtbarmachen” recalls the many paintings that Friedrich hopes to leave as his legacy. However, the connotation of reproduction and legacy that we associated with Friedrich’s painting is here redirected to success in trade.

Peter’s marriage also reflects a division between the ordinary, conventional world and art. He marries his cousin Mathilde, whom he praises as a “Bild jeder häusliche Tugend,”³⁰⁵ instead of his first lover who was “so frei und ätherisch... wie die in meinen Dichtungen und so schön wie die Prinzessinnen in den alten und neuen

³⁰² Ibid., 49.

³⁰³ Ibid., 58.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 59.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 61.

Heldenliedern.”³⁰⁶ He leaves behind the ideals of his poetry for the ordinary and conventional. At first glance, Peter’s perspective appears hopeful in regards to ordinary life, especially when compared to the bleak relationship to the ordinary that Keller’s protagonist Heinrich experiences. However, like Friedrich’s aesthetic, the discourse of Roderer identity allows no room for other voices.

Convention dulls the individuality of Friedrich’s narrative voice, for as naïve as Friedrich’s fixation on his empirical discourse is, it nonetheless highlights and even undergirds his unique identity. Once he submits to the Roderer narrative, his writing assumes the repetitive predictability of the Roderer narrative, just as his life does; the final pages lack the conversational tone and unconventional qualities of the early pages. Matthias Kamann describes the loss of individuality inherent in the Roderer identity and the reflection of this loss in the narrative thus:

Was also Roderer-Identität genannt werden kann, ist... ein im Boden verlaufender Strom grundsätzlich mimetisch orientierter Energie: jeder lässt seine Kräfte zunächst zu einem scheinbar allerpersönlichsten Ziel walten, kann sich aber, da jene Energien statt auf Subjektivierung auf Mimesis zielen, darin nicht erfüllen und biegt aus solcher Entfernung von der Wirklichkeit seiner Kräfte auf jene zurück. Dies prägt auch den Text, der sich erst der Landschaftsmalerei widmet, um sich dann mit in der Entfernung gesammelter Energie der Wirklichkeits-hingabe und -herstellung zu widmen.³⁰⁷

Kamann’s metaphor for the identity of the Roderer family as a mimetic energy that flows from one person to the next, and eventually to the text itself, is apt. The power of mimesis and convention appears to overcome individuality completely. Because the mimetic impulse overpowers and kills the subjectivity of the characters and text, I am more

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 60.

³⁰⁷ Matthias Kamann, *Epigonalität als ästhetisches Vermögen. Untersuchungen zu Texten Grabbes und Immermanns, Platens und Raabes, zur Literaturkritik des 19. Jahrhunderts und zum Werk Adalbert Stifters*, (Stuttgart: M & P, 1994): 240.

inclined to compare it to a disease that infects the story's characters, destroying their individuality and thus their creative agency.

Friedrich's transition from unconventional artist to bourgeoisie is exemplary of Max Weber's sociological concept of *Veralltäglichung* in which the unconventional values of a charismatic leader are eventually tamed by the routines of ordinary life. Of the charismatic person, Weber states that "In order to do justice to their mission, the holders of charisma...must stand outside the ties of this world, outside of routine occupations, as well as outside the routine obligations of family life."³⁰⁸ It is a profile that fits Friedrich well. Just so the "routinization" (*Veralltäglichung*) that follows in which "the extraordinary has become ordinary again, reintegrated into everyday reality."³⁰⁹

Friedrich's life and writing come to reflect his loss of "charisma": his distinct personality and narrative voice fade into the tropes and caricatures of ordinary experience.

The process of *Veralltäglichung* is clearly evident in the passage in which Friedrich and Susanna finally declare their love to each other. At this point – the climax of the novella's romantic subplot – Friedrich's text flattens as he submits his subjective voice to the conventions of Roderer identity (i.e. the Roderer story) and the conventions of story-telling. Their declaration of love introduces the clichés that characterize most of the novella's remaining pages—clichés which the Roderer narrative have imposed on Friedrich:

Mit stürmender Brust ging ich gegen sie. Als sie nahe war, und als ich sie sah und als ich sah, daß sie heute blasser sei, rief ich: "Susanna, Susanna!" Sie sah mich liebend an und reichte mir beide Hände hin. Ich ergriff die Hände, riss das

³⁰⁸ Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. and trans. Hans Gerth and Charles Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958): 248.

³⁰⁹ See Berger, 36.

Mädchen gegen mich, und schloss es an meine Brust. Unsere Arme umschlangen sich, und ihr heißer Mund glühte auf dem meinen. Der Mund der immer stolz gewesen war, hatte mich geküsst.³¹⁰

The passage is as formulaic as Friedrich's earlier writing was difficult to classify, not only in its content, but also in its corresponding style and melodramatic tone. It is filled with familiar tropes: passionate love empowers an otherwise timid man to boldly approach the woman he loves; his concealed love is finally expressed through impassioned physical intimacy, which gives him a sense of victory ('Der Mund der immer stolz gewesen war, hatte mich geküsst.'). The Roderer story has robbed Friedrich of his individualized narrative voice, and thus a banal love story replaces the initially erratic narrative. The predictable structure, which propels the narrative toward Friedrich and Susanna's marriage, replaces the intensely personal experiences and thoughts of the first half of the text.

If not for Stifter's ironical depiction of the Roderer family, the reader might assume that the happy ending resolves Friedrich's original problem: how to discover and represent the 'wirkliche Wirklichkeit.' This is the view Gerhard Plumpe takes when he states that, "Der Besitz der schönen Frau ist das höchste dem Künstler erreichbare Ziel, und so ist es nur folgerichtig, dass [Friedrich] Roderer auf seine Malerei verzichten wird, um sich im Leben als tätiger Mann zu erweisen."³¹¹ According to Plumpe, because Susanna's beauty is the *wirkliche Wirklichkeit* that Friedrich strives to portray in painting, his marriage to her precludes his continued attempts to capture that beauty in painting.

³¹⁰ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 79.

³¹¹ Gerhard Plumpe, "An der Grenze des Realismus. Eine Anmerkung zu Adalbert Stifters 'Nachkommenschaften' und Wilhelm Raabes 'Der Dräumling,'" *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft*, (1994): 78.

But a closer examination of the wedding passage throws doubt on this interpretation. Specifically, the emphasis on the Roderer family's obsessive desire to replicate themselves through reproduction and conformity to convention precludes the idea that Susanna's beauty represents a deeper truth. She is simply a replica cast in the Roderer mold. Peter Roderer expresses this value for replication when he raises the toast at Friedrich and Susanna's wedding:

Der hier anwesende Friedrich Roderer, der jüngste dieses Namens, hat in der letzten Zeit gezeigt, daß er ein ganzer Roderer ist. Meine Tochter Susanna hat auch nicht ermangelt, sich als Rodererin darzutun; heute haben wir beide ehelich zusammengefügt, es muß also von ihnen noch Rodererisches kommen, als von anderen Roderern – möge es so groß sein, wie nie ein Roderer etwas zuwege gebracht hat, und möge es mir erlaubt sein, ihr Wohl auf grenzenlose Zeit hinaus auszubringen.³¹²

Instead of his canvas mirroring nature, Friedrich and Susanne, who already mirror each other in name, appearance, and history, will replicate themselves yet again when they produce 'noch Rodererisches.' The burdensome repetition of the word *Roderer* and variations of it (*Rodererin*, *Rodererischer*) correspond to Peter's emphasis on the propagation of future generations of Roderers. This obsession with *Rodererisches* is made even more ridiculous when we imagine the context: "Alle Roderer...kamen...um diese Feier mitzufeiern, und die Stammesgefühle nur noch fester zu binden."³¹³ A crowd of people who look more or less alike (due in part to incest) and who have more or less the same life paths, gather to celebrate the increasing exclusivity and propagation of their family line. Friedrich has shown that he is a 'complete' Roderer—and even more of a Roderer than the others—by forsaking his passion for art so that he can produce more

³¹² See *Nachkommenschaften*, 93.

³¹³ Ibid.

Roderers. The reproduction of Roderers in life replaces reproduction of nature in paintings. The resemblances that bind the Roderers thus constrict (‘noch fester zu binden’), to the exclusion of individual artistic aims that might reach beyond the web of familial familiarity or fail to attain the complete resemblance that this marriage accomplishes. To speak with Neymeyr, “die Absurdität eines auf bloße Reproduktion zielenden künstlerischen Programms”³¹⁴ is translated and achieved in the Roderer family’s continued expansion. The replication required by Friedrich’s conception of realist representation is best realized in the biological reproduction and conformity to convention that characterizes family life.

To conclude this section, we have examined the seemingly irreconcilable discourses of objectivity in painting, subjectivity in writing, and conventions of the Roderer identity. But we have yet to see a harmonious intersection of these discourses: Friedrich at first resists and rejects conventions of all types, to the detriment of his art and relational well-being; a realism of mirroring proves to be an impossible model for his painting, and similarly, the isolation that results from his rejection of social conventions is impractical. In the end he adopts the Roderer narrative and all of the conventions it includes. We see him immersed in his family to the extent that Peter names him a paragon of Roderer identity. However, Friedrich’s loss of both art and individuality at the end of the novella suggest that neither a full rejection nor embracing of convention yields an experience of the elusive “wirkliche Wirklichkeit.” Below we turn our attention to the process that takes place between two poles of mimetic discourse and conventional discourse. Over the course of the process of *Veralltäglicung*, Friedrich’s paintings reveal brief intersections of these discourses, evidence of the potential for multiple modes

³¹⁴ See Neymeyr, 191.

of understanding to be expressed aesthetically. The painting of the Lüpfig Moor is one example. Also notable, although not surprising given the close resemblance between painting and religion that I observed in the previous chapter, is the representation of a religious festival that brings these discourses together.

HARMONIZING DISCOURSES

Between the empirical discourse of Friedrich's early aesthetic and his abandonment of art for the Roderer narrative, elements of both discourses overlap to create aesthetic variations on the theme of mirroring – paintings that bring aspects of different discourses together. Key to these permutations is Friedrich's new vision of nature. Love catalyzes this change. Before Friedrich and Susanna's relationship gives rise to another conventional Roderer family, their love gives Friedrich a fresh perspective on nature and painting. He comes to see the Lüpfig Moor, not as an object to be mirrored, but as *düster* (bleak), *einfach* (simple), and *erhaben* (sublime)³¹⁵ and forgets his previous obsession with painting a landscape 'as it is.' He describes this phase of his career thus:

Nun begann ein eigenes Leben. Des frühen Morgens schon malte ich, und malte den größten Teil des Tages mit einem Eifer und mit einem Feuer, die ich früher gar nicht gekannt hatte, alles gelang besser, und oft oft war es mir schon deutlich, als ich müsse es erfassen können, daß der *unnachahmliche* Duft und die *unerreichbare* Farbe der Natur auf meine Leinwand käme.³¹⁶ (emphasis added)

The words "unnachahmlich" and "unerreichbar" would be out of place in his empirically-informed aesthetic; but his engagement to Susanna marks a new phase of life ('ein eigenes Leben') and a new (though short-lived) phase of his art in which his view of

³¹⁵ Ibid., 92.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 88.

nature is loftier, even while his writing and life have taken the familiar path of Roderer conventionality. Representations of nature are no longer impossible because of his unfeasible mimetic aesthetic, but because human love renders nature ‘unnachahmlich’ and ‘unerreichbar.’ Human love is linked to divine qualities that appear particularly bright against the backdrop of the highly repetitive and replicative Roderer identity.

Lüpfing Moor Painting

In examining the aesthetic, context, and purpose of the Lüpfing Moor Painting, it cannot be overemphasized that this painting is a drastic departure from, even contradiction of, the empirical discourse I laid out above. Friedrich’s new-found view of nature’s vastness, coupled with his gradual acceptance of Roderer conventions, corresponds to a loosening of his strict aesthetic in his masterpiece, the enormous painting of the Lüpfing Moor which he calls his *Großbild*. The increasing involvement of the Roderer family in Friedrich’s otherwise solitary life energizes Friedrich’s new approach to painting, and as his friendship with the family develops, he turns to an aesthetic that is so radically subjective, it is impossible to situate in any particular tradition or epoch. Sparse descriptions of the painting have lead scholars to speculate about its resemblance to the art of Cubism, the Avante-garde, and pop art.³¹⁷ His focus on time and perspective in this enigmatic painting is particularly notable in light of his previous attempts to mirror natural landscapes on his canvas. Willer dubs this painting

³¹⁷ See Begemann, 27, and Marcus Hahn’s “Stifters ‘Garten voll Gespenster’: Epigonalität / ‘Postmoderne’, ‘Narrenburg’/’Nachkommenschaften,’ ” *History, Text, Value: Essays on Adalbert Stifter. Londoner Symposium 2003*, (Trauner Verlag, 2006): 61.

the “Simultangemälde,”³¹⁸ and rightly so, for the *Großbild* is a single painting, composed of myriad depictions of the moor from multiple angles and at various times of day:

[I]ch wollte Moor in Morgenbeleuchtung, Moor in Vormittagbeleuchtung, Moor in Mittagbeleuchtung, Moor in Nachmittagbeleuchtung beginnen, und alle Tage an den Stunden, die dazu geeignet wären, an dem entsprechenden Blatte malen, so lange es der Himmel erlaubte.... [D]ie Stunden flogen wie Augenblicke dahin, die Beleuchtungen wechselten, und ich mußte die Stellen aufsuchen, von denen sich die Beleuchtungen am schönsten zeigten.³¹⁹

The layers of time denoted by the variations in *Beleuchtung* (lighting), and the *Stellen* (locations) determined by the lighting, define a project unlike Friedrich’s preceding paintings. Whereas he once found multiple interpretations of the same object suspect, he now attempts a complex interpretation of the affects of time on the Lüpfig Moor. Rather than a visual reflection of nature, the *Großbild* is a subjective expression of Friedrich’s own perception of it.

A brief look at the history of marshes in nineteenth-century Germany further elucidates Friedrich’s representation of the *Großbild*, particularly his interest in the way the moor relates to time. Marshes represent a paradoxical intersection of time and space that captured the attention of the scientific community in nineteenth-century Germany, according to Stefan Willer’s fascinating reading of the *Großbild*.³²⁰ Referring to German scientist Arend Friedrich August Wiegmann’s research on peat in *Die Entstehung, Bildung und das Wesen des Torfes* (1837), Willer observes that marshes are rich with centuries of history. For example, in 1830 two human corpses from the time of Julius

³¹⁸ See Willer, 49.

³¹⁹ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 38.

³²⁰ See Willer.

Caesar were discovered in the waters of a moor in Thuringia.³²¹ The discovery of these bodies and other similar discoveries gave rise to a perception of the moor as an ancient juncture of space and time: the shallow waters of the moor contain deep history. Willer observes: “Das Moor ist also räumlich verdichtete Zeit und zeitlich dimensionierter Raum.”³²² Friedrich’s *Großbild* exhibits a similar compression of time into physical space; its representation of compressed layers of time signifies a shift away from Friedrich’s naïve understanding of realism.

Painting the moor is also an act of preservation, for it is a place under threat of extinction, both in Stifter’s novella – Peter is draining it – and in nineteenth-century Europe. Technological advances enabled farmers and developers to claim bogs, such as the Lüpfig Moor, which were otherwise useless for the purposes of agriculture and development. In a conversation with his landlord, Friedrich asks whether Peter is “Der reiche Mann[,]...der mit seinem unbilligen Reichtum das Moor austrocken will?” To which she replies, “Ja, der die Steine in das Moor wirft.”³²³ Friedrich is aware of the role his painting will play in preserving the memory of the moor: “ich muß es malen, denn der reiche Mann vernichtet es am Ende ganz, und dann ist gar nichts zu malen.”³²⁴ In her discussion of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff’s poetry, Lindsay Brandt’s observations about transformations of landscapes through technological developments in the nineteenth century provide a helpful context for understanding Friedrich’s representation of the

³²¹ Ibid., 48.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ See Stifter, 35-36.

³²⁴ Ibid., 32.

moor:

As the landscapes of Europe were made increasingly rational and “legible” through new scientific technologies, spaces that were once untamed and dynamic underwent a number of physical transformations. Droste seems to suggest that a natural world subjected to processes of standardization (e.g., through the draining of heaths or engineering of forests...) in turn changes the kind of art that can be produced within that world, because an alteration of nature necessarily elicits an alteration of the humans who create the art.³²⁵

Brandt’s statement that standardization of the natural world ‘in turn changes the kind of art that can be produced within that world’ holds true for Friedrich, although not, perhaps, in the way we might anticipate. The creative *Großbild* preserves the perception of the moor as untamed by modernization. The painting, by means of its strange aesthetic, resists and rejects the scientific modes of understanding to which the moor itself is subject.

Because scientific discourses alter the moor landscape, they also affect the superstitions that surround it. Friedrich observes that many hikers “[mieden] das Moor am Abende..., teils der Dünste, teils der Gespenster wegen.”³²⁶ Physically removing the moor may also exorcise the ghosts that haunt it. As in the first chapter of this dissertation, we see here a quiet example of the secularization thesis at work in which modern advancement encroaches on faith in the supernatural. Although, in the case of the ghosts in the Lüpfig Moor, Stifter does not make the relationship as explicit as Storm does in *Im Schloß*. Just as the portraits in Storm’s novella exhibit a vague sort of life, the *Großbild* too seems to come alive — a contrast to earlier characterizations of Friedrich’s

³²⁵ Lindsey J. Brandt, “Tangled up in Truths: German Literary Conceptions of Nature between Romantic Science and Objective Empiricism,” (doctoral dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University, 2015): 91-92.

³²⁶ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 45.

works as *Misslingen* (failures or miscarriages).³²⁷ This is most vivid in a passage that comes directly after Friedrich's *rendezvous* with Susanne. When Friedrich returns to his painting studio, he confronts a living being: "Mit wallendem Herzen ging ich in mein Zimmer. Dort schaute mich ruhig von seinem Gerüste mein großes Bild an."³²⁸ The demise of the moor and the network of beliefs and experiences surrounding it are transferred to some extent to his painting. Life is also implied in the language Friedrich uses to describe his destruction of the painting. When he realizes he will never achieve his aesthetic ideal he destroys the painting, echoing the end of Peter's literary endeavors, in which he "dichtete ... nicht mehr und vertilgte alles, was [er] gemacht hatte"³²⁹:

Im Blockhause nahm ich das Bild aus dem Rahmen, zerlegte den Rahmen, und verpackte ihn in seine Kiste. Dann schnitt ich die Leinwand des Bildes aus ihren Hölzern, zerschnitt sie in kleine Teile, und verbrannte diese Teile langsam im Ofen. Dann zerlegte ich alle meine Entwürfe, und zuletzt die Farben, die Pinsel und die Malerbrette. Was sonst noch an Geräten war, bestimmte ich späterer Zerteilung. Daß in dieser Sommerszeit Rauch aus meinem Rauchfange ging, befremdete meine Nachbarn, die Wirtsleute nicht; denn ich hatte öfter im vergangenen Sommer zu meinen Zwecken Feuer in meinem Ofen gehabt.³³⁰

Again, Friedrich's attitude toward painting is anything but distant. The scene is simultaneously tragic and grotesque; Friedrich maintains the language of life for the painting—Wild uses the word "Opfercharakter" to describe it.³³¹ The narrator eerily personifies the painting, frame, sketches, and supplies in his description of his own

³²⁷ Ibid., 29.

³²⁸ Ibid., 82.

³²⁹ Ibid., 58.

³³⁰ Ibid., 92-93.

³³¹ Michael Wild, *Wiederholung und Variation im Werk Adalbert Stifters*, (Königshausen & Neumann, 2001): 112.

meticulous ‘dismembering’ (*zerlegen*), ‘dissecting’ (*zerschneiden, zerlegen, zerteilen*), and burning of them. The process transforms his house into a sort of crematorium. The smoke signals the end of his artistic endeavors and the end of a way of life and belief represented by the moor. The multiple discourses that contributed to the moor painting capitulate to the Roderer narrative.

The unconventional *Großbild* seems to depart from a realist aesthetic, which – misguided though it was – aimed for the verisimilitude usually associated with realism; but Roman Jakobson’s understanding of realism is helpful in understanding how Friedrich’s subjective depiction of the moor is indeed a form of realism, while it differs from his earlier aesthetic. Jakobson suggests that true realism strips away visual tropes, which turn the work of art into “an ideogram, a formula, to which the object portrayed is linked by contiguity.”³³² As resistant as Friedrich was to conventional forms of visual representation, even his understanding of realism as mirroring was based on a conventional understanding of realism. But the uncharacteristic compression of time and perspective that his painting depicts resists the viewer’s easy understanding, while conveying the real depth of time contained in the space of the marsh and contradicting the standardizing effect of draining it. The new form that Friedrich imposes on the painting comes closer to capturing the invisible relationship between time and space in the marsh, which would go unnoticed in his former approach to realism. It also, through the life it exudes, captures something of the supernatural life of the marsh ghosts. Nonetheless, Friedrich fails to capture the “wirkliche Wirklichkeit”: “Mein großes Bild...kann die Dürsterheit, die Einfachheit und Erhabenheit des Moores nicht darstellen.

³³² Roman Jakobson, “On Realism in Art,” *Language in Literature*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987): 21.

Ich habe mit der Inbrust gemalt, die mir [Susannas] Liebe eingab, und werde nie mehr so malen können. Darum muss dieses Bild vernichtet werden.”³³³ Like all of his earlier paintings, Friedrich burns the *Großbild* after determining that, although love provided the insight to *see* the essential qualities of the moor, love could not enable him to *capture* the moor’s ‘quintessence.’³³⁴

Bartholomäustag Sketch

While the *Großbild* landscape painting reveals his new-found insight into nature, Friedrich’s sketch of a village festival celebrating *Bartholomäustag*, shaped by an identifiable aesthetic tradition that celebrates human conventions, reveals his growing affinity for human presence and even the conventions of mundane life. Furthermore, the harvest festival, as an event on the liturgical calendar, offers a model for the integration of multiple discourses, both sacred and secular.

Although Friedrich identifies the *Großbild* as his greatest work, I argue that the festival sketch embodies the unique ability of art to dissolve the opposition between discourses. The *Bartholomäustag* sketch suggests a harmonious integration and structuring of visual art, human community, and aesthetic convention. On the day of the festival, Friedrich becomes restless and leaves his painting studio to go for a walk, hoping to meet Susanna. When he sees the festival, he lies down at the edge of a forest and begins to sketch the scene, viewing it through a hole in a stone wall. In his description of the festival, we see nature and human presence, art and convention, sacred and secular,

³³³ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 92.

³³⁴ See Begemann, 27.

poetry and visual representation, in harmonious co-existence:

Ich machte mich auf und ging gegen Lüpfig unausstehlich. Es war ein langes Gehölze, morgenwärts von Lüpfig, von dessen Rande man das Tal, die Wiesen, Felder und Gärten, in denen Lüpfig lag, übersehen konnte. Auch das Schloß Firnberg sah man von da aus. Als ich an den Rand des Gehölzes herausgelangte, sah ich ein seltsames Bild vor mir. Auf dem Wiesenanger, der sanft abwärtsgehend an das Gehölze stieß, und teilweise auch auf den abgeernteten Feldern waren Buden aufgeschlagen, waren Tische mit schmausenden Menschen, waren Kegelbahnen, Scheibenschießen, Schaukeln, Musikbühnen, Tanzplätze, und ich weiß nicht, was sonst noch, von Stangen mit wallenden Fahnen überragt, und durchwimmelt von bunten Menschen aus Lüpfig, Kiring, Firnberg, Zanst und den weiteren und näheren Umgebungen. Ich blieb stehen und schaute über das Ding hin. Dann nahm ich mein Zeichnungsbuch heraus und beschloss einen Abriss dieser Sache zu machen. Zwischen dem Gehölze und dem Anger war eine Steinmauer aus losen Steinen, an der auf der Seite des Angers ein Weg dahinging. Ich suchte auf meiner, nämlich der Waldseite der Mauer, eine gute Stelle zu gewinnen, an der ich nicht gesehen, mein Buch auf die Mauer stützen und zeichnen konnte. Ich hatte die Stelle bald gefunden. Ein trockner Rasen, von Haselnußgesträuche überschattet, ging gegen die Mauer, die hier niedriger wachsend, so daß ich mit dem Körper unter dem Haselnussgestäuche liegend, das Zeichnungsbuch auf eine Emporragung stützen und mit meinem Haupte durch eine Scharte der Mauer hinaussehen konnte.³³⁵

That Friedrich describes the people, objects, and villages in long lists is unsurprising — many of Stifter's works include, amid detailed descriptions of nature, lists of the elements composing the scenes he describes. However, unlike the description of the village festival, Stifter's lists usually enumerate elements or aspects of nature. For example, in the novella *Granit* (1853), a grandfather teaches his grandson about the history and natural landscape of their homeland, sometimes listing the elements of nature as he describes the countryside: "Dort stehen die Tannen und Fichten, es stehen die Erlen und Ahorne, die Buchen und andere Bäume wie die Könige, und das Volk der Gebüsche und das dichte Gedränge der Gräser und Kräuter der Blumen der Beeren und Moose steht

³³⁵ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 75-76.

unter ihnen.”³³⁶ Such lists as this one, in their categorization of natural elements, fit well into an empirical mode of perceiving and representing nature. However, Friedrich breaks out of this mode, for unlike the grandfather’s natural description, Friedrich offers lists of human elements. The human elements of the festival also distinguish Friedrich’s sketch from his earlier paintings. Although the village is situated on the edge of a forest, the sketch itself does not include elements of nature. Human-made objects replace natural elements. Instead of trees, mountains, skies, and moors, the scene includes people (“mit schmausenden Menschen” and “Menschen aus Lüpfig”), human-made objects (“Buden,” “Tische,” “Kegelbahnen,” etc.), activities (*Schießen, Musik, Tanzen*, etc.), and communities (Lüpfig, Kiring, Firnberg, etc.).

Of its relationship to ordinary life, Taylor notes that the “festive” includes feasts, pilgrimages, and large numbers of people coming together outside of their “quotidian routine,” breaking with the “everyday order” of life.³³⁷ It is important to note, however, that the festival is not a rejection of the “quotidian routine,” but a momentary pause in it. Indeed, the predictable rhythms of the church calendar establish a “routine” and “order” of its own that goes hand in hand with mundane experience. In his characterization of the religious festival Gordon Graham also focuses on routine and structure, stating,

rather than being events (major or minor) in the flow of ordinary historical time, festivals provide a high-level framework within which the passage of time can be structured and punctuated and thus made ‘practical’. Human beings live *in time*, and not merely (as other animals do) *while time passes*. This requires time to have

³³⁶ Adalbert Stifter, “Granit,” *Adalbert Stifter Werke und Briefe. Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1982): 45.

³³⁷ See *A Secular Age*, 469.

some structure.³³⁸

The festival is not antithetical to the ordinary, but rather gives it structure. Similar to Carus's description above of painting's potential to create a sense of order and wholeness out of the vastness of nature – 'ein Ganzes, als eine kleine Welt (einen Mikrokosmos)' from 'der unendlichen Natur' – the liturgical calendar in general, and the festival in particular, gives shape to otherwise unstructured time, providing a repeating cycle in which patterns of ordinary experience intertwine with sacred memory.³³⁹

By choosing the village festival as the subject of his sketch Friedrich participates in multiple communities – the religious communities that observe the religious calendar, the villagers represented at the festival, the Roderer family, and the aesthetic tradition of Dutch realist painting. Soon after he begins drawing, the Roderer family appears; unaware that Friedrich is behind the stone wall, Peter, his wife Mathilde, and Susanna discuss the festival. Peter Roderer states: "ein Maler könnte kaum einen bessern Platz wählen, wenn er es malen wollte. So etwas sieht man am lebendigsten in Holland."³⁴⁰ Susanna, too, calls her view of the festival "a picture."³⁴¹ It is significant that Friedrich, Peter, and Susanna all identify this scene as an ideal subject for visual representation. This shared interpretation creates a community of perception foreign to Friedrich's ideal of human absence. Similarly, the scene's resemblance to the genre paintings of Dutch

³³⁸ Gordon Graham, *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Art Versus Religion*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007): 161.

³³⁹ In the next chapter, I look in more detail at the role of repetition in German Realism in terms of ritual.

³⁴⁰ See *Nachkommenschaften*, 76.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 78.

artists such as Pieter Bruegel and Jan van Steen, which Peter alludes to when he identifies Holland as the ideal place for such scenes, situates Friedrich's art within a community and tradition of painters – the same community or tradition to which, in Theodor Storm's novella *Aquis submersus* (1877), the painter Johannes belongs. Friedrich's presence in these communities overrides his former distance from his own paintings, his family, and society.

In addition to the subject matter of his sketch, Friedrich's use of perspective and time differ here greatly from his early works, including the *Großbild*. Whereas he usually creates a controlled location from which to observe and paint, whether by setting up his portable chair and umbrella³⁴² or building a room from which to view and paint the Lüpfig Moor,³⁴³ here he simply lies down on the ground on the far side of a stone fence to observe the scene through a hole. His willingness to release control over his environment exemplifies the loosening of the rigidly defined ideal that dictated his earliest landscape paintings. Furthermore, he sketches this scene of celebration very quickly; in fact, Peter Roderer's family interrupts him before he can complete it, foreshadowing their role in ending his painting career. Nonetheless, Friedrich draws our attention to his uncompleted drawing. He calls it an "Abriss" (outline or sketch)—a word that, because it denotes the earliest stages of a work of art, emphasizes the process of representation instead of its completion.

The repetition of the annual festival marks the texture of Friedrich's description, which includes rhythmic sounds and descriptions of rhythmic movement. Sabina Becker

³⁴² Ibid., 26.

³⁴³ Ibid., 64.

and Katherina Grätz observe that repetition is a common feature of Stifter's writings and propose that ritual is a helpful means of interpreting it:

Unmittelbar verknüpft mit dem Hang zur Ritualisierung ist das Strukturprinzip der Wiederholung, das in Stifters Prosa sowohl auf der Figuren- und Handlungsebene als auch auf der Erzählebene dominant hervortritt. Wiederholung zeigt sich in analogen Satzbaumustern, in formelhaft wiederkehrender Figurenrede, in immergleichen Handlungsabläufen und der Schilderung sich wiederkehrender Konstellationen.... Die beharrliche Beschreibung solcher repetitiven Figurenhandlungen verleiht diesen rituelle Züge.³⁴⁴

In *Nachkommenschaften* the theme of repetition is made more visible, even literal, in the description of the ritual festival. The repetition of Friedrich's mimetic aesthetic and the repetition of the Roderer narrative take on sacred, poetic potential in light of the repetition of the festival. The relationship between the narrator's voice and the scene he describes is also noteworthy for its poetry, rather than conventional structure. Friedrich verbally frames the scene with two statements about himself as a viewer ("ich [sah] ein seltsames Bild vor mir" and "[i]ch blieb stehen und schaute über das Ding hin"); within the frame he uses repetitive, rhythmic language to convey the visually repetitive, rhythmic objects at the festival, such as the many wind-whipped banners and colorful crowds: "Stangen mit wallenden Fahnen überragt, und durchwimmelt von bunten Menschen." The waving flags and bustling crowds come to life in the sentence's galloping cadence. The description of festival activities also follows a rhythmic pattern, in that the number of syllables gradually decreases as the list progresses: "auf den abgeernteten Feldern waren Buden aufgeschlagen, waren Tische mit schmausenden Menschen, waren Kegelbahnen, Scheibenschießen, Schaukeln, Musikbühnen, Tanzplätze, und ich weiß nicht, was sonst noch." The repetition of [sh] in the words

³⁴⁴ See Grätz, 9.

“schmausenden,” “Scheibenschießen,” and “Schaukeln,” and of [k] in “Kegelbahnen,” “Schaukeln,” and “Musikbühnen,” and the many words that end in “n” lend the language poetic vibrancy. Similar repetitions of sound are present in the list of villages as well. Unlike the reoccurring Roderer story, whose pre-determined structure undermines individual artistic representation, Friedrich’s description utilizes the repetitious elements in the scene to create poetry. The harmony of sacred and secular that the festival represents is thus expressed in a harmony of poetry and visual representation that weds art, ordinary human experience, and convention.

Between caricatures of opposing discourses, Stifter posits art as conciliatory, insofar as it brings multiple discourses into a unity. It requires a vision other than that of empirical observation, as shown in the creation of the *Großbild*; both an acceptance of the conventions of art and community, as in the festival sketch, and a willingness to break it in order to uncover the realities that lie beneath the superficial appearance of nature, as in the moor painting. Although flexible in the discourses it incorporates, art is more akin to sacred discourse than secular, for like a religious celebration, it punctuates ordinary life through its poetry.

CHAPTER FOUR

Painting, Ritual, and Christian Discourse in Fontane's *L'Adultera* (1882)

Great art has dreadful manners. The hushed reverence of the gallery can fool you into believing masterpieces are polite things, visions that soothe, charm and beguile, but actually they are thugs. Merciless and wily, the greatest paintings grab you in a headlock, rough up your composure and then proceed in short order to rearrange your sense of reality.

- Simon Schama, *The Power of Art*³⁴⁵

The title of Fontane's novel—*L'Adultera*—already offers a sense of the complex relationship between painting and the world beyond it within the text. Referring at once to a painting by Tintoretto of the woman caught in adultery from the Gospel of John and to the novel's main character, Melanie van der Straaten, the title raises the question: What is the relationship between the Tintoretto painting and the plot that unfolds following its introduction? One of the novel's secondary characters claims that "alle Kunst ist Hexerei," a phrase that recalls texts of late German Romanticism such as *Das Marmorbild* (1818) by Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, in which art is not only magical, but even dangerous in its mysterious ability to make dream and reality indistinguishable. Similarly, Eduard Mörike portrays painting as the gateway to a dark, supernatural world in *Maler Nolten* (1832). But what sort of painted "Hexerei" do we find in a novel that shares more with the social realism of nineteenth-century Europe than with the mysterious forces of romanticism?

³⁴⁵ Simon Schama, *The Power of Art*, (New York: Ecco, 2006): 6.

In the previous chapters, I foregrounded several aspects of modernity that scholars of secularization theory have identified as integral to a revised understanding of what Charles Taylor calls the “subtraction theory” of secularization. According to the subtraction theory, as science progresses, religious belief falls away, leaving a core of human goodness to flourish. In the first chapter, I introduced this secularization narrative via Storm’s novella *Im Schloß* (1862) as a backdrop against which the second and third chapters unfold, each introducing complications to the subtraction theory and the scholars that posit those complications. In the second chapter, I examine the ordinary realities of home and family portrayed in Keller’s *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854/55) in terms of the “disenchanted” world that Taylor describes. In *Grüner Heinrich*, the disenchanted world is simultaneously mundane and alien for the protagonist who is never able to experience his home as a place of familiarity and belonging. Painting offers an imaginative experience of belonging, but fails to overcome the disenchantment of Heinrich’s home. In the third chapter I claim that in Stifter’s *Nachkommenschaften* (1864) painting becomes a means of uniting otherwise exclusive sacred and secular discourses. Art strikes a blow at the secularization thesis’s privileging of rational modes of understanding. In each chapter painting offers an alternative to secularization, or at least it exerts some opposing pressure to it. But what characterizes the alternative or opposition that is painting? In this chapter I offer sociologist of religion David Martin’s characterization of liturgy and “Christian language” as a model for understanding the function of painting vis-à-vis secularization.

While the novel alludes to Christian liturgical practices such as baptism, confirmation, and church attendance, the efficacy of those distinctly religious rituals

pales in comparison to that of the Tintoretto painting, which is both reflected in the narrative and also shapes it. My argument is that Fontane portrays his characters' practices of viewing painting in ways best understood in terms of both nineteenth century art history and in terms of religious practice. The result is a conception of art (and literature) as not only reflective of the deepest values and desires of those who view it, but also integral in their formation. Furthermore, this ritualized function extends to the viewer, who is guided by the literary depictions of paintings to view the novel and its characters in terms of Christian discourse. The notion that art can be understood in terms of Christian ritual allows for the integration of several ideas that are generally thought of as binaries – the sacred and the mundane, narrative progression and repetition, reflection and transformation. The paintings in *L'Adultera* must be understood as more than literary devices that foreshadow future events, although they certainly do. In the case of the Tintoretto painting, the characters are aware of its predictive power and are thus aware of belonging to a narrative—the narrative of the woman caught in adultery. My claim about the relationship between the painting and the events that unfold following its introduction are two-fold. By combining an examination of nineteenth-century viewing practices with theories of religious practice, an understanding of painting as potent in its potential to shape the audience emerges.

The scholarship on *L'Adultera* focuses primarily on the significance of gender and the societal conventions of the nineteenth century that are thematized through the protagonist's transgression of them. Many interpretations of the Tintoretto painting share this focus on gender and conventions. The overwhelming consensus is that Fontane posits Melanie's affair as self-liberation from an oppressive patriarchal system, which the

painting represents. Henry Garland, for example, identifies the act of adultery as part and parcel of a process of maturation in which Melanie gradually leaves behind the norms and superficial values of high society for more fulfilling relationships. The miniature Tintoretto painting that she receives at the end of the novel reflects a similar growth on the part of van der Straaten, whose small gift indicates that the offense has diminished in his eyes.³⁴⁶ Sabina Becker approaches the text, and the painting in particular, from a gender studies perspective to argue that by viewing and discussing Tintoretto's painting of the adulteress, the male characters in the novel are shown to perceive women as objects to possess and evaluate.³⁴⁷ Similarly, Katharina Grätz characterizes Melanie's divorce and remarriage as the rejection of a familiar, conventional narrative for her own individual narrative: "Melanie wird nicht zur Kopie von Tintoretto's Ehebrecherin, sondern erhält eine individuelle Geschichte."³⁴⁸ Here the painting *as a copy* and a familiar narrative of the adulteress highlights the mimetic nature of gender roles and the reoccurring narratives that society compels women to reenact. Patricia Howe notes that by comparing Melanie to the woman depicted in the painting, van der Straaten reveals his perception of her as his possession, which, just like the painting, he views as an expression of his own status.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁶ Henry Garland, *The Berlin Novels of Theodor Fontane*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980): 65.

³⁴⁷ Sabina Becker, "'Wiederhergestellte' Weiblichkeit, alternative Männlichkeit. Theodor Fontanes Roman *L'Adultera*," *"Weiber weiblich, Männer männlich"? Zum Geschlechterdiskurs in Theodor Fontanes Romanen*, (Tübingen: Franke Verlag, 2005)

³⁴⁸ Katharina Grätz, *Alles kommt auf die Beleuchtung an: Theodor Fontane, Leben und Werk*, (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2015): 130.

³⁴⁹ Patricia Howe, "'Ich hätte so geschrieben': Fontane's Reception of Zola," *Fontane and Cultural Mediation. Translation and Reception in Nineteenth-Century German Literature*, (Cambridge: Legenda, 2015): 177.

On the other hand, some scholars' analysis of painting in *L'Adultera* foregrounds the novel's rich intertextuality without much reference to social convention. The fact that the Tintoretto painting is a copy of the original is often a point of interest. The dominant note of Marion Doebling's deconstructive reading is the loss of the "original" and the "real" amid the copies. For example, she notes that, from the biblical text to Tintoretto's painting to the copy that Ezechial van der Straaten purchases, there is a "dreifach gebrochenen Distanz zum eigentlichen 'Original'" that obscures the original's significance.³⁵⁰ For Eva Geulen, the painting's status as a copy undercuts what appears to be Melanie's development throughout the novel, for it draws attention to the ways in which her second marriage is indeed a repetition of the first.³⁵¹ Although Gerhard Neumann shares my interest in the presence of the Christian narrative and ritual in the novel, he argues that as copies, the biblical paintings are robbed of their potential to infuse the plot with the weight of the sacred text. Instead, the works of art fit into a series of clichés and conventions that Fontane uses to reveal the hollowness of the bourgeois society.³⁵² Arturo Larcati, rather than focusing on the fact that the painting is a copy,

³⁵⁰ Marion Doebling, "Eine Gemäldekopie in Theodor Fontanes *L'Adultera*: Zur Destabilisierung traditioneller Erwartungs- und Sinngebungsraster," *The Germanic Review* 68 (1993): 9.

³⁵¹ "Hieß es eingangs über Van der Straatens Verhältnis zur Gattin, dass Melanie 'fast noch mehr sein Stolz als sein Glück' war, so zeigt sich auch der neue Mann am Ende vor allem stolz auf seine 'süße Melanie'. Und im Kleinformaat ist auch der Tintoretto schon wieder vor Ort. Wie im Märchen vom Fischer und seiner Frau, dessen letzte Station aus Anstandsgründen 'bei Tische' nicht zitiert werden darf, findet sich Melanie ziemlich genau dort wieder vor, wo sie vordem auch schon war, nur ein bisschen kleiner gesetzt – vorläufig jedenfalls." In "Realismus ohne Entsagung. Fontanes *L'Adultera*," *Herausforderungen des Realismus. Theodor Fontanes Gesellschaftsroman*, (Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2017): 48.

³⁵² In "Speisesaal und Gemäldegalerie. Die Geburt des Erzählens aus der bildenden Kunst: Fontanes Roman 'L'Adultera,'" *Roman und Ästhetik im 19. Jahrhundert. Festschrift für Christian Grawe zum 65. Geburtstag*, (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2001)

locates it amid a dense web of allusions to Venice (Tintoretto was Venetian) and the sensuality and decadence often associated with that city in literary texts.³⁵³ Finally, Lieselotte Voss makes an interesting observation about the role of the painting to reveal the nature of reality: “Die Kunst bildet das Typische, ewig sich Vollziehende ab, sie sagt den Betroffenen im voraus, was in der Realität noch schlummert.”³⁵⁴ Whereas Grätz interprets the painting as a symbol of a calcified convention, Voss claims that it reveals an essential, eternal truth.

While scholars have taken into account the role of the biblical narratives portrayed in several of the novel’s paintings, examinations of them have been far too quick to offer overly simplified explanations of the biblical allusions, either as trappings of the repressive patriarchal milieu from which Melanie escapes, or as empty signifiers in a society that speaks and acts in clichés and copies. The former interpretations tend to focus on the biblical narratives themselves to the exclusion of the network of religious practices and elements in which they are embedded. The latter link those practices and elements to the many idioms, citations, and allusions that Ezechial van der Straaten uses as a means of trivializing ideas and situations that are better taken seriously. For my argument, a close examination of the characters’ practices of viewing art calls for an interpretation that opens up the sacred practices associated with the Christian narrative. In order to shed light on the significance of the viewing practices portrayed in this novel, I

³⁵³ Arturo Larcati, “Ekphrasis bei Fontane und M.L. Kaschnitz: Zur Tintoretto-Rezeption in der deutschen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts,” In *Fontane und Italien: Frühjahrstagung der Theodor Fontane Gesellschaft e.V. Mai 2009 in Monópoli (Apulien)*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2011): 122-123.

³⁵⁴ Lieselotte Voss, *Literarische Präfiguration dargestellter Wirklichkeit bei Fontane: Zur Zitatstruktur seines Romanwerks*, (München: W. Fink, 1985): 158.

offer two sections. In the first, I provide close readings of the passages in which Melanie and Ezechiel view and respond to the paintings – while I will focus on the “L’Adultera” painting, I will also refer to the other paintings mentioned in the text – and relate my readings to nineteenth century understandings of painting and its relationship to the viewer. Of particular importance for this section is the tendency of the characters to strongly identify with the situations portrayed in the paintings, a propensity that art history can account for. The second section links those viewing practices to David Martin and James K.A. Smith’s accounts of liturgy – specifically, of the role liturgy plays in societies shaped by secularization.

Although among Fontane’s lesser-known novels, *L’Adultera* includes many of the elements for which he is known as a novelist—depictions of Berlin’s upper middle class, the restrictions of bourgeois convention, adultery, and a sympathetic female protagonist. Like his famous novel *Effi Briest* (1896), *L’Adultera* is the story of the cataclysmic shifts that follow a young woman’s marital infidelity, though Melanie van der Straaten fares much better in the end than Effi Briest does, for she marries her lover and establishes a modest but happy life with him and their child. The painting of the adulterous woman from the Gospel of John is introduced in the early pages of the novel and then again on the final page. This framing of the events with copies of Tintoretto’s painting “L’Adultera” indicate a noteworthy relationship between the painting and the world beyond it. Her story begins when Melanie’s husband, councilor of commerce Ezechiel van der Staaten, shows her the painting, which he commissioned while he and Melanie were traveling in Venice. He predicts that Melanie will someday be unfaithful to him, like the woman portrayed in the painting. Following this prediction, Melanie does indeed

fall in love with another man, Ebenezer Rubehn, and she conceives a child with him. Although Ezechiel offers to raise the child as his own if she will agree to stay with him, Melanie leaves him to marry Ebenezer. Several years of rejection, guilt, and uneasiness follow, for her divorce and remarriage render her an outcast from Berlin's upper middle class. Eventually she and her new family find acceptance among the working class. In the last chapter of the novel, Melanie finally experiences a sense of absolution when van der Straaten sends her a miniature painting of "L'Adultera", which she takes to be a symbol of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Beside the novel's plot, it is also important to an overview of the short narrative alluded to throughout the text – the biblical pericope from the Gospel of John traditionally entitled "The Woman Caught in Adultery." The Gospel writer records that religious leaders brought an anonymous woman to Jesus to see whether he would commend her stoning for adultery: "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" The paucity of detail about the woman speaks volumes about her subservient position in her society and specifically in this situation. The writer offers no identifying information beyond the act of adultery for which she was accused. In the eyes of her accusers, she is just one of many "such women." While others discuss her fate, she speaks only once. The narrative portrays her as contingent on other voices and judgments. Jesus neither condemns nor condones her stoning. His statement instead obscures the line dividing sinner and saint: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." Presumably recognizing that they did not meet this criterion, the woman's accusers leave her and Jesus alone. Finally, Jesus does not condemn her ("Neither do I condemn you"), but neither does he suggest that she is guiltless. He tells

her “go, and from now on sin no more.”³⁵⁵ The writer suggests a destabilization of the established order – the sinner is pardoned and the religiously pious condemned. It is a pattern that appears throughout the Gospels; in the parable of the “Good Samaritan,” for example, the despised Samaritan receives praise for his mercy, while those respected as pious receive criticism for their indifference.³⁵⁶ We will see that this paradoxical pattern exemplifies the pattern of Christian language that David Martin delineates and that pervades the novel.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY VIEWING PRACTICES

Although the Tintoretto painting portrays the story of the adulteress, it is the painting itself, as the vehicle of the narrative, that the characters respond to, so we must begin by examining how they understand and react to the painting. Most notable is Melanie’s and Ezechiël’s empathetic response to it, for they see themselves in the situation it depicts. The narrator foregrounds their personal interpretations of the painting by describing their responses to it without describing the painting itself. Standing before the painting, Melanie focuses on Tintoretto’s rendering of the woman and on the theme of forgiveness, attributing to her a depth of emotion and history that is absent in the Gospel of John:

Sieh nur! ... Geweint hat sie ... Gewiß ... Aber warum? Weil man ihr immer wieder gesagt hat, wie schlecht sie sei. Und nun glaubt sie’s auch, oder *will* es wenigstens glauben. Aber ihr Herz wehrt sich dagegen und kann es nicht finden

³⁵⁵ John 8:2-11

³⁵⁶ Luke 10

... Und daß ich dir's gestehe, sie wirkt eigentlich rührend auf mich. Es ist so viel Unschuld in ihrer Schuld ... Und alles wie vorherbestimmt.³⁵⁷

Our only hint about the painting's appearance is in Melanie's observation that the woman had cried. Other than that, we are only privy to Melanie's interpretation and reaction. From this, Melanie envisions the accusations and inner struggle that the woman must have endured. She interprets the image by imagining the woman's social situation. Melanie's response recalls G.E. Lessing's idea of the "pregnant moment" in which a work of art anticipates a moment of great passion or action, for although the sculpture or painting is static, it can facilitate action within the imagination.³⁵⁸ Also resonant with Lessing's concept of *Wirkung* is Fontane's description of Melanie's reaction to the painting, rather than the painting itself. Lessing offers Homer as an example of the poet's ability to communicate Helen's great beauty, not by describing her directly, but by describing reactions to her: "Was kann eine lebhaftere Idee von Schönheit gewähren, als das kalte Alter sie des Krieges wohl wert erkennen lassen, der so viel Blut und so viele Tränen kostet? Was Homer nicht nach seinen Bestandteilen beschreiben konnte, läßt er uns in seiner Wirkung erkennen."³⁵⁹ Similarly, the painting stirs Melanie to imagine what events and motives may have lead to the image of the woman. However, it is not only the image or her knowledge of the story that stimulates her imagination; it quickly becomes obvious that her interpretation may be less about the situation depicted than it is about herself. She comforts herself as she explicates the woman's tearful face: "sie wirkt

³⁵⁷ Theodor Fontane, "L'Adultera." *Theodor Fontane. Sämtliche Werke* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1959): 12-13.

³⁵⁸ "Laokoon: Oder über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie," *Gotthold Ephraim Lessings Werke 1766-1769*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1990): 31-34.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 154.

eigentlich rührend auf mich.” Perhaps Lessing’s term *Wirkung* is useful here in combination with the realist interest in *Wirklichkeit* that we saw thematized in Stifter’s *Nachkommenschaften*.³⁶⁰ Holub makes a similar observation when he states: “a more fruitful way of dealing with the phenomenon of realism is to view it as an effect.”³⁶¹ In contrast to the aims of the painter Friedrich in Stifter’s novella, the Tintoretto painting does not mirror the *wirkliche Wirklichkeit*; rather, the work of art elicits a *wirkliche Wirkung* on the viewer. Moreover, the emotional effect of the painting eventually crystallizes into action. When Melanie interprets the events from the narrative as predetermined, she speaks better than she knows; as Ezechiel says, the painting portends her own future. On the last page of the novel, she recalls her interpretation of it, and the narrator focalizes her response: “Ach, sie fühlte jetzt, daß das alles auch für sie selbst gesprochen war.”³⁶² The narrator confirms, and perhaps even understates, what the reader and the characters have understood: the interpretation is not as much about the situation portrayed as it is about the interpreter.

The moment in which the significance of the interpreter over the object of interpretation reaches its peak comes later in the novel, when Melanie’s situation most resembles that of the adulterous woman. The force of her own experience as she reinterprets the painting eclipses the biblical narrative and her interpretation. After leaving Ezechiel for Rubehn, she describes her feelings of guilt for leaving van der Straaten in terms of the painting in a letter to her sister: “das Bild, Du weißt schon, über das ich

³⁶⁰ See previous footnote.

³⁶¹ See Holub, 14.

³⁶² See Fontane, 124.

damals so viel gespottet und gescherzt habe, es will mir nicht aus dem Sinn. Immer dasselbe ‘Steinige, steinige.’ Und die Stimme schweigt, die vor den Pharisäern das himmlische Wort sprach.”³⁶³ Melanie’s guilt and rejection not only informs her reading of the painting in this moment, but completely alters the events that occur in the biblical narrative; in her interpretation, Jesus becomes powerless to defend her and is named only as a synecdoche (“die Stimme”) which, instead of speaking the “Spruch” to ward off her accusers—“ ‘Wer unter Euch ohne Sünde ist’ ”³⁶⁴—is silent. This pattern of interpretation in which the viewer’s experience seems to overwhelm the work of art is not confined to *L’Adultera*. For example, Theodor Storm depicts a very similar relationship between painting and viewer in *Waldwinkel* (1874) in which the middle aged protagonist Richard projects his fear of losing his young fiancé Franziska onto a painting of an old man who looks longingly at a young couple as they walk away from him. The narrator reveals Richard’s fear vis-à-vis the painting: “Würde das Antlitz jenes einsamen Alten, wenn es sich plötzlich zu ihm wendete, ... sein eigenes Angesicht ihm zukehren?”³⁶⁵ When Franziska runs away with a young man, Richard looks again at the painting, which he so completely identifies with that it appears to transform: “Richard hatte die Augen noch immer nach dem Bild. Es war sein eigenes Angesicht, in das er blickte.”³⁶⁶ Just as the painting in Storm’s novella appears to alter through the viewer’s personal interpretation of it, so Melanie’s guilt shapes her interpretation of the painting. Although

³⁶³ See Fontane, 94.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., 12.

³⁶⁵ Theodor Storm, “Waldwinkel,” *Theodor Storm Novellen 1867-1880*, (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987): 254.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 277.

Ezechiël's initial interpretation of the painting differs from Melanie's, he too bases his interpretation on personal experience and intuition, positing a parallel between the biblical narrative and the future of his own life story. He identifies the painting as a "Momento mori" of his coming doom.³⁶⁷ More than a symbol of death or doom, the painting becomes a *mis en abyme* for his own life's narrative: "Ich will [das Bild] vor Augen haben, so als Momento mori.... [A]ndere haben eine Neigung, ihr Geschick immer vor sich zu sehen und sich mit ihm einzuleben. ... so will ich es auch machen, und das Bild soll mir dazu helfen."³⁶⁸ Choosing the painting as a symbol for his future, van der Straaten uses it as a means of becoming accustomed to his fate ("mit ihm [dem Geschick] einzuleben") and as a model for interpreting it.

While Melanie's interpretation of the painting is an expression of her personal experience, van der Straaten sees his personal experience as predicted by the painting; he projects the painting onto Melanie. His understanding of the painting is reminiscent both of prophetic revelation and of the language of literary epiphany, for he is convinced of the painting's predictive power and thus convinced that the narrative of the woman caught in adultery parallels his own life story. He buys it and shows it to Melanie as a way of broaching the topic of her future adultery. This moment could be classified as a literary epiphany, according to Sharon Kim's definition. She says that an epiphanic moment is a "perceptual event" that suddenly illuminates both the object in view and the

³⁶⁷ See Fontane, 15.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., 14.

viewer.³⁶⁹ Furthermore, although not a religious experience, the author often uses the “language of spirituality” to depict an epiphany. In *L’Adultera* we have all three of these qualities, for the object – the painting – is suddenly revealed to have a prophetic quality, and Ezechiel – a character otherwise lacking in insight – perceives it. Just as the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel received and communicated divine warnings and promises, Ezechiel believes he has received an aesthetic revelation of his wife’s future infidelity. The prophet Ezekiel states that, “the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God,”³⁷⁰ while Ezechiel van der Straaten states: “als...ich dies Bild sah, da stand es auf einmal alles deutlich vor mir.”³⁷¹ As in Melanie’s case, Ezechiel’s understanding of the painting shifts at the end of the novel. Its significance is transformed from a *Memento mori* into a token of forgiveness for both of them. Assuming the role of Christ, van der Straaten’s gift recalls his promise to Melanie before she left him: “wenn ich dich je wieder [an das Bild] erinnere, so sei’s im Geiste des Friedens und zum Zeichen der Versöhnung.”³⁷² Whether as prophecy, *Memento mori*, or token of forgiveness, the painting’s primary significance lies in its close resemblance to the novel’s characters and to their self-understanding, rather than to the original situation it depicts. Furthermore, its particular expression of realism lies not in its style or resemblance to any object, but in the real effect it has on its viewers and on their lived experience.

³⁶⁹ *Literary Epiphany in the Novel, 1850-1950: Constellations of the Soul*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012): 2.

³⁷⁰ Ezekiel 1:1

³⁷¹ See Fontane, 14.

³⁷² *Ibid.*

While the characters' personal identification with the painting is notable, it is by no means unprecedented. Ezechiel and Melanie's interpretations of the painting reflect a significant shift in the role of art in modern Western societies in which, by the nineteenth century, art's primary function had come to be understood as primarily *experiential* rather than *referential*. That is: the viewer's personal identification with the work of art took precedent over the objects that it portrayed. This difference between *experiential* and *referential* should not be understood as a difference between affective and cognitive responses. Rather, the difference lies in the means by which the viewer's sympathy is evoked. Charles Taylor observes that a new understanding of art emerged in the eighteenth century as "publicly available reference points," including Christian dogma, become fewer. Before this took place, "painting could long draw on the publicly understood subjects of divine and secular history, events, and personages that had heightened meaning, as it were, built in to them, like the Madonna and Child or the oath of the Horatii."³⁷³ Earl Wasserman offers a more detailed characterization of how "publicly available reference points" once functioned:

Until the end of the eighteenth century there was sufficient intellectual homogeneity for men to share certain assumptions, or universal principles, outside the structure of discursive language, that tended to order their universe for them. In varying degrees, from conviction to faith and to passive submission, man accepted, to name but a few, the Christian interpretation of history, the sacramentalism of nature, the Great Chain of Being, the analogy of the various planes of creation, the conception of man as microcosm, and, in the literary area, the doctrine of the genres. These were cosmic syntaxes in the public domain; and the poet could afford to think of his art as imitative of 'nature,' since these patterns were what he meant by 'nature.' He could expect his audience to recognize his employment of these cosmic syntaxes, could transform language by means of them, and could survey reality and experience in the presence of the

³⁷³ Charles Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity*, (Toronto: Anasi, 1991): 83.

world these syntaxes implied. Poetry was, in the sense in which the word has been employed here, essentially lyric, the poet's task being to 'imitate nature' by giving poetic reality to nature's principles.³⁷⁴

Although Wasserman refers here to poetry, the same holds true for painting. The audience's understanding of and response to the work of art were guided and bolstered by the shared knowledge and acceptance of these purportedly universal principles. Reliance on the collective acceptance of these cosmic syntaxes in art is the atmosphere in which Tintoretto painted "L'Adultera." Again, it is perhaps easy to misunderstand the function of these widely accepted interpretations of reality – conventions, really – as playing a purely cognitive role, as providing the viewer with the code for deciphering the work of art. But this is too limiting, for they were conventions that not only shaped the audience's ability to cognitively understand and make sense of the work of art, but also established pathways that channeled affective responses. The shared worldview ensured a framework for reacting to the work of art.

Echoing Wasserman and Taylor, Robert Joustra and Alissa Wilkinson note that modernity is marked by disagreement about which narratives and conventions give meaning to our experience, and because of this disagreement, artists no longer appeal to a greater story, since their audience may or may not recognize it or identify with it.³⁷⁵ In the absence of such "publicly understood subjects"³⁷⁶ two changes take place in art: first,

³⁷⁴ Earl R. Wasserman, *The Subtler Language. Critical Readings of Neoclassic and Romantic Poems*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964): 11.

³⁷⁵ Robert Joustra, and Alissa Wilkinson, *How to Survive the Apocalypse: Zombies, Cylons, Faith, and Politics at the End of the World*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016): 156.

³⁷⁶ See *Malaise of Modernity*, 87.

there is a shift from a *mimetic* understanding of art as a representation of nature to a *creative* understanding of it as expressing the artist's unique point of view.³⁷⁷ Instead of the conventional understanding of the world beyond the work of art providing a painting meaning, the artist's creative abilities to supply meaning and significance are paramount. The logical result is that – second – the visibility of and regard for the artist outgrows that of the world he or she depicts. It becomes the artist's greatest aim to employ a “personal,” “articulated sensibility” which only people “whose sensibility resonates like the [painter's]” can understand.³⁷⁸ A work of art gains meaning and affective resonance, not by tapping into the storehouse provided by the tenets of a shared worldview, but by its originality – and thus the originality of the artist – and the resonance it finds with the viewer. Such glorification of the artist is evident in the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and certainly in works explored in this dissertation. The experiences, thoughts, and desires of the fictional artists Heinrich Lee and Friedrich Roderer, for example, are shown to be the sources of their creative expression, while their works of art serve as barometers for the extent to which they themselves are either conforming to or challenging the conventional approaches to life around them.

The increased focus on the artist's ability to relate to the viewer through the work of art goes hand in glove with the increased prominence in the audience's role. The artist's appeal to the individual reader or viewer's personal experience and feeling

³⁷⁷ One is reminded of the tension between mimesis and creativity explored in the previous chapter on Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*. In that novella, however, the transition from mimesis to creativity is not associated with successive periods of art history, but with the painter's personal development.

³⁷⁸ See *Malaise of Modernity*, 87.

elevates their own role in the process of artistic creation, for the appeal of art is not about “shared *beliefs* in a society but ... *experience* between the artist and the audience.”³⁷⁹

This is particularly apparent in *L’Adultera* and also in Storm’s *Im Schloß*. In both works, the artists play no role in story. Paintings become occasions for showcasing the viewer’s inner life. In *L’Adultera* the force of the painting is not found primarily in the identity and personality of its painter or in its reference to a shared belief in Christian morality, but in the viewers’ intense identification with it. It is thus in the spirit of shared experience that Melanie and Ezechial view the painting, for they both locate its significance in their own fears and desires.

Particular conventions for viewing works of art emerge from the viewer’s elevated role. In her examination of nineteenth-century painting, art historian Susan Sidlauskas describes the viewing practices that developed in response to the artist’s aims to facilitate particular responses in the viewer. She begins by describing the strategies used by nineteenth-century painters to elicit responses from their audiences. She then moves to the habits of viewing that took shape in response to those strategies. The similarities between these practices and the passages about Melanie and Ezechiel’s viewing practices are notable:

These images do not *narrate* stories of psychological discomfort, alienation between the sexes, or the isolation of children. Rather, they *act out* their effects through figural and spatial arrangements calculated to provoke a bodily empathy on the part of the viewer. Conventions for perceiving and describing space in these years suggest that when spectators viewed painted figures stranded on the opposite reaches of a gaping space, pressed into a corner, or subsumed into the furniture around them, they were cued to experience a visceral response, a bodily empathy, for the discomfort of their protagonists. The visual provocations to

³⁷⁹ See Joustra and Wilkinson, 156.

unease and disorientation were thus translated into an imagined experience of another's psychological state. In architectural treatises, manuals on decoration, descriptions of theatrical settings, and novels, readers/viewers were encouraged to project themselves imaginatively into whatever space was described or represented. One didn't merely *see* space; one experienced it through a visceral response to the imagined effects of light and shade, proportions, perspective, and scale.³⁸⁰

The distinction between achieving the viewer's "bodily empathy" through narrative versus the careful use of space on the canvas is fascinating for our examination of the "L'Adultera" painting that explicitly refers to a narrative. Sidlauskas claims that the arrangement of images, rather than the suggestion of a story, facilitates the viewer's empathy, encouraging her to imagine participating in the situation portrayed. The experience of the painting was spatial, not narrative. This distinction recalls the discussion above about the transition from referential to experiential approaches to art. The basis of resonance with the work of art is here the viewer's self-projection onto the space depicted on the canvas and a level of empathy with the painted figures that produced even "bodily," "visceral" responses.

While the viewers in *L'Adultera* empathize with what they see in the painting, as Sidlauskas describes, the empathy is dependent on their knowledge of the narrative. While the experiential aspect of modern viewing practices is apparent, the painting's reference to the biblical narrative is key to their responses and to the events following their encounters with the painting. Experience and reference are intertwined, for Fontane creates an interplay between experiential and referential receptions of the painting "L'Adultera." As a representation of a narrative, the painting reveals the potential for the

³⁸⁰ Susan Sidlauskas, *Body, Place and Self in Nineteenth-Century Painting*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 2-3.

experiential effect to heighten the information it references. The narrative provides a structure for Ezechiel and Melanie to interpret their relationship to each other and to other people, but it is the medium of *painting* that is occasion for them to identify with the woman portrayed. So while the narrative that the painting recalls points to particular events and action, the medium into which it is translated facilitates their appropriation of that narrative. Melanie and Ezechiel exemplify the nineteenth-century viewer insofar as they immediately project themselves onto the situation portrayed in the painting, but in them we find an intensity of empathy that far outweighs and outlasts what Sidlauskas describes. It is as though Fontane were offering a hyperbolic example of the impact of art on the modern audience. Beyond a psychological or even visceral response to the painting, their viewing actually shapes their lives and decisions to an extent that nineteenth-century viewing practices cannot fully account for.

THE ACT OF VIEWING AS RITUAL

While the history of the viewer's relationship to the work of art and nineteenth-century conventions of viewing art offer an explanation for the immediate responses that Melanie and Ezechiel have vis-à-vis "L'Adultera," the question still remains: What is the relationship between the Tintoretto painting and the events that occur following its introduction? Philosopher James K.A. Smith and sociologist of religion David Martin's conceptions of liturgy provide frameworks for understanding how two are related. In this final section of the chapter, I introduce Smith's and Martin's definitions of liturgy in order to fill out our understanding of the role of painting in *L'Adultera*. While Smith's understanding of liturgy will shed more light on the viewing practices described above,

Martin's definition of liturgy and Christian language shed light on Fontane's use of the Christian allusions surrounding the events that appear to flow from the painting.³⁸¹

The viewing practices of Melanie and Ezechiel and the events that follow their encounter with "L'Adultera" are explained in part by what Smith calls a "cultural liturgy". Central to his definition of "cultural liturgies" are routines of behavior, religious or otherwise, which simultaneously reflect and form the values and desires of those who habitually practice them – "they both *reflect* what matters to us and *shape* what matters to us."³⁸² Smith's aim is to show that common cultural practices – such as participating as a fan at a professional basketball game – reveal much more about an individual's and a society's fundamental values than is perhaps immediately apparent. Visions of fulfillment, sources of individual worth, and human identity are implicit within them. Such practices are indicative of conceptions of human life and value as deep as those offered by formal religion, although not explicitly articulated.

Repetition is the first component of Smith's definition of liturgy. A familiar theme in the scholarship of German Realism, repetition is woven into the fabric of its thematization of representation, mimesis, and the rhythms of everyday life.³⁸³ The language of ritual is neither new in discussions of German Realism, nor in this

³⁸¹ While I find Smith's and Martin's understandings of liturgy applicable for my reading of *L'Adultera*, I have chosen to use the term "ritual" instead of "liturgy" to describe the function of painting within the text. Because "liturgy" is closely associated with a religious worship service, the broader idea of "ritual" is more suitable for what I observe in the novel.

³⁸² James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009): 93.

³⁸³ See, for example, Eric Downing's *Double Exposures. Repetition and Realism in Nineteenth-Century German Fiction*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000)

dissertation.³⁸⁴ In Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*, for instance, repetition is not only a quality of the painter Friedrich Roderer's aesthetic goals of mimesis, but he also joins the repetitive narrative of his extended family when he ends his painting career to marry his cousin. Indeed, the Roderer pattern of replacing artistic passion with greater conformity to the Roderer identity might be seen as a ritual. Repetition in *L'Adultera*, and specifically in regards to the present focus on viewing painting, takes a different shape than it does in *Nachkommenschaften*. As I have shown above, Melanie and Ezechiel respond to the painting of the woman caught in adultery according to an established pattern of nineteenth-century interpretation. Their responses conform and thus repeat cultural practices beyond the actual text. Furthermore, within the text, Melanie's story follows a pattern similar to that of the biblical narrative – hers is a modified version of the biblical story, but a repetition of it nonetheless.

While the language of ritual is familiar in examinations of German Realism, what Smith's definition adds to the discussion is the suggestion that ritual reveals and guides ultimate desires. Thus the second aspect of Smith's cultural liturgies is that they are rituals that *reflect* the desires and loves of those who practice them. But not just any desire is in view. He defines these desires as expressions of an "*ultimate concern*"; that is, they are desires that express "particular visions of the good life" and that assume particular ideals of "human flourishing."³⁸⁵ In contrast to a ritual of ultimate concern, let's consider the ritual of brushing teeth. While brushing one's teeth twice daily reflects

³⁸⁴ See Sabina Becker and Katharina Grätz, *Ordnung—Raum—Ritual. Adalbert Stifters artifizieller Realismus*, (Heidelberg: Winter, 2007); see also Neumann.

³⁸⁵ See Smith, 86.

a desire for good dental hygiene, in most cases one would hardly describe this desire as an “ultimate concern.” In contrast, Melanie’s response to the painting reflects her ultimate desire to be seen for who she is within a society that has prefabricated her role and identity. As Melanie projects herself onto the painting, we are able to see her own desires spread across the canvas. Her reaction to the painting centers on how the woman is viewed by her society: “man [hat] ihr immer wieder und wieder gesagt..., wie schlecht sie sei.”³⁸⁶ Similarly, in the first chapter, the narrator indicates the rumors that surround the van der Straaten marriage from its inception: “Einige Freunde beider Häuser ermangelten selbstverständlich nicht, allerhand Trübes zu prophezeien.”³⁸⁷ That the speculations were ‘selbstverständlich’ suggests that Melanie lived in an atmosphere heavy with suspicion and gossip. This is confirmed in the next chapter, where we find Melanie bemoaning the newspaper’s latest gossip column: “Ich liebe nicht diese Berichte mit ausgeschnittenen Kleidern und Anfangsbuchstaben.”³⁸⁸ Foreshadowing coming events, Ezechiel responds, “Und warum nicht? Weil du noch nicht an der Reihe warst.”³⁸⁹ Melanie’s awareness that she is nothing more than potential fodder for the judgment and gossip of her social milieu results in her desire for a full-orbed identity within that circle. Again, her viewing practices reflect this desire, for when she mentions the painting again, shortly after her marriage to Rubehn, her focus is on the accusing voices of society. And when Ezechiel sends her the miniature painting in the final chapter of the novel, she

³⁸⁶ See Fontane, 12.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 8-9.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 10.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

recalls her earlier reaction to it. Her interpretation and responses to the painting suggest a deep desire for recognition of her personhood, including a more complex conception of her moral integrity and moral agency: “Es ist so viel Unschuld in ihrer Schuld... Und alles wie vorherbestimmt.”³⁹⁰ Melanie sees more in the woman than is at first apparent – guilt, innocence, and even an unavoidable fate – revealing her own desire for a balanced view from the people around her. My claim that Melanie desires that her *moral* agency be recognized differs from interpretations such as Garland’s and Grätz’s that emphasize a morally neutral agency in which Melanie frees herself from conventions. Culpability does not factor into these readings of her story; they do not account for comments such as this one (“Es ist so viel Unschuld in ihrer Schuld.”) or of her insistence, once she becomes pregnant by Rubehn, that her adultery be recognized for what it is. The agency for which Melanie desires recognition is moral: she is fully capable of both good and evil. While Melanie’s response to the painting reveals a desire to be seen as she truly is by society, Ezechiel’s suggests a desire to know and control the events in his life. He sees his own future in the painting, and although a bleak outlook he gains some comfort from his sense of knowing what lies ahead.

Even more noteworthy in Smith’s definition of cultural liturgies than their *reflection* of desire, is their third distinctive quality: their *formative* or *pedagogical* function. Cultural liturgies not only express ultimate concerns, according to Smith they “aim to do nothing less than shape our identity by shaping our desire for what we envision as the kingdom – the ideal of human flourishing...[they] function as pedagogies

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 13.

of ultimate desire.”³⁹¹ This is where we start to gain ground in understanding why the events of Melanie’s story echo those of the biblical narrative, and what role the painting plays in bringing the two stories together. I would like to suggest that, like a cultural liturgy, viewing the painting trains and channels Melanie’s desires such that her decisions begin to reflect the events of the adulteress. Her desire that her moral agency be recognized motivates, in part, her decision to exert that agency. She sees herself not only in the woman surrounded by accusers, but in the painting she also sees the potential to be both guilty and absolved, for absolution is the recognition of guilt, of moral agency. Her affair with Rubehn and her decision to marry him are marked by her ongoing insistence that she is guilty, and yet she is in constant search of a peaceful existence in which the voices that yell out, “Steinige, steinige” are silenced.

L’Adultera is not the only of Fontane’s works that depict viewing painting or images in a way that can be understood as a formative ritual. However, in the following examples, fear plays a more dominant role as the underlying motivation and impetus for action than desire does. In the scholarship on *Effi Briest* (1895), which focuses predominantly on explicating the role of the ghost, little attention has been given to the fact that before she ever (believes she) sees the ghost of a Chinese man, Effi sees a picture of a Chinese man. As in *L’Adultera*, the events that follow her encounter with the image can be explained as influenced by the ghost’s precursor: the image. Similarly, in *Schach von Wuthenow* (1882), when a young nobleman sees a mocking caricature of his lover – a woman whose face is severely scarred – his fear that his reputation will suffer if he marries her increases. Shortly after they marry, he commits suicide rather than face

³⁹¹ See Smith, 87.

social derision. In both examples, the image reflects and channels the fear and desire of their viewers.

SACRED RITUAL AND DISCOURSE

In this final section I turn again to the idea of ritual's relationship to art, this time as understood by David Martin, to provide a set of terms that envelope the range of painting's functions within *L'Adultera*'s expression of German Realism – the functions painting performs within the texts and for the reader closely resemble religious ritual. While bringing nineteenth-century viewing practices to bear on the novel sheds light on the relationship that Fontane depicts between the characters and the painting, I am finally interested in how this particular novel furthers our understanding of painting within the field of themes we have encountered in this dissertation. The fusion of the secularization theory with the trajectory of a character's *Bildung* in Storm's *Im Schloß*, the tension between the conventional discourses of everyday life and the creativity on which art thrives in Stifter's *Nachkommenschaften*, and the turn to art for the re-enchantment of the world in Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich* – in each example, painting is shown to be more than a means of representation. It is a mediator between warring discourses, subversion to entrenched narratives, a source of vision for what the re-enanted world might be like, and a mold that both reflects and shapes its audience.

In the previous chapter I claim that several secular discourses were visible in the stages of Friedrich Roderer's landscape paintings; he at first attempts to apply a rigid rational discourse to his painting, but finally tempers this aesthetic with a more subjective one. I concluded that art allows for an integration of discourses, not the dominance of one

over the other. Moreover, painting even allows for the harmonization of secular and sacred discourses, challenging the notion that secular and sacred are mutually exclusive. But what characterizes the alternative or opposition that is painting? Whereas a master narrative of secularization posits the decreased relevance of religion in general and the Christian faith in particular, Martin claims that a plurality of secularizations, differing according to culture and the distinctive qualities of the religious belief, have allowed for greater clarity about the distinctive quality of Christian discourse. Secularizations have furthermore given rise to a plethora of discourses, such as the ones examined in the previous chapter, which Martin argues foreground – by means of contrast – the logic of Christian language:

The gain from these successive secularizations is the way they throw into high relief the intrinsic character of the original Christian language, particularly as embodied in liturgical drama and poetic imagery ... I am suggesting that successive secularizations, including what used to be called ‘scientific’ history, but also other critical approaches, have made possible a recovery of Christian language as a distinctive mode of speech, and as an alternative logic, unencumbered by partial fusions with earlier scientific and philosophical conceptions or by a literalism treating the Bible as science or history as now understood.³⁹²

Secularizations provide a contrasting background against which the distinctive qualities of Christian language appear, revealing it as “an alternative logic to that governing science, or indeed to that governing politics and academic debate”³⁹³ – what Berger calls a “different rationale.”³⁹⁴ Martin’s claim about the increased clarity of Christian language dovetails with Berger’s claim that modernization gives rise to a plurality of secular

³⁹² David Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005): 188.

³⁹³ Ibid., 171.

³⁹⁴ See Berger, 48.

discourses that co-exist with sacred discourse. But while Berger focuses primarily on secular discourse – the focus I too take in my examination of Stifter’s *Nachkommenschaften* – Martin takes a long look at sacred discourse – specifically, Christian discourse.³⁹⁵ Some have argued that Melanie’s story ends on a more tragic note than is immediately apparent, but Martin offers a framework that holds tragedy and comedy, repetition and progression, the sacred and the secular in an unresolved tension that is pervasive in *L’Adultera*. Painting does not only influence the events that follow, but Fontane crafts those events such that the reader sees the imprint of the painting and its Christian logic throughout the novel.

Martin’s claim that secularization provides a contrast that heightens the visibility of sacred discourse holds true in *L’Adultera*. In the novel, the secular is depicted as the denial or muting of the difference between sacred and profane. Melanie gives voice to sacred discourse, Ezechiel to secular. So while Melanie insists on the difference between the sacred and profane – she says, “es ... widerstand [mir] Unheiliges und Heiliges durcheinander zu werfen”³⁹⁶ – Ezechiel does not recognize the sacred at all. His trivializing discourse flattens distinctions between sacred and secular: “Denn es ist schließlich alles ganz egal und, mit Permission zu sagen, alles Jacke.”³⁹⁷ The logic of Ezechiel’s discourse differs from Melanie’s in a significant way: whereas the opposition that Melanie recognizes between holy and profane creates difference and tension, Ezechiel’s diminishes difference. It is the passage in which Melanie makes her final

³⁹⁵ See Martin, 173.

³⁹⁶ See Fontane, 108.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., 30.

decision to leave Ezechial that we get the clearest example of her sacred language. In it, she insists that Ezechial recognize her infidelity for what it is; she tells him, “Fleck ist Fleck, und Schuld ist Schuld.”³⁹⁸ She refuses his attempts to smooth things over.

Speaking of her unborn child, he promises, “Es soll niemand davon wissen, und ich will es halten, als ob es mein eigen wäre...Es soll nichts sein.”³⁹⁹ The phrase “es soll nichts sein” is problematic for Melanie. She cannot accept a translation of her actions into the obscurity and triviality that “nichts” represents. Here the narrator reveals her inner response:

Und nun plötzlich sollt’ es *nichts* sein, oder doch nicht viel mehr als nichts, etwas ganz Alltägliches, über das sich hinwegsehen und hinweggehen lasse. Das widerstand ihr. Und sie fühlte deutlich, daß das Geschehene verzeihlicher war als seine Stellung zu dem Geschehenen. Er hatte keinen Gott und keinen Glauben, und es blieb nur das eine zu seiner Entschuldigung übrig: daß sein Wunsch, ihr goldene Brücken zu bauen, seine Verlangen nach Ausgleich um *jeden* Preis, ihn anders hatte sprechen lassen, als er in seinem Herzen dachte.⁴⁰⁰

The contrast implied by the word “Alltägliches”⁴⁰¹ is between the sacred and secular; it recalls my discussion in the third chapter on Peter Berger’s idea that a plurality of discourses, sacred and secular, exist side by side in modern societies. Melanie insists that sacred discourse, not Ezechiel’s trivializing, secular (“Alltäglich”) discourse, be used to characterize her infidelity. She insists on words and actions that affirm the difference

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 90.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 89.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 89-90.

⁴⁰¹ It is interesting to compare this use of “alltäglich” to the definitions outlined in the second and third chapters of this dissertation. In *Der grüne Heinrich*, I contrasted the “ordinary” with the “familiar,” claiming that a central problem in the novel is the protagonist’s inability to experience his ordinary surroundings as a familiar place of belonging. In my exploration of *Nachkommenschaften*, the idea of the ordinary is closely linked to the conventions of middle-class family life. There I turned to Max Weber’s concept *Veralltäglichung* to suggest that the unique power of artistic representations is tamed by the conventions of mundane life.

between sacred and profane, which she traces back to the religious belief in God; according to Melanie, Ezechial does not acknowledge the difference because “Er hatte keinen Gott und keinen Glauben.” Elsewhere she makes a similar observation: “Aber er kennt kein Geheimnis, weil ihm nichts des Geheimnisses wert dünkt. Weil ihm nichts heilig ist. Und wer anders denkt, ist scheinheilig oder lächerlich.”⁴⁰²

In contrast secular discourse’s propensity to level the difference between sacred and profane, Martin suggests that the logic of Christian ritual is rife with contrast and tension. The nature of Christian ritual, according to Martin, suggests that the rotation and rhythm of the natural order, seen most clearly though not exclusively in nature’s seasonal cycles, and the grand narrative of the Christian tradition are not mutually exclusive or even disparate, but complementary:

The popular power of the idea of time’s consummation has been incised in the consciousness through the canonical status accorded the Bible and the ritual repetitions of liturgy. In a way that is paradoxical because liturgy represents a fusion of the forward- looking myth with seasonal rotation. It relates the cycles of birth and death, spring and autumn to the cumulative sequence of annunciation, threatening and hopeful advent, new birth, proclamation, turbulence, trial, death, and resurrection.⁴⁰³

The claim that the common understanding of time as teleological is an inheritance of the Christian tradition is reminiscent of Smith, who also claims that ritual changes its participants. What Martin focuses our attention on here, is how this “incision” is accomplished through a paradox of repetition and unfolding narrative. The novel is self-conscious about the idea of human experience consisting of both repetition and movement towards an end. Twice the narrator refers rather cryptically to Melanie’s desire

⁴⁰² See Fontane, 60.

⁴⁰³ David Martin, “Prophecy, Time and Christian Art,” in *Christian Language and its Mutations: Essays in Sociological Understanding*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002): 84.

for the repetition she sees in nature: “Etwas wie Sehnsucht überkam Melanie beim Anblick dieses Flockentanzes, als müsse es schön sein, so zu steigen und zu fallen und dann wieder zu steigen.”⁴⁰⁴ Using similar language, the narrator states again of Melanie, “die kindische Sehnsucht über sie kam, zu steigen und zu fallen wie sie.”⁴⁰⁵ The desire appears to be a reaction to the monotony of her upper middle class life, which, although surely rhythmic in its predictability, lacks the sharp contrasts – represented by the rising and falling of snowflakes – that are characteristic of the repetitive contrasts found in the natural order. Her desire for the natural rhythms of repetitions represented in the falling and rising of windblown snowflakes is counterbalanced by her awareness that her life is moving forward, a narrative that progresses. As her relationship with Rubehn progresses, Melanie acknowledges that their interactions are leading towards a destination, an end, though she does not know where, and asks herself “Wohin treiben wir?” Similarly, when Ezechiel identifies the Tintoretto painting as representative of his future, he reveals an understanding of his life as a narrative. Fontane immerses his characters in a simultaneous rotation and progression.

In Christian traditions, ritual provides a harmonious fusion of repetition and narrative, as the weekly and annual practices – taking communion, observing the Christian calendar, attending religious services, etc. – locate believers within a narrative of redemption still ongoing. These repetitive reminders encourage participants to cast their own experience into the terms of the Christian narrative. As ritual repetition recollects parts of the narrative, whether the birth of Christ celebrated at Christmas or his crucifixion remembered in communion and at Easter, it points beyond the parts to the

⁴⁰⁴ See Fontane, 11.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., 92.

whole narrative. Through participation in ritual, the believer's sense of also participating in the progressing narrative is heightened. This is due, in part, to the fact that each distinct part of the biblical narrative contains the whole. Martin explains this aspect of religious discourse thus:

In ordinary discursive prose one thing follows from another either in terms of physical causation or in terms of the circumstances and motives giving rise to action, but in religious language all the elements are present at every point. The redemption is already prefigured in the Incarnation, and the child in his mother's arms is already the broken body of the crucified Christ awaiting burial. The medieval *Pietà* is, of course, an imaginative extension of the gospel narrative, but it faithfully represents the simultaneity of birth and death. Indeed, all human births and deaths are gathered together at key moments in the gospel narratives and we read our joys and sorrows into the story in a manner most recently illustrated by John Adam's *El Niño* and Harrison Birtwistle's *The Last Supper*.⁴⁰⁶

Just as each stage of the progressing narrative recalls the whole, the Tintoretto painting recalls the whole of the biblical narrative – as the story of one woman's experience of salvation and freedom from the condemning voices of the law, it recalls the Christian understanding of salvation. As an image recalled throughout the novel, like the steady rhythms of ritual, the painting calls on the reader to view Melanie's story again and again within the framework of the biblical narrative. The painting guides the reader, at each stage of the novel, to view the plot in terms of the story of the adulteress, and more broadly within the larger biblical story of redemption. Martin's explanation of Christian ritual as both "rotation" and "progression" offers a structure for understanding what is taking place in the interplay between the stasis of the "L'Adultera" painting and the movement of the narrative it depicts and the narratives into which it is enfolded.

A framework of allusions to Christian narratives and rituals re-enforces the function of the painting. While scholars have noticed these allusions, the consensus has

⁴⁰⁶ See *On Secularization*, 178.

been that they ultimately fail to impart any sense of sacred weight to Melanie's story. Neumann has perhaps engaged most directly with the biblical discourse present in the novel; he observes its pervasiveness but is quick to interpret the sacred as subverted within the novel. He begins by discussing two biblical paintings mentioned in the novel, Tintoretto's "L'Adultera" and "Die Hochzeit zur Kana," which is mentioned in passing, and their inherence within a more expansive network of allusions to Christian discourse:

Das Bildreservoir, das deren aller Karriere-Muster bestimmt, besitzt keine authentisierende Kraft mehr. Zwar sind es noch die großen, aus dem christlichen Weltkonzept genommenen Muster: die parabolische Situation der Ehebrecherin aus dem Neuen Testament; die Beglaubigung der Ehe – nach dem Muster der Hochzeit zu Kana – durch Christus, der hierbei sein erstes Wunder vollbringt und mit dieser Beglaubigung den Weg seiner eigenen 'Identitätskarriere' beginnt; die Einbettung der Lebensgeschichte der Heldin in die Kalenderfolge der eucharistischen Karriere, in eine Spur mithin, die von der Hochzeit über die Weihnacht – die 'Geburt des Heiden' – und Ostern, als das Fest der Auferstehung, wiederum zum Heiligen Abend als Beglaubigungsritual für die Identität der 'Heldin' zurückkehrt. Aber das Urbild, das Lebensgeschichte prägen konnte, präsentiert sich nur noch als Kopie und verkommt am Ende formlich zum 'Jackierten Bildchen', zum 'eidyllion', zur niedlichen Miniatur, die an der Uhrkette getragen wird – eine ins Enge gezogene Kopie der Kopie. Das Weihnachtsfest, das einen neuen Anfang durch die Geburt des Erlösers setzen konnte, verfällt zum Scherzritual eines heidnischen 'Julklapp'.⁴⁰⁷

Similar to my claim above that the novel offers not only the story of the adulterous woman but through that narrative – a part of the whole – also recalls the broader Christian story as a parallel to Melanie's, Neumann observes that Fontane frames Melanie's story within the Christian calendar, anchoring her narrative to the pivotal moments of the Christian narrative. However, Neumann sees the weight of this parallel as resting on the originality of the painting. The potency and authenticity ("Beglaubigung") of the sacred discourse depends on the authenticity of the painting. Because it is finally the painting, and not the religious narrative, that bears the weight of meaning, all of the

⁴⁰⁷ See Neumann, 153.

potential for redemption and hope that Christmas and Easter suggest for Melanie's future is rendered as inauthentic as the miniature painting and its "dreifach gebrochenen Distanz zum eigentlichen 'Original.'" ⁴⁰⁸ Neumann's argument, though compelling, does not take into account a very important fact, and one for which I have offered a thorough explanation above: though a copy, the painting by Tintoretto produces a very real effect (*wirkliche Wirkung*) in the life of those who view it. Furthermore, its function to repeatedly prompt the reader to recall the biblical narrative's relationship to Melanie is re-enforced by its status as a copy. As such, the duplicate is part the strategic use of repetition to remind the reader to recast the plot into sacred discourse.

What is distinctive, though, about the sacred discourse into which the paintings guide readers? According to Martin: paradox. The paradoxes of Christian language are based on "transformation and deformation, acceptance and alienation, presence and absence, an image broken and an image restored, a fractured creation and a creation re-created and made new"; ⁴⁰⁹ they reveal an "underlying pattern of descent and ascent." ⁴¹⁰ Martin identifies the figure of Jesus as the locus of such contrasts, and here expands on how Jesus exemplifies the contradictions between high and low, life and death, defeat and victory:

I am also illustrating a quite distinctively Christian problem arising from the way its fundamental repertoire is rooted in the kingship of the lowly king, and in the eschatological [sic] anticipation of a time when 'the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.' In that particular text from Revelation all the attributes of majesty have been transferred to the 'sacred diadem' which on Calvary's hill was nothing but a crown of thorns. Such a

⁴⁰⁸ See Doebling, 4.

⁴⁰⁹ See *On Secularization*, 173.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

paradox lies at the heart of Christian civilization and its discontents, above all the built-in oscillations between the power and the glory of the Church established on earth as the bearer of the keys of the Kingdom, and the power and glory that belongs to a man expelled from the city as a blasphemer and a criminal.⁴¹¹

The contrast is between a grand kingdom and its unlikely king whose “diadem” is a “crown of thorns” is not resolved but maintained. Thus in the book of Revelation, the image of Christ as the “Lamb who was slain” is not eventually replaced with that of the “Lion of Judah,” but both remain.⁴¹² The paradoxes of Christian language extend to characterizations of Christian believers. Jesus says in the Gospel of Matthew, for example, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”⁴¹³

Simultaneous poverty and abundance. Martin Luther’s treatise “Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen” is exemplary of this tension between high and low; it begins with an oxymoron about the roles and identity of the Christian: “Ein Christenmensch ist ein freier Herr über alle Dinge und niemandem untertan. Ein Christenmensch ist ein dienstbarer Knecht aller Dinge und jedermann untertan.”⁴¹⁴ The relationship between “freier Herr” and “dienstbarer Knecht” is not dialectical, for the tension will not to be overcome.

Even within Christian rituals we see this tension. Martin notes that they fuse the spiritual and mundane realms – a theme we saw in both Keller’s *Grüner Heinrich* and Stifter’s *Nachkommenschaften*. As an example, he takes communion, noting that it,

⁴¹¹ Ibid., 172.

⁴¹² Revelation 5

⁴¹³ Matthew 5:3

⁴¹⁴ Martin Luther, *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen*, (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1954)

emphasizes the presence or embodiment of divinity here and now, so that the mundane element of bread is colonized as a tiny grain of heaven. On the other hand the edge of that element is in spatial tension with its secular surrounds and the boundary of time is infiltrated by the pent-up glory of feasting for all eternity.⁴¹⁵

Spiritual and physical, temporal and eternal, divine and mundane – communion encompasses these tensions. In Chapter 3 of this dissertation, I discussed Ludwig Feuerbach’s argument that communion is a distraction from the beauty of mundane reality – that it obstructs the believer’s ability to see and admire the ordinary. Feuerbach saw no means of – and no need for – reconciling the mundane and the spiritual.⁴¹⁶ Martin, while acknowledging a tension between sacred and mundane, sees Christian ritual as something like a gateway in which an ordinary object becomes the vehicle by which a spiritual reality is released into the world. It secures communication and exchange between the sacred and mundane.

The counterintuitive logic of sacred discourse is at work in *L’Adultera* and the logic that its paintings evoke. In the character of Melanie – both rejected sinner and sympathetic heroine, resolute adulteress and concerned mother – we see traces of the paradoxical logic of Christian language that Martin delineates. Fontane depicts Melanie’s fall from the esteem and wealth of high society as a necessary precursor to her happiness: “Und sie hatten an diesem Unglückstage wieder einen ersten glücklichen Tag.”⁴¹⁷ We have already seen this movement between descent and ascent at work in Storm’s *Im Schloß*, in which the hero Arnold emerges from the lower class, and the heroine’s

⁴¹⁵ See *Prophecy, Time and Christian Art*, 85-86.

⁴¹⁶ Ludwig Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841): 379-380.

⁴¹⁷ See Fontane, 120.

maturity includes rejecting her place of privilege. As an example of the “creative contradiction and the coincidence of opposites”⁴¹⁸ in Christian language Melanie is simultaneously perpetrator and victim. She suffers the rejection of social elites but emerges nonetheless as the sympathetic heroine of the novel. Although she inwardly hears the accusing voices that say “immer dasselbe ‘Steinige, steinige,’” Fontane’s depiction of her does not encourage the reader to join that chorus. In part, this is due to another allusion that Fontane associates with Melanie; Hanna Delf von Wolzogen and Hubertus Fischer identify Melanie not only with the adulteress but also with Mary.⁴¹⁹ Adulteress and virgin mother – an unlikely coupling. Like Melanie’s association with the adulteress, this unexpected association with Mary is the result of painting, this time of Mary. After the painting “L’Adultera” has already established a comparison between Melanie and the woman depicted in the painting, a discussion among several characters about the differences between Madonna paintings by Murillo and Tizian offers this second comparison. It is a jarring juxtaposition, to be sure, and one that prevents a simplistic understanding of Melanie’s actions, while underscoring the presence of sacred discourse and its paradoxical logic.

One of the most striking instances of Christian logic in the novel is Melanie’s visit to the Nikolaikirche. It takes place after she has married Rubehn and returned to Berlin. Nearly all of Melanie’s friends and family have abandoned her. Even her daughters refuse to acknowledge her as their mother. Her only consolation is Rubehn’s love, but

⁴¹⁸ See *On Secularization*, 178.

⁴¹⁹ Hanna Delf von Wolzogen and Hubertus Fischer, “Einleitung,” *Religion als Relikt? Christliche Traditionen im Werk Fontanes*, (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006): 11.

even that appears precarious. Desperate for comfort, she attends a church service for the poor (“Armengottesdienst”) at the Nikolaikirche:

Und nun in die Kirche selbst. Ein paar Lichter brannten im Mittelschiff, aber Melanie ging an der Schattenseite der Pfeiler hin, bis sie der alten, reichgeschmückten Kanzel gerade gegenüber war. Hier waren Bänke gestellt, nur drei oder vier, und auf den Bänken saßen Waisenhauskinder, lauter Mädchen, in blauen Kleidern und weißen Brusttüchern, und dazwischen alte Frauen, das graue Haar unter einer schwarzen Kopfbinde versteckt, und die meisten einen Stock in Händen oder eine Krücke neben sich. Melanie setzte sich auf die letzte Bank und sah, wie die kleinen Mädchen kicherten und sich anstießen und immer nach ihr hinsahen und nicht begreifen konnten, daß eine so feine Dame zu solchem Gottesdienst käme. Denn es war ein Armengottesdienst, und deshalb brannten auch die Lichter so spärlich.⁴²⁰

The contrast between light and shadow, young and old, the “reichgeschmückten Kanzel” and the “Armengottesdienst” heightens the paradox of Melanie’s presence in this service: she no longer associates with the nobility or upper classes, but here she gathers with the poor. However, even here she is an outsider, for her stately appearance draws the attention of the orphaned girls. She seems out of place at an “Armengottesdienst,” and yet she resembles them in several ways. She has lost family and friends. She is a social outcast with a bleak future.

The contrast is further underscored by the hymn that the congregation sings at the end of the service, in which multiple opposites are brought together. Fontane includes the first four lines of the hymn “Ich weiß, daß mein Erlöser lebt,” the “Osterlied”; I have extended the quote to include the final three lines that complete the stanza:

Du lebst, du bist in Nacht mein Licht,
Mein Trost in Noth und Plagen;
Du weißt, was alles mich gebricht
Du wirst mirs nicht versagen.
In Zweifeln Rath und Kraft zur That,
Im Tode selges Leben

⁴²⁰ See Fontane, 115-116.

Wirst du den Deinen geben.⁴²¹

“Nacht”/“Licht,” “Trost”/“Noth und Plagen,” “Zweifeln”/“Rath,” and “Tode”/“Leben” – the contrasting pairs do not denote progression, for there is no movement *from* night to day, suffering to comfort, doubt to council, death to life. Rather the preposition connecting the opposing realities in each case is *in*, reveal that opposite realities exist simultaneously. This is the paradox that characterizes the end of the novel, the Christmas on which Melanie receives the miniature “L’Adultera” from Ezechiel. In the happiness that Melanie has found in her modest surroundings, the coupling of Christmas and the painting reminds us again of the contrast Melanie embodies of “Schuld” and “Unschuld.”

In showing how ritual offers a set of concepts for understanding the role of painting in *L’Adultera* we see once again the pattern established in the previous chapters: rather than adhering to the secularization narrative, the depictions of art in Storm, Keller, Stifter, and Fontane’s works exist in contrast to the various understandings of secularization expressed in those works. While art is not equivalent to the sacred, it sides with the sacred and often resembles it.

⁴²¹ See Fontane, 116, and “Ich weiß, daß mein Erlöser lebt,” *Gesangbuch zum gottesdienstlichen Gebrauch für evangelische Gemeinden*, (Berlin: Decker, 1874): 120-121.

CONCLUSION

In German Realism, painting resists secularization. That is the claim underlying the four chapters of this dissertation. It suggests a close affinity between art and religion, for by definition *religion*, not *art*, is primarily at stake in secularization. Whether religion is said to decline, as the Enlightenment narrative claims, to become detached and “differentiated” from other social institutions as the theory of differentiation posits, scholars agree that many aspects of modernity pressurize religion into new forms and expressions. However, the texts at hand suggest that similar pressures have an impact on visual art. At times, the works of art depicted in the texts become a means of engaging secularization. I have shown that a focused examination of painting in the context of recent theories of secularization opens up a number of possibilities for our understanding of nineteenth-century German literature and for fresh readings of German Realism’s most foundational themes, such as visuality, mimesis, the ordinary, and the family. In this conclusion, I would like to foreground three insights that this dissertation has yielded regarding the relationship between painting and secularization in German Realism, and how these insights might prove applicable to future research.

Rethinking Modernity: The Ordinary

In the second and third chapters I argue for a more nuanced view of the ordinary reality German Realism portrays than scholars have generally given it credit for. Charles

Taylor's theory of secularization situates the ordinary reality to which German Realism is so attuned in the center of modernity's most challenging questions. He claims that as a result of the modern subject's experience of religious belief as a choice, ordinary life has been divested of the meaning inherent in an enchanted world. In *Der grüne Heinrich*, the ordinary surroundings of the home are similarly alienating—home is a reality to be reckoned with and reconciled to. In *Nachkommenschaften* Stifter portrays the ordinary—inseparable from the conventions of the bourgeois family and antithetical to artistic expression—not as an aspirational ideal, as some have read it, but an obstacle to artistic creativity and individual expression. The artist Friedrich's initial resistance to middle class conventions resembles the modern subject's relationship to ordinary reality, insofar as he must grapple with the meaningless repetition inherent in the routines of the middle class. Once he accepts and adapts to the conventions of his family, he loses both his individuality as an artist and the potential for other modes of discourses.

In both cases, ordinary reality bears little resemblance to what many scholars view as the Achilles' heel of German Realism—an avoidance of modernity that favors a naïvely nostalgic depiction of a world removed from the concerns that plague modern people. Taylor's characterization of modernity, however, allows for a different reading of German Realism's penchant for hearth and home. Far from a retreat from modern reality, Taylor's theory suggests that ordinary life, and the domestic settings that fall within its purview, is modernity's frontlines. The challenge for the modern subject is to find meaning in the mundane. This nuanced way of understanding the role the ordinary reality has far-reaching implications for scholars of German Realism, for it challenges the entrenched narrative about the provincial quality of this period of literature. Beyond the

immediate context of German Realism, a redefinition of ordinary reality in terms of Taylor's secularization model offers new opportunities for literary scholars to return to the problem of the ordinary's depiction in art.

Rethinking Secularization: Periodization

There is a resemblance between the comparison many have made between German Realism and contemporary expressions of realism in Europe, and its comparison to German Romanticism. Scholars often use Romanticism as a point of contrast to describe what German Realism does and does not do. This can be thought of as a set of binaries: the enchantment of Romanticism versus the disenchantment portrayed in German Realism, mystery versus mundane, transcendental versus material, even original versus epigone. The theme across these binaries is subtraction: in contrast to Romanticism, German Realism appears to be stripped down. It is a pattern that conforms very neatly to the "subtraction theory" of secularization, the purportedly historical movement away from a spiritualized vision of the world towards an increasingly naturalistic view of it. An excellent example of how these contrastive categories shape the scholarly work on German Realism is the challenge that Theodor Storm's work poses for many scholars. Many interpretations explain away the supernatural elements in his novellas, excluding the possibility that Storm is depicting supernatural events. What the models of secularization proposed by Taylor, Berger, and Martin offer characterizations of Romanticism and Realism are paradigms that unsettle these binaries, suggesting more complex ways of considering the relationship between these two periods and their distinctive characteristics.

Irreducibility: Art's Resistance to Secularization

Recent theories of secularization, while they focus on the changing roles of religion, offer food for thought to literary scholars of all kinds as we consider the value of our work within societies that largely take for granted the hierarchy of discourses posited by the traditional secularization narrative. This dissertation has uncovered in German Realism's depiction of art, a discourse that, while threatened by secularization, is irreducible to its privileged modes of discourse. As I show in the final chapter by referring to David Martin's work on secularization and Christian language, rather than eradicating or subsuming the discourses of religion and visual representation, secularization provides a contrastive backdrop that highlights the distinctive, irreducible aspects of artistic expression. Art, like Christian discourse, cannot be translated into other modes of understanding. Such a claim encourages literary scholars to resist pressures to accommodate their study of literature to scientific methods that would obscure the integrity of literature as a unique, irreducible mode of representation.

WORKS CITED

- Ambrose, Kathryn. *The Woman Question in Nineteenth-Century English, German and Russian Literature*. Leiden: Brill Rodopi, 2016.
- Amrein, Ursula. "Atheismus—Anthropologie—Ästhetik. Der 'Tod Gottes' und Transformationen des Religiösen im Prozess der Säkularisierung." In *Der Grüne Heinrich. Gottfried Kellers Lebensbuch—Neu gelesen*, edited by Wolfram Groddeck. Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009.
- Ardnt, Christiane. "On the Transgression of Frames in Theodor Storm's Novella *Aquis Submersus*." *Monatshefte* 97, no. 4 (2005): 595–614.
- Ardnt, Christiane. "Theodor Storm's *Schimmelreiter* or Gothic Realism in the Family Periodical." In *The German Bestseller in the late Nineteenth Century*, edited by Charlotte Woodford and Benedict Schofield, 144–64. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012.
- Artiss, David. *Theodor Storm: Studies in Ambivalence: Symbol and Myth in his Narrative Fiction*. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1978.
- Auerbach, Erich. *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Aust, Hugo. *Realismus. Lehrbuch Germanistik*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2006.
- Baker, Geoffrey. *Realism's Empire: Empiricism and Enchantment in the Nineteenth-Century Novel*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2009.
- Bassler, Moritz. "'Die ins Haus heimgeholte Tranzendenz' Theodor Storms Liebesauffassung vor dem Hintergrund der Philosophie Ludwig Feuerbachs." *Schriften der Theodor-Storm-Gesellschaft* 36 (1987): 43–60.
- Becker, Sabina. "'Wiederhergestellte' Weiblichkeit, alternative Männlichkeit. Theodor Fontanes Roman *L'Adultera*." In "*Weiber weiblich, Männer männlich*?: Zum Geschlechterdiskurs in Theodor Fontanes Romanen", edited by Sabina Becker and Sascha Kiefer, 127–58. Tübingen: Franke Verlag, 2005.
- Becker, Sabina, and Katharina Grätz. *Ordnung—Raum—Ritual: Adalbert Stifters artifizieller Realismus*. Heidelberg: Winter, 2007.
- Begemann, Christian. "Figuren der Wiederkehr. Erinnerung, Tradition, Vererbung und andere Gespenster der Vergangenheit bei Theodor Storm." In *Wirklichkeit und Wahrnehmung. Neue Perspektiven auf Theodor Storm*, edited by Elisabeth Strowick and Ulrike Vedder, 13–38. Bern: Peter Lang, 2013.

- Begemann, Christian. "Roderers Bilder—Hadlaubs Abschriften. Einige Überlegungen zu Mimesis und Wirklichkeitskonstruktion im deutschsprachigen Realismus." In *Die Dinge und die Zeichen: Dimensionen des Realistischen in der Erzählliteratur des 19. Jahrhunderts*, edited by Sabine Schneider and Barbara Hunfeld, 25–41. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2008.
- Berger, Peter L. *The Many Altars of Modernity: Toward a Paradigm for Religion in a Pluralist Age*. Boston: De Gruyter, 2014.
- Bernd, Clifford Albrecht. *Poetic Realism in Scandinavia and Central Europe 1820-1895*. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1995.
- Bilda, Thomas. *Figurationen des "ganzen Menschen" in der erzählenden Literatur der Moderne: Jean Paul—Theodor Storm—Elias Canetti*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2014.
- Boswell, Patricia M. "Theodor Storms heiligenstädter Novelle: 'Im Schloß.'" *Schriften der Theodor-Storm-Gesellschaft* 40 (1991): 17–32.
- Brandes, Peter. *Leben die Bilder bald?: Ästhetische Konzepte bildlicher Lebendigkeit in der Literatur des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2013.
- Brandt, Lindsey J. "Tangled up in Truths: German Literary Conceptions of Nature between Romantic Science and Objective Empiricism." Ph.D. dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University, 2015.
- Büchner, Georg. "Lenz." *Georg Büchner Werke und Briefe*. Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1988.
- Carus, Carl Gustav. *Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei*. Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1972.
- Casey, Edward S. *Getting back into Place. Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*. Second Edition. Bloomington: Indiana University, 2009.
- Cheeke, Stephen. *Writing for Art: The Aesthetics of Ekphrasis*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008.
- Chesterton, G.K. "My Six Conversions." In *The Well and the Shallows*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 2006.
- Cooper, Ian. "Theodor Storm and Disenchantment." *German Life and Letters* 68, no. 4 (2015): 584–597.
- Cullens, Chris. "Marginality and Melancholia." In *A New History of German Literature*, edited by David E. Welberry, 581–87. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004.

- Delf von Wolzogen, Hanna, and Hubertus Fischer. *Religion als Relikt: Christliche Traditionen im Werk Fontanes*. Würzburg: Königshausen u. Neumann, 2007.
- Detering, Heinrich. *Kindheitsspuren. Theodor Storm und das Ende der Romantik*. Boyens, 2011.
- Doebeling, Marion. "Eine Gemäldekopie in Theodor Fontanes *L'Adultera*: Zur Destabilisierung traditioneller Erwartungs- und Sinngebungsrastrer." *The Germanic Review* 68 (1993): 2–10.
- Downing, Eric. "Binding Magic in Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*." *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 90, no. 3 (2015): 156–70.
- Downing, Eric. *Double Exposures: Repetition and Realism in Nineteenth-Century German Fiction*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- Dünnebier, Hans. *Gottfried Keller und Ludwig Feuerbach*. Zürich F. Ketner: 1913.
- von Eichendorff, Joseph. "Wünschelruthe." In *Joseph von Eichendorff. Gedichte*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1993.
- Eliot, George. *Adam Bede*. London: Dent, 1966.
- Eliot, T.S. "Religion and Literature." In *Religion and Modern Literature. Essays in Theory and Criticism*, edited by G.B. Tennyson and Edward E. Ericson, Jr., 21–30. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975.
- Feuerbach, Ludwig. *Das Wesen des Christentums*. Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1841.
- Finney, Gail. "Poetic Realism, Naturalism, and the Rise of the Novella." In *German Literature of the Nineteenth Century, 1832-1899*, edited by Eric Downing and Clayton Koelb, 117–138. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005.
- Fleming, Paul. *Exemplarity and Mediocrity: The Art of the Average from Bourgeois Tragedy to Realism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009.
- Fontane, Theodor. "L'Adultera." In *Theodor Fontane. Sämtliche Werke*. Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1959.
- Furst, Lilian R. *All is True. The Claims and Strategies of Realist Fiction*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Truth and Method*. New York: Crossroad, 1989.
- Garland, Henry. *The Berlin Novels of Theodor Fontane*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.

- Geßner, Salomon. "Brief über die Landschaftsmalerey." Zürich: Geßnersche Buchhandlung, 1824.
- Geulen, Eva. "Realismus ohne Entsagung. Fontanes *L'Adultera*." In *Herausforderungen des Realismus: Theodor Fontanes Gesellschaftsroman*, edited by Peter Uwe Hohendahl and Ulrike Vedder, 45–48. Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2017.
- Gesangbuch zum gottesdienstlichen Gebrauch für evangelische Gemeinen*. Berlin: Decker, 1874.
- Glicksberg, Charles I. "Modern Literature and the Death of God." In *Religion and Modern Literature. Essays in Theory and Criticism*, edited by G.B. Tennyson and Edward E. Ericson, Jr., 138–150. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1975.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre." In *Johann Wolfgang Goethe. Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung. Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre. Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*, Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1992.
- Graham, Gordon. *The Re-enchantment of the World: Art versus Religion*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Grätz, Katharina. *Alles kommt auf die Beleuchtung an: Theodor Fontane, Leben und Werk*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 2015.
- Grätz, Katharina. "Erzählte Rituale—ritualisiertes Erzählen: Literarische Sinngebungsstrategien bei Adalbert Stifter." In *Ordnung—Raum—Ritual: Adalbert Stifters artifizierter Realismus*, edited by Sabina Becker and Katharina Grätz, 147–74. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2007.
- Habermas, Jürgen. "Notes on Post-Secular Society." *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2008): 17–29.
- Hahn, Marcus. "Stifter's 'Garten voll Gespenster: Epigonalität / 'Postmoderne', 'Narrenburg'/'Nachkommenschaften.'" In *History, Text, Value: Essays on Adalbert Stifter londoner Symposium 2003*, edited by Michael Minden, Martin Swales, and Godela Weiss-Sussex. Trauner Verlag, 2006.
- Harrisville, Roy A. *Pandora's Box Opened: An Examination and Defense of Historical-Critical Method and its Master Practitioners*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2014.
- Herrmann, Britta. "Verweigerte Ich-Ausdehnung, historische Kontinuitätsbildung und mikroskopierte Wirklichkeit: Familienroman im 19. Jahrhundert." *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 84, no. 2 (2010): 186–208.

- Hertling, G. H. "Adalbert Stifter." In *Major Figures of Nineteenth-Century Austrian Literature*, edited by Donald G. Daviau. Riverside, CA: Ariadne Press, 1998.
- Hertling, Gunter H. *Adalbert Stifters Erzählkunst im Spiegel seines humanistisches Erbes*. Berlin: Weidler Buchverlag, 2012.
- Hertling, G. H. "Reflections on the 'Poetic Real': The Transcendent in Nineteenth-Century German Realism." *Pacific Coast Philology* 31, no. 2 (1996): 135–57.
- Hess, Günter. "Die Bilder des grünen Heinrich. Gottfried Kellers poetische Malerei." In *Panorama und Denkmal: Studien zum Bildgedächtnis des 19. Jahrhunderts*, 207–230. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2011.
- Hohendahl, Peter Uwe, and Ulrike Vedder. Introduction to *Herausforderungen des Realismus. Theodor Fontanes Gesellschaftsroman*, edited by Peter Uwe Hohendahl and Ulrike Vedder, 7–22. Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2017.
- Holub, Robert C. *Reflections of Realism. Paradox, Norm, and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century German Prose*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991.
- Howe, Patricia. "'Ich hätte so geschrieben': Fontane's Reception of Zola." In *Fontane and Cultural Mediation. Translation and Reception in Nineteenth-Century German Literature*, edited by Ritchie Robertson and Michael White, 170–181. Cambridge: Legenda, 2015.
- Jackson, David A. "Storm at the Foot of the Cross." *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 59, no. 3 (1984): 82–89.
- Jackson, David. "Taboos in Poetic-Realist Writers." In *Taboos in German Literature*, edited by David Jackson, 59–78. Providence, R.I.: Berghahn Books, 1996.
- Jackson, David A. *Theodor Storm: The Life and Works of a Democratic Humanitarian*. New York: Berg, 1992.
- Jakobson, Roman. "On Realism in Art." In *Language in Literature*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Jasper, David. *The Sacred and Secular Canon in Romanticism: Preserving the Sacred Truths*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998.
- Joustra, Robert, and Alissa Wilkinson. *How to Survive the Apocalypse: Zombies, Cylons, Faith, and Politics at the end of the World*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2016.

- Kamann, Matthias. *Epigonalität als ästhetisches Vermögen. Untersuchungen zu Texten Grabbes und Immermanns, Platens und Raabes, zur Literaturkritik des 19. Jahrhunderts und zum Werk Adalbert Stifters*. Stuttgart: M & P, 1994.
- Kant, Immanuel. "Beantwortung auf die Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?" In *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 4, no. 2 (1784): 481-494.
- Keller, Gottfried. *Der grüne Heinrich*. Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985.
- Kim, Sharon. *Literary Epiphany in the Novel, 1850-1950: Constellations of the Soul*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Kontje, Todd. "Der gescheiterte Realist im Zeitalter der Abstraktion. Gottfried Kellers *Der grüne Heinrich* I (1855)." In *Medialer Realismus*, edited by Daniela Gretz, 79–88. Freiburg: Rombach Verlag, 2011.
- Larcati, Arturo. "Ekphrasis bei Fontane und M.L. Kaschnitz: Zur Tintoretto-Rezeption in der deutschen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts." In *Fontane und Italien: Frühjahrstagung der Theodor Fontane Gesellschaft e.V. Mai 2009 in Monópoli (Apulien)*, edited by Hubertus Fischer and Domenico Mugnolo, 117–140. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2011.
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. "Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts." In *Gotthold Ephraim Lessing Werke 1778-1781*, Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2001.
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. "Laokoon: Oder über die grenzen der Malerei und Poesie." In *Gotthold Ephraim Lessing Werke 1766-1769*. Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1990.
- Lukács, Georg. "Das Ideal des harmonischen Menschen in der bürgerlichen Ästhetik." In *Essays über Realismus*. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1948.
- Luther, Martin. *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen*. Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1954.
- Lyon, John B. *Out of Place. German Realism, Displacement, and Modernity*. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.
- MacLeod, Catriona. *Fugitive Objects. Sculpture and Literature in the German Nineteenth Century*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2014.
- Martin, David. *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2005.
- Martin, David. "Prophecy, Time and Christian Art." In *Christian Language and its Mutations: Essays in Sociological Understanding*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002.

- Martyn, David. "The Picturesque as Art of the Average: Stifter's Statistical Poetics of Observation." *Monatshefte* 105, no. 3 (2013): 426–442.
- Meyertholen, Andrea. "It's Not Easy Being Green: The Failure of Abstract Art in Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*." *German Studies Review* 39, no. 2 (2016): 241–258.
- Müller, Dominik. "'Adalbert Stifter'sche Malermittel': Beobachtungen zur malerischen Qualität von Adalbert Stifters Landschaftsschilderungen." *Informationen zur Deutschdidaktik: Zeitschrift für den Deutschunterricht in Wissenschaft und Schule* 29, no. 1 (2005): 36–47.
- Müller, Dominik. "Des gezähmten Widerspenstigkeit. Gegenläufige Deutungsperspektiven in Adalbert Stifters Erzählung 'Nachkommenschaften.'" *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft* (2000): 122–135.
- Müller, Dominik. "Self-Portraits of the Poet as a Painter: Narratives on Artists and the Bounds between the Arts (Hoffmann—Balzac—Stifter)." In *Text into Image, Image into Text: Proceedings of the Interdisciplinary Bicentenary Conference Held at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth (the National University of Ireland) in September 1995*, edited by Jeff Morrison and Florian Krobb, 169–174. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997.
- Musignant, Rosa. *Realism and Space in the Novel, 1795-1869. Imagined Geographies*. Surry: Ashgate, 2013.
- Neumann, Gerhard. "Speisesaal und Gemaldegalerie, die Geburt des Erzählens aus der bildenden Kunst: Fontanes Roman 'L' Adultera.'" In *Roman und Ästhetik im 19. Jahrhundert. Festschrift für Christian Grawe zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by Tim Mehigan and Gerhard Sauder, 139–169. St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2001.
- Neymeyr, Barbara. "Die Aporie der Epigonen. Zur kulturhistorischen Bedeutung der Identitätsproblematik in Stifters *Nachkommenschaften*." *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 48 (2004): 185–205.
- Nicolai, Philipp. "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern." Bach Cantatas Website, June 8, 2017. <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Texts/Chorale015-Eng3.htm>.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *Human, All Too Human, I*, translated by Gary J. Handwerk. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Oschmann, Dirk. "Absolute Darstellung—Zur Metapoetik von Stifters 'Nachkommenschaften.'" *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* (2009): 135–150.
- Osterkamp, Ernst. "Erzählte Landschaften." In *Der grüne Heinrich. Gottfried Kellers Lebensbuch—neu gelesen*, edited by Wolfram Groddeck. Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009.

- Pastor, Eckart. *Die Sprache der Erinnerung: Zu den Novellen von Theodor Storm*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1988.
- Plato. "Republic." In *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, edited by Vincent B. Leitch, 41–76. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010.
- Plumpe, Gerhard. "An der Grenze des Realismus. Eine Anmerkung zu Adalbert Stifters 'Nachkommenschaften' und Wilhelm Raabes 'Der Dräumling.'" *Jahrbuch der Raabe-Gesellschaft* (1994): 70–84.
- Rickels, Laurence A. "Stifter's Nachkommenschaften: The Problem of the Surname, the Problem of Painting." *MLN* (1985): 557–598.
- Robertson, Ritchie. "Keller and Ariosto: The Seductive Imagination in *Der grüne Heinrich*." *English Goethe Society LXXX* (2011): 127–142.
- Roebeling, Irmgard. *Theodor Storms ästhetische Heimat: Studien zur Lyrik und zum Erzählwerk Storms*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2012.
- Römhild, Dorothee. "Der Hund als Falke. Zur poetologischen und kulturgeschichtlichen Funktion des Löwengelben in Storms Novella *Waldwinkel*." In *Die Zoologie der Träume. Studien zum Tiermotiv in der Literatur der Moderne*. Opladen/Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999.
- Rorty, Richard. *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Sammons, Jeffrey L. "The Nineteenth-Century German Novel." In *German Literature of the Nineteenth Century, 1832-1899*, edited by Eric Downing and Clayton Koelb, 183-206. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005.
- Schama, Simon. *The Power of Art*. New York: Ecco, 2006.
- Schuller, Marianne. "Familienähnlichkeit. Zur Krise der genealogischen Poetik beim späten Stifter." In *Biologie, Psychologie, Poetologie—Verhandlungen zwischen den Wissenschaften*, edited by Ursula Renner and Walburga Hülk, 221–232. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2005.
- Sidlauskas, Susan. *Body, Place and Self in Nineteenth-Century Painting*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Smith, Helmut Walser, and Chris Clark. "The Fate of Nathan." In *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany, 1800-1914*, edited by Helmut Walser Smith, 3–29. Oxford: Berg, 2001.

- Smith, James K. A. *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009.
- Smith, Mack. *Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.
- Sternberger, Dolf. *Panorama oder Ansichten vom 19. Jahrhundert*. Hamburg: Claassen Verlag, 1955.
- Stifter, Adalbert. "Granit." In *Adalbert Stifter Werke und Briefe. Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1982.
- Stifter, Adalbert. *Der Nachsommer. Eine Erzählung. Erster Band*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1997.
- Stifter, Adalbert. "Nachkommenschaften." In *Adalbert Stifter Werke und Briefe. Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2003.
- Storm, Theodor. "Aquis Submersus." In *Theodor Storm. Novellen. 1867-1880*. Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987.
- Storm, Theodor. "Im Schloß." In *Theodor Storm. Gedichte. Novellen. 1848-1867*. Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987.
- Storm, Theodor. "Waldwinkel." In *Theodor Storm Novellen 1867-1880*. Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987.
- Strauss, David Friedrich. *Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk, zweite Auflage*. Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1864.
- Swales, Martin. "The Need to Believe and the Impossibility of Belief. Romantic and Realistic Strategies in Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*." In *Realism and Romanticism in German Literature*, edited by Dirk Göttsche and Nicholas Saul, 385–394. Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2013.
- Tan, Hikmet. *Die Romanpoetik Theodor Fontanes: Seine Romane Effi Briest und der Stechlin im sozioliterarischen Überblick*. Aachen: Shaker, 2013.
- Taylor, Charles. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989.
- Taylor, Charles. *The Malaise of Modernity*. Toronto: Anasi, 1991.

- Tebben, Karin. “‘Wo keine Göttinnen sind, da walten Gespenster’: Dämoninnen und Philister im Werk Theodor Storms.” *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 79, no. 1 (2004): 7–38.
- Tennyson, Alfred. “In Memoriam A.H.H.” (1849)
- Tschorn, Wolfgang. *Idylle und Verfall: Die Realität der Familie im Werk Theodor Storms*. Bonn: Bouvier, 1978.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.
- Villanueva, Darío. *Theories of Literary Realism*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.
- Voss, Lieselotte. *Literarische Präfiguration dargestellter Wirklichkeit bei Fontane: Zur Zitatstruktur seines Romanwerks*. München: W. Fink, 1985.
- Wasserman, Earl R. *The Subtler Language. Critical Readings of Neoclassic and Romantic Poems*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964.
- Weber, Max. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, edited and translated by Hans Gerth and Charles Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press, 1958.
- Weir, Todd H. *Secularism and Religion in Nineteenth-Century Germany: The Rise of the Fourth Confession*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Willer, Stefan. “Grenzenlose Zeit, schlingender Grund. Genealogische Ordnungen in Stifters ‘Nachkommenschaften.’ ” In *Figuren der Übertragung. Adalbert Stifter und das Wissen seiner Zeit*, edited by Michael Gamper and Karl Wagner, 45–62. Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2009.
- Wild, Michael. *Wiederholung und Variation im Werk Adalbert Stifters*. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001.
- Wolterstorff, Nicholas. “Art, Religion, and the Elite: Reflections on a Passage from André Malraux.” In *Art, Creativity, and the Sacred. An Anthology in Religion and Art*, edited by Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, 262–274. New York: Crossroad, 1984.