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THE WANDERER'S PATH THROUGH THE AGE OF GOETHE:
A LITERARY AND MUSICAL FOCUS

A Thesis Presented

by

Mark P. Russell

to

The Faculty of the Graduate College

of

The University of Vermont

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
Specializing in German

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Abstract

By exploring the symbolism of the wanderer motif, we can trace its path in German literature, first through the mind of Johann Wolfgang Goethe, specifically focusing on some of his poetry from early on in his career during the Sturm und Drang Period. We then travel to the Romantic Period, as we focus on works from Wilhelm Müller with the help of musical interpretations of Franz Schubert, and finally end the journey with *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, a novella by Joseph von Eichendorff in the late Romantic Period. The wanderer, as we will see, is not the aimless figure normally associated with it today, but rather one who is transformed through his journey. These writers each had a different purpose for using the motif, and each plays a part in making the wanderer a prominent figure during the Age of Goethe.

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Introduction

The Wanderer Motif in the Age of Goethe

The wandering theme has evolved throughout the many years and periods in German literature, but it prospered the most during the Age of Goethe. For many of us today, wandering has come to be just a leisure activity, but during the Age of Goethe, it was much more embedded in everyday life. Stemming from the idea of a journeyman moving from one town to another in order to learn a trade from different masters, the wanderer has become a multifaceted symbol.

Before the Age of Goethe, the philosophy of the Enlightenment dominated. It was a period where rationalism and order within a society were favored above everything else. This is probably one of the reasons why the wanderer motif didn't prosper as much during this time. A counter movement was the Sturm und Drang, which included younger authors protesting these norms, for example Johann Wolfgang Goethe or Friedrich Schiller. They acted on their impulses and sought to change the order of things from the preexisting conditions. The wanderer fit into this ideology quite perfectly, as someone seeking out to make his own way in life. In this period, there are many works that exude rebelliousness, but one of the most recognizable examples is Goethe's "Prometheus," where Prometheus, a symbol of the new generation, confronts the power of Zeus by stealing fire from him. This act shows how Goethe thought of himself and the writers of the Enlightenment Period. The wanderer motif also appears in many of his other poems and novels later on in his career, including the popular *Wilhelm Meisters*

Lehrjahre (1795-1796) and *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (1829), where the wanderer is used to show an educational trip from childhood to a still-growing adult whose name has the word “Meister” as a goal in life.

After these drastic changes of the Sturm und Drang occurred, the Romantic Period prospered in literature from roughly 1795 to 1835. In these forty years, there were different ideologies that tended to focus around a particular city and a particular group of authors. The first of which lasted from 1795 to 1802 in the cities of Jena and Berlin. This period is known as the early Romantic Period, and some of the most prominent authors included Novalis, Ludwig Tieck and the brothers August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel. Some of the initial impulses from the previous period also occurred in the Romantic Period, but with more of a sense of optimism and hope. In Novalis’s *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, the symbol of the blue flower, which would be associated with the entire Romantic Period, is introduced. The protagonist sees the blue flower in one of his dreams, and upon getting closer to it he sees a girl’s face in the middle. After awakening from the dream, the protagonist continues his journey onwards, always towards his home. The sense of yearning, which is associated with the flower, and the pursuit of love will become an important theme for the whole period. The wanderer was perfect to portray this feeling of ‘Sehnsucht’ and therefore was found quite frequently.

The city of Heidelberg became a center for the middle Romantic Period, which took place from 1805 to 1815. Authors included Clemens Brentano, Ludwig Achim von Arnim and the brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. These authors became very interested in past German history and culture, and this could be seen in many of their

works. For example, this is the time when the Grimm brothers wrote their famous fairytale collection. The works of the middle Romantic Period focused on renewing the German national feeling and sense of belonging.

The final period of the Romantic happened in more than just one city, and it occurred from around roughly 1815 to 1835. These authors still incorporated many of the ideals that were found in Jena and Berlin more than a decade beforehand, but more often than not there was also a sense of the unknown and mystery in this period. E. T. A. Hoffmann and Joseph von Eichendorff were the most prominent figures, and the novella was an often used style. Their narrations made use of many of the popular themes found in earlier works of the Romantic Period, and the wanderer was no exception.

The motif was used in each of these periods by many different authors, but each time it stood for something different. This study will focus on works from three of the major authors during the Age of Goethe: Goethe himself, Wilhelm Müller and Joseph von Eichendorff. George R. Marek defines the motif in his book *Schubert*: “To ‘ramble,’ to ‘meander,’ to ‘be a vagabond,’ to ‘journey aimlessly’ – perhaps to ‘roam’ comes nearest to a definition of the half-joyous, half-melancholy notion of shouldering a knapsack containing not much more than a crust of bread and a piece of cheese, walking through village, woods, and fields, sleeping in the open, getting up with the sun, and walking on, stick in hand, here and there knocking on strange doors while the dogs barked” (124). We will see how this image of an aimless traveling vagabond is used and transformed in the works from these three authors, and what it symbolizes for them. The motif has many facets, either a hero exploring the world or a stranger being shunned by

society, either students learning from their travels or someone escaping a failed relationship, and each of them will be explored in this study. Due to the vast range of what the motif could stand for and its ubiquity in the Age of Goethe, it makes for a perfect tool to have a better understanding of German literature during this time.

The Wanderer Motif in Selected Works from Goethe's Poetry

The wanderer motif is used frequently in the prolific career of Johann Wolfgang Goethe. In their book *Goethe: Poet and Thinker*, Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby state, "No German poet has written more about wandering than Goethe" (35). Wilkinson and Willoughby also define the motif in the following quote: "Early and late this image is a symbol for expressing every conceivable manner and mode of his 'wandering,' from the simple impulse to roam in space, through the urge to dalliance and philandering, or the limitless aspiration of individual striving, to every variation of self-fulfillment, including that soaring of the human mind which we call poetic vision" (35). 'Poetic vision,' as they called it, was pivotal for one of the symbols the wanderer motif in his works could stand for. More often than not the figure of the wanderer can be seen as a symbol for Goethe's own life. In fact, he actually wrote many poems while on his own wanderings. Therefore, it would be remiss if the correlation was not made. The figure also stood for the idea of being a world citizen, because to experience the world, one has to wander into it. The motif is also sometimes associated with music and the idea of a travelling musician as seen in the following quote: "Der Wandersänger lebt weder in einer bestimmten Stadt noch in einem bestimmten Land; er ist ein *vollkommener Weltbürger*, der die Großen und die Kleinen kennenlernt, alle Lebensverhältnisse, ohne einem verhaftet zu sein" (Bosse and Neumeyer 84). According to Heinrich Bosse and Harald Neumeyer (*Da blüht der Winter schön: Musensohn und Wanderlied um 1800*), the wanderer, who is a singer in this case, loses his confines in society in becoming a

world citizen. He is able to observe and learn from every part of society without being confined to any given social class. In Dieter Lamping's book *Die Idee der Weltliteratur: Ein Konzept Goethes und seine Karriere*, the connection between the wanderer and the world citizen is expanded upon: "Auch wenn nicht alle Wanderer Weltbürger sind, so scheinen [...] alle Weltbürger Wanderer zu sein" (76). 'Wanderer' doesn't have to be taken in just a literal way. Immanuel Kant provides us with another example of a world citizen. He was a famous philosopher of the Enlightenment who wrote *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in which he explored the world by reason. He may also be called a 'wanderer' in a metaphorical sense of the word, even if his actual wanderings were limited to his regular 4pm-walks down the streets of Königsberg. The idea of being a world citizen and his interpretation of poetical intent coexists in Goethe's poetry, including the odes and hymns in the Sturm und Drang Period. Some of these include "Wandrer's Sturmlied," "Der Wanderer," "An Schwager Kronos," as well as the two short poems both titled "Wandrer's Nachtlid."

Goethe, in his younger age, was a member of the Sturm und Drang Period, as was previously stated. The wanderer motif was often used in this period and Horst S. and Ingrid G. Daemmrich suggest in their essay, "Crossroads Decisions: Diverging Paths, Loss of Direction, Affirmation of Life," a reason why it was a common theme: "The young German poets and playwrights who became identified with the generation of Storm and Stress frequently used the motif of the journey to express a deeply felt desire for change" (*Spirals and Circles* 94). The motif, for them, was a way to escape from the order and traditions of the Age of Enlightenment. The Sturm und Drang Period was

known for strong and rebellious stances against authority and power. These writers didn't fit into the norms of the Enlightenment Period, but they were, they thought, better off for it. In her article for the *Metzler Lexikon Literatur*, Gisela Henckmann explains the differences between these two periods: "Ihr [Sturm und Drang] Ausgangspunkt ist eine jugendliche Revolte gegen Einseitigkeiten der Aufklärung (z. B. Rationalismus, Fortschrittsoptimismus, Regelgläubigkeit, verflachtes Menschenbild), aber auch gegen die als unnatürlich empfundene Gesellschaftsordnung der Zeit mit ihren Ständeschranken, erstarrten Konventionen und ihrer lebens- und sinnenfeindlichen Moral" (741). The authors during the Sturm und Drang wanted to break the preconceived notions one may have about society, and the wanderer could do just that. The Daemmricks continue, "They [the Sturm und Drang authors] conceived the figures of wanderers as nonconformists who seek to escape the confinement of convention, demand social and political reforms, and often yearn for unrestrained expression of individual desires" (*Spirals and Circles* 94). What can be found very often in Goethe's works is this 'unrestrained expression of individual desires.' The wanderer motif, as can be seen in the previously mentioned works, is used to depict what Goethe wanted for himself and his career.

In 1772 Goethe wrote a free rhythm ode fashioned after the style of Pindar, a poet from ancient Greece who was known for complex structures in his victory odes. In a letter addressed to Johann Gottfried Herder in July 1772, Goethe states, "Ich wohne jetzt in Pindar, und wenn die Herrlichkeit des Pallasts [sic!] glücklich machte, müsst ich's seyn. Wenn er die Pfeile ein übern andern nach dem Wolkenziel schießt [sic!] steh ich

freylich noch da und gaffe” (*Briefe* 131). In the same letter, he told Herder that he had only been studying Greek and the ancient Greek authors since their last correspondence. During this same time is when he composed “Wandrer’s Sturmlied.” As the title suggests, these are the wanderer’s struggles, both outer and inner, of traveling through a storm. Goethe makes reference to a number of gods and figures from Pindar’s time, which is believed to have been fresh in his mind from his recent studies. Goethe’s use of classical figures shows his interest in ancient Greek mythology and how these figures were relevant to his own time period. The first memorable lines of the ode state the importance of the ‘Genius’ in his life:

Wen du nicht verlässest, Genius,
Nicht der Regen, nicht der Sturm
Haucht ihm Schauer übers Herz.
Wen du nicht verlässest, Genius,
Wird dem Regengewölk,
Wird dem Schloßensturm
Entgegen singen,
Wie die Lerche,
Du da droben.

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 24)

Without this ‘Genius’ in his life, he wouldn’t be able to survive the storm and sing like the larks in the sky, which was commonly used as a symbol for poets. It’s important to note what this ‘Genius’ actually stands for. Wilkinson and Willoughby relate it to mean “poetic inspiration” (42). Other mythological figures like the Muses, Graces and the gods Apollo and Bromius are mentioned to show further aspects of this so-called ‘Genius.’ The ode can be seen as an allegory of a poet trying to find inspiration to continue onwards despite what is present in the universe. He seeks inner warmth or even a feeling of peace, and first, he turns to his own skills and own inspiration. The wanderer

will later turn to the gods, muses and other figures in the Pindaric style, which helps give expression to the inner struggle of the protagonist to cope with the turmoil in the world around him. In his biography of Goethe, *Goethe: Kunstwerk des Lebens*, Rüdiger Safranski speaks briefly on the ode and on the importance of the gods he referenced: “Aber die Pindarschen Götter können ihm nur helfen, wenn er sich selbst hilft, sich selbst vertraut” (127). The wanderer finds inspiration and hope from these gods, but according to Safranski it has more to do with the inner feelings and motivation of the protagonist himself. Sebastian Kaufmann (“*Schöpft des Dichters reine Hand...:*” *Studien zu Goethes poetologischer Lyrik*) describes this poem as being set in a fictional ‘noble’ world within the mind of the protagonist: “Vielmehr handelt es sich um die abstrakte Fiktion einer ‘dynamisch-erhabenen Natur,’ gegen die sich das Dichter-Ich in seiner Subjektivität zu behaupten strebt” (55). This ‘dynamic’ and ‘noble’ world is where the wanderer is trudging on through the storm.

The Muses, to whom the wanderer speaks, are the goddesses of inspiration for the arts, and the Graces are the goddesses of human creativity and nature, among other things. The wanderer is addressing these figures in the following excerpt:

Umschwebet mich, ihr Musen,
Ihr Charitinnen!
Das ist Wasser, das ist Erde,
Und der Sohn des Wassers und der Erde,
Über den ich wandle
Göttergleich.

Ihr seid rein wie das Herz der Wasser,
Ihr seid rein wie das Mark der Erde,
Ihr umschwebt mich, und ich schwebe
Über Wasser, über Erde,
Göttergleich.

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 25)

He is asking for their presence while he travels over the son of earth and water, or in layman's terms, mud. Goethe uses a scene of the wanderer trudging on during a storm and glorifies it to follow suit to the Greek tradition, and he even uses the word 'Göttergleich,' or being on the same level as the gods. Use of this word means that the protagonist is equal to the figures of the arts and creativity, which can be seen as how Goethe saw himself and his own career. Even when the storm creates obstacles for him to overcome, figuratively speaking, he always has these inspirations and graces by his side. Goethe could also be referencing the Book of Genesis in the Bible. Man was created from the dust of the ground, and he was made to rule over the world. By blending Greek and Christian mythology, the complexity of Goethe's work can be seen.

Throughout the ode, the wanderer seeks inner warmth from the tumultuous storm; and he seeks warmth from every figure he pays homage to. In the second stanza, the figure of Apollo is introduced:

Den du nicht verlässest, Genius,
Wirst ihn heben über'n Schlammfad
Mit den Feuerflügeln;
Wandeln wird er
Wie mit Blumenfüßen
Über Deukalions Flutschlamm,
Python tötend, leicht, groß,
Pythius Apollo.

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 24-5)

Wilkinson and Willoughby reference Apollo's fight with the python, and in so doing believed the following when relating the usage of this metaphor to Goethe's own feelings: "The myth of Apollo moving light-footed over the primeval slime to slay the

python grips the poet's imagination because it can symbolize the power of poetry to overcome all ills" (42). In the following excerpt, he now addresses Bromius as well as Apollo:

Vater Bromius!
Du bist Genius,
Jahrhunderts Genius,
Bist, was innre Glut
Pindarn war,
Was der Welt
Phöbus Apoll ist.

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 26)

Bromius, which means noisy or boisterous, is a surname for the god Dionysus, the god of wine. According to Greek mythology, Dionysus was the son of Zeus and Semele, who was a mortal who had asked to see Zeus in his godly presence. Semele's request, accompanied by a fierce storm of lightning and fire, killed her, and so Dionysus earned the surname of being born within a storm. The figure's relationship to the storm is probably one of the reasons why Goethe used it, because the god Dionysus survived the storm, even though his mother did not. He is also the god of wine, a drink that causes inner warmth one could say, just what the protagonist is seeking, thereby making Bromius one of the gods to whom he pays homage. Wilkinson and Willoughby believe, "[...] 'Vater Bromius' is what inner glow was to Pindar, what Phoebus Apollo is to the world" and later continue, "[...] we learn that he ['Vater Bromius'] has the highest value, since Pindar without his inner glow was nothing, and the sun is indispensable to the world" (46). The figure of Bromius is partly used to signify how important it was for the wanderer to search for his inspiration from within and overcome what his predecessors could not:

Weh! Weh! Innre Wärme,
Seelenwärme,
Mittelpunkt!
Glüh entgegen
Phöb-Apollen:
Kalt wird sonst
Sein Fürstenblick
Über dich vorübergleiten,
Neidetroffen
Auf der Zeder Kraft verweilen,
Die zu grünen
Sein nicht harrt.

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 26)

Now the wanderer must compete with Phoebus Apollo, the python-killer hero mentioned in the second stanza as well as the god of the sun, poetry and many other things. The inner warmth of the soul is what this wanderer seeks for himself, as Apollo is envious of the powers and ability of the cedar to be perpetually green. He realizes that without an inner ‘warmth,’ he is nothing to the god. Goethe referenced Apollo due to his association with warmth, but it could also reflect back to Goethe’s own life in how he saw his poetry. The ambiguity of all the characters was not an accident, and is a reason as to why this wanderer’s ode is so complex. The figures of both Apollo and Dionysus will become important for literary philosophy after the time of Goethe, mainly in Nietzsche’s *Birth of Tragedy*. “Thus inconspicuously there enters into German poetry that conception of which Nietzsche was to make so much, of Dionysiac ecstasy and Apolline form, and that it does so is due to Goethe’s imaginative grasp of Pindar and Greek symbols” (Wilkinson and Willoughby 50). Goethe was not the first to use these figures during his time, but, as Wilkinson and Willoughby have suggested, was very influential on works to come.

In many of his works dealing with the motif of the wanderer, the motif of the 'Hütte,' or hut is also commonly found. Wilkinson and Willoughby explain, "'Hütte' represents the other pole of man's being, and symbolizes an equally wide range of experience: the comfort of home, the cramping ties of domesticity, the irksomeness, but also the fulfillment, of self-limitation" (36). The following lines introduce the symbol of the hut:

Dort auf dem Hügel,
Himmlische Macht!
Nur so viel Glut,
Dort meine Hütte,
Dorthin zu waten!

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 28)

The last lines of the ode show these contradicting elements: confronting the storm head-on and taking refuge in a shelter. The wanderer, who saw himself as being on the same level of the gods, is now seeking shelter from the storm, which he cannot control.

Although he was confronted with wind, rain, hail and a muddy terrain, and had asked for warmth from the gods to get him through, he is now wading through the mud to the shelter and warmth of the hut. Wilkinson and Willoughby suggest the symbol to mean a fulfillment of self-limitation, which could fit into the meaning behind the ode. "[...] the *Hütte* is constantly tugging at the soaring aspirations of the *Wanderer* and bringing him down to earth" (Wilkinson and Willoughby 53).

In his autobiography, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe referenced "Wandrer's Sturmlied" in the following quote: "Ich sang diesen Halbunsinn leidenschaftlich vor mich hin, da mich ein schreckliches Wetter unterwegs traf, dem ich entgegen gehn mußte" (*Dichtung und Wahrheit* 559). He referred to the ode that he had written in his

younger days as ‘Halbunsinn,’ or half-nonsense. At first, he didn’t want to even publish the piece, and it was, in fact, done so without his permission. The question arises, which half of the ode was the nonsense? Was it the fact that it was written in the Sturm und Drang Period, where defiance, youthfulness and the view that he and his compatriots were geniuses of the time reigned? Or, was it the fact that the wanderer was giving praise to the son of earth and water in the complicated style of Pindar? The ode, with many different facets, became almost a symbol of how the younger Goethe wanted to see himself and how he wanted to realize his writing career. He believed he could make it with all of his education and inspirations of the past, but at the same time he knew he would always seek shelter in the comfortable surroundings of his hut.

Goethe also wrote another poem with the title “Der Wanderer,” which is a dialogue between a wanderer in Italy and a woman holding a child. The setting foreshadows Goethe’s own interest in classical art forms and his future Italian journey. In the poem, the wanderer, seeking rest from his travels, addresses the mother. The wanderer is seen as being optimistic and ambitious to travel and explore his surroundings in Italy. Just as in “Wandrer’s Sturmlied,” the motif of the hut also appears in correlation with the wanderer motif. The woman offers to bring him back to her home and fetch the tired wanderer a drink of water:

Natur, du ewig Keimende,
Schaffst jeden zum Genuß des Lebens.
Deine Kinder all
Hast mütterlich mit einem
Erbeil ausgestattet
Einer Hütte.
Hoch baut die Schwalb am Architrav
Unfühlend welchen Zierrat

Sie verklebt.
Die Raup' umspinnt den goldnen Zweig
Zum Winterhaus für ihre Brut.
Und du flickst zwischen der Vergangenheit
Erhabne Trümmer
Für dein Bedürfnis
Eine Hütt o Mensch!
Genießest über Gräbern!
Leb wohl du glücklich Weib!

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 206-7)

The wanderer is amazed at the site of her home, and how it was built in between remnants of ancient buildings in Italy. The woman sees these decaying stones in a practical sense, whereas the wanderer calls them 'noble' and is impressed that the woman is living amongst the graves of the past. The woman could be a symbol of the duties associated with domestic life, but with the symbol of the home or hut, the feeling of comfort and security also arises. The woman does everything to take care of her family, and she does not seem to be aware of the ruins from the past civilizations. The wanderer cannot stay, and insists on traveling onward without losing his sense of optimism. This can also be related back to a symbol for the journey through life, but more specifically it could be for Goethe's own artistic career. He was extremely interested in ancient cultures and literature, as we can see from the work he did with "Wandrer's Sturmlied" and his studies of Pindar. The figure in the poem is, however, only able to experience the ruins of the culture, which means they were once a much greater entity. The woman, whom he admired, used these ruins in a practical sense to make her home from them, but she was unable to recognize them as the evidence of a past culture as the wanderer could.

The figure of a wanderer, or in the following case a traveler, appears in one of Goethe's famous Frankfurt hymns, "An Schwager Kronos," which had the subtitle 'In der

Postchaise D. 10. Oktober 1774.’ He had written it while riding in a coach from Darmstadt to his house in Frankfurt after accompanying the older Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), a famous author of the time. The hymn is used as another symbol for life and represents the new ideals of the Sturm und Drang Period, as opposed to the aforementioned norms of the Enlightenment. Due to the fact that there was a date given in the subtitle, the reader is prone to associate the work more as an autobiographical representation of Goethe, even though it is a figurative journey ultimately ending in the underworld. Just as in “Wandrer’s Sturmlied” and many other works from the Sturm und Drang, Goethe used figures from Greek mythology in this poem. In A. E. Wright’s interpretation, “Goethe’s ‘An Schwager Kronos,’” he noted the similarities to Pindar: “The lavish idiosyncrasy of its vocabulary and syntax marks ‘An Schwager Kronos’ as allied to Goethe’s ‘Pindaric’ odes” (169).

In “An Schwager Kronos,” the narrator is addressing the coachman Kronos directly, who in Greek mythology was the leader of the Titans and father of Zeus. The name ‘Kronos’ can also be associated with another Greek figure, ‘Chronos,’ who is the god of time. The mythological figure can be found in a popular poem of the time “An Chronos” written by Christian Friedrich Daniel Schubart (1739-1791), where time is compared to a rushing coachman. The ambiguity between the two gods in Greek mythology was likely intentional, which allows for the character in the work to be a symbol for both ancient figures. Wright explains what the coachman stands for: “This combination is legitimized in a contemporary mythological handbook, which traces the Greek name ‘Kronos’ to ‘Chronos,’ Time or Eternity, thus offering an etymological

explanation for the iconographic tradition of the god as a very old man” (170). Goethe could have also been staying true to the Pindaric style and referencing a chariot race, which would have been a common topic in an original ode from Pindar.

The hymn is constructed into seven different stanzas and describes a journey through life. The first stanza is where the narrator uses the imperative mood to order the coachman to drive faster:

Spude dich Kronos
Fort den rasselnden Trott!
Berg ab gleitet der Weg
Ekles Schwindeln zögert
Mir vor die Stirne dein Hadern.
Frisch, den holpernden
Stock, Wurzeln, Steine den Trott
Rasch in's Leben hinein.

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 260)

As seen in the previous stanza, the use of the informal form of address shows a redefined hierarchy between the traveler and the symbol of a Greek god or gods. The traveler is the master in the situation, and Kronos is his servant. Even though the traveler is in a position of giving orders, his fate really lies within the hands of the coachman and where Kronos leads him. The traveler is now demanding him to take him quickly into his life. There is also a sense of optimism in the word ‘frisch’ with the onset of the journey. He is ready, optimistic and eager to start his figurative journey into life.

The second stanza talks briefly about some of the difficulties that one finds in life:

Nun, schon wieder?
Den er atmenden Schritt
Mühsam Berg hinauf.
Auf denn! nicht träge denn!
Strebend und hoffend an.

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 260)

The coach is now making its way up the figurative mountain of life, and based on his question, the traveler has experienced such a tiresome, tedious path before. Even with the struggles that come with the ascent, the protagonist continues with the initial hope and is always striving onwards and upwards.

Finally in the third stanza, he stands on the summit where he enjoys life:

Weit hoch herrlich der Blick
Rings ins Leben hinein
Vom Gebürg zum Gebürg
Über der ewige Geist
Ewigen Lebens ahndevoll.

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 260)

Once on top of the mountain the ‘ewige Geist,’ or eternal spirit, reigns. In Bernhard Sowinski and Dagmar Schuster’s interpretation within *Gedichte der Empfindsamkeit und des Sturm und Drang*, they relate this scene to the unlimited quality of life: “In der emphatischen Überschau offenbart sich dem lyrischen Subjekt eine höhere Dimension, der Blick in die räumliche und zeitliche Unendlichkeit wird zur Einsicht in das Leben schlechthin” (100). The narrator now has the ability to experience life to the fullest, looking out into the never-ending distance of what life has to offer. The world belongs to him. The mountaintop is also where the Titans reigned over the world in Greek mythology. Being on the same level as the gods, as mirrored in “Wandrer’s Sturmlied,” was a common aspiration of many of the works in the Sturm und Drang Period, and it is another example of how the young Goethe saw himself relating to the older established writers of the previous periods.

In the fourth stanza, the narrator also notices a girl while on his journey:

Seitwärts des Überdachs Schatten

Zieht dich an
Und der Frischung verheißende Blick
Auf der Schwelle des Mädgens da.
Labe dich – Mir auch Mädgen
Diesen schäumenden Trunk
Und den freundlichen Gesundheits Blick.

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 260)

The theme of love is not the most important aspect for the journey, as will be seen in later works of the Romantic Period. Goethe's use of the word 'seitwärts,' or sideways, to define where the girl was in relationship to his figurative path in life shows her relative lack of importance. She is only mentioned through observation and only appears in the fourth stanza. What is known for sure is that this girl is seen as a symbol of desire. Wright believes, "[...] this new reading concentrates instead on the cottage occupied by a woman as the potential locus of erotic experience, the experience in which all truly artistic creation must be grounded" (173). The narrator does benefit from the drink she offers and is refreshed by this 'Gesundheits Blick.' He is, however, quick to continue on his journey after a respite in her hut. Many of the Romantic writers would use the figure of the wanderer to describe an unrequited love relationship, as will be seen in Wilhelm Müller's *Die schöne Müllerin*, or the protagonist would journey onward due to a failed relationship, as in *Die Winterreise*, but for Goethe's wanderer the path and feelings of the narrator himself are now more important.

The hut, as also seen in his previous works, was typical for Goethe to include with his wanderer motif. In the poem, the hut has a sense of self-restriction because it is not the goal of the journey. After the narrator has glimpsed what he was looking for, eternal spirit – or in other words perfect bliss and fulfillment in life (the high point of the work) –

he is brought down to earth by the figure of the girl. Wright speaks on the significance of the hut for the wanderer: “The traveler in both poems [‘An Schwager Kronos’ and ‘Der Wanderer’] appears to be charmed by the simple beauty of the scene [Hütte], a scene that he nonetheless must leave to travel on” (170). Even with this ‘Gesundheits Blick’ from the girl, the wanderer was unable to reach his true goal, as stated in the third stanza, and he is now ready to travel onwards into the underworld, just like the wanderer in “Der Wanderer” – whose destination is Cumae, an entrance to the underworld.

In the fifth and sixth stanzas, the narrator is nearing the end of his (young) life:

Ab dann frischer hinab
Sieh die Sonne sinkt!
Eh sie sinkt, eh mich faßt
Greisen im Moore Nebelduft,
Entzahnte Kiefer schnattern
Und das schlockerde Gebein,

Trunknen vom letzten Strahl
Reiß mich, ein Feuermeer
Mir mit schäumenden Aug,
Mich geblendeten, taumelnden,
In der Hölle nächtliches Tor.

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 261)

The picture of the sun setting is symbolic for the end of life. Before the narrator finds himself at an old age, he welcomes death and begins his journey down the mountain into the depths of the underworld. Instead of being fearful, he instructs his coachman Kronos in the final stanza to sound the horn to let them know a prince is coming:

Töne Schwager dein Horn
Rassle den schallenden Trab
Daß der Orkus vernehme: ein Fürst kommt,
Drunten von ihren Sitzen
Sich die Gewaltigen lüften.

(Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* 261)

In so doing this, Orcus, Roman god of the underworld, knows that he is coming and will treat him with the respect he deserves.

The hymn, as well as many other works from Goethe, has been set to music. One noteworthy setting is that from Franz Schubert, which he made in 1816. The text Schubert used was from Goethe's 1789 reworked version, and it is set to music in the key of d minor, which shows how Schubert saw the original work from Goethe. The chosen key brings a sense of urgency for the demands that the coachman should drive quickly bringing the protagonist into his life. Schubert also wrote the piece in 6/8 time, which places the beat on the eighth notes. There are normally two main beats in each measure, whereas the normal 4/4 time has 4. Most of the notes should be played with a staccato feeling, meaning short and light but at the same time at forte volume, which gives the feeling as though the journey is taking place over a constant eighth-note pattern, ticking away underneath the carriage's wheels. The pattern repeats itself in a similar fashion with emphasis on the first and fourth beats (the two main beats in the measure), showing the coach is always trudging forward, never stopping. The first stanza of the hymn is focused around the chord progression of d minor, but when the singer makes it to the final utterance, 'Rasch ins Leben hinein,' the chord changes to F major, which is brighter in sound and therefore reflects the optimism of the traveler. Not only is 'Leben' on the highest note that has been sung thus far; the whole phrase is repeated as if echoing his idea, first in minor than in major.

The song continues in a similar fashion with the same urgency and movement, and in the second stanza when 'nun schon wieder' is sung, there are numerous chromatic

notes, which can be a backdrop to the type of journey he is facing, namely a steep treacherous path. The phrase is repeated a whole step higher, as if the singer is making his way to the top of the mountain. The right hand of the accompaniment begins climbing in octaves while the singer is singing ‘[...] strebend und hoffend hinan!’ When the singer reaches the climax of the hymn, the point where the traveler has reached the top of the mountain, the right hand of the accompaniment starts repeating the eighth-note pattern on the same set of notes an octave higher and in B major. The dynamic marking is fortissimo, the loudest it has been the entire song. The singer is now singing mostly dotted quarter notes, which makes it seem like he is taking his time to enjoy the experience and the view, which is particularly pronounced when compared to the continual beating of the eighth note in the previous stanza. This is how Schubert interpreted the idea of ‘der ewige Geist’ existing on the mountaintop of life, but being ever present. When the traveler notices the maiden in the hut alongside his path, the key changes into major and the dynamic is suddenly lowered to piano. It is as if the journey has almost come to a complete halt just for the girl. The chords are changing from A major to D major, which signifies the changing mood that she evokes within him. It is not until the singer comes to the word ‘Gesundheitsblick’ that the music makes a crescendo into the next verse similar to that of the beginning. The journey continues onward with the image of the sun sinking, especially seen when the right hand moves into the bass clef. Throughout the next verse, there is a sense of foreboding that the music is leading us into the depths of the underworld. When the images of old age are being described, the music changes dynamic again to piano with a crescendo upwards. The

right hand begins its descent at the onset of the second to last verse: ‘Trunknen vom letzten Strahl;’ it starts on a high F and is marked with staccato as well as a forzando on the first note of the measure, which is repeated all the way to the gates of the underworld when the singer has arrived at the ‘Tor.’ A key change from d minor to D major shows the optimism and hope that Schubert wanted to portray. The voice is finding itself in the lower, more powerful range of what has been sung thus far, and the exclamation ‘Töne, Schwager, ins Horn, / Rassel den schallenden Trab’ is repeated twice as though with a sense of defiance. The final lines read: “Daß der Orkus vernehme: wir kommen / Daß gleich an der Türe / Der Wirt uns freundlich empfangen.” The reworked edition of the text is much more welcoming than the first edition of Goethe’s text with the self-proclaimed prince found in the Sturm und Drang Period, and it is mirrored in Schubert’s setting, with the singer singing in full volume. It is as though the traveler has accepted his fate and has completed his journey with an accomplished resolution.

Sowinski and Schuster conclude, “Erinnert man sich an die Entstehung der Hymne aus der Gelegenheit der Rückfahrt Goethes von Darmstadt, so ließe sich die Fahrt des Lebens auch als Rückblick des Dichters auf das eigene Leben und als Antizipation seiner künstlerischen Zukunft deuten” (103). The hymn was written on the cusp of Goethe’s prolific career, and has many autobiographical elements with how he saw the course of his own life. Wright refers this poem to the artistic genius, the figure of the Sturm und Drang: “[...] the poem represents in its picture of the coach ride the career of the artistic genius, full of peaks and valleys but always striving hopefully on” (172). The figure of a man on a journey is used as a symbol for the path one has to travel through

life, and one should aim to make it to the top of the figurative mountain. The aforementioned passage was the climax of the hymn and the climax for which Goethe wished to achieve, at the same time hoping to welcome death before old age crept in. An example relating back to his own life can be seen in his relationship with Klopstock. In his work, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (published in that same fall of 1774), he showed a great respect for Klopstock. Nicholas Boyle's interpretation of the character Charlotte, the love of Werther's life, shows a glimpse into how Goethe felt about Klopstock: "Lotte is not only lively and practical, but she has a similar sensibility to Werther's, revealing at the ball her taste for Goldsmith and Klopstock" (171). These feelings of admiration changed over time after Klopstock criticized Goethe's works, and in response Goethe writes him a letter on the 21 May 1776, in which he writes, "Verschonem Sie uns ins Künftige mit solchen Briefen, lieber Klopstock! Sie helfen nichts, und machen uns immer ein paar böse Stunden," and he continues, "Also kein Wort mehr zwischen uns über diese Sache! Glauben Sie, daß mir kein Augenblick meiner Existenz überbliebe, wenn ich auf all' solche Briefe, auf all' solche Anmahnungen antworten sollte" (*Briefe*, 215). The condescending tone found in the letter initiated a feeling for Goethe that resonated in "An Schwager Kronos." Klopstock, as Goethe believed during the point in his life when he wrote the poem, should have stopped writing while he was ahead, or on the 'mountaintop' of his career. Goethe sought a different destiny for himself.

During his time in Weimar, Goethe wrote a poem in a letter addressed to Charlotte von Stein titled "Wandrer's Nachtlid" (1776). She was older than he was and

also married, but that did not stop the feelings he had for her, which could be seen in their correspondence. He addresses her as an angel and says the following to her: “Ich habe nun wieder auf der ganzen Redoute nur deine Augen gesehn –” (Goethe, *Briefe* 209). She became a lifetime long friend and a muse for Goethe, as seen in the poem he wrote for her:

Der du von dem Himmel bist,
Alles Leid und Schmerzen stillest,
Den, der doppelt elend ist,
Doppelt mit Erquickung füllest,
Ach ich bin des Treibens müde!
Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
Süßer Friede,
Komm, ach komm in meine Brust!

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 55)

The wanderer is tired from his journey and addresses peace to aid him in finding rest and solace for the night, which in itself could mean a desire or yearning for death. It can also be seen as a prayer, because it is reminiscent of the prayer “Our Father:” “Vater unser, der Du bist im Himmel” (*New International Version*, Matthew 6.9). Since this reference to heaven was mentioned and Charlotte von Stein was commonly called angel by Goethe, this is probably a reference to her nickname, “Engel,” commonly used in the letters addressed to her from Goethe. As Hans-Jörg Knobloch points out in “*Wandrer's Nachtlied – ein Gebet*,” it is important to recognize the purpose for writing the poem, which shows the relationship between Goethe and Charlotte. Knobloch writes, “[...] die vermeintliche Sehnsucht eines Wandermüden nach ewiger Heimat ist nichts anderes als eine listig verklausulierte Drohung, daß seine Geduld sich ihrem Ende nähere” (97). In spite of her husband, was Goethe still attempting to form a romantic relationship with

her? In relating Goethe's life with the wanderer in this poem, we see he is growing weary, and the 'süße Friede' that he longs for is his way of giving up on his journey.

Another poem, which he wrote later in 1780 and has the same title, reads:

Über allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch.

(Goethe, *Gedichte* 78)

He wrote the poem on a wall of a hunting hut on the Kickelhahn close to Ilmenau, and it is commonly found with the previous poem under the title of "Ein Gleiches." In the first six lines of the poem, a scene is depicted where peace and silence can be found on top of the mountains with barely the rustling of the trees or the growing silence of the birds. The last two lines show the wanderer reassuring himself that he himself will soon find peace in death.

There are numerous articles and books written about the significance of a poem containing eight lines with many different interpretations, but Ronald Peacock's article "The lyrical structure of Goethe's second 'Wandrer's Nachtlied'" seems to be the most compelling: "[...] the effect of the poem depends on a contrast between the stillness of nature, now unfolding, and the human being with his tiredness of body and restlessness of heart, still to be borne a little longer" (198). The poem is titled "Wandrer's Nachtlied," or "Wanderer's Night Song," which shows us the protagonist of the poem – the wanderer. From many of Goethe's other works previously mentioned, the figure can be seen as a

metaphor for the journey through life. Peacock continues: “[...] the Wanderer-image develops metaphorical power and character as it represents human weariness of body, emotions, and mind” (196). The wanderer visualizes a serene moment of the stillness of nature, but he himself can’t quite enjoy the peace that it is offering, which can be seen from the imperative of the verb ‘warten’ or ‘wait.’ He, first, observes the world, and then at the end he wants this feeling of peace within his inner self, a similar theme that was found in “Wandrer’s Sturmlied” when he was searching for refuge from the storm in the hut, as well as in the first “Wandrer’s Nachtlied,” where he asks peace for rest from his journey. He, however, has to wait for his own peace. The fact that the poem was written in a hunting hut on top of a mountain makes it, in a sense, personalized for everyone finding himself or herself both literally and figuratively on a journey. The ‘du,’ the person who is addressed in the poem, can be anyone who reads it. Peacock explains the relationship of the ‘du:’ “All nature, in its nightly cycle, is falling to rest, and you are included in this vast natural movement, so that you must not fret, however weary; you, a part of nature, will also be at one with the process, and will find your rest” (194).

By taking a closer look at the wanderer motif in this selection of Goethe’s poetry, the relationship between the wanderer and Goethe becomes quite tangible. “Bei den Empfindsamen nannte man Goethe gerne den ‘Wanderer’” (Safranski 127). In his Frankfurt years, he travelled regularly to Darmstadt and back, and (as we have seen) the figure of the wanderer appeared quite often in his works. Peacock defines what the wanderer was to the 18th century: “He was a traveler, journeying from one place to another as a practical matter; or he was someone engaged perhaps on a pilgrimage or a

quest” (194-5). The figure didn’t yet have the Romantic qualities that will be found in later works such as Eichendorff’s *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, but Goethe’s use will have a great impact on how it will later be transformed. The figure, who is very closely connected with nature, as in “Wandrer’s Sturmlied” and “Wandrer’s Nachtlid,” will later become developed in the following period. But this personal connection with the character shows the impact of using the wanderer motif as a metaphor for life’s journey.

The Wanderer Motif in Müller's

Die schöne Müllerin and *Die Winterreise*

The wandering motif, as previously mentioned, was found in the works of many of the Romantic writers of the time, and Wilhelm Müller (1794-1827) was no exception. Originally Johann Ludwig Wilhelm Müller, he lived and worked in Dessau as a teacher, librarian, editor, translator, critic and poet. He put aside his studies of philosophy, history and literature at Berlin University to fight in the War of Liberation in 1813. Sometime later, at the urging of his professors who were concerned about the lack of focus in his studies, he made his own wanderings through Italy, Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt in search of life experiences, which motivated him into becoming a well-known author of the time.

A study of many of his popular works reflects a simple folk-song style of writing in poetry. He copied and imitated styles, which included the vocabulary, themes, imagery and linguistic devices found in German folk-song literature of the time. A great source for Müller's inspiration was *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, the collection of old German songs by Ludwig Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano. The first volume was published in 1805, and the second and third were made available in 1808 during a period known as Heidelberg Romanticism, or the middle Romantic Period. Arnim and Brentano wrote as well as transcribed many songs that were passed down through generations orally. Ferdinand Rieser writes the following when talking about the importance of the collection: "Achim von Arnim und Clemens Brentano hatten für ihr

Werk das Ziel vor Augen, dem Landvolke und dem städtischen Bürgertume den Reichtum gesammelt zurückzuerstatten, den sie zerstreut bei ihm gefunden und zusammengetragen hatten” (iv). Müller, having been familiar with the collection, imitated many of the styles that existed in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Even other cultures found their way into his works. Hints of Italian and Greek literature can be seen in his song cycles. A number of these songs are given their popularity due to many composers like Franz Schubert who eventually set them to music. Müller ultimately died at a young age in his hometown of Dessau, which happened to be the same year that Schubert was scoring music to his song cycle *Die Winterreise*. Susan Youens remarks in *Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin* that “*Wanderlust* is a major theme of his [Müller’s] life and his verse” (3). The wanderer of the Romantic Period is defined by Horst S. und Ingrid G. Daemmrich as follows: “Es [wandering] charakterisiert Sucher auf dem Weg zur göttlichen Ordnung. Ihnen zur Seite stehen Personen, die, aus der Erfahrung eines verunsicherten Daseins, eine gesellschaftliche Neuordnung anstreben” (*Themen und Motive* 339). They speak on the many facets that the motif can have. Not only can it be a path towards God, but also towards fitting into the order of society. As can be seen in two of Müller’s song cycles, *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Die Winterreise*, both of which will be discussed, this proves to be true. His poetry shows a different aspect of the wanderer motif from what was found earlier in the Romantic Period, as well as in the Sturm und Drang.

Die schöne Müllerin and *Die Winterreise* were first published within the volume with the title of *Siebenundsiebzig Gedichte aus den hinterlassenen Papieren eines*

reisenden Waldhornisten. Alone, the volume's title suggests common themes that were present in these works specifically, and more generally during the Romantic Period in its entirety, namely wandering. Cecilia C. Baumann says the following in her book, *Wilhelm Müller: The Poet of the Schubert Song Cycles: His Life and Works*: "Since the *Waldhornist* of the poems is a traveling musician, the theme of wandering is infused into the entire Müller collection" (47). The *Waldhorn* is very similar to Arnim and Brentano's *Wunderhorn*, and the *Waldhornist* could represent the everyday member of society or the common folk. In the word itself, the connection between nature, 'Wald,' and the arts, 'Horn,' can be made, and both of these themes were essential for authors of the Romantic Period. Roswitha Schieb compares the figure with that of a lone musician in her article "*Die schöne Müllerin und Die Winterreise: Möglichkeiten und Grenzen romantischen Sprechens*:" "[...] der *Waldhornist*, und gar der reisende *Waldhornist*, ist der unbehauste Kunstausübende auf der Suche nach einem Orchester, in das er einstimmen kann, das Orchester menschlicher Geselligkeit, die der Einzelstimme ein Gefühl von Kontinuität, räumlicher und zeitlicher Zusammengehörigkeit, vermittelt" (59). Her analogy of a musician trying to find his place in an orchestra shows a facet to the goal of the Müller wanderer. Fitting in with society and having a sense of belonging are one of the main objectives for using the motif. The horn itself can be a symbol for yearning or longing for traveling, which was a major idea of the Romantic Period. James Thorn Barickman has written his Master's thesis over the characteristics of the horn in Romantic literature. He states, "The horns retain, as one might expect, their character as instruments of 'Sehnsucht,' yet the *Waldhorn* and occasionally the *Posthorn* become also

a source of ‘Verlockung,’ or allurements” (Barickman 7). With the theme of the horns, the beauty of nature, the sheer joy of wandering or the pain of separation from a loved one are developed and appear a number of times during this period.

When looking at the lyrical cycle *Die schöne Müllerin* from Müller’s *Gedichte aus den hinterlassenen Papieren eines reisenden Waldhornisten*, the wanderer motif can be found. The work was inspired by Wilhelm Müller’s trip to the home of the privy councilor Friedrich August von Stägemann. Müller and a circle of his friends met at the Stägemann home and worked on a ‘Liederspiel,’ where every member of this company wrote their own tale of a story containing the same characters, but from differing perspectives. Each member played a different role. The Stägemanns’ daughter, Hedwig, played the part of the miller’s daughter, and Müller played the part destined to him by his name of the miller or the ‘Müller.’ This setting was the basis of his work, and it was also influenced by a number of previously written works and themes, like “Der Überläufer,” “Das fahrende Fräulein” and “Müllers Abschied” from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. In the latter, the miller falls in love with a knight’s daughter, but is ultimately forced to leave her. *Die schöne Müllerin* tells a story of a similar miller’s fortunes and misfortunes in his wanderings. There is a vast range of emotion: from hope and optimism to thoughts of suicide. Enjoying the beauty of a rambling brook, the protagonist begins his journey, whereby he encounters and then falls in love with a miller’s daughter. He believes that she is in love with him too, but learns of her attraction to a hunter and becomes distraught. Overcome with sadness, he turns the beautiful rambling brook that once inspired him into his deathbed. Müller’s intention was that his cycle should be performed

with music, and many composers saw just how easy it was to fit his words into music, which is not surprising since Müller himself was musically inclined. The following is a quote by Müller that was found in his diaries and letters in 1815: “Ich kann weder spielen noch singen und wenn ich dichte, so sing’ ich doch und spiele auch. Wenn ich die Weisen von mir geben könnte, so würden meine Lieder besser gefallen, als jetzt. Aber, getrost, es kann sich ja eine gleichgestimmte Seele finden, die die Weise aus den Worten heraushorcht und sie mir zurückgiebt” (Baumann 35). Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel, Carl Maria von Weber, Carl Loewe, Louis Spohr and Johannes Brahms are just a few composers who made use of Müller’s poetry, and perhaps one of the most notable was Franz Schubert.

The first publication of Schubert’s song setting *Die schöne Müllerin, ein Zyklus von Liedern, gedichtet von Wilhelm Müller* was in 1824, and it is composed of twenty songs. As Schubert worked on these scores, he fell ill to a disease, most likely syphilis, which ultimately took his life. Some scholars believe that this work, as well as *Die Winterreise*, had many autobiographical elements. Susan Youens comments on the elements which could be related back to Schubert’s life and the impact the disease had on his works: “For all the chronological mysteries and gaps in the chronicle, we know that the genesis of the cycle is interwoven with the beginning of the end of Schubert’s life” (*Müllerin* 12).

Müller wrote his works towards the end of the Romantic Period, but he was inspired by the works and themes of the early Romantic writers: “He knew many of its poets [the early Romantic writers] and borrowed their images, but he and his characters

are outsiders who find much in Romanticism an oddity to be questioned and misunderstood, even where they most yearn for its former verities and echo, in wistful or mocking disbelief, its themes” (Youens, *Müllerin* 31). His subtitle was ‘Im Winter zu lesen,’ and he iterates the theme of winter in his prologue:

Erhoffe, weil es grad ist Winterzeit,
Tut euch ein Stündlein hier im Grün nicht leid;
Denn wißt es nur, daß heut in meinem Lied
Der Lenz mit allen seinen Blumen blüht.

(Müller 6)

Even though the work is to be read in winter, it takes place in the spring. The subtitle, in itself, could symbolize the end of an era, while spring is symbolic of life, growth and a new beginning. From the very first stanza in the prologue, there is a sense of contrasting ideas, which becomes more evident as the narrative progresses. The poems are set mostly in the first person, and the other characters, namely the miller’s daughter and the hunter, are only seen through the eyes of the miller. This technique gives the reader a one-sided story, which was a characteristic of the Stägemann ‘Liederspiel.’ The reader experiences the thoughts, feelings, emotions and ambitions, as well as the disillusionment of the miller in this unrequited love story. The poet, who is only heard from in the prologue and the epilogue, instructs the reader that none of these words are real. The poems should be seen as art and not life. These sections were ultimately deleted when Schubert set the poetry to music, because he wanted to keep the ambiguity of the text.

The first two and the last stanzas of the first song in the cycle read as follows:

Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust,
Das Wandern!
Das muß ein schlechter Müller sein,

Dem niemals fiel das Wandern ein,
Das Wandern.

Vom Wasser haben wir's gelernt,
Vom Wasser!
Das hat nicht Rast bei Tag und Nacht,
Ist stets auf Wanderschaft bedacht,
Das Wasser.

[...]

O Wandern, Wandern, meine Lust,
O Wandern!
Herr Meister und Frau Meisterin,
Laßt mich in Frieden weiter ziehn
Und wandern.

(Müller 8)

In these stanzas, the reader or listener already learns a good deal about the protagonist. In the typical German guild system of the time, there was a process which the miller would have to undergo to become a 'Meister' or a master craftsman. First, he would become a 'Lehrling' or apprentice to the master craftsman, usually in his hometown. After he finished his apprenticeship, he would become a 'Geselle' or journeyman and travel from town to town to perfect his trade by learning from other master craftsmen, or 'Herr Meister' in the case of Müller's miller. After completion of this phase, he would become a 'Meister' himself. In the fifth and final stanza of the first song, the young man asks to be let go in peace so he can start his journey. The song proves how ambitious and anxious Müller's wanderer was to get his journey started. His 'Lust,' or desire to journey, is described in the first stanza, and if he didn't have this desire then he would be a bad miller, according to the text. The second stanza is interesting, because it describes from where the journey was inspired, which was the water or symbol of the path of life.

Having a connection to nature was an important theme in the Romantic Period, and this connection is seen in the entire cycle, including the first song. The miller's desire to follow the brook's path is a good example, and later in the cycle he seeks consolation from the brook, naming it his friend, and ultimately seeking refuge there when he commits suicide.

Many of the songs are written in the strophic style commonly found in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, which is reminiscent of a folk-tune. "Wanderschaft," or what Schubert entitled "Das Wandern" (#1), is one of the songs written in strophic form, which is reminiscent of a hiking song in that time period. The challenge with Schubert's arrangement is that if it were performed as written, it would be quite challenging to actually walk or hike to the music. While it has a steady beat of eighth notes, the music would be more suitable to jogging, and if one tried to walk to the quarter notes, it wouldn't be much of a hike at all. Schubert chose to evoke the imagination of his listeners by giving them similarities to a hiking song, with a unique tempo that was not exactly structured like another hiking song of the time. 'Mässig geschwind' reads the tempo for the setting. Schubert rarely takes the range of the singer outside of two octaves, which results in a more simplistic score that draws the listener into the 'journey' of the music. He played to his audience's knowledge of the folk-song and the collection from Arnim and Brentano, while at the same time creating a new and exciting work.

In a closer study of the context of the first song, the vision of the wandering motif becomes clearer. Both Müller and Schubert make use of the double-refrain, which repeats the main aspects of each stanza. Not only does this structure put emphasis on

particular ideas, but it also gives the listener or reader a sense of actually seeing the water flowing and the millwheel turning in the third stanza – rhythmically and repetitively. The placement of each refrain allows one to visualize forward movement, and the poem itself has a circular flow that supports the journeyman’s unique pathway. The perception of the wheel making a complete circle comes from the similarity of the first and fifth stanzas focusing on the theme of wandering, and the refrain in both stanzas is ‘Wandern.’ The continual motion of the water and wheel could also be a symbol for life, which is never stopping and always continuing onward. The miller, inspired by the beauty of life, is starting his journey to discover the mysteries of the world that will open the door to self-discovery. The rambling, babbling movement of water in the brook inspires the miller to step out on his journey. Müller uses the water as an element that never rests and has the power to move heavy mill-stones. In Alan P. Cottrell’s book *Wilhelm Müller’s Lyrical Song-Cycles: Interpretations and Texts*, Cottrell speaks about this song and its imagery as symbolizing a theme in the entire Romantic Period: “This quaint image is characteristic of the urge of romanticism to animate all of creation – to set the entire universe in motion [...]” (10). Müller’s wanderer embodies many of the themes of the Romantic authors. He found inspiration in nature that led to a ‘Lust’ for ‘Wanderschaft.’ In the first stanza, the profession of the miller is seen in the third person, but in the second stanza the pronoun ‘we’ is used: ‘Vom Wasser haben wir’s gelernt, / Vom Wasser!’ The use of this pronoun could represent that wandering should be taken as a truth that everyone has learned from past generations. Going on one’s own journey is the order of life and the way it will always be. The perspective finally changes to the first

person in the fifth and final verse. Instead of being grouped together with other members of society, the miller is on his own personal journey, which sets the tone for the entire cycle.

Perhaps the highest point in the cycle is reflected in the poem “Mein!” (#11), where the wanderer claims that the miller’s daughter belongs to him.

Bächlein, laß dein Rauschen sein!
Räder, stellt eu’r Brausen ein!
All ihr muntern Waldvögelein,
Groß und klein,
Endet eure Melodein!
Durch den Hain
Aus und ein
Schalle heut’ *ein* Reim allein:
Die geliebte Müllerin ist *mein!*
Mein!
[...]

(Müller 20)

He commands the birds to stop singing, the millwheel to stop spinning and the water to stop flowing. Where the water once inspired his journey, a force much stronger carries him – his love for the miller’s daughter. Life should now sing a different tune because he has found bliss in this love.

Interestingly, the shortest line in the song as well as the entire cycle is one word: ‘Mein.’ This is significant in a number of different ways. First, it emphasizes the climax of the cycle, in the sense that the miller has reached what he thinks is ultimate happiness. Second, it highlights a focus on himself – instead of the inspiration of nature which was found in “Das Wandern” (#1). And finally, it introduces conflict in the following lines:

Frühling, sind das alle deine Blümelein?
Sonne, hast du keinen hellern Schein?
Ach, so muß ich ganz allein,

Mit dem seligen Worte *mein*,
Unverstanden in der weiten Schöpfung sein!

(Müller 20)

Suddenly, nature fails to produce enough flowers and the sun fails to shine brightly enough to compete with the beauty of a blossoming love. Little does he realize that the beauty he believes to find in love is merely an illusion, for it is soon to be an unreciprocated love. In Schubert's setting of this song, he uses an ABA song pattern, meaning the final verse is very similar to the first with a juxtaposing middle section. It is as if the conflict the protagonist is facing is becoming lost within the other verses, and the miller has now entered a state of disillusionment that will later be realized by him. In this song, however, he is, at this point, content in believing the miller's daughter belongs to him. The rhyme scheme is the same throughout the whole poem, where everything rhymes with the exclamation 'Mein,' and the music is set to a constant eighth note pattern. The song is written in the key of D, and Robert R. Garran explains the significance of the music: "[...] the whole point of the song [Mein!] is that, to the accepted lover, the universe is ringing and rhyming with 'Mine,' and this is expressed in the words by the insistent rhyme, and echoed in the music by the insistent dominant" (10). The dominant chord (A or A⁷) is played numerous in correlation with the words rhyming with 'Mein,' and the use of this chord gives the listener the feeling that the music is coming back to the tonic or home key (D). This is just one example of how Schubert tried to stay true to the emotions of the poem.

A sense of foreboding can also be noticed in the following poem "Pause" (#12):

Meine Laute hab ich gehängt an die Wand,
Hab sie umschlungen mit einem grünen Band –

Ich kann nicht mehr singen, mein Herz ist zu voll,
Weiß nicht, wie ich's in Reime zwingen soll.
Meiner Sehnsucht allerheißesten Schmerz
Durfst ich aushauchen in Liederscherz,
Und wie ich klagte so süß und fein,
Glaubt ich doch, mein Leiden wär nicht klein.
Ei, wie groß ist wohl meines Glückes Last,
Daß kein Klang auf Erden es in sich faßt?

Nun, liebe Laute, ruh an dem Nagel hier!
Und weht ein Lüftchen über die Saiten dir,
Und streift eine Biene mit ihren Flügeln dich,
Da wird mir bange und es durchschauert mich.
Warum ließ ich das Band auch hängen so lang?
Oft fliegt's um die Saiten mit seufzendem Klang.
Ist es der Nachklang meiner Liebespein?
Soll es das Vorspiel neuer Lieder sein?

(Müller 21)

“This is where the cycle first flowers into tragedy” (Youens, *Müllerin* 54) states Youens in her book, *Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin*. The miller has now hung his lute on the wall, which is symbolic of him giving up his poetry inspired by the longing he had for the miller's daughter. Now that he is not fueled by the ‘Sehnsucht’ that he possessed in the earlier songs, he is not able to continue his poetry – a sign of leading a philistine existence, as we will see in the two life wanderers in Eichendorff's “Die Zwei Gesellen,” where both journeys end badly. The lute, however, still makes music when the wind or an insect flies by the strings, and he is contemplating whether or not this ‘sighing tone’ is the postlude of the pain he felt when he was longing for the miller's daughter or the prelude to what is to come. In Schubert's setting, with limited harmony and small steps in melody, he gives listeners this sense of a break from the complex harmonies and melodies from earlier songs to signify a looming shift of thought. At points he uses the

key of g minor, which is a perfect way to depict the pending depression of the protagonist. From this point on the wanderer starts his journey into disillusionment.

In the song “Mit dem grünen Lautenbände” (#13), the color green emerges and also foreshadows a problem for the miller:

„Schad um das schöne grüne Band,
Daß es verbleicht hier an der Wand,
Ich hab das Grün so gern!“
So sprachst du, Liebchen, heut zu mir;
Gleich knüpf ich’s ab und send es dir:
Nun hab das Grüne gern!

Ist auch dein ganzer Liebster weiß,
Soll Grün doch haben seinen Preis,
Und ich auch hab es gern.
Weil unsre Lieb ist immer grün,
Weil grün der Hoffnung Fernen blühn,
Drum haben wir es gern.

[...]

(Müller 23)

The band is fading in the sunlight just like the feelings that the miller’s daughter has for the miller, but unfortunately he doesn’t make the association at this point. He thinks the color stands for hope and how their relationship will prosper in the future, and therefore likes the color as much as she does. The poem “Der Jäger,” which follows directly after “Mit dem grünen Lautenbände,” is where the hunter is introduced, and he is also, unfortunately for the miller, associated with the color green. Horst S. and Ingrid G. Daemmrich define what the hunter or the hunt can mean in literature: “Das Motiv wurde traditionell dazu verwendet, das Wesen der Liebesjagd zu charakterisieren, die Züge der Menschenjagd herauszuarbeiten und die Verwandlung des Jägers in die Beute zu

beleuchten” (*Themen und Motive* 185-6). The hunter is now in pursuit of his prey – in this case the miller’s daughter. The first lines of “Der Jäger” (#14) read:

Was sucht denn der Jäger am Mühlbach hier?
Bleib, trotziger Jäger, in deinem Revier!
Hier gibt es kein Wild zu jagen für dich,
Hier wohnt nur ein Rehlein, ein zahmes, für mich.

[...]

(Müller 23)

The miller’s daughter is now being referred to by the protagonist as a small doe, but he doesn’t have the ability to capture her, figuratively speaking, like the hunter can.

Barickman also comments on the meaning of the hunter and deer relationship: “The slaying of the deer would then signify the subduing of the female and the consummation of love” (102). It is as though the miller, destined by his trade, didn’t have any chance in winning the girl’s affection, thus adding to his disillusionment.

The color green reappears again in the poem “Die liebe Farbe” (#16):

[...]

Grabt mir ein Grab im Wasen,
Deckt mich mit grünem Rasen,
Mein Schatz hat’s Grün so gern.
Kein Kreuzlein schwarz, kein Blümlein bunt,
Grün, alles grün so rings und rund!
Mein Schatz hat’s Grün so gern.

(Müller 27)

He is now ready to do everything he can to gain her affection, even if it means his green-covered grave. The title still shows his mentality towards the color, because he names it the lovely color. He desperately is hanging on to the notion that someday, she will

belong to him. Directly following this poem comes “Die böse Farbe” (#17), where the miller has now completely changed his tune:

Ich möchte ziehn in die Welt hinaus,
Hinaus in die weite Welt,
Wenn's nur so grün, so grün nicht wär
Da draußen in Wald und Feld!

Ich möchte die grünen Blätter all
Pflücken von jedem Zweig,
Ich möchte die grünen Gräser all
Weinen ganz totenbleich.

[...]

(Müller 28)

He has now come to terms that he will never have what he is seeking, and he sees the world has played a joke on him. He wants to run away, but wherever he goes the color green haunts him. From here on the miller is completely lost without any hope.

The last song of this cycle, “Des Baches Wiegenlied” (#20) or the “Brook’s Lullaby,” is also written in strophic form with five stanzas just like “Das Wandern” (#1). Being true to the typical lullaby, Schubert made use of elements found in a child’s song to help the listener relate to emotions found in putting a child to rest. Not only does the strophic setting help with the repetition of melodic ideas, but it also gives the song a needed feeling of melancholy as well as security of emotion to portray the mother rocking the cradle. Regular two-beat pulsations also help with the sense of repetition. The title in itself suggests the end, while still conveying a theme of harmony. A lullaby is typically sung to soothe a child to sleep, and Müller could have chosen this title to symbolize the naivety of the protagonist toward an unexpected and looming unhappy ending. Committing suicide in a river to many is far from being considered a positive

outcome for our love-stricken miller, but he has, in a sense, become one with nature and has defined his fate. The millwheel, a symbol for life, has now made a complete spin. Death and birth are connected with the use of the lullaby. Musically speaking, the song was written in the key of E major, whereas the key of the first song is written in B flat major, making the distance between the two keys the furthest possible. Based on his article, “The Wanderer’s Many Returns: Schubert’s Variations Reconsidered,” Jeffrey Perry believed that Schubert deliberately used these two keys to show the distance of how far the wanderer has traveled emotionally. The choice of keys shows how tangible the differences are: from the initial height of hope and aspiration that was found in the motion of the watermill spinning and the movement of water to the illusion generated by what he thought was love’s invitation to rest, ‘du bist zu Hause,’ as well as the despair of standing alone without love returned. Even though the key tells the listener’s ears that he is far from where he began, he is, in essence back ‘home’ where his journey began; only this time he sees death and not the hope of possibilities. The theme of disillusionment is new to the motif, and thus it helped show the change of philosophy from what was seen in Goethe’s writings in the Sturm und Drang Period. Even when Goethe’s wanderer was confronted with a storm or trapped by old age, he found a way to overcome these obstacles. Müller’s wanderer has lost his hope and optimism to keep trudging onward.

In *Die Winterreise*, the protagonist doesn’t have the optimistic ideals of the earlier Sturm und Drang and Romantic writers; instead, he had already been in a love relationship. Unfortunately, from what is found in the first poem “Gute Nacht,” he has to abandon the failed relationship and escape the binds of society. *Die Winterreise* is a

monodrama, which tells the narrative through the character's thoughts and interactions with nature around him. The journey includes a trip through the mourning of the wanderer, the loss of hope of a promising future and finally his wish for death. There is a notable lack of other characters, with the exception of a hurdy-gurdy player he chances upon in the last song of the cycle, "Der Leiermann" (#24). Not only is there an outward journey of a winter landscape described, there is also an inner journey through the mind of the protagonist. The Daemmricks explain another facet of the wanderer motif: "Das Wandern kennzeichnet auch die Existenz von Menschen, die sich in der Innenwelt ihrer Gedanken verlieren" (*Themen und Motive* 339). Müller uses this motif to now show how the protagonist is a member of society but then ultimately ends up being on the verge of insanity. The path is, therefore, an internal one, rather than the external path that was found in Goethe's "Der Wanderer" for example.

In the first song of the cycle, the protagonist sets off on his journey in a winter scene that is depicted in the middle of a dark chilly night marking a pending end to a particular period of time in the protagonist's life. "Wenn Wilhelm Müller demnach seinen Wanderer in den Winter und in die Nacht aufbrechen läßt, so entläßt er ihn – inhaltlich betrachtet – gleich doppelt in die Zeit der Melancholie" (Bosse and Neumeyer 124). The first stanza introduces the reader to an abandoned love and the 'melancholy' of the wanderer. It is only known that a planned marriage was interrupted, but they do not know why or by whom, the mother or the daughter. Instead, we see that he has decided to leave a way of life that he had entered into and return to the darkness or isolation from

which he initially came into this life. He is saying ‘good-night’ to his former lover, but there is also a tone of acceptance in the poem as well. He states:

Die Liebe liebt das Wandern,
Gott hat sie so gemacht –
Von einem zu dem andern –
Fein Liebchen, gute Nacht!

(Müller 38)

He knows that the relationship couldn’t go on any further, because it seems his love has continued her figurative journey onward and turned her attention to someone else, a similar relationship which was found in *Die schöne Müllerin*, when the miller’s daughter fell in love with the hunter. The wanderer’s ‘Fein Liebchen’ is never introduced in *Die Winterreise*, but the evidence of how the protagonist feels about her is revealed in a number of the poems.

In H. Lowen Marshall’s article, “Symbolism in Schubert’s *Winterreise*,” he describes the emotions of Schubert’s opening music: “The dark minor harmonies and the ponderous eighth-note pulse of this song aptly set the stage for the drama that is to follow” (609). He describes the symbolism in the cycle as one of sadness and despair, which occurs very often in Schubert’s music as well. The eighth notes of “Gute Nacht” (#1) sound like solemn footsteps, and they return in a number of subsequent songs. One interpretation to the odd tempo of these ‘ponderous’ eighth notes is that it is as if the protagonist were thumping out his sad footsteps on the start of his journey. This musical figure Susan Youens identifies in her article “Wegweiser in *Winterreise*” as the journeying figure, and it is appearing and is transformed many ways in the later songs of the cycle: “The ‘journeying figure,’ which becomes emblematic of the central metaphor

of Müller's poetic text, is hardly a major axis of *Winterreise*'s structure, but it is an element of cyclic unification and further evidence that the songs are indeed musically interdependent, bound by more than a unified succession of texts" (Wegweiser 357). One of the beauties of Schubert's music is that the songs are great numbers when considered individually, but are extremely harmonious to each other when viewed in the context of the entire cycle. Musical figures from one song can be found numerous in other songs. With the mention of the loved one or thoughts of the wanderer's past, the key is transformed into a major tonality. The first statement that is entirely in major is the quote 'an dich hab ich gedacht.' The wanderer is remembering the happiness that he once knew. One of the most important words of the entire cycle is the very first word of the opening song: 'Fremd.' Musically speaking, this word is on the highest note of the phrase, which helps to emphasize the significance and importance of the word, because it ultimately sets the tone for the entire cycle. The wanderer feels isolated from the community, and he feels obligated to start his journey before he is forced to do so.

The protagonist has lost the yearning for adventure or desire for self-improvement that was so important for the writers that preceded him, for example as seen in Goethe's "An Schwager Kronos." Müller's protagonist can now be seen as an anti-typical portrayal of the wanderer motif in the Romantic Period. Müller uses the major Romantic themes of nature and love, as well as death, but instead of the start of the journey being in spring with a feeling of hope and optimism, the opposite occurs. In a letter on 18 May 1812 to Count Otto Heinrich von Loeben, Ludwig Uhland (a predecessor to Müller from whom he drew inspiration for a number of his themes) writes: "Wir haben einmal keinen

dauernden Frühling, und unsere kräftige Winterpoesie wollen wir niemals verläugnen” (Bosse and Neumeyer 117). Uhland and Müller, as well as other authors of this time, frequently used the imagery of winter to explore the negative sides of their protagonists’ lives. The protagonist, for example in the *Die schöne Müllerin*, had a strong desire to start his journey in the springtime, just like many other wandering figures of the time, but he ultimately found a tragic fate. “Das Wandern ist des Müllers Lust,” exclaims the first line of this cycle. Now in *Die Winterreise*, the protagonist is almost forced by society to begin his journey. The darker aspects of life, betrayal, isolation or disillusionment are now represented, but at the same time still using the exact same figure of the earlier optimistic, hopeful wanderer.

When looking at what the wanderer in *Die Winterreise* meant to Müller, one has to first consider the character’s reason for starting his journey. A failed love forced him from being accepted in society and he is now, figuratively speaking, on a search to find another orchestra in which to have a sense of belonging (to use Schieb’s analogy). While this is the initial aim of our journeyman, it changes during the course of his trip. In the first few poems, his former lover was mentioned a number of times. For example in “Die Wetterfahne” (#2), she is compared to a weather vane following the path of the wind: “Der Wind spielt drinnen mit den Herzen, / Wie auf dem Dach nur nicht so laut” (Müller 40). The sense that his lover was unfaithful can also be found in the previous passage. Perhaps she had found someone else, and she then changed directions towards him, just as the weather vane would do with shifting winds. If the protagonist had seen this sign before he met her, he may have never searched for a devout wife within her house. In

“Erstarrung” (#4), he searches for her footsteps in the ground, where they had once walked together, but he is distraught because a layer of ice and snow now conceals them. As he leaves the city, his mood changes in “Rückblick” (#8). He now has a sense of regret:

Kömmt mir der Tag in die Gedanken,
Möcht ich noch einmal rückwärts sehn,
Möcht ich zurücke wieder wanken,
Vor ihrem Hause stille stehn.

(Müller 46)

Little by little her memories seem to fade after he leaves, because she is mentioned less and less. There are many poems, especially a number of them toward the end, where her existence doesn't even appear at all – either in symbolism or revealed emotions. She does, however, reappear in “Frühlingstraum” (#11) at the end of the first half of the cycle of 24 songs, where he is dreaming about holding her once again in his arms. Without having these memories of her in his dreams of the past, the only thing he seems to be left with is pain and regret. The sense of acceptance of the failed relationship that can be found at the onset of the journey has turned into a danger of losing control of his sanity, a similar feeling as the miller in *Die schöne Müllerin*.

While leaving the town, the motivation towards death becomes more and more prominent. He initially comes across the feeling of committing suicide in “Der Lindenbaum” (#5), which took place at a fountain by the gates of the town:

Und seine Zweige rauschten,
Als riefen sie mir zu:
Komm her zu mir, Geselle,
Hier findest du deine Ruh!

(Müller 43)

The desperate wanderer could find respite by a tree, and a possible interpretation is that if he were to end his journey through life, then his soul would find the peace that it was longing for, as in the brook's lullaby of the young miller. He is, however, able to resist the temptation at this point and keep journeying onward:

Die kalten Winde bliesen
Mir grad ins Angesicht,
Der Hut flog mir vom Kopfe,
Ich wendete mich nicht.

(Müller 43)

It is not easy for him, because he has to shut his eyes to avoid looking at the tree in order to pass the temptation. He is always reminded of the linden tree's calling throughout his life.

Nun bin ich manche Stunde
Entfernt von jenem Ort,
Und immer hör ich's rauschen:
Du fändest Ruhe dort!

(Müller 43)

From this point on the protagonist is losing his ability to close his eyes, figuratively speaking, and journey onward.

The 'Lindenbaum' is rich with tradition. The tree has a close association with the Nordic goddess Freia, who is believed to stand for love and honor, and according to German folklore, it wasn't possible to lie while standing under the tree. Therefore, it was seen as being sacred. The tree was used in a number of different works throughout the ages, for example "Under der linden" written by Walther von der Vogelweide, and the symbol of the tree always seems to relate back to a feeling of honor and security. In the aforementioned song, a love scene takes place under the tree. Perhaps our wanderer is

remembering a moment he shared with his own lover or a feeling of security or belonging he once found within the community. Unfortunately, he no longer possesses this feeling, and instead, he senses his death looming on the horizon.

A turning point in our wanderer's journey is found in the song "Der Wegweiser" (#20), when he learns how he must continue his journey and face his fate. There are many different interpretations of what he actually saw on the sign, because the true meaning in the text is not mentioned, although the title of the next song "Das Wirthaus" proves to be an "inn" that is a graveyard. This is most likely the point where the protagonist realizes that his fate is death, and through his destiny all is resolved. Susan Youens in her article "Retracing a Winter Journey: Reflections on Schubert's *Winterreise*" believes however: "The tragic discrepancy between the wanderer's desire for ordinary happiness and the hardships imposed on him by destiny leads not to the more obvious ending in death or insanity, but to a hard-won accommodation with fate" (Youens, *Winter Journey* 135). The contents of the sign are unknown, but the protagonist must now accept the fate given to him, be it death or simply not fitting into society. The wanderer and Schubert's own life have many common parallels. Schubert was reported to have seen himself as an outsider in his own life, and he likely related himself to Wilhelm Müller's figure. Although there may be some autobiographical elements in Schubert's song cycle of the text, Müller's protagonist is now unable to turn his life around, and thus seeks solace in death. He no longer can capture the feelings he had when he was with his lover, or the feelings of satisfaction found in finding a place to

belong within society. His destiny to be alone is realized to him, and he, from this point on, accepts that fact. A journey to his death seems to be all that is left for him.

Society and his relationship to society come back a number of times. It is known that if he hadn't begun his journey, he would have been made to start it unwillingly.

Another reference can be found in "Rückblick" (#8):

Es brennt mir unter beiden Sohlen,
Tret ich auch schon auf Eis und Schnee;
Ich möchte nicht wieder Atem holen,
Bis ich nicht mehr die Türme seh.

Hab mich an jedem Stein gestoßen,
So eilt ich zu der Stadt hinaus;
Die Krähen warfen Bäll und Schloßen
Auf meinen Hut von jedem Haus.

Wie anders hast du mich empfangen,
Du Stadt der Unbeständigkeit!
An deinen blanken Fenstern sangen
Die Lerch und Nachtigall im Streit.

(Müller 46)

The protagonist is now rushing to leave the city of his lover and tripping over every stone in the previous depiction of a winter scene. He doesn't want to even take a breath until the towers of the city vanish behind his back. In the poem, he addresses the city directly saying that it is inconsistent or always changing. The city could represent that society in general was multifaceted. He at one point thought he would fit in, but soon found out that he would only be an outcast. He feels hopeless and alone. The crows, as compared to the lovebirds associated with spring, are now taunting him and throwing snowballs and hail at him, which in a way can show the two sides of society: the lovebirds a symbol for hope and spring, and the crows a symbol for death and winter. The protagonist feels

conflicted by society. One day everything is seemingly perfect, but then in the next there is only desolation to be found.

“Im Dorfe” (#17) is also another great poem, where Müller has characterized the people living in the village as the wanderer passes through on his journey:

Es bellen die Hunde, es rasseln die Ketten.
Es schlafen die Menschen in ihren Betten,
Träumen sich manches, was sie nicht haben,
Tun sich im Guten und Argen erlaben:
Und morgen früh ist alles zerflossen. –
Je nun, sie haben ihr Teil genossen,
Und hoffen, was sie noch übrig ließen,
Doch wieder zu finden auf ihren Kissen.

Bellt mich nur fort, ihr wachen Hunde,
Laßt mich nicht ruhn in der Schlummerstunde!
Ich bin zu Ende mit allen Träumen –
Was will ich unter den Schläfern säumen?

(Müller 56)

Here, the protagonist is remembering members of society and depicting them while they are sleeping during the night. These members are dreaming about things that they don't have, and in the opinion of the protagonist, they will never achieve these dreams, because when they wake in the morning, all dreams melt into reality. He states that they have enjoyed their part in life, but they will always need more, which can only be found to them on their pillows, or in their dreams. In the second stanza, the protagonist exclaims he is done with dreaming, because he knows nothing will come of it. Even if he were to be a happy member of society, he would know that he would always want more out of life.

Still later in the cycle, he seeks respite at a sort of inn, “Das Wirtshaus” (#21), because he became tired from his journey. The chosen inn, which is a graveyard, didn't

have any available rooms, which meant the journey had to continue on without him being able to have any rest. Earlier in the cycle, in poem #10, he did end up finding a place to stay by a charcoal burner's hut in "Rast," but he was unable to completely rest because of his 'burning wounds' from his journey. At this point, even when a member of the society, albeit on its outskirts, offers him help, he is unable to benefit from it. He is filled with so much pain, that he is now disconnected from the world that he had once known. He continues on, feeling like a lonely cloud over the world that he once knew, as seen in "Einsamkeit" (#12). He has come to realize he is alone in this world and will always be alone:

So zieh ich meine Straße
Dahin mit tragem Fuß,
Durch helles, frohes Leben,
Einsam und ohne Gruß.

(Müller 50)

Nature, for a Romantic writer like Müller, was often used as a visual portrayal of the emotions within the characters. In *Die Winterreise*, it reflects the wanderer's inner struggles. A perfect example can be seen in "Letzte Hoffnung" (#16), where a picture of a leaf falling from a tree is depicted:

Hier und da ist an den Bäumen
Noch ein buntes Blatt zu sehn,
Und ich bleibe vor den Bäumen
Oftmals in Gedanken stehn.

Schaue nach dem einen Blatte,
Hänge meine Hoffnung dran;
Spielt der Wind mit meinem Blatte,
Zittr' ich, was ich zittern kann.

Ach, und fällt das Blatt zu Boden,
Fällt mit ihm die Hoffnung ab,

Fall ich selber mit zu Boden,
Wein' auf meiner Hoffnung Grab.

(Müller 55)

The protagonist is watching the last leaves fall to the ground. Life, which was once blooming with vitality, is now nowhere to be seen. What little hope he had left is now lost, and according to the poem, now lies within a grave. One could say, his soul is now dead to him, and all that remains is a journey to his grave.

In his article, “‘Wanderlust’ and ‘Wanderlied:’ The Motif of the Wandering Hero in German Romanticism,” Theodore Gish comments on how the Romantic writer would portray the wanderer: “By means of a vocabulary (verbs, verbal nouns, and adverbs) and syntax (parallel and paratactic constructions) connoting motion, by the use of kinetic images of light, color, sound, and space, finally by the inclusion of natural motion imagery (wind, cloud, water, and bird images) and that of human design (mill wheels and fountains) [...]” (228). Müller’s works are a perfect example of the previous description. For example, in “Der Lindenbaum” (#5), the tree is standing next to a fountain. This fountain, along with all of the other water images in the cycle, can be seen as a symbol for life, and how it is always progressing (or not progressing, as in the case of the frozen brook). Parallels like these are numerous throughout this work and bring insight into its symbolic nature.

The last song of the cycle, “Der Leiermann,” where we meet another human character for the first time, is simply written. The hurdy-gurdy player is depicted as a sad, old man playing his song, where no one other than the howling dogs and our protagonist listen. Interestingly, the musician isn’t found playing his song on the bustling

streets of the city, but rather outside of it, another example of not fitting in with the norms of society. “All the descriptive details hinge about one central point: that the old musician keeps on playing his instrument despite the cold, the snarling dogs, and the lack of an audience” (Youens, *Winter Journey* 132). The protagonist relates to him. Not only is the hurdy-gurdy player the first person he actually notices while on his journey, he turns out to be someone he can actually identify himself with. Perhaps their ‘outsider’ status from society makes that possible. But, we can’t forget the very first word of the cycle: ‘Fremd.’ The protagonist finds companionship with or admiration for the ‘wunderlicher Alter,’ because the musician plays for no one but himself, which allows our disconnected protagonist to find something he can relate to about the musician. He questions whether he should join him or continue his own journey. For a moment he is inspired by the hurdy-gurdy player’s dedication in continuing his own journey, even though he, too, has received no support from society. While the musician could be seen as a symbol of death in life, in his resignation to his disconnection from society, the protagonist has yet to fully accept his fate. Should he continue to be an outsider like the hurdy-gurdy player? Or, should he continue a desolate path of trying to fit in and ultimately resigning to death? “Wunderlicher Alter, / soll ich mit dir gehen?” (Müller 63). Eventually, we find that he has to decide his fate in the last two lines of the cycle: “Willst zu meinen Liedern / Deine Leier drehn?” (Müller 63). He has come to terms with being an outsider to society, and death is the only place where his desired peace lies. Schubert portrays the feelings of the wanderer musically. In the left-hand of the accompaniment there are repeating open-fifths. This type of chord is missing the most

identifying note, the third. Without the third, the chord could either be minor or major, positive or negative. The symbolism of the struggle and yet still hope in the wanderer's thoughts at this point is perfectly portrayed in these two notes. Lowen Marshall relates this aspect of the song cycle back to Schubert: "Indeed it could symbolize the lack of fulfillment which Schubert felt in his own life and it does not seem too far-fetched to consider that he may have had this in mind" (629). He concluded that at this point the protagonist is on the verge of insanity, and that is portrayed in the music; for example, the repetition of the simple phrases or the lack of accompaniment can be symbolically seen. Müller's choice of what instrument the musician is playing should also be noted. A hurdy-gurdy, which is a string instrument very similar in sound to the fiddle, can be seen as a symbol of the path of life. When playing a fiddle, the musician has the bow to stroke the strings with and to make music, but when playing the hurdy-gurdy the musician must crank the mechanism which strokes the strings automatically. The musician has very little freedom with the tone of the instrument, and the circling motion is like an inevitable fate, always turning, always moving on. The instrument, therefore, could be a symbol that the protagonist needs to accept his sad destiny without any chance of altering it.

In Andrew Cusack's *The Wanderer in Nineteenth-Century German Literature: Intellectual History and Cultural Criticism*, he defines the journey of a wanderer as a circular path: "The ideal form of the Romantic journey is the circle, the completion of which brings the protagonist both to his origins and to a higher existential level" (168). There is an evolution of the wandering motif during the Romantic Period. The path now is not necessarily a journey from point A to point B, like when a journeyman, after

completing an apprenticeship, sets out to practice his trade to become a master. The journey itself isn't the key part of the experience for the journeyman; rather, it is the accomplishment of becoming a master. For the Romantic writers, however, the end destination could be seen more as a redefined point A. Thus, the wanderer sets out from one destination, but returns, normally with an improved self, to the same destination. Müller's protagonist initially started his journey as a quest owing to his unrequited love, but through his wanderings he has grown from his experiences along the trek. "Gute Nacht" tells of a character who doesn't fit into society and is compelled to start his journey. In "Der Leiermann" (#24) the wanderer depicted as accepting his fate, and knowing that his next stage in life will give him the rest that he has been yearning for. He has evolved mentally and emotionally throughout his journey, and where he ended up physically has little effect on the storyline. Clearly, how he developed is much more important. In many of the Romantic works, *Die Winterreise* included, the protagonist's goal isn't achieved or it isn't exactly what they hoped it would become at the beginning. Müller's wanderer seems to be always searching or 'wandering' for answers, which portrays a feeling of an infinite 'Sehnsucht:' his desire to continue on, even though it seems that there is no reason to. This feeling was so important for the Romantic writers to portray, and they have done so with help from the wanderer motif. "From the winter of post-Romantic disillusionment, he looked back at the springtime of Romantic ideals [...]" (Youens, *Müllerin* 33). Müller and Schubert's song cycle is written after the optimistic ideals of the period were established, and the motif of the wanderer is used differently, portraying the opposite side of these ideals.

What can be seen in *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Die Winterreise* is that both journeys start off with a different motive than what is realized at the end of their journeys. The main significance for Müller, and writers of the period, is that there had to be a transformation of the characters while on the journey. The goal is not as important as it once was; and with the help of the symbolic nature scenes, these characters' experiences and inner feelings were told. In both of these instances, the figure of the wanderer is used in a negative way, the polar opposite of the optimism the motif usually brings with it. The characters in these song cycles didn't quite fit into society and sought answers in their journey, and both arguably ended in death.

The Wanderer Motif in Eichendorff's

Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts

Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff, living 1788 through 1857, was one of the most prominent authors of the late Romantic Period, and many would argue that he was the last of this period. His work embodies a number of important elements that united writers of the period, while developing the wanderer motif that set him apart from all the others. His works embodied the themes of the period, which included the importance of nature and a 'Sehnsucht' or yearning for adventure. These same characteristics were, as previously stated, laid down by a number of his predecessors of the Romantic Period: Friedrich Schlegel, Novalis and Ludwig Tieck. These themes can be found in a majority of Eichendorff's poems and novellas, where he expanded and developed the aforementioned themes of the period. One of his greatest works was his novella *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, where he tells a story about a good-for-nothing's journey to find his place in the world.

Eichendorff was born to a Prussian officer father and aristocratic mother and enjoyed a idyllic childhood with the best education available. He drew upon many childhood memories of his time at Schloss Lubowitz, and therefore, 'Heimweh,' or homesickness, was a recurring and important theme in many of his works. Later in his life, Schloss Lubowitz as he knew it no longer existed, which ignited even more emotion. Homesickness even comes into the novella about the *Taugenichts*. He and his brother Wilhelm had many opportunities to enjoy trips to foreign cities like Prague, Heidelberg,

Hamburg, Lübeck and Regensburg. Once a law student in Halle, he eventually moved to Heidelberg to continue his education. Here, he had the opportunity to meet other famous authors like Ludwig Achim von Arnim, Clemens Brentano and Joseph Görres. In 1808, he had a chance to travel on a ‘Bildungsreise,’ or educational trip to Strasburg and Paris. One notable trip, which bears a close relationship to his novella, was his trip to Vienna that he took aboard a mail ship on the Danube. The Taugenichts makes a similar voyage, which shows some biographical elements in the novella. It is no surprise that Eichendorff used the wandering motif as a symbol in his writings because of the vast number of opportunities he had to travel. Edith Glatz speaks about the use of the wanderer motif in her book, *‘Wandern’ in poetischen Texten*: “Der Wanderer nimmt die Natur mit allen Sinnen und mit ganzer Seele in sich auf, er verliert sich sozusagen im Raum, vergisst seine Begrenztheit und hat Sehnsucht nach etwas Unbestimmtem” (16-7). Glatz believes that nature is an important aspect associated with the wanderer. We see how he loses himself and his soul in what nature has to offer, and he yearns for something ‘unknown.’ For Eichendorff, this element of not knowing is portrayed in the search for God and the path to heaven. Eichendorff was not the first author to use the motif, but he uses it to mean something different than what we see in works by Goethe or Müller, for example. In all of the works that use the motif, a sense of yearning is found, be it with a certain future goal or just to escape the present. The motif of the wanderer has developed from a journeyman, who initially sought education and personal betterment, to a person who ultimately wanted even more – a higher connection to God and the heavens.

Ludwig Achim von Arnim redefines the figure of the Taugenichts, the protagonist of Eichendorff's novella, in the essay "Von Volksliedern," which can be found in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*: "[...] so wurde jeder als Taugenichts verbannt, der umherschwärmte in unbestimmten Geschäften, als wenn dem Staate und der Welt nicht gerade diese schwärmenden Landsknechte und irrenden Ritter, diese ewige Völkerwanderung ohne Grenzverrückung, diese wandernde Universität und Kunstverbrüderung zu seinen besten schwierigsten Unternehmungen allein taugten" (420). Arnim, along with Clemens Brentano, was a member of the Heidelberg Romantics, in which, as was previously stated, the authors attempted to use literature from the Middle Ages, fairy-tales and songs, for example, to help define and renew the German culture. Eichendorff studied in Heidelberg and found inspiration from their collection and this essay in particular. When Eichendorff was contemplating who his main character would be, he considered using the title "Der neue Troubadour," which is known from his original manuscripts from around roughly 1817. The title showed that there would be a modern version of love between two classes, which was characteristic of the Middle Ages. He later deleted this subtitle and settled on the character of the Taugenichts instead, which Arnim had defined in his essay, to carry out the story. Helmut Koopmann addresses the use of the character in "Joseph von Eichendorff: *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*:" "Ein Taugenichts ist also das (positive) Gegenbild zum Philister, [...] der Taugenichts ein romantischer Protest gegen die geordnete und phantasielose Welt der Normalität" (*Große Werke* 94-5). It is common to find in Eichendorff's works the dangers of living a philistine existence, and the Taugenichts

portrayed the complete opposite. In his essay, “Der ‘Taugenichts’ als literarisches Deutschlandbuch,” Wilhelm Gössman speaks on the magic of Eichendorff’s fictional character: “Man ist sich mit ihm sogleich einig, stimmt ihm zu, ist sogleich bereit, mit ihm aufzubrechen, in die Welt hinauszugehen und sein Glück zu machen” (148). Normally, one might find it hard to relate to a good-for-nothing, but in the novella the reader tends to have sympathy for him. Interestingly, the Taugenichts is never specifically named. The reader only learns about his character, where he comes from and the relationships he develops as the story unfolds. The journey of the Taugenichts is defined by Glatz in the following quote: “Seine Novelle [*Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*] darf man auch als Lebenswanderung, als Reifungswanderung eines reinen Toren ansehen” (56). A reference can be made to the character of Parzival in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s medieval work, where the figure develops from being a simple fool to that of a knight searching for the Holy Grail. A good-for-nothing is only one possible translation for a Taugenichts; another option could be ‘Tor,’ like Glatz refers to, which can also be associated with being fool. Without reading the novella, one may initially think that the protagonist won’t be easily relatable. In Glatz’s context, however, a pure fool is not necessarily portrayed as being a negative figure. ‘Pure’ can mean possessing innocence and not being corrupted by sins from the surrounding world, and ‘fool’ can mean having a sense of naivety of the world, just like in the story of Adam and Eve. They can be referred to as being pure fools, because they possessed innocence as well as the naivety of not knowing the difference between good and evil. Glatz states that Eichendorff’s Taugenichts can be viewed as the journey a ‘pure fool’ has to travel in

order to mature, which makes the character be seen as a hero, just like in Wolfram von Eschenbach's work. Eichendorff depicts the character in such a way that the reader is also able to relate to him, and in fact, portrays the German society of the time as a more realistic framework for this modern-day 'romance.' Without having a name, it is easier for readers to make their own associations to the character. He then could represent people in everyday life, rather than just a character in a story. The novella emerges from the life of 'a' good-for-nothing, not 'the' good-for-nothing, showing that this character could be seen as more than one person.

The Taugenichts has just awakened at the onset of the novella. He barely has the chance to rub the sleep out of his eyes, when his father insists he go out into the world and care for himself: "Du Taugenichts! Da sonnst Du Dich schon wieder und dehnst und reckst Dir die Knochen müde, und läßt mich alle Arbeit allein thun. Ich kann Dich hier nicht länger füttern. Der Frühling ist vor der Thüre, geh auch einmal hinaus in die Welt und erwirb Dir selber Dein Brodt" (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 7). A father, disturbed by a lazy son, is not hard to imagine because of the association with a good-for-nothing. Koopmann discusses this father-son conflict in his article: "Denn wenn der Vater auch nur Müller ist, so beherrscht ihn die Vorstellung von einem geordneten Dasein, in dem offenbar eine besondere Rolle spielt: die Arbeit" (*Große Werke* 86). The father, a miller by trade, found his place in society through hard work at the mill; the protagonist, obviously lacking ambition, did not. Koopmann considers him as an 'outcast' to society because the father believes that in order to be a good citizen, one has to be a diligent worker. When his father complains that he has to do all of the work alone around the

mill, and he isn't able to take care and feed the protagonist anymore, the Taugenichts isn't distraught or disheartened. He retorts, "Nun [...] wenn ich ein Taugenichts bin, so ist's gut, so will ich in die Welt gehen und mein Glück machen" (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 7). The Taugenichts can be seen as a criticism on the norms of society, because he doesn't do what is expected.

Shortly after exchange of words with his father, the Taugenichts begins his journey. With a literal interpretation of the onset of the protagonist's journey, one can associate this as being the first steps into figuring out his trade. He sets off to define his life and determine whatever happiness and fortune in the world it will lead to. Glatz relates this goal to that of a fairytale: "Damit werden wir auch allgemein auf märchenhaftes Geschehen während der Wanderung und auf einen positiven Ausgang des Unternehmens eingestimmt" (57). One can relate easier to the protagonist when his path is laid out in front of him, similar to the common fairytales, which were for the writers of the middle Romantic Period very important. The Grimm brothers, for example, made the characters in their fairytales easily relatable, because everyone wants a happily-ever-after ending. For the characters in fairytales, even if confronted with a problem, everything always falls into place, and that is exactly what is hoped for the Taugenichts, even though he is a good-for-nothing.

Logically, his father would prefer that his son follow in his footsteps and take over the family business at the mill; but when deemed a good-for-nothing at an age where the father should be training him, and society would be expecting to find him in his father's shadow, he sets off on a different path away from what is expected of him.

Shortly after the beginning of his journey, two women pick him up with their coach and offer to take him to Vienna. After falling asleep on the coach and waking up alone, he meanders into the castle, where he is confronted. After the initial shock of his presence, he is offered a job as a gardener. He then gets promoted to the toll-keeper alongside a castle on the outskirts of Vienna after the previous toll-keeper passed away. Joy and hope quickly rise with the new position: “Ich wünschte nur immer, daß auch einmal ein paar Leute aus meinem Dorfe, die immer sagten, aus mir würde mein Lebtag nichts, hier vorüber kommen und mich so sehen möchten” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 18). This is the first time that the reader realizes that not only his father but also the whole community he lived in had deemed him as someone who couldn't amount to anything in his life. Where he was once a social outcast, we see that he now sits proudly at his new post as toll-keeper. He has a respectable job with his own house and own possessions, and wants nothing more than acceptance from society, at least at this point in the story.

If the protagonist were truly happy with his new position, the novella could have ended after the second chapter. But, there still remains a conflict with what he thinks is right in society and what he actually wants in life. He falls prey to a (seemingly) unrequited love relationship with a young woman whom he believes to be a countess in Vienna, and this is an example of where the aspects of a Troubadour come into the novella. One day when the *Taugenichts* was relaxing in the garden, he was spotted by a group of nobles, including the one he loved. He was asked to take them in a boat to the other side of the pond as well as sing them a song. Eichendorff references *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* in the following quote: “Ich danke Ihnen für den sinnigen Einfall! ein

Volkslied, gesungen vom Volk in freiem Wald, ist ein Alpenröslein auf der Alpe selbst - die Wunderhörner sind nur Herbarien -, ist die Seele der Nationalseele” (*Taugenichts* 16).

One stanza in his own “folksong” that he sang, which was referred to as the essence of the national culture, reads:

Wohin ich geh’ und schaue,
In Feld und Wald und Thal,
Vom Berg’ hinab in die Aue:
Viel schöne, hohe Fraue,
Grüß ich Dich tausendmal

[...]

Ihr darf ich keinen [Kranz] reichen
Sie ist zu hoch und schön,
Die [Blumen] müssen alle verbleichen,
Die Liebe nur ohnegleichen
Bleibt ewig im Herzen stehn.

(Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 16)

Here he sings a song to a noble lady, who is too noble and beautiful for him, and this is symbolic of the Taugenichts’ own feelings. He is a mere gardener falling in love with a ‘countess,’ and proclaiming his love through music, just like what a Troubadour would have done. Having everything he needs to live on, shelter, food and a place in society, he has found a muse for whom to play his numerous love songs on his fiddle. His life appears to be rich and full, yet he still desires the ‘noble’ lady’s love.

One evening when the Taugenichts was sitting with the doorman of the castle, they hear the hunting horn in the distance. He exclaims, “Ich war recht im innersten Herzen vergnügt und sprang auf und rief wie bezaubert und verzückt vor Lust: ‘Nein, das ist mir doch ein Metier, die edle Jägerei!’” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 19). The doorman realizes and accepts his place in society, which makes him more grounded, as

opposed to the Taugenichts' idealistic views. Due to this fact, he has a more realistic view of all of the problems that come with the profession of hunting, i.e. cold feet, if one is not on horseback like the noble hunters. The Taugenichts, not willing to accept his reply, insists the doorman leave his presence. The doorman, just like the protagonist's father, fits into the confines of the work force in society, whereas the Taugenichts, the idealistic dreamer, wants more from life. He wants to believe that hunting is as noble as he imagines it, and he has the mentality that if he doesn't experience it for himself, then he will never know what it is truly like. The students, who will appear later in the novella, have a similar mentality. They need to experience the world despite the fact that there are hardships that will come with their journey. He isn't ready to settle into society and take his role as gardener or a toll-keeper for the rest of his life. His ambition and optimistic ideals lead him onward.

When interpreting the novella literally, the reader is left with a feeling that the only thing that could make the Taugenichts content is finding his true love, building a house and starting a family. In his toll-keeper's house, by way of contrast, he uproots all of the practical vegetation that is needed for him to sustain making his own food, and in its place plants flowers to give to his new love. There is no desire for him to be practical, but instead he is formed by his feelings. When thinking of his new love he says the following: "Jeder hat sein Plätzchen auf der Erde ausgesteckt, hat seinen warmen Ofen, seine Tasse Kaffee, seine Frau, sein Glas Wein zu Abend, und ist so recht zufrieden; selbst dem Portier ist ganz wohl in seiner langen Haut. – Mir ist's nirgends recht. Es ist, als wäre ich überall eben zu spät gekommen, als hätte die ganze Welt gar nicht auf mich

gerechnet” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 25). The Taugenichts can’t fit into this philistine existence that society and the doorman seem to hold so dearly. He desires something more, which causes great distress for him. He believes he can find that in love, and ultimately thinking he was in a different class than his ‘countess,’ he wanders away from everything he should think good in the world in hopes of finding his fairytale ending.

The love of the Taugenichts, known later in the story as Aurelie, becomes the reason for much joy and pain for him. In Otto Eberhardt’s book *Eichendorffs ‘Taugenichts’: Quellen und Bedeutungshintergrund: Untersuchungen zum poetischen Verfahren Eichendorffs*, he analyzes Aurelie by comparing the name to Aurora, which was the Roman goddess for dawn. Throughout his entire journey, the Taugenichts has a varying distance to God. There are many clues that give this away and one of them is Aurelie: “Die doppelte Disposition des Taugenichts sowohl zur Gottnähe wie zur Gottferne kann sich gerade in seiner Liebe [Aurelie] zeigen, und die geliebte Frau kann – in Wechselbeziehung dazu – beiden Orientierungen entsprechen” (Eberhardt 88). Eberhardt compares the character of Aurelie to the figure of Maria as well as of Venus. These two characters are total opposites – one a pagan figure, the other a figure of the church – but both are represented in Aurelie, source for the Taugenichts’ love. Maria is seen as being closer to God, whereas Venus’s realm is the earth, which gives Aurelie both a connection to the heavens while at the same time being ‘worldly.’ According to Eberhardt’s analysis, Aurelie appears two times as the figure of Maria and one time as the figure of Venus. “Die schöne Frau, welche eine Lilie in der Hand hielt, saß dicht am Bord des Schiffeins und sah stilllächelnd in die klaren Wellen hinunter, die sie mit der

Lilie berührte, so dass ihr ganzes Bild zwischen den widerscheinenden [sic!] Wolken und Bäumen im Wasser noch einmal zu sehen war, wie ein Engel, der leise durch den tiefen blauen Himmelsgrund zieht” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 15). Eichendorff places Aurelie in a tranquil boat ride, dangling a lily over the water and getting lost in the melody of the Taugenichts’ song. She is compared to an angel, a heavenly figure, which Eberhardt believes significant as seen in the reference to the lily: “[...] – die Lilie, nach alter Tradition ein spezifisches Marienattribut” (187). Another time Maria can be seen in Aurelie is when the Taugenichts notices her at the ball while sitting on top of a tree: “[...] die schöne junge gnädige Frau, in ganz weißem Kleide, wie eine Lilie in der Nacht, oder wie wenn der Mond über das klare Firmament zöge” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 27). Once again, the picture of a lily is present, representing the form of Maria. The white color of her dress is also interesting. It is the color of the lily, and it is a symbol for innocence and perfection, which can also be related back to her heavenly presence. This picture of Aurelie, as well as the previous one, brings the Taugenichts into falling more desperately in love with her, and it is as though with this heavenly image of Maria he is closer to God. On the other hand, Aurelie can be seen as the figure of Venus, also known as the Roman goddess for love and sexuality: “[...] denn schon kam meine schöne gnädige Frau selber, in einem grünen Jagdhabit und mit nickenden Federn auf dem Hute, langsam und wie es schien in tiefen Gedanken die Allee herabgeritten” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 20). In this scene, the Taugenichts notices that she is wearing a flower on her jacket that he had left her the night before. He offers her the flowers, which he had in his hands. Without saying a word and giving him a discerning look, she takes the flowers

and leaves his presence. Hunting, which can be associated with the earth, is used to put Aurelie in a different perspective. The fact that she took his bouquet of flowers and was wearing them symbolizes that this love can be very alluring. The Taugenichts is deceived during the ensuing ballroom scene. After being instructed to bring the countess flowers, whom he thought was Aurelie, he observes the ballroom while sitting on top of a tree. He notices that Aurelie was with a man, which made him think that she didn't love or even notice him. This is the point when the Taugenichts decided to start his journey once again.

Outside of the protagonist's home village, there are three cities that are identified in the story. They include Vienna, where the protagonist returned to after living there on its outskirts for an indeterminate amount of time, Rome (Italy), where the protagonist journeys to in the search of his 'happiness,' and Prague, where the students are from that the protagonist encounters shortly before the wedding ceremony, at which they will be the musicians. Eichendorff, unlike Goethe, never travelled to Italy, so a portrayal of Rome would have been the result of his experiences in literature and conversations with friends who had been there. It was a logical destination for the Taugenichts' journey of self-discovery, as it was known as the center of the Catholic Church. Eichendorff introduces Italy beautifully through the doorman, the character the Taugenichts meets while in the outskirts of Vienna. "Werthgeschätzter Herr Einnehmer! Italien ist ein schönes Land, da sorgt der liebe Gott für alles, da kann man sich im Sonnenschein auf den Rücken legen, so wachsen einem die Rosinen ins Maul, und wenn einen die Tarantel beißt, so tanzt man mit ungemeiner Gelenkigkeit, wenn man auch sonst nicht tanzen

gelernt hat” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 31). Rome – idealized as the perfect backdrop for the Taugenichts’ nirvana on earth – is where raisins grow in one’s mouth without need of work and toil and it is also where if bitten by a tarantula one can dance the tarantella perfectly without ever being taught. With eager anticipation, the Taugenichts takes his first steps into Rome: “Denn von dem prächtigen Rom hatte ich schon zu Hause als Kind viele wunderbare Geschichten gehört, und wenn ich dann an Sonntags-Nachmittagen vor der Mühle im Grase lag und alles ringsum so stille war, da dachte ich mir Rom wie die ziehenden Wolken über mir, mit wundersamen Bergen und Abgründen am blauen Meer, und goldnen Thoren und hohen glänzenden Thürmen, von denen Engel in goldenen Gewändern sangen” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 65-6). When talking about the city, he only knew stories from his childhood, similar to the real-life situation of the writer. What is most interesting about the previous quote is when he would be thinking about the city, he would be lying on the grass and looking up into the heavens. At a very young age, he glorified the city into being something more than just another town, and in his description he mentions the wonderful mountains, the golden gates and even angels singing on top of high towers. In his book, *Versuche über Eichendorff*, Oskar Seidlin has an entire chapter devoted to explaining the initial scene of when the Taugenichts first enters Rome. When referring to the Taugenichts’ vision of Rome during his childhood, he compares it to a fairytale among other things: “[...] als ein Märchen, das man erzählen kann, nicht eine Kontur, die sich den Augen darbietet, sondern eine Fabel, ein Stimulus für einen Traum, eine Schöpfung unserer eigenen Seele, an Sonntagnachmittagen, wenn alles still ist, und wir ganz allein sind mit uns, zurückgezogen in uns und fern von der zerstreuten und

zerstreuenden Welt” (Seidlin, *Versuche* 17). He makes a connection between reality and fantasy, between what is known and something that only affects our feelings. The idea of picturing the city within the clouds not only gives the image of a heavenly city, but also strengthens Seidlin’s distinction of reality. The image of heaven is hardly subtle, and purposefully so. Seidlin also argues that Eichendorff is writing about more than just the city of Rome. The city is named two times in the above quote from the novella, but after this passage Eichendorff changes from using the city’s name to just calling it a city, even a ‘holy’ city: “[...] und auf einmal die Stadt in der Ferne vor mir sah” and “[...] darunter lag die heilige Stadt von der man nur einen langen Nebelstreif erkennen konnte” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 66). Was this just Eichendorff’s attempt to vary his writing techniques, or was he trying to bring the focus off of the worldly city to that of a different nature? We are following the Taugenichts on his journey when he is first noticing the city from afar, and interestingly, the city is surrounded by fog. This fact can allude to the memories that he already had of the clouds while lying on the grass on those Sunday afternoons or the association that in German ‘Himmel’ stands for heaven as well as sky. Before he reaches the ‘holy city,’ the Taugenichts had to pass through a heath that was grey and still just like a ‘grave:’ “Ich kam nun zuerst auf eine große, einsame Haide [sic!], auf der es so grau und still war, wie im Grabe” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 66). He has to walk through these ancient ruins of a city with only his shadow to accompany him. In another one of Seidlin’s essays, “Eichendorff’s Symbolic Landscape,” he comments about the significance of Rome: “[...] the celestial city, beginning and end of man’s roaming, primordial image and distant lure of salvation, reachable only by crossing,

undaunted, the heathenish heath, dry, lightless, and full of temptations” (*Landscape* 647). This foreground to the city of Rome could be a symbol of the trials and tribulations that the wanderer has to go through while on earth. “Sie sagen, daß hier eine uralte Stadt und die Frau Venus begraben liegt, und die alten Heiden zuweilen noch aus ihren Gräbern heraufsteigen und bei stiller Nacht über die Haide [sic!] gehn und die Wanderer verwirren” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 66). The scene that confronts the Taugenichts depicts a city that has been left in ruins, namely its pagan past. If he is not careful, Venus and these old ghosts will allure him off of the true path of salvation. He is luckily not led astray and keeps his sights set on his goal, the holy city. When he approaches the city, he is able to experience the sights and it becomes a part of his reality. It is as if this fantasy of the holy city is now part of his reality. “Der Name also, der auf etwas äußerlich Sichtbares hinweisen sollte, schlägt ein – im Innern; anstatt die Fenster aufzustoßen in die wirkliche Welt, führt er zu einer Bewegung im fühlenden Ich; anstatt die Augen zu mobilisieren, mobilisiert er das Herz” (Seidlin, *Versuche* 16). Seidlin argues that the Taugenichts is not actually in Rome, because its descriptions simply do not line up with reality. Eichendorff describes the city having mountains that appear to be like giants watching over it. Although famous for its seven hills, Rome isn’t known for its mountainous landscape. Did Eichendorff make a mistake in describing the city, or did he intentionally do it to strengthen the point that this is now a heavenly city? “Nun freilich, nachdem alle Orientierung in der Wirklichkeit unmöglich geworden ist, scheint der Weg freigelegt für das eigentlich ‘Wirkliche’” (Seidlin, *Versuche* 19). Life can be seen as a journey that everyone has to travel through, but in this novella, it is as if Eichendorff

were saying that everything on the journey isn't as important as what is to come in the reality of heaven.

Eichendorff wrote over the theme of wandering in countless numbers of other works, but one poem deserves to be compared with the protagonist in *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*, and that is the poem "Die Zwei Gesellen" or "Frühlingsfahrt," which was published in 1818:

Es zogen zwei rüstige Gesellen
Zum ersten Mal von Haus
So jubelnd recht in die hellen
Klingenden, singenden Wellen
Des vollen Frühlings hinaus.

Die strebten nach hohen Dingen,
Die wollten, trotz Lust und Schmerz,
Was Recht's in der Welt vollbringen,
Und wem sie vorübergingen,
Dem lachten Sinnen und Herz

[...]

(Eichendorff, *Gedichte* 61)

In the poem, the journey begins in spring, just as it did for the Taugenichts. Both works share a feeling of excitement and anticipation of what is to come. The hope of new beginnings continues to unite the poem and Eichendorff's story of a Taugenichts. In the poem, there are two journeymen venturing out of their houses for the first time in hopes of finding their place on earth. Both men pursue high things in their lives. In other words, their life goal is to do what is right, or at least what they think is right. In Gerd Holzheimer's book *Wanderer Mensch*, he speaks briefly about the poem and says the following about the two life wanderers: "Die beiden Extrempunkte wandernder wie menschlicher Existenz überhaupt sind damit festgelegt" (71). The first has found a wife,

was supplied with a house and had a child, as if to be living the perfect philistine existence. The second searches for a life of adventure and excitement on his voyage, influenced by sexual desires. In talking about the outcome of both of these journeymen, Bernadette Malinowski writes in her article: “Both fates end in catastrophe: the fate of the first companion in bourgeois society is marked by homey comforts, prosperity, and familiar order but also by narrow-mindedness, rigidity, restrictions, confinement, and stagnation; the second companion succumbs to the whirlwind of Romantic striving for ideals, to Eros, to poetry” (158). Seidlin also comments on the poem: “In keinem anderen Eichendorffschen Gedicht sind die Bedrohung wahrer menschlicher Existenz: engumzirktes Philistertum und allentgrenzender Selbstverlust, Sich-Verliegen und Sich-Verlieren, so scharf nebeneinandergestellt, so nummernmäßig aufgezählt wie in diesem von den beiden Gesellen” (*Versuche* 162). The journeys of these men should be seen as warnings to what is to come of people who follow similar paths in the world, because there is something more important to follow: God’s will.

The last stanza of the poem, which is the first time the narrator is directly mentioned, reads:

Es singen und klingen die Wellen
Des Frühlings wohl über mir
Und seh ich so kecke Gesellen;
Die Tränen im Auge mir schwellen –
Ach Gott, führ uns liebeich zu Dir!

(Eichendorff, *Gedichte* 62)

The ending brings the poem from a negative story of two journeymen to having a positive outcome. The narrator, after having explained the paths of a couple of wanderers, now realizes with tears in his eyes the real path that one needs to go on in order to get into

heaven. Holzheimer concludes, “Über alle Irrwege, Irrtümer und Abgründe hinweg darf der Gläubige zumindest darauf hoffen, daß auch sein Weg sein Ziel finden wird: in der Aufgehobenheit des Jenseits, bei Gott” (71). The ending shows that no matter what path one travels in the world, be it the pursuit of love or adventure, a relationship with God should be the main goal of realization and source for life’s answer to true happiness. As in the story, the poem also reflects Eichendorff’s personal life. He was a student of law and became a government official, but he also had a creative mind that was expressed through his passion to write. Even though he enjoyed many secular aspects that should define his level of happiness, he believed the only true path to happiness and contentment was to follow God’s plan.

In “The Significance of the Taugenichts for Eichendorff,” J. D. Workman writes, “Concepts such as plot, motivation, characterization, have no bearing on this *Novelle*, even less so than on Eichendorff’s other narrative works” (64). In his view, more important aspects are the mood or atmosphere that Eichendorff sets, the form in which he sets this mood and the symbolic meaning of different aspects throughout the novella. He believes, “The world of nature is the medium in which Eichendorff lives and breathes” (Workman 65). We know from previous writers that this was an important aspect for this era. Nature is always vividly painted and normally depicts the moods of the protagonists. One such example of this can be found in the first sentence of the novella: “Das Rad an meines Vaters Mühle brauste und rauschte schon wieder recht lustig, der Schnee tröpfelte emsig vom Dache, die Sperlinge zwitscherten und tummelten sich dazwischen; ich saß auf der Thürschwelle und wischte mir den Schlaf aus den Augen, mir war so recht wohl

in dem warmen Sonnenscheine” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 7). This sentence sets the mood for the entire novella. The twittering and dancing of birds after the onset of spring stands in stark contrast to the grinding and whiling of the mill, which promises labor, toil and routine of a day. With such a portrait painted as a backdrop that adds dimension to his stories, Eichendorff’s characters begin to appear. The reader knows that ‘change’ is in the air as winter melts into a spring that promises a ‘new start.’ Eichendorff also awakens multiple senses in this description. Not only can we see the picture of an old wheel turning and the birds flying around, but we can also hear the birds singing, the steady dripping of melting snow and the rasping of an old millwheel in motion. Eichendorff’s faith in God and belief in His hand in all of creation is without question. One shouldn’t try to evade these beautiful scenes, but should enjoy them as a heavenly symbol for what is to come. Workman continues speaking of the beauty of Eichendorff’s world: “[...] to the discerning eye the beauty of the temporal world is symbolic of a higher life to come: the earth is the antechamber of the temple, a resplendent interlude between two eternities” (66).

The first thing the protagonist grabs before he starts the journey is a fiddle. This instrument is a major part of his life and shows the connection with music and the arts as a form of expression. The *Taugenichts*, fiddle in hand, is even more similar to that of a troubadour in the Middle Ages, traveling around being supported by the wealthy and staying in one place for a period of time, but not permanently. Wherever he goes he will think of his new love, Aurelie. And he realizes that all beauty in nature will remind him of her. The fiddle could symbolize Eichendorff’s own connection to the arts, mainly his

writing and the joy that came with it. Interestingly, in the Taugenichts story, the protagonist, while working as a toll-keeper in Vienna, didn't pay attention to his fiddle as much as he wanted to. He had become a respectable member of society and he was consumed with his work and didn't have time for anything else – not unlike his father who went from sleeping to work day in and day out. This is the risk of living a philistine existence. At the end of the chapter, when he decided to leave Vienna, he says the following about his fiddle: “[...] meine Geige, die ich schon fast ganz vergessen hatte, hing verstaubt an der Wand. Ein Morgenstrahl aber, aus dem gegenüberstehenden Fenster, fuhr grade blitzend über die Saiten. Das gab einen rechten Klang in meinem Herzen. Ja, sagt' ich, komm nur her, Du getreues Instrument! Unser Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt!” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 29). While he was working as a toll-collector, his fiddle collected dust just like the miller's lute in *Die schöne Müllerin*, when the miller (falsely) thought he had attained true love and happiness, but then the Taugenichts came to the realization that he wasn't satisfied with his current situation. He then sets off with his initial desire to wander with his 'devoted' instrument by his side. The Taugenichts was able to achieve what Müller's miller could not. He is wandering into the world optimistically, where the miller only found sadness in the lute's faded green band.

The fiddle has been used to symbolize many things, including having a connection to the heavens and to God. There is a German expression that says, “Der Himmel hängt voller Geigen,” which translates loosely into: the heavens are filled with fiddles. This means that all is well in the world, heavenly music fills the air, and the Taugenichts' fiddle reminds him that he is part of that nirvana. Subsequently, throughout

his journey, we hear his song and the sound of the fiddle – as if in praise to the heavens and out of thankfulness to God. An excellent example of works that could have influenced Eichendorff was the song from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* “Der Himmel hängt voll Geigen.” The song’s text contains references to the music found in heaven, and how much more beautiful it is compared to earthly music. This could have had a huge influence on Eichendorff’s choice of the fiddle as the protagonist’s companion, as opposed to a flute or a lute, as in *Die schöne Müllerin*.

The fiddle turned out to be a strong representation of the arts in general. Even though the Taugenichts is not a professional musician, he plays for a number of people on his journey to Italy. Many were very complimentary of his entertainment and even offer him money, which he angrily refuses: “Wenn ich gleich dazumal kein Geld in der Tasche hatte” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 35). He finds a job that could sustain him, but finds it insufficient to create complete happiness for him. He realizes that he needs more in life, which his fiddle music seems to provide him. Eberhardt speaks about what he feels the journey means to this work: “Und das Wandern und Reisen, zu dem gerade der Frühling einlädt, ist für Eichendorff nicht nur ein grundlegendes Bild für das menschliche Leben, sondern insbesondere auch eine ideale Voraussetzung für rechtes Dichten” (113). Wandering is not only a picture of human life, but also a condition or requirement for true poetry.

“Unser Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt!” also makes reference to the Bible passage when Pilate was confronting Jesus on being King of the Jews. Jesus’ reply, “My kingdom is not of this world” (*New International Version*, John 18.36), signifies that he

doesn't belong on earth, and that he is only here to spread word of what is to come. It is as if the Taugenichts can relate to this idea. Not only does he say that to his fiddle, a heavenly instrument, but he also knows that something better will come. He can't seem to find his place on earth, just like God's son. This passage wasn't the only time when Eichendorff's novella closely related verses from the Bible. In the very last scene when the protagonist learns about his misunderstanding and discovers that the woman he took to be a married countess is truly in love with him, he says, "[...] – und es war alles, alles gut!" (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 108). This draws a very close reference to when God first made the earth. "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Gen. 1.31). God created the beautiful earth with the intention that we would live our lives in full enjoyment of it and in close fellowship to Him. Later, after the fall of man, His creation becomes a sampling of the greatness of things to come in heaven. It is as if the Taugenichts now knows this. His journey was fulfilled when he realized God's intentions. Interestingly enough, Eichendorff brings back the city of Rome in his final paragraph: "[...] und gleich nach der Trauung reisen wir fort nach Italien, nach Rom [...]" (*Taugenichts* 108). The city, which is an earthly representation of heaven, becomes their honeymoon destination, and that shows what Eichendorff thought of the city and how he used it to depict what is to come in heaven on earth.

As mentioned before, Eichendorff considered using "Der neue Troubadour" as his title for the novella. Other authors of his time used the idea of the travelling musician of the Middle Ages in their works, including Ludwig Tieck in his *Minnelieder aus dem Schwäbischen Zeitalter* (1803). Wilhelm Müller even created an anthology of

minnesongs thirteen years after the publication of Tieck's work, shortly before Eichendorff began working on *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*. In the foreword to his work, Tieck talks about what poetry, or the arts, meant to a travelling musician of that time: "Die Poesie war ein allgemeines Bedürfniß des Lebens, und von diesem ungetrennt, daher erscheint sie so gesund und frei, und so viel Kunst und strenge Schule auch so manche Gedichte dieser Zeit verrathen, so möchte man doch diese Poesie nicht Kunst nennen; sie ist gelernt, aber nicht um gelehrt zu erscheinen, die Meisterschaft verbirgt sich in der Unschuld und Liebe, der Poet ist unbesorgt um das Interesse, daher bleibt er in aller Künstlichkeit so einfältig und naiv" (xix). Art takes on a different form in this period, because musicality is learned; musicians were seen as a tradesman of sorts. Just as a miller's son was expected to learn everything possible about the mill, so too was it expected that the troubadours knew everything of their 'trade.' Eichendorff's protagonist, a miller by expectations, didn't have the training that a troubadour would have had or would have been expected to have. The true form of his art comes into effect throughout the novella. This can also be seen as a criticism of the time period. Carel ter Haar comments in his commentary to the novella about the presence of art: "Die Kunst, denn Musik und Malerei werden im *Taugenichts* mit einbezogen, ist der Kristallisationspunkt jenes fiktiven Volkes. Daß sie in der Figur eines armen Müllersohns erscheinen muß, um zur Gestaltung zu gelangen, ist auch ein Zeichen der 'gnadenlosen' Zeit" (153). The art of the society comes from a poor tradesman, as opposed to when there were troubadours, the music tradesmen of the day but very much in keeping with what Arnim and Brentano propagated in their *Wunderhorn*.

As soon as the protagonist enters the open fields after leaving his village, he pulls out his fiddle and sings:

Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen,
Den schickt er in die weite Welt,
Dem will er seine Wunder weisen
In Fels und Wald und Strom und Feld.

Die Trägen, die zu Hause liegen,
Erquicket nicht das Morgenroth,
Sie wissen nur vom Kinderwiegen,
Von Sorgen, Last und Noth um Brodt.

[...]

(Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 8)

In the first lines of the song, commonly known as “Der frohe Wandersmann,” it is clear that faith will play a large role in the Taugenichts’ journey. God’s wonder of the world’s creation is a gift to everyone. The beauty of nature can draw one closer to God, and it represents freedom from society. It is not uncommon to find the representation of religion, faith and an awareness of God in Eichendorff’s works. This is unique when compared to works preceding this period. Goethe, for example, made reference to many types of gods, as seen in “Wandrer’s Sturmlied.” His wanderer put himself on the same level as these Greek gods, which is a complete change from what is seen in Eichendorff’s works.

The poem is written in four stanzas with a mood of hope and excitement. The protagonist is eager to set off onto his journey into nature, which God created. The mountains, rivers, forests and fields are all described as magnificent objects, and the people who sit at home couldn’t enjoy these beauties, instead could only be preoccupied with the philistine problems of life, i.e. struggles of working or caring for a family. He

also mentions the larks in the sky and how he can't resist singing along with them in praising God. Eberhardt states the following about his journey: "Die folgenden Abenteuer des Taugenichts mit ihren Wanderungen und Reisen erscheinen danach also von Anfang an deutlich im Sinne der christlichen Tradition als spezifischer Vollzug der menschlichen Existenz, als Wanderung durch das irdische Leben oder als 'Lebensreise'" (111). He is on an earthly journey to heaven, and nature, created by God, is the Taugenichts' way of becoming closer to Him. This path is extremely different than the path of Goethe's protagonist in "An Schwager Kronos," where he is traveling towards the underworld to meet 'Orkus.' The Taugenichts realizes the gift that God has given him and begins his journey.

The time of the year is also an interesting aspect of Eichendorff's work. Sabine Karl has an in-depth book researching this theme extensively. She suggests, "Der Frühling symbolisiert den von ihm eigenständig gefaßten Entschluß, zur Lebensreise aufzubrechen" (Karl 206). The opening sentence of the novella not only sets the mood of the entire novella, but also supports Karl's claim. With the image of the snow melting and the presence of the birds, the spring is just setting in, and thus this is a symbol for the onset of the journey. New life is beginning to bloom, which for the Romantic writers is a perfect setting for the wanderer motif. Reversely, fall as well as winter is a time for ending one's journey and the time for either 'Heimweh' or reaching one's destination, unless one wants to risk a cold and loveless 'Winterreise.'

Another symbolic aspect in *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* is that of the birds. There are numerous references to birds, which are seemingly just to help paint a picture

of nature that is happening around the main character, but it does, however, symbolize more than just that. For Eichendorff, birds had the ability to travel freely, but not just in an earthly setting. They were not bound to the ties of the earth, and therefore had a connection to heaven, which the Taugenichts, and also Eichendorff, admired. During his trip on the mail ship heading back towards Vienna, the Taugenichts exclaims, “Wenn ich nur heute Flügel hätte!” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 94), which is a reference to “Wenn ich ein Vöglein wär” from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*:

Wenn ich ein Vöglein wär,
Und auch zwei Flüglein hätt,
Flög ich zu dir;
Weils aber nicht kann seyn,
Bleib ich allhier.

[...]

(Brentano and Arnim 217-8)

He is jealous of the birds, a symbol for beauty and freedom, around him, and knows of their magical ability to have the freedom to travel where they want. While sitting at a fountain in Rome, the protagonist sings the following song:

Wenn ich ein Vöglein wär',
Ich wüßt' wohl, wovon ich sänge,
Und auch zwei Flüglein hätt',
Ich wüßt' wohl, wohin ich mich schwänge!

(Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 69)

He sings about how magical it would be if he had wings and could fly like the birds.

Eichendorff makes another comparison when describing the Taugenichts leaving the boat towards Vienna, “[...] ein Vogel, der aus jeden [sic!] Käfig ausreißt, sobald er nur kann, und lustig singt, wenn er wieder in der Freiheit ist” (*Taugenichts* 95). He associates a bird flying away from his cage, or the binds of society, into freedom, which not only

gives a good picture of the scene, but is also a way to show the envy that the Taugenichts has for these birds. He wants to have this freedom or this connection that he cannot exactly get on earth living a philistine existence.

As mentioned before, the theme of 'Heimweh' or homesickness is also very important in Eichendorff's works. The Taugenichts remembers aspects about his hometown, his family or the time he spent at the mill. As he was staying in Rome, he contemplated the following: "Da träumte mir, ich läge bei meinem Dorfe auf einer einsamen grünen Wiese, ein warmer Sommerregen sprühte und glänzte in der Sonne, die soeben hinter den Bergen unterging, und wie die Regentropfen auf den Rasen fielen, waren es lauter schöne bunte Blumen, so daß ich davon ganz überschüttet war" (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 74). Not only does Eichendorff paint a vivid picture of this scene in nature, it also shows that the protagonist still dreams about his home. This passage happened right after he was unsuccessful in finding his 'countess' in the city of Rome. Not knowing what to do, feelings of homesickness returned. "In Eichendorffs Dichtung spiegelt sich deutlicher als alles andere die Welt seiner Kindheit und frühen Jugend [...]" (Koopmann, *Deutsche Dichter* 421). The feelings of the Taugenichts could be a connection to Eichendorff's own life and how he longed for the days he lived at Schloss Lubowitz. Europe was in a time of change, where new borders were being drawn by the Congress in Vienna. Eichendorff himself participated in a war fighting for Prussia, and later had to pursue a career as a Prussian bureaucrat, which is an entirely different situation compared to the life of nobility he previously enjoyed as a youth prior to 1806.

The themes of homesickness and love can be seen in the following song:

Wer in die Fremde will wandern,
Der muß mit der Liebsten gehn,
Es jubeln und lassen die Andern
Den Fremden alleine stehn.

Was wisset Ihr, dunkle Wipfeln,
Von der alten schönen Zeit?
Ach, die Heimath hinter den Gipfeln,
Wie liegt sie von hier so weit.

Am liebsten betracht ich die Sterne,
Die schienen, wenn ich ging zu ihr,
Die Nachtigall hör' ich so gerne,
Sie sang vor der Liebsten Thür.

Der Morgen, das ist meine Freude!
Da steig ich in stiller Stund'
Auf den höchsten Berg in die Weite,
Grüß Dich Deutschland aus Herzensgrund!

(Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 59)

Originally, he heard this song being sung by a wandering tradesman that had once visited his father's mill. He sings it during a stay at a castle in Italy, where he feels abandoned in a foreign land. He remembers the song when sitting on top of the tallest tree, a perch that brings him symbolically closer to God. While sitting there, he is distracted by the post horn he hears in the distance, growing louder as it comes closer. He reminisces about Germany or the 'Vaterland' and then says the following about the post horn: "Es war, als wenn mich das Posthorn bei meinem Liede aus der Ferne begleiten wollte. Es kam, während ich sang, zwischen den Bergen immer näher und näher, bis ich es endlich gar oben auf dem Schloßhofe schallen hörte" (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 60). Eberhardt speaks about the significance of the post horn; it can be seen as "[...] ein Zeichen für die Bewegung in die Ferne, aber auch ein Zeichen der Vergänglichkeit des Irdischen" (433).

According to Eberhardt, the post horn is also a symbol that everything on the earth is transitory. The horn connects him to his childhood home and, as Barickman points out, is a symbol of both ‘Heimweh’ and ‘Fernweh.’ In both instances, it awakens the longing found in the Taugenichts’ dreams (Barickman 127-8). The song which he sings speaks of a wanderer’s journey into a distant and unknown land, and how he will always think of the ‘alte schöne Zeit,’ or good old times of the past and of Germany, where his dearest now is. The theme of homesickness can be very closely tied to many of the songs in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. For example, the first lines of “Der Schweizer” read:

Zu Straßburg auf der Schanz,
Da ging mein Trauren an,
Das Alphorn hört ich drüben wohl anstimmen,
Ins Vaterland muß ich hinüber schwimmen,
Das ging nicht an.

(Brentano and Arnim 136)

This poem shows another example of how the horn can be used to portray a connection with the feelings of homesickness the protagonist is feeling. In Eichendorff’s poem, he sets the mood with reference to nature and the narrator climbing the highest mountain just to look in the direction of his homeland. The morning itself, like spring, is a time for hope and clarity, which gives his song an optimistic feeling, even though it speaks of homesickness. This motif is put into a positive light here, and is important and ever present in the character of the wanderer.

After the Taugenichts leaves Vienna to escape the disappointment in his relationship with Auriele, he encounters two people whom he believes are painters, Leonhard and Flora, alias Guido. After accompanying these painters for a while, they find respite at an inn. Upon waking, the Taugenichts realizes that he was left

abandoned. Despite this, he continues his journey onwards with the post carriage and the money that Leonhard and Guido had left for him. He arrives at another castle, where he is treated like a king. Shortly thereafter, he receives a letter intended for Flora from Aurelie: “Es ist alles wieder gut, alle Hindernisse sind beseitigt. Ich benutze heimlich diese Gelegenheit, um die erste zu seyn, die Ihnen diese freudige Botschaft schreibt. Kommen, eilen Sie zurück. Es ist so öde hier und ich kann kaum mehr leben, seit Sie von uns fort sind. Aurelie” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 60). The letter was never meant for the Taugenichts, but he takes this to mean that he is loved by his ‘countess.’ The intentional recipient of the letter was disguised as the painter Guido and betrothed to Leonhard with whom she eloped to Italy, but it’s not until the end that the reader and the Taugenichts figure this out.

Near the end of the story, upon his return from Italy, the Taugenichts comes across three theology students from Prague – a city that Eichendorff visited on one of his educational trips. The students are on their way to play at a wedding, and the horn player turns out to be both the doorman’s cousin and related to the Taugenichts’ ‘countess.’ A planned coincidence always seems to be a part of fairytales, and this novella is no exception to the rule. In the following two quotes, the opinion of the students’ view of the world is seen: “Und wenn dann endlich die Vakanz kommt, und die Andern fahren und reiten zu ihren Ältern [sie] fort, da wandern wir mit unsern Instrumenten unter’m Mantel durch die Gaßen zum Thore hinaus, und die ganze Welt steht uns offen” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 90) and they continue, “[...] laßt die Andern nur ihre Kompendien repetiren, wir studiren unterdeß in dem großen Bilderbuche, das der liebe

Gott uns draußen aufgeschlagen hat!” (Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 91). They wander when the other students are taking a break or going home to their parents. Their belief shows us that not only is the time spent studying seen as being important, so also is the experience that a journey into the world will provide. Glatz states, “Was sich von der Welt erwandern lässt, steht den Studenten offen” (60). Through wandering, the students enjoy the beauty in the world. Interesting enough, the students are accompanied by their instruments, just like our protagonist. This restates the importance of music and of the arts. “Ähnlich scharf kontrastiert das von Eichendorff entworfene Bild der Studenten mit den Vorstellungen der damaligen Zeit” (Haar 116). The students in Eichendorff’s novella can’t be compared to the students during the early 19th Century. Haar talks about the difference between the students during the 19th century and the students in the novella: “Das ‘Studentenwesen,’ das Eichendorff in der Novelle schildert, gestaltet sich gerade nicht ‘aus dem jedesmaligen Geiste der Zeit,’ sondern ist zeitlos” (116). He wanted to keep a ‘timeless’ nature in the novella, and his students should be seen as separate to what was happening during the time. Haar continues: “Sie werden nicht als künftige Staatsbeamte, sondern in ihrer mittelalterlichen Wirklichkeit als angehende Geistliche, das heißt also als Diener und Repräsentanten der Kirche, geschildert” (116). The students should be seen as representatives and servants of the church, who only have God’s ‘Bilderbuche,’ or picture book, to guide them through the world, and their journey will end in heaven after they have completed their studies. These characters show the importance of the wanderer motif to Eichendorff as the pursuit to have a close relationship to God.

Towards the end of the ninth chapter the students sing the following song:

Nach Süden nun sich lenken
Die Vöglein allzumal,
Viel' Wandrer lustig schwenken
Die Hüt' im Morgenstrahl.
Das sind die Herrn Studenten,
Zum Thor hinaus es geht,
Auf ihren Instrumenten
Sie blasen zum Valet:
Ade in die Läng' und Breite
O Prag, wir ziehn in die Weite!

[...]

Nun weht schon durch die Wälder
Der kalte Boreas,
Wir streichen durch die Felder,
Von Schnee und Regen naß,
Der Mantel fliegt im Winde,
Zerrissen sind die Schuh',
Da blasen wir geschwinde
Und singen noch dazu:

[...]

(Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 97)

As opposed to the song at the onset of the novella, this takes place during fall and heading towards winter. The birds are flying south and the musicians are wet from snow and rain, a common theme that was found in earlier works as in Goethe's "Wandrer's Sturmlied" or Müller's *Die Winterreise*. Their shoes are falling apart from the long journey they have travelled, and even if they wanted to travel farther, it wouldn't be possible, due to their torn shoes. These descriptions are symbolic of the Taugenichts' journey coming to an end, and the tone is quite different from "Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen." The simplistic rhyme scheme is very similar to styles found in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. It gives readers now, as well as those who read the book when it

was first published, a tangible connection to German culture. An interesting comparison can be made to the musicians in “Nachtmusikanten” from Arnim and Brentano’s collection:

Hier sind wir arme Narrn
Auf Plätzen und auf Gassen,
Und thun die ganze Nacht
Mit unsrer Musick passen.

[...]

Und also treiben wirs
Oft durch die lange Nacht,
Daß selbst die ganze Welt
Ob unsrer Narrheit lacht.

(Arnim and Brentano 26-7)

The musicians in this song are struggling to find food and shelter through the night and they are compared to being fools, at whom the whole world is laughing. In Eichendorff’s poem, the students have a sense of optimism that is not found in the example of “Nachtmusikanten.” Despite the problems they face on their journey, they keep heading towards their goal of playing for a wedding in Vienna.

The song is also written in two different languages, German and Latin. German can be seen as the language of the common people, or a worldly language, which everyone understands, while Latin is the language of the church and of classical learning. Both languages are present in each stanza, where the German begins and the Latin has the final answer.

Et habeat bonam pacem,
Qui sedet post fornacem!

[...]

Venit ex sua domo –
Beatus ille homo!

[...]

Beatus ille homo
Qui sedet in sua domo
Et sedet post fornacem
Et habet bonam pacem!

(Eichendorff, *Taugenichts* 97-8)

This is translated in Haar's commentary to mean:

Der habe guten Frieden,
Der hinter dem Ofen sitzt!

[...]

Er kommt aus seinem Haus –
Glücklich jener Mann!

[...]

Glücklich jener Mann,
Der in seinem Hause
hinter dem Ofen sitzt
und seine Ruhe hat!

(Haar 109)

According to the first stanza, one might have peace when sitting in one's warm home, but that is not enough for life. Traveling outside the comforts of home is also another part of finding true happiness. It is not until one has made this journey that he realizes the true peace of what a sense of belonging and a home can bring. The students realize what is waiting for them at the end of the journey; that is why they can withstand the aches and pains the journey brings.

Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts was the highpoint in Eichendorff's work and was one of the most significant works of the late Romantic Period. Glatz argues that with

this work, specifically the final song, an end to the wandering period has arrived, “Mit dem bekannten Wanderlied der Prager Studenten ‘Nach Süden nun sich lenken [...]’ schließt Eichendorff die Wanderperiode” (60). After the students have sung their song, the party makes their way to the wedding, in which the Taugenichts thinks he is the groom. Soon he realizes the wedding was for Leonhard and Flora, whom the Taugenichts knows as Guido. After hearing Guido’s voice but seeing Flora, the Taugenichts is lost to confusion and is confronted by maidens singing a wedding song from *Der Freischütz*, a recently debuted opera from Carl Maria Weber. His ‘countess’ turns out to be the niece of the doorman and foster daughter of the old countess, which means she is from the same social class as the Taugenichts. After a short conversation ending his confusion, they are now able to live out their days happily-ever-after. The novella is written in 10 chapters, in which each chapter seems to correlate with another. The first is, for example, very similar to the last, in that they both happen around Vienna. In this sense, the novella is written almost in the form of a circle. This idea relates back to Andrew Cusack’s theory of associating the journey with a circle, where the focus is on the journey itself. The Taugenichts started off as a good-for-nothing but ended up living his fairytale dream with the one he loves.

From *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* we can see this figure of the wanderer being used for a number of different reasons. In the literal story of the Taugenichts, we followed him on his journey of finding a place in the world and seeking true happiness with Aurelie, but Eichendorff also uses the wanderer to symbolize the religious journey that everyone has to travel if in pursuit of heaven. If one follows the plan that God has

made, then true bliss can be found, which is different than what was found in Goethe's or Müller's protagonists. Müller's wanderers, for example, couldn't find true happiness, or at least couldn't keep what they thought it was, and ultimately suffered from not fitting into society's expectations. The protagonist in Eichendorff's work can be seen as a Christian's journey to salvation. Even though he encounters temptations along the way, he keeps marching on, and that is the essence of the wanderer for Eichendorff. The connection between God and the wanderer appears numerous times in his works, and specifically this novella. Seidlin points out a perfect example when commenting on the singing angels that the Taugenichts senses when entering Rome, the 'holy' city: "Und für wen singen sie? Für einen Taugenichts, der nach Rom kommt? Nein, für einen gläubig-frommen Menschen, für jeden gläubig-frommen Menschen, der gewandert ist durch die Welt der kalten, unerlösten Wirklichkeit, der treu geblieben ist dem Märchenbild aus Kindertagen und nun endlich, endlich vor den Toren steht – zum Paradies" (*Versuche* 30-1). This is the path of Eichendorff's wanderer.

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