Title

Der Spiegel des Weltenlaufes: Figures of Rome as Figures of History in Goethe, Humboldt, and Kant

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Figures of Rome as Figures of History in Goethe, Humboldt, and Kant

by

Kyle Benjamin Ralston

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Comparative Literature

and the Designated Emphasis

in

Critical Theory

in the

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Karen S. Feldman, Co-chair
Professor Duncan MacRae, Co-chair
Professor Niklaus Largier
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Abstract

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Set against the scholarly and historical backdrop of 18th- and 19th-century German philhellenism, this dissertation examines how the idea of ancient Rome – the city, its history, and its literature – shapes ideas of history in the writings of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Immanuel Kant. The idealization of ancient Greece looms large in both the writings of this period in Germany and in scholarship written about them This cultural obsession also coincided with and colored new theories of history and education that emerged in this intellectual milieu. As a result, moments in which these thinkers and theorists address Rome, especially outside specialized discourses of classics and ancient history, are rare and frequently offer unfavorable contrasts with Greece – or have at least been interpreted as doing so. Contributing to a scholarly counternarrative to the dominance of philhellenism, I adopt a methodology of sustained literary close reading and comparative study of Latin, Greek, and German texts to excavate the presence and influence of Rome in the works of these prominent contributors to early historical thought. The following chapters comprise three discrete case studies of such Roman moments: first, in the aesthetic discourse of Goethe's *Italienische Reise*; then in the theoretical essays and elegiac poetry of Wilhelm von Humboldt; and finally in natural metaphors of Kant's *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*. While each of these studies showcases a distinct approach to Rome, its history, and its literature in German thought, together they illustrate Rome's capacity to serve a tropical or metaphorical role in their language. More specifically, despite these different approaches, ideas of Rome show a persistent affinity for the language and figures of thought these authors use to describe time and history, as perceptions of the enormous scale of both the city and its long history find reflection in their efforts to assign meaning to the manifold phenomena of the past. These studies illustrate how Rome and Roman literature are naturalized and incorporated to German ideas of history around the turn of the 19th century but also thus reveal tensions and contradictions within and across disciplinary boundaries of history, philosophy, and classical studies.

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Acknowledgements

The lifecycle of this dissertation happened to fall within a moment when we were all too aware that we were living through something historical: the once-in-a-lifetime emergence of COVD-19 and the isolation and aftereffects that followed. Reading of Goethe's Italian travels while unable to leave my apartment and conducting many early meetings remotely, and many more behind masks, will remain indelible memories of this process. However, having been threatened by the doubled isolation of dissertating during a pandemic, I am deeply and especially grateful to all those whose support, guidance, and community made its completion possible.

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KBR
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INTRODUCTION

Rome as Place, Rome as Concept

This dissertation examines Rome as place and as concept and its radiating implications in the writings of key figures in the development of historical thought in late 18th- and early 19th-century Germany. This focus on Rome offers a complement and counterweight to the long dominant narrative of antiquity's role in German intellectual history, that of philhellenism: abiding interest, reverence, and, at times, cultural obsession with the art, philosophy, and politics of ancient Greece. Throughout German philosophical and theoretical writings of this period, ancient Greece seems to stand as the external source of the flow of a continuous conception of Western history, whereas the Rome and its history are subject to and intertwined with that history. This underlying imagined chronological continuity – most simply: the Greeks preceded the Romans; the Romans preceded "us," wherever and whenever we may find ourselves – always portrays Rome chiefly in conjunction or opposition with Greece as the successor, plunderer, or pale imitator of an ideal it failed to attain. My dissertation steps out of these shadows of philhellenism and focuses on Rome's presence and function in the language and literary forms of this period rather than solely on its place in this tidy world-historical narrative. Closely reading of works of Goethe, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Kant, I will explore how these textual encounters with the Eternal City and its past shape the ways these authors represent and relate themselves to past, the present, and the future.

The central concerns of this dissertation are formal and literary but an awareness of the historical and intellectual milieu surrounding the study of antiquity around the turn of the 19th century in Germany provides crucial context for how we are to locate and understand figures of Rome in the writings of this period. Early in her classic study of this cultural obsession and its aftermath, *Down from Olympus: Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970*, Suzanne Marchand briefly touches upon the fraught and ahistorical relationship German thinkers had to ancient *Rome* in this period:

> Schiller and his friends, of course, owed a great debt to the humanist tradition, in which Greek contributions to the arts and sciences had long been recognized. But unlike most humanists, German philhellenes did not like to emphasize their dependence on a long tradition of scholarly erudition, or to acknowledge the intermediary function of Rome. This is only one of the many ironies of German philhellenism, that it owes some of its greatest debts to Latin writers and Roman copies of Greek statuary, to Italian humanists and French philosophes; access to things Greek was almost always mediated by the wider culture of Latin learning. But the Germans wished to see themselves as rediscoverers of a lost Arcadia and pioneers of a new kind of pedagogy. And the development of Germany's national self-identification with the Greeks, precisely in its explicit rejection of the culture of "Augustan" neoclassicism, did create a new complex of ideas and ambitions. (4)

On one hand, then, Rome's historical significance was greatly diminished by the project of direct national identity between the Germans and the Greeks. On the other, however, this identification resulted in the "intermediary function" of Rome being both preserved and driven beneath the surface of much academic discourse. We will nevertheless find this assertion of Rome's "primary" significance (more or less) begrudgingly expressed throughout these texts: Rome serves in various ways as the mediator, or, even more dismissively, the transmitter of Greek culture, art, and literature into modernity. We will see this characterization most explicitly in the essays of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the self-professed pioneer of a new, Greek-inspired *Bildung*, but it is also evident in Goethe's creative and aesthetic activities in Italy – and even in the epigram of his Italian Journey, "*Auch ich in Arkadien*" – and is likewise lurking in the margins of Kant's responses to Epicureanism and their close resemblance to Roman texts. This particular characterization of Rome under philhellenism has its most obvious origin in the work and widespread influence of Johann Joachim Winckelmann and his 1764 *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums.*

Winckelmann stands tall at the center of introductions and early chapters in historians of German thought from Meinecke to Marchand and, in his afterlife, claims credit for the origins of both art history and the concept of classical antiquity itself.[1] In the fifth chapter of the first part of his *Geschichte der Kunst*, Winckelmann refutes what he sees as an erroneous presumption that there was a uniquely Roman style of art. He claims that "in the earliest times, [Roman artists] probably imitated the Etruscans, from whom they adopted many customs, especially religious ones; and in their later and flourishing periods, the few Roman artists would have been students of the Greeks" (284). From this basis, Winckelman believes that he is "justified in stating that the concept of a Roman style in art – insofar as our present knowledge extends – is a delusion" (285). Here Winckelmann's influential historicizing argument about the periodization of artistic styles casts not just Roman art but aspects of Roman culture as fundamentally unoriginal and imitative. Winckelmann thus sets the stage for the view of Rome Marchand outlines and its afterlife in interpretations of Roman culture as empty, unoriginal, and devoid of genuine investment in art or spirituality. This notion that serves as Roman background for Marchand's account of Germany's graecophilia, however, will here become the foreground for a new investigation of Rome's ideologically and rhetorically suppressed role in this intellectual milieu.

Rome, of course, did not vanish from German academic and intellectual discourse under the reign of philhellenism, though its wider cultural presence was far more constrained. As Marchand's account also hints, Rome's rhetorical and ideological undervaluation in this period coexisted alongside continued widespread instruction in Latin language and literature throughout formal educational settings. As a result, despite this rhetorical and ideological suppression of Rome, one can safely assume that the learned men of the era – women were both systematically and even philosophically[2] excluded from institutions of classical learning in this period – possessed meticulously drilled knowledge of Latin language and literature and thus a deep familiarity with the Rome and Roman ideas conveyed by that literature. Alongside these educational practices, the abiding relevance of Rome in learned circles is also visible in the city's prominent place within the rise of history as an independent academic discipline. A brief

[1] See, e.g., Potts' *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* and Harloe's *Winckelmann and the Invention of Antiquity*.

[2] See also Marchand xxiii-xxiv for the thoroughly gendered conception of German neohumanism and the Greek *Bildung* advanced by Humboldt.

overview of this association helps us to understand the breadth of meaning Rome might have and also its tenuous position along an ideological fault line within classical studies, as well.

The first decade of the century brought about the opening of Wilhelm von Humboldt's reimagined *Universität* Berlin,[3] where, from 1810-11 Barthold Georg Niebuhr was invited to give the new institution's first lectures on history. For reasons personal, political, and historical,[4] this newly appointed *Hofhistorigraph* of Prussia focused these lectures on Rome and "in an extraordinary concentration of thought, he virtually created the modern study of Roman history" (Momigliano, 230). Despite Niebuhr's lack of academic credentials, allegedly off-putting appearance, and stiff demeanor, the lectures were an immense public success and over the following decades were transformed into the multi-volume *Römische Geschichte*.

These first lectures on Roman history represent a landmark moment in the reorganization of knowledge production taking place within German academic institutions from roughly 1790-1810, which Theodore Ziolkowski traces in *Clio the Romantic Muse: Historicizing the Faculties in Germany*.[5] Ziolkowski claims that this period saw a shift from historical knowledge as intellectual decoration adorning the products of other longstanding academic faculties to a discipline all its own, which in turn resulted in a centering of historical or philosophical methods within the knowledge produced across faculties. While many of Niebuhr's specific conclusions have been contested and his prose style is notoriously dry, his lectures on Roman history reflect an affinity in this moment between the Roman and the rising influence of history. Indeed, Karl Christ has schematically traced the trajectory of Roman history in the intellectual and disciplinary history of Germany from Niebuhr, through Mommsen's mammoth influence, and into the 20th century in his 1982 *Römische Geschichte und deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft,* which reflects, as Momigliano quips at the start of his review of this work, that "none of the eminent historians of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century…really doubted that the study of Greek and Roman history had its center in Germany" (Momigliano, Review 105). Yet, as early as the immediate reactions to Niebuhr's work in the first decades of the century, these Roman histories also reflect an inflection point as they garnered different responses and achieved different legacies as rifts between classics and history as disciplines, and between ideologies of classicism and historicism opened, widened, and continue to grow today.[6]

The works mentioned above attest that Rome's place in this intellectual history and the history of historiography in Germany is well recorded and well understood, but far less attention has been paid to the extent to which Rome and Roman literature influenced the language and figures of thought emerging alongside these ideas of history. While scholars divided themselves and their methods, Rome itself continued to straddle the historical and classical views of the past and so is always both real and imagined, always already evoked as place and as concept. Rome's

[3] See Marchand 24ff for Humboldt's educational reforms, their intersection with his philhellenism, and this attitude's debt to Winckelmann and Wolf.
[4] See Momigliano 229ff for a succinct biography and account of Niebuhr's intellectual history.
[5] See Ziolkowski, *Clio* esp. 26-32, for the newly imagined Universität Berlin and Niebur's lectures in this context.
[6] For the divisive responses to Niebuhr's work, see Christ "Römische Geschichte und Universal Geschichte bei Barthold Georg Niebuhr" 191ff; and Nippel, "Barthold Georg Niebuhr und die Begründung der Modernen Althistorie" 103ff. Michael C. Alexander's 2013 article "History and Text: Two Kinds of Ancient History" continues this narrative into contemporary disciplinary history and shows this era to be the beginning of a rift between the nascent science of history and its incorporation of material culture and the classical tradition of ancient history rooted in textual study and philology.

unique situation within these disciplinary and ideological tensions enables its enormous capacity to contain these and other contradictions within itself. These conflicts pile up and compound within Rome's diverse literature, the facts of its long history, its tumultuous political life, and even within its own city walls. The signifier "Rome" thus stands variously and all at once as metonymy for at least one thousand years of history and can at once call to mind both republic and empire; rejection of monarchy and burgeoning autocracy; cultural dominance and cultural decline. Surpassing Rome's alleged world-historical role as merely intervening chronologically between Greece and modernity, this flexibility and breadth of possible meaning is crucial for how Rome has "intervened" in the construction of historical thought and served as inspiration, mediator, or interpretive frame for these thinkers. Moreover, the nature of these meanings renders Rome both useful and relevant as a figure and archive of tropes in the discourse not only of classics and ancient history, but for the construction and description of time and history as concepts. Thus, my project argues we must recognize and reckon with how Rome and Roman ideas become useful in these texts but also, in turn, with how they mark sites of tension, complexity, and contradiction within the persistently relevant ideas of history and classicism that stem from this period.

Thought of in these terms, Rome draws its significance not only from its antiquity but equally from the resultant polysemy of the city, its remains, and its afterlife, which both contain and exceed these disciplinary concerns. Rather than taking the familiar approach to the influence of Rome in this period through reception studies or intellectual history, however, I propose that a more literary or tropological method is most appropriate to excavate and understand the presence of Rome in text. The ways in which these marked and unmarked Roman moments intersect with, shape, or even provide the language and figures of thought that these authors use seem to have gone largely if not entirely unexamined in scholarship. The educational history traced briefly above is itself implicated in this lacuna in the study of Rome. Until well into the 20th Century, most scholars working on the 18th and 19th centuries were themselves very likely also to be trained as classicists, and so more prone to find allusions and engagements with ancient texts less noteworthy. However, because classical training has become less ubiquitous over the past decades at the same time that aesthetic and artistic defenses and analyses of Roman culture finally became more prominent within classical studies, we have lost a vein of scholarship that might explore how the authors and thinkers of the 18th and 19th centuries were influenced by their relationships to Rome beyond their few explicit statements about it, which are most often made in comparison or conjunction with Greece. Because Roman allusion and engagement is largely unmarked and so much less explicit in its relevance to the philosophical and historical projects of the era, a primarily literary, rather than historical or philosophical, analysis of these texts opens far more space for consideration for how ancient Roman material and literary culture shapes their figures of thought.

My literary focus marks a distinct approach to this field that nevertheless complements relatively recent scholarly efforts to rectify this imbalance. In his 1995 chapter "*Zwischen Anpassungsdruck und Autonomiestreben: die deutsche Latinistik von Beginn bis in die 20er Jahre des 20. Jahrhunderts*," Peter Lebrecht Schmidt traces the history of Latin studies in Germany as an antidote to a focus on Greek matters in the history of classical studies as a discipline and offers insight into the emergence of notions of *Römertum* and the literary value and unity of Latin texts in the early 20th century. Even more pertinent is Angela Cornelia Holzer's sweeping 2013 cultural study *Rehabilitationen Roms: Die römische Antike in der*

deutschen Kultur zwischen Winckelmann und Niebuhr.[7] Holzer examines discourse surrounding Rome in various areas of German culture in this period, from children's books to aesthetic and literary theory, in direct response the emphasis afforded to Germany's obsession with the Greek ideal in other scholarship. As Holzer humbly notes in the final paragraph of her introduction:

> Rom wurde nicht an einem Tag erbaut. Die folgenden Kapitel stellen lediglich Elemente einer noch zu schreibenden Geschichte der Bedeutung Roms in Deutschland um 1800 dar. Sie können nicht einmal für den ausgewählten Zeitraum Vollständigkeit behaupten. Sie verdeutlichen nur Tendenzen und Dimensionen des Nachlebens der römischen Antike, die bislang kaum untersucht sind. Ebenso wenig wie das Nachleben Roms wird voraussichtlich die Untersuchung dieses Nachlebens jemals zum Ende kommen. (24)

This dissertation offers another contribution to this barely investigated but likely never-ending study of Rome's afterlife and *its* afterlife in German thought and culture. Formal literary analyses of texts, their language, and their figures of thought only stand to deepen our understanding of the significance of Rome in German thought in this period by allowing us to move beyond discourse explicitly addressing Rome and to better trace its implications throughout historical ideas in theoretical writings of this influential period, and therefore into more contemporary theory built on the foundation of 19th century thought.

The interdisciplinary approach I take in these textual studies thus centers two methodological principles: first, the value of literary close reading – that is, paying sustained analytical attention to specific language, tropes, and narrative structures – in traditionally not-literary genres; and second, an emphasis on how such language and figures of thought contain and convey notions of temporality – orientations of and toward various pasts, presents, and futures – within them. These principles originated from my own training in the study of classical literature and ancient history, but their expressions here are respectively inspired by and drawn loosely from the work of Hayden White and Reinhart Koselleck.

White's *Tropics of Discourse* provides methodological grounding and justification for identifying and analyzing sites of multiple or contested meanings, regardless of form and genre when he articulates "the ineluctable fact that even in the most chaste discursive prose, texts intended to represent 'things as they are' without rhetorical adornment or poetic imagery, there is always a failure of intention" (3). The mention of Rome or even its history inevitably opens the possibility of unintended associations, comparisons, and continuities. In other words, Rome often implicitly serves a metaphorical or tropical function in language. Tracing Rome's archive of established meanings – including all those linked to the city, its history, its literature – throughout these texts thus helps us to locate places where these serve to create or reveal new meaning and new implications in these well-known arguments. Therefore, I propose broadly considering Rome's relationship to these texts as mirroring how White discusses the relationship of tropes to discourse in the introduction to *Tropics of Discourse*:

> Tropes generate figures of speech or thought by their variation from what is "normally" expected, and by the associations they establish between concepts normally felt not to be related or to be related in ways different from that suggested in the trop used. …

[7] Holzer's work on divergent ideas of Rome following Winckelmann plays a key role in my own reading of the works of Wilhelm von Humboldt in Chapter 2.

> [Troping] is always not only a deviation *from* one possible, proper meaning, but is also a deviation *towards* another meaning, conception, or ideal of what is right and proper *and true* "in reality." Thus considered, troping is both movement *from* one notion of the way things are related *to* another notion, and a connection between things so that they can be expressed in a language that takes account of the possibility of their being expressed otherwise. Discourse is the genre in which the effort to earn this right of expression, with full credit to the possibility of their being expressed otherwise, is preeminent. And troping is the soul of discourse without which discourse cannot do its work or achieve its end.
>
> […]
>
> A discourse moves "to and fro" between received encodations of experience and the clutter of phenomena which refuses incorporation into conventionalized notions of "reality," "truth," or "possibility." It also moves "back and forth" (like a shuttle) between alternative ways of encoding this reality, some of which may be provided by the traditions of discourse prevailing in a given domain of inquiry and others which may be idiolects of the author, the authority which he is seeking to establish. Discourse, in a word, is quintessentially a *mediative* enterprise. As such, it is both interpretive and preinterpretive; it is always as much *about* the nature of interpretation itself as it is *about* the subject matter which is the manifest occasion of its own elaboration. (2, 4)

In an intellectual culture suffused with an ideal of antiquity and a growing fascination with making sense of the "clutter of phenomena" of the past, Rome's multiple meanings coincide with widespread familiarity with them. Rome thus proves to be especially useful for discourse surrounding history and making sense of the past because, as White elsewhere claims, "history – the real world as it evolves in time – is made sense of in the same way that the poet or novelist tries to make sense of it, i.e., by endowing what originally appears to be problematical and mysterious with the aspect of a recognizable, because it is a familiar, form" (98). All of the texts examined in the following chapters are concerned in various ways with making meaning from or attributing meaning to the past. White's career has highlighted that such meanings are unstable, contested, and multiple, and that metaphors and other modes of literary representation not only depict what has already happened, but necessarily construct various orientations of that past to both the text's present and an imagined future. In this context, Rome both calls to mind the innumerable realia of the past and gives familiar and recognizable form to that enormity, as its concept contains within it both the real, the "how it really was" of its long history and material remains, and the timeless ideal of its classical status, even if held below that of Greece. As a result, Rome's meaning, or potential meanings, exceed its immediate significance to any given argument and its evocation enables new meanings and new conceptual associations of the past and of time to emerge.

The city, though one place and one concept, simultaneously reflects the differing complex notions of time at play in these texts. The very same Rome leads Goethe to a sense of his own place in time, becomes Humboldt's epitome of all past and future human efforts, and supplies Kant with an archive of language and images to make newly modern and useful to his philosophy of progress. In this way, the assertive temporal dimension of the figurative and

tropical uses of Rome in these arguments also aligns with the work of Reinhart Koselleck.[8] As Koselleck states in the introduction to *Zeitschichten, "Wer über Zeit spricht ist auf Metaphern angewiesen,*" and precisely this spatial/geological metaphor of "time layers" or "sediments of time" feels especially appropriate for theorizing the overlapping temporal layers of Rome's "classical soil" (9). This intersection illuminates how the utility of Rome for these theoretical discussions of time and history is anything but arbitrary. The different phrases and figures of thought these texts draw from or align with Rome call to mind a diverse and extensive range of temporal models and narratives: the succession of empires, cycles of rise and fall, time as force of erosion or destruction, and even human experiences and markers of time – recurring generational, ritual and institutional cycles and records – imagined against underlying cycles of nature, to name only a few. What I have called "models" or "narratives" here also, of course, contain the vast catalog of specific events, persons, and other details known of Rome's long history, from the founding legends of antiquity to our authors' own presents.

This plethora of distinct but interrelated trajectories and scales of history and their manifold individual contents thus aligns well both with the different sorts of "layers" Koselleck theorizes *and* his overarching claim about how these layers comprise historical time: "Historical times consist of multiple layers that refer to each other in a reciprocal way, though without being wholly dependent on one another" (*Sediments* 4). Koselleck's layers roughly conform to a model of short-, medium-, and long-term events and transformations, but his own language helpfully centers the *experience* of these events, which will also play an important role in the texts in question here. The smallest layer is that of individual events experienced in their singularity, "primarily as surprising and irreversible," (*Sediments* 4); the second is composed of "structures of repetition that are not exhausted in singularity," such as systems of language, law, and large institutions whose recurrences serve as a precondition for singular events to be recognized and experienced as such by overlapping generational groups (*Sediments* 5); and the largest Koselleck calls "transcendental," because "these kinds of human conceptions of the world repeat themselves in rhythms too slow for specific generations to directly experience their alteration over time" and thus "reach beyond and undergird multiple generations" (*Sediments* 9). Here the tensions between Rome as place and as concept come into the highest relief as a singular event, a view of the modern city, makes changes of a transcendental scale *visible* and accessible as an object of experience.[9] Rome's overlapping and coexisting layers of time render over two

[8] Despite the period and authors addressed in the project, I am not substantively engaging with the historical claims Koselleck famously made regarding changes within the concept of history over the *Sattelzeit*. While we will see moments of slippage between *das Geschicht* and *die Geschichte* and tensions between written narratives of the past and broader concepts of history as a process, the present argument does not seek to explain what historical role Rome might have played in this conceptual shift, but rather claims that Rome's similarity or amenability to the tensions of this moment in intellectual history leads to representations and instrumentalizations of the ancient city and its physical and cultural remains in the language these thinkers employ to think through problems of time and temporality.

[9] Conceived of in this way, Rome approaches and even prefigures the status of what Timothy Morton has termed "hyperobjects" in his 2013 book of the same name. While Morton's term is engineered to address conditions of life and thought in the 21st century, this confrontation between object reality and the limit of conceptual thought is anticipated by our authors' encounters with Rome and the figures of earthly, human effort and history that emerge from them. "Hyperobjects," Morton writes, refers to "things that are massively distributed in time and space relative to humans" (1). Like Rome and its scattered remains and legacies, "hyperobjects are not just collections, systems or assemblages of other objects," nor are they merely "figments of the (human) imagination" (Morton 2). Rather, in being both real and inconceivably vast or diffuse, "hyperobjects force us to acknowledge the immanence of thinking to the physical" and often confront us with almost immeasurable stretches of time (Morton 2). Mirroring figures of

thousand years of thens and nows not only comprehensible but also relevant and useful when – like Benjamin's tiger's jump – a present moment or thought calls them to the surface, revealing and even creating new continuities across these layers. Rome thus becomes an indispensable figure for thinking and giving meaning to the past.

In a timelier manner, the containment of these manifold temporalities within the singular "Rome" further heightens its affinity with philosophical language and projects of the 19th century. Rome's figuration in Goethe, Humboldt, and Kant collides with the empirical struggle and intellectual intervention in perceiving and making sense of immense aggregates of events and data. In the absence of a cultural influence on the scale of Winckelmann, Rome never represents an idealized, singular concept, as Greece does, but does render one such enormous aggregate wieldier and more amenable to written thought: while the singular ideal of Greek beauty and national spirit demands almost infinite explication, the concept of Rome's manifold meanings conversely make it capable of incredibly flexible implication – the folding of events and ideas of the past into itself to incorporate them into its layers of meaning and significance. For all three authors, Rome and Romans thus emerge in language striving to make the putative infinities of time and the phenomena of the past meaningful and comprehensible, aesthetically, intellectually, and historically – to serve, in Humboldt's words, as a mirror of the world's course.

Following these methodological principles and chasing their diverse implications, each individual chapter in the dissertation conducts a case study that centers a self-contained literary argument about the text(s) it covers. These readings highlight different ways of relating to, responding to, and using Rome and Romans. More precisely, each chapter showcases a distinct way that a sense of history and a vision of historicity or understanding of historicity is produced in an engagement with Rome or Roman artifacts. Decentering Greece and the project of philhellenism – and thus at times decentering the assumptions of classicism, as well – affords us a clearer view into how Rome finds expression in these three prominent and influential thinkers at the dawn of the so-called century of history. Together these case studies are thus meant to open this inquiry into the undiscovered and underappreciated Roman influence in German figures of thought and to offer a complement to scholarly narratives of the prevalence and importance of German philhellenism in this period.

The chapters are ordered according to two thematic trajectories rather than historically by text and author. First, the engagements with Rome upon which the chapters focus move from the material to the literary, thus from direct experience of the physical city to indirect engagement with its cultural and literary remains. Second, this movement also corresponds to the alignment of Rome with a triptych of concepts of increasing complexity: time, history, and progress. This arrangement is thus meant to highlight how each of these chapters demonstrates the presence and use of these Roman figures – linguistic expressions of Rome's many meanings – in distinct ways. These case studies are not meant to converge into one argument about Rome's influence on German thought but to serve as a demonstration and invitation for further investigation into

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thought we will see in both Goethe and Humboldt's writing and aspects of Kant's phenomenology, Morton explains hyperobjects' relationship to time: "hyperobjects are not forever. What they offer instead is very large finitude. I can think infinity. But I can't count up to one hundred thousand. … It is unimaginably vast. … There is a real sense in which it is easier to conceive of "forever" than very large fiitude. Forever makes you feel important. One hundred thousand years makes you wonder if you can imagine one hundred thousand anything" (60).

the aesthetic and literary interventions Rome enables in the theories and methods emerging from this influential period and its aftermath.

The first chapter, **Seeing Rome, Feeling History: Becoming Historical in Goethe's *Italienische Reise*,** argues that Goethe's approach to the city as an aesthetic object leads to a growing sense of his place in time and history as he translates his perceptions into language throughout his retrospective and reconstructed travelogue. I argue that a narrative of Goethe's struggle to put his experience of Rome into words emerges from the conflict between his prior knowledge and fantasies of the city and the aesthetic experience of seeing it directly. Throughout his travels, Goethe professes an attempt to maintain clear objective point of view, keeping his mind and imagination clear of preconceptions and allowing the ruins, works of art, and landscapes he sees across Italy to work upon him directly. However, his prior knowledge of history, art, and literature of and from Rome, both ancient and modern, and his belief in Rome's "classical" status clash with this method of objective thinking and lead to an almost vertiginous awareness of the many periods and moments of time – the many pasts – the city presents all at once before his eyes. This overwhelming impression of the city's physical presence in turn leads Goethe to record a growing awareness of his own place in time: the place of his present both in his own life and in history more generally, and ultimately his self-conception as a both a participant in Rome's long history and as a potential historical object of the future.

The second chapter, **A Higher Point of View: Wilhelm von Humboldt's Roman History**, seeks to disentangle the few direct references to Rome in Humboldt's theoretical essays on classicism and *Bildung* from his ardent philhellenism by bringing them into dialogue with more explicit engagements with Rome across his letters and his elegiac poem *Rom*. Noting close similarities between the language of these texts and reading them together in this way reveals a striking affinity between Humboldt's approach to Rome and his broader conception of history. As in Goethe's writings of Rome, this connection is in large part inspired by Humboldt's own sensory experience of the city, but I will show that his idea of history also relies on his pointed and motivated interpretations of Vergil and Livy's descriptions of the city and the literary tropes he extracts from them. Rather than allowing this experience and knowledge to act *upon* him, as Goethe claims to do, Humboldt more actively synthesizes them to construct his own particular narrative of human activity throughout time. From his experience of Rome and his interpretations of Roman literature, Humboldt builds a sweeping and totalizing view of history, comprising not merely his place or the place of his present in time, but a process by which human action, over the succession of generations and cultures, resists the erosion and destruction of time to progress toward an ideal of humanity. While this ideal is forcefully and persistently aligned with ancient Greece, Rome does not merely transmit it from antiquity to modernity but provides the very ground of its possibility. Thus, the city comes to stand not merely as a symbol for this totalizing view of humanity's practically infinite agglomeration of events, dates, and data but the very place and idea through which it becomes visible and comprehensible.

In this way, the second chapter acts as a formal and thematic bridge from Goethe's direct sensory experience of the physical city to Kant's subtle and purely textual engagement with Roman literature and philosophy, which is the focus of my third chapter. This final reading conceives of the central topics of this project in ways distinct from the other two. No travel to or view of Rome, no response to its ruins and gathered remains of antiquity occurs in Kant's text. Instead, this study of Kant showcases how naturalized into prose and argumentation these Roman moments might be. **Kant's Apiary: Ancient and Modern Problems of Progress in**

Idee zur einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht begins with a reading of Kant's use of natural metaphor in that essay, which, I argue, reveals a largely unmarked (and completely unremarked upon) but pervasive engagement with Lucretius' *De rerum natura* and Vergil's *Georgics.* The organic and botanical imagery throughout the *Idee* brings Kant's language into contact these Roman texts and highlight ways that Kant's attempt to justify belief in human progress is also an intervention into an ancient philosophical problem: the (in)compatibility of moral progress with technological and cultural development as man moves further from an idyllic state of nature. To arrive at his ultimately optimistic vision of human progress, Kant blurs his own conception of humanity's relationship to nature with powers and intentions the ancients reserve for the gods. Thus, Kant incorporates his own work into this ancient Roman archive of literary language and imagery *and* renders its ideas amenable to his own enlightenment philosophy, bringing the past into his present to imagine a favorable future. While the first two of these case studies both illustrate instances of the city of Rome itself inspiring or providing figures of thought, this reading of Kant complements them by demonstrating that attention to figurative language can also help us to *find* Rome and its influence beyond the texts examined here, as well.

CHAPTER ONE

Seeing Rome, Feeling History:
Becoming Historical in Goethe's *Italienische Reise*

Introduction – Goethe's Time in the Eternal City

Goethe's *Italienische Reise* tells the story of the author's travels throughout Italy from 1786 to 1788, primarily through the compilation of his journals and letters from this period. The first two of the text's three parts are told entirely in this diaristic and epistolary format, creating the impression that one is reading along with Goethe's contemporaneous experiences and thoughts, from his initial departure from Carlsbad through his longer stays in Rome, Naples, and Sicily. In the text's third part, however, this illusion of immediacy falters and the surrounding circumstances of *Italienische Reise*'s compilation and publication become apparent: despite their presentation as a sequence of primary documents, even the first two parts of the text were not edited and published together until thirty years after the events they relate, in 1816 and 1817, during the writing of Goethe's autobiography, *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.

The third part was, in fact, originally conceived of as a separate text, simply titled *Zweiter römischer Aufenthalt*, because, unlike the contemporaneous materials compiled in the first two parts, the documents and journals written during the later period of the trip were never intended to be read and were destroyed. The presence of this final section that relies explicitly on memory imbues the combined texts with a sense of cohesion and retrospect through its more visible editing and artifice and so colors every "immediate" moment of the journey with a sense that it is already being revisited and reconsidered by the older Goethe. Uniting these three portions together raises the question of what story from or of his life the elder Goethe is constructing and presenting to his readers from the vantage point of his later years. We need not read this question in terms of a historical claim about authorial intention but might more fruitfully take it as an invitation to consider how the element of retrospect gives the text the sense of an ending: a conclusion and narrative cohesion that reveals meaning in the whole.

If there can be said to be a main plot of the entire travelogue that Goethe reconstructs, it would undoubtedly be Goethe's quest to train his talents and appreciation for the visual arts, and so to benefit his aesthetic sensibilities in general through the many priceless works of art and architecture found throughout Italy. While a great deal of the text does address his studies of such individual objects, in this chapter I argue that there is another narrative embedded within the aesthetic project of *Italienische Reise*: throughout the text, Goethe also tells the story of his coming to know the city of Rome itself and his coming to understand a difficult but transformative aesthetic experience of it. I argue that Goethe's struggles to process his sensory impressions of Rome in writing reveal a marked sense that Rome is uniquely capable of serving as a mediator between the aesthetic and the historical. Over the course of the text, writing

through his aesthetic experiences of Rome gradually drives Goethe to increasingly self-conscious reflections of his own place, and his own present, in history – in short, to writing his own history.

Focusing exclusively on Goethe's experience and writings on Rome in conjunction with his sense of history constitutes a marked departure from most scholarly work on both Goethe himself and on this specific text. Like many of his contemporaries, Goethe did not write extensively on Rome in conjunction with history or the ancient past and far more often engages with classical antiquity through the lens of an idealistic perception of ancient Greece, largely indebted to the extraordinary influence of Winckelmann and his work. Much attention in both the English- and German-speaking scholarly communities has been devoted to the influence of Greek poetry, art, and thought on Goethe's own cultural productions and influence, notably at great length in Trevelyan's 1941 study *Goethe and the Greeks* and in Meinecke's long discussion of Goethe in his 1936 *Entstehung des Historismus*. Goethe's affinity for Winckelmann and his philhellenism is attested even more directly in Goethe's own encomiastic writings on Winckelmann, his life, and his legacy. While Meinecke specifically touches upon several of the passages examined in this chapter and naturally discusses similar concepts at times,[1] my interpretation of these moments offers an overdue counternarrative to the dominant lens of philhellenism. My reading strives to explore more fully how Rome shapes Goethe's written thoughts and experiences under Italian skies and how, in turn, this influence suffuses the text with a rich awareness of time and temporality.

Throughout this chapter, I will identify and examine key stages in this embedded narrative that illustrate how Rome mediates the aesthetic and the historical in *Italienische Reise*. Together, these stages show the emergence and development of the influential role of Rome in Goethe's thought and self-perception as he puts sense experiences of the city (and retrospective processing *of* those experiences) into writing. I divide this analysis into five sections. The first studies entries before Goethe's arrival in Rome to demonstrate the tension and friction between two key presuppositions of the text's aesthetic project: a focus on viewing objects without projecting thoughts or fantasies onto them, and an investment in the inherent significance of places associated with classical antiquity. The second section examines the implications of this conflict for Goethe's prior knowledge and familiarity with images of the city. This body of knowledge pre-structures his first experience of seeing Rome directly but is radically transformed and revitalized by the reality of that experience. The third section follows Goethe's difficulties in building up a concept of the city in his mind by seeing and visiting monuments and

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[1] See Meinecke 2: 508-523. Meinecke's treatment most directly links *Italienische Reise* to the evolution of Goethe's historical thought, but his account of this text and this period of Goethe's life places great emphasis on comparing and connecting him to Winckelmann, who famously wrote his *Geschichte* in Rome. Meinecke characterizes effects of the trip as "*die hinreißende Offenbarung, die ihm in der griechischen Kunst und unter italienischen Himmel jetzt wurde,*" suggesting that Italy was merely the setting, rather than the cause of this revelation (510). Likewise, he concedes that "*seine Worte über Rom [sind berühmt],*" but restricts the importance his time there for his historical thought to the development of two concepts, *Entwicklungsgedanke* and *Individualitätsgedanke* (the latter, individuality, being a frequent buzzword in German philhellenism, as we shall see in Chapter 2, and a primary element of Meinecke's account of Goethe's historical thought), and further restricts Goethe's historical interest in Rome itself to political and military affairs (523).

Indeed, this devaluation of Goethe's interest in Rome lived beyond Meinecke and can still be found in more contemporary scholarship, as well. See, e.g., Jordheim: "[Goethe] had little interest in the Romans as anything other than the privileged vestiges of the Greeks. Symptomatically, what interests Goethe on his journey to Rome, and even more on his travels to Naples and Sicily, are the Greek works of art, whereas everything Roman, which he sees as belonging not to the world of art, but to the world of politics, leaves him mostly cold" (53).

sites of interest. These attempts culminate in Goethe's realization of a fraught relationship of part and whole between individual remains and ruins and his perception of the whole city. Goethe's senses that the whole of Rome is always expanding but must remain forever incomplete because it is simultaneously filled with the visible evidence of how much has survived for so long *and* with the knowledge of how much has been irreparably lost. Section four sees something of a climax in this narrative arc when Goethe develops a totalizing idea of Rome as *das Ungeheure*, an object of such magnitude that it resists both aesthetic perception and conceptual understanding. This excessive and inconceivable whole brings with it an understanding of how the idea of Rome contains these contradictory forces of survival and destruction, past and present, representation and reality, within itself and imparts meaning to everything it contains without being fully defined by them. The final section then examines episodes in the text where we can witness this concept of Rome mediating aesthetic and historical experience in Goethe's writing as it transforms his encounters with written histories, ruined monuments, and ancient literature into reflections of his own relationship to the past and his own place in time. The chapter concludes as Goethe's written persona integrates *himself* into this vast body of representations in a moment of decisive self-reflection, not only seeing his experience as part of Rome's expansive history but envisioning his own life's work as the object of future histories.

1 – "Objective Thinking" and "Classical Soil"

The interaction of two key concepts in *Italienische Reise* catalyzes the momentum of this embedded narrative within the travelogue: Goethe's aesthetic method of "objective thinking" and the assumed, inherent significance of "classical soil." Understanding these two ideas at the outset allows us to trace how Goethe's objective aesthetic approach, the *method* of the text, leads to gradually heightening tension when applied to the "classical soil" of Rome, the *object* of key passages examined below. The frictions and difficulties that arise from this combination of method and object set the stage for Goethe's increasingly complex reflections once he arrives in the city itself.

Throughout the compilation of his journals and letters, Goethe explicitly presents the purpose of his journey to Italy as an attempt to educate his eyes, to better himself in his knowledge and practice of both natural science and the visual arts through direct observation of the world. Language of visuality and the eye is pervasive throughout the text from the start but its centrality in Goethe's motivations comes into focus most clearly in his entry from Trent on the morning of September 11, 1786:

> Mir ist jetzt nur um die sinnlichen Eindrücke zu tun, die kein Buch, kein Bild gibt. Die Sache ist, daß ich wieder Interesse an der Welt nehme, meinen Beobachtungsgeist versuche und prüfe, wie weit es mit meinen Wissenschaften und Kenntnissen geht, ob mein Auge licht, rein und hell ist, wieviel ich in der Geschwindigkeit fassen kann, und ob die Falten, die sich in mein Gemüt geschlagen und gedrückt haben, wieder auszutilgen sind. (*Italienische Reise* 22-23)

Several key ideas are linked in this brief passage: the privileging of direct sensory experience over written descriptions and visual representations, the relationship of such experience and knowledge, and, finally, the ability of sensory experience to effect self-change or self-actualization. This final idea is expressed even more clearly in an entry dated six days later, when the author explains: "*Ich mache diese wunderbare Reise nicht, um mich selbst zu betriegen, sondern um mich an den Gegenständen kennen zu lernen*" (*IR* 41). The initial articulation of this goal to come to know himself through objects in fact relates specifically to his perceived lack of understanding of visual art, as the following admission makes clear: *"da sage ich mir denn ganz aufrichtig, daß ich von der Kunst, von dem Handwerk des Malers wenig verstehe"* (*IR* 41). The texts that eventually become *Italienische Reise* thus comprise efforts to record his experiences of objects of perception and to process the impressions they create within him in order to train his eye to better appreciate those objects and in so doing better understand himself. On the whole, then, we can see clearly here that a certain method of "objective" thinking, of thinking *through* objects, is central to the stated goals of his entire journey to Italy and eventually to his experience of Rome itself.

While Goethe's interest in aesthetics at first appears narrowly limited to the fine arts, this attitude gradually transforms into a preoccupation with sensory experience, perception, and the impressions they produce in him more broadly over the course of his time in Italy. By the June of his second stay in Rome in 1787, he describes a shift in his whole way of seeing as he muses on both a fireworks display and the more mundane but no less enchanting illumination of the cityscape: "*Da ich neuerdings nur die Sachen und nicht wie sonst bei und mit den Sachen sehe, was nicht da ist, so müssen mir so große Schauspiele kommen, wenn ich mich freuen soll"* (*IR* 352). As we shall see, this description represents an exemplary moment of Goethe's repeatedly expressed desire only to see objects themselves, and, in turn, to focus on how those objects work upon him through only his perceptions and impressions of them, rather than projecting anything onto them.[2] This notion of objectivity thus ideally entails attempting to keep his consideration of objects free and clear of "*was nicht da [mit den Sachen] ist,*" such as fantasies, preconceptions, and even memories of representations or replicas of them.

Goethe strives to maintain and hone this objective point of view throughout his time in Italy. Shortly before his arrival in Rome, however, his ability to maintain such direct and immediate perception begins to be challenged by a wealth of preconceptions about the value and meaning of antiquity, and thus, of Rome. In brief, his method of objective thinking quickly comes confoundingly into conflict with a value-laden notion of "classical soil," catalyzing the narrative tension this chapter will trace and paving the way for his transformative experience of the city itself.

Writing of a day (27 October 1786) spent visiting Roman ruins in south Umbria, most notably the aqueduct at Spoleto, Goethe reflects on the difficulty "*einen Begriff des Altertums zu erwerben*" when one "*nur Ruinen entgegenstellen, aus denen man sich nun wieder das*

[2] The mode of objective thinking described here also, in fact, connects Goethe even more directly to the history of historical thought. In his chapter, "Ranke's Romantic Philosophy," Beiser notes the influence Goethe's objective thinking had on Ranke's historical method. Beiser quotes a passage on Goethe taken from Ranke's 1862 lectures on contemporary history: "It occurs to me that exactly such objective thinking suits the historian. He may not apply a theory to the historical event; instead he must quietly allow the object to work upon him. But he should go even further. He must intellectually reproduce the object and rebuild it before his eyes. That belongs to the method of research and expositions I have discussed" (*Aus Werke und Nachlass,* IV, 80-2; cited at Beiser 277).

kümmerlich aufzuerbauen hätte, wovon man noch keinen Begriff hat" (*IR* 114). Goethe's lament here at his yet unsuccessful striving to comprehend antiquity is inspired by his encounter with "*eine wunderliche Kapelle am Wege*" between Spoleto and Terni that he identifies as "San Crocefisso," known primarily today as the Temple of Clitumnus (*IR* 114). Goethe's interpretation of this structure, based on the apparent bricolage of its construction, can be read as a metaphor for the disorienting task of reconstructing antiquity wholly from those few remaining ruins which can still be directly perceived. During his visit, Goethe claims, "*halte ich nicht für den Rest eines Tempels, der am Orte stand*" and arrives at this conclusion by noticing the inclusion and combination of various *spolia* (*Säulen, Pfeiler, Gebälke*) of ancient structures "*gefunden und zusammengeflickt, nicht dumm aber toll*" to produce the peculiar chapel (*IR* 114). This structure – standing, surviving into his own day, centuries old and bearing an outwardly ancient appearance, but being, upon closer examination, only a hodge-podge of fragmented ruins and debris – offers a cautionary tale for attempts to reconstruct the past based solely on recombining whatever visible fragments and ruins remain without any broader understanding or overarching context.

This momentary despair over the apparent impossibility of reconstructing the past from such limited evidence is immediately contrasted with the situation "*mit dem, was man klassischen Boden nennt,*" which he thus attributes to Rome before he has even arrived (*IR* 114). Referring generally to the spaces and places related to the histories and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome, the phrase "classical ground or soil" clearly connotes a physical place or geographical region (ground) imbued with a complex sense of significance ("classical"), which is both temporal (referring to a specific period in time, "classical antiquity") and evaluative (the broader sense of "classic(s)"). However, in the specific context of Rome, the goal of Goethe's journey, the term also suggests that even the lowliest strata of the modern city and the ancient remains it contains may be suffused with this dual significance, as well.[3]

In this passage, Goethe develops this notion and synthesizes the ideas of experience and subjectivity discussed above with a particular sense of place and of history:

> Mit dem, was man klassischen Boden nennt, hat es eine andere Bewandtnis. Wenn man hier nicht phantastisch verfährt, sondern die Gegend real nimmt, wie sie daliegt, so ist sie doch immer der entscheidende Schauplatz, der größten Taten bedingt, und so habe ich immer bisher den geologischen und ladschaftlichen Blick benutzt, um Einbildungskraft und Empfindung zu unterdrücken und mir ein freies, klares Anschauen der Lokalität zu erhalten. Da schließt sich denn auf eine wundersame Weise die Geschichte lebendig an, und man begreift nicht, wie einem geschieht, und ich fühle die größte Sehnsucht, den Tacitus in Rom zu lesen. (*IR* 114)

Goethe's reverie shifts frequently between descriptions of the place and the experience of the viewing subject, maintaining at least a superficial focus on sensory perceptions and the impressions resulting from them. Moreover, what the author begins to work through here is, at least in part, a set of ideas and a feeling he does not yet fully comprehend. What remains consistent through both topics, however, is an intersection of conceptual and visual language and

[3] For further reading on the meaning and boundaries of "the classical," see, e.g., the introduction to *Postclassicisms* and Jürgen's "*'Klassik' als Periodenbegriff in historiographischen Wissenschaften.*" Güthenke's *Placing Modern Greece* also touches on the tensions specifically in the construction of classical *places*, especially in its first half, which focuses on German representations of Greece around this period.

the weighing of various mental faculties to discern which is most appropriate for perceiving and understanding such "classical" places. This internal debate quietly hints at the difficulty of maintaining an "objective" perspective, focusing only on the impressions produced by direct sensory experience, when the object being perceived already has so much meaning projected or agglomerated onto it.

The description of this "situation" opens with the implication that one's first impulse is to approach classical places through the lens of imagination or fantasy (*phantastisch*). Yet, Goethe suggests, even from a realist perspective, considering only what presently stands or remains upon this "classical soil" (*wie sie daliegt*), such sites retain the significance imparted to them by such fantasies even into the present. More specifically, that significance relates to the location's characterization as "*der entscheidende Schauplatz,"* which must here mean that the site is not only the scene of action in the imagined past, as fantasy would suggest, but that this distinction extends into the present, taken as it is in reality before the viewer. We might thus consider how this dichotomy of fantasy and reality represents a conflict between two sets of images and impressions: those produced by the viewer's mind or memory in his imagination (*Einbildungskraft*) and those perceived directly before his eyes in the present.

The simultaneous engagement and conflict of both fantasy and reality here nevertheless underscores the centrality of direct sensory experience in Goethe's theorization of the significance of "classical soil" at this stage in the text's narrative. Over the course of the passage, we see the author aligning various attributes and descriptors with these two divergent approaches to the space. Broadly speaking, the language here suggests that imagination fruitlessly seeks to reconstruct the past by recombining previously familiar facts or images of it, ruminating on great deeds which have already occurred, or scanning over reused pieces ruins and rubble, quite divorced from any sense of present action or possibility. Furthermore, imagination and sentiment (*Einbildungskraft und Empfindung*) are implied to be impediments which blur or muddy one's own present view. Goethe thus contrasts the mind's image-making power against his scientific or objective point of view (*Blick*), which suppresses (*unterdrücken)* these mental images to preserve his own *freies, klares Anschauen* of the place which lies before him.

The opposition this passage constructs between present vision and the images formed in the mind through past knowledge and expectations is complicated, however, by the fact that both ways of seeing or understanding "classical soil" seem to bring Goethe to the same conclusion. *Even if* one avoids erring into imagination and fantasy and takes only the reality before him into consideration, Goethe claims, the place is *still* (*doch immer*) the site of decisive action (*der entscheidene Schauplatz*), though he fails to explain what, if any, immediately perceivable qualities of a "classical" site might produce such an impression. The passage thus privileges the notion of a free, clear, direct point of view over secondary representations while simultaneously suggesting that the significance of "classical soil" as *der entscheidene Schauplatz* is an indelible and objective quality of the place, independent of these differing subjective modes of experiencing it. But while Goethe is striving to suppress the image-forming capacities of his own mind and to rely on what is in front of his eyes, the very expression "*was man klassischen Boden nennt*" silently admits that some mediation is taking place between the viewing subject and the object or place before him. The act of *calling* a place "classical soil," of attributing "classical" significance to anything, is already the intervention of the subject's mind through an acceptance of a certain interpretation and valuation of its past. The term itself and the impressions that this *idea* produce thus rely on past knowledge of a place, what happened there, and even past visual

or written representations and interpretations of it – a reliance which briefly comes into view in the passage's final moments.

While the discussion of classical soil has up to this point remained quite general and abstract, a crucial concluding sentence brings Rome specifically into the discussion when Goethe expresses an emotional desire to read its history while physically there. A concept of history might arise quite naturally while reflecting on great deeds of the past in the places in which they occurred, but the way in which history comes to Goethe's mind as a sort of impression produced by classical soil indeed seems to defy his clear, free point of view rather than aligning with it. History enters this description of the experience of classical soil "*auf eine wundersame Weise*." Goethe's strategy of suppressing imagination and emotion particularly through his scientific point of view seems undermined by this introduction of *Wunder*, which broadly connotes something seen but in contradiction with reason or understanding. Moreover, the wondrous way in which history "links itself up" (*schließt sich…an*) with this sort of experience is further qualified as "*lebendig*," lively, or alive, attributing an almost fantastical vividness to *Geschichte* as well as its own independent agency.

This language initially creates the sense that Goethe's attempted scientific approach to classical soil, enabled by his alleged suppression of feeling and imagination, produces an overwhelming emotion of longing for history: "*die größte Sehnsucht den Tacitus in Rom zu lesen.*" The impending presence of the city itself inspires Goethe's longing to revisit Tacitus, though it is yet unclear whether Tacitus will contribute to his understanding of the city or whether Rome will deepen or transform his understanding of Tacitus. This sense of history *emerging* into his mind rather than being a conscious thought, though, is also related Goethe's own unprocessed experience (*und man begreift nicht, wie einem geschieht*). His longing for the past through familiar *Geschichte* is thus intimately linked with an absence of understanding of the *Geschehen* of his present. It is crucial to remember that Goethe is, at this point in the text, only anticipating an encounter with what he considers "classical soil" but which he has not yet directly experienced. As a result, his attempted explanation results in a moment in which the "objective" and "classical" ways of approaching and evaluating antiquity and its remains are entangled or even conflated in his writing. In sum, Goethe's fraught reflections on classical soil seem to emerge precisely from these intertwined desires: to directly experience the place as it really is now (*real…wie sie daliegt*) and, because of that experience, to revisit and reconsider in its presence well-known representations of what it once was and what had happened there.

These tensions and difficulties seem almost inherent to the idea of "classical soil" and bringing it to one's experience of Rome. In their introduction to the 2004 collection, *Auf klassischem Boden begeistert,* which draws its title from the fifth of Goethe's *Römische Elegien*, Hildebrand and Pittrof state, "*Der Titel steht nicht nur für den Enthusiasmus, den die Begegnung mit der Antike ausgelöst hat…; zu lesen ist der Titel auch im Sinne des Insipiriertseins zur kritischen Auseinandersetzung mit der eigenen Gegenwart*" (15). Likewise, in Wilhelm von Humboldt's 1829 review of Goethe's *Zweiter römischer Aufenthalt*, he reflects that "*Ihnen [den Römern] ist Rom die Wirklichkeit, in der sie sich täglich bewegen, wie uns ein Land der Einbildungskraft und Sehnsucht*" (2: 397). As the text continues, Goethe experiences the collision of precisely these tensions, combining enthusiasm for the past with a critical reassessment of the present and, equipped with an overabundance of imagination and longing, confronting the realities of daily life in and exposure to Rome.

Powerfully capturing his attention, Goethe's attachment to the value of "classical soil" thus provides the ground for a transformative conflict in his thinking about his relationship to the past and present, and the relationship between representation(s) and reality. This overwhelming desire to read Tacitus represents only the first instance of past knowledge and prior judgments of value interrupting and complicating Goethe's so-called objective way of seeing and thinking about perception – a process which becomes more explicit once Goethe arrives in Rome, where he begins to work through and understand this experience as it becomes both more frequent and more profound.

2 – Knowing Oneself: Goethe's Aesthetic Journey and the *Grand Tour* Tradition

When Goethe finally reaches Rome the following day, the nature of this relationship between individual and place, between experience, object, and representation, begins to take on a clearer shape in his writing. This relationship is first depicted as an almost physical or physiological need for Goethe to visit Rome when he claims the place was "*[der] Mittelpunkt…, nach dem [ihn] ein unwiderstehliches Bedürfnis hinzog*" (*IR* 119). This description blurs the distinction between Goethe's own feelings and the qualities he attributes to Rome itself. The need which draws him to the city seems to be internal and subjective, yet the city itself is independently "*ein Mittelpunkt*."[4] Goethe compares this irresistible need to "*eine Art von Krankheit, von der [ihn] nur der Anblick und die Gegenwart heilen konnte*" (*IR* 119). The necessity which supposedly drew him to Italy thus takes the form of a bodily affliction and, appropriately, its remedies are equally physical and sensuous: the sight and presence of Rome. This disease, Goethe explains, expressed itself prior to his journey as an aversion to mere *representations* of Rome, its appearance, and its culture and history: "*zuletzt durft' ich kein lateinisch Buch mehr ansehen, keine Zeichnung einer italienischen Gegend*" (*IR* 119). The need for "*nur der Ablick und die Gegenwart*" thus opposes itself to (even ancient) "*Bücher und Zeichnungen."* This opposition highlights both the importance of immediate, sensory experience of the place *and* the temporal and spatial ambiguity of "*die Gegenwart"* Goethe requires to come to understand the place and antiquity more broadly.

This refusal to intellectualize his motivations continues in the opening of the second, longer entry from the date of his arrival in Rome, when Goethe explicitly distances his journey from the tradition of a culturally and personally edifying Grand Tour.[5] After announcing his arrival "*in dieser Hauptstadt der Welt*," Goethe draws on both the trope of Rome as *caput mundi* and his prior description of the city as *Mittelpunkt*. By doing so, Goethe, on the one hand, laments not

[4] cf. especially a later passage dated 15 September 1787, "*Auch darum ist der Aufenthalt in Rom so interessant, weil es in Mittelpunkt ist, nach dem sich so vieles hinzieht*" (*IR* 394).

[5] Jeremy Black's *Italy and the Grand Tour* and Gábor Gelléri's *Lessons of Travel in Eighteenth-Century France: From Grand Tour to School Trips* serve as a useful complementary pair of scholarly sources regarding this tradition. Black focuses on the British and Northern European fascination with Italy on the *Tour* and primarily uses archival materials rather than published travel literature to support his account; Gelleri, as the title suggests, centers on the French context but also conducts a much more formalist study of travel literature as a genre, and the chapter "Defining the Grand Tour" provides a comprehensive overview of that literary form.

having seen the city earlier in life, stating "*Wenn ich sie in guter Begleitung, angeführt von einem recht verständigen Manne, vor fünfzehn Jahren gesehen hatte, wollte ich mich glücklich preisen"* (*IR* 119). On the other hand, he nevertheless concedes: *"Sollte ich aber allein, mit eignen Augen sehen und besuchen, so ist es gut, daß mir diese Freude so spät zuteil ward*" (*IR* 119). These sentences depict two distinct notions of traveling to Rome which are both entirely positive in their tone. What distinguishes these two ideas, then, are the ways in which the subject's experience of the city is mediated. In the former, the traditional Grand Tour model, emphasis is placed not only on the presence of an entourage, but specifically on the traveler being led or guided (*angeführt)* by the (pre-existing, external) knowledge of another.[6] While there is still passing mention of the direct sensory experience as the goal of such a journey *(gesehen*), that experience, in Goethe's characterization, would be mediated by external knowledge and guided by the intellect of another learned figure. Conversely, the particular "*Freude*" Goethe claims for his present experience emerges precisely from the absence of such mediation: it is well not simply that he is alone, but rather that his vision *and* physical presence in the city (*sehen und besuchen*) are processed solely "*mit eignen Augen*." As in the discussion of classical soil, however, this immediacy is something of a sleight of hand. While there is no *external* figure or body of knowledge mediating or guiding Goethe's experience, as we shall see, his direct, objective approach comes into tension as his aesthetic experience of the city calls to mind and thus mediates and *is* mediated by his *own* prior thoughts, expectations, and knowledge of the city.

The variously entangled motifs of these passages, such as the relationships between knowledge and experience, and between memory, representation, and perception, are synthesized as Goethe further expands upon the satisfaction of his desire to see Rome and the effects it has on him, particularly on his own personal history with representations of the city:

> Die Begierde, nach Rom zu kommen, war so groß, wuchs so sehr mit jedem Augenblicke, daß kein Bleiben mehr war, und ich mich nur drei Stunden in Florenz aufhielt. Nun bin ich hier und ruhig und, wie es scheint, auf mein ganzes Leben beruhigt. Denn es geht, man darf wohl sagen, ein neues Leben an, wenn man das Ganze mit Augen sieht, das man teilweise in- und auswendig kennt. Alle Träume meiner Jugend seh' ich nun lebendig; die ersten Kupferbilder, deren ich mich errinere (mein Vater hatte die Prospekte von Rom auf einem Vorsaale aufgehängt), seh' ich nun in Wahrheit, und alles, was ich in Gemälden und Zeichnungen, Kupfern und Holzschnitten, in Gips und Kork schon lange gekannt, steht nun beisammen vor mir; wohin ich gehe, finde ich eine Bekanntschaft in einer neuen Welt; es ist alles, wie ich mir's dachte, und alles neu. Ebenso kann ich von meinen Beobachtungen, von meinen Ideen sagen. Ich habe keinen ganz neuen Gedanken gehabt, nichts ganz fremd gefunden, aber die alten sind so bestimmt, so lebendig, so zusammenhängend geworden, daß sie für neu gelten können. (*IR* 119-20)

[6] See, e.g., Black 10-11, which discusses the focus in the Grand Tour tradition on "the period of youth, the most formative period post-childhood," in contrast to Goethe's rather advanced age, at least for a *tourist*, in his thirties, as well as the practices of traveling with servants and tutors on the often years-long *Tour*. Black's account of these tutors suggests that Goethe's characterization of the tour here is somewhat idealized, as the higher aristocratic status of their charges, upon which their own careers and status depended upon their return, often left them in more deferential than controlling or pedagogical relationships.

If the traditional notion of the Grand Tour introduced above was characterized by sense experience guided and contextualized by the knowledge of another, Goethe's experience as described in this paragraph demonstrates a complete inversion of that paradigm. Here, Goethe claims that his *own* prior knowledge (comprised variously of familiarity, thoughts, and dreams) begins to be actively transformed and restructured by his direct sensory experience of Rome itself. We then begin to see the complications arising from Goethe's so-called objective thought, as the impressions brought to mind by his aesthetic experience *are* the very sorts of desires, dreams, and fantasies he seeks to bar from view, drawn from both his own past and his knowledge of the city's past. Echoing back to his observations at the Temple of Clitumnus days earlier, this passage suggests that this transformation is catalyzed by the exposure of partial (*teilweise*), though extensive (or even exhaustive, *in- und auswendig*), knowledge, acquired through disparate remains and (secondary) representation, to the direct experience of totality (*wenn man das Ganze mit Augen sieht*).[7] Furthermore, the passage also draws from the same language with which Goethe described the surprising emergence of *die Geschichte* in his reflection on classical lands. The result of seeing *das Ganze* is nothing less than "*ein neues Leben*, in which "*alle Träumer [s]einer Jungend [sieht er] nun lebendig*." This emergent liveliness lies at the heart of both Goethe's general theorization of the experience of classical soil and his account of his personal encounter with Rome.

As the passage continues, it becomes even clearer that this liveliness possesses a strong aesthetic dimension. Most straightforwardly, the "dreams of youth" which have been vivified by this experience of Rome were largely if not entirely derived from artistic representations of Rome with which Goethe was previously very familiar.[8] As Goethe recalls these images of Rome in a variety of media, summarized as "*alles…schon lange gekannt*," a contrast is developed between them and his present experience, expressed through the parallel statements "*seh' ich nun in Wahrheit*" and *"steht nun beisammen vor mir.*" The emphatic repetition of *nun* in these phrases again captures the temporal and spatial ambiguity of his desire for the Roman *Gegenwart* at the same that it equates the truth of his perception (*seh' …in Wahrheit*) with a notion of totality, as the fact of all these images "standing now together before [him]" echoes "*das Ganze mit Augen sieht*." This forceful sense of the present and presence of Rome thus allows us to consider Goethe's changing consideration of and relation to these past representations in two ways: the personal (or subjective) and the temporal.

These familiar dreams, paintings, and images of Rome mediate Goethe's present experience of Rome at the same time that they are radically transformed and renewed by it: "*wohin ich gehe, finde ich eine Bekanntschaft in einer neuen Welt."* Contrasted against both *bekannt* and *alt* throughout the passage, and conversely linked with *fremd*, *neu* here must mean both "novel," previously unfamiliar to Goethe, and "recent," close to the present in time. This duality suggests

[7] cf. Wurst 200: "Goethe's travels to Italy marked a kind of rebirth in his way of seeing and perceiving and, upon his return, a new way of living. In one of the first letters written during his travels to Italy, Goethe signals not only a break with traditions in art history and its iconographic methodology but, more importantly, with his previous viewing practices: 'Es geht…ein neues Leben an, wenn man das Ganze mit Augen sieht, dan man teilwise in und auswendig kennt'… Here the sensual visual impact is contrasted with mediated remembrance and with knowledge based on the memory of having seen copies. The object influences the viewing subject with a powerful immediacy that brings about a new state of being."

[8] See Tschudi's "Goethe in the Hall and His Journeys in Printed Rome," which will be discussed at length below, for discussion and reproductions of the *specific* prints Goethe had in his possession and refers to, implicitly and explicitly, throughout *Italienische Reise*.

that a change has taken place in the meaning these representations hold for Goethe both in his personal history *and* in the history of Rome itself, as their inadequacy and incompleteness is brought into relief by this new and overwhelming sense of totality and presence. In this formulation, we can begin to excavate a sensibility approaching something like historical consciousness from his descriptions of his experience of the city. Goethe's prior exposure to representations of the city provides the basis, the condition of possibility, for his present experience of it,[9] which, in turn, forces him to reckon with both their conceptual distance from the reality of the city as it stands before him *and* their temporal distance from the "now" from which he considers the past.

Goethe's relationship to visual representations of Rome, both the engravings in his father's hall and the vast collection of prints and plans he accumulated over the course of his life, is also the focus of Victor Plahte Tschudi's 2015 article "Goethe in the Hall and His Journeys in Printed Rome." Tschudi considers these works of art and their role in Goethe's thought from a historical and biographical perspective to argue chiefly that "Goethe's encounter with Rome prompted a re-reading of the history of classical architecture as organic inspired by his ideas of the metamorphosis in nature" (15). Despite fundamental differences in its methods and conclusions, Tschudi's argument touches on many of the same passages of the text as this reading and highlights similar processes of Goethe's thought regarding his experience of Rome as it is recorded in *Italienische Reise*, including the emergence of some understanding of historical experience: "to Goethe prints did not exclusively tell a story of personal past, but of time passing, and of the nature of history" (Tschudi 11). For Tschudi Rome does not serve directly as the catalyst of this transformation, but instead Goethe's prints and their eventual substitution for his own memories of his Italian journey tell this story *outside the text*. My focus on Rome as a mediator of aesthetic and historical experience within *Italienische Reise* thus offers a complement to Tschudi's account of the history of Goethe's thought through art. Together these approaches demonstrate the importance of *Rome* for Goethe's Roman experience and the value of its reappraisal across disciplines. Further distinctions between our arguments will come into relief especially in Sections 3 and 4 of this chapter due to fundamental differences in our conceptions of "the whole of Rome." Tschudi's Goethe conceives of the whole city through the lens of specific etchings of the city which juxtapose ancient ruins with the structures of the current day; I argue that Goethe's idea of the whole of Rome *exceeds* such visual representation and his sense of the historical emerges as aesthetic language and concepts are strained to their very limits within his account of the city.

[9] We might compare the ways in which the language and images of Goethe's past thoughts create the possibility for his present experience to Kosselleck's argument in "Linguistic Change and the History of Events" (*Sediments of Time* 137-58). This essay asserts that language itself acts as a repository of experiences, as it seems to for Goethe, and thus gathers up the conditions of further possible events. Likewise, Goethe's process of *writing through* these transformations of past and present can be mapped onto Koselleck's notions of historiographical writing as summarized by Hoffmann and Franzel in their introduction to the collection *Sediments of Time*: "Koselleck…discern[s] three modes of historiographical writing that are…structured by temporality and capture past experiences linguistically: writing down (*Aufschreiben*) at the moment when the event occurs; copying (*Abschreiben*), that is, transmitting the meaning once attached to particular events; and rewriting (*Umschreiben*) under the pressure of new experiences that call for new explanations of familiar events" (*Sediments of Time* xxvi). The passages of Goethe's initial experiences of the city here seem precisely to be an example of this sort of *rewriting* of familiar events and experiences of his own past.

Strikingly, the transformation of experience in his written account, catalyzed by the juxtaposition of past representation and present reality, extends beyond aesthetic and temporal considerations and leads to a self-conscious reflection of his changing relationships even to his own past thoughts as he draws on them to make sense of his new experience. *"Es ist alles, wie ich mir's dachte, und alles neu,*" he muses, continuing, *"Ebenso kann ich von meinen Beobachtungen, von meinen Ideen sagen. Ich habe keinen ganz neuen Gedanken gehabt, nichts ganz fremd gefunden, aber die alten sind so bestimmt, so lebendig, so zusammenhängend geworden, daß sie für neu gelten können."* Elaborating on his relationship to past images of Rome, Goethe acknowledges that the transformation or realization occurring in the presence of Rome is not simply due to the inaccuracy or inadequacy of such representations, as "*es ist alles, wie ich mir's dachte*," yet, at the same time this very familiarity has been rendered *neu*. This succinct expression encapsulates the crucial relationship between the thoughts of the subject (Goethe) and the expectations set by previously known representations of the place he is now experiencing directly in the present: everything can only be as he thought it would because of the expectations derived from representations.[10]

This bridging of representation and individual perspective is made explicit in the subsequent sentence, where this *neu* and *lebendig* sense is extended even to his own *Beobachtungen, Ideen*, and then, *Gedanken.* The physical and sensory experiences described earlier in the passage ("*seh' ich," "wohin ich gehe"*) that revitalized Goethe's prior, incomplete knowledge of Rome though the totality of its presence are now mirrored in his account of changes to his thoughts themselves. None can be described as entirely new, nor entirely foreign, but his sense of his old thoughts (*die alten*) has itself been revitalized as they have become certain, vivid, and coherent to the point that they could count as entirely new. Goethe's changing knowledge and experience of Rome, then, seems also to reflect a shift in his own self-consciousness.[11]

In sum, this passage describes a process by which prior, indirect, fragmentary knowledge of an object, in this case a certain time or place, becomes revitalized and recontextualized by direct experience of that object in the present. When we bring the two passages into dialogue, the fragmented ruins and remains seem equivalent to incomplete, limited representations cobbled together as a mass in Goethe's own memory and thus in the language he has available to make sense of them in his writing. Crucially, however, the process at play in these passages is not one of replacement or obliteration: the incompleteness or pastness of these representations is *not yet*

[10] In his article "Impressions of Rome," Mayer conducts a systematic study of literary accounts of authors' first impressions of the city of Rome and "aims to provide…a 'grammar' with which to read them," characterized, as in Goethe's account here, by "the juxtaposition of opposites" (176). Mayer helpful elaborates: "What complicates these fairly simple opposites is the double nature of first impressions of Rome…because Rome is rarely viewed with an innocent eye, there is sometimes a disjunction between the virtual image and the reality of a railway station in the rain" and these views are perhaps most complicated by "the temporal disjunction between 'then' and 'now'" in which the "actual features of the city can move from one to the other category" (176).

[11] This self-reflective and reflexive discourse further distances Goethe's text from the traditional travel literature of the French Grand Tour tradition in Gelléri's account. Gelléri specifically highlights a distinction between reflexive and normative discourse. The latter was the hallmark of *apodemica*, the body of travel advice literature popular between the 16th and 18th centuries, whereas the latter, being so self-reflective, tends to obviate the possibility or desire to make normative claims about travel itself and thus produces something closer to "the intellectual and moral, possibly also social, self-fashioning of a traveller" which seems more appropriate for the collection of texts Goethe compiles in *Italienische Reise* (Gelléri 22).

and *not completely* superseded by the totality of the present in Goethe's account.[12] Rather, both aesthetically and historically, the collision of representations, or memories of representations, with presence and direct experience begins to reveal the centrality of a more total, positive concept.

At the same time, this encounter must necessarily be mediated by or take place within the seeing subject. Goethe's account records an encounter between the experiencing subject situated in his own time and place and the presence of the classical locale which renews and vivifies his prior knowledge of it as much as is it a collision of the past and present of the place itself. This transformation seems, then, to comprise the "objective" response or *impression* the sight of Rome produces in Goethe. In this passage, then, we can see two conceptual configurations intersecting in Goethe's written project of coming to know himself through objects in Rome: the doubly mediated relationships of the subject to representation and reality, and that of the subject to the past and present. The instability and interrelations of the temporal and ideal or essential qualities of Rome are brought into focus here by the contrast between changes brought on by the passage of time and the city's spatial and geographical identity, producing a complex framework of ideas and associations to attached to the toponym itself over the long duration of its use.

3 – Traces of the Whole: Survival and Destruction in Rome

Goethe's account of his exposure to the city recognizes this incompleteness and contingency of secondary artifacts and accounts of the past and their inherent tensions with an experience of the present. At the same time, he also becomes aware of his own distance from that past and changes within his own knowledge and self-consciousness over time. The following passages highlight key aspects of Rome's frame of meaning in Goethe's recollection and show more explicitly how the structure of Goethe's experience of the city is projected onto more abstract considerations of temporality and history in his writing.

In earlier passages, Goethe's recollections of his frustrations with making sense of antiquity involved a fraught relationship between viewing the city of Rome in the present and his familiarity with representations of the city at various moments in its own past. As his narrative continues, the author increasingly reckons with the evolution of his conception of the city and its past in response to his direct experience of it. Subsequent entries complicate the previous conflict between the totality of the city in the present with past representations and explore what it means

[12] As noted above, it is in this point that my readings begin to differ more radically from those of Tschudi, who claims that "the overwhelming encounter of with Rome obliterated much of what Goethe had learned from printed reproductions" (3). However, through his focus on Goethe's relationship to his own collection of prints of Rome, both in childhood and late in life, Tschudi nevertheless arrives at a similar characterization of the processes at play in Goethe's narrative: "As he would soon learn, the 'complete' city would only materialize through a tough negotiation between looking and imagining, between what one senses and what one knows" (5). Moreover, my own argument examining the transformation, through this process, of aesthetic into historical experience, as we shall see below, relies on a much different conception of what the "complete" Rome entails for Goethe.

for these representations, ruins, and fragments to be contained within that totality without ever being enough to (re)construct it from them:

> Nun bin ich sieben Tage hier, und nach und nach tritt in meiner Seele der allgemeine Begriff dieser Stadt hervor. Wir gehn mehr fleißig hin und wider, ich mache mir die Plane des alten und neuen Roms bekannt, betrachte die Ruinen, die Gebäude, besuche ein und die andere Villa, die größten Merkwürdigkeiten werden ganz langsam behandelt, ich tue nur die Augen auf und seh' und geh' und komme wieder, denn man kann sich nur in Rom auf Rom vorbereiten. (*IR* 124)

This relationship between pieces, fragments, and the whole is indicated clearly in the opening sentence of the entry: writing of his sense of the city after a week of being there, Goethe professes that a general concept of the city (*der allgemeine Begriff dieser Stadt*) is forming in his mind but is emerging only gradually or progressively (*nach und nach*). However, the gradual process hinted at by this sentence is not merely the straightforward, cumulative agglomeration of individual details into a larger whole. Rather, Goethe's concept of the city is developed more dialectically from his individual, moment-to-moment experiences. Considering this passage in light of Goethe's prior discussions of his difficulty forming a concept of antiquity, we can begin to theorize the ways in which he depicts this process as a series of confrontations between the general and the particular. It is especially noteworthy here that even ancient and modern plans of the city are listed alongside individual ruins, buildings, and villas, suggesting that this emerging concept or understanding (*Begriff*) of the city is not general or universal (*allgemeine*) because of the scope or breadth of individual details included within it.

For Goethe, no ancient plan of the city, no modern reconstruction or representation of it, nor any collection of individual structures, ruins, or remains can give sufficient meaning or context to achieve the level of significance possessed by the entire city as he desires it. What the city plans mentioned in the passage do achieve, however, is a sense of the juxtaposition and interpolation of past and present in this one space and thus within the nominal idea of Rome.[13] Goethe thus renders the specific *Ruinen, Gebäude, Villa*, and even *die größten Merkwürdigkeiten* laid out in both the old and new plans as aides to a process of holistic understanding. In this vein, the passage emphasizes the frequency and nature of his walks throughout the old and new Romes over these first seven days. He walks "*mehr fleißig hin und wider,*" underscoring both his fastidious attention to detail and habit of treading and retreading the same paths in order to examine (*behandeln*) the greatest points of interest *"ganz langsam*." The gradual process of developing a general understanding of the city is thus depicted as a product of growing exposure and familiarity, not of collecting or enumerating sites of interest, but of seeing them repeatedly and growing more familiar with them and as they relate to one another and his holistic understanding of the city.[14]

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[13] Jessica Maier's *The Eternal City: A History of Rome in Maps* lays out a comparative study and history of maps and plans of the city, replete with images and examples, from antiquity to the 21st century. In particular, Maier examines the ways that these documents have, since the Renaissance, constituted "the urge to restore Rome's fragmentary past through visual imagery," by attempting to capture both past and present in one glance (91).

[14] Goethe's practice of walking through the city and his written account of this practice demonstrates what Atkinson and Caviglia, in the French context, describe as "an aesthetics of walking (217). In their account, the practice of walking becomes "a necessary act to apprehend [Rome] through dynamic and personal interactions with it" especially as walkers attach "historical events and persons to the sites in which they took place as a way of conjuring up that past as a personal memory made real by the topography of its occurrence" (218). This source, along with

As in earlier moments, Goethe's language here conforms to his method of objective thinking and thus privileges the direct, sensory character of this exposure over any intellectual aspect of its individual moments: "*ich tue nur die Augen auf und seh' und geh' und komme wieder.*" To come to understand Rome, then, is merely to open one's eyes and see it, *because*, the passage concludes, "*man kann sich nur in Rom auf Rom vorbereiten*." This comment hearkens back to Goethe's desire, even before reaching the city, to read – and, more likely, to *re*read – Tacitus *in* Rome and further underscores the extent to which one's presence there reshapes any prior knowledge one has of it in Goethe's account – *including* knowledge of its status and value as "classical soil." Thus, any preparation or desire to experience Rome made or inspired outside the city, Goethe suggests, is immediately rendered inadequate by the actual experience of it. Presence in the city and the presence *of* the city *do* enable prior knowledge or familiar representations of it to become *useful*, as with the ancient and modern city plans above, but that utility is not intrinsic to the representations. Their relevance and usefulness to a fuller understanding of Rome must come instead from their reconsideration *after* they have been called to mind by the city itself. The possibility of understanding Rome and its significance comes to Goethe through a collapse of temporality in the text. To borrow Koselleck's language, Goethe comes to know Rome through this project of contemporaneously writing down (*Aufschreiben*) his aesthetic experience of seeing Rome, which itself demands a rewriting (*Umschreiben*) and a new explanation of all of the meaning he once attached to his own past understanding of the city (what was copied, *Abschreiben*), as well as its place in his own past.

This inextricable connection between the experience of seeing and the process of learning is reinforced by other moments in which Goethe describes studying and learning about the city. In an entry dated 22 January 1787, Goethe states, "*Doch auch in Rom ist zu wenig für den gesorgt, dem es Ernst ist, ins Ganze zu studieren. Er muß alles aus unendlichen, obgleich überreichen Trümmern zusammenstoppeln*" (*IR* 161). Even one seriously interested in "the whole" lacks sufficient materials to study it in Rome and "must cobble together everything out of endless though abundant debris." As the passage continues, we can begin to see parallels to Goethe's account of *klassicher Boden*: "*Freilich ist's wenigen Fremden reiner Ernst, etwas Rechts zu sehen und zu lernen*. *Sie folgen ihren Grillen, ihrem Dünkel...*" (*IR* 161). The second sentence essentially glosses *studieren* in this context as "*zu sehen und zu lernen"* at the same time that it claims that few foreigners possess serious desire to take on this task. The passage contrasts the pure seriousness of someone interested in the whole, to see and to learn something *correct*, with those who instead follow more flighty and emotional drives, recalling the contrast of Goethe's scientific view against more emotional and imaginative approaches to classical lands.

In a second passage dated nearly nine months later (3 September 1787), Goethe states, "*Jetzt gehn hier erst meine Studien an, und ich hätte Rom gar nicht gesehen, wenn ich früher weggegangen wäre. Man denkt sich gar nicht, was hier zu sehen und zu lernen ist; auswärts*

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others regarding the Grand Tour tradition cited throughout the chapter, reflect ways in which Goethe's habits and interests in Rome superficially conform with those of other travelers around this period. However, the depth of his consideration of the significance and nature of Roman architecture and monuments beyond mere antiquarianism separates his reactions from this larger body of evidence. As Ziolkowski notes in "Ruminations on Ruins: Romantic versus Classical," "initially, Germans turned to "die Antike im Schlafrock des häuslichen Familienglücks," a rather condescending allusion to the frequently trivialized obsession with Rome," but later Goethe's writing, specifically on Strassburg Cathedral, prompted a reevaluation of ancient architecture (277). It is noteworthy that Goethe's aesthetic sensibilities helped inaugurate this shift in cultural perspective but, Ziolkowski notes, authors such as Eichendorff essentially ignored Goethe's "subsequent turn to ancient Rome" ("Ruminations" 277).

kann man keinen Begriff davon haben" (*IR* 389). Despite the passage of time, Goethe still feels as though his studies, again glossed as *zu sehen und zu lernen,* are just beginning, evoking the very gradual development of a general understanding of the city discussed above and the constant demand for rewriting and reevaluation. Any less time spent there, he claims, would be equivalent to never seeing the place at all. Moreover, the repeated emphasis of *zu sehen* being a crucial component of learning about and understanding the city necessarily depicts Goethe's gradual formation of an *idea* of the city as entirely dependent on his presence there, to the extent that one cannot comprehend this process at all when anywhere else. It is important to reemphasize here, however, that the "gradual formation" of his idea, does not indicate the piecemeal aggregation of a larger idea from smaller components, but rather a growing exposure to the presence of the whole. As Goethe's reflections on his time in the city continue, this idea of Rome thus takes clearer shape and the elements of its broader frame of meaning in his writing come into view and begin to play larger and more explicit roles in the text.

Goethe's frustrations with "San Crocefisso" provide an illustrative point of comparison with these descriptions of his tours through and studies of Rome itself. As discussed, Goethe himself realized that the hodge-podge structure was not constructed or reconstructed according to some plan or example from antiquity, but rather "*man hat Säulen, Pfeiler, Gebälke gefunden und zusammengeflickt, nicht dumm, aber toll*" (*IR* 114). The verbs throughout Goethe's description emphasize the merely incidental, or even accidental, relationship between these pieces, merely found (*gefunden*), rather than sought out, and the whole into which they have been "madly patched together" (*zusammengeflickt…toll*). This accidental quality extends also to his own perceived relationship to them, as well, as he describes himself, in his capacity as one "*bemüht…einen Begriff des Altertums zu erwerben*" as "*nur Ruinen entgegenstellen*" (*IR* 114). Despite their antiquity, the architectural remnants cobbled together into this strange structure are *only ruins*, which, again, confront or stand against (*entgegenstellen*) one so eager to attain a concept of antiquity. This phrase, "*uns…nur Ruinen entgegenstellen*," marks an experience of ancient remains utterly deprived of both context and significance, and thus further characterized as that "*aus denen man sich nur wieder das kümmerlich aufzubauern hätte, wovon man noch keinen Begriff hat*" (*IR* 114). It is precisely this bare, meaningless quality which contrasts with the notion of classical soil described in the text's following paragraph and the experience of "preparing for Rome *in* Rome" outlined above.

The material composition of "San Crocefisso," unguided, as it seems, by a specific plan or design, thus becomes a metaphor through which to understand a particular sort of encounter with the past as a pastiche of ruins, objects, and artifacts which bear no immanent connection to a greater whole and whose survival and discovery seem merely accidental. At the end of his architectural description, Goethe includes the curious critique that these remains were cobbled together "*nicht dumm, aber toll*" (*IR* 114). Here Goethe suggests that the structure was not built in an unintelligent or ineffectual manner – it stands and survives, after all – but rather in a manner which evokes senselessness or madness. The sequence of verbs here, alongside the passage's final lament, reinforces a sense of mere happenstance, a marked absence of any larger idea or identity which might imbue these remains with some greater meaning. Goethe's disappointment, then, derives from the notion that one cannot reconstruct a complete or coherent concept of antiquity inductively from individual remains. Such remains, including those found throughout the city itself, are thus important not because one can build a concept of antiquity out of them, but rather *become* important only when considered *in light of* such a concept. They are

not discrete *fragments* of this unified significance which might be brought together to comprise the whole, but rather only ever manifold particular *expressions* of a more general unity.

Goethe's writings on Rome intertwine this fraught relationship between part and whole more explicitly with that of past and present when he describes, in new terms, the laborious work of sorting through more abstract aspects of the city:

> Gestehen wir jedoch, es ist ein saures und trauriges Geschäft, das alte Rom aus dem neuen herauszuklauben, aber man muß es denn doch tun und zuletzt eine unschätzbare Befriedigung hoffen. Man trifft Spuren einer Herrlichkeit und einer Zerstörung, die beide über unsere Begriffe gehen. Was die Barbaren stehenließen, haben die Baumeister des neuen Roms verwüstet. (*IR* 124)

Echoing the previously discussed labor of cobbling together "*die unendlichen, obgleich überreichen Trümmern,"* the sad and sour business described in this passage presents an inverted and abstracted version of that task. Goethe here is no longer trying to *build up* his idea of Rome out of individual bits of ruin and debris, but instead attempting to *sort out* the past of Rome from the present city in which he finds himself. As I have argued above, despite the negative tone of such descriptions, these potentially futile endless tasks are nevertheless viewed as necessary for any hope of *"eine unschätzbare Befriedung*" regarding his understanding of the city and its past. This doubled (old and new) Rome also hearkens back to Goethe's recollections of the etchings and images of the city hanging in the hall of his father's home, in which all his *alt* and *bekannt* conceptions of the city were rendered *neu* and *fremd* by his presence there. Likewise, the new Rome here seems, from Goethe's present perspective, to have subsumed the old, traces of which might yet be pried out of the modern totality, but only with much difficulty and emotional turmoil. This turmoil seems to arise, in part, from a growing distance between what feels old (already known, familiar) and new (foreign, revitalized) *for Goethe*, and what comprises the old (ancient, ruined, lost) or new (present) *Rome*. Through these differing, even conflicting, notions of old and new, the tension between Goethe's preconceptions and his aesthetic experience takes on a temporal dimension.

Goethe's struggles with this "*saures und trauriges Geschäft,"* however, lead him to identify and articulate two key concepts which become major components of his developing idea of the city: "*Man trifft Spuren einer Herrlichkeit und einer Zerstörung, die beide über unsere Begriffe gehen.*" While the verb *treffen* at first resembles the language of meaninglessness and pure contingency which characterized the San Crocefisso passage, the encounter described here again inverts the process and logic of Goethe's dissatisfaction with those ruins as his thinking continues to shift away from encounters with individual remains and toward a more holistic idea of Rome. In sorting out the old Rome from the new, Goethe no longer writes of discovering fragmentary debris and ruins, but rather of "*Spuren*" traces or clues of two abstract (or abstracted) concepts, "*Herrlichkeit*," magnificence or splendor, and "*Zerstörung*," destruction, both of which, at this moment, exceed his comprehension.

This sentence, then, represents two key innovations and narrative developments in Goethe's intertwined aesthetic experience and conceptual understanding of Rome. First, the adoption of the word *Spuren* makes explicit the transition from the frustrated method of aggregation to the emergent sense of holism that will dominate his reflections on the city going forward. Traces, unlike fragments, cannot add up to a whole of which they are a part, but rather reflect or express some aspect of it on a smaller and perhaps more manageable scale. Second, the passage

introduces the related notion of excess, specifically an excess of magnificence and splendor which defies conceptualization due to its magnitude. Although the totality of each concept is too great to be imagined or held at once in the mind, each is nevertheless made both recognizable and accessible through these traces. The sentence encapsulates a shift in Goethe's evaluation of the significance of individual sites and ruins within the city. While these places might still be considered parts of a whole in a simple sense, it is a whole that exceeds the sum of the parts available. Their significance thus derives not from that relationship, but rather from the way they act as traces of an idea of Rome that already contains elements within it that are too great to be conceived.

The interplay of these two ideas of magnificence and destruction *also* picks up the growing difficulties Goethe has with making sense of time, of old and new, in Rome. The obvious connotations of *Herrlichkeit* and *Zerstörung* call to mind a dialectic of survival and loss, which together produce the modern state of the city of Rome. Despite the most straightforward reading of this passage, *Herrlichkeit* is not strictly reserved as a quality for what has survived from ancient times, and *Zerstörung* is not merely the loss or vanishment of the old but is an ongoing and inevitable process reflected in both the old and new alike. Crucially, these forces are not only abstract but also sensuously present in these various traces of the past. This duality prepares Goethe's aesthetic thought to give way to a richer contemplation of time.

The ironic and aphoristic conclusion to the passage succinctly captures this temporal and causal complexity: "*Was die Barbaren stehenließen, haben die Baumeister des neuen Rom verwüstet*." This pithy sentence superimposes the forces of physical destruction in antiquity (*die Barbaren*, a broad term generally referring to non-Greek or non-Roman peoples, and an action associated with them, *verwüsten*) onto the notion of temporal change. The splendor of the old Rome, *allowed to stand* (*stehenließen*) by the barbarians of the ancient past, is now ravaged by the modern architectural changes and developments of the city, many of which are themselves *herrlich*. Moreover, this ironically inverted description of these concepts also implies that acts of rebuilding, restoration, and urban development are themselves, in a sense, acts of destruction. As a result, the unified totality of what Rome *is* and what it *has been* is always growing but has always already been incomplete, irrecoverable. Ending with this reversal of expectations, the passage suggests that old and new, splendor and destruction, duration and change, are not conflicts between independent ideas, but fractures and contradictions contained within the singular conception of Rome Goethe is developing in his writing.

4 – All of Rome: *Das Ungeheure* and the Limits of Aesthetic Discourse

This growing sense of a unified or totalizing idea of Rome, gradually realized through Goethe's repeated aesthetic experiences of its traces on his habitual walks around the city, becomes even more explicit in the following paragraph of the entry:

> Wenn man so eine Existenz ansieht, die zweitausend Jahre und darüber alt ist, durch den Wechsel der Zeiten so mannigfaltig und vom Grund aus verändert und doch noch derselbe Boden, derselbe Berg, ja oft dieselbe Säule und Mauer, und im Volke noch die

> Spuren des alten Charakters, so wird man ein Mitgenosse der großen Ratschlüsse des Schicksals, und so wird es dem Betrachter von Anfang schwer, zu entwickeln, wie Rom auf Rom folgt, und nicht allein das neue auf das alte, sondern die verschiedenen Epochen des alten und neuen selbst aufeinander. Ich suche nur erst selbst die halbverdeckten Punkte herauszufühlen, dann lassen sich erst die schönen Vorarbeiten recht vollständig nutzen; denn seit fünfzehntem Jahrhundert bis auf unsere Tage haben sich treffliche Künstler und Gelehrte mit diesen Gegenständen ihr ganzes Leben durch beschäftigt. (*IR* 124-26)

This passage reframes the process of painstakingly disaggregating two Romes, sifting the ancient out from the contemporary, as *looking at one existence*.[15] Even on the surface, the notion of sorting out the old from the new within Rome already inverts a straightforward relationship of individual parts to a complete whole. The idea of the whole of Rome, seen as a unified two-thousand-year existence, is no longer composed of its ancient and modern parts, but instead contains them all within itself, going beyond them. The conceptualization of Rome attempted in this moment *cannot* be identical with a(n impossibly) comprehensive *knowledge* of the city's entire history: the initial verb of looking, *ansehen*, rather implies that this simultaneous consideration of the entirety of the city's more than two thousand year old existence is the impression produced in Goethe's mind by the aesthetic experience of *seeing* Rome from the vantage point of his own present moment. This description of *seeing* two thousand years, however, shows that Goethe's aesthetic discourse is reaching its limits and is beginning to blend seamlessly into the temporal as his view of Rome's present seems now to take in its entire past, as well.

The remainder of this passage struggles to put Goethe's aesthetic experience of objective thought into words, as it strains to contain the contradiction of the stable identity of a limited physical place with the sense of the passage of an almost inconceivable amount of time: "[*eine Existenz*] *durch den Wechsel der Zeiten so mannigfaltig und vom Grund aus verändert, und doch noch derselbe Boden, derselbe Berg, ja oft dieselbe Säule und Mauer, und im Volke noch die Spuren des alten Charakters…"* This phrase encapsulates a stage in Goethe's experience that Tschudi characterizes as "a tough negotiation…between what one senses and what one knows" (5). The repetiton of *derselbe* emphasizes the stability of the things Goethe can see before him, the ground, the mountains, surviving columns and walls. However, his recognition of these objects of perception simultaneously raises the manifold changes they have undergone, whether they show evidence of those changes or not, to the level of conscious awareness. This identity of place, contrasted with the changes wrought by the passage of time, recasts the *Barbaren* and *Baumeister* above from individual human agents to the efficient causes of the inevitable changes time, considered as a constant and infinite process, brings with it.

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[15] "*Existenz*" may also mean something like "subsistence" and gesture toward a more organicist connotation which emphasizes an understanding of each part's place in the whole, as in Goethe's later articulation of a similarly holistic idea, employing the language of anatomical study's relation to the living whole of the body: "Auf Anatomie bin ich so ziemlich vorbereitet, und ich habe mir die Kenntnis des menschlichen Körpers bis auf einen gewissen Grad nicht ohne Mühe erworben. Hier wird man durch die ewige Betrachtung der Statuen immerfort, aber auf eine höhere Weise hingeweisen. Bei unsere medzinisch-chirurgischen Anatomie kommt es bloß darauf an, den Teil zu kennen, und hierzu dient auch wohl ein kümmerlicher Muskel. In Rom aber wollen die Teile nichts heißen, wenn sie nicht zugleich eine edle, schöne Form darbieten." (*IR* 160).

This experience inspires a deep ambivalence in Goethe's articulation of his relationship to that immense and volatile past. Through looking upon such a long-lasting existence, "*so wird man ein Mitgenosse der großen Ratschlüsse des Schicksals, und so wird es dem Betrachter von Anfang schwer, zu entwickeln, wie Rom auf Rom folgt, und nicht allein das neue auf das alte, sondern die verschiedenen Epochen des alten und neuen selbst aufeinander."* The parallel constructions beginning "*so wird man...so wird es...*" indicate that the two clauses of this sentence refer equally to results of this aesthetic experience of the city and also relate to one another. First, being surrounded by a view of Rome that calls to mind such a long span of time in every instance allows, or perhaps compels, Goethe to feel as though he himself is within that course of time's manifold changes. In other words, he feels himself within the city's history – described here as the decrees or resolutions of fate (*Ratschlüsse des Schicksals*), because the events that happened in the past to produce *this* present moment *must* have happened to afford him *this* view.[16]

At the same time, Goethe reports that his ability to sort out that span of time, that is, to make it manageable and comprehensible, is being curtailed precisely by this feeling of being *within* two thousand years of change rather considering it as an object from the outside. Now, Goethe describes the difficulty of trying to be an observer of Rome's existence from the very beginning (*Betrachter von Anfang*), and of trying to discern and arrange the various periods of its history. The discussion of isolating, arranging, and describing different epochs, presumably using material remains and evidence, calls to mind Winckelmann's influence on Goethe's classicism,[17] yet his experience of Rome seems here to be resisting that approach. The language of the *saures und trauriges Geschäft* of sorting out the old Rome from the new is here supplanted and complicated by the more tautological expression *"wie Rom auf Rom folgt*," again heightening these contradictions of identity and change. Goethe immediately clarifies that the multiple Romes in this phrase refer not only to the old and new, but also to a potentially *infinite* number of *"verschiedene Epochen*" contained within and between these larger periods, creating a distinct sense of an *excess* of the past within the city, much of which will remain lost and inaccessible forever. Just as the many surviving remains will never add up to the whole of ancient Rome, whatever epochs are accessible and discernible will never add up to the city's entire history. This idea of the city and its history thus resembles a *process* in which individual instances take place, but whose limits are unknown or nonexistent, rather than a fully bounded concept. Goethe's aesthetic experience of the city's dense collection of objects, remains, and reconstructions thus produces the feeling of being within Rome's history, of constituting one moment of that enormous and irrecoverable whole.

This dense rumination on the entirety of what Rome means concludes with a new reflection on the relationship of prior studies and knowledge of the city in light of this totalizing approach. Goethe modestly describes his own engagement with the city here as an attempt merely "*die halbverdeckten Punkte herauszufühlen,*" to sense or feel out those points of interest which have

[16] See also a passage discussed below: "Hier brachte der Zufall nichts hervor, er zerstörte nur; alles auf den Füßen Stehende ist herrlich, alles Zertrümmerte ist ehrwürdig" (*IR* 399).

[17] As Potts describes in his introduction to *History of the Art of Antiquity*, one of Winckelmann's most enduring contributions was that, thanks to his analysis, "the classical artistic tradition no longer presented itself as a timeless idea but instead took on the character of a historical phenomenon" which "prepared the way for a flurry of archaeological activity" (3). In Part 1, Chapter 4, Section 3 of his *Geschichte*, Winckelmann divides Greek art into a sequence of stylistically and historically distinct epochs, though, as discussed in my introduction, he later denies Rome any such style or development.

not been entirely obscured. This limited characterization of his own efforts nevertheless serves to contextualize and, perhaps, historicize that work within the immense body of scholarship on the city produced since early modernity. While he had previously addressed such foreknowledge with a combination of appreciation and dissatisfaction, now that he can see and experience Rome for himself he finally feels able to make full use of this body of scholarly and artistic work (*die schönen Vorarbeiten recht vollständig nutzen*). This changed relationship recalls the gratefulness Goethe had previously expressed for seeing Rome on his own, with his own eyes, *not* under the tutelage of a learned guide in the tradition of the *grand tour*. Now, however, because he is experiencing the *Gegenwart* of Rome, these prior studies and representations are, in fact, mediated and considered through his sense of the city itself. Moreover, describing this art and scholarship as extending "*bis auf unsere Tage,*" Goethe implicitly places himself and the new representation of the city he constructs in *Italienische Reise* at the head of this five-hundred-year march of "*Künstler und Gelehrte*."

As the following paragraph reverts to an account of moving through the city, this one *Existenz,* considered together with the great body of artistic and scholarly engagement associated with it, now become "*dieses Ungeheure*," an unwieldy, even monstrous, vastness or enormity:

> Und dieses Ungeheure wirkt ganz ruhig auf uns ein, wenn wir in Rom hin und her eilen, um zu den höchsten Gegenständen zu gelangen. Anderer Orten muß man das Bedeutende aufsuchen, hier werden wir davon überdrängt und überfüllt. Wie man geht und steht, zeigt sich ein landschaftliches Bild aller Art und Weise, Paläste und Ruinen, Gärten und Wildnis, Fernen und Engen, Häuschen, Ställe, Triumphbögen und Säulen, oft alles zusammen so nah, daß es auf ein Blatt gebracht werden könnte. Man müßte mit tausend Griffeln schreiben, was soll hier eine Feder! und dann ist man abends müde und erschöpft von Schauen und Staunen. (*IR* 126)

This enormity, on the one hand, establishes a direct parallel between the physical elements of Rome, both ancient and modern, piled atop one another throughout the city and the confused periods the *Betrachter* above struggles to isolate and arrange from them (*IR* 126). However, this specific word also has a place in aesthetic discourse and theories of the mind that come into play in this context. In Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, the distinction *ungeheuer*, usually translated as "monstrous," appears in conjunction with the sublime as it relates to the estimation of magnitude: "… *[die Natur enthält] nichts, was ungeheuer (noch was prächtig oder gräßlich) wäre; die Größe, die aufgefaßt wird, mag so weit angewachsen sein, als man will, wenn sie nur durch Einbildungskraft in ein Ganzes zusammengefaßt werden kann. Ungeheuer ist ein Gegenstand, wenn er durch seine Größe den Zweck, der den Begriff desselben ausmacht, vernichtet.*" (5: 253). Moreover, scholars of Goethe have noted a similar valence in its use throughout his works. In the Goethe-Lexicon of Philosophical Concepts, Trop explains that in certain contexts "'ungeheuer,' which typically connotes monstrosity, signifies an order of extraordinary magnitude bordering on the uncanny and the numinous. In Goethe's construction, a force conceptualized as 'ungeheuer' marks the void of discourse. It cannot be conditioned and—in its concentrated appearance—exercises an unconditioning power over the codes of sense, normativity, and intelligibility that would otherwise constitute social reality" (Trop, "Kraft"). This technical meaning of the term is further corroborated in a review of a translation of *Elective Affinities*, where Nicholas Boyle critiques the rendering of the term as "monstrous": "the thematic term 'ungeheuer' is regularly translated as 'monstrous.' An element of disapproval, as of some kind of perversion, is thus imported into a word which suggests in the first instance

an incommensurability with our normal categories of judgement, something out of all proportion to normal life, and therefore awesome and terrible" (413).

Goethe's language here communicates a realization that Rome cannot be contained within one view and that the impression produced by even a necessarily incomplete overview, evoking elements of his own past, familiar representations, and two thousand years of existence, is too much to hold in the mind at once. Both Rome and his impression of it are thus rendered *ungeheuer*. The appearance of *das Ungeheure* here, where Goethe attempts to conceive of everything Rome is and was and contains within it in one glance and one thought, marks the moment in the text where aesthetic perception and conceptual understanding collapse into one another as they both reach their respective limits when brought to bear on Rome as a whole. The *allgemeine Begriff dieser Stadt* Goethe has gradually been approaching here reveals its fundamental *Unbegreiflichkeit*: Goethe's complete notion of Rome is not defined by a single concept or representation, but by overwhelming, limitless *excess* – a constant deferral and denial of completeness, containment, and comprehension. Rome, for Goethe, is forever incomplete, too lost and fragmented to be represented as a whole, so he can only do what he does in this compiled bricolage of a text: bring together the pieces available in an order to make his own, piecemeal sense of it.[18] Just as History is represented in individual histor*ies*, Rome as *das Ungeheure* can only be approached through traces, individual expressions of it that *are* comprehensible, that belong to a whole, but can never complete it.

Somewhat counterintuitively, what might be considered "monstrous" acts as a source of calm: "*dieses Ungeheure wirkt ganz ruhig auf uns ein, wenn wir in Rom hin und her eilen, um zu den höchsten Gegenständen zu gelangen*" (*IR* 126). The language of rushing back and forth within the city echoes Goethe's earlier account of his frequent and diligent walks, but here he acknowledges that *dieses Ungeheure* operates or works on us "*ruhig*," steadily, quietly, calmly. This tonal contrast hearkens back to the tension between Goethe's sense of fleeting time and "*Rom, das bestehende*," reinforcing the sense of stability the immensity of the city imparts to him. Importantly, the agency of this influence is attributed to *das Ungeheure* itself: as it works through the impression produced in Goethe's mind by his view(s) of the city, the passage maintains its "objective" focus by describing how this impression works *upon* the viewer of Rome, rather than coming *from* the viewing subject.

As the passage continues, the physical excess of the city gives way to an excess of meaning: "*Anderer Orten muß man das Bedeutende aufsuchen, hir werden wir davon überdrängt und überfüllt*" (*IR* 126). In other places, one must, in the active voice, seek out what is significant, what has meaning; in Rome, however, the viewing subject is passively "overrun and overstuffed" by an overwhelming excess of significance. This excess of significance bleeds uncontrollably into Goethe's almost manic description, as if his sentences can barely contain the wealth of visual and mental stimulation Rome offers: "*Wie man geht und steht*, *zeigt sich ein landschaftliches Bild aller Art und Weise, Paläste und Ruinen, Gärten und Wildnis, Fernen und Engen, Häuschen, Ställe, Triumphbögen und Säulen"* (*IR* 126). The indefinite use of *wie* here underscores the idea that the city, in every glance and from every angle, exposes the viewing subject to a similarly overwhelming concentration of images of every sort – old, new, natural, man-made, artistic, architectural. Moreover, as he reaches the limits of verbal representation, he

[18] Future work might investigate the implications of this reading of Goethe's "*das Ungeheure*" for the work of Hans Blumenberg at the intersection of his writing on Goethe and his own theory of *Unbegrifflichkeit*.

begins to reflect, too, on the limits of translating reality into visual representation: "*oft alles zusammen so nah, daß es auf ein Blatt gebracht werden könnte. Man müßte mit tausend Griffeln schreiben, was soll hier eine Feder!*" (126). Evoking the tradition of prints and plans which juxtapose ancient and modern structures within the city "*auf ein Blatt*," Goethe emphasizes again how tightly packed and piled atop one another both structures and the epochs they represent are in Rome.

The hyperbole of needing to write with a thousand styli or pencils suggests that the task of capturing and representing all the objects and views within *die ungeheure Stadt* will and, indeed, *could* never be completed. The contrast with a *Feder* further implies that written representations in language, contrasted with visual sketches and drawings, would be even less capable of doing so. And, even if one could, "*man [ist] abends müde und erschöpft vom Schauen und Staunen*" (*IR* 126). This hyperbole at once celebrates the joy and value Goethe has found in representations of the city while also gesturing again toward their inability to represent or reproduce the whole of Rome, individually or collectively. The final position of "*Schauen und Staunen*" similarly dismisses any possibility of representations rivaling the *Gegenwart* of Rome as it elevates gazing and marveling as the most appropriate forms of engagement with the city, even to the point of exhaustion. Goethe's own descriptions and reflections of Rome throughout *Italienische Reise,* then, represent one more trace, one more individual expression of the inconceivable whole, and one more captured *present,* ensconcing itself within unwieldly totality of the writings and representations the city has inspired.

Goethe's arrival at the notion of Rome as *das Ungeheure* represents a climax in the narrative of his project of coming to understand the city and his relationship to it. While Goethe initially attempts to construct a concept of Rome through a process of aggregation, to build a whole out of many parts, the city persistently exceeds and overflows the bounds of such a concept in Goethe's mind. The city, already over two thousand years old, simultaneously and often in one glance displays the ruined fragments of its glorious past surrounded by later medieval, renaissance, and modern restoration and construction. As the city itself has continuously changed and grown, perpetually adding to both its history and its present enormity, the task of sorting out these objects and the moments they represent becomes nearly impossible for Goethe's gaze to take in and for his mind to comprehend. Goethe thus comes to reflect on how the physical space of Rome is not made up of all these particulars, but rather contains all of them within its unwieldy whole, how it is not made significant by them, but rather imparts significance *to* them. Similarly, the *history* of the city is not reducible to a chronological sequence of individual moments and epochs but becomes an overarching, seemingly infinite whole which contains all such epochs and evidence of them, what has survived, what has been lost, and what might yet be, within itself – including Goethe and the text itself.

5 – The Past in the Present: Coming to Know Rome through Objects and Objects through Rome

Past representations of Rome and Goethe's prior knowledge of it, of course, do not only *lead* him to his unwieldy conception of the city. Rather, as his first writings in Rome suggest, his continued engagement with these representations and the physical remains he encounters in the city is likewise radically transformed in light of this new development in his thought. The following episodes from *Italienische Reise* demonstrate moments in which Rome mediates aesthetic and historical experience in Goethe's writing. This idea of Rome and the forces it contains with in it reshape his encounters with individual objects from simple "objective" descriptions of his perceptions of them into reflections of his own relationship to the past and his own place in time. In these moments, Goethe's opportunity to take in the physical presence of Rome with his own eyes calls his knowledge of the city's past to mind and renders it not only relevant but *useful* in and in light of the present. While the notion of classical soil originally suggested that the city is made meaningful by the famous moments and periods of its past – that is, the parts of it Goethe was aware of before his arrival – Goethe subsequently finds that those fragments of the past strewn throughout the city and contained within his memory are imbued with greater significance not by what they *were*, but by when and where and what they are to him *now*.

5.1 – In the Company of History

This change in perspective is expressed in an especially transformative way by the experience of reading history in Rome. Indeed, the grand sense of temporality and connection to the great events of the past Goethe finds through his exposure to the city renders history not merely something to be read, but something to be lived and experienced:

> Ich will Rom sehen, das bestehende, nicht das mit jedem Jahrzehnt vorübergehende. Hätte ich Zeit, ich wollte sie besser anwenden. Besonders liest sich Geschichte von hier aus ganz anders als an jedem Orte der Welt. Anderwärts liest man vom außen hinein, hier glaubt man, von innen hinaus zu lesen, es lagert sich alles um uns her und geht wieder aus von uns. Und das gilt nicht allein von der römischen Geschichte, sondern von der ganzen Weltgeschichte. Kann ich doch hier aus die Eroberer bis and die Weser und an den Euphrat begleiten oder, wenn ich mein Maulaffe sein will, die zurückkehrenden Triumphatoren in der heiligen Straße erwarten, indessen habe ich mich von Korn- und Geldspenden genährt und nehme behaglich teil an aller dieser Herrlichkeit. (*IR* 150-52)

This passage contains the travelogue's most explicit discussion of history as such. Beginning this paragraph with an articulation of desire immediately connects it to Goethe's earlier admission of a great longing to read Tacitus in Rome. While that statement was left unexplained and unexplored in the discussion of classical soil, here, in the light of his new conception of the city, Goethe finally describes the novel experience of reading history in Rome itself in writing. The

topic of reading history emerges from Goethe's expressed desire to see Rome "*das bestehende, nicht das mit jedem Jahrzehnt vorübergehende*." This contrast is not merely another gloss of *alt* and *neu* but rather evokes the dynamic tension of identity or duration and change discussed above. Seeing "the Rome that persists," then, seems to refer precisely to viewing the city as two-thousand-year *Existenz* and all that that perspective entails and calls to mind, but with a subtly different connotation than that of the usual epithet, *die ewige Stadt,* or even *ewige Roma,* which Goethe uses at *Römische Elegien* 1.4.[19] On the one hand, in the following sentence Goethe wishes to use what time he has in Rome better, even if he had more of it. He contrasts his own perception of time slipping by with the stability of "*Rom, das* bestehende" and articulates a tension between his own perception of time and his perception of this seemingly timeless place. In this way, *bestehende* possesses an obvious temporal dimension. However, *bestehen,* unlike *ewige*, can mean both to persist or survive *and* to stand firm or hold one's ground, allowing the word to gesture toward Rome's abiding presence in both space and time. This duality emerges powerfully in Goethe's subsequent account of reading history in the following sentences.

Without transition, Goethe's desire *to see* gives way to an explicit discussion of what it feels like *to read* history in Rome, inherently linking this activity to Goethe's new perception and conception of the city. With a now familiar formulation, Goethe contrasts how this activity feels *here*, in Rome, with what one might normally expect elsewhere. The primary verb in this introductory sentence, *sich lesen*, which recurs throughout, indicates that *Geschichte*, even in the singular, here refers primarily to history as a genre of writing, in the sense of *a* history rather than any broader concept. However, the way Goethe describes how history, or histories, are read and experienced in the city blurs that distinction as the passage continues. Anywhere else in the world, he claims, "*liest man vom außen hinein,*" but "*hier*" in Rome itself, "*glaubt man, von innen hinaus zu lesen, es lagert sich alles um uns her und geht wieder von uns.*" This abstract, somewhat impressionistic thought suggests that, outside of the city, reading history draws one out of the present world and into a captured or represented moment within the text. In the unique physical and intellectual environment Goethe has found in Rome, however, the opposite occurs, or one feels or believes (*glaubt*) that it does: history flows from the text out into the city. "Everything" found in the text, he suggests, "settles around us" and even "emanates from us." The distinction between the textual and the spatial loses focus as Goethe's imagined reader finds the past of which he is reading – or traces of it – everywhere around him, not merely contained within a text. Moreover, the reader simultaneously finds himself as the *Mittelpunkt* from which this past flows out into the present world. The remainder of the passage explores the implications of this new sense of history for the reader, who now finds himself *within* history rather than merely reading it.

This experience places Rome *and* the reader at the *Mittelpunkt* not only of Roman history, Goethe explains, "*sondern von der ganzen Weltgeschichte.*" The use of the singular *die ganze Weltgeschichte* further blurs the line between history as text and a broader concept of history within which all world events fall, especially given the pervasive contrast throughout *Italienische Reise* between the general and the particular. Reading history in Rome, then, seems to reveal not only an excess of past time, but an excess of *history* within the city, an

[19] See Hom 98-9 for interpretation this passage in direct connection with the history of the trope of the eternal city and its relationship to both the experience and reception of tourists in Rome.

overabundance of the past made visible and accessible in the present that engenders an awareness of one's place within it and a sense of experiencing it directly.

The long concluding sentence of the passage further heightens this sense of experiencing and participating in the history of the world from Rome. Returning to the first person, Goethe claims reading history in Rome makes it possible for him "*die Erober bis an die Weser und an den Euphrat begleiten.*" This phrase simultaneously evokes the sense of participating in the great events of the past while it also connects his home in Germany to the Euphrates, rich with ancient associations of conquest, from the wars of the Romans and the Parthians to the expansive aspirations of Alexander and his successors, and even further, into biblical history and beyond, as it calls to mind the scripturally inspired theory of the four empires. Like the campaign of the conqueror, history becomes an ongoing act, a process in which one can take part.[20] However, if the greatness of the past appears to flow outward from Rome as Goethe accompanies the conquerors on campaign, an alternative choice to observe such events rather than participate directly suggests that it also flows back to the city, as well.

To illustrate this pattern of departure and return, Goethe cleverly connects his vision of world history with the classical image of the Roman Triumph. His language draws on the symbolic geography of the ancient city – the classical significance of its soil – to imagine himself not only as a common spectator of these marvels, but as a citizen of ancient Rome, benefitting from Roman grain doles and standing along the *Via Sacra,* watching the parade of a returning general and his spoils of war ("*wenn ich mein Maulaffe sein will, die zurückkehrenden Triumphatoren in der heiligen Straße erwarten, indessen habe ich mich von Korn- und Geldspenden genährt*"). This alternative experience still allows him to take part *"an aller dieser Herrlichkeit*," as he would with the *Eroberer*, but *"behaglich*," comfortably or easily. Goethe's imagined view of this triumph, the celebration of the conqueror's return to Rome, expresses his awareness of history emerging from and inevitably returning to the city in the language of aesthetic experience. He no longer needs to travel with the conqueror to experience world history because, in Rome, he can see it all from where he stands. History – the representation and now *experience* of past events – flows out of but comes back to the city in time, just as the *triumphator* departs and returns to the city in space, together completing the dual sense of "*Rom, das bestehende*." Being in Rome and reading history there thus incorporates Goethe into both.

As a whole, then, the passage suggests that Rome and the expansive, even all-encompassing conception of the past it inspires allows the reader of history a view, and even a share, of the *Herrlichkeit* of the famous past. While Goethe could only previously discern *Spuren* of this magnificence, he now experiences this sense of greatness and significance as it both emanates outward from the city and inevitably returns to it and spreads across it, like the triumph of a Roman general. Goethe's idea of Rome seems inextricably linked to the meaning and significance that histories and history writ large bestow upon the events and objects of the past, from the "great men" to the ground itself. Goethe's writing thus conveys a deeply felt sense that these *histories* read in Rome are simultaneously suspended in and in constant tension with its

[20] cf. Tschudi's characterization: "The overwhelming encounter with tangible history obliterates Goethe's earlier distinctions and unlocks Rome's progressive nature. History materializes not as a series of abstracted epochs but as a process which he himself also forms a part" (6). In Tschudi's view, the idea of history as a process specifically stems from Goethe's biological theories and his idea of metamorphosis in plants. The history of Rome's architecture thus becomes "a metamorphosis of monuments" and "ties his encounter with Rome to a theory that fills his mind at the time" (6).

history, as these individual representations of Rome's (and the world's) past(s) *also* comprise an important part of Goethe's own.

5.2 – *Herrlichkeit* and *Zerstörung* on Display

Goethe reinforces this notion of Rome granting access to the splendors of the past through his account of looking upon an Egyptian obelisk. The monument now stands in the Piazza Montecitorio, but at the time of his stay in the city lay broken in several pieces at ground level. Elsewhere in the text, Goethe muses that *"man kann das Gegenwärtige nicht ohne das Vergangene erkennen*" (*IR* 162). His description of this obelisk, depicting it almost as a microcosm of the city's physical state, illustrates how knowledge of the past (and particularly *classical* knowledge), of history, enables recognition of objects, artifacts, and remains in the present, but also that it is only through their situation in the present, rather than any state they may have been in in the past, that such knowledge becomes useful:

> Diese Tage war ich einigemal bei dem großen Obelisk, der noch zerbrochen zwischen Schutt und Kot in einem Hofe liegt. Es war der Obelisk des Sesostris, in Rom zu Ehren des Augusts aufgerichtet, und stand als Zeiger der großen Sonnenuhr, die auf dem Boden des Campus Martius gezeichnet war. Dieses älteste und herrlichste vieler Monumente liegt nun da zerbrochen, einige Seiten (wahrscheinlich durchs Feuer) verunstaltet. Und doch liegt es noch da, und die unzerstörten Seiten sind noch frisch, wie gestern gemacht und von der schönsten Arbeit (in ihrer Art). Ich lasse jetzt eine Sphinx der Spitze und die Gesichter von Sphinxen, Menschen, Vögeln abformen und in Gips gießen. Diese unschätzbaren Sachen muß man besitzen, besonders da man sagt, der Papst wolle ihn aufrichten lassen, da man denn die Hieroglyphen nicht mehr erreichen kann. (*IR* 389-90)

We learn immediately that the great obelisk in question is one of the many *Merkwürdigkeiten* that Goethe visited repeatedly to learn and to study during his stay in Rome. While the passage focuses solely on a single object of interest, its description nevertheless contains within it a tangle of subtle contrasts and tensions. This ancient monument, *groß* in both size and significance, lies before Goethe ignobly "*noch zerbrochen zwischen Schutt und Kot.*" Yet rubble and filth fade from view as Goethe expounds in a stately, declarative tone, "*Es war der Obelisk des Sesotris.*" This present state is thus contrasted with an account of what "*es war*" in the past, briefly outlining its Egyptian origins as a monument to the pharaoh "Sesostris" and what he knows of its later transport to Rome. This knowledge refers to both the symbolic and practical functions the fallen monument served in antiquity when it had been erected as the gnomon of the great sundial etched into the ground of the Campus Martius in honor of Augustus. Moreover, his phrasing of the image of the intact obelisk rising purposefully above this design *"auf dem Boden des Campus Martius*," which Goethe elsewhere refers to as *das Marsfeld,* [21] seems precisely to correspond to the initial description of the ruins lying *"in einem Hofe*," but elevated in diction and rendered distant in time and culture through this untranslated Latin name. Despite the

[21] As he does in another passage on this very monument in the *Bericht* of September 1787 included in Part 3 of *Italienische Reise*, discussed below.

passage providing the description of an object, however, *none* of the 'knowledge' Goethe inserts here is properly empirical, but is, in fact, *classical*. Even the account of the obelisk's Egyptian origins come from the Greek tradition[22] rather than observation or close study of Egyptian material culture. As with "classical soil" more broadly, Goethe's aesthetic experience of this ancient object in Rome immediately calls to mind not an original, immediate impression, but a wealth of received tradition and previously assigned value attributed directly to the object itself.

The implicit contrast between the ancient majesty and present disrepair of the obelisk is emphasized and heightened further in the following sentence. The entire prior history and reputation of this object, condensed into the superlative "*Dieses älteste und herrlichste vieler Monumente,*" comes crashing both onto the ground and into the present tense when Goethe states for a second time that it *"liegt nun da zerbrochen*." This juxtaposition slowly expands as Goethe recounts more details of the obelisk's current condition: certain faces of the obelisk have been marred or defaced, likely by fire, at some unspecified point(s) since its transport to Rome nearly two thousand years prior. Goethe *again* emphatically repeats "*und doch liegt es noch da*" before revealing that the undestroyed (*unzerstörten*) sides appear *"noch Frisch, wie gestern gemacht*" and still display their seemingly timeless beauty as though plucked directly from the distant past. Structurally, then, the passage shifts between statements about the past, drawn *intellectually* from prior knowledge of the classical tradition and *empirically* from the very sides of the obelisk reflecting different moments or events throughout its long existence, and a series of assertive, emphatic jumps back to the present, where both become available and useful.

The specific language with which the obelisk is described also directly mirrors or borrows from Goethe's account of attempting to sort the old Rome from the new and encountering only "*Spuren einer Herrlichkeit und einer Zerstörung,*" (*IR* 124). While neither word is necessarily noteworthy on its own, the fact that this obelisk, as it is described here, bears traces of both *Herrlichkeit* and *Zerstörung* within it in one moment allows it to stand as a concrete representation of the interplay of these forces within Goethe's idea of Rome. The juxtaposition of certain faces appearing "as though made yesterday" and others "defaced by fire" can be read as the object visually representing its own history before Goethe's eyes. This visual representation is *not,* however, chronological or sequential, as even Goethe's brief description of its past was, but rather simultaneous. The ruined obelisk, at once destroyed and preserved, thus exhibits the ways in which it has been radically changed over time, while, in the same glance, it retains nearly the same appearance and identity it had under Augustus, allowing it to be recognized and appreciated in Goethe's present at the same time that this recognition calls to mind its place in the classical tradition.

In a broader sense, then, this description enables a more nuanced consideration of how Goethe conceives of *Zerstörung* within his concept of Rome. Considered quite abstractly earlier in the text, the *Zerstörung* expressed through its traces in Rome defied the mind's ability to grasp it. Within this *one* particular trace, however, the process of conceptualizing this force and how precisely it operates in Goethe's idea of Rome becomes more manageable. While the burnt sides are most explicitly referred to as *zerstört* by comparison with the undamaged faces, in its current position, "*noch zerbrochen zwischen Schutt und Kot,"* the entire monument is destroyed, reduced

[22] Herodotus mentions the figure of Sesostris repeatedly in Book 2 of his *Histories*. As Marincola points out in a note, it is now known that "H.'s Sesostris is an amalgamation of the Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs Senwosret I and Senwosret III, with some absorption of the historical Rameses II" (*Histories* 640, n. 57).

to one of the many *Trümmern* left behind by antiquity. It is only *because of* this *Zerstörung* that Goethe's examination of the monument, its various faces, carvings, its history, is even possible. While this force of destruction has damaged the obelisk, it has also made it accessible in the present in ways that it had not been in the past. Thus, Goethe concludes his description after describing his intention to record and reproduce the obelisk's many inscribed hieroglyphics and decorative reliefs: "*Diese unschätzbaren Sachen muß man besitzen, besonders da man sagt, der Papst wolle ihn aufrichten lassen, da man denn die Hieroglyphen nicht mehr erreichen kann.*" By re-erecting the monument as it once stood, raising its point and faces above ground level, the pope will destroy the unprecedented view of this object that Goethe so celebrates, becoming, as it were, the *Baumeister* who ravages what the barbarians left standing.

In a later *Bericht*, Goethe reminisces about the obelisk as he reports on an exhibition of Egyptian monuments. The report arrives at this conclusion even more explicitly, describing the experience of "*neben der sonst in die Luft gerichteten Spitze standen*" and *"*[*ein Bild*] *zu sehen, früher keinem menschlichen Auge, sondern nur den Strahlen der Sonne erreichbar... Wir machten Anstalt, diese heiligen Bilder abgießen zu lassen, um das bequem nah vor Augen zu sehen, was sonst gegen die Wolkenregion hinaufgerichtet war"* (*IR* 399). In this way, the destruction and ruination wrought by the passage of time is not merely the erasure of the past and its remains. In Rome, it can also be the very process by which the past is rendered accessible to human vision and human understanding in ways it previously was not.[23] The play of *Herrlichkeit* and *Zerstörung* in the broken obelisk thus reflects how the present state and physical presence of the remains of the past, much like Goethe's view of the city itself, can lead or even force one to consider not only their origins or a single prior state, but the entire scope and duration of their history in one moment.

These reflections on the significance and state of the ancient obelisk can thus be read as a limited microcosm of Goethe's idea of Rome, as it condenses the complex relationship of the city's materiality to an expansive consideration of time and temporality into one object. It seems to be no coincidence, then, that in the very next paragraph, the text most clearly articulates an idea of Rome as the basis for broader theorizing and philosophical discussion:

> In dem widerwärtigen Raume,[24] worin wir uns mit den würdigsten Werken befanden, konnten wir uns nicht entbrechen, Rom als ein Quodlibet anzusehen, aber als ein einziges

[23] cf. Tschudi: "Gradually, Goethe came to cultivate the grandeur of antiquity not in its lost forms, but as perpetual erosion" (2). This conceptual similarity again highlights complementary argumentative differences with Tschudi. The concept of erosion in my argument emerges from the possibility of these descriptions and thus the link between long-term historical change and present aesthetic experience. For Tschudi's more biographical argument, however, erosion is a visual trope drawn from many engravings and sketches of Roman ruins popular in Goethe's day that becomes a metaphor for the older Goethe's own process of remembering as "the image of the romantic looking back on youthful adventures has to give way to the relentless observer of the world, to whom all phenomena exist in a constant state of transformation" (2).

[24] The muddy space in which these works are displayed, for Goethe, seems to mirror the rather unfortunate geographic position and situation of the city as a whole: "Schon die Lage dieser Hauptstadt der Welt führt uns auf ihre Erbauung zurück. Wir sehen bald, hier hat sich kein wanderndes, großes, wohlgeführtes Volk niedergelassen und den Mittelpunkt eines Reichs weislich festgesetzt; hier hat kein mächtiger Fürst einen schicklichen Ort zum Wohnsitz einer Kolonie bestimmt. Nein, Hirten und Gesindel haben sich hier zuerst eine Stätte bereitet, ein paar rüstige Jünglinge haben auf dem Hügel den Grud zu Palästen der Herren der Welt gelegt, an dessen Fuß sie die Willkür des Ausrichters zwischen Morast und Schilf einst hinlegte. So sind die sieben Hügel Roms nicht Erhöhungen gegen das Land, das hinter ihnen liegt, sie sind es gegen die Tiber und gegen das uralte Bette der Tiber,

> in seiner Art: denn auch in diesem Sinne hat diese ungeheure Lokalität die größten Vorzüge. Hier brachte der Zufall nichts hervor, er zerstörte nur; alles auf den Füßen Stehende ist herrlich, alles Zertrümmerte ist ehrwürdig, die Unform der Ruinen deutet auf uralte Regelmäßigkeit, welche sich in neuen großen Formen der Kirchen und Paläste wieder hervortat. (*IR* 399)

While this passage does not explicitly connect the text's idea of Rome with a concept of history or historical experience, it nevertheless presents the city as an invitation to consider the forces of change that have shaped the city and its significance over its long existence holistically. The sort of quodlibet Goethe considers Rome to be also brings together many of the key terms explored and interpreted above, reflecting how deeply interwoven their appearances in various passages and contexts are throughout the literary fabric of the text. The discussion inspired by Rome here seeks to explore and unpack how such an "*ungeheure Lokalität*" might nevertheless possess "*die größten Vorzüge,*" recalling the earlier notion of Rome as *das Ungeheure*. The mass and unwieldiness implied in this appellation is echoed later in the passage by *"die Unform der Ruinen*," succinctly recapturing the *unendlichen, obgleich überreichen Trümmern* from which Goethe began his project of understanding Rome and antiquity. Here the indefinite quantity and shapelessness of these ruins nevertheless hint at "*uralte Regelmäßigkeit, welches ich in neuen großen Formen der Kirchen und Paläste wieder hervortat*." Just as they previously served as *Spuren einer Herrlichkeit*, the ruins of Rome can only hint at an *uralte* regularity. This limitation suggests that this ancient order is irrecoverable due to both the fragmentary character of these traces and its pre-classical origins. The loss of this bygone order to time, however, is neither permanent nor complete, as it is called forth again "*in neuen großen Formen"* of more contemporary churches and palaces. Evidenced by both sources, this quality of the ancient city takes on an air of timelessness, though also of abstraction from any one structure or ruin. This moment thus echoes Rome's ability to provide meaningful and overarching context for these innumerable pieces of its long past and harkens back to Goethe's being *überdrängt und überfüllt* with significance at the sight of *die ungeheure Stadt*.

These descriptions of ancient and modern ruins and architecture surround another somewhat ironic and aphoristic expression of how time and value collide in this theorization of Rome: "*Hier brachte der Zufall nichts hervor, er zerstörte nur; alles auf den Füßen Stehende ist herrlich, alles Zertrümmerte ist ehrwürdig.*" The absolute dichotomy of *nichts* and *alles* repeated throughout this quotation gestures toward its universalizing tone and the *ungeheuer* conception of the city from which it emerges. Similarly, this dichotomy, again not simply old and new, reflects the dynamics of duration, destruction, and change at play over Rome's long existence. Everything which has ever existed in the city, Goethe explains, is thus either "*auf den Füßen Stehende*" or *"Zertrümmerte,"* marking that which has survived intact with an active participle, and what has been ruined with the passive. These modifiers instantiate in language the sweeping claim made immediately prior about the role of chance or contingency in the history of the city.

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was Campus Martius ward. Erlaubt mir das Frühjahr weitere Exkursionen, so will ich die unglückliche Lage ausführlicher schildern. Schon jetzt nehm' ich den herzlichsten Anteil an dem Jammergeschrei und den Schmerzen der Weiber von Alba, die ihre Stadt zerstören sehn und den schönen, von einem klugen Anführer gewählten Platz verlassen müssen, um an den Nebeln der Tiber teilzunehmen, den elenden Hügel Coelius zu bewohnen und von da nach ihrem verlassenen Paradiese zurückzusehn. Ich kenne noch wenig von der Gegend, aber ich bin überzeugt, kein Ort der ältern Völker lag so schlecht als Rom, und da die Römer endlich alles verschlungen hatten, mußten sie wieder mit ihren Landhäusern hinaus und an die Plätze der zerstörten Städte rücken, um zu leben und das Leben zu genießen" (*IR* 162).

Zufall has *produced* nothing, only destroyed, he claims, elliptically justifying the positive valuations he attributes to both sides of the dichotomy (*herrlich* and *ehrwürdig*). Everything in the city, past and present, surviving and destroyed, must, therefore, have been brought forth with purpose and meaning by its association with the city. This discussion of Rome as quodlibet thus reflects the great extent to which Goethe's presence in and direct experience of the city, and, more precisely, the language with which he represents – and *struggles* to represent – them in his writing, have contributed to his more holistic conception of the city, which at the same time reflects onto and reshapes his impressions of the objects and structures within it.

5.3 – Elegiac Exile

The extent to which Goethe's putting his experience of Rome into writing both depends on and transforms the connection between his present perception and prior representations of it is shown most strikingly by the final passage of the entire *Italienische Reise*. Here, in this final *"gegenwärtigen nachträglichen Bericht*," the elder Goethe reflects on his final nights in the city with a palpable and romantic nostalgia (*IR* 523). Admitting that this writing relies primarily on memory, drawing on only a few scant papers and mementos rather than extensive letters or journals, Goethe renders the conditions in which he remembers gazing upon the city for the last time in vivid language: "*drei Nächte … stand der volle Mond am klarsten Himmel, und ein Zauber, der sich dadurch über die ungeheure Stadt verbreitet, oft empfunden, war nun aufs eindringlichste fühlbar"* (*IR* 532). Far from displaying the *freies, klares Anschauen* with which Goethe strove to drive off fantasy and sentiment upon his arrival in the city, this retrospective account struggles to maintain a boundary between what Goethe himself sees, or saw, and what his imagination and memory project onto it. Perhaps also paralleling the initial passage on *klassicher Boden*, however, Goethe persists here in favoring outwardly objective description, claiming that even this *Zauber* is most hauntingly or vividly *palpable* (*eindringlichste fühlbar*), capable of being touched or felt, rather than a being a feeling of his own.

Following this atmospheric description, the passage retraces Goethe's steps through "*die ungeheure Stadt*,"[25] strolling down the Corso, climbing the Capital, and gazing wistfully at the

[25] The notion of *die ungeheure Stadt* seems to have left an impression on Wilhelm von Humboldt, who uses the word repeatedly and conspicuously in his 1829 *rezension* of Goethe's *Zweiter römischer Aufenthalt*. He refers explicitly to "*ungeheure Rom*" once (2: 398), but also uses the adjective in moments which align with Goethe's interpretation of the city. For example, Humboldt describes how, in Rome, concepts of human history, the feeling of the inevitable decline of everything enduring in time, are all visible and embodied "*wie in einem ungeheuren Bilde*" (2: 396). Humboldt later succinctly encapsulates the shock of Goethe's initial perception and in the incomprehensibility that follows: "*Allein Begriff und Studium können nur Vorbereitungen, Hülfmittel seyn, Mass angeben, Schranken setzen; die Gestalt ist immer Eins und ein Ganzes, immer mehr und ein Andres. Da tritt nun das unbegreifliche, durch kein Studium Erreichbare ein, das was nur gefühlt und geschaffen, nicht gemacht warden kann"* (2: 408). Compared with Goethe's gradual and difficult process of coming to terms with the "monstrous" whole of Rome, the concise argumentative language with which Humboldt explicates Goethe's concept of the city both reflects a similar view of its historical significance *and* foreshadows Humboldt's quite different and fundamentally *sub*jective use of that significance in his own work, which we will explore in Chapter 2.

statue of Marcus Aurelius[26] before descending to marvel at the dark shadows cast upon the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus. His tour ends as he takes in "*die Einsamkeit der Via Sacra*" and stops, finally, to wonder at "*den erhabenen Resten des Koliseums*." These moments together prompt a shift in the passage from an account of what lay before his eyes to more explicit discussion of the reactions these sights provoke in him. In the loneliness of the Via Sacra, the way Rome initially enlivened Goethe's prior knowledge of it plays out again in reverse, when now *"erschienen die sonst so bekannten Gegenstände fremdartig und geisterhaft*" (*IR* 532). In this way, Goethe's final trek through Rome produces the inverse of what he achieved through his many walks through the city during his stay: while seeing the city with his own eyes rendered familiar representations *fremd, neu,* and *lebendig*, as he recalls his preparations to leave, it is the objects before him, now "*so bekannt"* themselves, which appear alien and spectral, disembodied, drained of life. This reconstructed memory of Goethe's final walk, then, not only begins the end of *Italienische Reise*, but also offers something of an end*ing* to the story of Goethe's aesthetic experience of Rome. Though there is a pointed reference to *die ungeheure Stadt*, Goethe's recollection is composed and constructed far from the overwhelming presence of the city itself and this written memory of Rome again disintegrates into to a collection of familiar, famous, individual places and monuments within it.

The final passages of the *Bericht* stem directly from Goethe's reaction to one of these monuments in particular: the *erhabene Reste* of the Colosseum in the light of the full moon.[27]

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[26] As Tschudi astutely observes, this passage contains an anachronism which clearly marks the irruption of the older Goethe into his written memories: "He describes his ascent up the stairs to Michelangelo's Capitol where the statue of Marcus Aurelius reminded him of the intimidating *Commandatore* in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. It is highly unlikely that Goethe in April of 1788 had seen, or indeed even known of, this opera, which had premiered in Prague only six months earlier. It is not as if impressions fade, but Goethe colors them in a more intense hue and inscribes them in a dramatic plot. An ideal recollection, then, takes the form not as an exact replication of an event, but as a re-creation of it. As readers, we understand – we *feel* – Goethe's departure more strongly with reference to the fateful opera" (Tschudi 2).

[27] The overwhelming scale of the Colosseum, especially at night, is a sight which fascinates Goethe throughout his stays in Rome. He first remarks on it soon after arriving in the city, on November 11, 1786: "Abends kamen wir ans Coliseo, da es schon dämmrig war. **Wenn man das ansieht, scheint wieder alles andre klein, es ist so groß, daß man das Bild nicht in der Seele behalten kann**; man erinnert sich dessen nur kleiner wieder, und kehrt man dahin zurück, kommt es einem aufs neue größer vor" (*IR* 132).

An even more similar passage comes in the entry of February 2, 1787: "Von der Schönheit, im vollen Mondschein Rom zu durchgehen, hat man, ohne es gesehen zu haben, keinen Begriff. Alles Einzelne wird von den großen Massen des Lichts und Schattens verschlungen, und nur die größten, allgemeinsten Bilder stellen sich dem Auge dar. Seit drei Tagen haben wir die hellsten und herrlichsten Nächte wohl und vollständig genossen. Einen vorzüglich schönen Anblick gewährt das Coliseo. Es wird nachts zugeschlossen, ein Eremit wohnt darin an einem Kirchelchen, und Bettler nisten in den verfallenen Gewölben. Sie hatten auf flachem Boden ein Feuer angelegt, und eine stille Luft trieb den Rauch erst auf der Arena hin, daß der untere Teil der Ruinen bedeckt war und die ungeheuern Mauern oben drüber finster herausragten; wir standen am Gitter und sahen dem Phänomen zu, der Mond stand hoch und heiter. Nach und nach zog sich der Rauch durch die Wände, Lücken und Öffnungen, ihn beleuchtete der Mond wie einen Nebel. Der Anblick war köstlich. So muß man das Pantheon, das Kapitol beleuchtet sehn, den Vorhof der Peterskirche und andere große Straßen und Plätze. Und so haben Sonne und Mond, eben wie der Menschengeist, hier ein ganz anderes Geschäft als anderen Orten, hier, wo ihrem Blick **ungeheure und doch gebildete Massen** entgegenstehn" (*IR* 166).

Goethe's wistful reverie, describing the play of light and shadow over the massive ruins of Rome in the moonlight, aligns with a trope of roughly contemporary Romantic novels and poetry of the early 19th century, in which the sight of Rome in the moonlight prompts moments of deep reflection from an expansive perspective. While Jordheim underplays Goethe's interest in Rome and Roman art (see note 1 above), he examines quite a similar moment in his analysis of the role of Rome in Jean Paul's novel *Titan*, published between 1800 and 1803.

Thinking back on this experience of the sublime, the elder Goethe visibly interrupts this recollection in the present tense: "*darf ich nicht leugnen, daß mich ein Schauer überfiel und meine Rückkehr beschleunigte*" (*IR* 532). The shudder which assails Goethe and drives him from the city continues the play of reversal in this passage as it also marks the sudden shift in language from Goethe's *Abschied aus Rom* to his *Rückkehr* for the first time. The passage also transitions here, only briefly, from the narrative of Goethe's final night to a more philosophical reflection on the sublime, which hearkens back to an earlier passage of this *Bericht.*[28]

> Alles Massenhafte macht einen eignen Eindruck zugleich als erhaben und faßlich, und in solchen Umgängen zog ich gleichsam ein unübersehbares Summa Summarum meines ganzen Aufenthaltes. Dieses, in aufgeregter Seele tief und groß empfunden, erregte eine Stimmung, die ich heroisch-elegisch nennen darf, woraus sich in poetischer Form eine Elegie zusammenbilden wollte. (532).

This brief observation interrupts the narrative with the language of aesthetic philosophy. All things as massive as the Colosseum, he suggests, produce an *Eindruck* at once *erhaben* and *faßlich*, sublime and comprehensible, but shy of *das* U*ngeheure*. This explicit philosophical gloss on *die erhabene Reste* in turn suggests a deliberate contrast between this vast but still comprehensible or intelligible ruined structure and the description of the entire city earlier in the passage as *ungeheure*, enormous to the point that it exceeds comprehension and intellect.

Just as the juxtaposed faces of the obelisk enabled Goethe to better conceive of the forces of *Herrlichkeit* and *Zerstörung* in Rome*,* this final *erhaben und faßlich* impression of the

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Jordheim discusses how the protagonist's experience of Rome „after he had stood so long in the light of the full moon of the past" and many visits to the "Forum, Colosseum, the Capitol," leads him to a fateful decision in which "all the different temporal layers that structure his experience of Rome…are brought into convergence, are reintegrated into one single, uniform temporal horizon, which gives direction to his actions" (Jordheim 59). Here we see remarkable parallels not only to the imagery Goethe recalls but also to the climactic moment of action and direction to which it drives him.

Even more striking, however, are the parallels of Goethe's moonlit Rome to the famous "moonlight stanzas" in the fourth canto of Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, published a bit later, between 1812 and 1818. Stanza 128 and those following specifically describe the "Coliseum" lit by "moonbeams" and shift from a reverie of the present view to an apostrophic address to time itself, "beautifier of the dead, adorner of the ruin." Pinto includes Stanza 144 as a classic example of this trope: "But when the rising moon begins to climb/ Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;/ When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,/ And the low night-breeze waves along the air,/ The garland forest, which the gray walls wear,/ Like laurels on the bald first Caesar's head;/ When the light shines serene but doth not glare,/ Then in this magic circle raise the dead:/ Heroes have trod this spot – 'tis on their dust ye tread" (Byron). Pinto concludes, "Through the medium of Byron's verse and the agency of moonlight, the Colosseum is transformed from a ruined edifice into a "magic circle" capable of raising the dead. Of course, the dead abide everywhere in Rome; their animating presence affects everyone who walks its streets. Ancient heroes live on, as do the writers and artists who have flourished in Rome over the centuries" (4).

This trope proves to be remarkably flexible. In all three texts – Goethe, Jean Paul, and Byron – each with a distinct genre and drastically different literary styles and perspectives, such an experience, such a vision of Rome, at once immense and rendered ethereal in the moonlight, becomes a narrative impetus for a moment of temporal collapse when the present is integrated into the life of the distant past and the subject imagines how that continuity might then extend an equally immense distance forward in time, as well.

[28] "Wenn man, wie in Rom der Fall ist, sich immerfort in Gegenwart plastischer Kunstwerke der Alten befindet, so fühlt man sich wie in Gegenwart der Natur vor einem Unendlichen, Unerforschlichen. Der Eindruck des Erhabenen, des Schönen, so wohltätig er auch sein mag, beunruhigt uns, wir wünschen unsre Gefühle, unsre Anschauung in Worte zu fassen: dazu müßten wir aber erst erkennen, einsehen, begreifen; wir fangen an zu sondern, zu unterscheiden, zu ordnen, und auch dieses finden wir, wo nicht unmöglich, doch höchst schwierig, und so kehren wir endlich zu einer schauenden und genießenden Bewunderung zurück" (*IR* 524-5).

Colosseum prompts the text's final attempt to render Goethe's impression of the entire city in words. Returning to the simple past tense of narrative, he continues, "*und in solchen Umgängen zog ich gleichsam ein unübersehbares Summa Summarum meines ganzen Aufenthaltes."* The account of his entire stay that Goethe draws or extracts (*ziehen*) from this impression takes the form of a slippery, bilingual play on words: *gleichsam ein unübersehbares Summa Summarum*. On the surface, the colloquial meaning of the phrase in this context would simply be an incalculable or inestimable sum or accounting. While this interpretation already connotes the inability of words or concepts to contain his experience of *die ungeheure Stadt,* both the German adjective and the Latin phrase might also be read to refer at the same time to the material stature Rome. *Summa* can mean both sum and "the greatest or highest things," and *unübersehbar*[29] could take on a more literal meaning of something one cannot see over. Moreover, *gleichsam* already casts Goethe's summary into the realm of *als ob*. Thus, this phrase succinctly expresses the attempt, impossible and forever incomplete, of conceiving of something which exceeds the mind's and language's capabilities of representation. It captures, simultaneously, the experience of seeing and the struggle of holding what has been seen in the mind.

Goethe's impression of the sublime and the feat of drawing a *quasi*-concept of the whole from it then incite an empowering swell of Romantic feeling: "*Dieses, in aufgeregter Seele tief und groß empfunden, erregte eine Stimmung, die ich heroisch-elegisch nennen darf, woraus sich in poetischer Form eine Elegie zusammenbilden wollte.*" The passage preserves the structure of Goethe's objective aesthetic thought by narrating explicitly the effect this sensory experience produces in his excited and agitated mind. Rather than describing his own agency, the sentence maintains *dieses*, seemingly referring to the entire prior sentence, as its subject, which is "*tief und groß empfunden*," and which arouses *eine Stimmung* in him. This feeling or disposition, which he retrospectively terms "heroic-elegiac," in turn sets off another seemingly autonomous aesthetic process in his mind. Rather than stating that he was inspired to write an elegiac poem, Goethe instead claims that "an elegy in poetic form wanted to shape itself together [from this mood]" (*woraus…sich zusammenbilden*). Though this sentence dramatizes the inspiration of verbal art, the presence of both *Form* and a compound of *bilden* here imbues the process with a distinctly visual character, as even the elegiac poem taking shape, inspired by a sensory experience, seems mediated by imagination, specifically construed as the mind's image-forming capability.

As this new elegiac poem begins to shape itself out of the aesthetic experience of Goethe's final moonlit look at Rome, a jarring but now familiar process overrides his ability to translate his perception into words: his own thoughts become interrupted and transformed by a prior, well-known representation of just such an experience of the city, which itself, over the course of the passage, is likewise translated and transformed:

> Und wie sollte mir gerade in solchen Augenblicken Ovids Elegie nicht ins Gedächtnis zurückkehren, der, auch verbannt, in einer Mondnacht Rom verlassen sollte. "Cum repeto noctem!" seine Rückerinnerung, weit hinten am Schwarzen Meere, im trauer- und jammervollen Zustande, kam mir nicht aus dem Sinn, ich wiederholte das Gedicht, das mir teilweise genau im Gedächtnis hervorstieg, aber mich wirklich an eigner

[29] This double meaning anticipates Humboldt's own complex assertions about the physical and historical "*Übersicht*" Rome affords, explored in Chapter 2.

Produktion irre werden ließ und hinderte; die auch, später unternommen, niemals zustande kommen konnte.

Wandelt von jener Nacht mir das traurige Bild vor die Seele,
Welche die letzte für mich ward in der römischen Stadt,
Wiederhol' ich die Nacht, wo des Teuren soviel mir zurückblieb,
Gleitet vom Auge mir noch jetzt eine Träne herab.
Und schon ruhten bereits die Stimmen der Menschen und Hunde,
Luna, sie lenkt' in der Höh' nächtliches Rossegespann.
Zu ihr schaut' ich hinan, sah dann kapitolische Tempel,
Welchen umsonst so nah unsere Laren gegrenzt.—

Cum subit illius tristissima noctis imago,
Quae mihi supremum tempus in Urbe fuit;
Cum repeto noctem, qua tot mihi cara reliqui;
Labitur ex oculis nunc quoque gutta meis.
Iamque quiescebant voces hominumque canumque:
Lunaque nocturnos alta regebat equos.
Hanc ego suspiciens, et ab hac Capitolia cernens,
Quae nostro frustra iuncta fuere Lari.— (*IR* 532-33)

As we have seen from Goethe's first days in Rome, his aesthetic experience of the city and even his own thoughts in its presence are colored and mediated, pre-structured in a sense, by his intimate familiarity with older visual and textual representations of it, as they are here by an excerpt of Ovid's *Tristia* 1.3. The final prose paragraph of *Italienische Reise* explicitly narrates and processes this irruption of past representation into present thought. The first sentence immediately characterizes this interruption as immediate (*gerade*) and inevitable (*wie sollte…nicht zurückkehren*) "in such moments." The necessity of Ovid's elegy springing *ins Gedächtnis* is then paralleled with Ovid's own compulsion to quit the city on a moonlight night by the repetition of *sollte*. While the Roman poet was forcefully and legally exiled from the city, Goethe nevertheless seems to hint that he, too, is being driven away through the phrase "*auch verbannt*," though only by his obligations at home and the *Schauer* of the sublime.

Ovid's own words then burst into the prose: *"Cum repeto noctem!*" (*Tristia* 1.3, line 3). Goethe immediately glosses this phrase as "*seine Rückerinnerung*," Ovid's recollection. Ovid's words inaugurate a motif of remembering and repeating which dominates this final passage. This emphasis on remembering and the description that follows begin to blur the boundary between the narrative present of Goethe in Rome and the present in which he is putting that moment into writing some decades later. He specifically notes how far the exiled Ovid was from Rome when he recalled his last night there in his elegy, a similarity which could only apply to the elder Goethe. Goethe claims that in that moment he could not keep Ovid's revisiting that final night in his poetry from his own mind, not merely in the sense of springing uncontrollably into his thoughts, but also overwriting his own efforts to put his memory into words: "[*seine Rückerinnerung] … kam mir nicht aus dem Sinn, ich wiederholte das Gedicht, das mir teilweise genau im Gedächtnis hervorstieg, aber mich wirklich an eigner Produktion irre werden ließ und hinderte.*" Goethe's own poetic output is reduced to repetition of Ovid's poem, which emerges ambiguously in and from Goethe's memory, partially but precisely (*teilweise genau*). In the past narrative, this persistent recollection drives Goethe mad and explicitly prevents him from his

own poetic production. While these intense effects are restricted to the moment of his viewing Rome, the final clause brings them into something closer to the temporality of the perfect tense, begun in the past but extending and continuing into the present of Goethe's writing: "*die auch, später unternommen, niemals zustande kommen konnte.*" In that moment, Ovid's representation of remembering the sensory experience of his final moonlit night in Rome emerges simultaneously from both Goethe's memory and Rome's past and becomes persistently and assertively useful in Goethe's present.

Following this paragraph, the text of *Italienische Reise* concludes not with Goethe's reflections on the layers and epochs of antiquity on display in the city or the majesty and destruction of Rome, but rather with Ovid. We are left finally with Goethe's capable, fluid translation of a portion of *Tristia* 1.3, juxtaposed with the original Latin. In one sense, it seems that Goethe has vanished from the text as his perspective is reduced to the repetition of Ovid's poetry and the author collapses into identification with a figure and a representation from the ancient past. However, the transformative force of this encounter is not as one-sided as it initially seems: while Ovid's poetry seems to have overtaken Goethe's, Goethe has simultaneously banished Ovid from his own poem. What Goethe presents here as eight continuous lines of *Tristia* 1.3 are, in fact, drawn from two separate passages, lines 1-4 and lines 27-30. The intervening twenty-two lines[30] chiefly concern the personal and material circumstances of Ovid's own departure from Rome, replete with distinctly ancient Roman cultural references. In Goethe's condensed version, the many dear things (*tot cara*) Ovid has abandoned are nonspecific, rendered by a neuter plural substantive. In the full poem, however, the specifics are made painfully clear as Ovid refers to the management of his household and slaves, his retinue, property, clothing, and to his friends, loving wife, and daughter, too far away to be informed of his fate. He writes of Augustus' command of his exile and the fiery lightning of Jove.

By omitting these lines, Goethe's 19th-century *teilweise* recollection of the poem strips away much of the personal and nearly all of the historical context of its composition in the first

[30] iam prope lux aderat, qua me discedere Caesar
finibus extremae iusserat Ausoniae.
nec spatium nec mens fuerat satis apta parandi:
torpuerant longa pectora nostra mora.
non mihi seruorum, comitis non cura legendi,
non aptae profugo uestis opisue fuit.
non aliter stupui, quam qui Iouis ignibus ictus
uiuit et est uitae nescius ipse suae.
ut tamen hanc animi nubem dolor ipse remouit,
et tandem sensus conualuere mei,
alloquor extremum maestos abiturus amicos,
qui modo de multis unus et alter erat.
uxor amans flentem flens acrius ipsa tenebat,
imbre per indignas usque cadente genas.
nata procul Libycis aberat diuersa sub oris,
nec poterat fati certior esse mei.
quocumque aspiceres, luctus gemitusque sonabant,
formaque non taciti funeris intus erat.
femina uirque meo, pueri quoque funere maerent,
inque domo lacrimas angulus omnis habet.
si licet exemplis in paruis grandibus uti,
haec facies Troiae, cum caperetur, erat. (*Tristia* 1.3, lines 5-26)

century. What is left is a touching, but now timeless, nostalgic representation of remembering one's final night in Rome and a clear, moonlit view of the Capitol. In this moment, it is not simply Ovid's poetry, but its crystallization of this *tristissima imago* which comes to serve as Goethe's own written representation of "*das traurige Bild vor die Seele,*" the representation of this specific aesthetic experience of the city, both in the moment of his final view of Rome and his own later memory of it. Through the juxtaposition of Ovid's already retrospective "*Cum repeto noctem*" and Goethe's twinned "*Wiederhol' ich die Nacht*" and "*ich wiederholte das Gedicht*" this finale creates a *mise en abyme* of remembering Rome, a present recollection perpetually mediated by the already remembered. In this way, to the same extent that Goethe disappears into the past, Ovid's words rush out of Rome's past and out of his own to meet him in the present. As Goethe's perspective is translated into the words of ancient Rome, those words are themselves appropriately translated and transformed for Goethe's use. As Goethe tries to hold an incomprehensibly large city and its excess of history in his mind, these are the words the Roman past provides to best represent his aesthetic experience in his own present, the individual fragment or trace of that inconceivable and forever incomplete whole that emerges to serve this specific moment. The double mediation of Goethe and Ovid here recasts Goethe's present as an entry in and the inheritor of Rome's history.

Conclusion – Becoming Historical

While the text spends a great deal of time exploring the qualities and significance of Rome as an object of observation, the parallel importance of this exploration's effect on Goethe as the viewing subject in his account cannot be understated. At every stage that *Italienische Reise* establishes and expounds upon Rome's relationship to and situation in time, it also reflects a growing awareness of Goethe's own sense of temporality, as he considers not only the ways in which the city allows him to take part in the glory of the past, but also how his work, his representation of Rome and his experience of it, interact with those that have come before. In a letter dated 27 October 1787, following a discussion of the sections of Herder's *Ideen* on Greece and Rome and considerations of reviews of his own *Egmont*, Goethe's emergent sense of historical consciousness or historical experience reaches a powerful climax:

> Mir jetzt ist nur dran gelegen, zu machen, seitdem ich sehe, wie sich am Gemachten, wenn es auch nicht das Vollkommenste ist, Jahrtausende rezensieren, das heißt, etwas von seinem Dasein hererzählen läßt. (*IR* 413)

In this moment, Goethe's present, rather than a general notion of classical soil, becomes for him the place of decisive action. His entire visual experience of Rome, everything he has seen and learned, is recast here in terms of pure action: *"wie sich am Gemachten, wenn es auch nicht das Vollkommenste ist.*" Everything he has seen of the city was *done* at some decisive moment in the past. What Goethe initially professed to be an objective characteristic of a certain type of place has been transformed into a form of subjective experience and growing self-consciousness of his place within an expansive view of time's passage and the inevitable changes and destruction it will bring. Rising out of his thoughts about reviews of his recently composed play, Goethe

initially commits himself to *doing* so that what he does might itself be reviewed (*rezensieren*). However, the inclusion here of *Jahrtausende* places this local consideration into dialogue with his earlier conception of Rome's *Existenz* and its duration of two thousand years and more. Goethe thus places himself, in Rome, and his actions and works at the center, the *Mittelpunkt,* of a similarly expansive timescale, implicitly extending for thousands of years into both past and future. At the conclusion of this reflection, Goethe expands the meaning of *rezensieren* into *"etwas von seinem Dasein hererzählen*," that something might be told or narrated about its existence. In imagining the possibility of this future narration of his own existence in these terms (*Dasein* seeming to directly parallel Rome's own *Existenz*), Goethe expresses an awareness of his place in a historical process and his work's place in a sequence of historical representations and imagines his own present moment as a future past.

CHAPTER TWO

A Higher Point of View:
The Roman History of Wilhelm von Humboldt

Introduction – Finding Rome in Humboldt's Roman Writings

While less of a household name than Goethe or Kant in non-German scholarship, the Prussian philosopher, statesman, and educational reformer Wilhelm von Humboldt stands firmly at the crossroads of classicism and the development of historical thought around the turn of the 19th century. Within a few decades of his death, Humboldt had already been "canonized" in the preface to Johann Gustav Droysen's 1867 *Grundriß der Historik* as "the Bacon of history" (Beiser 167). Droysen attributed to him nothing less than the foundational methods and attitudes of the modern historical sciences. Indeed, Humboldt's influence on the field still sets the stage for scholarly narratives of history's history over a century later: despite profound differences in their respective projects and arguments, both Georg G. Iggers' 1968 *The German Conception of History* and Frederick C. Beiser's 2011 *The German Historicist Tradition* devote early chapters to Humboldt's work and thought. Between these two accounts, Humboldt's theories of ideality and individuality are celebrated as "basic elements of the philosophy of German historiography and historical thought from Ranke to Meinecke" (Iggers 62) and "the precedent for Ranke, Droysen, Dilthey, Windelbrand, Rickert and Weber" (Beiser 169).

The specific ideas to which these authors attribute such immense historical weight are also deeply and inextricably linked to Humboldt's lifelong interest in classical antiquity, and especially with the culture and language of ancient Greece. As with Goethe and many of their contemporaries, Humboldt's affinity for the Greeks was deeply influenced by the writings of Winckelmann and he also advanced his study of classical languages and literature through friendship and correspondence with Friedrich Schiller and Friedrich August Wolf, among others. Although Humboldt had professed his ardent philhellenism in writing as early as 1793 in his controversial essay "*Über das Studium des Alterthums, und des griechischen insbesondere,*" one period of his life and career saw a more intense and more protracted focus on classical antiquity in his work: from the spring of 1802 to the fall of 1808, when he returned his energy and attention to the ancient Greeks not on the classical soil of Greece itself, but rather in Rome, where he served as the Prussian ambassador to the Holy See.

During this Roman period, as Beiser tells it, "Several books on ancient history were planned, whose aim was to characterize the Greek spirit or character, to explain how art, poetry, religion, customs and institutions differed from those of other peoples. Although these books were never completed, a few fragments remain – *Latium und Hellas* (1806), *Ueber den Character der Griechen* (1807), and *Geschichte des Verfalls und Unterganges der griechischen Freistaaten* (1807)," as well as a long elegiac poem entitled *"Rom,"* which Humboldt composed to honor Schiller following his death in 1805 (Beiser 195-96). While scholars *have* examined the

place of this Roman period in Humboldt's intellectual history and its role in his return to classical antiquity, a familiar narrative frequently emerges. Undoubtedly, Greece, or the ideal of Greece, stands at the heart of Humboldt's theoretical and philosophical interests – the tension between the nation and the state, human individuality, history, philosophy of language and linguistics, and antiquity itself – so just as Meinecke describes Goethe discovering Greece under Italian skies, scholars of Humboldt draw on his comments about Rome and his written impressions of the city largely in order to contextualize his philhellenism and the dominance of an idealized Greece in his writings. As a result, little attention has been paid to how the city itself and Humboldt's readings of Roman literature also find expression throughout his writings. The Prussian statesman not only rediscovered Greece in Rome, but also wrestled with the tensions and contradictions this collision of two cultures and two times produced in his concepts of history and the classical past. By approaching Humboldt primarily as a writer rather than as an educational theorist or political figure, we can examine how Rome sits at the center of these tensions and contradictions and, in fact, shapes fundamental figures of thought throughout his works.

In this chapter, I will explore how Humboldt's unique interpretation of Rome, as a place and as an ancient culture, links his sensory experience of the city (its material presence and remains) with his readings of ancient literary accounts of the city and its (pre)history. Despite his persistent obsession with Greece, his engagement with Rome presents us with unexpected complexity and exerts a subtle but profound influence on his idea of history and its fraught relationship with his classicism. Expanding on Angela Cornelia Holzer's comprehensive analysis of Humboldt's Roman thought, I contend that a literary approach to these Roman writings – that is, close and specific attention to their language and modes of expression – helps us to understand better the often-ignored role the experience and idea of Rome play even throughout his better-known philosophical writings, despite their more obvious debt to the Greeks. By examining the language and figures of thought Humboldt uses in describing Rome and Roman history, we will uncover a conception of Rome not only as the center of the diminished, post-Greek epoch of world history but as a world-historical force in its own right. Bringing language from "Roman period" theoretical essays on Greece into dialogue with Humboldt's letters and poetry reveals that Rome represents a sense of history that surpasses the mere delivery of classical Greece through time and instead encompasses humanity's perpetual struggle to *defy* time's passage and destruction. Rome serves not merely an empty vessel for an ideal, but its very ground of possibility. I will argue that Humboldt's treatment of the city, its history, and its legacy is not merely reverse engineered from the intellectual demands of his philhellenism, but also offers a rare glimpse into how the texts and tropes of Roman literature in fact comprise a constitutive element of this historical view.

Excavating and illuminating the Roman figures in this body of texts involves bringing multiple works and multiple genres of Humboldt's oeuvre into dialogue. For this reason, we begin not with his longest or most explicit discussion of Rome but with a moment among these Roman writings which best encapsulates the problems and fissures in his thinking about antiquity from which these figures ultimately emerge. The various ways in which the language of these texts is shaped by these Roman tensions is most succinctly illustrated by the introductory paragraphs of the essay *Latium und Hellas* (1806) and the abridged epigraph from the Greek historian of Rome Dionysius of Halicarnassus which adorns it. Quite distinct among Humboldt's

explicit mentions of Rome, this dense and peculiar introduction to the ancient world hints at the broader influence Roman figures exert throughout these writings.

The chapter thus first examines the opening of *Latium und Hellas* to situate Rome's place in Humboldt's *Genuss* of antiquity, where he suggests the city offers a rather sweeping view not just over the countryside, but over humanity. We then turn to the epigraph of that essay to consider how Humboldt's translation of this Greek passage imbues Rome with sense of universal history and to contrast this significance against his philhellenic ideal of human *Individualität.* The third section of the chapter builds firmer connections between these fragmentary ideas with help from Holzer's study of Humboldt's thought. After examining how Holzer comes to claim that Rome becomes Humboldt's "epitome of history," we are then able to connect the language and figures of thought with which he discusses Greece and Rome with those he applies more explicitly to his idea of history. With these conceptual relationships clarified, the remainder of the chapter then brings these philosophical and theoretical texts into dialogue with a description of his experience of the city itself in one of his letters and then with his long elegiac poem "*Rom.*" Analysis of this pair of texts, especially a sustained comparative reading "*Rom*" and the passages of Vergil and Livy from which the German elegy is adapted, reveal how fundamental aspects of Humboldt's concept of history and its relationship to his classicism are directly shaped by his time in Rome and his interpretations of Latin literature.

1 – Enjoying Classical Soil, or, How to Learn from Antiquity

The first full paragraph of *Latium und Hellas* lists what Humboldt describes as the "fourfold enjoyment" (*Genuss*) of antiquity (*Werke* 2: 25). This moment, of all the points made in the long essay, best and most explicitly captures the tension inherent in its title, a tension between two places, cultures, and times, *Latium und Hellas*, united in the single concept of "*classicsche Altherthum*." The unity of this concept or field of study is maintained throughout the first three *Genüsse*, which deal with the literary and artistic remnants of classical antiquity: "*in der Lesung der alten Schriftsteller, in der Anschauung der alten Kunstwerke, in dem Studium der alten Geschichte*" (*Werke* 2: 25). Indeed, these first three points seem precisely to correspond to elements of the description of the field at the opening of his 1793 *Über das Studium des Alterthums und des Griechischen Insbesondre:* "*das Studium der Überreste des Alterthums - Litteratur und Kunstwerke***,"** (*Werke* 2: 1)**.** These points uniformly denote activities and their objects, from the straightforwardly practical (reading authors, looking at art) to a much broader range of practices and objects implied by the *study* of history. "*Die Geschichte"* here is explicitly separated from individual texts and grammatically feminine and singular and must therefore refer to a larger and more abstract idea of history than the surviving writings of Thucydides or Tacitus. If one compares this introduction with the title of the earlier essay, it seems that history and antiquity are parallel objects or fields of *Studium* to which the more specific activities of reading texts and appreciating works of art, which would fall under the label of *Überreste,* are subordinate. While a sort of hierarchy or taxonomy is suggested here, including the first two *Genüsse* individually must mean that the enjoyment of ancient art and literature are not merely

subordinate to a larger *Studium* of the history of antiquity as a whole, but that each of these produces a distinct benefit.

The taxonomy sketched here, however, fails to account for the fourth, final, and most verbose *Genuss* in any obvious way: "*in dem Leben auf classischem Boden. – Griechenland, Empfindungen tieferer Wehmuth. Rom, höherer Standpunkt, mehr Vollständigkeit der Uebersicht*" (*Werke* 2: 25). Even at first glance, this *Genuss* lays out an altogether different sort of relationship between its components than the earlier three do. In this fourth point, we find again the same set of tensions and collisions of time and place juxtaposed in Goethe's reflections on this concept of *classischer Boden*. While thoroughly implied already, this passage strictly and explicitly limits Humboldt's definitions of *das Altherthum* and *die Alten* to "the classical." Moreover, as in Goethe, Humboldt's engagement with this notion expands the reach of "the classical" beyond the remains, the surviving texts and artworks, produced by the people and cultures of ancient Greece and Rome, and applies the concept also to the modern geographical spaces these peoples and cultures once occupied.

Despite Humboldt's usual practice of precisely structured argumentation, the action through which this fourth *Genuss* is experienced is deliberately vague and broad: *das Leben*. Likewise, this dictum denotes not an object or even intellectual field of activity, but a physical and geographical space within which life itself achieves *der Genuss des Altherthums*. Perhaps most distinct of all its curiosities, though, is the tantalizingly terse explanation which follows "*auf classischem Boden***.**" These fragmentary, paratactical thoughts begin to sketch out the uneasy unity and deep contradictions that the unavoidable pairing of Greece and Rome produces in Humboldt's notion of the classical: "*Griechenland, Empfindungen tieferer Wehmuth. Rom, höherer Standpunkt, mehr Vollständigkeit der Uebersicht.*" Life in Greece, according to Humboldt, evokes "feelings of deeper melancholy," whereas life in Rome provides a "higher point of view, more completeness of the overview."

These thoughts are constructed in parallel phrases and both describe something from the point of view of one experiencing it, but an obvious conceptual and affective difference separates them and distinguishes them from one another. The words associated with Greece are explicitly emotional and reflect a turning inward. The specific emotion at play, *tiefere Wehmuth*, also connotes an intense longing for something lost or missing. In stark contrast with these ideas, life on Rome's classical soil provokes both a turning outward, as if gazing out from a high point, and also the notion that nothing, or almost nothing, could be lost or missing from the overview that view affords. At the same time, however, these opposing impressions are both expansions of the same experience of "*Leben auf classischem Boden*" and the persistent use of comparative forms throughout the brief passage links both ideas subtly but inextricably to one another. We must understand, then, that is *not* the case that Rome inspires no deeply felt sense of loss and Greece no expansive perspective, but that each of these two places and cultures acts as a pole or exemplar of one of these two divergent but coexisting pleasures of life on classical soil.

With even a cursory glance at Humboldt's collected essays and writings, including the bulk of *Latium und Hellas*, one readily finds ample evidence of his peerless estimation of the Greeks and, in particular, of the inexhaustible value of the longing he identifies as one of their defining traits. Humboldt writes on the Greeks in great depth and often with eloquence and passion, developing arguments from various aspects of their art, culture, and, centrally for his own thought, their language. His comments about Rome here, however, are more distinct even

from his few other explicit discussions of the city, its history, and its culture. In this essay and elsewhere, these mentions most often use the city as a foil or point of contrast to underscore the superiority of its Greek forbears. This language is unique in the context of his scant writings on Rome and so raises the question of what value or utility he is here attributing to the city, its art, literature, and history. Curiously, however, this language *does* match closely with that in another of Humboldt's writings: not one engaging directly with classicism or classical antiquity, but in the fragment outlining his thoughts on the possibility of a general theory of the education and development of humanity, "*Theorie der Bildung des Menschen*," dated to 1793-4.

Like Kant's 1784 *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, Humboldt's *Theorie* does not lay out the author's own systematic theory of *Bildung,* but rather presents aspects of it in the course of reflecting on how a hypothetical work which *did* develop such a theory would benefit education and the development of human faculties and culture. Such a work, in Humboldt's view, would illustrate

> die eigenthümlichen Fähigkeiten…welche die verschiedenen Fächer der menschlichen Erkenntniss zu ihrer glücklichen Erweiterung voraussetzen; den ächten Geist, in dem sie einzeln bearbeitet, und die Verbindung, in die sie alle mit einander gesetzt werden müssen, um die Ausbildung der Menschheit, als ein Ganzes, zu vollenden. (*Werke* 1: 234).

This description sketches out a network of relationships which comprise this vision of *Bildung.* On the one hand, one must consider the particular faculties required to expand specific fields of knowledge, but, on the other, one must also keep in mind how all of these fields must be approached and must relate to one another to complete a higher, more holistic goal: "*die Ausbildung der Menschheit, als ein Ganzes*." In short, the appropriate application of human faculties expands individual fields of knowledge that, together, expand and develop humanity itself.

This process seems simple enough to summarize, but Humboldt quickly makes clear that he considers it immensely difficult for either the individual scholar *or* the whole of humanity to realize: "*Der Mathematiker, der Naturforscher, der Künstler, ja oft selbst der Philosoph beginnen nicht nur jetzt gewöhnlich ihr Geschäft, ohne seine eigentliche Natur zu kennen und es in seiner* ***Vollständigkeit zu übersehen****, sonder auch nur wenige erheben sich selbst späterhin* ***zu diesem höheren Standpunkt und dieser allgemeineren Uebersicht***" (*Werke* 1: 234, my emphasis). In this account we find language remarkably similar to the vocabulary and concepts he attributes to the enjoyment of life on the classical soil of Rome, repeated here nearly verbatim. Despite this nearly identical language, however, this passage suggests no connection to or association with Rome at all, nor does any language in the fragments on *Bildung*. What *is* made clear in this passage, though, is that these ideas (completeness of perspective, higher point of view, more general overview), despite, or perhaps because of, the rarity of their attainment, are not only desirable but crucial for the development and growth of humanity. The questions remain, then: *how* do we make sense of this intersection of Rome with the language and figures of thought through which Humboldt's expresses his ideas of human progress and even of "Greek" *Bildung*? What are the implications of this linguistic similarity and of these expansive feelings of Rome for his broader thinking on classicism, history, and humanity?

Latium und Hellas itself continues to offer some insight into these connections in variously subtle and unsubtle ways. A surprisingly direct connection between antiquity and

education is, in fact, hidden in plain sight in the opening of the essay: Humboldt's unusual use of the word *Genuss*. His pointed, rapid-fire observations on the elements of classicism and the study of antiquity, glossed as *Genüsse,* distract from the obscurity and ambiguity of this word's meaning in the passage. While it is certainly not unreasonable to derive enjoyment or pleasure from one's studies and appreciation of art, literature, and history, it does seem an unlikely candidate for a single concept which unites all these activities, especially when combined with less a positive notion such as *Wehmuth* and an idea as deeply abstract idea as *Vollständigkeit der Uebersicht*. However, in his commentary on Humboldt's letters to his friend and mentor F. A. Wolf, Mattson compares different occurrences of the word in Humboldt's oeuvre and concludes: "*Humboldts Begriff* Genuss *hat durchaus nichts Hedonistiches an sich, sondern hänt innig mit seinem Bildungsbegriff zusammen*" (Humboldt, *Briefe* 525).[1] To support this characterization, Mattson quotes another letter which describes the obligations of every person "*auf den Charakter der Menscheit [zu] wirken*" and "*ihre Individualität ausbilden zu wollen [und] nichts so heilig zu ehren, als die Individualität der andern*" (Humboldt, *Briefe* 525; *an Forster*, Berlin 8.2.1790). Humboldt claims that the fulfillment of these duties is what will ensure humanity's progress in both the achievement of human justice and the understanding of natural law.

The quotation concludes with a summation of these ideas which gives a clearer sense of this particular meaning of *Genuss*: "*Man sei nur groß und viel, so werden die Menschen es sehn und nuzen; man habe nur so viel zu geben, so werden die Menschen es genießen und der Genuß wird Vater neuer Kraft sein"* (Humboldt, *Briefe* 525). *Genießen* falls in a parallel grammatical position to *sehn et nuzen* and *Genuß* itself becomes *"Vater neuer Kraft*" through these efforts. It seems, then, that rather than "pleasure" or "enjoyment," *Genuss* here more precisely refers to the correct and productive consumption of or engagement with human creations which, in turn, allows for the progressive development of human power. This narrower, specialized definition comports with the specific range of activities and objects outlined in *Latium und Hellas* brings the comments in the essay's introduction more fully into the context of Humboldt's educational writings.

While connections between ideas of classical antiquity and education in Humboldt's thought are thoroughly expected, the curious alignment of Rome rather than Greece with the realization of *Bildung's* highest goals through this linguistic echo appears, at first glance, to conflict with the essay's broader arguments and so demands further investigation. Potential contradictions between the language describing Rome and the goals of the essay emerge in the following paragraphs, which describe what "*alle diese verschiedenen Genüsse*" inspire *in Ganzen*. Despite their differences, all these approaches to the remains and history of the past together produce one *Eindruck,* and this section of the essay concludes with the summary, "*Was diesen Eindruck hervorbringt, kann man die Behandlungsart der Alten nennen"* (*Werke* 2: 25-6). The passage goes on to state that this entire "way of treating of the ancients," which encompasses all of the intial *Genüsse*, must itself stem directly from the Greek spirit: "*Der Geist, der sich eine solche Behandlungsart erschafft* (*den Schöpfer derselben waren die Griechen unläugbar*) *muss ihr selbst ähnlich seyn*" (*Werke* 2: 26). Here we begin to see fissures within this unified idea of classical antiquity come into view: a classical approach to the study of antiquity *undoubtedly (unläugbar)* comes to us from the Greeks, yet something like an awareness of its unity and totality is achieved more through Rome, and particularly "life on its classical soil."

[1] See also Glazinski 406-408.

2 – "*Die ganze Erde*": Greek Spirit, Roman World

Further insight into this notion of totality is likewise hidden in plain sight on the first page of *Latium und Hellas*, this time in the brief epigraph from Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Antiquitates Romanae* which opens the piece. Closely examining this choice of quotation and carefully comparing it to Humboldt's German translation of it transforms this simple assertion of Greek language and Roman domination into evidence of a more complex, rather sweeping idea of Rome's meaning. Just below the title of the essay, Humboldt inscribes:

> Dionysius Hal. Antiquit.I.4.[2] ἡ δὲ Ῥωμαίων πόλις – κατοικεῖται. Die Stadt der Römer beherrscht die ganze Erde, so weit sie nicht unzugänzlich ist, und von Menschen bewohnt wird. (*Werke* 2: 25)

The abbreviation of the quotation from Dionysius' text, marked by the long dash, masks the ways that Humboldt's translation is carefully constructed to conform to a particular understanding of what the Greek historian is asserting about Rome and its domination of the world. No individual component of the German translation is incorrect by any means, but the choice of *"die ganze Erde"* for "ἁπάσης…γῆς" limits the range of meaning of this phrase to one specific interpretation of the Greek which aligns Rome not merely with political hegemony, but with the totality of all human action, also hinted at by the language concerning *Bildung* above. The complete section of Dionysius reads:

> ἡ δὲ Ῥωμαίων πόλις **ἁπάσης μὲν** ἄρχει **γῆς** ὅση μὴ ἀνέμβατός ἐστιν, ἀλλ᾽ ὑπ᾽ ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖται, **πάσης δὲ** κρατεῖ **θαλάσσης**, οὐ μόνον τῆς ἐντὸς Ἡρακλείων στηλῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς Ὠκεανίτιδος ὅση πλεῖσθαι μὴ ἀδύνατός ἐστι, πρώτη καὶ μόνη τῶν ἐκ τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος μνημονευομένων ἀνατολὰς καὶ δύσεις ὅρους ποιησαμένη τῆς δυναστείας: χρόνος τε αὐτῇ τοῦ κράτους οὐ βραχύς, ἀλλ᾽ ὅσος οὐδεμιᾷ τῶν ἄλλων οὔτε πόλεων οὔτε βασιλειῶν. (1.3.3, my emphasis)[3]

This description of the extent and duration of Roman rule up to the time Dionysius was writing is, in fact, the final entry in a series of such descriptions, structured to highlight how Rome has emerged as the most recent and most powerful in a sequence of empires, following the Assyrians, the Medes, the Persians and the Macedonians. The use of the particle μὲν with the Assyrians and the appearance of δὲ in each subsequent description indicates the parallel nature and context of each of these clauses in the original text. As Dionysius builds toward the perceived exceptionalism of the Romans and their dominion, he employs a very similar linguistic formula to describe the extent of their rule. Namely, he first describes in general terms their relative influence on land (γῆ) then on the sea (θάλασσα) before listing specific limitations on these domains, usually mentioning regions or nations by name that the regime in question failed to subjugate. The most pertinent example is that of the Macedonians under Alexander, which

[2] Humboldt's citation, as Holzer 91 also points out, is incorrect. The quotation falls at I,3,3 rather than I,4.

[3] "But Rome rules every country that is not inaccessible or uninhabited, and she is mistress of every sea, not only of that which lies inside the Pillars of Hercules but also of the Ocean, except that part of it which is not navigable; she is the first and only State recorded in all time that ever made the risings and settings of the sun the boundaries of her dominion. Nor has her supremacy been of short duration, but more lasting than that of any other commonwealth or kingdom." (Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 11). Unless otherwise noted, all English quotes from Dionysius are from Cary's 1937 Loeb translation.

directly precedes the passage quoted above. Here he states "καὶ οὐδὲ αὕτη [ἡ δὲ Μακεδονικὴ δυναστεία] μέντοι πᾶσαν ἐποιήσατο γῆν τε καὶ θάλασσαν ὑπήκοον" before noting that Alexander and his successors conquered neither all of Libya nor all of Europe because they failed to make it past Thrace in the north and beyond the Adriatic Seas to the west (1.2.3-4).

The context of this sequence of empires and its descriptive formula help us to better understand what Dionysius is saying about Rome in the passage from which Humboldt excises his epigraph and specifically clarifies the scope of what is mostly likely denoted by the word γῆ. Certain potential meanings of γῆ and *Erde* align quite closely, as each can indicate soil, earth, and land generally. Missing from γῆ, however, is the idea of the entire world, globe, or planet Earth. The closest use of γῆ would be "earth (including land and sea) opp. heaven," but the context here conforms much more closely to the meaning of "land opp. sea" given the repeated pairing with θάλασσα in each of the passages in question (LSJ s.v. γῆ). Similarly, the adjectives πᾶς and ἅπας, which modify γῆ in this context, can mean "all, the whole," as *ganz* does, but can also mean *"*every," which *ganz* does not. Given the movement in these passages from the general γῆ to more specific regions or cities, and the parallel movements concerning θάλασσα, it seems very unlikely that the γῆ in Dionysius's Greek conveys the sense of totality and completeness captured in the set phrase *die ganze Erde,* "the entire Earth/world."

Curiously, Dionysius *does* employ his own hyperbolic language for complete world hegemony later in the passage: "πρώτη καὶ μόνη τῶν ἐκ τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος μνημονευομένων ἀνατολὰς καὶ δύσεις ὅρους ποιησαμένη τῆς δυναστείας," "[the city of the Romans was] the first and only of those recorded from all eternity which made the risings and settings (of the sun) the limits of its power" (1.3.3, my translation). The following, final sentence of the section similarly expresses that the duration of Roman rule had, by that point, also exceeded that of all previous world powers, continuing the thematic pairing of extent and duration as the chief measures of imperial success. In the quotation Humboldt abbreviates and translates, then, Dionysius seems to be communicating the limits of possible expansion and rule rather than an absolute concept of totality or completeness, which is connoted instead by the cosmic imagery of the sun. We might more staidly paraphrase the original as "The city of the Romans rules every/all of the land, as much as is not unreachable (ἀνέμβατός), but is settled by human beings, and every sea, not only the one within the Pillars of Hercules, but also the Ocean, as much as it is not impossible to sail (πλεῖσθαι μὴ ἀδύνατός)." In this full context, I read these α-privative modifiers as setting contingent limits established by the possibility of human technology and migration, that is, "wherever people *have so far managed to* step or sail, the Romans are the first to have reached them all and brought them under their dominion," rather than a total or abstract conceptual limit.

It is a subtle distinction, but this context allows us to see how Humboldt's careful truncation and translation of this passage provide him with an ancient – and even a Greek – source that closely links Roman world rule with the totality of humanity and human civilization. By ending the quotation at "κατοικεῖται," Humboldt removes the specific references to the Pillars of Hercules (the Strait of Gibraltar) and the parts of the (Atlantic) Ocean navigable by ancient sailors, and thus the suggestion of similar limitations of the land under consideration. In this way, Humboldt's translation tacitly conflates the limited, circumscribed world of the ancient Mediterranean with his own contemporary knowledge and concept of *die ganze Erde,* which extends far beyond. When he continues, "*so weit sie nicht unzugänglich ist, und von Menschen bewohnt wird,"* which conforms very closely to Dionysius's Greek, he thus presents Rome not just as the widest-spread empire of the ancient Mediterranean in the first century BCE, but as a

power ruling or circumscribing the entire Earth and every human being inhabiting it. This translation precisely crafts an ancient source which *pairs* ideas of global hegemony, of worldly rule, and of the sum total of humanity, which Dionysius' text does not unite in any single moment. In abridging the quotation and isolating it from the specificity of its full context, Humboldt uses Dionysius's words to make Rome stand as a figure for an unidealized earthly totality of human action – and perhaps, then, for a notion of history. The *breadth* and scope of the *Uebersicht* implied by this notion of Rome stands in stark contrast, then, to the singular *depth* of feeling thus far attributed to Greece. Together these details suggest a yet deeper fissure in Humboldt's single notion of classical antiquity: Rome suggests a totality of innumerable human actions of the past and Greece, we shall see, becomes closely linked to a single but boundless, eternal *Individualität.*

Humboldt's rather slippery use of Greek to couch this radically contrastive idea of Rome affirms that examining aspects of his Greek thought and the ideas and ideals derived from it will be crucial for understanding how his Roman thought, though more subtle, is both intertwined with and distinct from its Hellenic counterpart. As the introductory paragraphs of *Latium und Hellas* continue, they begin to illustrate these connections when they describe "*das Charakteristische dieses Eindrucks,*" and aspects of the fundamentally Greek *Behandlungsart der Alten* which produces it, in terms which strike at the very heart of Humboldt's educational thought (*Werke* 2: 25). Most prominently in the context of the quotations discussed above, the essay describes the essential character of this Greek approach as "*die Form der menschlichen Individualität, wie sie seyn sollte, darzustellen*" and proceeds to elaborate on this idea of human individuality at length, creating a clear link to the language from his letter quoted above (*Werke* 2: 26).

Individuality, for Humboldt, is the hidden, inner force that comprises the actual life of humanity and every individual person, only perceivable *in* but also barely captured *by* any given perceptible phenomena. As the letter above suggested, to understand and to foster this hidden force is the ultimate goal of *Bildung*, of human development. This process is essentially the process of making the ideas which reflect this hidden faculty, which is only ever narrowly expressed in any single moment count "*als Wirklichkeit d.i. als Leben*" (*Werke* 2: 29). The development of individuality thus takes the form of an "eternal competition": "*Daher ist zwischen Idee und Leben zwar ein ewiger Abstand, aber auch ein ewiger Wettkampf. Leben wird zur Idee erhoben und Idee in Leben verwandelt*" *Werke* (2: 29). What the majority of the essay goes on to explain is precisely why the Greek spirit in particular was (and perhaps must always be) best suited for "*die schaffenden Kräfte des Menschen…zu dem Uebergange vom Endlichen zum Unendlichen, der immer nur idealisch ist*" (*Werke* 2: 29).

This elevation of an ideal, infinite individuality is likewise echoed in *Latium und Hellas*'s explanation of why antiquity constitutes the ideal object of study in its description of the single *Eindruck* produced by the fourfold *Genuss* of antiquity. As with the multifaceted *Genuss*, the account of this one impression builds up to its full complexity through the enumeration of four characteristics:

> dass jeder andre Gegenstand immer nur zu einer einzelnen Beschäftigung tauglich, das Alterthum hingegen eine bessere Heimath, zu der man jedesmal gern zurückkehrt, scheint,

> dass von ihm aus alle mannigfaltigen menschlichen Sinnes- und Vorstellungsarten verständlich werden, die man, wenn man unmittelbar von einer zur andern übergienge, nicht leicht verstehen würde,
>
> dass viele andre Gegenstände auf vielfache Weise ergreifen, allein keiner so alle Ansprüche befriedigt, so in nichts anstösst, so eine vollkommene und zugleich energische Ruhe einflösst,
>
> dass die Beschäftigung mit dem Alterthume die Untersuchung nie zu einem Ende und den Genuss nie zur Sättigung führt, dass es scheint, als könne man auf einem kleinen, eng begrenzten Felde in immer unergründlichere Tiefe graben, um immer grössere Ansichten zu erhalten, dass die längst bekannten Formen immer zu neuer Erhabenheit und Lieblichkeit übergehen, und zu neuem Einklang zusammentreten. (Humboldt, *Werke* 2: 25-6)

In certain aspects, these characteristics present a direct response to the passage regarding the difficulties of realizing *Bildung*'s overarching goals discussed above. Chiefly, this *Behandlungsart* precisely sidesteps the difficulty of realizing *Bildung's* universal human goal that Humboldt ascribes to practitioners of individual fields of study in *Theorie der Bildung,* where he further asserts that one *must* focus on a single field to achieve the depth necessary for the proper point of view, again echoing this tension of breadth and depth. The second of these points also closely aligns antiquity with the pursuit of developing and understanding human *Individualität*. As a single field, antiquity, more than all other objects of study, renders *all* various human senses and ideas – all the expressions of individuality – comprehensible more easily than their particular study would. This notion is pushed further in the final point, which asserts that this quintessentially Greek *Behandlungsart der Alten*, in granting access to such a breadth of human feeling and experience, provides boundless avenues through which to learn and pursue their understanding. At the same time, however, more subtle aspects of the essay's language suggest that the scope of this field and the access it grants to these innumerable expressions of humanity also relies equally on Humboldt's idea of Rome.

3 – Latium und Hellas? Greece, Rome, and the Problem of History

While antiquity seems an almost perfect subject through which to pursue this ideal of human progress, there remains an inherent tension between the concept of classical antiquity, which, as we saw above, includes both Greece and Rome, and the sole emphasis here and elsewhere, in both method and content, on the Greeks. Humboldt himself most clearly articulates this problem in his 1807 *Geschichte des Verfalls und Untergangs der griechischen Freistaaten*, a fragment of a much longer planned but never completed history of Greece. Marking the treatment of antiquity as the chief *Prüfstein* of the character of modern nations, Humboldt notes that some misguidedly give equal weight to Greece and Rome, whereas, in his "correct" view, Rome ought to be included only out of a begrudging necessity: "*Denn insofern antik idealisch heißt, nehmen die Römer nur in dem Masse daran* (i.e., *am Altertum*) *Theil, als es unmöglich ist, sie von den Griechen zu sondern*" (*Werke* 2: 101). Here Rome seems to distract or even *de*tract from

antiquity's ideality, despite its admitted inseparability from the Greeks. Thus, navigating the internal contradictions within a sole conception *Altertum* and *die Alten* becomes an intellectual problem these arguments must address and one which has attracted some degree of scholarly attention periodically over the last century.

The most recent and most systematic attempt to explicate Humboldt's differentiation of these two elements of *Altertum* is Angela Cornelia Holzer's treatment of him in *Rehabilitationen Roms*. Holzer meticulously traces developments in Humboldt's Roman thought as part of her larger argument that Rome was seen as a "culture of transformation" in German intellectual circles in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, conducting a more focused and sophisticated analysis of the "mediating role" Marchand briefly describes in her work. Carefully tracing how Holzer establishes a link between Rome and history in Humboldt's thought will allow us to connect his idea of history to the language and figures of thought he derives *from* Rome more firmly throughout the remainder of the chapter.

Holzer cleverly connects the incongruity of *Latium und Hellas'*s title and its subsequently one-sided focus and the very same description of Greece and Rome's "*Untrennbarkeit*" quoted above in order to interrogate what she terms Humboldt's "*Problematik der Unterscheidung*" (90). Holzer notes that Humboldt simultaneously maintains the inseparability of Greek and Roman antiquity and strenuously resists the confusion of their respective characteristics and contributions resulting from their being so conjoined for so long. This project of differentiation thus operates on two levels, as his works strive not only to distinguish what is Greek from what is Roman but also to distinguish modern nations capable of appreciating the value of this distinction (i.e., the value of Greece) from those that uncritically perpetuate the complete conflation of the Greco-Roman. Humboldt claims that the Germans first proved able to adopt "*die Griechische Bildung*" due to their similarity to the Greeks in spirit and language and Holzer maintains that "*Dieser Glaubenssatz einer Hermeneutik der Ähnlichkeit ist Kernpunkt von Humboldts Philhellenismus*" (Holzer 90). At this moment in Humboldt's intellectual history, then, Holzer suggests that the tradition of the classical demanded engagement with both Greece and Rome while his drive for national excellence advancement motivated the elevation of Greece.

Although these Greek and Roman elements must necessarily coexist, it is thus no surprise that they by no means receive equal attention in Humboldt's writings. Nevertheless, Holzer posits the emergence of a peculiar but crucial significance of Rome despite its minimal presence in *Latium und Hellas*:

> Wenn in *Latium und Hellas* nun weiterhin der durch das „Altertum" erweckte Eindruck – seine Wirkung und seine Wesen – im Vordergrund steht, spielt das Römische hauptsächlich die Rolle eines Hintergrundes, aus dessen Dunkelheit sich die Lichtgestalt der griechischen Antike herausbildet. Die Definition und Erklärung der Eigentümlichkeit des griechischen Geistes ist das eigentliche Thema der Schrift. Während die Epochen der Griechen am Ende des Aufsatzes sogar eine historische Differenzierung erfahren, bleibt der Begriff Roms unhistorisch, paradoxerweise, da Rom für Humboldt zunehmend als Inbegriff der Historie, Griechenland jedoch vor allem als Inbegriff des Idealischen und Symbolischen relevant wird. (Holzer 92-3)

The way that Holzer begins to frame this contrast opens space for more argumentative interpretation of what seems to be an openly dismissive attitude toward Rome in Humboldt's

essays, particularly when related in any way to Greece. Although she acknowledges that the Greek spirit, reemerging from the dark background of Rome, is "*das eigentliche Thema,*" of the essay, she also finds evidence that Rome here serves "*als Inbegriff der Historie*," as the epitome of history, a claim which echoes the intellectual operations we saw at play in Humboldt's curious translation of Dionysius. In Holzer's phrasing, Rome can be contrasted with Greece not just in terms of its ideality, value, or importance, but by *what it stands for* in Humboldt's thought.

This observation thus encapsulates two key interpretive and methodological insights that emerge from Holzer's intellectual historical project. First, her comprehensive characterization of Humboldt's approach to antiquity as addressing a problem of differentiation enables us to consider how he aligns and opposes various concepts in his writing. Second, and more specifically, her clear and confident articulation of Rome as *Inbegriff der Historie* provides a firm argumentative foundation for a more intensive literary and linguistic examination not only of how Rome embodies or epitomizes history in these writings, but also of how the language which expresses this relationship stems from Humboldt's experiences and interpretation of Rome. Because of Humboldt's persistent adherence to a single concept of classical antiquity, building a more complex account of this less explicit side of his Greco-Roman dichotomy also allows for a deeper understanding of how these interrelations exert influence on ideas rooted in his philhellenism, such as ideality and *Bildung*, as well. Once we understand Holzer's basic mapping of these oppositions and alignments in Humboldt's thought, the extent of these influences will come into starker relief.

The heart of this differentiation, in Holzer's reading, is a certain *Einseitigkeit*, a one-sided orientation toward reality and away from the ideal, that serves as the defining characteristic of Humboldt's Rome. As Holzer summarizes, the inability to bring reality and the ideal closer together, to move between the finite and the infinite, discussed above in the context of *Bildung*, is what most fundamentally separates the Romans from the Greeks in these accounts: *Rom wird charakterisiert durch einen Mangel an innerer Energie zur Vermittlung des Idealen und Wirklichen, als einseitige Ausrichtung der Kraft der Nation auf die Wirklichkeit, als Unfähigkeit zur Entwicklung und Verbindung von freier Individualität* (Holzer 94). In Holzer's interpretation, the spiritual and cultural failing of Rome is the cause of both its political and military successes *and* its world-historical role in transmitting the remains of the Greece to modernity. This characterization of Rome emerges in, and perhaps through, stark contrast with Greece's relationship to an idealized, inner individuality as "*Konsequenz historischer Entwicklungen, also äußerer Einflüsse*" (Holzer 95). Ironically, Rome's purely outward, worldly focus, leads to its failure to comprehend and integrate Greek culture into its own. As a result, Rome transmits the remains of the conquered Greece entirely unchanged, ripe for rediscovery and reintegration by the more similar and more capable German mind.

Holzer thus describes Humboldt's central characterization of Rome as a "*Kultur der Vermittlung,*" as this transmission of Greek antiquity seems to represent its primary world-historical significance in his thinking (95). In this way, Greece and Rome also align somewhat neatly with the contemporary ideas of the idealized ethnic nation and the abstract, oppressive state apparatus respectively, an argument, she notes, that emerges earlier in Winckelmann. So, while Humboldt denies Rome any share of what is *ideal* in antiquity, its necessary inclusion in this concept nevertheless suggests that classical antiquity must contain both the ideal *and* the forces which have conveyed it into the present, that is, the real and the historical. On the surface, though, this role still conforms to a strict hierarchy of value: *"Humboldt fast das Verhältnis von*

Griechenland und Rom hier auch in Kategorien wie Gehalt und Hülle, Innen und Außen, Geist und Körper" (Holzer 98).[4] Up to this point, both Rome and the notion of history it epitomizes thus seem empty of their own worthwhile content and serve only as the vessel for Greece and the ideal.

Despite the apparent *Einseitigkeit* inherent in Humboldt's own *Unterscheidung,* however, Holzer marks a shift toward both greater ambivalence and more dialectical interdependence between the two sides of this dichotomy illustrated by two key terms used throughout Humboldt's *Geschichte des Verfalls: Sehnsucht* and *Streben*.

> Im Ganzen resultiert Humboldts vergleichende Kontrastierung von Griechenland und Rom in einer dichotomischen Grundstruktur. Diese geht von den beiden Begriffen "Sehnsucht" und "Streben" aus. Durch diese Gegenüberstellung von Transzendenz als Trieb nach dem Göttlichen und Immanenz, die, mehr vom klar gedachten Begriff zu bestimmten Zweck geht, wird auch die Harmonie zwischen dem Göttlichem als Idee und der Natur schließlich dem griechischen Wesen, die Einseitigkeit des Volkscharakters in Richtung auf Krieg, Rechtskunde und Ackerbau dem Römischen zugeordnet.
>
> [...]
>
> Die in *Latium und Hellas* als negative Einseitigkeit betrachtete Ausrichtung der Römer gewinnt in *der Geschichte des Verfalls und Unterganges der griechischen Freistaaten* auch positive Aspekte; es scheint hier durchaus, als würdige Humboldt durch die von ihm skizzierte Unterschiedlichkeit der antiken Kulturen auch die römischen Stärken, er sieht jedenfalls nun auch die Griechen mit Skepsis: „Der Römer hatte ein eifriges, ernstes, kraftvolles Streben, aus dem eine zusammenhängende Thätigkeit, und sichere, stufenweis fortschreitende Resultate erwuchsen. Der Grieche war von Sehnsucht begeistert, sein absichtliches und weltliches Treiben war oft sehr zerstreut und zerstückt[...]." [5] Ernst, Eifer, Kraft: Die Konnotationen, mit denen Humboldt die römischen Antike versieht, sind nun deutlich positiver. Hierin zeigt sich seine zentrale Erkenntnis mit Bezug auf die römische Entwicklung: Gerade diese Einseitigkeit habe letztlich dazu geführt, dass Rom seien welthistorische Aufgabe der Synthese und Vermittlung der antiken Kulturen, vor allem der griechischen, habe wahrnehmen können. Humboldts Auffassung Roms ist die eines Realpolitikers - Rom ist ihm diejenige antike Macht, welche auf die historischen Umstände adäquat reagierte. (Holzer 95,96)

As Holzer states, *Sehnsucht* and *Streben* structure the very core of Humboldt's contrast between Greece and Rome. For Humboldt, both notions address important concerns for humanity: on the one hand, longing for the unreachable divine, the ideal of what we ought to aspire to be and to do, and, on the other, the reality of life, what we are, what we do, and what we achieve in actuality. In this way, Holzer suggests that Humboldt uses these terms to align each ancient culture not only with abstract, philosophical concepts such as transcendence and immanence, but with two modes of human behavior and action. While Humboldt unsurprisingly privileges *Sehnsucht*[6] – and it seems to describe his attitude *toward* the Greeks as much as their own

[4] See also Rehm 204: *"Rom ohne Athen wäre nicht Mitte der Welt, Athen ohne Rom wäre verloren und vergessen.*"
[5] Humboldt, *Werke* 2: 111
[6] See, e.g., the continuation of the passage Holzer quotes: *Allein Sehnsucht und Streben, auch beide gleich erhaben genommen, sind nicht durchaus gleichbedeutende Ausdrücke, da in jener mit dem Wort auch die Unerreichbarkeit*

psychology – these terms surprisingly characterize and assess both ancient cultures in terms of their relationships to reality, ultimately leading to the growing ambivalence toward Greece that Holzer describes. In the sentence Holzer quotes, the Roman case is presented straightforwardly, as the grammatical structure mimics the causal logic moving from *Streben* through "*eine zusammenhängende Thätigkeit* to *sichere, stufenweise fortschreitende Resultate*." The adjectives and participles coloring this description characterize *Streben* with the surety and concreteness of gradual, practical progress. Greece, however, is distanced further from that sense of historical process and progress here not solely by its timelessly ideal spirit, but also by its "*absichtliches und weltliches Treiben*" which do not produce *Resultate* but are instead "*zerstreut und zerstückt.*" *Sehnsucht* for the divine provides powerful, aspirational motivation that is never directed toward a practical goal but always toward something ultimately impossible to achieve. Furthermore, the scattered and flighty "impulses" of the Greek are distanced both from the intent (*absichtliches*) required to achieve those sure progressive results, and from the world itself. Thus, considered in terms of human activity and achievement rather than the ideal and the expression of *Individualität*, Holzer's *Einseitigkeit* shifts from mere *Vermittlung* to a world-historical force with a positive value of its own.

Holzer's insight into this growing ambivalence also highlights connections Humboldt expresses *across* the dichotomy, as well, which provide us with valuable language through which to trace his associations with antiquity and history even more clearly. Indeed, considered in the context of Holzer's argument, Humboldt seems precisely to pit the ideality of Greece against chronology itself earlier in *Geschichte des Verfalls* when he describes "antiquity's" untimeliness in the expected history of human development: "[*das Alterthum*] *war eine einzige, aber glückliche Erscheinung in der Bildungsgeschichte der Menschheit, dass den Zeitaltern, die durch Mühe reifen sollten, ein Geschlecht vorausging, das, mühelos und gleichsam in der schönsten Blüthe, dem Boden entwuchs*" (*Werke* 2: 100). Greece defies the expectation that successive ages should mature or ripen through effort (*Mühe*) and instead reaches the heights of beauty almost spontaneously and autochthonously.

Greece, the culture of individuality *par excellence*, through its untimely and effortless achievement of harmony and beauty, stands outside of but nevertheless drives *die Bildungsgeschichte der Menschheit*. Just as Rome's relationship to the idealized concept of antiquity is fraught with tension, so too is Greece's place not only in *Bildungsgeschichte,* but in history writ large:

> Es ist daher mit dem Studium der Griechischen Geschichte für uns nicht, wie mit dem der Geschichte anderer Völker. Die Griechen treten gänzlich aus dem Kreise derselben heraus; wenn ihre Schicksale gleich zu der allgemeinen Verkettung der Begebenheiten gehören, so liegt hierin nur ihre geringste Wichtigkeit in Rücksicht auf uns; und wir verkennen durchaus unser Verhältnis zu ihnen, wenn wir des Massstab der übrigen Weltgeschichte auf sie anzuwenden wagen. Ihre Kenntniss ist uns nicht bloss angenehm, nützlich und nothwendig, nur in ihr finden wir das Ideal dessen, was wir selbst seyn und hervorbringen möchten; wenn jeder andre Theil der Geschichte uns mit menschlicher

des Ersehnten und die Unbegreiflichkeit ihres Ursprungs ausgesprochen wird, dieses mehr von klar gedachtem Begriff zu bestimmtem Zweck geht; das Streben durch Schwierigkeiten und Hindernisse geschwächt und vereitelt werden kann, vor der Sehnsucht aber, wie durch einen in ihr selbst liegenden Zauber, jede Fessel zerbrochen zu Boden fällt. (Humboldt, *Werke* 2: 111)

> Klugheit und menschlicher Erfahrung bereichert, so schöpfen wir aus der Betrachtung der Griechen etwas mehr als Irrdisches, ja beinah Göttliches.
>
> Denn welchen andern Namen soll man einer Erhabenheit geben, deren Unerreichbarkeit, statt muthlos zu machen, aufrichtet und zur Nacheiferung anspornt? (Humboldt, *Werke* 2: 92)

In this passage, we see the elevation of Greece's idealized individuality come directly into conflict with its historical significance and even its inclusion *in* history. While Humboldt would never deny the value of the study of Greek history, he nevertheless marks it out as a completely different endeavor from the historical study of all other peoples. Humboldt's words here present almost a photo-negative of his admission of the inseparability of Rome and the ideal aspect of antiquity by nearly rejecting any merely historical significance to Greece and its spirit: "*wenn ihre Schicksale gleich zu der allgemeinen Verkettung der Begebenheiten gehören, so liegt hierin nur ihre geringste Wichtigkeit in Rücksicht auf uns.*" Beginning this phrase with the conditional *wenn* renders this description even more radical, as it implicitly questions whether Greece's fate belongs *at all* to "the general chain of events," which seems, in this passage, to be equivalent to "*die übrige Weltgeschichte*." While the study of all other periods offers "*menschliche Klugheit…und Erfahrung*," Greece reveals "*das Ideal dessen, was wir selbst seyn und hervorbringen möchten*," echoing his lofty description of *Bildung* itself. In other words, he concludes, Greece offers us *"etwas mehr als Irrdisches, ja beinah Göttliches*." As concepts continue to be divided and aligned throughout the essay, here "the earthly," along with (merely) human wisdom and experience, are sorted largely, if not entirely, to the side of the historical rather than the ideal.

Though used disparagingly of Greece, this language concerning his view of history and its relationship to the cause-and-effect logic of *Streben* can now be reapplied to Rome and furnish further insight into Rome's role as *Inbegriff der Historie.* Indeed, this language finds close parallels with that of Humboldt's more explicit writing on history, specifically his later 1821 essay *"Über die Aufgabe des Gesichtschreibers."* While Humboldt's other writings elevate the idealized aspects of classical antiquity far above their place in history, this later essay loftily characterizes both the project of writing history and its subject matter. The language the essay uses to describe the historian's project and purview helps to bridge the conceptual distance between *Streben* and the *Vollständigkeit der Uebersicht* associated with Roman soil in *Latium und Hellas*. Echoing Greece's divorce from the "*allgemeiner Verkettung der Begebenheiten*," this essay describes the proper view of the historian as considering "*alles Wirkliche, als eine nothwendige Kette"* (Humboldt, *Werke* 1: 587). The conception of everything real as a chain of necessity further reaffirms the divergence between idealizing and historicizing worldviews in Humboldt's writings, respectively associated with Greece and Rome, and thus suggests the presence of the same contradiction within his singular notion of antiquity.

The tensions between these ideas heighten as Humboldt's language for history intersects with that of *Bildung*, encompassing both the mundane and metaphysical in its scope. By recognizing this chain of necessity, "*Der Geschichtschreiber umfasst alle Fäden irrdischen Wirkens und alle Gepräge überirrdischer Ideen; die Summe des Daseyns ist, näher oder entfernter, der Gegenstand seiner Bearbeitung, und er muss daher auch alle Richtungen des Geistes verfolgen"* (Humboldt, *Werke* 1: 587). The underlying philosophy here comports closely with that of the *Bildung* fragment. Both ideas and reality are necessary to approach a notion of "*die Summe des*

Daseyns," as single ideas, as individuality, can only be expressed in the manifold of actual phenomena. A proper writer of history, however, is capable of gathering together "*alle Fäden irrdischen Wirkens,*" which perhaps together comprise that *allgemeine Verkettung*, and the traces or stamps of the spiritual they bear. Unlike the scholars of individual fields who must labor and raise their consciousness to understand how their narrow field relates to the development of mankind as a whole, the *Geschichtschreiber,* by producing a representation of that development and its guiding ideas, comes more directly and naturally to an appreciation of a more holistic awareness.

What is most remarkable, however, is how closely this language of historical writing and research simultaneously resembles and *inverts* that of *Bildung* as a whole. Humboldt hopes that a work accurately capturing *die Bildung des Menschens* would *discover* the directions and demands given to the mind or spirit by examining and comparing all manner of human activity in all its various fields.[7] The historian, on the other hand, in order to intuit the guiding ideal of humanity structuring all world events, must *follow* the directions of the spirit. Previously, we had discussed Humboldt's contention that the purpose of *Bildung* was to make the ideas which reflect this *Individualität* "count as reality, as life" (*als Wirklichkeit d.i. als Leben gelten zu machen*). In *Aufgabe des Geschichtschreibers*, he concludes with striking similarity, "*alle Geschichte [ist] nur Verwirklichung einer Idee*" and so, "*das Ziel der Geschichte kann nur die Verwirklichung der durch die Menschheit darzustellenden Idee seyn*" and "*das Geschäft des Geschichtschreibers in seiner letzten, aber einfachsten Auflösung ist Darstellung des Strebens einer Idee, Daseyn in der Wirklichkeit zu gewinnen*" (*Werke* 1: 604-5). In both cases, we are transported back to the movement between ideas and phenomena, between the finite and the infinite at the heart of the concept of *Individualität,* of what humanity should be and become.

The historian, too, engages with something impossibly vast and incomprehensible,[8] but not one single, infinite field or idea, as was located in the Greek spirit and what is ideal in antiquity. Rather, the writer of history must vie with an endlessly expanding manifold of real human events and phenomena in the world:

> Das ungeheure Gewühl der sich drängenden Weltbegebenheiten … ist ein Unendliches, das der Geist niemals in Eine Form zu bringen vermag, das ihn aber immer reizt, es zu versuchen, und ihm Stärke giebt, es theilweise zu vollenden. … so strebt Geschichte nach dem Bilde des Menschenschicksals in treuer Wahrheit, lebendiger Fülle, und reiner Klarheit. (Humboldt, *Werke* 1: 588-89)

The mass of world events described here seems, in its enormity, partially akin to the Greek ideal, specifically in how the mind is incapable of bringing it together into one form, yet it nevertheless encourages attempts to do so. On the other hand, the way this single concept comes to completeness only *theilweise* more closely aligns with the *stufenweis fortschreitende Resultate* of Rome's characteristic *Streben.* If Rome serves as Humboldt's *Inbegriff der Historie*, then it must also stand in some way for the process by which we might make sense of this infinite, though not

[7] See Humboldt, *Werke* 1: 238: "Denn bestimmt, die mannigfaltigen Arten menschlicher Thätigkeit in den Richtungen, die sie dem Geiste geben, und den Forderungen, die sie an ihn machen, zu betrachten und zu vergleichen, führte es geradezu in den Mittelpunkt, zu dem alles, was eigentlich auf uns einwirken soll, nothwendig gelangen muss."

[8] Here we see clear parallels between Humboldt's language for history, especially "*das ungeheure Gewühl der sich drängenden Weltbegebenheiten*" quoted below, and Goethe's language for Rome and its excess of time.

idealized, totality of world events – which are also, necessarily, expressions of human *Invidiualität*. These connections developing between Rome and a certain conception of history thus point toward Humboldt's "higher point of view" while also highlighting the contradictions and tensions between Greece and Rome, the ideal and the historical, in his concept of antiquity.

Likewise, from this perspective, the epigraph from Dionysius of Halicarnassus and its translation playfully invert the usual relationship between Greece and Rome, both historical and cultural, expressed in Humboldt's writings. Rome, per Holzer's comprehensive synopsis, primarily plays the role of the mediator or vessel of the Greek spirit to modernity, yet, in that brief excerpt, the Greek language, to which Humboldt attributes an enormous degree of influence in the shaping of that spirit throughout *Latium und Hellas*, transmits the content of Rome's *Weltherrschaft*. This inversion, like the comparative language in the *Genüsse* describing life in Greece and Rome, suggests a mutually interdependent, almost dialectical relationship between the two components of "classical antiquity" and their influences on modernity. Humboldt's translation, in conjunction with his historical writings, thus helps to hone our understanding of Rome as an *Inbegriff* for history, which, for Humboldt, is not merely the general chain of events, but in comprising also the real, the mundane, and the practical, provides the very ground of possibility for human development and is essential for its continued progress. Rome thus exceeds its purported world-historical significance as merely the transmitter of ancient Greece to modernity.

Both *Latium und Hellas* and Humboldt's unfinished Greek history thus tidily align ancient Greece with whatever about classical antiquity can be considered timeless and ideal, especially as it benefits human progress as an object of *Bildung*. Yet together Humboldt's writings also suggest a far less explicit alignment between Rome and an unidealized but quite sweeping notion of history – the chain of causes and effects of all human action(s) on Earth – both by implied contrast with Greece and through its close association with his concept of *Streben*. In a more subjective framing, we might also connect the *Sehnsucht* which allegedly inspired and is inspired by the Greeks with *Latium und Hellas*'s "*Empfindungen tieferer Wehmuth."* The more earthly, incremental, forward-looking *Streben*, might, then, likewise relate to the completeness of overview of *die ganze Erde* associated with Rome's classical soil and offer a deeper understanding of how the city affords a Humboldt a higher point of view, both physically and metaphorically. Examining Humboldt's literary production regarding the city, its history, and its literature brings these connections into stark relief.

4 – The Horizon of World History: Humboldt's Higher Point of View

Turning away from his theoretical writings and considering what Humboldt says about his own life *auf klassischem Boden* in his personal and literary production thus allows us to understand better how Rome relates to or even epitomizes history - and, more pressingly, how *Rome itself* shapes the concepts and language of Humboldt's historical thought. Bringing a letter to Wolf dated July 20th, 1805, and the text of the elegiac poem "*Rom*" into dialogue, we find an intersection of much of the conceptual language we have seen in the theoretical writings with

aspects of Humboldt's personal experiences of the city and of Roman literature, as well as the thoughts they inspired in him. These texts, individually and together, do not refute the mediating world-historical significance Holzer emphasizes in her account of Humboldt's Roman thought. Rather, a comparative reading allows us to develop a more precise sense of his thinking in and about the city on its own terms and to discover what can be said to be particularly *Roman* about it, rather than what has seemed at every turn to be reverse engineered or construed out of necessity to form a contrastive but inseparable pair, conceptually and historically, with Greece and its legacy.

The letter is one of many from this period that express a heartfelt desire for Wolf to travel to Italy. In it, Humboldt attempts to entice his friend and colleague with the opportunities for work and study he would find in Rome: *"Wie mannigfaltig aber wäre hier auch Stoff für Sie zu Studium und Arbeit, und wie anschaulich würde auf einmal die ganze Römerwelt, in der Sie soviel leben, für Sie werden, wenn Sie Monate hindurch auf den sieben Hügeln herumstreichen könnten"* (*Briefe* 254). This invitation inaugurates a pattern, continued throughout the letter, of blurring the line between Rome as physical city and its history. Humboldt here encapsulates this duality when he laments Wolf's absence from his company yet notes at the same time that he lives so much of his life "*in der Römerwelt.*" This plea dangles before Wolf the allure of "*die ganze Römerwelt*" becoming "*anschaulich*," vivid, but also concrete, visible, all at once (*auf einmal*), if he were able to spend a few months prowling or loitering (*herumstreichen*) "*auf die sieben Hügeln.*" The sudden vividness and visibility of the *whole* Roman world likewise suggests that the view of the physical city will enliven everything immaterial which comprises *"Stoff für [Wolf] zu Studium und Arbeit."* The Roman world, then, is composed not only of the space within the seven hills, but also its history and cultural productions, past and present.

Throughout the following paragraph, the letter transitions into a vivid account of Humboldt's own physical and intellectual engagements with the city:

> Ich lese jetzt wieder sehr viel die Alten, und immer Römer. Denn das Localinteresse überwiegt doch alles Andre. Die Totalität der Römergeschichte und des Römerlebens im Kopf, in Rom herumzugehen, ist eigentlich mein Leben. In die Museen und Gallerieen komme ich selten; um Basreliefs, Münzen und Gemmen bekümmre ich mich wenig oder gar nicht. Ich liebe nicht die in Häuser eingeschlossenen Götter. Aber die Kolossen, deren Wunderköpfe Sie im Barbarenlande gesehen haben, die unter freiem Himmel stehen, und auf Rom vom Quirinal hinabsehen, die grüße ich ziemlich alle Tage. Wo für mich der Genuß vollkommen seyn soll, muß die Bläue des Himmels auch ihr Recht behaupten, man muß noch einen Theil Latiums mit überschauen und das Lateiner Gebirge den Horizont schließen sehen. Dann wird man unwiderstehlich zu endlosen Betrachtungen über Geschichte und Menschenschicksal hingezogen, dann rundet sich auf einmal um die Hügel herum das ganze Gemälde der Weltgeschichte. Denn auf mich übt Rom immer seine große Gewalt mehr als durch alles Andre dadurch aus, daß es der Mittelpunkt der alten und neuen Welt ist. Denn selbst das Letzte wird ihm niemand mit Recht streitig machen. Unsere neue Welt ist eigentlich gar keine; sie besteht bloß in einer Sehnsucht nach der vormaligen, und einem ungewissen Tappen nach einer zunächst zu bildenden. In diesem heillosesten aller Zustände suchen Phantasie und Empfindung einen Ruhepunkt und finden ihn wiederum nur hier. (*Briefe* 255)

The opening sentence of the passage directly ties intellectual pursuits with antiquity to physical presence in Rome. Humboldt, somewhat surprisingly given the bulk of his writings, admits that among his frequent readings of *die Alten* his selections are "immer Römer," due to the power of "*Localinteresse.*" The following sentence quickly expands the scope of fixation from that of reading Roman authors to Rome itself to an immeasurable degree: "*Die Totalität der Römergeschichte und des Römerlebens im Kopf, in Rom herumzugehen, ist eigentlich mein Leben.*" Beyond linking reading Roman authors to being in the city, the first clause of this sentence pairs the whole of life there with the whole of its history, and Humboldt claims to hold the *totality* of both in his mind (*im Kopf*). Along with "walking around in Rome" (*herumgehen*), this knowledge and these activities, he claims, constitute his own life in actual fact (*eigentlich*). While there is certainly an element of hyperbole here in service of persuading Wolf to join him, Humboldt's pairing of Rome – and, thus, of history – with totality need not *merely* refer to an ideal, comprehensive knowledge of the city's life and history. Rather, we might see this phrase as a link between the all-encompassing quality Humboldt attributes to Rome, its history, and its role in world history, throughout his writings, and limited, contingent existence in reality.

As a whole, the paragraph emphasizes Humboldt's subjective experience of being in Rome over what he learns from individual objects that might be seen and studied within it. He quickly dismisses interest in *Museen und Gallerieen*, in curated collections of artifacts, *Basreliefs, Münzen, und Gemmen*, enclosed in modern spaces. Likewise, he finds no *Genuss* in *"die in Häuser eingeschlossen Götter*." On the one hand, we might read this rejection of Roman gods and temples as an expression of the hollowness or dryness German philhellenism attributes to Roman culture, particularly the intertwining of what modern scholars divide into civic and religious practices. In another sense, however, this characterization of temples as "gods locked up in houses" continues a thematic thread which attributes a richness and depth to experiencing Rome *en plein air.* Despite the promise of *Stoff zu Studium und Arbeit*, the study and work Humboldt finds especially enriching in Rome seems not to involve close (or enclosed) attention to individual examples of the art, artifacts, architecture, and material remains of the city.

Instead, Humboldt describes his deepest engagement with the city as "greeting *Kolossen* nearly every day": "*Aber die Kolossen, deren Wunderköpfe Sie im Barbarenlande*[9] *gesehen haben, die unter freiem Himmel stehen, und auf Rom vom Quirinal hinabsehen, die grüße ich ziemlich alle Tage."* This sentence and the next confirm the importance of experiencing the city under the open sky, and the focus here on *die Kolossen* and their *Wunderköpfe* in particular, imbue Humboldt's perspective with both physical and affective loftiness. However, he goes on to clarify that it is not simply being in Rome and looking over it from the Quirinal that gives him his greatest satisfaction: "*Wo für mich der Genuß vollkommen seyn soll, muß die Bläue des Himmels auch ihr Recht behaupten, man muß noch einen Theil Latiums mit überschauen und das Lateiner Gebirge den Horizont schließen sehen.*" As Humboldt implicitly likens himself to an enormous, ancient statue, under the open sky, this particular experience of looking out from the city's hills, over all of Rome and beyond, leads to the literal and figurative "higher point of view" over the region, the world, and history.

[9] See also Humboldt, *Briefe* 258: "*Ich sitze tiefer als je in den Griechen und Römern, und habe alle barbarische Sprachen aufgegeben.*" From this phrase, we can infer what he means by *Barbarenlande* here as another way to divide classical antiquity from the modern (geographical) nations outside of "classical soil."

As the letter continues, the prevalence of *herum,* which can connote things scattered around but also a sense of circumscription, subtly reinforces a notion of Rome and the point of view it affords being all-encompassing. Not only does Humboldt invite Wolf "*herum*zustreichen" and describe his own life being spent "*in Rom herum*zugehen," but he also extends this spatial indication of *around* into to the realm of metaphor later in the letter when he describes how the view past Rome into Latium draws one "irresistibly into endless contemplations of history and human destiny": "*Dann wird man unwiderstehlich zu endlosen Betrachtungen über Geschichte und Menschenschicksal hingezogen, dann rundet sich auf einmal um die Hügel* ***herum*** *das ganze Gemälde der Weltgeschichte*" (my emphasis). Just as Humboldt himself walks "*um die Hügeln herum,*" so too does "the entire painting or tableau of world history" round the seven hills of Rome. For Humboldt, it seems that this specific view from the Quirinal conforms quite closely to the broadly described "enjoyment" of living on the classical soil of Rome in *Latium und Hellas*. His position under the blue sky allows his *Genuss* of this experience to be *vollkommen*, and he describes the act of gazing over the part of Latium out to the hills on the horizon as *überschauen*.

While the act of "looking over" Rome's environs described in the letter is quite literal, a portion of Humboldt's elegiac poem "*Rom*" gives specific meaning to the landscape beyond Rome in a way which allows us to better understand how it is that this view becomes *das ganze Gemälde der Weltgeschichte*. In a passage describing all of the various wars and conquests the Romans fought to achieve "*der Thron der Welt,"* the verses turn to early Roman history to discuss their subjugation of the other Italian tribes and city-states:

> Doch eh' kühn sie waget ferne Züge,
> Uebt daheim erst Roma Schlacthenmuth;
> denn dass, kaum gebohren, sie erliege,
> Zischt um sie der Nachbarvölker Wuth;
> Doch die Hände streckt sie aus der Wiege,
> Und erwürget liegt der Nattern Brut.
> Bändigend Ausonien ihrem Worte,
> Steht sie an der Weltbeherrschung Pforte" ("*Rom*" 37).

This stanza personifies Rome as an infant essentially born into a nest of adders, as the neighboring peoples hiss (*zischt*) at the fledgling city. Succumbing to the desire to test her *Schlachtenmuth,* the infant Rome merely stretches her hands from the cradle, and these hissing *Nachbarvölker* fall in line. The imagery of the cradle around Rome in its early days echoes the letter's description of the horizon delimited by *das Lateiner Gebirge.* The stanza's final sentence identifies the subjugation of Ausonia, the Greek-derived poetic name for lower Italy, often used for the entire peninsula, as the moment at which Rome "stands at the gate to world-rule." This metaphor spatializes this moment in time as the threshold through which the Rome of the distant past, imagined from the vantage point of Humboldt's present, gazes proleptically toward all its future conquests across the world, all its future history. Humboldt's view over modern Lazio, stretching out to the sites of the homes of the ancient *Ausones* (whose conquest is reported at Livy 9.25.4.1), inverts this metaphor: the moment of Rome's conquest of Italy is no longer spatialized, but the view of Italy *from* Rome is temporalized, offering him a view *back* over Rome's influence in world history, stretching out from this point in space and time.

This moment of inversion of time and space alone connects specific elements of Rome and its environs to historical thinking, but it also draws our attention to the specific ways that Humboldt links the material site of Rome to its broader history. What this letter reveals, then, is a more properly and distinctly *Roman* approach to Rome in Humboldt's writing and thought, drawn in no small part from his own experiences in and familiarity with the city and its history.

5 – Defying Time: Layered Temporality in Humboldt's "*Rom*"

This distinctly "Roman" approach to Rome pervades the text of "*Rom*" and emerges from the very start of the poem through a direct address to a personified Tiber. This anastrophe evokes the site of Rome and, in doing so, gathers a familiar nexus of thematic tensions: geographic identity and change over time, memory and legacy, glory and destruction. Through a series of questions posed to the ancient river, the poem offers a preview of its major themes and more subtle hints of its literary inspirations:

> Tibris, der du rollst die stolzen Wogen,
> Denkst du wohl noch jener grauen Zeit,
> Wo noch nicht, gewägt auf luft'gen Bogen,
> Stand des Capitoles Herrlichkeit,
> Roma's Name, noch von Nacht umzogen,
> Nicht des Nachruhms Stimme war geweiht? -
> Kehrt einst Nacht, die wieder ihn verschlinget?
> Strahlt ein Tag, wo keinem Ohr er klinget? (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 25)

Both the content and structure of the stanza reveal a multifaceted preoccupation with time and its passage. The opening question to the personified Tiber places us squarely in the *now* of Humboldt's poetic voice as both the main verb *denkst* and that in the relative clause *rollst* appear in the present tense. Then, as the river is asked whether it still thinks of "that gray time," this temporal fixation is spatialized as the second line ends with *Zeit* but the descriptive clause in the next line begins not with a solely temporal adverb or conjunction but with the phrase "*Wo noch nicht."* Here the poem reveals multiple layers of past and present, as it places one foot back into the river's memory of a time where the site of Rome was *not yet* Rome but speaks from a present when ancient Rome is *no longer* what it was, even as the Tiber flows all the same.

The following two pairs of lines with past tense main verbs connect to Rome's past in distinct ways, each with their own relationship to time and history. The first pair focuses on a concrete representation of the height of Rome's magnificence and power: "*die Herrlichkeit des Capitoles, gewägt auf luft'gen Bogen.*" The second instead concerns *Roma's Name,* still shrouded by the night, and not yet consecrated as a "*Stimme des Nachruhms.*" This pairing together stacks multiple temporal perspectives of the city on top of each other. The Capitol, the seat of the city's citadel and long a symbol of its power and persistence, stands for the long present of ancient Rome's dominance, though we are here encouraged to think of a time before it rose atop the city. At the same time, shifting quickly to the city's *name* brings to mind both the mythical moment at which Rome came to be called Rome and also its inevitable transformation

into *die Stimme Nachruhms*, not merely a name but the herald of a fallen city and a fallen empire's posthumous fame.

The final lines of this introductory stanza pick up the lapsed futurity of *Nachruhm* as we transition from this meditation on the Roman past(s) back to the present tense. While the final two questions do return grammatically to the present of the poem, both the structure of these lines as questions and the content of those questions produce a distinctly anticipatory sense. The stanza looks forward to the return of the "night" in which Rome's name could *not yet be* remembered to ask if there could ever come a day in which that name would simply be absent, *unable* to be remembered, forgotten. The metaphor of day and night transposes a brief but ever-recurring cycle of natural time over questions of the rise and fall of human constructions, institutions, and their legacies over innumerable passing generations. Posing the question "will night come again?" draws on that natural recurrence to build a sense of futility. Night always returns, and so, the poem suggests, does the forgetfulness, the un-knowing, brought by time's passage.

Falling at the end of the stanza, these questions linger in the mind, enhancing that tension until the second stanza opens with a powerful and defiant "*Nein!*" (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 25). This following stanza evokes the geography of Italy and refers to myths of the gods' ancestors' founding their own empire there – which, as we will see, evokes the imagery of Vergil's *Aeneid* – before concluding, "*Mag dahin das Rad der Zeit auch eilen,/ wird [das Land] die Siebenhügelstadt gennant./ Ewig hieß sie in der Vorwelt Munde,/ Ewig tönt der Nachwelt ihre Kunde*" (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 25). The image of the rushing *Rad der Zeit* sets Rome in (at least symbolic) opposition to the passage of time and the change and destruction it entails. Rome here thus comes to stand for a kind of durability or survival even against material destruction. The final two lines of this stanza play on the trope of Rome as *ewige Stadt* but turn that adjectival quality into an adverbial way of persisting, implicitly transferring the epithet from the city itself to *Roma's Name*. While the city may not and indeed cannot persist eternally in the same form, it lingers forever spoken in the mouth of the world before and ringing out in the lore of the world after. As in the previous stanza, however, before and after *what* – the civilization of ancient Rome or Humboldt's own poetic present – remains somewhat ambiguous. In either case, however, Rome seems to exist in a continuity which persists from an indefinite time before into an uncertain time after.

Associating Rome perpetually with both a *Vorwelt* and *Nachwelt,* these lines bear more than a passing resemblance to the second half of the quote from the letter to Wolf examined above:

> Denn auf mich übt Rom immer seine große Gewalt mehr als durch alles Andre dadurch aus, daß es der Mittelpunkt der alten und neuen Welt ist. Denn selbst das Letzte wird ihm niemand mit Recht streitig machen. Unsere neue Welt ist eigentlich gar keine; sie besteht bloß in einer Sehnsucht nach der vormaligen, und einem ungewissen Tappen nach einer zunächst zu bildenden. In diesem heillosesten aller Zustände suchen Phantasie und Empfindung einen Ruhepunkt und finden ihn wiederum nur hier. (Humboldt, *Briefe* 255)

Coming immediately after Humboldt's reflections of looking out over "*das ganze Gemälde der Weltgeschichte*," this passage characterizes Rome as "*der Mittelpunkt der alten und neuen Welt.*" Touching, too, on the language of *Geschichte des Verfalls, die Neue Welt* is hardly a world at all, but exists only in *Sehnsucht* for the former, *alte Welt* and in "an uncertain groping after [a world]

yet to be formed." While *Vorwelt* and *Nachwelt* seem to give an impression of eternal continuity, the configuration of *alte und neue Welt,* particularly alongside the uncertainty of this future world and the longing for an unreachable former one, instead conveys a sense of rupture and loss. Rome as *Mittelpunkt* is not one step in this process, but rather a point on which the mind, feeling, and imagination can rest "in this most hopeless of all conditions." The poem, then, offers a far more continuous notion of Rome's presence in and relationship to time – not an ahistorical point of rest in a storm of loss and longing, dividing "before" irretrievably from "after," but rather a symbol of survival and duration through and against the rupture and loss of the past.

In their own readings of Humboldt's "*Rom,*" Holzer and Volker Riedel, who discusses the poem in the course of his article, "*Der Anteil Roms am Antikebild Wilhelm von Humboldts*," arrive at similar conclusions regarding the increasing complexity of Rome's relationship to time and history reflected in its verses. Holzer states:

> Aus der Sicht auf Rom als den Inbegriff der Vergänglichkeit ergibt sich letztlich aber auch der Gedanke des Wandels. Nicht dem Untergang, sondern vielmehr der Metamorphose setzt Humboldt mit dem Gedicht ein Denkmal…
>
> Im Geschichtlichen ist hier das Denken einer Synthese angelegt, für die Rom das Symbol; im Geschichtlichen stellt sich hier der transformative Charakter Roms als Übergang von der Antike zur Moderne und als Ort der Erfahrung ihres Zusammenhangs dar. Rom ist in der Elegie Humboldts also letztlich Symbol nicht der abgeschlossenen und vergangenen Geschichte, nicht, wie in seiner griechischen Abhandlung oder bei Gibbon nur Verfall und Untergang, sondern Symbol von Transformation und Synthese. Rom wird so schließlich zum Synonym für Humboldts Begriff des menschlichen Schicksals in der Geschichte. (99)

And, similarly, Riedel's article concludes:

> Wo Hölderlin und Schlegel nur den Untergang des Alterthum betrauern, dort bezieht er, wenn auch keineswegs widerspruchsfrei, den geschichtlichen Prozeß in seine Überlegungen ein - und hierzu dürften die langjährige Vertrautheit mit Rom und die Erfahrungen, die er als preußischer Staatsmann in dieser Stadt gewonnen hatte, nicht unwesentlich beigetragen haben. (59)

These excerpts elegantly capture the ways in which this poem resists an oversimplification of Rome as either the brutish destroyer that brought about the end of classical antiquity or as merely the world-historical *Kultur der Vermittlung*, significant only for its preservation and transmission of classical Greek culture into modernity. This resistance inherently distances Humboldt's idea of Rome from a definition shaped purely through contrast with his elevation and idealization of Greece and so further establishes these articulations of time and the historical process as distinctly or predominantly Roman aspects of his thought on antiquity. Holzer's description of this continuity pushes Rome's role as an ahistorical epitome of history to one of *Vergänglichkeit*, transience and change in time, leading, in turn, to considerations of more continuous or iterative notions of change, synthesis, and transformation. As Holzer concludes that Rome comes to be synonymous with a concept of human fate in history and Riedel sees Rome as intimately connected with Humboldt's reckoning with the historical process, both arguments engage with the poem to reveal the complexity and tension of Humboldt's Roman thought, especially over the course of his theoretical writings and broader philosophy.

Neither argument, however, engages in depth with the possibility that this poem does not merely construct its idea of the history of the world through Humboldt's own theoretical terms. I argue that, in "*Rom,*" this vision is also largely shaped by the historical and poetic reflections on Rome and its relationship to time in Book 5 of Livy's *Ab urbe condita* and Book 8 of Vergil's *Aeneid*. In the letter to Wolf discussed above, Humboldt mentions that his frequent reading of ancient literature in that period tended "*immer Römer,"* which, despite his residence in Rome, seems somewhat surprising given the ways he so frequently subordinates Rome's importance in his own thinking to that of Greece. Indeed, Holzer quips, "*Zwar schrieb Humboldt in einem Brief an Wolf 1804, sein Leben sei 'nun eigentlich die Totalität der Römergeschichte und des Römerlebens und er lese immer nur Römer,' doch gibt er in Latium und Hellas, wie in anderen Texten, kaum Quellen als Grundlagen seines Urteils an*" (91). Similarly, Riedel mentions in passing that Humboldt's poem develops its "*Dialektik von Untergang und Bewahrung…unter Anspielung vor allem auf Vergil und Livius*," but does not touch upon the poem's close engagement with the original texts (56). Yet, both the depth and frequency of Humboldt's references to – and, at times, *translations* of – his Roman readings in "*Rom*" make the poem all the more remarkable among his writings. An intertextual analysis, then, not only deepens this sense that Humboldt's treatment of the city, its history, and its legacy is not merely reverse engineered from the intellectual demands of his philhellenism, but also offers a rare glimpse into how the texts and tropes of Roman literature in fact comprise a constitutive element of his historical thought.

Looking back to the opening stanza of "*Rom,*" nearly every aspect of this passage can be read as an allusion to Livy and Vergil: the anastrophe to the Tiber and its connections to Rome's mythical prehistory, as we will see, strongly evokes the narrative and imagery of Book 8 of the *Aeneid*. Similarly, the emphasis of *Roma's Name*, here and throughout the poem, as well as the emphasis on the Capitol and the Roman citadel are key thematic elements in Livy's narrative of the Gallic sack and siege of Rome in Book 5 of his history. These very first lines thus inaugurate a pervasive program of intertextuality throughout the poem. These allusions, adaptations, and translations are not merely erudite adornments on the more philosophical themes of Humboldt's poem. Rather, examining these passages of Roman literature reveals the ways in which their respective narrative structures, themes, and tropes work both with one another *and* with the text of Humboldt's poem to shape his complex historical idea of Rome.

Coming together with Humboldt's own experience of the city, the influence of Livy's and Vergil's textual representations of Rome further enrich the poem's preoccupation with Rome's place in and relationship to time, primarily through two related tropes: the literary device of foreshadowing or prolepsis – anticipation in a representation of the past to a *then* future or not-yet-occurring or -existing site, institution, or state of affairs, yet surely known in the facts of the writer or narrator's own past – and the more specifically Roman historical trope of the city's repeated *re*-foundation. These texts bring concrete, material focus to both the city's mythical, pre-Roman past and historical and legendary moments of crisis in which the persistence of the city on its famed seven-hilled site is reaffirmed or renewed, all the while anticipating how these moments lead to the grandeur and power of their city in their present(s). The poem's intertextuality shows, then, that this *Dialektik von Untergang und Bewahrung*, the historical tension within Humboldt's classical ideal, is built on a foundation of ancient Roman literature and thought.

6 – Stadt der Trümmer: Thinking Rome's Pasts and Futures through *Aeneid* 8

The direct address to the Tiber, several stanzas before the first and only explicit mention of Aeneas, provides the first example of a pattern of allusive anticipation in Humboldt's poem: while no ancient authors besides Homer are mentioned by name in the poem, the passages which engage most closely with these Roman texts are preceded by more subtle and diffuse allusions to them. In Book 8 of Vergil's *Aeneid*, the Trojan hero has finally arrived in Italy, where he is fated to wage war against the Rutulians and found a city that will someday lead to the foundation of Rome. When Aeneas sleeps, weary from his travels, Tiberinus, the god of the Tiber River, appears to him in a dream and speaks to him, instructing him to travel down the river to the small settlement of Pallanteum, which, in this mythic past, is located on the future site of Rome itself. There, Aeneas is to meet its founder, the Greek hero Evander, who settled in Italy sometime before the Trojan war, to help him in his fated efforts (8.24-65). In *Aeneid 8*, the personified Tiber thus serves as a guiding figure, which, mimicking the river itself, leads the narrative and its hero from the wide sea to the future site of Rome.

In Humboldt's poem, the Tiber serves the very same role. After the opening stanzas discussed above, the poem goes on to describe the Italian peninsula's volcanic formation before transferring its perspective to a boatman being tossed about waves and commanding his crew. This excited *Schiffer* cries out, "*Höret Ihr die Welle stolzer rauschen?/ Seht auf wogt sie vom Romul'schen Hain*" (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 26). While it is initially ambiguous whether this boatman is sailing on the Mediterranean or the Tiber, the mention of waves rushing *stolzer* immediately calls to mind the Roman river's "*stolzen Wogen*" in the first line of the poem, even before the *Schiffer* instructs his crew, and the reader, to look up to see the waves rise "from Romulus' grove." The stanza immediately following this *Schiffer*'s brief address begins the poem's direct engagement with Vergil's *Aeneid*, relating its own version of the meeting of Aeneas and Evander at Pallanteum. In Humboldt's "*Rom,*" the personified Tiber thus guides the poem not only to the site of Rome and Romulus' grove, but to its own literary antecedent in Vergil.

This narrative imitation of the opening of *Aeneid* 8 also connects Humboldt's poem to this episode of Roman epic through their shared preoccupation with Rome's fate and future. While the entire *Aeneid* anticipates the founding of Rome following Aeneas' long journey, the Trojan hero's visit to Pallanteum contains a collection of moments in which the poem explicitly looks forward from its narrative present to the rise of the city and its empire in the present of its composition. At the conclusion of his speech, after confirming his identity to Aeneas, Tiberinus states, "*hic mihi magna domus, celsis caput urbibus exit"* (8.65). The deified Tiber claims its "head flows out to lofty cities." Although this region of Italy is well populated in this mythic past, its scattered settlements hardly merit this description, suggesting that the river god is speaking as much of the Roman future as the Italian present. This proleptic perspective intensifies when Aeneas finally lays eyes on Pallanteum from his own boat on the Tiber: "…*cum muros arcemque procul rara domorum/ tecta vident, quae nunc Romana potentia caelo/ aequavit…"* (8.97-100). Evander's Pallanteum already possesses walls and a citadel (*muros arcemque*), but actual homes in and around these fortifications are few (*rara*). The following relative clause, however, imbues these structures with their full significance: "[all these things] which the power of Rome has *now* raised up to the sky." In this *cum inversum* construction, Aeneas and his men view the city vividly in the present tense (*vident*), and the grammar of the

relative clause bridges that vivid past with the Rome of Vergil's present, as the true perfect *aequavit* conveys an action begun in the past but extending into the now (*nunc*) and fulfilling the Tiber's promise of "lofty cities." Engaging with this episode in this way, Humboldt's poem thus adds more layers of temporal complexity as more pasts, presents, and futures of Rome collide on the page.

When the German poem finally mentions Aeneas and Evander by name, the stanza begins with a temporal *als*, immediately characterizing this mythic and literary episode as an aspect of the city's past:

> Als Aeneas zu Evanders Hütte,
> Wälzend, kam, des großen Krieges Last,
> Und in seiner Opfertische Mitte
> Nun der Held empfing den neuen Gast,
> Wankten schon durch Trümmer ihre Schritte,
> Die Grause Hand der Zeit erfaßt.
> "Phryger, schaue diese öden Reste,
> "Hier stand Janus, dort Saturnus Veste!"
>
> Also sprach Arkadiens Greis und stillte
> Seines Freundes Sehnsucht, ahndungslos,
> Welcher Werke Pracht noch Nacht umhüllte,
> Welche Zinnen, wunderhehr und groß,
> Da, wo ihm die frohe Heerde brüllte,
> Einst entstiegen dunkler Zukunft Schooß.
> Ach! Die da noch nicht das Licht getrunken,
> Liegen wieder jetzt in Schutt gesunken. (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 26-7).

These sixteen lines of *ottava rima* allude to and condense roughly 500 lines of Vergil's Latin hexameters, drawing from various moments throughout the episode (8.102-606). Humboldt first sets the scene by mentioning Aeneas' war-weariness, echoing Vergil's "*Aeneas, tristi turbatus pectora bello*" (8.29), as well as Evander's ongoing observance of a sacrificial rite to Hercules at the time of Aeneas' arrival, which is also a major component of the scene's context in *Aeneid 8* (*Forte die sollemnem illo rex Arcas honorem/ Amphitryoniadae magno divisque ferebat ante urbem in luco*, 8.102-3). The remaining five lines of the stanza, however, primarily adapt the famous tour of this proto-Roman settlement on which Evander guides Aeneas.

Despite the legendary setting of this episode, taking place long before even most of the ancient histories of the city begin, Vergil's poem strives to produce a concrete, historical sense of Aeneas' experience. In her article on the role of Evander in *Aeneid* 8, Sophia Papaioannou writes: "The narrative in Aeneid 8 is composed of small, independent, fully detailed, and chronologically well placed units - it is what one may define as historical. Proto-Rome is a historical landmark; it has a past that can be actually traced, and a future that will be fulfilled" (688). Perfectly aligning with the temporal fixation of Humboldt's "*Rom,*" this portion of Vergil's epic thus juxtaposes these pre-historical sites and ruins against explicit allusions to famous Roman landmarks of Vergil's present, such as the Ara Maxima, Porta Carmentalis, the Asylum of Romulus and the Lupercal, the Tarpeian Rock, and even the Roman Forum, which themselves commemorate various elements of Rome's early history and legends.

The tour proper begins after Evander explains the occasion for his sacrifice to Aeneas, telling the tale of Hercules and Cacus, whose cave, he points out, is already a ruin (*ruinam*, 8.192). The introduction of the tour in the *Aeneid* also explicitly characterizes Aeneas as fascinated by the evidence of the life and deeds of the site's already ancient inhabitants: *"miratur facilisque oculos fert omnia circum/ Aeneas, capiturque locis et singula laetus/ exquiritque auditque virum monimenta priorum"* (8.311-12). The presence of the already ruined abode of Cacus and Aeneas' marveling at these "monuments of earlier men," scattered about even in Rome's legendary pre-history, seem to strike at the heart of Humboldt's interest in this episode of Latin literature. As he narrates his own version of this tale, he states that the two men's steps *"wankten schon durch Trümmer…die Grause Hand der Zeit erfaßt.*" The adverb *schon* succinctly captures the temporal richness of Vergil's scene, while the second line also inserts Humboldt's own specific perspective and interpretation which has no parallel in the Latin original. While Vergil's poem visits these already-ruins to build anticipation for the rise of Rome at the height of its power and influence in his own time, Humboldt, of course, writes nearly two thousand years later, when that magnificence has already fallen and faded away, only reflected in ruins and *monimenta virum priorum*. Thus, he adds this new and ironic layer of foreshadowing to the scene: the ruins Evander and Aeneas tour have already been grasped by the cruel hand of time, as even the Rome that, in their time, has yet to come into being, inevitably will, as well.

The final lines of Humboldt's first stanza here translate, almost verbatim, lines 357-58 of *Aeneid* 8, which fall in Evander's description of two already ancient settlements and fortresses nearby: "*haec duo praeterea disiectis oppida muris, / reliquias veterumque vides monimenta virorum./ hanc Ianus pater, hanc Saturnus condidit arcem;/ Ianiculum huic, illi fuerat Saturnia nomen"* (8.355-8). It hardly seems a coincidence that Humboldt draws his next lines from the other passage in this episode where the word *monimenta* appears, here employed even more forcefully and specifically, as Evander describes the two towns and their ruined walls as "relics and monuments of ancient men." While Evander does mention the ruined walls (*disiectis muris*) of these ancient settlements, Humboldt's more condensed gloss of the sites as "*diese öden Reste"* instills a more foreboding tone.

Likewise, the opening lines of the following stanza look forward, from the present of the scene between the two heroes, to the anticipated pinnacles of Aeneas' famous achievements, but again go on add a sense of impending doom to a subsequent allusion to Vergil's Latin: "*Da, wo ihm die frohe Heerde brüllte, / Einst entstiegen dunkler Zukunft Schooß./ Ach! Die da noch nicht das Licht getrunken,/ Liegen wieder jetzt in Schutt gesunken."* The *Heerde* which Humboldt quickly mentions here, which bellow "for him," that is, in Aeneas and Evander's time, refer almost certainly to the herds of cattle the two men see in the site that will someday become the Roman Forum, the very heart of Roman political and civic life. In the lines immediately following Evander's description of Janiculum and Saturnia, Vergil writes, "*passimque armenta videbant/ Romanoque foro et lautis mugire Carinis*" (8.360-61), in which *armenta* and *mugire* are nearly perfect equivalents for *Heerde* and *brüllen.* Humboldt's next words, however, again transform the anticipation of greatness into a lament of future destruction, the *dunkler Zukunft* of ancient Rome. The conclusion of the stanza likewise simultaneously looks forward to the Romans not yet born in this mythic age and back from Humboldt's present to the foregone conclusion of their demise.

Describing *Aeneid* 8, Papaioannou claims that "the text of the Aeneid challenges the readers to detect the coexistence of past, present, and future, as well as the unity of history and

tradition, in all parts of the history of Rome" (699-700). By adapting this episode of Book 8, Humboldt poses this same challenge to his reader yet expands the scope and scale of this coexistence of times into his own present, and even beyond. "*Rom's*" next stanza goes on to imagine a pilgrim visiting the city *"in später Jahre*," to pay respect to the ruins of its past, while also jumping from the desolation of Rome's fall to its rise to the seat of the new empire of Christianity (27). Rome is *jetzt* a city thronged by "*Menschenwelle*" described as "*heil'gen, gnadenvollen,"* and the home of "*der Fürst der Priester*" (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 27). While, at first, this scene seems to be taking place in Humboldt's own time, the final lines parallel his lament of the past and future Romans to reveal his anticipation of a similar fate yet to come: *"Der sich jetzt des nahen Aethers freuet, / Jener Dom, liegt dann in Staub zerstreuet*" ("*Rom*" 27). This couplet thus transposes the present and future of Christian Rome into Humboldt's multifaceted temporal reflections on the episode of Aeneas and Evander. The ambiguous temporal shift from *jetzt* to *dann,* in fact, strikingly mirrors a similar gesture in Aeneid 8. As Zetzel explains, "As Aeneas and Evander walk through Rome, they go past the Capitoline, 'aurea nunc, olim siluestribus horrida dumis' (8.348)–golden now, at one time bristling with thickets," just before seeing ruins of Saturnia and Janiculum, those *monumenta virum priorum* who came before (20). Yet, "*nunc, olim*," Zetzel claims, in the very same way as *jetzt, dann* in Humboldt's vision of the fallen *Dom*, "in the line describing the Capitol can either mean 'now golden, at some future time covered by thickets' or 'now golden, formerly covered with thickets': *olim* is either past or future" (21). "Vergil," like Humboldt, "asks but never answers whether the destructive cycle of time can be brought to an end, whether Rome's history has a direction or a goal" (Zetzel 21). Rome, both Vergil and Humboldt suggest, survives as a populous and marvelous city, but every present of Rome, and of every human being and institution, is doomed to one day become the ruins of the past, the *monimenta virum priorum* of the future.

Evolving out of Humboldt's interpretation of the *Aeneid*, this repeated collision and conflation of Rome's pasts, presents, and future(s) leads directly into the poem's most explicit association of the city and a concept of history:

> Stadt der Trümmer! Zufluchtsort der Frommen!
> Bild nur scheinst du der Vergangenheit;
> Pilger deine Bürger, nur gekommen,
> Anzustaunen diene Herrlichkeit;
> Denn vor allen Städten hat genommen
> Dich zum Thron die allgewalt'ge Zeit.
> Daß du seyst des Weltenlaufes Spiegel,
> Krönte Zeus mit Herrschaft deine Hügel. ("*Rom*" 27-8)

For Humboldt Rome becomes, in essence, the city of ruins. This appellation does not simply refer, however, to the ruins of antiquity variously gathered and scattered throughout its modern and renaissance structures. As both the episode of the *Aeneid* and the prior stanza together make clear, ruins in Humboldt's poem represent not merely the fallen grandeur of classical Rome – as he states, Rome only *seems* to be but an image of the past – but also whatever peoples, settlements, and institutions existed there before the Republic and Empire emerged, *and* everything and everyone in the city in Humboldt's own present and every possible future, likewise fated to fall and decay to time's inevitable passage. These various times, as well as the distinctions between physical place and literary representation again subtly bleed together in the exclamation *"Zufluchtsort der Frommen,"* which simultaneously calls to mind the Holy See and

Vergil's *pius Aeneas, fato profugus*. Thus, like the *Waller* of the prior stanza, Rome's *Frommen* and *Pilger*, its citizens, are not explicitly Christian here but instead marvel only at the city's *Herrlichkeit*, past, present, or future.

Despite previously being described as cruel, time is more ambiguously described here as omnipotent (*allgewaltige*). Time is thus not only the destroyer of Rome, but also the force which sets it upon a throne before all other cities, whose relationship to the city gives it its unique significance in Humboldt's thought. Thus, the stanza concludes, "that you would be [a/the] mirror of the world's course, Zeus crowned your hills with sovereignty." Just as Rome's hills offered Humboldt himself a full view of *das ganze Gemälde der Weltgeschichte*, here the city reflects something like the history of the world. The concept of *der Weltenlauf* contains within it a sense of linearity and forward movement, a sense of ongoing progress. The metaphor of the mirror, however, implies not identity but representation or mimicry. It seems, then, given where this crucial stanza falls in the poem, it is precisely the way Rome incites reflection on the relationship of the passage from its many pasts, through individual presents, and their transformations into future pasts, that allow it to take on this historical significance. While this stanza is often quoted, and indeed fully supports the readings of Holzer, Riedel, and others, too little attention has been paid to the ways in which Humboldt's reading of Vergil seems to ground and shape Rome's relationship to a concept of history.

7 – *Ewige Stadt:* Livy's Camillus and Humboldt's Refounded Rome

The particular way in which Rome reflects the historical process is, however, also enabled by another trope more subtly present in this portion of the *Aeneid*: the idea of foundation and, ultimately, the possibility of re-foundation. In Evander's description of the ruined citadels of Janiculum and Saturnia, he states that Janus was *pater* of *hanc arcem*, and Saturn founded (*condidit*) the other *arx*. At the beginning Evander's tour of the site of Rome, Vergil likewise calls him "*rex Evandrus Romanae conditor arcis*" (8.313), an appellation that Papaioannou notes is unique to Vergil's depiction of this character of Rome's founding legends. In the context of Humboldt's elegy, this language of foundation in Vergil's text plays two key thematic functions. First, on its own, this language introduces the notion of multiple, sequential acts of foundation within the bounds of the site of Rome in the text of the *Aeneid,* which of course also includes Aeneas' own feats, as well. The actions that establish Rome and its institutions and landmarks are thus extended indefinitely into the past: back through history, beyond the heroic, and into the divine. Rome is not timeless, nor did it arise autochthonously, but came about through a progressive, piecemeal process. All of the traditions of Rome and its foundations legends are thus integrated into one great chain of events in the text.

Second, this association with both the act of foundation and prominence of the citadel, and the *arx* of Rome specifically, forges a close intertextual link between this episode of Vergil's epic and the closing chapters of the fifth book of Livy's *Ab urbe condita.* This portion of Livy's sprawling history from the city's foundation centers on the Gallic sack of Rome in the early fourth century BCE (ca. 390) and, more specifically, the intervention of the dictator Camillus,

who returns from exile in Ardea to rout the Gauls from the city. Just as crucially for Rome's survival, Livy's Camillus then delivers a rousing speech which ultimately prevents the Roman *plebs* from abandoning the city and relocating to Veii due to the damage the Gauls dealt to Rome. Due to his success in the campaign, he is praised at 5.49 as "*Romulus ac parens patriae conditorque alter urbis,"* Romulus, parent of the fatherland, and a second founder of the city. While the name itself and the designation of *second* founder connect Camillus most closely to Romulus, in light of the poem's previous engagement with Evander and Aeneas, who predate but explicitly foreshadow Romulus in the *Aeneid*, Camillus thus becomes another founder in this longer literary-historical chain.

Humboldt's adaptation of Book 5 of Livy centers almost entirely on the speech of Camillus,[10] which comprises chapters 51-54 of that book. But, just as with Vergil earlier in the poem, Humboldt's allusions to this text begin before his more direct engagement with it begins:

> Um den Siebengürtel dieser Hügel,
> deren Stirn die hohen Zinnen trägt,
> schwingt der Sieg die goldumstrahlten Flügel,
> Treu dem Kreise, der ihn einzig hegt.
> Ewger Herrschaft unverletztes Siegel
> Hat hier nieder das Geschick gelegt.
> Wohl verpflanzen läßt sich Muth und Tugend,
> Aber nicht des Glückes Götterjungend. ("*Rom*" 39)

Following the section of the poem which describes Rome's conquest of Italy and eventual road to world-rule (part of which was discussed in conjunction with Humboldt's letter to Wolf), this stanza again links the image of the seven hills to the unbroken, *ewige Herrschaft* Rome has achieved through its military conquests at home and abroad. The final couplet echoes this sentiment, emphasizing the importance of the city's physical site by arguing that while courage and virtue could be transplanted, the "divine youth of fortune," could not.

Though completely unacknowledged by the text, this final couplet is a nearly word for word translation of a rhetorical question posed by Camillus to the Roman *plebs*: "*Quod cum ita sit quae, malum, ratio est [haec] expertis alia experiri, cum iam ut* ***virtus vestra transire alio possit, fortuna certe loci huius transferri non possit?****"* (5.54, my emphasis). Camillus' heightened emotion and frustration with the Roman people, marked by the expletive *malum*, here mixes with his patriotism and praise of their characteristic Roman *virtus*. While the language of this thought very closely mirrors that of the Latin original, Humboldt elides this clear distinction Camillus draws between the qualities demonstrated by the Roman people (*virtus vestra*) and the divine fortune of the city itself (*fortuna loci*) through possessive modifiers. In line with the thematic development of the poem, Humboldt thus, while acknowledging their separability, reinforces the association of all these qualities with the place itself, instead of seeing that separability as a threat to their continued coexistence as Camillus does. In this way, Humboldt

[10] See, e.g., Rehm 206. Humboldt's adaptation of Camillus' speech from Livy is widely noted in scholarship on the poem; however, it is generally considered solely as a tribute to Schiller following his death in 1805, as he had planned to adapt this moment of Livy into the climax of his own Roman history, thus little attention has been paid to how Humboldt himself engages with Livy's original text and adapts it to suit his own interpretation of the city and its history. For history of the legendary Roman figure and the evolution of his story and its use in political discourse, see Gaertner.

seems to temporalize the spatial-geographic threat Camillus fights, the migration to Veii. For Humboldt, courage and virtue might come and go as the years pass, but this divine fortune resides forever in the ground upon which these changes take place. Yet again, this allusion reaches into the archive of past representations of Rome to strengthen the bonds between the geographical place of Rome and its literary and material history in the poem.

Beginning with this unmarked translation and subtly recasting its ancient argument as a description of the city's relationship to time, the poem thus lays the foundation for viewing the act, and, indeed, the very possibility of refoundation as the thematic focus of the episode. Moreover, Humboldt heightens the authority of this question-turned-statement by embedding it directly in the narrative voice of the poem rather than as a part of the marked quotation which begins in the next stanza. What was once a part of Camillus' rhetorical strategy here becomes one of the underlying assumptions which supports it. As I have outlined below, the individual details and descriptions with which Humboldt builds his account of this famous episode do, individually, cleave quite closely to those of Livy's own. However, the order and arrangement of these details in these stanzas of "*Rom*" depart from Livy's patriotic themes and instead reshape the narrative to exemplify Humboldt's theorization of Rome's relationship to time.

The table below presents Humboldt's stanzas in order, paired with their corresponding passages of Livy:

Als einst von der Gallier Siegerhänden Rom, verbrannt, in Graus und Schutte lag, Und den neuen Aufbau zu vollenden, Es an Muth dem müden Volk gebrach, Wollten sie sich feig nach Veji wenden; doch Camill, der kühne Retter, sprach: "Von der Väter Heerde wollt ihr fliehen? In die Stadt besiegter Götter ziehen?	5.50.8 directly precedes Camillus' speech in Livy and describes the proposed migration to Veii: *His peractis quae ad deos pertinebant quaeque per senatum agi poterant, tum demum agitantibus tribunis plebem adsiduis contionibus ut relictis ruinis in urbem paratam Veios transmigrarent, in contionem universo senatu prosequente escendit atque ita verba fecit.* One of the less direct examples; Camillus alludes to the conquered gods of Veii at 5.52: *An ex hostium urbibus Romam ad nos transferri sacra religiosum fuit, hinc sine piaculo in hostium urbem Veios transferemus? … Iuno regina transvecta a Veiis nuper in Aventino…*
So, Quiriten, traget ihr nur Liebe Zum Gebälk, von Menschenhand erbaut? So umfaßt ihr nicht mit innigerem Triebe Dieser Muttererde süßen Laut? Nein! wenn auch nur jene Hütte bliebe, Die den großen Gründer einst geschaut, Möcht' an's Herz ich diese Oede drücken, Lieber, als den alten Sitz verrückten.	5.54: *Adeo nihil tenet solum patriae nec haec terra quam matrem appellamus, sed in superficie tignisque caritas nobis patriae pendet?* 5.53: *Si tota urbe nullum melius ampliusve tectum fieri possit quam casa illa conditoris est nostri, non in casis ritu pastorum agrestiumque habitare est satius inter sacra*

	penatesque nostros quam exsulatum publice ire?
Oft mit Thränen netzte meine Wangen, Als ich weilte in Ardea verbannt, Hier nach diesen Fluren tief Verlangen, Nach des Tibers altgewohntem Strand, Nach dem Himmel, von dem hold umfangen, Mir der ersten Jugend Blüthe schwand. Daß nicht Sehnsucht trübe unsere Freuden, Laßt uns nie vom süßen Boden scheiden!	5.54: *Equidem—fatebor vobis, etsi minus iniuriae vestrae [quam meae calamitatis] meminisse iuvat—cum abessem, quotienscumque patria in mentem veniret, haec omnia occurrebant, colles campique et Tiberis et adsueta oculis regio et hoc caelum sub quo natus educatusque essem; quae vos, Quirites, nunc moveant potius caritate sua ut maneatis in sede vestra quam postea, cum reliqueritis eam, macerent desiderio.*
Und wer wird den Göttern Opfer bringen, Deren Dienst von unseren Vätern stammt? Deine Schilde wer, Gradivus, schwingen, Wann kein Bürgerheerd mehr wirthlich flammt, Und wo jetzt der Freiheit Kräfte ringen, Ist zur Wüste dann der Markt verdammt? Vesta's Lohe wer zu löschen wagen? Wer auf Feindes Heerd sie frevelnd tragen?	5.52: *Forsitan aliquis dicat aut Veiis ea nos facturos aut huc inde missuros sacerdotes nostros qui faciant; quorum neutrum fieri salvis caerimoniis potest. Et ne omnia generatim sacra omnesque percenseam deos, in Iovis epulo num alibi quam in Capitolio puluinar suscipi potest? Quid de aeternis Vestae ignibus signoque quod imperii pignus custodia eius templi tenetur loquar? Quid de ancilibus vestris, Mars Gradive tuque, Quirine pater? Haec omnia in profano deseri placet sacra, aequalia urbi, quaedam vetustiora origine urbis?*
Fest noch steht die hohe Burg gegründet, Aller Götter Häuser unversehrt. Wem die Brust das Vaterland entzündet, Dem bleibt kein Beginnen je verwehrt. Für die oft in Schlachtenreihe verbündet, Ihr gekämpft mit blutgefärbtem Schwert, Diese wüsten Mauern, o Quiriten, Laßt aufs neue Trotz den Zeiten bieten.”	5.39, in Livy’s narrative voice: *si arx Capitoliumque, sedes deorum, si senatus, caput publici consilii, si militaris iuventus superfuerit imminenti ruinae urbis, facilem iacturam esse seniorum relictae in urbe utique periturae turbae.* 5.53, in the course of Camillus’ speech: *nos Capitolio, arce incolumi, stantibus templis deorum, aedificare incensa piget? Et, quod singuli facturi fuimus si aedes nostrae deflagrassent, hoc in publico incendio universi recusamus facere?*
Und sie wankten zweifelnd hi nund wieder, Da zieht übers Forum Kriegerschaar, Und begeistert schallt es durch die Glieder: "Hier zu bleiben, frommt uns, immerdar! Senket hier der Adler stolz Gefieder!" Und als tönte Götterstimme klar, hört vom Markt man und des Rathes Stufen:	5.55: *sed rem dubiam decrevit vox opportune emissa, quod cum senatus post paulo de his rebus in curia Hostilia haberetur cohortesque ex praesidiis revertentes forte agmine forum transirent, centurio in comitio exclamavit: "Signifer, statue signum; hic manebimus optime."*

"Hier zu bleiben, frommt uns!" alle rufen. (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 39-41)	

The transition into Humboldt's adaptation of Livy connects these stanzas to his earlier engagement with Vergil both formally and thematically. As in the earlier section, the poem steps back into this historical episode with an initial *als,* despite the prior stanza already tacitly inaugurating this as a literary episode. This temporal conjunction looks forward to the events yet to be narrated while also emphasizing the distance of these events from Humboldt's poetic present, further underscored by *einst.* This introduction thus looks both backward and forward in order to transmute this narrative arc into an *exemplum* of the borrowed aphorism in the preceding stanza – that is, in Humboldt's composition, the episode from Livy, from Humboldt's vantage point, supports the claims Camillus' makes within that episode in the manner of a self-fulfilling prophecy. This play of textual immediacy and temporal distance is also reflected in the arrangement of the opening lines of the stanza. Echoing Vergil's description of the already-ruins of the proto-Roman Pallanteum, this *als* likewise calls forth a famous image of a Rome in ruins. In this sense, the Livian episode similarly keeps both the immediate past and potential futures of the Roman people in view, but the tone here is not, as in Vergil, solely one of amazement and anticipation of Rome's inevitable rise, but one of political and temporal crisis.

> Als einst von der Gallier Siegerhänden
> Rom, verbrannt, in Graus und Schutte lag,
> Und den neuen Aufbau zu vollenden,
> Es an Muth dem müden Volk gebrach,
> Wollten sie sich feig nach Veji wenden;
> Doch Camill, der kühne Retter, sprach:
> „Von der Väter Heerde wollt ihr fliehen?
> In die Stadt besiegter Götter ziehen? (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 39)

The ordering of the details in this passage shifts through various points in time, blending past, present, and future in this moment of crisis. In these lines, Rome sits squarely between the victorious hands of the Gauls and the new construction required by plebs (*Volk*) to ensure the city's survival and duration. *Als einst* performs a double duty here as it not only places the entire narrative in Humboldt's past, but describing the Gauls as victorious necessarily also places them in the past relative to the narrative moment of Camillus' speech. On the other side of Rome's name, we find a still past but not yet new/recent *Aufbau,* incomplete due to the *plebs'* plan to migrate to Veii. Between these verses, Rome stands temporally *between* and symbolically *for* both ruins, burnt, in horror and rubble, and the possibility of new structures rising from their ashes. Humboldt also attributes the delay in this rebuilding to a failure of the *Muth* of the weary Roman *Volk*, precisely linking this verse to his translation of Livy's *virtus* as *Muth und Tugend* above. This shift from the formerly victorious (but since defeated) Gauls and the failing courage of weary *plebs* thus come to represent the movable and changeable human components in Rome's history, while the city itself and, ultimately, its fates and fortunes, remain steadfastly in place amidst them. Thus, in rearranging portions of Camillus' speech into this new order and form, Humboldt also explicitly recasts this entire episode as an *exemplum* of his particular

conception of Rome's perpetual relationship to human fate and the possibility of its continued duration through acts of refoundation.

The concluding lines of the stanza finally introduce Camillus, "*der kühne Retter*," both in contrast to the *müde Volk*, but also in a doubled capacity as savior. As in Livy, he has already been praised as a new founder of the city for defeating and expelling the invaders but will soon be recognized as such again by history for his role in preventing the migration to Veii. Camillus' speech in Humboldt's poem begins at the end of this stanza by gesturing toward a tension between the people's relationship to Rome's past, represented by the bucolic image of their fathers' herds, and Veii's divine inadequacies. The very brief allusion to the Latin city's "conquered gods" offers only a hint of the strong religious valence of Camillus' speech in Livy, much reduced in Humboldt's adaptation. As the speech continues, we continue to see this element of the Livian episode eclipsed by Humboldt's own preoccupation with Rome's relationship to a broader concept of history. To develop this Humboldtian thread, the first full stanza of the speech in "*Rom*" heightens tension between the transience of what is built by human hands and the permanence and value land or site of the city itself:

> So, Quiriten, traget ihr nur Liebe
> Zum Gebälk, von Menschenhand erbaut?
> So umfaßt ihr nicht mit innigerem Triebe
> Dieser Muttererde süßen Laut?
> Nein! wenn auch nur jene Hütte bliebe,
> Die den großen Gründer einst geschaut,
> Möcht' an's Herz ich diese Oede drücken,
> Lieber, als den alten Sitz verrückten. ("*Rom*" 39-40)

This stanza essentially inverts the order of two short passages of Camillus' speech in Livy: that contrasting the beams of homes with the notion of a motherland, which comes at the beginning of 5.54, and that referencing the hut of Romulus, which falls at the close of 5.53. While these passages are relatively close to one another in the original and are largely, at least in the brief portions included, faithfully reproduced in German verse, this inversion, alongside several subtle changes, nevertheless extends the gap between Camillus' argument in Livy and the elegy's historical vision.

As with the *Siegerhände* of the Gauls in the previous stanza, the construction of the city they destroyed is likewise rendered in a particularly human, even bodily way by the use of *Menschenhand*. This emphasis on human agency is implied but not as explicitly evoked by Livy's *superficie tignisque*. The contrast between human construction, diminished in importance and reduced to its component materials, and the land of Rome as *Muttererde* is, however, central to both versions, emerging even from Livy's use of the word *superficies,* which conceives of buildings as being *made atop* the land. But while this focus on the land of Rome structures both accounts, the logic undergirding its prominence differs in each, in ways revealed by their treatments of Romulus' hut – the *Casa Romuli,* the perpetually preserved and rebuilt replica of the legendary founder's humble hut, maintained into and beyond Livy's time on the Palatine and Capitoline Hills. Superficially, these two passages are quite similar in sense and structure, but differences in their phrasing and the details they include produce strikingly different arguments by articulating different relationships, different notions of continuity, between this icon of the Roman past and its present.

In Livy 5.53, Camillus' reference to *casa illa conditoris* does necessarily link this sentence and, in the broader context of the narrative, his own recent actions with Rome's legendary foundation. This association, however, appears merely in support of Camillus' larger argument. As the demonstrative *illa* suggests, the dictator's allusion to the *casa Romuli* primarily emphasizes the hut's familiarity, and subsequently its quaint stature, rather than leveraging its connection to the legendary, long-past period of the foundation:

> Si tota urbe nullum melius ampliusve tectum fieri possit quam casa illa conditoris est nostri, non in casis ritu pastorum agrestiumque habitare est satius inter sacra penatesque nostros quam exsulatum publice ire? (5.53.8)

Camillus here poses a counterfactual question regarding the tension between the difficulty and the cultural importance of rebuilding the ruined Rome: "If, in the whole city, it were not possible to make any home better or more spacious than that hut of our founder, is it not enough to live in huts in the manner of shepherds and farmers among our household gods (*penates*) and things sacred to us (*sacra*) than to go into public exile (ie, into exile as a state)" (my translation). Mentioning Rome's legendary beginnings does not serve Camillus' argument because of how impressive it is that Rome has continued to exist since that time. Rather, he asserts that, *even* if the Romans are only able to rebuild such simple and agrarian abodes as that of Romulus, it would *still* be better to stay in the ruins of Rome rather than move to the still-standing Veii solely for the purpose of preserving their proximity to and continuity of Rome's religious sites and rituals. Rome and the Romans remaining *at* Rome is not significant merely a symbol of perseverance and human endurance against the changing times but is a *necessity* to maintain the people's sacred connection to their homes and the gods of the state.

Humboldt's adaptation likewise begins with a contrary-to-fact condition but diminishes the original speech's argument of religious and ritual necessity in favor of generating a sense of duration and temporal continuity. Humboldt's *jene Hütte* directly captures the sense of *illa casa*, and its identity is confirmed by the following line's reference to *der große Gründer,* but the change of the verb in the protasis of this condition from Livy's *possit fieri* to *bliebe* marks a clear shift in relationship of this hut to the present moment of crisis. While Livy's Camillus looks forward to the potential necessity of remaking Rome in the image of this hovel, of returning to a simple, agrarian life to maintain their connection to the religious sites of the city, Humboldt's Camillus instead marvels at the past: "*Wenn auch nur jene Hütte bliebe/ … Möcht' an's Herz ich diese Oede drücken,/ Lieber, als den alten Sitz verrückten.*" The hut no longer represents a primordial state of cultural or architectural development to which the Romans might return to stay Romans, but is imagined as the very kernel, the *sine qua non,* of Rome's existence itself. Thus, the notion that "it would be worthwhile to say even if we must live as Romulus did," becomes, "even if Romulus' hut was all that survived the Gaul's assault, I would press these beloved ruins to my heart rather than upset the ancient seat."

Humboldt's phrase *der alte Sitz* corresponds with the Latin word *sedes*, which appears in Livy's narrative most frequently in the phrase *sedes deorum*, referring precisely to the temples and cult sites of Rome. In replacing the possession of the gods with a gesture toward their antiquity, Humboldt again supplants the religious importance of this moment in Livy in favor of its new role as a symbol of the persistent human habitation of the site since its foundation. In Livy the hut's connection to the city's foundation and its continued maintenance and reconstruction represent the preservation of a Roman culture and identity which is intrinsically

linked to the site of the city. By contrast, Humboldt does not ignore this significance, but subsumes this narrative of refoundation into his broader concept of Rome as that which endures, that which defies the destruction time itself inevitably brings. Refoundation is no longer a means to preserve Roman religious and cultural continuity, but the very essence of continuity, of duration, itself.

Looking ahead, the stanza in which Humboldt engages most closely with the pervasive religious context of the original passage begins in a way which portrays religious and ritual continuity as a minor concern, or even afterthought, to his version of Camillus. This passage echoes Livy's references to the shields of Mars Gradivus and Vesta's eternal flame by name, but is introduced in this relatively late stanza by the phrase "*Und wer wird…*" (Humboldt, "*Rom*" 40). The entire stanza consists of a series of rhetorical questions, continued by the repetition of *wer*, and further intensified by the variation "*Und wo*," at the beginning of its second half. The opening *und* at this point in the speech gives this rhetorical flourish a subordinate or secondary character – it intensifies Humboldt's primary interpretation of the passage, rather than standing on its own. As the citations in the table above show, however, these details are, in fact, drawn from the *earliest* adapted portion of Camillus' speech in Livy. Even before Camillus addresses the Roman *plebs*, his first course of action upon driving the invaders from the city is the restoration of the rites and practices associated with the Capitol (5.50). Structurally, divine concerns comprise fully the first half (5.50-52) of Camillus' speech in Livy, with all political, geographical, and personal arguments coming only after (in 5.53-54) numerous religious objections to the migration have been raised. When the narrative resumes following the set speech, Livy even remarks, "*movisse eos Camillus cum alia oratione, tum ea quae ad religiones pertinebat maxime dicitur,*" "Camillus is said to have moved them with [the rest of his] speech, but what [moved them] most of all is said to be that which concerned religious obligations" (5.55.1, my translation).

The way "*Rom*" condenses and rearranges these elements also elides a quasi-historical argument that Livy's Camillus makes regarding the importance of these rituals and cult practices. The dictator asserts that many of these practices are just as old as, if not older than, the city itself, paralleling, too, Humboldt's reduction of Evander's forward-looking account of the pre-Roman rituals persisting into Vergil's age merely to his *Opfertisch*. In both accounts, the antiquity and religious sites of the city appear and interact as major points in the rhetoric of the speech, but Humboldt inverts their priority to reinforce the thematic core of his poem and his interpretation of Rome. The appearance of Vergil and Livy's texts in the poem thus subsumes religious concerns into a narrative of a spiritually empty Rome which subordinates all individuality and belief to the apparatus of the state. The consequence of this subordination in Humboldt's view, however, is precisely Rome's ability to persist as a human endeavor and institution through time, and thus to reflect human history. In this way, Humboldt's poem attempts to modernize and, at least in a modern sense, secularize the notion of refoundation and its goals, which in the Latin originals is paralleled, and arguably enabled, by patterns and continuities of cult and ritual. For Humboldt, the *fortuna loci* of Rome is not the immovable divine favor of the Roman gods so much as its status as the paragon of laborious, incremental, but unfailing human striving for survival and duration against the passage of time.

In the remaining stanzas in Camillus' voice, Humboldt further integrates this episode and the themes he finds in it into his broader philosophy of antiquity in two key ways. Curiously, perhaps the most faithful portion of Humboldt's adaptation is Camillus' recollection of his recent

exile in Ardea and his childhood in Rome. In both the first half of the stanza and the corresponding Latin, Camillus mentions the Tiber and the milieu of Rome, evoking the opening of Humboldt's poem, as well as his description of his expansive view of world history under the Italian sky in the letter to Wolf. The wistful articulation of Camillus' long personal connection to the city and its site certainly heightens the pathos of his appeal to the *plebs*, but Humboldt's translation of Livy's Latin in the stanza's final couplet finds a second, more subtle purpose for this moment:

> quae vos, Quirites, nunc moveant potius caritate sua ut maneatis in sede vestra quam postea, cum reliqueritis eam, macerent **desiderio**. (5.54.3, my emphasis)

> Daß nicht **Sehnsucht** trübe unsere Freuden,
> Laßt uns nie vom süßen Boden scheiden! ("*Rom*" 40, my emphasis)

Here, Livy's Camillus addresses the present situation (*nunc*) with two possibilities for the Roman future: "may these things (the pleasant and familiar features of Rome and its environs he has just recounted) move you now, Quirites, with their affection so that you remain in your abode (*sede*), rather than vex you with longing (*desiderio*) later, when you have left it" (my translation). Camillus draws on his own experience of exile to describe conflict between two opposing valences of the same feeling for home, for Rome, *caritas* and *desiderium,* affection and longing, corresponding to the two possible actions, *maneatis* and *reliqueritis*, staying and leaving. Humboldt's *daß* clause closely emulates Livy's *ut* and both share a sense of result or consequence, but he shifts the action of the surrounding sentence quite drastically. Livy's Camillus emphasizes the Roman people's own connection to the city itself, relying on their own emotion to drive their decision (*may these things move you with affection*), but Humboldt's issues a direct imperative, a call to action. Thus, when the passage makes its way into German verse, Humboldt's choices integrate Camillus' emotional appeal into the larger philosophical conflict he locates within the fraught unity of classical antiquity as Livy's *desiderium* becomes *Sehnsucht*. In this condensed couplet, Humboldt distills the crisis of the moment into the conflict between immediate action and the possibility of future longing, between active *Streben* and endless *Sehnsucht* for an unrecoverable home. The choice to remain through the act of refounding the city and their commitment to it is presented precisely as an avoidance of *Sehnsucht,* which here, from this Roman perspective, lacks all sense of the divine or the infinite. The Romans, from their position in the narrative, are driven not by longing for the unachievable, but by affection and attachment to the land, the institutions, and, at least in Livy, the gods immediately at hand among the Tiber and the seven hills. By recasting the threat of future longing as *Sehnsucht* in his translation, Humboldt simultaneously transforms Camillus' intervention and the subsequent rebuilding of the city into a clear moment of *Streben*, of earthly action taken to guarantee the survival and duration of the Roman state.

The concluding lines of Humboldt's final stanza in Camillus' voice complete this transformation and, in doing so, make his developing idea of Rome's relationship to time and history even more explicit:

> Fest noch steht die hohe Burg gegründet,
> Aller Götter Häuser unversehrt.
> Wem die Brust das Vaterland entzündet,
> Dem bleibt kein Beginnen je verwehrt.
> Für die oft in Schlachtenreihe verbündet,

Ihr gekämpft mit blutgefärbtem Schwert,
Diese wüsten Mauern, o Quiriten,
Laßt auf's neue Trotz den Zeiten bieten." ("*Rom*" 40-1)

While the first sentence here mirrors several moments found in the Latin (see table above), the remainder of these lines depart most freely from the original of any in this section of the poem. Comparing what is, in essence, a wholesale replacement of the rhetorical climax of Camillus' speech with that of Livy's original highlights both the elements of the original which make the episode so appealing to Humboldt's Roman thought *and* the precise way his adaptation reaffirms the role of Rome in that strain of thought as a symbol for striving and human fate in history. These first two lines, comprising Camillus' observation that *die hohe Burg*, the Roman *arx* and Capitolium, as well as all of the houses of the gods, Livy's *sedes deorum*, have survived the sack of the city thus set the stage for two very different conclusions to the dictator's argument, each stemming from this shared premise.

The ending of the speech in Livy *does* focus on the Capitolium but does *not* start with an explicit assertion of its survival. Camillus' final words instead immediately follow and constitute a direct response to the question of the Rome's immovable *fortuna loci* which Humboldt transposed into his own introduction to this section of the poem:

> Hic Capitolium est, ubi quondam capite humano invento responsum est eo loco caput rerum summamque imperii fore; hic cum augurato liberaretur Capitolium, Iuventas Terminusque maximo gaudio patrum vestrorum moveri se non passi; hic Vestae ignes, hic ancilia caelo demissa, hic omnes propitii manentibus vobis di. (1.54.7)

The rhetorical finale of Camillus' argument against emigration is fittingly structured by repeated emphases on the place itself. The paragraph divides neatly into three independent clauses separated by semicolons in the modern edition, each beginning with *hic*, here, with the final element of this triptych further subdivided into its own threefold repetition of *hic*. While presented separately here, the first two of these sentences in fact refer to one legendary moment of the Roman past, revealed in the *cum* clause of the second: the clearing of the Capitoline for the construction of the temple of Capitoline Jupiter, also known as Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Specifically, Camillus first references the discovery of an intact human head unearthed when the temple's foundation was being laid on the Capitol and then the "refusal" of the temples of Iuventas and Terminus, the gods of men of military age and boundaries, respectively, from being cleared off the hill to make room for the new, larger temple to Jupiter. Livy reports these events in his own authorial voice near the end of the first book of his history, at 1.55, imparting a certain cyclical sense to their invocation here at the close of his first pentad and, more precisely, at a moment of the city's refoundation and reconstruction.

Livy's Camillus thus summarizes the historian's own narrative when he provides a summary of these legends' traditional interpretations, which also seem to comprise the very core of Humboldt's interest in and use for this episode in his own work. Camillus' condensed recounting of the head's discovery elegantly encodes its temporal richness in Latin: "when once a human head had been discovered (past/perfect), it was said (perfect) that in this place will be (the future infinitive of the verb "to be," *fore*) the head of the world and the peak of empire" (my translation). Paralleling the episode adapted from Vergil, Camillus here looks back into the past to a moment which was, in its own time, looking forward to the future and, moreover, does so at a moment in which he, too, is trying to secure a desired future for the Roman people. Likewise,

the subsequent mentions of Iuventas, Terminus, Vesta, and other Roman *sacra*, are summarized in the concluding thought: "here/in this place [are] all of the gods favorable to you, remaining [here]." The omission of form of the verb "to be" in this sentence leaves its temporal sense somewhat ambiguous, indicated primarily in the present participle *manentibus*, which describes "you," the Roman *plebs.* In the context of this sentence, the participle takes on a progressive and a causal or almost conditional sense, that is, the gods there are or will be favorable to the addressees of the speech *while, because,* or *if* they remain at Rome and rebuild the city.

This divine favor, bestowed only *in* and *to* Rome, completes the meaning of the immovable *fortuna loci* alluded to in the immediately preceding sentence. Moreover, what, precisely, the gods supposedly communicated through these auguries and auspices to the Romans in their past is discussed earlier at 1.55 and thus Camillus' allusion grows even more significant, both within Livy and for Humboldt's own interpretation of Rome and its history:

> Idque omen auguriumque ita acceptum est non motam Termini sedem unumque eum deorum non evocatum sacratis sibi finibus **firma stabiliaque cuncta portendere**. Hoc **perpetuitatis auspicio** accepto, secutum aliud **magnitudinem imperii portendens prodigium** est: caput humanum integra facie aperientibus fundamenta templi dicitur apparuisse. Quae visa species haud per ambages **arcem eam imperii caputque rerum fore** portendebat. (1.55.4-5, my emphasis)

The descriptions of the unearthing of the head in this passage match nearly identically with the language in Camillus' speech in Book 5. Livy states that the strange discovery was taken to be *aliud magnitudem imperii portendens prodigium*, another wonder foretelling the greatness of empire, and, in the final sentence, prefigures the precise phrase *caput rerum fore*. Like Evander showing Aeneas sites in ruin that would someday reflect the greatness of Roman power, this inexplicable marvel plants the seed of future might quite literally in the foundations of Rome's past. Moreover, Livy states that Terminus, the god of boundaries, alone of all the gods, refusing to move was taken as a sign that "everything would be secure and steady," *firma stabiliaque,* and at the beginning of the next sentence, the historian glosses this event as *auspicium perpetuitatis*, an omen, or perhaps beginning, of continuity and permanence. Thus, when Camillus offers these omens of the Roman past as part of his argument for the rebuilding and refoundation of the city, he is also reaffirming a commitment to the fulfillment of this divine guarantee of the city's eternal stability and future glory. [11]

Having excavated these layers of allusion and meaning in Livy's text, we can now understand how Humboldt's conclusion does not so much supplant the original argument and its uniquely Roman religious foundations as construct a new, more expansive conception of its significance atop them. While borrowing language more directly from other moments in the Latin, Humboldt's mentioning the survival of *die hohe Burg* and *die Häuser aller Götter* precisely corresponds, too, to the original conclusion's focus on the Capitolium, imagined as the

[11] See Kraus 281 for the significance of this mythological episode and its employment in Livy's episode: "The arguments with which [Camillus] tries to avert such a disaster culminate in a twin appeal to the perfect location of the city in the 'heart of Italy' (*regionem Italiae mediam*, 5.54.4) and to two significant founding gestures – the refusal of Terminus to allow his shrine to be exaugurated and the discovery of the eponymous *caput* in the foundations of the Capitoline temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (5.54.7). Appeals, that is, to the centrality of the *urbs*, whose geographical situation makes it 'just right,' and to the twin powers of head and boundary which define a unity, its center and its periphery; i.e., to the image of Rome as both center of the world and as encompassing that world within its (metaphorical) *pomerium*."

head of Rome, and *omnes propitii di*, all of the gods favorable to the Romans should they remain. As elsewhere, Humboldt strips away the religious implications and extracts the symbolic value bestowed on them at Livy 1.55: they stand for the city as a whole, eternally steadfast and destined for greatness, even beyond any future the ancient Romans could imagine. Humboldt adds to this formula his own assertions of loyalty to the state and military valor, key aspects of Rome's contrast against the freedom and individuality of the Greek city-states: "*Wem die Brust das Vaterland entzündet, /Dem bleibt kein Beginnen je verwehrt. /Für die oft in Schlachtenreihe verbündet,/ Ihr gekämpft mit blutgefärbtem Schwert…*" ("*Rom*" 41). Humbolt's Camillus does not claim that this opportunity for refoundation, this new beginning, stems from an obligation to Rome's divinely ordained fate of eternal greatness, but rather that "no beginning remains forbidden to him whose breast the fatherland inflames." The Roman's drive to preserve his city reflects the subordination of the individual to his identity as a Roman. Moreover, it is thus Rome itself as *patria* which provides the possibility for the new beginning, the continuity through refoundation, around which this speech centers. The military imagery of the following lines continues this trend, as Camillus describes how his listeners have "often fought with bloodstained sword," "*für die oft in Schlacthenreihe verbündet,*" again privileging group identity as a motivating force for the Roman soldier. This second point also further grounds the Romans' striving for the survival and the continuity of their city in earthly action rather than divine decree: the breadth and duration of Roman greatness is won by the sword and purchased with blood.

Humboldt's adaptation leverages these threads of both concreteness and confrontation to produce its ultimate assertion, the rhetorical climax which ties the episode closely to his adaptation of Vergil, and confirms the place of both in his Roman thought: "*Dies wüsten Mauern, o Quiriten,/ Laßt auf's neue Trotz den Zeiten bieten,*" "let these ruined walls, o Quirites, defy the times anew" ("*Rom*" 41). While Humboldt persistently hollows out the religious significance of his allusions to Livy's narrative, he clearly maintains the symbolism with which they imbue this moment in Roman history, depicting this purported refoundation of the city as an assertion of stability and perpetuity. For Livy's Camillus, this notion conforms with Rome's divinely endowed destiny, but for Humboldt, these same ideas are evidence of an ongoing conflict between Rome and a more destructive higher power: time. Likened to soldiers arrayed in their battle lines, the walls of the city, the bulwark separating Rome from not-Rome, stand not only against earthly enemies, but against the destructive passage of time itself. That the walls are at this precise moment *wüsten*, already ruined, but already straining to be rebuilt marks this resistance to the eroding forces of time as *Trotz*, defiance offered *auf's neue*, anew. The building and rebuilding of a city repeatedly reduced to rubble, work of human hands, strives for and, from Humboldt's perspective, achieves Rome's perpetual duration. Rome's status as *die ewige Stadt* is not a timeless, metaphysical, or purely symbolic distinction, but precisely a timely one: its eternity is not an idea, but a perpetually renewed defiance of the destruction wrought by time's passage.

Just as Aeneas and Evander walked among prehistoric ruins as they anticipated the rise of Rome's future greatness, Humboldt's Camillus sees the refounding of the ruined Rome not merely as a duty to their gods and the legacy of their fathers, as an act of preventing the loss of a revered and sacred past, but also more pressingly as an explicit act of securing a future for Rome on earth. Thus, as Humboldt argues through these allusive passages, ruins in and of Rome exceed the conceptual bounds of their expected role as symbols of a lost past and the futility of human achievement against the inevitability of time's passage. Evander and Camillus, Vergil's *conditor*

arcis and Livy's *alter conditor urbis,* both gazing upon and walking among ruins scattered about the seven hills, not only connect Humboldt's "*Rom*" to these famous literary accounts, but also enable the poem, written from the vantage point of Humboldt's own present and his own knowledge of Rome's long history, to elevate refoundation from an ancient literary trope to a world-historical force.

As Miles argues in his article on the conclusion of Livy 5, Livy breaks the mold of the rise and fall of great powers common in prior Greek-style historiography, usually as a "system of natural recurrence," to instead focus on "human initiative" in Rome's history (20). "It is through refoundation," he claims, "that Rome can both survive and grow forever without losing its essential identity" (Miles 22). Immediately after Camillus's speech ends, Humboldt's poem integrates precisely this Livian notion of Rome's potentially endless growth and survival into his longer view of the structure of Roman history:

> Denn als hin das erste war gesunken,
> Blüht' ihn ihr empor ein neues Reich.
> Die durch Blut und Kampf shritt siegestrunken,
> Herrscht nun sonder Schwert- und Lanzenstreich;
> Liebe weckt in ihr die Himmelsfunken;
> Statt des Lorbeers, grünt der Palme Zweig.
> Tod und Knechtschaft hat sie sonst entsendet,
> Segnend jetzt die Welt sich zugewendet. ("*Rom*" 41-2)

Echoing the image of the fallen *Dom* that followed the adaptation of Vergil, this stanza more securely cements Humboldt's conception of the rise of Christian Rome not as a millennium-long rupture between the classical past and the realities of modernity, but as yet another refoundation of the same city, the same earthly, historical entity. On the one hand, this is a stanza defined by contrast: then and now, conquest and love, the laurel and the palm branch, enslavement and blessing; yet, crucially, every pronoun and verb related to or referring to Rome here is singular. Even in this expansive retrospective view, Rome here is not, as it was for Goethe, an unmanageable agglomeration of pasts and presents, new and old Romes. The first sentence assuages this difficulty by distinguishing old and new *empires* from the single place, the feminine *ihr*, likely referring directly back to the prior stanza's final words, "*Stadt der Städte,*" or simply to Rome itself. Likewise, this same singular subject once opposed all, visiting "*Tod und Knechtschaft*" upon the world, yet now turns *toward* the world, blessing it. Humboldt's repeated, sudden transitions from classical Rome to *Roma christiana* extend the narrative of Rome's perpetual refoundation(s) from antiquity, into the present, and, through the image of the ruined *Dom*, even into the future.

Through his adaptations and engagement with Roman literature in this poem, Humboldt hollows out the particular ancient Roman cultural values and religious concerns of these episodes to instead make the *form* of the Roman refoundation narrative the essential identity of Rome in his thought and writing. While this notion of Rome's identity is almost purely formal, again casting Rome as the state *par excellence* against Greece's nation of infinite individuality and divine longing, at the same time, this form is derived from literary productions of ancient Rome. Rome, for Humboldt, embodies not only the earthly limitations of human striving, but even more so represents its absolute necessity as the mechanism by which humanity – and human individuality – repeatedly secures its endurance and duration in the face of time's inevitable

annihilation. This conception elevates Rome's significance beyond its begrudging inseparability from classicism and an idealized Greece and allows it to become *der Spiegel des Weltenlaufes,* offering, in one place and one concept, a higher point of view over humanity's continued striving.

Conclusion – *Der Spiegel des Weltenlaufes*: Reflections & Refoundations

We can now see that the image of the mirror ascribed to Rome above, however, does not connote mere reflection or mimicry for Humboldt, but rather evokes a more complex process of representing ideas. As he describes in the *Theorie der Bildung* essay:

> Dies aber nun würde durch ein Werk, wie das obenerwähnte auf die kräftigste Weise befördert werden. Denn bestimmt, die mannigfaltigen Arten menschlicher Thätigkeit in den Richtungen, die sie dem Geiste geben, und den Forderungen, die sie an ihn machen, zu betrachten und zu vergleichen, führte es geradezu in den Mittelpunkt, zu dem alles, was eigentlich auf uns einwirken soll, nothwendig gelangen muss. Von ihm geleitet, flüchtete sich die Betrachtung aus der Unendlichkeit der Gegenstände in den engeren Kreis unsrer Fähigkeiten und ihres mannigfaltigen Zusammenwirkens; das Bild unsrer Thätigkeit, die wir sonst nur stückweise, und in ihren äussern Erfolgen erblicken, zeigte sich uns hier, wie in einem zugleich erhellenden und versammelnden Spiegel, in unmittelbarer Beziehung auf unsre innere Bildung. (*Werke* 1: 238)

This passage explores the potential of the imagined work on the *Theorie der Bildung* to enable consideration of human development by limiting the scope of our observation. Such a focused and potent study, Humboldt surmises, would isolate a more limited view of human capabilities and their various interactions from amidst the chaos of the undifferentiated mass of objects and facts that comprise reality as a whole. The passage thus describes aesthetic and intellectual movement between the general and particular, the essence and the expression, key to both the development and conception of human *Individualität*.

It is this imagined work that Humboldt describes through the metaphor of the mirror. In this figure of thought, the mirror is a mediator that also produces a sense of immediacy with the object it reflects. This peculiar function renders activity that initially seems unwieldy and disorganized in its *Mannigfaltigkeit* to be recontextualized within a narrower zone of inquiry. The broadest description of the object of this study of human development is the observation and comparison of "*die manifaltigen Arten menschlicher Thätigkeit*." Guided by this influential work, however, observation takes refuge (*sich flüchten*) "*aus der Unendlichkeit der Gegenstände in den engeren Kreis unsrer Fähigkeiten und ihres mannigfaltigen Zusammenwirkens.*" In this metaphorical mirror, that manifold variety no longer describes *types* of human activity but rather the interactions or collaborations of human faculties they display as they are considered among a newer, less human whole: *die Unendlichkeit der Gegenstände*. What is created in this narrower, reflected field of view is *das Bild unsrer Thätigkeit*, which is further distinct from that infinity of objects in a yet more specific way.

Normally, Humboldt suggests, the humanity within human activity is only perceived "*stückweise, und in ihren äussern Erfolgen,"* that is, glimpsed in individual moments where it is expressed within this *Unendlichkeit der Gegenstände*. Here, however, *das Bild unsrer Thätigkeit* reveals itself to us not merely in these discrete expressions but "*in unmittelbarer Beziehung auf unsre innere Bildung,"* united in one image by their direct relevance to humanity's inner, spiritual growth. This immediate connection presents itself curiously "*wie in einem zugleich erhellenden und versammelnden Spiegel*." The simile conveys a more active and transformative mode of representation than mere reflection, describing its subject not with adjectives but with multiple active participles, as the mirror at once (*zugleich*) both illuminates (*erhellen*) and gathers together, or perhaps centers (*versammeln*) the portion of reality it reflects back to its viewer. In this way, Humboldt's mirror seems to physically evoke the *engerer Kreis* of human activity within the *Unendlichkeit der Gegenstände,* and by reflecting just that desired subset of the infinite whole on its defined, limited surface, it transforms a collection of discrete expressions into one *Bild* and thus illuminates the single imperceptible idea which unites these manifold phenomena.

The "higher point of view" which *Bildung* and Rome seem paradoxically to share is thus not defined by the breadth of its scope but by its limits – it is not merely looking over more but looking at everything with a higher purpose. The completeness of the overview it grants is not totalizing, but rather makes conception of *a* completeness possible, collecting and highlighting the human from the chaos of facts, world events, and, as we shall see, of empty, natural time. So, imagined as *der Spiegel des Weltenlaufes,* Rome seems to offer precisely the same shift of perspective with regard to totality of world events, illuminating and delineating all human striving within time's passage into one image, one concept: history. Indeed, the evocative compound *Weltenlauf* refers less to history proper than to its raw material. Revisiting a familiar passage now also brings this word used to describe Rome into contact with both his idea of historiography and his broader educational thought:

> Das ungeheure Gewühl der sich drängenden Weltbegebenheiten … ist ein Unendliches, das der Geist niemals in Eine Form zu bringen vermag, das ihn aber immer reizt, es zu versuchen, und ihm Stärke giebt, es theilweise zu vollenden. … so strebt Geschichte nach dem Bilde des Menschenschicksals in treuer Wahrheit, lebendiger Fülle, und reiner Klarheit. (Humboldt, *Werke* 1: 588-89)

The scholarly challenge outlined in this passage closely mirrors the intellectual problems described above in the *Bildung* fragment. Like the *Unendlichkeit der Gegenstände* within which one could only determine *das Bild unsrer Thätigkeit* when viewed in the brightening and collecting mirror of the *Theorie der Bildung*, the mass of world events, too, is *ein Unendliches* which the mind is unable to bring into one *Form*, one *Bild.* History as both a field of study and an ongoing project *strives* (*strebt*) to bring *das Bild des Menschenschicksals* into fullness and clarity, collected and illuminated, precisely in the manner of *Bildung's* mirror. Rome's role as *der Spiegel des Weltenlaufes* in Humboldt's historical thought thus corresponds precisely to the *Theorie der Bildung* in his educational thought. Rome condenses of the process and struggle of human *Streben* into one place and one object of thought, enabling consideration of the narrower field of human fate and human agency within the shapeless, uncontrollable, destructive *Unendlichkeit* of time itself. The unwieldy, infinite mass of world events directly parallels *Bildung*'s potential infinity of objects, and just as the work of *Theorie* is the imagined key to generating one *Bild* of human activity, so too does this project called *Geschichte* strive *"nach*

dem Bilde des Meschenschicksals" amidst the formless data of the past. While Holzer and others have compellingly argued *that* Rome exceeds this general symbolism to represent a more complex idea of human fate in time, how particularly *Roman* Humboldt's conception of this representation is has gone largely unnoticed.

The language of striving, so closely aligned with Rome in Humboldt's classical thought, cements the link between Rome and history here. The similarity of its operation to the reflection allowed by the work on the theory of *Bildung* suggests that Rome itself is not merely a symbol or epitome of history but acts as a figure which encapsulates an entire theory of history. This theory, I argue, is wholly shaped by Humboldt's particular interpretation of the Roman trope of refoundation and its inherent alignment with his characterization of *Streben* as humanity's basic mode of existing and acting in the world. Despite dismissal of both Greece's own historicity and Rome's classical status elsewhere in these texts, this alignment illuminates the complications and tensions within his classicism by highlighting history's inextricable and supportive role within *Bildung.* As Humboldt writes early in the *Bildung* essay:

> Im Mittelpunkt aller besonderen Arten der Thätigkeit nemlich steht der Mensch, der ohne alle, auf irgend etwas Einzelnes gerichtete Absicht, nur die Kräfte seiner Natur stärken und erhöhen, **seinem Wesen Werth und Dauer verschaffen will.** Da jedoch die blosse Kraft einen Gegenstand braucht, an dem sie sich üben, und die blosse Form, der reine Gedanke, einen Stoff, in dem sie, sich darin ausprägend, fortdauern könne, so bedarf auch der Mensch eine Welt ausser sich. (*Werke* 1: 235)

Here Humboldt outlines the basic drives of human beings, who necessarily stand at the center of all of the forms of activity the essay concerns. He states that the human being, without any specific intention, "wants only to strengthen and increase the forces of his nature and to provide value and duration for his being or essence." While Humboldt elsewhere uses the term *Menschengeschlecht* for the human being, the more diffuse terminology of this passage allows aspects of humanity to stand separately and in tension with one another. Alongside *Natur*, *Wesen* connotes something ambiguously between being and essence and evokes the tension between existence and metaphysical essence. In this way, Humboldt's human is also caught between their nature and essence and their *Dauer,* which parallels closely the relationship the second sentence describes between the ideal and *eine Welt,* a world that Humboldt later glosses as *NichtMensch*. The concept of human nature's duration must necessarily also contain within it the fraught relationship between the idea of humanity and individuals. As an idea can only be expressed and developed through many physically and temporally finite individuals, the idea's extension in time must, therefore, be ever repeated and renewed. Through its refusal to perish, the achievement of its persistent identity and its repeated and repeatable refoundation, Rome thus becomes the sign of this precise form of permanence in Humboldt's thought, a notion of duration which is historical and material but also provides the very ground of possibility for spiritual development.

In the concluding paragraph of the essay, this relationship between *Dauer* and *Bildung* becomes even more textured and explicit in ways which bring Humboldt's educational thought into dialogue with the sort of progressive human striving Rome represents:

> Allein nur, indem man dies schrittweise verfolgt und am Ende im Ganzen überschaut, gelangt man dahin, sich vollkommne Rechenschaft abzulegen, wie die Bildung des Menschen **durch ein regelmässiges Fortschreiten Dauer** gewinnt, ohne doch in die

> Einförmigkeit auszuarten, mit welcher die körperliche Natur, ohne jemals etwas Neues hervorzubringen, immer nur von neuem dieselben Umwandlungen durchgeht. (*Werke* 1: 240, my emphasis)

The tensions between one idea and many individuals sits at the heart of this paragraph, providing the clearest articulation of the problem Humboldt strives to solve in the essay: how the inner development of humanity achieves duration through a regular, progressive movement, without falling into the uniformity of identical, endlessly repeating natural cycles of reproduction. The answer to this question is precisely the image formed by the mirror in the earlier passage: one image of the outer achievements of human activity in direct connection with its spiritual development. The image of the world's course, of human fate in history, in time, which appears in Rome's mirror seems, then, precisely to correspond to the striving which enables this duration to be achieved, the repeated physical refoundations and adaptations of humanity which allow it both to move forward in time and in its own development.

Moreover, Rome's defiance of time's destruction thus also comes to signify a defiance of empty, natural time. History is, in part, for Humboldt "*das Studium der schaffenden Kräfte der Weltgeschichte*," and it is these creative forces which enable human history, the story of humanity's activity in the world, to produce *etwas Neues* in ways that nature cannot (*Werke* 1: 596). These two models of movement *through* time thus also rely on several layered notions of time itself: infinite, empty time which moves ever forward and eventually grinds down everything that exists, the uniformly recurring cycles of nature, which repeat without ever producing anything new, and the successive eras of human striving, gradually defying both destruction and rote repetition through adaptation and refoundation. Building on the quotation above, humanity's continued relationship to the world, to *Nichtmensch*, is not merely conceived of as a series of mortal bodies carrying an eternal spirit, but Humboldt tacitly concedes the world and humanity's varied activities within it are the very ground of possibility for spiritual development, inner *Bildung*. Ironically, then, the *Einseitigkeit* which Holzer asserts as the chief characteristic of Humboldt's Rome, its one-sided obsession with mundane politics and expansion, represents precisely those characteristics of humanity which enable this defiance of natural time's *Einförmigkeit* and, unexpectedly, enables "Greek" *Bildung* itself.

CHAPTER THREE

Kant's Apiary:
Ancient and Modern Problems of Progress
in *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*

Introduction – The Nature of Progress

Kant's 1784 essay *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht* argues for the possibility of considering the total course of human events as if it were subject to natural law. Such a principle, Kant claims, guided by reason, would enable us to hope for, if not to prove, the possibility of regular and rational progress of human institutions throughout history, and thus the possibility of a purely rational society and perpetual peace on Earth. Kant's teleological vision of history, then, involves a rather vexed relationship between reason and nature. Reason, given to mankind by nature, allows humanity to rise above its natural, animal existence, and subsequently to give a sense of order to the sum total of freely willed actions of rational individuals by considering them as if they obey a natural law.

One of the ways Kant suggests that "*ein sonst planloses Aggregat menschlicher Handlungen*" might be seen and represented "*wenigstens im Großen als ein System*"[1] is by reference to a familiar, classicizing sequence of historical epochs:

> Denn wenn man von der griechischen Geschichte – als derjenigen, wodurch uns jede andere ältere oder gleichzeitige aufbehalten worden, wenigstens beglaubigt werden muß – anhebt; wenn man derselben Einfluß auf die Bildung und Mißbildung des Staatskörpers des römischen Volks, das den griechischen Staat verschlang, und des letzteren Einfluß

[1] The notions of aggregate and system and Kant's language throughout the *Idee* regarding making sense of manifold phenomena (such as those of nature) by generating and applying empirical laws closely conforms to that of his critical philosophy and represents a key component of his wider understanding of judgement and experience. See, e.g., *Erste Einleitung in die Kritik der Urtheilskraft*: "Gleichwohl aber bedarf die besondere, durchgehends nach beständigen Principien zusammenhängende, Erfahrung auch diesen systematischen Zusammenhang empirischer Gesetze, damit es für die Urtheilskraft möglich werde, das Besondere unter das Allgemeine, wie wohl immer noch empirische und so fort an, bis zu den obersten empirischen Gesetzen und denen ihnen gemäßen Naturformen zu subsumiren, mithin das **Aggregat** besonderer Erfahrungen **als System** derselben zu betrachten; denn ohne diese Voraussetzung kann kein durchgängig gesetzmäßiger Zusammenhang, d.i. empirische Einheit derselben statt finden" (20: 203).

Kant's application of this paradigm of thought to history here marks a point of contact with the earlier chapters: despite all their striking differences, Kant's *Aggregat* and *System* of history more than superficially resembles Goethe's *ungeheure Stadt* and Humboldt's *Spiegel des Weltenlaufes*. In each case, Rome and its material and cultural remains spring into usefulness at moments when meaning is being created and attributed to a vast, almost inconceivable span of human events, as Kant strives to do in the *Idee*. That this structural similarity persists across distinct genres and discourses speaks to Rome's tropic function in these authors' writing as they grapple with the experience and comprehensibility of the past.

> auf die Barbaren, die jenen wiederum zerstörten, bis auf unsere Zeit verfolgt; dabei aber die Staatengeschichte anderer Völker, so wie deren Kenntniß durch eben diese aufgeklärten Nationen allmählig zu uns gelangt ist, episodisch hinzuthut: so wird man einen regelmäßigen Gang der Verbesserung der Staatsverfassung in unserem Welttheile (der wahrscheinlicher Weise allen anderen dereinst Gesetze geben wird) entdecken. (8: 29)

At first glance, this clear epochal narrative of the *Bildung* and *Verbesserung* of state constitutions, rendered visible through historical practices inaugurated and guaranteed by the methods of the ancient Greeks and proliferated by the conflicts of Romans and barbarians, immediately links Kant's essay to the broader goals of this project. However, apart from a brief and dismissive allusion to Epicurean physics, this is, in fact, the only moment of the essay which touches upon the history or literature of antiquity. Moreover, this penultimate paragraph of the short essay is the only one in which Kant's idea of a purposive history engages directly with anything resembling "*die Bearbeitung der eigentlichen bloß empirisch abgefaßten Historie*," which he concedes in the essay's closing paragraph (8: 30). Yet while this glance at European history and historiography is the essay's only explicit mention of Rome, Kant's *Idee* engages with Roman literature and ideas more subtly and with greater complexity than this classicizing trope suggests.

Far more frequently, in expounding and explaining his complex relationship between reason and nature and its ramifications for his theory of history, Kant makes use of metaphors and analogies that often compare or otherwise link humans to the non-rational animals whose instinct-driven existence they have supposedly transcended. While much has been written about this essay's implications for Kant's broader critical philosophy and his later political writings, such scholarship tends to limit its discussion of these more literary elements and the discussion of nature and animals in the first three propositions. Scholars have thus only rarely explored how these features of the text influence its structure and the narrative of human progress it constructs, focusing instead on what philosophical utility can be extracted from the later propositions divorced from this bizarre or outmoded context. More literary attention to the language of this text, however, shows striking parallels to two ancient works which are also deeply concerned with questions of human progress and the role of human differentiation from non-human nature in these ideas: Lucretius' poetic tract on Epicurean philosophy, *De rerum natura*, and Vergil's *Georgics*, which deliberately borrows from and complicates Lucretius' Epicurean views on human cultural and moral development.

Exploring the parallels between the metaphors and literary features of Kant's text and those found in these prominent Roman engagements with Epicureanism shows how Kant attempts to resolve an old philosophical divide: the apparent incompatibility of human cultural and technological advancement with moral progress. Bringing the *Idee* into this context opens new ways of reading ancient texts whose language and tropes prove to be surprisingly amenable to Kant's Enlightenment project of universal history. Through his particular (and peculiar) notions of nature and history in this essay, Kant makes the case that his providential view of nature's relationship to human reason can unite cultural development and moral perfection in a single historical trajectory. In this way, Kant's essay can be read as responding directly to issues of perspective and temporal conflict that Vergil dramatizes in the *Georgics*.

Superficially, examining linguistic similarities between these temporally and generically different texts seems primarily to support a historicizing claim: "Kant read and adapted, and can thus be said to be influenced by, Vergil's *Georgics* in the course of this writings on world history." Such a claim, however, risks allowing the presence of something putatively classical (the language borrowed from the *Georgics*) and the historical claim of influence to eclipse a far more complex nexus of thematic and literary interactions. Thus, the aim of this essay is not to reveal some cryptic program of Lucretian or Vergilian allusion[2] in Kant's essay, but to explore the literary similarities between these texts in how they respond to Epicurean ideas of humanity's place in and relationship to nature. The *Georgics* variously describes humanity's relationship to nature as harmonious, hostile, stimulating, and exploitative, and Kant's essay seeks broadly to reintegrate all of humanity, as the only species of rational animal, into nature and natural law, but this fraught relationship stands at the core of both texts. While, of the two, Kant's essay is far more obviously and explicitly concerned with history, the surprising similarities in how both texts relate to this central problem of humanity and nature also helps to excavate a marked concern with time's passage from beneath the *Georgics'* meticulously adorned facade of agrarian didaxis. In this way, I conceive of this study not as in exercise of the reception of Vergil in Kant's work, but of their linguistic and literary complementarity as explorations of a shared thematic space: the intersection of humanity's relationship to nature with humanity's experience of time as and in history.

The chapter thus begins with a close analysis of these natural metaphors throughout Kant's text. This reading establishes the importance of figurative language in the coherence and argumentative methods of the essay as a whole. Attention to Kant's literariness then allows us to examine how the tropes, metaphors, and even philosophical terms he uses parallel those found in Lucretius' own account of human development in the *De rerum natura.* These formal and linguistic parallels in turn highlight a stark affective divergence between Lucretius' pessimism about human development and Kant's attempt to construct a more optimistic outlook. The following section then outlines how the *Idee's* literary features respond to this Epicurean

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[2] That said, there is clear evidence that Kant knew the works of Lucretius and Vergil intimately and, perhaps more interestingly, that he assumed his readers did, as well. Kant often provides Latin glosses for technical terms in his work, but also occasionally uses quotations from Latin literature to illustrate or support points of his argument, often in long footnotes. Most obviously, Kant concludes the main text of the second article of *Zum ewigen Frieden* with a direct quotation from Book 1 of the *Aeneid* marked with the poet's name: "*Furor impius intus – fremit horridus ore cruento*. Virgil" (8: 357). Throughout that text alone, however, Kant embeds Latin more quotations from both Vergil and Lucretius without attribution: once from the *Eclogues* (8.27 at 8: 368), once more from the *Aeneid* (6.95 at 8: 379), and once from *De rerum natura* (5.234 at 8: 360). Kant similarly uses yet another quotation from *Aeneid 12* in *Der Streit der Falcultäten* (7:87)*, Aeneid 6* in *Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis* (8: 277), and from *Aeneid 8* in a footnote in the introduction to the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft* (5: 178).

In this last instance, the almost casual manner with which Kant provides an abridged quotation in his note strongly suggests that he assumes his reader possess knowledge of the full quotation and passage from Vergil *and* would understand the relevance of that passage to his point. The note in question describes the inner contradiction produced by desires one might understand to be impossible (and thus whose object could be achieved only through the imagination) and Kant offers an example to illustrate such a wish: "*z.B. das Geschehene ungeschehen zu machen* ***(O mihi praeteritos, etc.)*** *oder im ungeduldigen Harren die Zwischenzeit bis zum herbeigewünschten Augenblick vernichten zu können"* (5: 178, emphasis mine). The full line of Vergil reads, "*O mihi praeteritos referat si Iuppiter annos*" (*Aeneid* 8.560) and does convey just such an impossible wish to change the past. However, only assumed comprehensive knowledge of Vergil among the learned reading public of the time would allow these few (on their own, agrammatical, incomplete) words of Latin to serve as illustration of Kant's example in this manner.

pessimism and how, in doing so, they bring the essay into remarkable similarity with imagery and language found in Vergil's *Georgics*. Finally, a comparative reading of Kant's philosophical essay and Vergil's didactic epic reveals how configurations of various narrative perspectives of experience – human, animal, divine, individual, generational – stand at the heart of their respective outlooks on progress. Understanding how each text addresses the possible rift between the achievement and the experience of progress showcases how Kant transforms this ancient moral problematic to justify his hopeful history of the future.

1 – Figurative Language and Literary Coherence in Kant's *Idee*

The drive to redeem or recuperate Kant's philosophy of history from the perceived failings of its outmoded and outdated scientific underpinnings characterizes much of the scholarship written about *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*. Such readings generally attempt to determine what of the *Idee* is salvageable in light of modern scientific and historical standards and how its propositions and theories can be integrated into Kant's critical works, either in conjunction with the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, with regard to the essay's concern with history's utility for moral progress; or the "*Kritik der Teleologischen Urtheilskraft*," in light of the essay's prominent assertion of a *telos* or purposiveness in nature in general.[33] These approaches often take umbrage particularly with the first three propositions' discussion of innate "*Naturanlagen*," which, Kant states, are "*bestimmt, sich einmal vollständig und zweckmäßig auszuwickeln*" (8: 18). If one asks what of this text might still be useful for 21st-century readers, this underlying theory of biology that flies in the face of Darwinian natural selection poses significant difficulties.

Caranti's "Defending Kant after Darwin: A Reassessment of *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose*" can be taken as emblematic of this approach to the text. In his attempt to answer, among other questions, "whether we have today any reasons to believe the progressive view of history Kant proposes (no matter whether for theoretical or practical purposes)," Caranti explicitly states that his argument "analyzes, criticizes, and discards the first three propositions" of the essay (67). Caranti goes on to assert what he calls his 'Separability Thesis,' which proposes taking Kant's thesis of unsocial sociability (*unsellige Geselligkeit*) and all of its "far-reaching consequences…for human affairs" as "independent of the first three propositions" in order to offer "the most plausible teleological argument one can construct out of the material Kant offers in the essay" (67-8). I have no stake in defending the scientific rigor of the theory of biology developed in these propositions and I acknowledge that the approaches discussed above offer valuable contributions for an analytic engagement with Kant's system of thought (as independent from Kant's text). However, I will argue that the natural images and metaphors employed in these difficult early sections of the essay are crucial for the literary

[3] See also Molina, Watkins, and Zammito. While not explicitly about *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte,* these texts provide excellent discussion and explanation of Kant's conception of nature in his critical writings in many ways that are relevant for a philosophical understanding of how Kant seems to envision nature, organisms, and reason to be connected in our text.

coherence of the text and, through the particular examples Kant chooses, reveal a rich vein of intertextuality with Lucretius' and Vergil's considerations of similar topics.

Even Klein's study of the particular metaphors found in *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte,* "The Use of Metaphor in Kant's Philosophy of History," takes an exclusively philosophical approach to these literary features in the essay. Klein's goal, he states, is to "reconstruct elements of Kant's theory of metaphor and its proper use" and "to investigate whether the metaphors used by Kant are well formulated" (497). Drawing on Kant's rather polemical debate with his former student Herder over "the use of imaginative or poetic language" in philosophy, Klein's analysis of Kant's uses of poetic language focuses on determining how they illustrate what Kant believed was the *correct* use and meaning of metaphor in philosophical writing. Klein thus judges such language and figures of thought valuable but decidedly secondary to "the careful analysis of concepts and justification of principles" they are "intended" to support (Klein 511). Again, this treatment presupposes a fixed and correct meaning of the text, with which any imaginative and poetic language must therefore neatly align.

A literary reading of these figures and features, on the other hand, illustrates that they are not merely tools to render ideas of reason more sensible,[4] but that they, along with the unsatisfying science of the early propositions, are inextricable from the way Kant's essay constructs, complicates, and presents its meaning. This notion is best illustrated by a close examination of two metaphoric programs running throughout *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*: the botanical, and the architectural. The particular ways the essay repeats and develops these two motifs intertwines them at several key moments, reflecting the inseparability of natural capacities and human moral progress in the text.

In the essay's Second Proposition, Kant continues to develop the theory of natural capacities introduced in the First, but adds a complication: "*Am Menschen (als dem einzigen vernünftigen Geschöpf auf Erden) sollten sich diejenigen Naturanlagen, die auf den Gebrauch seiner Vernunft abgezielt sind,* ***nur in der Gattung, nicht aber im Individuum*** *vollständig entwickeln*." (8: 18, my emphasis). This addition echoes the conjecture in the essay's introduction that it is only "*im Großen*" that one could perceive "*einen regelmäßigen Gang"* among freely willed actions of individuals, in the form of "*eine stetig fortgehende, obgleich langsame Entwickelung der ursprünglichen Anlagen [an der ganzen Gattung]*" (8: 17). Kant's further description of this progression at the species level in the Second Proposition introduces a biological metaphor for this development of humanity's rational capacities:

> wenn die Natur seine Lebensfrist nur kurz angesetzt hat (wie es wirklich geschehen ist), so bedarf sie einer vielleicht unabsehlichen Reihe von Zeugungen, deren eine der andern ihre Aufklärung überliefert, um endlich **ihre Keime** in unserer Gattung zu derjenigen Stufe der Entwicklung zu treiben, welche ihrer Absicht vollständig angemessen ist. (8: 19, my emphasis)

This notion of *Keim*, which might be translated as "germ, seed, bud, or sprout," couches the development of enlightenment in the human species in the language of natural plant growth.[5]

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[4] See, e.g., Klein 500.

[5] Regarding the translation of *Keim* as "germ," see Munzel 113, note 52: "The translation of 'germ' for *Keim* (other possible choices being seed, bud, sprout) is intended to convey the active connotation of germination (which a seed

The word appears six times in the essay, not only in these early quasi-scientific discussions, but also in key sections explaining the thesis of unsocial sociability and its implications for a perfect civil constitution on earth. The repeated use of this term, we shall see, works to efface, or at least to complicate, the separation of human cultural developments from natural processes in the essay.

That *Keim* bears some particular significance in this essay is supported by its appearance both in the early explanation mentioned above and in the closing summary paragraphs of the final proposition. In this latter section, Kant explains that civil constitutions and nations are also improved gradually through conflict, and that even when their faults lead to overthrow or revolution, it happens "*so doch, daß immer ein Keim der Aufklärung übrig blieb*" (8: 30). Assuming the presence of a plan of nature in this process, he goes on, "*eine tröstende Aussicht in die Zukunft eröffnet werden, in welcher die Menschengattung in weiter Ferne vorgestellt wird, wie sie sich endlich doch zu dem Zustande empor arbeitet, in welchem alle Keime, die die Natur in sie legte, völlig können entwickelt und ihre Bestimmungen hier auf Erden kann erfüllt werden."* (8: 30). The development of human capacities and cultural institutions, then, is not envisioned as fully distinct from non-human life, as one might expect given the importance of human reason in the essay, but as analogous to the entirely mechanistic and will-less growth of a plant. Thus, Kant integrates humanity into nature in both the content and language of the argument.

Considered in this way, this unexpected alignment is reinforced further by the famous simile of the trees at the end of the Fifth Proposition. This section of the essay concerns the necessity of a civil society and constitution to constrain humanity's unsocial sociability in order to guide it in productive ways for the growth of enlightenment. Describing the benefits of adversity and competition, Kant explains:

> Allein in einem solchen Gehege, als bürgerliche Vereinigung ist, thun eben dieselben Neigungen hernach die beste Wirkung: so wie Bäume in einem Walde eben dadurch, daß ein jeder dem andern Luft und Sonne zu benehmen sucht, einander nöthigen beides über sich zu suchen und dadurch einen schönen geraden Wuchs bekommen; statt daß die, welche in Freiheit und von einander abgesondert ihre Äste nach Wohlgefallen treiben, krüppelig, schief und krumm wachsen. Alle Cultur und Kunst, welche die Menschheit ziert, die schönste gesellschaftliche Ordnung sind Früchte der Ungeselligkeit, die durch sich selbst genötigt wird sich zu disciplinieren und so durch abgedrungene Kunst die Keime der Natur vollständig zu entwickeln. (8: 22)

Just as the potential development of rational capacities is repeatedly compared, if only implicitly, to the growth of a germ, seed, or sprout, here antagonistic individuals within a civil society are

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does not necessarily do) and the wider sense of origin, first principle, and rudiment, beyond that from which something can develop and grow."

In the Fourth and Seventh Propositions, Nisbet translates the word as "dormant state" and "dormant capacity," somewhat weakening the potential presence of this image in the English, but also, in a sense, reflecting how ingrained this natural concept is to the essay's philosophical reflections on human characteristics and capabilities (Kant, *Political Writings* 45; 49).

also explicitly compared to growing trees. The development of the germ does not refer to the same process as the growth of the trees, but rather, it seems, the former is enabled by the latter.

Culture and art, which are distinctly unnatural in the sense that they are, by definition, products of human will and reason, are, following this simile, translated into fruits, products of botanical growth. While one might consider this "metaphor" to be merely a common idiom, its proximity to the simile of the trees reinforces the notion that human achievement in this essay is consistently characterized as a natural process or as the result of one. The near inseparability of these concepts is underscored by the circularity of the final sentence, in which art, just described as the fruit of unsociability, is the mechanism by which the germs of nature, the potential for enlightenment in society, are allowed to develop. In both language and concept, cultural development and humanity's relationship to nature are mutually implicated in the possibility of moral progress that the essay as a whole strives to justify.

The language of this simile is curiously repeated in the following proposition. The trees of the Fifth Proposition, depicted as living, growing organisms,[6] have been reduced and instrumentalized to *Holz*, wood or timber, as Kant remarks that "*aus so krummem Holze, als woraus der Mensch gemacht ist, kann nichts ganz Gerade gezimmert werden*" (8: 24). The verbal echo of "*krummem Holze*" here and trees growing "*krumm*" in the Fifth Proposition supports the reflexive moment at which it falls in Kant's argument. The "nothing" which can be built entirely straight in the quote above refers to "*das höchste Oberhaupt*" required to guide mankind's unsociability to the beneficial end nature intends for it, which, Kant explains, must "*doch ein Mensch sein*" (8: 24). Taken together, then, these passages point toward the essay's "*befremdend*" and "*räthselhaft*" observation that, in order for enlightenment and the human capacity for reason to develop as Kant believes nature intends, it *appears* that human beings must be treated as means to an end – a notion fundamentally at odds with Kant's ethical project (8: 20). This ethical contradiction is avoided or at least ameliorated by the text's heavy emphasis on language of seeming, appearance, and "as if," which makes clear that what is being presented is not a constitutive description of human progress but rather a certain way of understanding or imagining the potential for such progress.[7] What's more, the passage in question from the Sixth Proposition also echoes the earlier metaphor Kant employs to explain the problematic schema of generational improvement in the Third Proposition: that of architecture.

The architectural metaphors of the Third Proposition offer another imagined perspective on how we might understand the possibility for moral development in humanity that is distinct but, I have argued, not entirely separable from the language of natural or botanical growth throughout the essay. Because, Kant says, such development must only be observable at the level of the species as a whole, it appears:

> daß die ältern Generationen nur scheinen um der späteren willen ihr mühseliges Geschäft zu treiben, um nämlich diesen eine Stufe zu bereiten, von der diese das Bauwerk, welches die Natur zur Absicht hat, höher bringen könnten" and, furthermore, "daß doch nur die spätesten das Glück haben sollen, in dem Gebäude zu wohnen, woran eine lange Reihe

[6] See Zammito, "Organism: Objective Purposiveness," for a rigorous account of Kant's philosophy of organisms and organismic organization as grounds for possible knowledge of them.
[7] For two different approaches to this conclusion, see Kleingeld, "Kant on historiography and the use of regulative ideas," and Lindstedt, "Kant: Progress in Universal History as a Postulate of Practical Reason."

> ihrer Vorfahren (zwar freilich ohne ihre Absicht) gearbeitet hatten, ohne doch selbst an dem Glück, das sie vorbereiteten, Anteil nehmen zu können. (8: 20)

The language or building or carpentry discussed above, in *Holze* and *gezimmert*, is prefigured here in the notion that mankind unconsciously works on a *Bauwerk* or *Gebäude* of nature's intention or design, once again confounding the separation of human and natural agency as they concern moral progress.

In these figurative moments, while nature provides the design, humans serve as both the craftsmen and their material, imbuing this proposition's earlier assertion that humanity was meant to produce everything "*gänzlich aus sich selbst*" with imaginative vividness throughout the essay (8: 19). The language of botanical growth implies a sense of immanent development that is guided solely by the nature of the organism, absent even of instinct, whereas the architectural metaphors convey the sense of a lasting institutional progress made of, for, and by human beings. The intersection of these two imaginative programs at key points in the essay suggests that Kant's metaphors need not be seen as only springing up in single moments to render a given rational idea or principle more sensible. Rather, by confounding the boundary between nature's intention and human progress at the level of language, these repeated images perform the argument of the essay as a whole by imagining a narrative of human progress that is compatible with and envisioned as natural law. These metaphors, then, seem together to offer a vision of the kind of story of mankind Kant envisions as a universal history.

What this reading has thus far omitted is the importance of humanity's unique role as the only rational *animal* in the introduction and early propositions. After all, even in the Sixth Proposition, mere sentences before Kant describes humans as being made out of wood, he reminds us that "*der Mensch ist ein Tier, das…einen Herrn nöthig hat*"[8] (8: 24). In the *Idee's*

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[8] Kant's assertion that the human being is not only an animal but more specifically an animal who needs a master, an animal who must be constrained or broken in a variety of ways to fulfill its purpose, points to a fruitful intersection of his essay with contemporary scholarship on the *Georgics* which addresses the absent presence of slavery and slave labor throughout the agrarian settings of the poem. Tom Geue's 2018 article "Soft Hands, Hard Power" and his 2019 chapter "The Imperial Animal" thus provide useful language and concepts to better understand the parallels between Kant and Vergil's work and open Kant's idea of progress to the critiques Geue levels against Vergil's literary world. As both texts concern the efforts and mechanisms of human progress, they might also both be seen to justify forms of violence and subjugation supporting that project by instrumentalizing them, as Kant does through the thesis of unsocial sociability, or hiding them, as Vergil does by omitting the labor of enslaved people from his poem.

In "Imperial Animal," Geue critically deconstructs the "sympathy" the *Georgics* displays through blurring the lines between its human and animal subjects: "blurring this boundary (at least in antiquity) is not necessarily in the interests of either the human or the animal in question. Rather, it can be a crucial ideological bedrock of violence and domination" (103). Geue approaches this problem precisely through the lens of the "domestication" of animals in the poem, which parallels Kant's comment on humanity's animal nature. Geue argues that the "project of 'domestication' applies to both certain animals, and certain humans; and that the erasure of the human-animal boundary is no proto-ecological love-in, but rather a savvy means of sub*jugation*: that is, a way of bringing specific species *under the yoke*" ("Imperial Animal" 12). This rhetorical sleight of hand the in the poem relies on the elevation of a universal "human" above all mere "animal" life, but "as usual, 'the human' is a universalist archetype glossing over, and formed in the image of, a very specific *kind* of man – in this case, the Roman ruling class on their merry imperial mission. It is this universalizing notion of the human that Derrida critiques as a culture gesture of the cannibalistic subject: a subject who performs a kind of symbolic sacrifice by subsuming all individual beings into the category of human" ("Imperial Animal" 104). Despite the comparison here, Kant also moves humans *away* from livestock in his language (see note 21 below), but we might consider how his architectural metaphors simply reconfigure this relationship: humans are both the building and the material, the means and the end, and the unified

introductory paragraphs on methodology, however, Kant invokes two animals which also point directly toward the intersection of architectural and natural imagery in much the same way discussed above. Because human beings act as individuals guided neither by instinct or an overarching providential design, he argues, "*so scheint auch keine planmäßige Geschichte (wie etwa von den Bienen oder den Bibern) von ihnen möglich zu sein*" (8: 17). Alliteration aside, what seems most plausibly to link these two very different animal examples together is their shared depiction as natural *builders*,[9] who, despite their reliance on instinct rather than *Cultur und Kunst*, construct lasting hives and dams together in order to survive as a species. This strange notion of a law-governed history of bees and its connection to the intertwined metaphors discussed above invite us to consider how Kant's particular characterization of humans, by contrast and comparison to other animals, harmonizes the relationship between natural intention and human reason in order to justify his proposed *Idee*. This harmonization, I will argue, is best understood by unpacking several parallels to Lucretius' *De rerum natura* and the later complication of its principles in Vergil's *Georgics*, whose own strange discussion of bees reveals

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"Mensch" in both cases obscures the hierarchical violence of that operation and abstracts it, assigning "*Natur*" the blame for all the hardship and human conflict that must pave the way to perpetual peace and world union.

Geue notes a similar displacement in "Soft Hands, Hard Power," which focuses more closely on the effacement of slave labor in the poem and the way the text performs various degrees of othering. Geue claims that "basic outlines of violent domination may be displaced, or mediated into different forms: farmer over earth; trainer over animal; teacher over student; … even, as we shall see, beekeeper over bees," and notes specifically how the poem "dramatizes their emphatic codification into natural law" ("Soft Hands" 118). We might then question the extent to which Kant's desire to see a specific vision of moral and world-political progress as a product of natural law can be read in a similar light. Furthermore, the bulk of Geue's article focuses on the depiction of Vergil's bees, which we will touch on at the end of the chapter (see also notes 9 and 32 below), and the way they depict an ideal social stratum of displaced "third-person" labor, which diverts our attention "from the impersonal hands behind the production, to the products themselves" ("Soft Hands" 134). Geue's goal in this reading is to break down the argument of the *Georgics'* optimism or pessimism (see note 25 below) and instead ask *for whom* things might be getting better or worse, to whose benefit and at whose cost. While Kant's political and intellectual circumstances, as well as his genre and goals as a writer, stand at immense distance from those of Vergil, the ways his text blurs the human and animal, the animal and master, the builder and the material, raise similar questions as to the work, hardship, and experience underlying his "natural" and optimistic view of human progress.

[9] While this chapter focuses on Kant's relationship to Vergil's famous and peculiar depiction of bees, the trope of comparing human society with the workings of a beehive (both positively and negatively) has a history which predates even Vergil and connects Kant's piece to ancient and contemporary sources beyond the *Georgics*. The characterization of bees as natural builders here immediately draws Kant's account into the context of Aristotle's long description of bees at *Historia Animalium* 623b, which begins by noting the shared property of all bees as making wax combs and which marks bees, like humans, as political animals.

See Abbate for further analysis of this term in Aristotle as it pertains to both humans and bees. See Farrell for a useful list of classical and post-classical appearances of this trope in primary texts, and Lehoux for a comprehensive scholarly bibliography regarding accounts of bees in antiquity.

Farrell focuses on what may be the most famous near-contemporary example of this trope to Kant's *Idee*, Mandeville's 1723 *Fable of the Bees*, which, moreover, Jack describes as representing "one extreme of 'the great corruption debate' of the eighteenth century; the debate, that is, about the relationship between material progress and moral decline" (119). Per Farrell's account, Mandeville does not use bees as an aspirational model for human society but instead chiefly serves to highlight facets of human behaviors in these insects that live like men, in which we might see parallels to Aristotle's description, as well. Many of these comparisons, then, marvel at how bees resemble humans in microcosm rather than imagining how humans might become more like bees, which marks them as quite unlike Kant in my reading.

However, Morley attributes this precise reversal of the comparison to *Roman* engagements with the trope, such as Vergil's, which just as often project contemporary political and military crises onto what they observe of bees' social behavior and organization. Kant, like Vergil and his contemporaries, resists simple anthropo- or theriomorphism and touches on more complex contemporary moral and political question through this connection.

fascinating intersections between Kant's concept of reason and the role of divine agents and perspectives in Vergil's poem.

2 – What Kant Owes to the Ancients

It may seem counterintuitive to connect Kant's essay to two ancient authors who are neither named nor directly referenced in *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*, but the popularity of Lucretius' text in this period, the specific ways Kant engages with Epicureanism in the essay, and several striking parallels between these texts justify bringing them into dialogue with one another. In his article "Lucretius in Eighteenth-Century Germany," Nisbet notes that "the first complete translation of the *De rerum natura* to appear in German was not published until 1784," the same year as Kant's essay, amid tension between the popularity of didactic poetry in Germany at the time, for which Lucretius provides an eloquent model, and the antipathy many felt toward the poem's "rigorously naturalistic explanation of all reality" which naturally flies in the face of any "teleological and Providential views of nature and human history" at the time (115; 117-118).[10] Nevertheless, the ancient poem had something of a moment in the culture of the mid-1780s, with even Frederick the Great describing the text as "his breviary" and carrying it with him on campaign (Nisbet 118). Nisbet goes on to explain that Kant's own engagement with Lucretius reflects these same tensions of acceptance and rejection. In the cosmological section of his early work, *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels* from 1755, Kant "attempts in his preface[11] to dissociate himself from Lucretian materialism and to uphold the doctrine of Divine Providence" but nevertheless "proceeds to explain the solar system by combining Newtonian mechanics with the Epicurean theory of a random concourse of atoms" (Nisbet 118-19). Despite the two authors bearing some fundamental differences in belief, a certain attraction to Lucretius' text and ideas still gripped Kant's writings.

Adler, too, notes that Kant's reception of Epicureanism is distinctly Lucretian, both in his early works and in *Idea for a Universal History*, and the same fraught relationship is detectable in several passages of the *Idee*. In the Seventh Proposition, Kant explicitly invokes "*ein epikurischer Zusammenlauf wirkender Ursachen*" characterized by random collisions and chance

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[10] For a corroborating account of this tension of scientific influence and cultural disagreement, see Johnson and Wilson 147: "…the Lucretian conception of nature as 'accomplishing everything by herself spontaneously and independently and free from the jurisdiction of the gods' was a major driving force in the Scientific Revolution experienced in Western Europe beginning in the early seventeenth century. Over the following three centuries the theory of atoms was converted from a poetic fancy to a well-confirmed empirical hypothesis, the charm, consoling power, and provocation of Lucretius' poem contributing in no small measure to this result. In every field of inquiry, from chemistry to physiology to meteorology and cosmology, the Lucretian rejection of teleology, immaterial spirits, and divine and demonic intervention into the lives of men and the phenomena of nature provided an explanatory ideal, even when it was scorned as inadequate to the phenomena or rejected as a threat to morals, politics and religion" (147).

[11] See Adler 200: "In the *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755), Kant calls attention to the similarity between his own doctrine and that of Lucretius, and indeed his theory could be seen to reproduce, in only somewhat veiled fashion, the most central tenets of Epicurean natural and moral philosophy, despite rejecting Epicurean 'chance' in favor of the regularity and order of a strict determinism."

as a model of historical explanation which he ultimately rejects (8: 25).[12] This idea "that the history of the universe involves a ruinous sequence of chance collisions and formations is a familiar motif of the Epicurean tradition, if not of Epicurus' own extant writings, and is eloquently formulated in Lucretius *De Rerum Natura"* (Adler 212). While this rejected model of history is the only mention of this ancient system of thought by name, the same dynamic of borrowing certain elements of it while rejecting its hostility toward all teleology and providential design is also prominently expressed in the First Proposition's assertions regarding the necessary and certain destiny of animals' natural capacities.

The notion that animals possess naturally predetermined dispositions and capacities, which Caranti and others find so troubling, itself has roots in Lucretius' Epicureanism. In Book 3 of *De rerum natura*, Lucretius describes how the immutable nature of each animal is determined by the particular configuration of various types of atoms in the mind and body of the creature: "*sic tibi nominis haec expers vis facta minutis/ corporibus latet atque animae quasi totius ipsa/ proporrost anima et dominantur corpore toto* | So does this nameless force made of minute/ Atoms lie hid, spirit of spirit, and lord/ Of all the body" (3.280-282; Melville 78).[13] These various elemental particles come together, by chance, "*ut quiddam fierei videatur ab omnibus unum* | in such a way that a unity/ Is made of all" (3.284-285; Melville 78). The passage goes on to explain that the combination of atoms of various types (air, fire, etc) give rise to the disposition of a given species of animal, such as lions, stags, and cows (3.296-306). "*Sic hominum genus est* | So also is it with the race of men," Lucretius explains, that despite differences of experience or socialization, "*illa relinquit/ naturae cuiusque animi vestigia prima* | the character [each] is born with still remains" (3.307, 309; Melville 78). In a later passage, Lucretius reaffirms this idea: "*herbarum genera ac fruges arbustaque laeta/ non tamen inter se possunt complexa creari,/ sed res quaeque suo ritu procedit et omnes/ foedere naturae certo discimina servant* | All breeds of plants, and corps, and smiling woodlands/ Cannot be interbred and woven together,/ But each proceeds on its appointed way/ And by fixed laws of nature stays distinct" (5.921-924; Melville 163). Thus, while the Epicurean conception of nature is fundamentally different, that nature nevertheless determines the individual characteristics of organisms in an immutable way.

As Kant introduces his conception of natural capacities, he retains this immutable natural predetermination, but is careful to distance himself from the Epicurean reliance on chaos and

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[12] Adler also more broadly addresses Kant's orientation toward Epicurus throughout his works, especially in his critical philosophy. Epicurus and tenets of Epicurean ethics are addressed throughout the Second Critique and in a few moments throughout the Third in which Kant addresses Epicurean notions of gratification and causality. Adler traces the ways that Kant rejects Epicureanism as doctrine but nevertheless remains engaged with the ancient philosophy throughout his work in surprisingly positive ways, specifically in how Kant interprets certain tenets as anticipating his own.

This dynamic can also be seen at play in the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, when Kant explains his theory of pleasure relating to a sense of health and physical well-being, he states, "*so daß Epikur, der alles Vergnügen im Grunde für körperliche Empfindung ausgab, sofern vielleicht nicht Unrecht haben mag und sich nur selbst mißverstand, wenn er das intellectuelle und selbst praktische Wohlgefallen zu den Vergnügen zählte*" (5: 331). The notion that Epicurus "misunderstood himself" allows rejection of specific conclusions to coexist alongside the possibility of broader reconciliation or even agreement between these systems of thought, as we see, too, in Kant's use of Lucretius discussed in the note above. For more recent scholarship centering Kant's engagement with Epicurus, see also Molina and Vatansever.

[13] All Latin quotations of Lucretius' text follow Bailey's OCT edition; English is taken from Melville's translation of the corresponding passages.

chance to achieve it. This adaptation of an Epicurean belief lends additional context to Kant's vehement denial of chance at the end of the First Proposition: "*Denn wenn wir von jenem Grundsatze* [of a teleological theory of nature] *abgehen, so haben wir nicht mehr eine gesetzmäßige, sondern eine zwecklos spielende Natur; und das trostlose Ungefähr tritt an die Stelle des Leitfadens der Vernunft*" (8: 18). In both systems, the *result* of natural law remains the same, but the specific mechanisms *of* natural law diverge radically. As he had previously done with cosmology, Kant here constructs his theory of biology through the unlikely union of Epicurean ideas with some notion of providential design, which here takes the form of "*der Leitfaden der Vernunft*." In this way, the most basic assertions of Kant's essay orient themselves in direct opposition to Lucretius' Epicurean materialism. Kant's use of the concept of reason to mediate his adaptation of and departure from Lucretius continues in the Third Proposition.

In this passage, Kant lays out the implications of nature's giving reason to humanity, most prominently: "*[der Mensch] sollte nämlich nun nicht durch Instinct geleitet, oder durch anerschaffene Kenntniß versorgt und unterrichtet sein; er sollte vielmehr alles aus sich selbst herausbringen*" (8:19). Reason, bestowed on humankind alone out of all the animals, distinguishes the process of human development from that of animals, who rely instead on instinct and innate knowledge. Kant's account continues: "*Die Erfindung seiner Nahrungsmittel, seiner Bedeckung, seiner äußeren Sicherheit und Verteidigung (wozu sie ihm weder die Hörner des Stiers, noch die Klauen des Löwen, noch das Gebiß des Hundes, sondern bloß Hände gab) ... sollten gänzlich sein eigen Werk sein*" (8: 19). This passage closely mirrors Lucretius' account of the development of language, which, too, rejects innate *knowledge*,[14] but depicts this moment of human progress as analogous to animal instinct:

> *sentit enim vis quisque suas quoad possit abuti.*
> *cornua nata prius vitulo quam frontibus exstent,*
> *illis iratus petit atque infestus inurget.*
> *at catuli pantherarum scymnique leonum*
> *unguibus ac pedibus iam tum morsuque repugnant,*
> *vix etiam cum sunt dentes unguesque creati.* (5.1033-1038)
>
> For every creature feels the purposes/ for which he can use the power that lies in him./ Before the budding horns sprout from its forehead/ a calf will use them, butting angrily,/ And cubs of panthers and lions fight and scratch/ With feet and claws, and use their mouths to bite/ When teeth and claws have scarcely yet been formed. (Melville 166)

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[14] *at varios linguae sonitus natura subegit*
mittere et utilitas expressit nomina rerum,
non allia longe ratione atque ipsa videtur
protrahere ad gestum pueros infantia linguae,
cum facit ut digito quae sint praesentia monstrent. ...
proinde putare aliquem tum nomina distribuisse
rebus et inde homines didicisse vocabula prima,
desiperest. (5.1028-1032, 1041-1043)

"As for various sounds of speech, 'twas nature/ That made men utter them, and convenience/ Found names for things, rather as we see children/ Driven to make gestures by their lack of speech/ And point with finger at things in front of them; Therefore to think that someone then allotted/ Names to things, and that men learnt words from him,/ Is folly." (Melville 166)

In nearby passages, Lucretius also describes how early humans, spurred on by threats to their survival, discovered sources of food, clothing, and shelter, and this proximity, combined with the close resemblance of Kant's animal counterexamples, suggests that Kant's description is engaging with this Lucretian history of human development, if only to depart and distinguish itself from it. For Kant, the specific self-reflexive and self-reliant characterization of reason, humanity's natural capacity, fundamentally differentiates human survival and achievement from other animals' merely instinctual use of their own natural capacities to survive. By contrast, the passage of Lucretius, in seeing *all*, even human, natural capacities as products of chance rather than some *Leitfaden der Vernunft*, as Kant would have it, has no trouble depicting human progress and animal instinct as subject to the same laws of nature and on the same narrative trajectory.

Kant's rational reimagining of natural law in his *Idee* can be seen in this context as an attempt to rescue human progress and human history from the pessimism with which Lucretius' Epicureanism views cultural development. *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte* does not hide the optimism it wishes to find in its vision of human affairs: both the introduction and the final paragraphs of the Ninth Proposition repeatedly invoke the hope for the future Kant's philosophy of history strives to inspire. This positive outlook also both necessitates and supports Kant's thesis of unsocial sociability and its ultimately beneficial effects. Without this belief in the destined development of reason, Lucretius' account of the hardships and conflicts of human life cannot be redeemed in the same way. For over one hundred lines,[15] Lucretius' conjectural history goes on to describe all the evil and moral decline that arises as a consequence of humanity's continued cultural development. Spurred on by hardship and danger, humanity gradually rises above this natural state, but not without consequences. Ambition and envy rise alongside city and government; fear of death and fruitless labor alongside religion and ritual. "*Quid mirum si se temnunt mortalia saecla/ atque potestates magnas mirasque relinquunt/ in rebus viris divum, quae cuncta gubernent?*" "What wonder," the passage concludes, "if mortal men despise themselves/ And all great and wondrous powers relinquish/ To gods, as governors of all the world?" (5.1238-1240; Melville 172). In the Epicurean model, because all matter and all life are the products of pure chance, any concept of determinism or providence is seen merely as a source of undue concern about an unknowable future – and, moreover, such anxiety over punishment or one's legacy after death exacerbate strife and hardship.[16] However, as we will see, Kant also engages with a famous *complication* of these specific ideas in order to overcome the incompatibility of cultural development and moral progress - namely, their adaptation in Vergil's *Georgics*.

While scholars disagree on the extent and purpose of this intertextual relationship, "the overwhelming importance of Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* for the interpretation of the *Georgics* is recognized by almost all critics" (Gale, "Man and Beast" 414). Vergil's sprawling poem, which presents itself as a didactic poem on various types of agricultural labor, frequently borrows and rejects aspects of Lucretius' work in ways that are analogous and complementary to Kant's

[15] 5.1105-1240

[16] See, e.g.: "But men instead sought after fame and power/ To make a firm foundation for their future/ And live in wealth a life of quiet content - / In vain. Since as they strove to reach the heights/ They made a lonely path beset with danger,/ And from the summit like a thunderbolt,/ Envy struck them down to a Hell of shame" (Melville 168; translation of 5.1120-1126)

project in *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*. Catto notes that, similar to Kant, "while Vergil admires and makes frequent use of Lucretian phraseology, he rejects Lucretius' denial of the providence of the gods" (316). While Vergil's text never adopts the firm optimism for human progress to the degree it is found in Kant's essay, a series of moments in the poem show clear and conspicuous parallels to Kant's argument in ways that offer further insight into how *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte* envisions the relationship between nature and providence in response to Epicureanism and, in turn, offer us new approaches to the *Georgics'* ideas of time, progress, and perspective. Whereas Lucretius derives the origins of cultural advancement from an animal-like state of nature, Vergil draws on a different trope of antiquity, that of a self-sufficient Golden Age in which no labor is required for survival and the earth provides food and shelter to all creatures. In the *Georgics'* telling, this Golden Age is brought to an end by the god Jupiter, whose means and motives, as we shall examine closely below, bear a striking resemblance to those Kant attributes to nature itself in the theory of unsocial sociability. Outlining Vergil's narrative of human development brings illuminating moments of both similarity and difference with Kant's own into focus.

3 – Problems of Providence and Perspective in Kant and Vergil

In contrast to Lucretius' anthropology, Vergil presents his account of the origins of human development in the form of an etiological myth. Curiously, this passage does not explicitly narrate the emergence of society or technology, but rather the concept of work or toil, *labor* in Vergil's Latin. Given the agrarian focus of the poem, *labor* is primarily imagined not only as human work, but as the work of humanity *on* nature – the ways in which humanity distances itself from a hostile and uncaring world while shaping and exploiting it for sustenance, safety, and benefit. While their contents are quite different at first glance, this myth comes into dialogue with both Lucretius and Kant as Vergil narrates this etiology of *labor's* role in the world as a quasi-epochal story of human development:

> … pater ipse colendi
> haud facilem esse uiam uoluit, primusque per artem
> mouit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda
> nec torpere graui passus sua regna ueterno.
> ante Iouem nulli subigebant arua coloni:
> ne signare quidem aut partiri limite campum
> fas erat; in medium quaerebant, ipsaque tellus
> omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat.
> ille malum uirus serpentibus addidit atris
> praedarique lupos iussit pontumque moueri,
> mellaque decussit foliis ignemque remouit
> et passim riuis currentia uina repressit,
> ut uarias usus meditando extunderet artis
> paulatim, et sulcis frumenti quaereret herbam,
> ut silicis uenis abstrusum excuderet ignem. (1.121-135)

The first sentence of this passage explains that Jupiter, called only *pater ipse* here, wills the necessity of *labor* into the world and the second reveals that, in doing so, the god brings an end to a mythic pre-historical period of harmony with nature, a "Golden Age." As Perkell[17] succinctly notes, "the conception of a Golden Age, like that of an apocalypse as well, functions to create a structure in history and therefore an understanding of the context and meaning of present experience," initially for a contemporary audience "unable to foresee the trajectory of Augustan rule or, in a larger sense, the direction of history" ("Golden Age" 10). So, while none of the events related here are "historical," the passage does attribute a historical *sense* to the concept of *labor* as it stands not only for the work of the fields, vineyards, and stables but also as a marker of transition from one putative epoch to another, from pure legend into something closer to the reality of the poet's world. If the trope of the Golden Age gives structure to the idea of history in the *Georgics*, then *labor* gives it direction.[18]

This early section of Vergil's myth, then, even before describing the particular tasks demanded along this new *via colendi*, asserts that *labor* itself betters humanity by the stimulation engendered by its very existence, at least by comparison to the *gravis veternus* of the prior Golden Age, and fundamentally changes humanity's relationship to the world. While still couched in the poem's agrarian trappings, this narrative passage dramatizes this mytho-historical progress in terms which inextricably tie human social and economic development to a growing distance from nature. The shift from perfect tense verbs at the start of the passage (*voluit, movit, passus*) describing Jupiter's intervention to the imperfect (*subigebant, erat, quaerebant, ferebat*) throughout the account of the period *ante Iouem* reinforces this epochal transition, marking a break from "how things *used to be*" caused by "what Jupiter *did*." One might even read a true perfect sense into these early verbs beyond the simple past tense of narration to underscore that this moment not only broke away from this mythic past, but that the terms of this break still abide in the poem's present. Continuing the frequent parallel between *labor* writ large and the working of the earth, the ordering of the terms and phrases referring to the earth over the course of passage play out this return to the Golden Age in language. First, we see the negative description "*ante Iouem nulli subigebant* ***arua*** *coloni*," which pairs the most technical term for earth here, *arvum*, usually meaning specifically arable or ploughed land – land already subjected to *labor* – with explicit language of violent conquest and subjugation at the hands of *coloni* in the verb *subigere*. The indefinite negative *nulli* further casts the conquest of arable land by farmers as the norm *post Iouem*.

As we travel back into the Golden Age, this norm is explicitly undone: "*ne signare quidem aut partiri limite campum/ fas erat,*" it was not *fas* – speakable, right, moral, permitted by divine will – either to mark out or designate a set piece of land (*signare campum*) or to divide it with a boundary (*pariri limite*). In this way, divine will, *fas,* precludes human law, *ius*, conceivable as both the general structuring and enforcement of social order *and* the rules and regulations by which people, space, and property are divided and individuated. Thus, this sentence communicates not only a behavioral change but a semantic one: the prohibition on designation and demarcation not only strips away the conquering farmers from the land but also

[17] See Perkell, "The Golden Age and its Contradictions in the Poetry of Vergil" for a comprehensive examination of how Vergil employs the trope of the "Golden Age" throughout his entire oeuvre.

[18] The following sentences of the passage all begin with temporally oriented words, "*tunc*," "*tum*," "*prima*," and "*mox*," forcefully indicating the sense of progress driving the narrative out of the timeless and self-sustaining golden age into an age of change and development (1.135; 139; 143; 147; 150).

strips away the very words and signs humans project onto it to translate it into farmland to be owned, worked, and exploited by individuals. In the Golden Age, the poet subsequently states, "*in medium quaerebant, ipsaque tellus/ omnia liberius nullo poscente ferebat*." No subject of the verb *quaerebant* is supplied and, because of the impersonal *fas erat* in the intervening lines, the nearest nominative plural is the conquering *coloni*, similarly stripping this professional label from the unnamed human occupants of the land and setting these lines in direct contrast with the life of the farmers and their relationship to the land. The adverbial prepositional phrase *in medium*, "in common," modifying *quaerebant* also reflects a change of these humans' relationships between one another as well, as the divisions mentioned above are not only imposed upon the land, but also reflect a shift from communal efforts into a more individualistic system. What was once held in common is now divided into legally and economically discrete parcels of property and sources of profit. While this dense passage outwardly describes farmwork, the structure of its language and narrative progress ties the broader concept of *labor* to the gradual growth and increase in complexity of human social and cultural institutions, as well. This socio-cultural regression into the Golden Age reaches its completion in the final clause of the sentence, whose subject is *ipsa tellus*, the earth itself. While human actions made the conquered *arva* and demarcated *campum* their direct objects, here the least technically inflected term for earth or ground, *tellus,* takes the grammatical reins, as "the earth itself used to provide everything" (*omnia…ferebat*) both "willingly" (*liberius*), of its own positive agency, *and "nullo poscente*," with no one asking, in the absence of even a softened version of the conquering farmer.

While I have emphasized the implied violence of the *coloni*, a martial characterization prevalent throughout the *Georgics*, the following sentences make clear that human conquest of nature, in the poem's telling, is a just and necessary response to hostility and scarcity and even takes on a more optimistic tone. Jupiter does not change the nature of humans but the natural world itself to accomplish his desired goal, introducing predators, pests, natural disasters, and the dangers of starvation and exposure. No longer willing and forthcoming, nature is suddenly uncontrollable and threatening. The purpose clause "*ut varias usus meditando extunderet artis paulatim*" explains the mechanisms by which these growing threats of nature should stimulate mortal minds, namely by the gradual (*paulatim*) hammering out (*extunderet*) of techniques (*artes*) through reflective experience (*meditando*). While the changes in nature again come in the perfect tense narrative, Jupiter wills that humans sharpen their minds and develop these *artes paulatim*, gradually, giving a sense of progressive action and long duration to the story of the Jovian age and, along with *meditando*, suggesting incremental progress through repetition, trial and error in response to these new challenges. Two more specific examples follow this general expression of purpose, outlining tasks these sharpened mortal minds will undertake. The first twists the communal *in medium quaerebant* into the tedium, in the singular, of searching for one sprout among furrows of crops, representing the need for both cultivation and effort now to find what is useful in nature; and the second responds to Jupiter having "taken fire away" (*ignem removit*) and so requires our singular laborer to "strike out hidden fire from veins of flint." The verb of discovering hidden fire by effort, *excuderet,* calls back to *extunderet*, the hammering out of skills and techniques, two lines earlier, casting this final detail as something of a Promethean moment. Though fire – fire of warmth and shelter *and* fire of knowledge and innovation – was hidden, it can be claimed, and nature can be made useful, through both physical effort and reflective experience.

Despite this somewhat optimistic vision of human dominance over the hostility of nature, the passage reaches a far more ambivalent climax. Vergil's etiological narrative culminates in the famous – and much debated[19] – programmatic lines "*labor omnia uicit/ improbus et duris urgens in rebus egestas*" (1.145). Describing *labor* itself as the conqueror of all things, this axiomatic statement curiously inverts the agency of *subigebant arua coloni*: humanity may define and subjugate nature, but *all things* are at the mercy of *labor* itself. Furthermore, while there is clearly a connection asserted between *labor* and *egestas*, the phrasing of the line leaves ambiguous whether *labor*, in its universal conquest, is the successful answer to *egestas,* "bearing down in hard affairs," or whether they oppress and dominate life in this Jovian age side by side – an ambiguity only intensified by the delayed arrival of *improbus*, wicked, disloyal, morally wrong, as the sole descriptor of *labor* here.

This enjambment, however, encourages us to accept both possibilities simultaneously. On the one hand, what humanity produces and achieves through *labor* is, when managed and practiced properly, capable of overcoming need and necessity, but on the other, the efforts that comprise *labor*, while largely glossed over in this passage, are themselves constant necessities for overcoming scarcity and need and thus for the very survival of human life. Whether *labor* responds to *egestas* or rules alongside it, this paradigm for human life against nature must thus be structured by the cycles of natural time – a motif which emerges throughout the poem, from the passage and repetition of the seasons to larger recurrent sequences of years, stars, and generations. Thus, *labor* can be seen to have two intertwined but ultimately separable elements: the constant, gradual efforts and experiences of toil – the experience of individuals – and the products or achievements of that effort, which in their enduring innovations constitute steps forward for humanity as a whole.[20]

So, despite its seemingly punitive hostilities, this shift from a self-sufficient Saturnian age to a Jovian age of *labor* and *egestas* is not presented, at least not *merely* presented, as a theodicy or a narrative of decline, but also as an impetus to human improvement over time – that is, as human progress. According to Vergil's narrative, Jupiter is not punishing mankind with *labor* but rather seems to see, from his eternal, divine point of view, some intrinsic and positive value in these impositions. Campbell argues that "the obvious reading of this passage is that Jupiter created adversity to engender what Vergil construed a greater good, active intelligence" and "the evolution of a society, somehow superior because of intelligent action to the passivity of the golden age" (569). Here at the inception of work, then, even if only from the god's Olympian perspective, the answer to the question of what good all this *labor* does, raised throughout the poem, is *labor's* world-historical role as the marker and engine of human development.

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[19] In his commentary on this passage, Thomas describes *improbus* as "the most difficult, and perhaps most important, word of the poem" (Vergil, *Georgics* 87). For overviews of the debates surrounding this passage, particularly over the sense of "*labor improbus,"* see Catto 305, note 1; Campbell; Gale, *Virgil on the Nature of Things*, Chapter 5; and Jenkyns.

[20] See Gale, *Virgil on the Nature of Things* 158: "The Latin word itself can connote painful and fruitless toil, as well as perseverance and noble achievement." And similarly, Bovie 341: "On the whole, a distinction is observed, while at the same a connection is preserved, between the complementary visions of effort and achievement. Technique is carefully studied, to be sure, labor writ large on the pages of Vergil's alluring almanac, but technique is viewed as having an end, work as having a result, labor as having its fruition. Means and ends are both held firmly in view by virtue of the poet's manipulation of the labor-opus imagery."

This stimulating role, especially in the way Campbell summarizes it as a drive toward both mental and social development, bears a striking resemblance in its concepts and language to Kant's theory of humanity's unsocial sociability (*unsellige Geselligkeit des Menschen*) in the Fourth Proposition:

> Ohne jene an sich zwar eben nicht liebenswürdige Eigenschaften der Ungeselligkeit, woraus der Widerstand entspringt, den jeder bei seinen selbstsüchtigen Anmaßungen notwendig antreffen muß, würden **in einem arkadischen Schäferleben bei vollkommener Eintracht, Genügsamkeit und Wechselliebe** alle Talente auf ewig in ihren Keimen verborgen bleiben: die Menschen, gutartig wie **die Schafe**, die sie weiden, würden ihrem Dasein kaum einen größeren Werth verschaffen, als **dieses ihr Hausvieh** hat; sie würden das Leere der Schöpfung in Ansehung ihres Zwecks, als vernünftige Natur, nicht ausfüllen. Dank sei also der Natur für die Unvertragsamkeit, für die mißgünstig wetteifernde Eitelkeit, für die nicht zu befriedigende Begierde zum Haben oder auch zum Herrschen! Ohne sie würden alle vortreffliche Naturanlagen in der Menschheit ewig unentwickelt schlummern. Der Mensch will Eintracht; aber die Natur weiß besser, was für seine Gattung gut ist: sie will Zwietracht. Er will gemächlich und vergnügt leben; **die Natur will aber, er soll aus der Lässigkeit und untätigen Genügsamkeit hinaus sich in Arbeit und Mühseligkeiten stürzen, um dagegen auch Mittel auszufinden, sich klüglich wiederum aus den letztern heraus zu ziehen.** Die natürlichen Triebfedern dazu, die Quellen der Ungeselligkeit und des durchgängigen Widerstandes, woraus so viele Übel entsprangen, **die aber doch auch wieder zur neuen Anspannung der Kräfte, mithin zu mehrerer Entwickelung der Naturanlagen antreiben, verrathen also wohl die Anordnung eines weisen Schöpfers**; und nicht etwa die Hand eines bösartigen Geistes, der in seine herrliche Anstalt gepfuscht oder sie neidischer Weise verderbt habe. (8: 21, my emphasis)

While Kant's argument and its central idea of history are inherently forward-looking, as he seeks to open "*eine tröstende Aussicht in die Zukunft"* in which humanity has developed its moral capacities and fulfilled its natural destiny, this passage imagines an alternative to reality that, like Vergil, draws on the trope of a pre-rational Golden Age (8: 30). In this imagined past, "man would live in an Arcadian, pastoral existence of perfect concord, self-sufficiency and mutual love," evoking the very same qualities of Vergil's pre-Jovian Golden Age (Nisbet's translation, Kant, *Political Writings* 45).[21]

The convergence of the *Idee* with the *Georgics* continues as the passage delves into a certain antagonism between *die Natur* and *der Mensch*. Unlike in Vergil's etiology, Kant offers a human perspective on this imagined Golden Age existence and explicitly and repeatedly states that humans, at least individually, would desire and enjoy such a life. In general, Kant states, "*Der Mensch will Eintracht; aber die Natur weiß besser, was für seine Gattung gut ist: sie will Zwietracht.*" The structure of the sentence and the agency it attributes to nature itself, however, point to perhaps the most crucial difference between Vergil's etiological myth and Kant's theory:

[21] Kant even suggests that such an existence would drastically reduce, if not completely efface, distinctions between human and animal: "*die Menschen, gutartig wie die Schafe, die sie weiden, würden ihrem Dasein kaum einen größeren Werth verschaffen, als dieses ihr Hausvieh hat*" (8: 21). This reference to cattle or domesticated livestock draws Kant's Enlightenment theorizing even closer to the milieu Vergil's agrarian epic. The comparison also curiously suggests that, for Kant, the greater value and implied dominance of human over beast of burden, one specific axis of human differentiation from nature, is in no way as morally complex as Vergil allows it to be.

in Vergil, *pater ipse*, a sovereign divine intelligence, *haud facilem esse viam voluit*, for Kant, *Natur will Zwietracht*. In Vergil, an external divinity acts *upon* nature to foster its discord with humanity to stimulate mortal minds through difficulty, but for Kant nature itself introduces discord not between humanity and nature, but *within* humanity, allowing a similar mechanism to play out without the alienation from nature that plagues the inhabitants of the *Georgics*. In Kant, not only is humanity reintegrated into nature, but these Vergilian forces of nature are reintegrated into humanity.

Even despite this critical distinction, the plan of Kant's purposive *Natur* rapidly becomes a paraphrase of Jupiter's in the *Georgics*: "*die Natur will aber, er soll aus der Lässigkeit und untätigen Genügsamkeit hinaus sich in Arbeit und Mühseligkeiten stürzen, um dagegen auch Mittel auszufinden, sich klüglich wiederum aus den letztern heraus zu ziehen.*" *Gravis veternus*, insufferable in Jupiter's *regna*, and the harmony of the Golden Age become *Lässigkeit und untätigen Genügsamkeit* and nature's solutions to this unacceptable torpor are none other than *Arbeit und Mühseligkeiten*, labor and hardship. Both cases then, in Campbell's words, "dramatize the role of divine *pronoia* (providence), suggesting a teleology in the universe repugnant to Epicurean mechanism" (570). Yet, unlike Kant's impersonal *Natur* and his abstract and imperceptible process of unsocial sociability, Vergil's personified god and the poem's pervasive language of conquest and violence make no effort to mask the disturbing notion that providence has intervened in the world to make things *worse*, or at the very least more difficult, in the lived experience of human beings. Nevertheless, wrestling with implications of human free will and moral agency, Kant describes such a plan of nature as evidence of "*die Anordnung eines weisen Schöpfers.*" While Kant carefully distances himself from this claim (*verrathen also wohl*), the union of nature and something like divine providence[22] in the essay provides the foundation for the hopeful optimism which eludes Vergil's mortals, who are divorced from both nature and the timeless perspective of the gods throughout the *Georgics*. By naturalizing human reason and divinizing nature, Kant strives to argue for a convergence of perspectives, a bridge between individual human experience and the Olympian, world-historical view Vergil seems to reserve only for the gods.

Thus, in both cases, some intentional design, whether from a god or nature itself, both introduces and gives purpose to the dangers and toils of human existence in order to drive various axes of human progress in resistance to the randomness espoused by their shared Epicurean underpinnings. Yet, fundamental differences in how each author envisions humanity's place in the natural world produce radically different conceptions of human progress and, more specifically, human *experience* of progress. Kant's argument, by attributing this agency to nature itself, places human development – though *not* the individual experience of human life – in concord with nature and his writing strives solely to justify a perspective vast enough to perceive and project this process indefinitely into the future. By contrast, Vergil's notion of human development, while in some sense still a "gift" of divine providence, remains morally ambiguous and less clear in its purpose. Human success in the *Georgics* is often achieved by domination of, and occasionally overt cruelty to, the natural world.[23] The ways the text confronts these

[22] The near interchangeability of these terms, in concept at least, is further supported by Kant's statement near the end of the Ninth Proposition: "*Eine solche Rechtfertigung der Natur – oder besser der Vorsehung – ist kein unwichtiger Bewegungsgrund, einen besonderen Gesichtspunkt der Weltbetrachtung zu wählen*" (8: 30).
[23] On the ambiguities and contradictions of humanity's relationship with nature in the *Georgics*, see Catto; Campbell; Gale, "Man and Beast;" and Perkell, "The Golden Age and Its Contradictions."

ambiguities often restricts its perspective to the life of an individual and only rarely touches on the optimism a longer or more community-oriented view might offer. Whereas Kant needs his proposed idea of human progress to seem both natural and inevitable, Vergil fundamentally complicates his vision of these ideas with an anxiously recurring suggestion that the project of human progress, imagined as increasing alienation from and exploitation of nature, might fail or be futile.[24] Reading these texts together thus highlights the extent to which both of them present the perceptibility and reality of this progress, often as opposed to the direct experience of the labors and conflicts that supposedly drive it, as a moral and affective problem.

Much of Vergil's apparent pessimism,[25] as well as the ethical hiccups in Kant's idea of history, seem to emerge from a divergence in perspective between the lived experience of the individual and a longer, generational view of the species as a whole, which not only survives but even gradually improves as a result of these cumulative conflicts and hardships.[26] In her interpretation of the poem's sections on breeding, Gale broadly notes:

> "Virgil…implies that mortals in general are wretched, because of their very mortality…but the emphasis in Virgil's version is very much on the misery of the individual, not on the continuity of the species … The problem raised here – whether the suffering of the individual is compensated for by the survival of the race – is one that the poet will come back to in book 4" (*Virgil on the Nature of Things* 177-78).

Beyond this immediate context, the problem Gale posits is endemic to the text and emerges even in the myth of *labor*'s shift from an undifferentiated communal perspective to one of individual struggle. The anxieties over mortality and the seemingly endless demands of *egestas* and nature seem to emerge precisely from the very ethical concerns Kant's proposed idea of history seeks to overcome: how and whether individuals, whose lives are short, can contribute to the improvement of a species that is immortal. Moreover, this problem also highlights a broader difference in the perspectives with which these authors approach humanity. Kant looks at the behavior of both individuals and the human species as a whole from without, as objects of observation, in trying to find his redemptive plan of nature, whereas Vergil, in centering the notion of *labor*, focalizes his text within individual and, more rarely, communal human experiences. What is perhaps even more striking is the similarity to Kant's Enlightenment thought with which Vergil's fourth book, too, offers an alternative point of view which so closely approximates Kant's universalizing perspective: that of bees.

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[24] See, e.g., 3.515-536, 4.485-506

[25] See Zanker regarding the longstanding debates over the pessimism often attributed to Vergil (and certain scholars of his poetry).

[26] The tension between individual experience and a longer, generational view also emerges across Goethe, Humboldt, and Kant's Roman figures, though again in slightly different configurations. Each author attempts to reconcile these perspectives in some way through their Roman moments, as Goethe is confronted and overwhelmed by the perception of their simultaneity, and Humboldt develops his notion of *Streben* from Livy and Vergil to compile human actions into a progressive continuity. Likewise, Kant's language enmeshes itself with the literature and philosophy of the past in order to adapt and address this problematic in his own thought.

Conclusion – Kant's Apiary

Vergil's unexpected and lengthy engagement with apiculture in Book 4 defies any unified sense of characterization or literary purpose. More specifically, what connection the bees bear to the very human issues of time and *labor* throughout the poem, symbolically, metaphorically, or even tonally, is notoriously difficult to pin down. As Gale notes, "the bees are depicted alternately as a paradigm of human society and as remote, alien, and sometimes rather ridiculous creatures" (*Virgil on the Nature of Things* 50). They are at one moment anthropomorphic, at another semi-divine, at a third they are mere insects. However, throughout these various treatments, these tiny and industrious figures touch upon many of the thematic cues and perspectives which held prominence earlier in the poem. From 4.149 to 4.227, the poet enumerates "*naturas apibus quas Iuppiter ipse addidit*," "the characteristics Jupiter himself gave to the bees," immediately bringing this passage into dialogue with the etiology of Book 1. This connection is renewed several lines later when he states that the bees "*in medium quaesita reponunt*" (4.157), echoing the precise language found description of life in the pre-Jovian Golden Age (*in medium quaerebant,* 1.127). These early details already hint at the bees' exceptional status: they derive their nature from Jupiter but, despite some parallels to humans, are miraculously able to preserve certain aspects of life before labor.

Later in the passage, after describing various tasks different bees perform, all driven not by *egestas* but by their shared "*innatus amor habendi*" (4.176), we are told: "*omnibus una quies operum, labor omnibus unus*" (4.184). The repetition of *omnibus* and its collocation with *labor* points conspicuously to "*labor omnia uicit"* at 1.145 at the same time that it juxtaposes *labor* with rest and community rather than violence and individual struggle. Bees are undoubtedly creatures of *labor*, but their peculiar relationship to it precludes many of the ambiguities and anxieties the concept provokes earlier in the text. The possibility of endless cycles of toil is undone by their shared *quies* from their individual *opera* and, moreover, such endless toil would be pursued out of an innate love, rather than by externally imposed hardships and need. Bovie claims that "they represent, of course, a composite figure, not individuals but a species, and demonstrate the collective way of life," rendering the question of an individual versus collective perspective on labor completely obsolete (353). The singular *labor*, reinforced by *unus*, might also work to efface the double meaning of labor discussed above: collectively, they both distribute the effort and share the achievement of their common task.

This collective existence, Vergil claims, also exempts the bees from any meaningful consciousness of or concern for their own mortality and from any perceived worry that individual work and suffering might only be redeemed by the survival of the species. For bees, the individual perspective is subsumed entirely into the communal, even as it relates to time.[27] After noting that bees often hurt themselves or even die while performing their various *opera*, "so great is their love for flowers and their glory at making honey" (4.203-205), the text states:

ergo ipsas quamuis angusti terminus aeui

[27] cf. also Koselleck, *Practice of Conceptual History* 88: "The entire utopia of the future thus lived off points of connection not only in the realm of the fictive but in the empirically redeemable present. In a word, what the future offers is compensation for the misery of the present: social, political, moral, and literary compensation – whatever the sentimental heart or enlightened rationality may desire."

excipiat (neque enim plus septima ducitur aestas),
at genus immortale manet, multosque per annos
stat fortuna domus, et aui numerantur auorum. (4.206-209)

Even more strikingly, perhaps, than their relationship to *labor*, the bee's relationship with death precludes all possibility many of the anxieties of individual experience that plague the *Georgics*. The consideration of one mortal life, *aevum*, against the longevity of the species precisely echoes the broader questions of perspective raised by Gale's observation above. The bees, we are told, like mortals, "are limited by a short span of life," but "their immortal race endures, and the good fortune of their house persists year after year, and grandfathers of grandfathers are counted among them." Vergil never suggests that the human race or even lines of livestock will die out completely – even the famous plague scene in Book 3 is relegated to a faraway land long ago – and, as noted above, humans are sometimes capable of thinking beyond the limits of one life of toil. What stands out here, however, is that this long-term perspective – a capability to see things from the progression of generations and natural cycles rather than from the slipping years and fleeting days of mortal individuals[28] – is the normal mode of their experience rather than the exception.

Notably, there is no notion of the endless or cyclical demands of *labor* in this passage, either. *Manet* and *stat* give a sense of consistent equilibrium and show no signs of the sorts of temporal conflicts or anxieties expressed in earlier passages.[29] The looming question Gale had raised, whether the survival of the race is consolation or compensation enough for the inevitable toil death of the individual,[30] which closely parallels Kant's own ethical concerns, is thus sidestepped entirely. From the unique perspective of these small creatures, no compensation or consolation must be demanded because they approach toil and death a) collectively in every case and b) out of *innatus amor* rather than *labor* and *egestas* imposed from without. Through this strange digression, the *Georgics* does not merely offer didactic precepts on *how* to labor but explores what it means to see *labor* as the defining feature of mortal life and the implications of considering that life from such disparate and, at time, inhuman perspectives – the human, the divine, the natural, the apian.

The ways in which Vergil's bees efface the conflicts of the linear, individual experience of time and the putative infinity of natural cycles and the worries over the possibility of progress and survival in the face of mortality[31] make their perspective not only uniquely remarkable in the world of the *Georgics* but do so in a way which constitutes the very sort of convergence Kant's essay seeks to justify. Vergil suggests that bees possess the active and innovative spirit of Jupiter's age of *labor* yet are driven to these improvements *by their own nature*, rather than by

[28] See esp. 3.66-68: *optima quaeque dies miseris mortalibus aevi/ prima fugit; subeunt morbi tristisque senectus/ et labor, et durae rapit inclementia mortis.*

[29] This sense of stability and equilibrium is of course complicated by the eventual necessity of the *bougonia* later in the book, which presents its own troubles and ambiguities. For readings of this violent ritual, see Perkell, "A Reading of Virgil's Fourth Georgic" 219; and Thomas, "The 'Sacrifice' at the End of the Georgics" 216. If, however, we return to the idea that the text's anxieties about *labor*'s inadequacies are brought to the surface by certain changes in perspective, then the *sense* of immortality can be preserved here, even if the reality of it cannot be guaranteed. Even though the bees are still subject to death and disease, their collective, *labor*-loving mindset, and perhaps their *pars divinae mentis* (4.220), render any sense of fear or anxiety around these issues irrelevant.

[30] See Gale, *Virgil on the Nature of Things* 177.

[31] In this way, Vergil's bees also prefigure Humboldt's differentiation of generational human progress against statically recurring natural cycles addressed in the conclusion to Chapter 2.

danger and necessity, and do so in *concord* with the natural world rather than through its domination. While the bees are anthropomorphized throughout the book, the bees are thus also nonhuman/natural *and* divine. After outlining all of the *naturas apibus quas Iuppiter ipse addidit* (4.149), Vergil notes, "*his quidam signis aqtue haec exempla secuti/ esse apibus partem divinae mentis…dixere,*" that "certain people, by these proofs and having observed these examples, have said that bees possess a share of the *mens divina*," which might be translated as divine mind, intellect, plan, or even reason (4.219-221).[32]

At the end of Third Proposition of *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*, just after the architectural metaphors discussed above and just before the introduction of unsocial sociability, Kant recalls his notions of generational progress and the destiny of natural capacities to formulate a solution to the "puzzling" ethical conundrum of older generations merely being means for the benefit of subsequent eras. He states: "*Allein so räthselhaft dieses auch ist, so nothwendig ist es doch zugleich, wenn man einmal annimmt: eine Thiergattung soll Vernunft haben und als Klasse vernünftiger Wesen,* ***die insgesammt sterben, deren Gattung aber unsterblich ist****, dennoch zu einer Vollständigkeit der Entwickelung ihrer Anlagen gelangen.*" (8: 20, emphasis mine). Kant's description of humanity here (as well as the positive sense of progress it endows) is a nearly verbatim translation of *Georgics* 4.204-209. Other features among Vergil's description of the bees as a sort of perfect "society" within nature are also echoed within Kant's argument, as well: the older bees tend the structure and build it out (4.178-179), their collective task is one, shared by all (4.184), one leader ensures that their shared labor is properly maintained and constrained to productive ends, without whom they would tear down what they have produced (4.212-215).

Following these parallels and verbal echoes, we can see Kant's early reference to a law-governed history of bees not only as an intersection of biological and architectural language in the essay, but as foreshadowing of his characterization of humanity seen through the lens of his optimistic philosophy of history. As Dupré notes, Kant usually refers to the impersonal 'Nature' rather than to Providence" throughout the essay, "thereby reducing…the impression of a superhuman being that intentionally interferes with human decisions" (816). Nature's intention for humanity, enabled by the gift of reason, thus replaces Vergil's bees' share of divine *pronoia*. As Dupré's observation suggests, this substitution allows Kant to imagine such an idealized society without intervention of a supernatural or divine being. While the bees, in some sense, serve to highlight humanity's failure or inability to coexist both morally and peacefully with the natural world in the *Georgics*, Kant's use of the same tropes to describe humans and their

[32] The notion that there is something godly or divine about bees likewise has roots in Aristotle, though in a remarkably different sense than Vergil asserts here. At *De generatione animalium* 761a5, Aristotle states that, unlike bees, wasps and hornets possess "nothing divine" (οὐθὲν θεῖον), specifically as it relates to procreation and reproduction.

In "Why Does Aristotle Think Bees are Divine?" Lehoux critically examines Aristotle's language in this passage and locates precise parallels with other passages regarding divinity and orderliness characterized by qualities like "proportion, magnitude, the number three, order, completion" (403). Aristotle, then, finds something divine about the arrangement and generation of bees, rather than any individual faculty they might possess. So while Vergil also marvels at what he understands to be the orderly, madness-free, and asexual reproduction of bees and Aristotle elsewhere suggests there is something divine in reflective thinking, the Roman's notion that bees possess a higher faculty akin to that of the gods again differentiates his depiction from other instances of this trope and, most importantly here, opens space for the collision and conflation of perspectives that are key to Kant's optimistic conclusion.

simultaneously rational *and* natural capacities enables the "as if" of a law-governed human history.

So, despite the vast differences in language, genre, and in their worlds, Vergil and Kant arrive at their divergent tones and divergent conclusions about human progress chiefly through the adoption and distribution of different perspectives on time and experience in their texts. Kant's rational reconciliation of humanity and a providential, quasi-divine nature thus achieves an optimistic view of humanity's future that is inaccessible to the inhabitants of the *Georgics*, the space of whose experience only rarely surpasses the toil of an individual life. Nevertheless, Jupiter's desire for the gradual improvement of the human mind and human technology, the first push out of the timelessness of the Golden Age, forces humanity to recognize the pregiven times of nature and imagines, if only implicitly and only from an eternal point of view, a horizon of expectation beyond the daily toils of moral experience.

Indeed, the greatest test for Kant's argument, he claims, is not its philosophical validity, but its proof by experience: *"Es kommt nur darauf an, ob die Erfahrung etwas von einem solchen Gange der Naturabsicht entdecke*" (8: 27). Moreover, Kant imagines "such a course of nature's intention," like all natural time, as a cycle: "*Ich sage: etwas Weniges; denn dieser Kreislauf scheint so lange Zeit zu erfordern, bis er sich schließt, daß man aus dem kleinen Theil, den die Menschheit in dieser Absicht zurückgelegt hat, nur eben so unsicher die Gestalt ihrer Bahn und das Verhältniß der Theile zum Ganzen bestimmen kann*" (8: 27). This *Kreislauf* of all human progress is almost imperceptible empirically but becomes intellectually conceivable *if* we can justify the belief that nature and providence indeed have a plan for human reason. By disintegrating any notion of this divine plan from the scope of human experience, Vergil dramatizes this very question of "whether experience can discover a purpose for *labor*" in far more morally fraught and pessimistic ways. The vast cycle Kant hopes structures human moral progress thus transcends the traceable natural cycles which structure life in the *Georgics* by granting humanity a point of view Vergil grants almost exclusively to the gods. Kant's project cannot allow humans, free-willed and morally imperfect as they are, to be gods, but he can hope, at least, for them to become bees.

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