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Nature and the "Dark Pastoral" in Goethe's *Werther*

Heather I. Sullivan
Trinity University, hsulliva@trinity.edu

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Introduction: The Dark Pastoral in Relation to Dark Ecology and the Anthropocene

CELEBRATING THE NATURAL HARMONY of the stream, grasses, and the beautiful wellspring where the peasant girls come to fetch water in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (The Sorrows of Young Werther, 1774), Goethe's eponymous hero embraces pastoral nature with a passion. He partakes in a traditional pastoral setting of rustic, idyllic landscapes rife with "simple" peasant folk, happy children, and agricultural pursuits far from the complexities of urban or courtly life—at least in the first part of the novel. This idealized pastoral framework with its peaceful green hills and valleys appears isolated from—or, more precisely, abstracted from—the urban sites where the authors of such poems and tales inevitably write and where, apparently, corrupted wealthy sophisticates rage political and economic battles. Yet according to ecocritic Terry Gifford, the pastoral trope is actually not so one-sided and simplistic; this literary form encompasses complex, often ironic tensions, including the primary oppositions between the (gritty) urban and the (garden-like) rural, between the always already lost "Golden Age" and a messier present time, between myth and history, and between an overtly artificial "utopia" and concrete "realism," as well as the intentional acknowledgment that the green vision is hyperbolic yet precisely therefore able to provide a social critique through artifice.[1] Even the pastoral's common insistence on avoiding all mention of politics can function as a form of critique, with its utopian, conflict-free zone inevitably suggesting the opposite, much in the way that a utopia can describe a "no-place" that critiques what actually is. The pastoral tensions in these polarities resonate all the more powerfully because they cannot be bridged; their mythic nostalgia can reveal stark contrasts in social, political, chronological, and, most significantly for ecocriticism, ecological terms.

However, the pastoral's capaciousness may not be broad enough to encompass the rupture documented in Goethe's novel through Werther's radical shift from a foundation of agrarian harmony to the unstable grounds of destructive storms and flooding. This shift parallels the text's move out of Werther's solipsistic letters and into a multiplicity of voices describing his downfall. One might thus abandon the pastoral's inherently dualistic artifice

altogether and seek to define some kind of "postpastoral" taking place in the novel; instead, I propose here the "dark pastoral." The dark pastoral builds on Timothy Morton's idea of "dark ecology," which shatters traditional notions of nature as an aesthetic and isolated site to visit or ignore and replaces this outdated vision of nature with a more ecological and postmodern understanding that engages us in every location, regardless of its color or number of trees, with a physical, bodily inevitability as part of the "mesh" of the world that includes us. Morton writes:

> I explore the possibility of a new ecological aesthetics: *dark ecology*. Dark ecology puts hesitation, uncertainty, irony, and thoughtfulness back into ecological thinking. . . . There is no metaposition from which we can make ecological pronouncements. Ironically, this applies in particular to the sunny, affirmative rhetoric of environmental ideology. A more honest ecological art would linger in the shadowy world of irony and difference. With dark ecology, we can explore all kinds of art forms as ecological: not just ones that are about lions and mountains, not just journal writing and sublimity. The ecological thought includes negativity and irony, ugliness and horror.[2]

Dark ecology thus opens up nature to include the full spectrum of the bodily materiality in which every living being exists, and it encompasses also the human discursive and cultural elements as well. There is no outside of this realm; it includes the biosphere, but Morton sees it as also expanding out into the cosmos and, from a more earthly perspective, as embracing cyborg or even robotic, mechanistic "beings"; he uses Ridley Scott's androids in *Blade Runner* as exemplary for the other-than-human. In addition to breaking down these categories, Morton notes how scale is essential for dark ecology: above all, thinking dark in this sense disrupts the human sense of scale, expanding it much like the sublime does into the cosmic and yet also opening it up to the smallest quantum level. In contrast, however, to the traditional sublime that offers an escape from nature's vastness into a perspective from the "outside," and unlike the pastoral's diminutive and contained scale, dark ecology places us fully, and inextricably, in all scales within the mix of the world. Seeing does not mean escaping. And ecological scale is not human scale. Morton's dark ecology, in other words, places us in the mesh of interconnections in a dark but also ecological sense, beyond dichotomies.

From dark ecology comes the dark pastoral; this concept allows us to expand the pastoral trope's oldest dichotomies, that is, the standard urban versus rural or corrupt versus "pure" (a concept that needs to be muddied in ecological conversation), to include a newer and more nuanced version of nature or "nature-culture" that is always impacted by industrial processes and materials. The vast spread of pollutants across the planet since the Industrial Revolution means that efforts to grasp unwieldy scales are particularly essential for understanding the dark pastoral. We reside fully within this vastness exemplified by minute particles. Scale is altered in ecology in manifold directions. Furthermore, there is no metaposition, as Morton notes, for viewing ecology from the outside, nor is there, in contemporary times, an outside of anthropogenic industrial substances. Goethe's *Werther* provides a very early model for the dark pastoral, particularly with its harsh shift from

harmonious nature into dark, stormy nature alongside Werther's shift from Homer to Ossian and from monologue to heteroglossia. Indeed, this novel most appropriately remains under the aegis of the pastoral (rather than some kind of postpastoral), because it maintains the trope's standard erasure of the urban, technological, and politicized realm of economic activity that was rapidly developing in the late eighteenth century with the rise of the modern middle class and the fossil-fueled enrichment of industrial capitalism at the very beginning of what is now termed the "Anthropocene."[3]

Currently being debated among climatologists, chemists, and geologists, as well as cultural critics, the term "Anthropocene" was coined in 2000 by the atmospheric chemist Paul Crutzen and the biologist Eugene Stoermer as a way of describing the spread of anthropogenic industrial particulates across the entire surface of the earth, the alteration of the chemical composition of the atmosphere (particularly the increase of carbon dioxide), the acidification of the oceans, and the large-scale changes to the terrestrial surface caused by agriculture and urban development.[4] This era begins, according to Crutzen, around 1800 or, more specifically, with James Watt's modern steam engine, which was patented in 1781, thus shortly after Goethe's first edition of *Werther* was published in 1774 and shortly before the revision in 1787.[5] Goethe was unaware, of course, that he was documenting the emergence of what we now term "new nature," second nature, or nature-culture—the inseparability of the natural world from human activities—at the very moment when things rather literally began to heat up.[6] However, his works document some inkling of the encroaching changes, specifically expressing concern about the rapid changes in transportation and increase in pace of modern life—famously terming it "veloziferisch" in his correspondence. Goethe also critiques the modern banking system as part of the upswing of capitalism and the growth of the middle class in *Faust II*;[7] and he experiences directly the increased demand for mining (in his Weimar position running the Ilmenau mine, for example)[8] and water control, such as draining swamps and redirecting rivers, during the era that David Blackbourn documents as transformative for German-speaking countries.[9] In sum, Goethe's lifelong efforts to seek out, understand, and describe nature in his literature and science allow us insights into this crucial moment when human activities (extraction and use of energy, development, and increased industry, etc.) begin to have an ever-greater impact not only on specific local areas but across the globe. *Werther*'s dark pastoral documents what we now understand as the beginning of the Anthropocene.

Ecocriticism, the Pastoral, and the Dark Pastoral

For ecocriticism and environmental discourse, the (not dark) pastoral remains a central trope despite some of its problematic aspects, a fact that Greg Garrard delineates in his *Ecocriticism*.[10] Garrard notes that the pastoral envisions its green landscapes as a site of eternal harmony and endlessly repeating cycles, which is now considered an outdated and inaccurate rendering of ecological and evolutionary complexity. Current ecological science rejects this simplified vision and emphasizes instead complexity, "discordant

harmonies," and open systems.[11] A sense of eternal natural order is often used insidiously to portray particular social structures as similarly "eternal" and "natural" and therefore to justify the status of the elite; it has also been used for conservative agrarian politics idealizing *Heimat* (homeland), such as the Nazi ecology.[12] Additionally, the idea of eternal, unchanging nature delineates humanity as "progressive" and separate from the cycles of nature, a position problematically assuming that our physical environment can be treated as mere "resources" to be utilized from an outside position.[13] Garrard's skepticism about the pastoral is hence eminently reasonable.

Yet the pastoral remains widespread in environmental discourses—both scientific and cultural—in part due to its familiar and long-established sensibilities, which date back to the Greek poet Theocritus in the third century BCE and provide concrete depictions of the nonbuilt environment. Its celebration of harmonious life may be simplistic, and its tendency to reduce the world to a small, local scale may be falsely comforting; nonetheless, it also provides a powerful alternative to current economic models that demand unceasing globalizing growth and expansion and express a problematically impractical—if not delusional—vision of "never-ending resources" despite a finite world. There are also other reasons the pastoral continues: its familiar paradigms provide reliable ground for critiquing technological and economic systems, particularly in contrast to more recent alternative ecocritical and environmental discourses that tend to be darkly skeptical and heavily inflected by postmodernism and contemporary science. In formulating the dark pastoral, this essay therefore combines aspects of both perspectives: on the one hand, Gifford's ideas about the ecopastoral and, on the other, the discourses of dark ecology and the Anthropocene.

Although the dark pastoral builds on Morton's ideas of dark ecology and "ecology without nature,"[14] it differs significantly by avoiding his goal of eliminating fully the pastoral impulses so common to environmentalism, including the idealization of nature as the "wild." Morton optimistically assumes that we can actually eradicate such dichotomies so that our perspective opens to the world of the "mesh": "The ecological thought realizes that all beings are interconnected. This is the mesh. The ecological thought realizes that the boundaries between, and the identities of, beings are affected by this interconnection" (*Ecological Thought*, 94). This precise insight, however, is only the beginning, for Morton sees it as significant enough to alter radically our long-held assumptions and visions of nature: "Ecology equals living minus Nature, plus consciousness" (*Ecological Thought*, 19); that is, "Nature" will disappear only if we become aware of its artificial qualities and duplicitous association with specific idealizations reinforcing current economic and political structures. The dark pastoral is not so optimistic as to believe that we can readily eradicate our past and our foolish dreams of peaceful parks—or even that we should, since they are an emblem of hope. Instead, the dark pastoral revels in the full spectrum of pastoral possibilities from the ancient poems of frolicking shepherds to the contemporary and edgy "necropastoral," which includes death, decay, the urban, and the industrial waste of the Anthropocene.[15] The dark pastoral is also about literary form, genre, and voice: rather than seeking to reform "thought" as Morton does in

The Ecological Thought, the dark pastoral asks what spectrum of genres, cultural forms, and types of voices (best) expresses environmental discourses in the Anthropocene.

In posing the question of voices, the dark pastoral links again to Morton by including, potentially, all kinds of voices, such as the nonhuman or "other-than-human," which are explored in the posthumanist animal studies emphasizing how humanity is (but) one of many interrelated species.[16] We are not just talking about pastoral sheep here, but rather, we are contextualizing human beings within the full spectrum of our "co-species," to use Donna Haraway's term, as well as in relation to our other "co-agents" in the world, as I call them. These co-agents include not only all living things but also the active, and even agentic, capacity of matter such as radioactivity and toxins; geophysical forces; and soil, water, air, and nutrients that pass through our bodies and into other bodies. The impacts of these co-agents have been described by Stacy Alaimo as a form of "transcorporeality," in which our inevitably porous bodies interact with matter in ongoing exchanges such as consumption, breathing, waste production, and breast-feeding. Her work is part of the development of the "new materialisms" broadly, and of material ecocriticism specifically, which studies the processes of material-discursive practices in which we develop our physical and cultural environment and that shape us in turn.[17] Building on these material insights, the dark pastoral is therefore a frame for the bodily interactions and co-agency of humans and other-than-humans in the Anthropocene expressed in gritty yet literary and narrative terms. For Goethe's *Werther*, this material breadth of voices and agencies includes nut trees, stormy weather, flooded rivers, ants, and the teeming life of insects at the streamside.

Werther: The Idyllic and Failed Pastoral Becomes the Dark Pastoral

In evaluating Goethe's *Werther* as a dark pastoral, we must first remember how much Werther speaks of "nature" as the location for his insights and as an idealized trope allowing a connection to the divine. His time at Waldheim inspires him to the extent that he declares that his visit there "bestärkte mich in meinem Vorsazze [*sic*], mich künftig allein an die Natur zu halten" (confirmed me in my resolution of adhering in the future entirely to Nature).[18] His version of nature is, at least initially, overtly pastoral. As a member of the ascending bourgeoisie at the beginning of the Anthropocene, however, Werther's efforts to perform the traditional pastoral fail. His life trajectory quickly evolves into something else, something darker: a crisis of class, of social expectations for individuals, and, with most relevance for ecocriticism today, of stormy, disruptive weather flooding the streams, into which he considers leaping. Werther's efforts to uphold a pastoral lifestyle by living outside town, visiting the local well of the village, and eating his peas become an absurd performance, as do his efforts to escape from the mundane economic labor of either the city or the court. His brief quest to share the life of the rural working class is as impossible as is his faith that he can be considered

an equal of the landed gentry at court. Turning to nature as a pastoral retreat does not appear to be a viable option for the middle-class citizen at the beginning of the Anthropocene. Instead, Werther feels himself limited both by troubling human-nature interactions (stomping on ants, felling nut trees, the devastation wrought by floods) and by the oppressive social expectations of all classes. Morton sees the kind of nature worship evoked by Werther as depressing, yet the melancholy of despair evoked, for example, by the felling of the nut tree is nevertheless essential for dark ecology:

> The attitude of Nature worship is like a depressed closeted gay man who insists he is straight. Melancholy has a "sickly" quality of excessive devotion, excessive fidelity to the darkness of the present moment. Yet isn't this excessive fidelity exactly what we need right now? Dark ecology oozes through despair. Being realistic is always refreshing. Depression is the most accurate way of experiencing the current ecological disaster. (Morton, *Ecological Thought*, 95)

In addition to Morton's and Werther's emphasis on despair and depression as reasonable responses to the Anthropocene, our environmental discussions also need the pastoral and its artificial ideals; or, at least, we cannot escape them. The pastoral broadly is a form whose artifice, narrow focus on local place, and dichotomous qualities are still relevant (or, rather, standard) for the twenty-first century. This is an era when the implications of the Anthropocene are becoming clearer daily, even while most of North Americans and Europeans perceive themselves as residing in a good, old-fashioned pastoral realm of the local (despite occupying urban settings that undergird their rural fantasy and that are part of global systems). This perception occludes most, if not all, ecological troubles and is blind to our environmental enmeshment, to not only the positive aspects of food, air, and water but also our daily contact with toxic pollution and other chemicals.[19] The urban pastoral today is fueled by massive extraction of resources, the severe ecological costs of which are radically underperceived. It would thus be premature to abandon the most common view of all, however problematically cheerful it is; one must face up to the pastoral's potency—perhaps even use it for ecological action instead of extending deluded blindness.

As Gifford explains, the pastoral is rife with provocative tensions. It is always and has always been part of a dichotomy: "From the beginning of its long history the pastoral was written for an urban audience and therefore exploited a tension between the town by the sea and the mountain country of the shepherd, between the life of the court and the life of the shepherd, between people and nature, between retreat and return" (3). The pastoral is not a unified category, however; Gifford describes the three kinds we find today, which encompass all kinds of writing. The first is the historical literary form in lyric and drama known for its shepherds and love stories. The second is any literature that "describes the country with an implicit or explicit contrast to the urban"; hence, the "pastoral is usually associated with a celebratory attitude" (2). Third is the pejorative or skeptical use of the term "pastoral" in order to criticize its traditional uses (the first two forms). This third type of pastoral is invoked by scholars when "the difference between the literary representation of nature and the material reality would be judged to be

intolerable by the criteria of ecological concern" or the "difference between the textual evidence and the economic reality would be judged too great by the criteria of social justice" (Gifford 2). Gifford suggests that this kind of (self-) critique of the pastoral's naïveté is itself a form of contemporary pastoral thinking. The dark pastoral fits into this third category of pastoral since such self-critique is found in much of recent ecocriticism and also in new literary forms such as the "necropastoral" in poetry, which highlights death, decay, and toxicity, as well as in other genres and forms, particularly science fiction. Although Goethe's *Werther* predates the kind of ecological concern and social justice issues we discuss today, the novel nevertheless marks an obvious shift from the clearly celebratory attitude typical of Gifford's second category of the pastoral to a more pessimistic response to the world that shares some characteristics with the self-critical third type. While the pastoral tends to maintain its dichotomies, however self-aware and intentionally hyperbolic it is, the dark pastoral more dramatically muddies the waters in terms of how we perceive nature-culture, how we register scale from the minute and local to the global, and which types of voice, agency, and genre are utilized.

Furthermore, the pastoral always has a mythological quality evocative of a past Golden Age, with the result that the pastoral posits itself as a kind of failed ideal ridden with nostalgia and longing for a lost harmony. Already Theocritus's third-century celebration of the "real working context of his herdsmen is actually a glancing back four centuries to the first European literature of country life, Hesiod's *Work and Days*"; yet even Hesiod "also looked back to a mythic idyllic time when for mortal men 'the fruitful earth unforced bore them fruit abundantly and without stint'" (Gifford 17). From its earliest forms, the pastoral translates "a personal nostalgia into a sense of a Golden Age that is given mythic significance" (Gifford 17). Werther's move from love for Homer to love for Ossian thus maintains the mythological aspects of the pastoral but also denotes a quest for a mythological reference point for the emerging middle class in the era we now know as the early Anthropocene. Gifford emphasizes, moreover, that there is humorous irony contained in even the earliest iterations of the pastoral that calls attention to the form's artifice and artful self-critique of assumed intimacy with nature: "This degree of intimate environmental relatedness [in which, e.g., oaks cry a lament], that is clearly understood by the poet, is distanced by the poetic structure and by the hyperbole's hint of humour. . . . The pastoral is on its way, with its strengths and its weaknesses already in tension, its fundamental contradictions established" (18). There is therefore no pastoral without contradictions, tensions, hyperbole, and an artificial nostalgia for a lost realm. The transition into the dark pastoral is not quite as dramatic as it might seem.

Goethe's Werther initially explores pastoral realms infused with aspects of the traditional literary tropes such as innocence, love, simple countryfolk, lush green landscapes, and low population. He delights in the inevitable scene at the well where the pretty girls and children come to draw water; his wellspring lures him in like a "Melusine to water," with the purest water springing from marble cliffs.

> Es vergeht kein Tag, daß ich nicht eine Stunde da sizze. Da kommen denn die Mädgen aus der Stadt und holen Wasser, das harmloseste Geschäft und das nötigste, das ehemals die Töchter der Könige selbst verrichteten. Wenn ich da sizze, so lebt die patriarchalische Idee so lebhaft um mich, wie sie alle die Altväter am Brunnen Bekanntschaft machen und freyen, und wie um die Brunnen und Quellen wohlthätige Geister schweben. (16)
>
> [Not a day passes that I do not spend an hour there. The young girls come from the town to fetch water—the most innocent and necessary employment, but formerly the occupation of the daughters of kings. As I sit there, the old patriarchal idea comes to life again. I see them, our old ancestors, forming their friendships and doing their courting at the well; and I feel how fountains and streams were guarded by kindly spirits. (7)]

This peaceful vision of girls at the well reminds Werther of the "patriarchal" times of yore, when friendships and romance began at this gathering place. He loves the "small" people and especially the children in this idyllic locale: "Die geringen Leute des Orts kennen mich schon, und lieben mich, besonders die Kinder" (18; The poor people hereabouts know me already, and love me, particularly the children, 7). Indeed, numerous scholars thus label the novel an "idyll," with characteristics typical of the pastoral trope.[20] Axel Goodbody analyzes *Werther*'s pastoral qualities specifically in ecocritical terms, emphasizing how Werther describes his delight in Arcadian scenes with a holist sense of nature. Goodbody also notes Goethe's move away from this singular vision into a more complex understanding of nature (that I call the dark pastoral) already in *Werther* but even more so in his later works and science.[21]

In the opening letter of May 4, 1771, Werther revels in solitary and soothing nature far from family and culture:

> Uebrigens find ich mich hier gar wohl. Die Einsamkeit ist meinem Herzen köstlicher Balsam in dieser paradisischen Gegend, und diese Jahrszeit der Jugend wärmt mit aller Fülle mein oft schauderndes Herz. Jeder Baum, jede Hecke ist ein Straus von Blüten, und man möchte zur Mayenkäfer werden, um in dem Meer von Wohlgerüchen herumschweben . . . zu können. (12)
>
> [For the rest, I am very well off here. Solitude in this terrestrial paradise is a wonderful balm to my emotions, and the early spring warms with all its fullness my often-shivering heart. Every tree, every bush is a bouquet of flowers; and one might wish himself transformed into a cockchafer . . . [to be able to] float about in this ocean of fragrance. (6)]

In Werther's bucolic and solitary vision, he is deeply connected to the natural in the form of plants, insects, and lovely scents. In his famous nature immersion letter from May 10, 1771, he similarly lies by a brook in the valley surrounded by trees, the sun filtering through the thick branches only in individual beams, and enjoys the grass and small lives bustling around him. The peaceful, solitary moment both establishes the pastoral mood and also allows him what he believes to be a direct connection with nature as a vehicle for the divine. This fits with Gifford's second kind of pastoral: the celebratory expression of place.

> Wenn das liebe Thal um mich dampft, und die hohe Sonne an der Oberfläche der undurchdringlichen Finsterniß meines Waldes ruht, und nur einzelne Strahlen sich in das innere Heiligthum stehlen, und ich dann im hohen Grase am fallenden Bache liege, und näher an der Erde tausend mannigfaltige Gräsgen mir merkwürdig werden. Wenn ich das Wimmeln der kleinen Welt zwischen Halmen, die unzähligen, unergründlichen Gestalten, all der Würmgen, der Mückgen, näher an meinem Herzen fühle, und fühle die Gegenwart des Allmächtigen, der uns all nach seinem Bilde schuf, das Wehen des Allliebenden, der uns in ewiger Wonne schwebend trägt und erhält. (14)
>
> [When the lovely valley teems with mist around me, and the high sun strikes the impenetrable foliage of my trees, and but a few rays steal into the inner sanctuary, I lie in the tall grass by the trickling stream and notice a thousand familiar things; when I hear the humming of the little world among the stalks, and am near the countless indescribable forms of the worms and insects, then I feel the presence of the Almighty Who created us in His own image, and the breath of that universal love which sustains us, as we float in an eternity of bliss. (6)]

Experiencing small-scale nature as a blissful spiritual retreat and entrance point into the immensity of the cosmos contrasts sharply with Werther's experiences of the social world as limiting in terms of class and personal choices. He famously exclaims that society binds us within awful confines; indeed, he is well known for resisting these restrictions to the extent that he easily loses all sense of bounds between himself and others, and nature or god or art.[22] He declares a sense of horror when viewing the restrictions of all kinds—social, bodily, and otherwise: "Wenn ich die Einschränkung so ansehe, in welche die thätigen und forschenden Kräfte des Menschen eingesperrt sind, wenn ich sehe, wie alle Würksamkeit dahinaus läuft, sich die Befriedigung von Bedürfnissen zu verschaffen, die wieder keinen Zwek haben, als unsere arme Existenz zu verlängern" (22; When I consider the narrow limits within which our active and our cognitive faculties are confined; when I see how all our energies are directed at little more than providing for mere necessities, which again have no further end than to prolong our wretched existence, 9), then he is silenced. His response to this feeling of being imprisoned is, initially, a turn to pastoral nature. Werther's nature appreciation is thus a performance of various pastoral tropes that, however subtly, suggest a world of contrast looming ominously.

Indeed, by invoking the positive pastoral at all, the novel also inevitably registers the idea that the connection to nature is necessarily already lost. After all, since its origins in the Greek idylls of Theocritus, the pastoral formulaically portrays a desired simple life that has always already been and gone (Gifford 15–18). This tension of presence that is already past is a rich one for the novel, and Goethe milks it fully: Werther experiences the wellspring as a connection to the past that he visits but briefly, and the peaceful scenery that seems eternal is transformed in the floods into a lost Arcadia. Werther's pastoral contains both the standard tension of being already a longing for the past and also his own version of its endangered status. His early pastoral functions—in Renato Poggioli's terms—as a "pastoral of the self" that places

faith only in his performance of his own visions and leads to the eventual implosion of his "self."[23] This process is the emergence of the dark pastoral, which the readers experience when Werther ceases his nature revelry and instead proclaims the horrors of nature's destructive powers, in which he participates.

In his August 18, 1771, letter after he has met Lotte's fiancé, Albert, he famously declares that nature is "nichts, als ein ewig verschlingendes, ewig wiederkäuendes Ungeheuer" (108; The universe to me is an all-consuming, devouring monster, 37). He is traumatized by nature's deaths and devastation, which are inevitable and yet to which he also inadvertently contributes. Not only is nature an all-consuming force, but he, too, destroys things with every step: "Da ist kein Augenblik, der nicht dich verzehrte und die Deinigen um dich her, kein Augenblik, da du nicht ein Zerstöhrer bist, seyn mußt. Der harmloseste Spaziergang kostet tausend armen Würmgen das Leben, es zerrüttet ein Fustritt die mühseligen Gebäude der Ameisen, und stampft eine kleine Welt in ein schmähliches Grab!" (106–8; There is not a moment that doesn't consume you and yours—not a moment in which you don't yourself destroy something. The most innocent walk costs thousands of insects their lives; one step destroys the delicate structures of the ant and turns a little world into chaos, 37). The significance of this statement must be stressed: Werther here sets himself up as *part* of the destructive power of nature. Hence, his shifting perspective from pastoral peace to an expression of nature's dangerous power is not so much a repositioning toward the sublime but rather the declaration of participation, of being a co-agent in the world.

Additionally, in his second-to-last letter before the editor interrupts his stream of letters from the night of December 8, 1772, Werther describes how the brook in his beloved valley, which he so lovingly painted with words, is now deluged by stormy flooding:[24] "Ein fürchterliches Schauspiel. Vom Fels herunter die wühlenden Fluthen in dem Mondlichte wirbeln zu sehn, über Aekker und Wiesen und Hekken und alles, und das weite Thal hinauf und hinab eine stürmende See im Sausen des Windes" (194; A terrible sight. The furious torrents rolled from the mountains in the moonlight—fields, trees, and hedges torn up, and the entire valley one deep lake agitated by the roaring wind!, 69). He almost decides to throw himself into this raging river and make even more concrete his acknowledgment of being part of nature's sweeping power.

The typical readings of Werther's changing experiences of nature from bright to dark pastoral mostly emphasize nature as a mere backdrop reflecting Werther's internal state rather than as a bodily, material realm. Dirk Grathoff summarizes how this emphasis tends to take one of two directions: either nature in *Werther* is a reflection of the young man's subjective inner landscape, or else nature and culture exist as opposites. In contrast, Grathoff notes that the novel expresses an "ästhetisierende Naturwahrnehmung" (aestheticizing nature-perception) and, simultaneously, a "kritisch-distanzierend[e] und ironisierend[e]" (critical-distancing and ironizing) perspective; and he concludes that Werther is merely a "tourist" rather than a radical transcender of sorts; that is, Werther never attends fully to nature itself but rather only

celebrates its beauty in a manner more typical of self-aggrandizement than landscape documentation.[25]

This shift in Werther's tone regarding nature has also been read as a move into the sublime. Joyce Walker sees it as part of the dialectic between the beautiful and the sublime, with the sublime being a turn toward violence.[26] By contrast, Gerhard Plumpe describes it as a failure to resonate either with art or with sublime nature, both of which he considers mediators between the individual wishing to communicate and various outside systems. Hence, for Plumpe, Werther's failure results in an inability to go beyond the "self."[27] Clark Muenzer, however, reads the move as a more literal step into sublimity, one in which the final embrace of death is Werther's performance of himself as Christlike, which ends in a successful transcendence of the self.[28] Considering Werther's shifting view of nature as a move into the sublime helps us understand the significance of his development, but by utilizing the frame of the dark pastoral we note that this is also a darker sublime, one that does not allow the possibility of occupying an external position from which to view or overcome nature. The standard sublime implies just such an externalization and separation; that is, it evokes the metaposition outside nature that Morton insightfully rejects and that Goethe's novel places into question. Such a metaposition is not possible ecologically, nor does it hold up in *Werther*. This is exactly what the dark pastoral emphasizes: a full bodily immersion and co-agency in the materiality of water, storms, peas, and the effects of felling trees. The interpretations emphasizing the sublime in Goethe's novel capture a sense of the shift in Werther's views of nature but tend to overlook Werther's sense of himself as part of the violence, as integrated into nature rather than outside it. Focusing on the sublime can also mean neglecting the question of the novel's altered path out of the singular voice of the monological epistolary into different forms and voices, that is, the heteroglossia so significant for the dark pastoral.

Bruce Duncan, in contrast, sees not a singular shift in Werther's choices but rather an ongoing series of similar failures in asserting various forms of self-identity, each one derived from a projection of the world that inevitably collapses along with each iteration of his self-perception.[29] Werther projects himself into a mystical communion with "nature" in the famous May 10 letter, yet Duncan notes the irony of this failed "idyll" that Werther simultaneously claims as his and yet denies for himself. In contrast to Duncan's ultimate divide that Werther never bridges, Hans Peter Herrmann describes Werther's relationship to *Landschaft* (landscape) as a reconciliation, in that nature is no longer the traditional "object" but rather transformed into an active subject ("die Natur ist zum handelnden Subjekt geworden. Der Mensch ist allerdings jetzt nicht mehr einfach Objekt . . ., sondern Schauplatz" [Nature has become the active subject. The human being is now, however, now longer simply object . . . but rather stage]).[30] Although Herrmann describes this change in nature's role positively, he notes that Goethe himself is skeptical regarding an idyll that exists only in terms of an overtly fictional subjectivity. In short, Herrmann and Duncan see Werther's pastoral landscape as inherently artificial and bound up in his troubled grappling with subjectivity. The problems of the idyll that they identify emerging from a performed pastoral

and a fantasized image of selfhood help us understand the novel's complex portrayal of bourgeois subjectivity in its changing landscapes. Yet these interpretations do not fully connect the troubled idyll with the novel's significant move out of a singular perspective and subjectivity and into multiple voices, as I seek to do with this study of the dark pastoral. Without linking Werther's various views on nature to the novel's play with form, our understanding of nature remains essentially a pastoral (in the traditional sense) exercise. Instead, this essay addresses nature in terms of the dark pastoral, in other words, as something that is as much about particular green locations as it is about genre, agencies, and voice—and about participation in destruction.

It is thus essential to note that Werther's final demise occurs not with a tragic leap into nature's stormy floods or with a clear embrace of the "sublime" presented to the reader solely through his voice, but instead with a dramatic shift to a mediated plurality of voices and forms, including finally the actual language used in the letter Goethe received from his friend Johann Christian Kestner describing the suicide of Karl Wilhelm Jerusalem in 1772.[31] We thus find here a parallel: the personal, individualized pastoral celebrations of fields and trees shift into the dark pastoral of storms and floods, much like Werther's monologue of letters shifts into the editor's introduction, into multiple voices, and into an enactment of an actual letter. The dark pastoral, in other words, portrays not only an altered sense of the relationship between self and nature but also an emphasis on multiple voices and agencies; in literary terms, it includes heteroglossia and textual play with form as part of the story. The form of *Werther*'s speaking voices, types of texts, and ruptured monologue is as relevant here as is the literary form of the pastoral itself. Morton writes that the "*form* of ecological thought is at least as important as its *content*. It's not simply a matter of *what* you're thinking about. It's also a matter of *how* you think" (*Ecological Thought*, 4, italics in original).

The Dark Pastoral and the Question of Form, Genre, and Voices for Ecology

The dark pastoral thus requires additional study of the novel's form. First is the question of the novel's format and its unusual tactic, for an epistolary novel, of including only Werther's voice, at least until the editor interrupts toward the end and provides many voices. As Morton notes for dark ecology, the mesh incorporates cultural discourses and practices as much as it does the more traditionally conceived natural and ecological entities and spaces. The fact that Goethe's *Werther* begins with a radical alteration of the usual exchanges typical of an epistolary novel has received much attention, and debate continues regarding its implications for the sympathetic audience,[32] the transformation of the genre,[33] and the move into unmediated experience.[34] Yet equally relevant in terms of innovative form is the second radical alteration that occurs when we are suddenly no longer allowed "direct" access to Werther's thoughts about nature and about other people and instead read selected fragments of his scribbling as well as the words of the others. After the December 17, 1772, letter in the first edition, the editor

interrupts and mediates for the rest of the novel: "Der Herausgeber an den Leser. Die ausführliche Geschichte der letzten merkwürdigen Tage unsers Freundes zu liefern, seh ich mich genöthiget seine Briefe durch Erzählung zu unterbrechen, wozu ich den Stof aus dem Munde Lottens, Albertens, seines Bedienten, und anderer Zeugen gesammlet habe" (198; The Editor to the Reader. In order to deliver the extended history of our friend's memorable last few days, I feel compelled to interrupt his letters with narrative; the materials I gathered from statements made by Lotte, Albert, his servant, and other witnesses).[35] The monologue of the novel is, in other words,"ruptured" in the final section when the editor steps in to comment and present the thoughts of others and some final notes documenting Werther's fate though he has not yet carried out his suicide.[36]

This move into mediation is only one part of the larger shift, however. The text also rather dramatically and at length moves out of all these voices and into Ossian's mythology: there are pages and pages of Goethe's heartfelt translation of the suffering figures and foggy, dark, rugged, nonpastoral landscapes. Indeed, the heteroglossic moments frequently relate to the representation of nature as individual, textual, or group experience. I cite just one passage of the expansive Ossian section, this one describing a dark and stormy night: "Es ist Nacht;—ich bin allein, verlohren auf dem stürmischen Hügel. Der Wind saust im Gebürg, der Strohm heult den Felsen hinab. Keine Hütte schützt mich vor dem Regen, verlassen auf dem stürmischen Hügel" (232; It is night; I am alone, forlorn on the hill of storms. The wind is heard on the mountain. The torrent is howling down the rock. No hut receives me from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds!, 76). This often-criticized inclusion of so much Ossian stands in contrast to the references to Homer, who is, significantly, not cited at length. Ossian's mythology, with its dark landscapes and laments, thus reflects not only Werther's hopeless longing for Lotte (apparently at least partly reciprocated) but also the text's firm commitment to the complex, darkly ironic, multilayered, and voiced perspective I term the dark pastoral. The inclusion of Ossian directly is not the ultimate break in *Werther*, however; that final moment occurs instead at the conclusion of the novel where the text becomes a very close representation of Kestner's letter describing Jerusalem's suicide. There is no return from that letter-imitating finale; instead, the extratextual reference becomes the novel's end so that the text is left permanently open to other voices. The move into dark pastoral happens as part of the text's transformation into intertextual, polyvocal perspectives that play with the question of the very boundary of the text itself in a similar way to how Werther grapples with the boundary of the self and nature when lounging by the stream or considering throwing himself into the flooded river but finally selects an imitation of life (Jerusalem's actual death), as it were, for his death.

As an additional piece of evidence for the value of reading *Werther* as a dark pastoral, I briefly refer to Goethe's lesser-known but significant play *Der Triumph der Empfindsamkeit* (Triumph of Sentimentality) from 1777, published just three years after the original *Werther*. This comedy openly mocks Werther's sentimental nature revelry. It thereby provides solid evidence that the initial pastoral should not be considered the final story. *Der Triumph der*

Empfindsamkeit, in fact, overtly critiques the Werther figure Prince Oronaro, who loves nature above all; or at least, he loves the sentimental texts about nature (including *Werther* and Rousseau's *Émile*) most of all, since they literally fill the body of the artificial doll he adores. Oronaro's claim to love nature becomes ludicrous when he creates an artificial nature replacement: because he finds the damp grass, stinging insects, and temperature fluctuations in outdoor nature far too unpleasant, he creates an indoor world of artificial and comfortable "nature" to enjoy without irritation, a place to stage his own personal pastoral daily. When traveling, he carries a smaller version of his "nature in a box" with him so as to have it readily available at all locations. Astrida Tantillo reads *Werther* through Oronaro in *Triumph der Empfindsamkeit* as a critique of Rousseau's emphasis on sentiment, solitary souls, and nature. She sees Werther's turn from Homer to Ossian and his return from the court via his homeland to Lotte's region as a problematic rejection of society and "return to a state of nature," revealing Goethe's "ironic treatment of Rousseau's philosophy and Werther himself."[37] Tantillo thus provides specific evidence of the irony surrounding Werther's pastoral nature vision. The ironic implications of Goethe's own artistic analysis of *Werther* in *Triumph* point toward the potential of the dark pastoral not only for reading *Werther* as a transformative text both in genre and in reflecting our rapidly changing relationship to nature, or nature-culture, but also for understanding the Anthropocene more broadly.

The dark pastoral, in sum, provides a new structure for reading Goethe's famous genre innovations in *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* by locating the novel ironically within the pastoral's long literary tradition and then altering those conventions and combining them with the introspective qualities of an epistolary novel exploring self and nature, but with a dramatic shift toward heteroglossia as a disturbing yet necessary development out of singular subjectivities and into more democratic and shared voices. As such, Goethe's novel is exemplary for the dark dawning of the Anthropocene and its modern, bourgeois, capitalistic, and industrial subjectivities and practices. Goethe seeks a format to express the rising middle class's consternation in response to the shifting landscapes, cultural evolution, and accelerating technological innovation. Although he could not have known that his special literary form provides a foothold from which to grapple with the radical social and ecological changes occurring around him, it nevertheless offers an entrance into ecological questions of scale, agency, and our interactions with "nature." The dark pastoral allows us to read *Werther* yet again with new eyes and also to find a possible textual framework for formulating environmental changes in the Anthropocene.

For ecocriticism, the dark pastoral offers a mixed genre as a means of thinking the familiar polarities of urban and rural nature, past and present, and myth and daily history intertwined. The dark pastoral enables these links, the mesh, as it were, by building on, expanding, and adding floods, dying ants, pollution, death, and problems of form and voice to the traditional pastoral's multitudes of dichotomies. In contrast to Morton's dark ecology, however, the dark pastoral avoids the scholarly pretense that we can and should entirely rid ourselves of our long-term cultural notions of

nature—however wrong and troubled they may be—and so start thinking better with an "ecological thought" that is cured of all dualisms. Such utopian hope for purity (from dualities) is eradicated ironically by the very artifice of the pastoral from which we have not escaped and whose places cannot escape our impact. It is this era of the Anthropocene, after all, beginning in the Age of Goethe, when nature can no longer escape the human. Of course, this assertion necessitates a concomitant reiteration of ecocriticism's major thesis that the human has never been able to escape and be "free" from nature either, any more than we can rid ourselves of the air and water around us and in our bodies. While Werther, the man, finally got it wrong and self-destructed in an effort to be free, Goethe's *Werther*, the novel, presents complex nuances and ironies of the dark pastoral with genre-ripping expansiveness. The dark pastoral provides a means to write ecology in the Anthropocene by depicting nature-culture in mixed genres with many voices while also exposing the artificiality of the metaviews that would isolate urban and technological humanity from the rest of the biosphere. In the dark pastoral, we are in the mesh on all scales and in many forms and voices. Let us work together.

Trinity University

NOTES

1. Terry Gifford, *Pastoral* (London: Routledge, 1999) 1–12.

2. Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2010) 16–17 (italics in original).

3. Jost Hermand comments on Goethe's critique of modern capitalism, expanding technology, and exploitation of nature in *Im Wettlauf der Zeit: Anstöße zu einer ökologiebewußten Ästhetik* (Berlin: Sigma Bohn, 1991); see esp. "Freiheit in der Bindung: Goethes grüne Weltfrömmigkeit," 29–52.

4. There are too many recent publications on the debates surrounding the Anthropocene to list them all here. Several recent cultural analyses are Elizabeth Kolbert, "The Lost World: Fossils of the Future," *New Yorker*, December 23 and 30, 2013, 48–56; Paul Alberts, "Responsibility towards Life in the Early Anthropocene," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 16, no. 4 (2011): 5–17; and Heinz Wanner, "Vom Holozän zum Anthropozän—Fakten und Fragen zu 10.000 Jahren Klima- und Menschheitsgeschichte," in *Fakten und Fragen zu 10.000 Jahren Klima- und Menschheitsgeschichte: Festvortrag anlässlich der Verleihung der Ehrendoktorwürde*, ed. Christoph Markschies (Berlin: HU Berlin, 2010) 13–36. Scientific highlights are given in the references cited in note 5.

5. See Will Steffen, Paul J. Crutzen, and John R. McNeill, "The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?," *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36, no. 8 (2007): 614–21; Jan Zalasiewicz et al., "Are We Now Living in the Anthropocene?," *GSA (Geological Society of America)* 18, no. 2 (2008): 4–8; and Jan Zalasiewicz, Mark Williams, Will Steffen, and Paul Josef Crutzen, "The New World of the Anthropocene: The Anthropocene, Following the Lost World of the Holocene, Holds Challenges for Both Science and Society," *Environmental Science and Technology* 44, no. 7 (2010): 2228–31.

6. For a discussion of the reformulation of "nature," see esp. Timothy Morton, *Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007); and the introduction to his *Ecological Thought*.

7. See Richard T. Gray's commentary in his *Money Matters: Economics and the German Cultural Imagination, 1770–1850* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008) esp. 375–84.

8. See Goethe's documents on running the mine as part of the "Bergwerkskommission": Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Amtliche Schriften*, pt. 1, *Geheimes Consilium und andere bis zur Italienreise übernommene Aufgabengebiete*, ed. Reinhard Kluge (Frankfurt/Main: Klassiker, 1998).

9. David Blackbourn, *The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape, and the Making of Modern Germany* (New York: Norton, 2007).

10. Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2012); see chap. 2, on the pastoral.

11. See ecologist Daniel Botkin's *Discordant Harmonies: A New Ecology for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Oxford UP, 1990). I discussed the implications of this shift in ecological understanding for ecocriticism and Goethe in "Nature in a Box: Ecocriticism, Goethe's Ironic *Werther*, and Unbalanced Nature," *Ecozon@* 2, no. 2 (2011): 228–39.

12. See Garrard's discussion on dwelling in chap. 6 of his *Ecocriticism*.

13. Martin Heidegger famously formulated the critical term "standing reserve," or *Bestand*, for this economic vision that sees forests as timber rather than as complex ecosystems of which we are also a part. See Martin Heidegger, "The Question concerning Technology," in *The Question concerning Technology and Other Essays*, ed. William Lovitt (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1982) 3–35.

14. See Morton, *Ecology without Nature*.

15. The "necropastoral" is a recent development in poetry that combines nature study with pollution and the frame of the Anthropocene. Joeyelle McSweeney describes it thus: "With my snout up against the fact of the Anthropocene, with my bill snared in fishing line and the blood pooling in my industrially overdeveloped chest and my meager thighs locked and a bolt in my bovine brain, I find myself reeling through an Anthropocenic zone I call the Necropastoral. I first wrote about the Necropastoral in January of 2011. The Necropastoral is a political-aesthetic zone in which the fact of mankind's depredations cannot be separated from an experience of 'nature' which is poisoned, mutated, aberrant, spectacular, full of ill effects and affects. The Necropastoral is a non-rational zone, anachronistic, it often looks backwards and does not subscribe to Cartesian coordinates or Enlightenment notions of rationality and linearity, cause and effect. It does not subscribe to humanism but is interested in non-human modalities, like those of bugs, viruses, weeds and mold." See http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2014/04/what-is-the-necropastoral/; accessed July 15, 2014.

16. See Ursula Heise, *Nach der Natur: Das Artensterben und die modern Kultur* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2010); Cary Wolfe, *What Is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 2003); Jacques Derrida, "The Animal That Therefore I Am (More to Follow)," in *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, ed. Marie-Louise Mallet, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham UP, 2008) 1–51.

17. For material ecocriticism and the new materialisms, see Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann, *Material Ecocriticism* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2014); Dana

Phillips and Heather I. Sullivan, guest eds., "Material Ecocriticism: Dirt, Waste, Bodies, Food, and Other Matter," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment* 19, no. 3 (2012): 445–47; Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 2010); Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2010); and Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2007). Recent work in biosemiotics and zoosemiotics such as that by Wendy Wheeler and Timo Maran studies semiotic systems throughout all living systems, not just in human culture. See Wendy Wheeler, "The Biosemiotic Turn: Abduction, or the Nature of Creative Reason in Nature and Culture," in *Ecocritical Theory: New European Approaches*, ed. Axel Goodbody and Kate Rigby (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011) 270–82; Timo Maran, Dario Martinelli, and Aleksei Turovski, eds., *Readings in Zoosemiotics* (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011).

18. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, ed. Waltraud Wiethölter (Frankfurt/Main: Klassier, 1774) 28. I cite the original version from 1774 here and throughout the essay. English translations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from David E. Wellbery's edition: *Goethe: "The Sorrows of Young Werther,"* trans. Victor Lange (New York: Suhrkamp, 1988) here 11.

19. Cf. Alaimo on the bodily impact of these daily exposures; in response to this deluge from which we cannot escape and which we, for the most part, cannot perceive, she develops the concept of "transcorporeality," highlighting the porosity of our bodies, which take in and expel substances constantly, with, nowadays, troubling results.

20. See, e.g., Gerhard Kaiser, *Wanderer und Idylle: Goethe und die Phänomenologie der Natur in der deutschen Dichtung von Geßner bis Gottfried Keller* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1977); and Lilian R. Furst, "The 'Imprisoning Self': Goethe's Werther and Rousseau's Solitary Walker," in *European Romanticism: Literary Cross-Currents, Modes, and Models*, ed. Gerhart Hoffmeister (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1990) 145–61.

21. Axel Goodbody, *Nature, Technology, and Cultural Change in Twentieth-Century German Literature: The Challenge of Ecocriticism* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); chap. 2 is on Goethe.

22. Particularly relevant discussions of Werther's loss of boundaries include Alice Kuzniar, "The Misrepresentation of Self: Werther versus Goethe," *Mosaic* 22, no. 2 (1989): 15–28. On Werther's desire to escape his bounds, see Steven P. Sondrup, "Wertherism and *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*," in *European Romanticism*, ed. Hoffmeister, 163–79; and Stuart Walker Strickland, "Flight from the Given World and Return to the New: The Dialectic of Creation and Escape in Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*," *German Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (1991): 190–208. See also Ellis Dye, "Werther's Lotte: Views of the Other in Goethe's First Novel," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, October 1988, 492–506.

23. In his essay on the "pastoral of the self," Renato Poggioli writes that these characters begin to honor only their own internal vision. Thus, "honor is no longer a social tie controlling moral conduct from outside, but an inner power ruled by no other law than itself. Chastity and purity are not the exterior signs of the ethical will, but spiritual manifestations of the integrity of the person, of the perfection of the soul. It is then by a total reversal of the pastoral casuistry of love that Marcela [in Cervantes's *Don Quixote*] brings forth what seems to be one of the earliest versions of the pastoral of the self." Renato Poggioli, "The Pastoral of the Self," *Daedalus* 88, no. 4 (1959): 686–99, here 692.

24. The sequence here is from the first edition; in the second (1787) edition, Goethe changed the order and had the editor interrupt Werther's words a few letters earlier so that less of the novel comes "directly" from Werther and more is mediated.

25. Dirk Grathoff, "Der Pflug, die Nußbäume und der Bauernbursche," in *Goethe's "Werther": Kritik und Forschung*, ed. Hans Peter Herrmann (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994) 382–402, here 401.

26. Joyce Walker, "Sex, Suicide, and the Sublime: A Reading of Goethe's *Werther*," *Monatshefte* 91, no. 2 (1999): 208–24.

27. Gerhard Plumpe, "Kein Mitleid mit Werther," in *Systemtheorie und Hermeneutik*, ed. Henk de Berg and Matthias Prangel (Tübingen: Francke, 1997) 215–31.

28. Clark Muenzer, "Turning toward the Sublime," chap. 1 of his *Figures of Identity: Goethe's Novels and the Enigmatic Self* (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1984).

29. Bruce Duncan, "Werther's Reflections on the Tenth of May," in *Exile and Enlightenment: Studies in German and Comparative Literature*, ed. Uwe Faulhaber et al. (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1987) 1–9.

30. Hans Peter Herrmann, "Landschaft in Goethes *Werther*: Zum Brief vom 18. August," in *Goethe's "Werther,"* ed. Herrmann, 360–79, here 365.

31. See commentary in Goethe, *Amtliche Schriften*, pt. 1, 909–15.

32. See Erdmann Waniek, "Werther lesen und Werther als Leser," *Goethe Yearbook* 1 (1982): 51–92.

33. See Robyn L. Schiffman, "*Werther* and the Epistolary Novel," *European Romantic Review* 19, no. 4 (2008): 421–38.

34. See Klaus Müller-Salget, "Zur Struktur von Goethes *Werther*," in *Goethes "Werther,"* ed. Herrmann, 317–37.

35. This translation is partly my own, since the English translation from Wellbery's edition (65) is for the second edition of the novel, which has a much longer statement by the editor than the first edition that I use here.

36. See Heather I. Sullivan, "The Dangerous Quest for Nature Narratives in Goethe's *Werther*: A Reading of the Ruptured Monologue and the Ruptured Body," *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and the Environment* 14, no. 2 (2007): 1–23.

37. Astrida Tantillo, "A New Reading of *Werther* as Goethe's Critique of Rousseau," *Orbis Litterarum* 56 (2001): 443–65, here 448.