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DOI: 10.1111/gequ.12453

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# Sentiment and specters: The posthumous influence of animals and women in Marie Espérance von Schwartz's *Gemma, oder Tugend und Laster* (1877) and the late nineteenth-century anti-vivisection debate

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## Abstract

Animals enjoyed an active afterlife in late-nineteenth-century pro-animal texts in Germany. Drawing on a number of primary texts and recent scholarship on the anti-vivisection movement, this article argues that remembering, mourning, and haunting by animals is part of a gendered discourse on animal rights that is associated in particular with sentiment and with maternity. This is illustrated with reference to Marie Espérance von Schwartz's *Gemma, oder Tugend und Laster* (1877), a sentimental anti-vivisection novella in which deceased animals and women return to punish their abusers or shore up the resistant stance of the living. Viewing Schwartz's fictional novella in the context of non-fictional pro-animal works, including Ernst Grysanowski's *Die Vivisection, ihr wissenschaftlicher Werth und ihre ethische Berechtigung* (1877) and Ignaz Bregenzer's *Thier-Ethik: Darstellung der sittlichen und rechtlichen Beziehungen zwischen Mensch und Thier* (1894), allows me, by means of contrast, to highlight its gendered dimension.

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Nonhuman animals—the ones we use, the ones we love—tend to die before we do. Many are forgotten; others are remembered in private or public. Pro-animal political advocacy, since it began in the nineteenth century, has attempted to reshape our understanding of the significance of animal death. Marie Espérance von Schwartz's anti-vivisection novella *Gemma, oder Tugend und Laster* (1877) illustrates that pro-animal fiction has a special role to play in reimagining animal death because it can explore fantasies of mourning, psychological haunting, and posthumous retribution.

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By comparing Schwartz's *Gemma* with non-fictional pro-animal works from the period, including Ernst Grysanowski's anti-vivisection treatise, *Die Vivisection, ihr wissenschaftlicher Werth und ihre ethische Berechtigung* (1877), I show here that remembering non-human animals is an act of resistance with a gendered dimension. The novella illustrates recent feminist thinking on sentiment in animal advocacy and shows how nineteenth-century ideas about the moral status of animals are linked to concepts of femininity, in particular to maternity.

## GENDER AND SENTIMENT IN *GEMMA* AND THE ANTI-VIVISECTION DEBATE

A fascinating body of research exists on women's involvement in anti-vivisection campaigns in the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century,<sup>1</sup> an involvement which historian Coral Lansbury ascribes to the parallels women saw between the vivisection of animals and their own objectification at the hands of gynecologists and pornographers ("Gynaecology" 414). Craig Buettinger has written on middle-class women's "defining presence" (857) in the anti-vivisection movement in the United States, where women saw the connection as rooted, not in oppression, but in their motherly role as protectors of children from moral depravity and animals from suffering (862). According to Buettinger, "That experimenters could be so cruel as to subject animal mothers to experiments involving pregnancy and maternal instinct horrified antivivisection women more than anything else" (862). In animal mothers, perhaps, these women saw themselves.

Less is known about female anti-vivisectionists in German-speaking countries. Germany's central anti-vivisection organization, the Dresden-based *Internationaler Verein zur Bekämpfung der wissenschaftlichen Thierfolter*, was founded in 1879. Ulrich Tröhler and Andreas-Holger Maehle observe that about a third of the members were women and that anti-vivisectionism offered women "a means of emancipation" (171), but Carola Sachse suggests that, unlike their British counterparts, they were discouraged by the men in the movement from taking prominent roles (10, 13).

In the extent of her animal advocacy, Marie Espérance von Schwartz (1818-1899), born in England to a German father but brought up in Switzerland, was an exception. A vegetarian (Tröhler and Maehle 172), she published a number of pamphlets on animal welfare; sat on the committee of the *Internationaler Verein zur Bekämpfung der wissenschaftlichen Thierfolter*; founded a home for horses and donkeys and fed stray dogs on Crete; campaigned in Rome for the better treatment of animals for slaughter; donated to many different European animal welfare organizations; and bequeathed 870 Swiss francs to a fund in Lucerne that incentivized agricultural workers to treat farm animals well.<sup>2</sup> She also published a work of fiction, *Gemma oder Tugend und Laster*, in Munich in 1877 under a Greek version of her name, Elpis Melena. According to Sachse, it was inspired by George Fleming's anti-vivisection

essay “Vivisection, is it necessary or justifiable?,” published in German in 1870 as “Die Vivisection (Zergliederung lebendiger Thierkörper): ist sie nothwendig oder zu entschuldigen?” (Sachse 12).

*Gemma* is subtitled “eine Novelle,” but in length it is more like a novel. It contains elements untypical of sentimental fiction: Schwartz, a friend and supporter of Garibaldi, includes long accounts of the struggle for Italian unification, reproduces pages from scientific works, complete with footnotes, and gives long quotations and paraphrases of anti-vivisection arguments in the essay her protagonist Gemma composes. On the other hand, despite the narrator’s disparaging description of “Empfindungsromane” as “wahre moralische Vampyre” (81), *Gemma* owes a clear debt to the sentimental genre. The plot, which Tröhler and Maehle describe as “poor and grossly tendentious” (159), is rife with melodrama, coincidence, wholly virtuous or evil characters, and pity-inspiring, untimely deaths.

Gemma, an innocent, animal-loving girl, lives in a beautiful cottage called Forest-Hill in the English countryside with her cruel father Dr. Farnham, her mother having wilted away from heartache in typical sentimental fashion while Gemma was very young. Gemma’s closest companion is a dog, Roy, whom she rescues from drowning as a puppy and who later saves her from drowning in turn. When Gemma falls in love with a young man called Osvaldo, her father forbids the match; Osvaldo leaves for Switzerland and is later reported dead. After discovering works on vivisection in her father’s library and hearing that Farnham himself vivisects for pleasure, Gemma devotes herself to combatting the practice, writing an anti-vivisection text for Queen Victoria and agreeing to marriage with an unappealing older member of parliament because he promises to help her with the cause. Osvaldo returns and is revealed to be Gemma’s long-lost brother. The unfortunate Roy is vivisected by Dr. Farnham, and Gemma herself dies a lingering death after a drunken Farnham hits her as she reaches out to help him, causing her to fall down the stairs. Osvaldo vows to set up a charitable institute on the family estate in Gemma’s and their mother’s memory; Farnham goes mad and dies.

Much of *Gemma*’s “sentimental power” arises from the cruel treatment of Gemma, her mother, and non-human animals.<sup>3</sup> The words “Opfer” and “opfern” occur with remarkable frequency, particularly toward the end of the novella, to describe Gemma’s decision to marry Sir Henry Mauworm (193, 194, 196, 210 twice), the abuse of Gemma and her mother by Farnham (228, 240, 247, 253, 254), and the fate of vivisected animals, including Roy (120, 221). Chapter 24, which narrates Gemma’s death, is entitled “Das Opfer” (243). Tröhler and Maehle suggest that because Farnham, a vivisector, causes the death of his daughter, the novella “revive[s]” the “old topic” of brutalization (159), the idea held by anti-vivisectionists that cruelty to animals leads to cruelty to human beings, in particular women. Certainly, Schwartz suggests a connection between animals’ and women’s oppression. Osvaldo links the way Gemma’s father treats her with his cruelty to animals, calling him a “Vivisector” when he criticizes Farnham’s treatment of his daughter (196). Gemma is also described with animal imagery when she is in danger, as a fish caught in a net (167, 184). However, in

the novella Farnham's cruel treatment of his wife predates his practicing vivisection. Schwartz's argument seems to be not so much that the abuse of animals leads to the abuse of women, but that male violence is directed at both. In this respect, she avoids the anthropocentric hierarchy implied by the brutalization argument, that is, that cruelty to animals matters because of its consequences for human beings.

The "Tugend und Laster" of Schwartz's subtitle, then, are gendered. As Holly Yanacek points out, for Schwartz vivisection is a male vice while compassion is a female virtue (566). In her essay for Queen Victoria, Gemma makes this clear:

Die Vivisection ist ein Verbrechen, welches einzig und allein das Werk des Mannes ist; doch die Frau, welche höheres Mitleid und zarteres Gefühl auszeichnen sollte, muß pflichtmäßig sich hervorthun, um als Apostel der Menschlichkeit dieses Uebel zu beschwören. (*Gemma* 147)

As this quotation shows, however, while Schwartz reinforces the traditional gendering of the dichotomy reason/emotion, she rejects the sexed opposition active/passive. Gemma is a victim, but she is also equipped "mit [...] männlicher Thatkraft" (126), has "eiserne Willenskraft" (126), and is described as a young Amazon (44). Women's capacity for feeling and sympathy, Gemma suggests, should precipitate them to action against vivisection in a quasi-religious crusade: they are "apostles." Male science and vivisection, on the other hand, are associated with the philosophy of materialism, according to which God does not exist, as Lord Glenford observes (120-21). Glenford is one of a number of worthy men in the novel, which shows that Schwartz's gendered moral schema is not purely binary: not all men support vivisection, though only men practice it. The virtuous male characters, however, play merely supporting roles in a moral landscape of which Gemma is the center. Osvaldo may be a former Italian freedom fighter who has escaped the death penalty, but in the narrative present his role is to live by Gemma's side in "unbegrenzter Hingebung" (83). These men also appear desexualized, as older, father figures to Gemma or, in the case of Osvaldo, a lover whose feelings are chaste, more adoration than romantic love (83), and who, to Gemma's delight, is revealed to be her brother (236).

Schwartz's sentimental novella is an early example of a trend in women's animal advocacy that Josephine Donovan observes in her essay "Animal Rights and Feminist Theory" (1990). While male animal rights philosophers, Donovan argues, tend to "dissociate" themselves "from a sentimentalist approach to animal welfare" (350), many feminists have tried to incorporate affect into their thinking on animals, for example in the feminist care tradition.<sup>4</sup> A comparison of *Gemma* with two non-fictional, pro-animal works, Gryanowski's *Die Vivisection* and Ignaz Bregenzer's *Thier-Ethik: Darstellung der sittlichen und rechtlichen Beziehungen zwischen Mensch und Thier* (1894), illustrates this gendered distinction. Gryanowski was inspired to compose an anti-vivisection work of his own after reading a draft of Schwartz's novella. Their two compositions, he hoped, according to Schwartz who wrote his biography, "sollen gemeinsam einen Kreuzzug [...] gegen die empörendste

Grausamkeit unsers Jahrhunderts unternehmen” (Schwartz, *Grysanowski* 4). In contrast to *Gemma*, however, which, “zum Herzen redend” (4), was intended to reach a female audience or, as Tröhler and Maehle put it “to exert influence in high circles via the ladies,” Grysanowski’s more intellectual work, published under the pseudonym Iatros, meaning physician, is aimed at a learned male audience (158). His tone is correspondingly scholarly. He counters science with science, avoiding what he calls fanaticism (Grysanowski 97) and trying to inform people of the facts (85). He puts forward rational arguments against vivisection, illustrated with examples and many Latin terms. He argues for better treatment of the weaker groups in society, which include women, animals, and the lower classes (81), but he sets limits to their emancipation. No one, he writes in a surprising disregard for evidence, will deny that people have the right to use animals and to kill them (82). As for women, he alludes to their detrimental role in British anti-vivisection campaigns and regrets that their influence is increasing in Germany (86).

Bregenzer’s *Thier-Ethik* takes a similarly “balanced” tone. Over 422 pages, with extensive footnotes, references, and facts, he displays his ethnological erudition and, although he views feeling as the basis of ethics, proposes the “Gewinnung der richtigen Mitte” (57) in arguments about animals. Vegetarianism is a step too far (215), in fact it is “eine psychologisch pathologische Erscheinung” (394). Animals can be eaten if they are killed humanely (319). Excessive affection for pets offends our moral sense and is unhealthy (306, 315). Although opposed to most forms of vivisection, he believes that antivivisectionists are sometimes too “extreme” (354), exhibiting confused, sentimental “Gefühlsduselei” (306). In rare cases, vivisection is justifiable (405). About women, Bregenzer has little to say. They appear mainly in lists with other groups who gain in rights with increasing civilization: animals, children, foreigners, and slaves (see for example 329). Animals, he argues, have rights but not *equal* rights with people; the same is true of some subgroups of people on the basis of sex, age, health, nationality, class, or religion (329). Fortunately, he writes, equality of the sexes is nowhere inscribed in law (329).<sup>5</sup>

Bregenzer’s and Grysanowski’s views are not uncommon in the German anti-vivisection movement in this period. Sachse observes that its male members had an ambivalent attitude toward women, wanting to recruit them for campaigns on the one hand, but often viewing them, on the other hand, as strange, half-animal creatures “im phantasmagorierten Zwischenreich anthropomorphisierter Tiere und animalisierter Menschen” (21). In fact this apparent ambivalence—male campaigners courting women’s support for anti-vivisectionism while at the same time considering them second-class citizens—is not a contradiction. Women and the “higher” non-human animals, particularly dogs, are for late-nineteenth-century male anti-vivisectionists such as Grysanowski what Kelly Oliver calls “liminal moral agents” (495), beings on the boundaries of the moral community onto whom “messier” or abject qualities are projected (498). In the late nineteenth century, when the ideal representative of the moral community is the rational, self-governing adult male, women

and animals are imbued with traits that challenge the boundaries of the self: selflessness, maternal sacrifice, emotional sensitivity, that is, with emotionally-driven ethical qualities at once valuable to the welfare of others and liable to overstep “healthy boundaries” and manifest themselves as sentimentality, irrationality, even abjection. Women’s compassion for animals, for example, could go too far. The French psychiatrist V. Magnan invented the term “anti-vivisectionist syndrome,” which, as Greg Murrie points out, uses the feminine ending on “antivivisectionnistes” and describes what Magnan saw as “a typically female hyper-emotionalism when considering the subject of vivisection” (Murrie 265–66).

When pro-animal thinkers argued for the moral consideration of animals by pointing out virtues they shared with human beings, these virtues were typically “female” ones. Canine loyalty was cited as an example of dogs’ similarity with, or even superiority to, human beings (Kete 25). In his or her self-abnegating love for a master, the dog—of whichever sex—plays a feminized, abject role. As Kathleen Kete writes, in the late nineteenth century, the British parallel to the loyal dog wasting away on his/her master’s grave was the Indian woman who committed sati (27). For Arthur Schopenhauer, whose work was an important influence on later pro-animal thinkers, the triumph of the general over the individual will is demonstrated in all species by a mother’s instinct to protect her young (*Welt* 587). For Bregenzer, maternal love, which is experienced by all vertebrates but especially by mammals, is the origin of all ethical feeling: “Der psychophysische Anfang der Entwicklung der sozial-ethischen Gefühle und Triebe ist ohne Zweifel in der Mutterliebe zu finden, die besonders bei den Wirbelthieren, am allgemeinsten und stärksten bei den Säugethieren, uns entgegentritt” (288). When Bregenzer wants to illustrate the proximity of human and non-human animals, he refers to women, with examples of interspecies mothering. Women breastfeed non-human young throughout the world, he writes (101); in Arab cultures, for example, they breastfeed whippet puppies (93). Conversely, children drinking cow’s milk lightens the burden of childrearing for women (88). Similarly, Schopenhauer, drawing the attention of male readers to a perhaps unwelcome interdependence, traduces those who insist on the absolute boundary between human beings and animals by reminding them, “wie Er von SEINER Mutter, so auch der Hund von der SEINIGEN gesäugt worden ist” (*Grundlage* 140). Maternity, it seems, is the place where species meet.

Bregenzer’s erudite *Thier-Ethik* was well-received in some quarters. In 1896 a reviewer praises its thoroughness, pleased that “We have not here the views of a confused, sentimental vegetarian” (Himmelbauer 534). Gryanowski’s *Die Vivisection* garnered little interest (Tröhler and Maehle 159). By contrast *Gemma* was a great success. It was turned into a play, translated into other languages, and converted readers to the cause, including Ernst von Weber,<sup>6</sup> who later founded the Internationaler Verein zur Bekämpfung der wissenschaftlichen Thierfolter (Tröhler and Maehle 159). In my analysis, this success was due in large part to Schwartz’s mobilization of images of mourning, memory, and the afterlife: that is, to the posthumous influence of women and non-human animals. Unlike for Bregenzer and Gryanowski, I suggest, the

porosity of psychic boundaries between self and other, including human and non-human selves, is central to Schwartz's anti-vivisection message.

## MOURNING AND ANIMAL AFTERLIVES

In late-nineteenth-century Germany, animals lived on after death in the imagination of many.<sup>7</sup> The argument for animal souls, although contrary to a traditional Christian view, had been developed in philosophy since the late eighteenth century (Maehle 212). Later Schopenhauer denied the "Unsterblichkeits-Patent der Menschenspecies" (*Grundlage* 138) and argued that when animals die, they become part of the general, immortal will, to be born again in another creature (*Welt* 545–46). Bregenzer largely approves of Schopenhauer's animal ethics. He documents varying beliefs in animal souls, immortality, and transmigration in different cultures through the ages. It is arrogance, he writes, that prevents people who believe in human immortality from ascribing it to animals as well (115). Frances Power Cobbe, the Anglo-Irish suffragist and founder of the National Anti-Vivisection Society in London in 1875, whose work was translated into German<sup>8</sup> and who was a friend of Grysanowski (Tröhler and Maehle 157), hoped that vivisected animals would be compensated for their suffering with a blissful afterlife.<sup>9</sup> As historian Philip Howell writes, speculation on the future life of animals was a way for late-nineteenth-century women, who had limited room for maneuver, to "challenge anthropocentric attitudes" (126) and was "bound up with the argument against vivisection" (135). Certainly, those who supported vivisection sometimes pointed to animals' lack of an afterlife as justification for the practice, as Fleming observes (38).

Fantasies about animal retribution, often posthumous, are not uncommon among pro-animal thinkers. Fleming observes that the vivisector Dr. John Reid said of the agony he experienced in his final illness, "This is a judgement on me for the sufferings which I inflicted on animals" (28). In a cartoon by Wilhelm Anton published in the *Lustige Blätter* in 1899 entitled "Die Vivisection des Menschen," part of the caption to which reads "Nur keine falsche Sentimentalität!," rabbits vivisect an old man who, with spectacles and a beard, is figured as a scientist. Bregenzer observes in 1894 that a "thierrechtlicher Gedanke" can be found in the painting *Gericht der Thiere über den Jäger* by the seventeenth-century animal artist Paul Potter (129) in which animals issue and enact the death sentence for a hunter. Many cultures, Bregenzer writes, suspect animals can punish human beings (132), and in some, proper mourning ceremonies for dangerous animals such as lions are thought to protect people from them (69).<sup>10</sup>

At the least, animals lived on in the memories of those who loved them. To mourn non-human animals was to imply that they had moral value and to recognize their relationship with human beings. The period saw many displays and discussions of mourning for animals. Bregenzer observes that pets are interred, sometimes with monuments, in certain places (110), for example in Ava, where a woman buried and



grieved for her deceased parrot as if he were a son (94). By the early 1890s, Howell writes, the burial of pet dogs was observed to be common in Germany (129). Pet cemeteries existed in several European cities, such as the dog cemetery Barsberge in Sachsen-Anhalt, founded in 1878, the London Hyde Park Dog Cemetery, founded in 1880, or the famous Cimetière des Chiens et Autres Animaux Domestiques in Paris, founded in 1899, where elaborate sculptures marked the graves.

The interspecies relationality to which mourning testifies went both ways. Tales abounded in this period of dogs, considered the most moral and compassionate of non-human species, grieving for human beings. Schopenhauer writes that loyal dogs often lie on their masters' graves until they die themselves (*Grundlage* 139). The artist Edwin Landseer (1802-1873), whose animal paintings were popular across Europe and whom Schwartz mentions in *Gemma* (36), depicted several dogs grieving human beings. Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach's popular novella *Krambambuli* (1883) narrated the story of a dog reluctant to leave his deceased master. According to Kete, ideas about canine devotion in late-nineteenth-century Paris were "organized mainly around the issue of death and dying" (27) and constituted a "protest against bourgeois individualism" (33). Alice Kunziar offers a different interpretation of dogs' fidelity. In *Melancholia's Dog* (2006), she suggests: "Tales about the legendary mourning and waiting of dogs [...] are perhaps the inverse expression of self-reproachful guilt vis-à-vis the dog" (139). In other words, the guilt that often accompanies the death of an animal, especially a mistreated animal, the fear perhaps also that the animal realm will take revenge, is displaced by its reassuring opposite, the spectacle of the devotion of dogs to deceased masters. It was not just human beings whom animals were observed to mourn, however. Schopenhauer comments on the grief of a baby elephant for its mother, so moving it made the hunter feel like a murderer (*Grundlage* 141-42). Bregenzler notes that dogs and monkeys mourn their own kind; ants even have burial ceremonies (297-98).

Two particular deceased animals appear frequently in the late-nineteenth-century anti-vivisection literature. As Sachse observes, again and again in pamphlets published in the 1870s and 1880s, the height of the anti-vivisection debate in Germany, the same two dogs are mentioned, both victims of the French physiologist Jean-Louis Brachet (1789-1858) (14). One was a pregnant dog, who, dying from vivisection, attempted to lick the puppies torn from her womb. The second was a companion dog upon whom, according to Weber's *Die Folterkammern der Wissenschaft* (1879), Brachet tested the limits of canine devotion by removing his eyes, destroying his hearing, and torturing him for months, whereupon the dog still licked his hands (Weber 16, qtd. in Sachse 14). Fleming, writing earlier in 1866, tells the story differently: Brachet was not attempting to test a pet dog's devotion, but, on the contrary, to establish whether a dog in whom he had inspired a great aversion by inflicting pain on him would feel the same aversion when deprived of sight and hearing (Fleming 45). In Fleming's account, then, it is an experiment on the senses rather than the emotions. Fleming mentions another case later in his essay, in which the physiologist François Magendie (1783-1855) vivisected a dog who licked his

face in an attempt to avert further torture (62). That writers after Fleming, including Weber and Grysnowski, amalgamated this detail about licking into the account of Brachet's experiment, which they reinterpret as an experiment upon a companion dog to test its attachment, is telling. As Sachse writes, these stories—as they are later told—highlight the cruelty of vivisection because of the emotionally charged nature of the relationship between dog and master and between mother and child (14).

## ANIMAL AND MATERNAL SPECTERS IN SCHWARTZ'S *GEMMA*

Both these animal figures appear in Schwartz's *Gemma* (1877) and Grysnowski's *Die Vivisektion* (1877), but in different ways, reflective of their authors' contrasting, gendered approaches to anti-vivisection advocacy. Grysnowski mentions them only briefly. He devotes a paragraph to the dog who remained devoted to his master despite his abuse and two sentences to the pregnant dog (87, 88). He speaks emotively of the "sittlichen Monstrosität" (94) of vivisection and refers to the large number of animals sacrificed to science as "hecatombs" (38), but sticks on the whole to scientific and logical arguments against vivisection rather than appearing haunted by its victims or dwelling on its horrors: "Von der Grausamkeit soll freilich hier nicht geredet werden" (38). By contrast, *Gemma*'s sentimental power is heavily reliant on references to the deceased, these two vivisected dogs among them.

Schwartz does not go as far as to argue outright that animals experience an afterlife, an idea which, as suggested above, was contrary to Christian orthodoxy. *Gemma* bases her opposition to vivisection on the sensible body rather than the eternal soul:

"Ich sage," begann Gemma mit der größten Gelassenheit, "daß es ungerecht ist, einen Menschen zu martern nicht etwa, weil er intelligent ist und eine unsterbliche Seele besitzt, aber weil er einen empfindlichen Körper hat und daß dieser Grund bei allen wirbelbeinigen Thieren seine Geltung haben sollte." (164)

Although here *Gemma* denies the significance of the soul in arguments against vivisection, neither does she explicitly deny that animals have eternal souls. Rather, with "Gelassenheit," she leaves the question open. In Chapter 3, similarly, Schwartz suggests the possibility of animal immortality at one remove. Instead of having the narrative voice or *Gemma* express it, she quotes from a poem by Byron in which he laments that the faithful dog is "denied in heaven the soul he held on earth" (29), an implicit criticism of the Christian view. As we shall see below, Schwartz's novella as a whole seems to reinforce the notion of an animal soul, both because of the moral qualities it attributes to Roy and because Schwartz finds other ways to represent animal afterlives: in her characters' memories, their dreams (231), and their delusions.

We can read Roy, Gemma's loyal and selfless companion, as a fictionalized representation of the devoted dog whom Brachet—at least according to later accounts—vivisected repeatedly to test his devotion, as well as a representative of the brave, life-saving dogs about whom stories abounded at this period. His cruel fate is particularly affecting to the reader because Roy, unlike the dog in non-fictional anti-vivisection texts, is a fleshed-out, sympathetic character. Illustrating the tendency Howell observes in Victorian Britain to see companion dogs as “living and breathing memento mori” (128), hints emerge early on—in the unlikely case that readers familiar with the sentimental genre do not anticipate his death—that Roy's days are numbered. He and Gemma are memorialized while still alive, with a marble cross bearing their names. When she sees the cross, Gemma gleefully anticipates their deaths and Roy's illustrious afterlife, telling him, “der Ruf Deiner Bravour wird Jahrhunderte nach unserm Tod unter den Nachkommen fortleben!” (80). Gemma may not be sure if Roy will go to heaven, but she is convinced that he will live on in human memory.

Roy's power does not only consist of the way his affecting story may influence the reader to a more pro-animal stance.<sup>11</sup> Roy narrowly escapes death when Farnham tries to drown him before the dog saves Farnham when the man falls into the river himself. In a footnote, Schwartz quotes the title of a story about a similar incident in a Genevan animal welfare publication, “Comment les bêtes se vengent” (How animals take revenge). This is clearly an ironic statement on animals' lack of desire for vengeance, but later events contradict this idea. When Farnham waxes lyrical about vivisectioning dogs, Gemma cites historical and literary examples of dogs—Ulysses's dog, Tobias's dog,<sup>12</sup> the dog who saved Roch,<sup>13</sup> Mortargi's dog, Jocelyn's dog in Lamartine's poem, and the St. Bernhard dogs who rescue people trapped by avalanches (110-11)—all of which reinforce the idea of canine devotion to human beings. Within this list is one, however, who could, had Farnham paid attention, have offered him a warning. According to a legend from the fourteenth century, when a French courtier called Aubry de Montdidier was murdered, his dog pursued his murderer and brought him to justice.<sup>14</sup> While Schwartz depicts the living Roy as selfless and forgiving, in keeping with the novel's moral elevation of non-human animals, after death he enacts the cruelest revenge.

The narrator addresses readers directly in the novel's theatrical, didactic final chapter, inviting them to return to the “Schauplatz” of Forest-Hill a month after Gemma's death. In vivid terms Schwartz describes how an emaciated Farnham, clothed in dirty rags, is confined to a room with bars on the windows and mattresses on the walls, raving, recalling the experiments he has performed in horrifying detail, trying to defend himself against Roy and the other animal victims he imagines pursuing him and, like Lady Macbeth, attempting in vain to wipe their blood from his hands. Farnham is taken to an institution where he is confined in a straitjacket and dies after two years of mental torture. Schwartz leaves no doubt as to how this ending is to be interpreted. The chapter is entitled “Die Nemesis” and its epigraph is an Italian proverb suggesting evil comes to those who do evil. Twice the narrator writes that Farnham's vice (“Laster”) is the cause of his agony (256, 260). Like Dr. Reid in Fleming's essay,

Farnham himself knows this is vengeance: “Das ist eure Rache” (258), he tells the imaginary animals, and “Gemma, Osvaldo, Roy — — ihr seid gerächt!” (260). In psychological terms, his deceased animal victims have returned to impose accountability on him and, shattering his psychic independence by injecting themselves against his will into his mind, to emphasize our unavoidable interconnection with non-human creatures. When Farnham imagines Gemma surrounded by animals who worship her, handing him her anti-vivisection essay, which he refuses to take, the baton is implicitly passed to the reader to continue the fight against vivisection and avoid a fate like Farnham’s.

The pregnant dog of anti-vivisection literature is mentioned at the novella’s turning point, when Gemma discovers J. Béclard’s *Grundriß der Physiologie des Menschen* (1861) in her father’s library, a book that describes several vivisection experiments. Schwartz’s sentimental narrative is disrupted here as, over the breakfast table, Farnham reads aloud from the book and from a science magazine, reproduced over nine pages and interrupted only by one short paragraph describing Gemma’s reaction and Farnham’s commentary. Although the passages from the scientific texts are ostensibly read out by Farnham, their text given in quotation marks, Schwartz abandons any illusion of narrative veracity by inserting diagrams alongside the text, a line of typographical dashes, and lengthy footnotes, in which she apologizes for including these disturbing details in the novel and explains that readers can check the facts by means of her references (100-09). It is here that we see most clearly the common origin of Schwartz’s and Grysanowski’s works, their mutual catalyst in outrage at the experiments they have read about, and here, also, that Schwartz’s sentimental narrative threatens to reveal itself to be a palatable vehicle in which to clothe scientific information for female readers. The scientific pages are clumsily inserted and, in form and style, they seem to offer a gendered contrast with the rest of the novella (male scientific writing versus female sentimental fiction), but a mention of the mother dog bridges the two parts. Gemma begs her father to stop reading; he does so only to inform her that he has himself witnessed several such experiments, and when, distraught, she begs him to admit he is joking, he decries her foolish, girlish sentimentality and tells her about an experiment at Crichton Browne’s establishment a few days previously at which he was present, during which a vivisected bitch dragged herself arduously to her puppies, licked them and tried to suckle them (109-10), an observation that Schwartz again annotates with a footnote assuring the reader this is “Ein geschichtlich wahrer Fall” (110).<sup>15</sup> Like the American anti-vivisectionist women mentioned above who were particularly appalled by experiments on maternal instinct, Schwartz seems to have chosen this experiment as the one to enter the main narrative of her novella because it is the most affecting, reveals Farnham at his most heinous, and resonates with the theme of self-sacrifice so central to the novel. This case, it seems, observed and enjoyed by her own father, is the one that most appalls Gemma and motivates her anti-vivisection advocacy.

As suggested above, the moral qualities associated with “higher” animals at this period are “feminine” ones. In English-language epigraphs for two successive chapters, Schwartz underlines the female/canine parallel. Byron’s verse about dogs is the epigraph to Chapter 3 (29); the verse epigraph to Chapter 2, which relates the sad story of Julia Farnham’s marriage, motherhood, and wasting death, laments that women’s love is “everlasting” and often attached to “a worthless thing” (9). Possessed of the female-animal virtues of devotion and maternal love, Julia Farnham haunts the novella as a “mitfühlender Schutzgeist.” Her memory is invoked again and again as characterizing device and as the basis for an alternative moral vision to that represented by the material world,<sup>16</sup> challenging the psychic discreteness of other characters, as the word “mitfühlend” implies. I argue elsewhere that in the nineteenth-century women’s novel the daughter’s identity often merges with that of her deceased mother (Richards); this is the case in *Gemma*. Gemma is Julia’s “Ebenbild” (224), embodies Julia’s virtues and spends much of her time mourning her, visiting her grave, and gazing at her picture. Indeed, Gemma’s graveside piety is such that it moves the graveyard worker—whose dog is called Fido, underlining the period’s association between dogs and faithful mourning—to tears (38). It is further evidence of Farnham’s wickedness, meanwhile, that he thinks it excessive for Gemma to commemorate the anniversary of her mother’s death (53) and refuses to pay anything for the upkeep of his wife’s grave, telling Mrs. Lowe in an assertion of his independence from the dead: “so laßt mich in Ruh mit euren Todten” (78).

Gemma’s mother dies without a word of complaint against her cruel husband, but she too serves a retributive function by means of the way Gemma and Osvaldo instrumentalize her memory. Julia’s thwarted desires during pregnancy—her craving for strawberries, which Farnham denied her—return on Osvaldo’s body as a strawberry-shaped birthmark and thus reveal his heritage, as if in illustration of the way her will, repressed during life, is asserted after death. Normally an obedient and submissive daughter, Gemma defies Farnham in the extent of her mourning and the charitable works she carries out after visiting her mother’s grave, as well as in what Farnham calls her “bestiale Sentimentalität” (129). When Farnham suggests that Gemma uses the anniversary of her mother’s death as an excuse to distribute money to the poor (53), he is missing the point. The two are linked: it is *because* of her remembrance of her mother that Gemma acts as she does. Nor is it a coincidence that Gemma visits her mother’s grave shortly before she discovers the work on vivisection in her father’s library and begins her crusade against it. It is also after a visit to her mother’s grave that Gemma first meets Osvaldo. When Farnham forbids Gemma to see him, Gemma insists that her mother would bless their union (96). When Farnham tries to force Gemma to accept an offer of marriage from the odious Mauworm, it is with the authority of Gemma’s mother, “bei der Seele Ihrer seligen Mutter” (192), that Osvaldo opposes the match. And at the end of the novel, Osvaldo declares himself motivated by their mother’s memory to claim ownership of Farnham’s estate in the eyes of the law and turn it into a charitable institute “in Namen meiner geliebten Mutter und

Schwester" (253). Osvaldo insists Farnham recognize his guilt toward Gemma and her mother and give evidence of it by mourning at their grave. He will not see his father again, Osvaldo writes, "bis Sie bittere Thränen auf das Grab ihrer beiden Opfer zu vergießen gelernt" (254). Mourning and the tears that accompany it are an ethical duty.

When, on her deathbed, Gemma dreams that she sees her mother telling her "Gemma, ich bin deine Mutter, deine eigene Mutter" (231), the incantatory repetition of a superfluous statement—Gemma recognizes her already—underlines here the spiritual and emotional resonance of the mother figure in the novella. Gemma says God is calling her to her mother (246) and follows her into the grave. They will both be remembered by Osvaldo, who takes over Forest-Hill, his maternal inheritance (238). While Gemma is alive, she and Osvaldo are "nur eine Seele, die zwei Körper bewohnt" (236); on her death the separation of bodies will be overcome and these three will exist in a kind of psychic unity, with Osvaldo inhabited by the spirit of and acting in the names of his mother and sister.

## CONCLUSION

In contrast with the non-fictional pro-animal works of male contemporaries such as Grysanowski and Bregenzer, Schwartz's novella harnesses the sentimental power of virtuous animals and women, dead and alive. Mourning and memorializing them is a way to make a point within—or perhaps at the boundary of—acceptable religious and feminine behavior. The physical suffering and the bodies of vivisected animals are commemorated at the novella's turning point when Schwartz reproduces diagrams from scientific texts and later in Farnham's ravings, which recall the gruesome experiments he performed. However, Schwartz's central preoccupation is not with animals' or women's bodies, but with the values they demonstrate that transcend death, in keeping with her spiritual, anti-materialist agenda. Gemma's mother, Roy, and the mother dog of the experiment are all characterized by the desire to protect and a profound sense of interconnection with others, which the act of mourning them—in psychoanalytic terms an introjection of the absent other into the psyche<sup>17</sup>—acknowledges in return. In keeping with Christian orthodoxy, Schwartz stops short of asserting the existence of animal souls, but she implies it in her emphasis on the moral qualities of non-human animals and her depiction of their posthumous influence.

Recent pro-animal feminists have drawn on images of maternity to conceptualize the relationship between women and animals because the oppression of women and animals involves the control of their reproductive capacities and because maternity offers an exemplary model of care (Adams 103, 112). Schwartz's novella prefigures this emphasis on maternity in animal advocacy. She describes maternal love as the animating breath of a girl's life (30); it is also the animating impulse of the novella's anti-vivisection message. In her preface, Schwartz writes that she hopes in particular to inspire mothers to counteract the poison of vivisection and its deleterious influence

on children (VIII). And it is to Queen Victoria, first patron of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and mother of the nation, that Gemma addresses her anti-vivisection essay, in which she speaks of the dead and which she calls a “Memorial” (191). Mothers, Gemma writes, can oppose vivisection via their influence on children and on men (148), and Queen Victoria could do the same for her people. Earlier in the novella, Lord Glenford similarly refers to Queen Victoria’s maternal role in relation to vivisection, certain that she will want to abolish a practice that poisons the morals of the nation’s children (118).

The centrality of maternity to Schwartz’s novella forms a contrast with Gryanowski’s *Die Vivisection*. In his professional life, Gryanowski dealt with maternity on a daily basis: he was an obstetrician. And yet, in *Die Vivisection*, the maternal not only lacks prominence, it is expunged. When it comes to ovariectomies, Gryanowski’s anti-vivisection conviction wavers. During this period, ovariectomy, an operation first carried out in Germany by Alfred Hegar (Longo 257), was practiced, often for minor, non-fatal, and even psychological conditions, with a frequency suggestive of an extra-medical agenda. According to Sally Frampton, this experimental operation was highly controversial. Many argued that it was unnecessary and unethical; some called it “spaying” (Longo 244); others saw it as “analogous to vivisection” (Frampton 3); and feminist historians have since interpreted it as an instrument of patriarchal control (Frampton 4). Gryanowski’s work gives evidence of the link between operations on women and vivisection. Taking what he considers a balanced view, he is opposed to vivisection in almost all cases but concedes that there are some rare exceptions, ovariectomies on sows being one (70–71). He observes that the experiments of Spencer Wells in London on sows (70–72) have allowed him to practice a new technique that has meant the deathrate from ovariectomies in women has fallen from 40% to 17%. To oppose vivisection in cases such as this—that is, unnecessary operations to cut out the reproductive organs of female animals in order to reduce to 1 in 5 the death rate in the same unnecessary operations on women—would in Gryanowski’s view be “abgeschmackt” (92). Even his hatred of arrogant vivisectionists who think themselves apostles gives way here to an admiration of Spencer Mills as a “Meister der Kunst” (71).

In the work of Schwartz, the maternity Gryanowski is happy to see excised returns, along with dead animals, to punish male vivisectionists and inspire animal advocacy in readers. Schwartz works with traditional gendered polarities, but she revalorizes and politicizes them. Gryanowski and Bregenzer reject sentimentality and make clear the distinctions between themselves as learned, adult men on the one hand and women and non-human animals on the other. Schwartz blurs the boundaries between self and other, including between human and non-human selves, and between life and death. Gemma, open to the spectral presence of the other, mourns her mother and follows her into the grave, while Roy, after a life of self-sacrifice, posthumously haunts his killer and denies his psychic independence. Interrelationality is central to the plot of *Gemma*, illustrated by the maternal spirit and also by the qualities demonstrated by “higher” animals, who may in this period be situated, like women, at the margins

of the moral community, but who for Schwartz are tutelary, sometimes retributive, spirits.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See for example Lansbury, *Old Brown Dog*.
- <sup>2</sup> See Tröhler and Maehle (156, 162), Petrus and Späni (49), and Kollecker.
- <sup>3</sup> Tompkins develops the concept of “sentimental power.”
- <sup>4</sup> See for example Adams and Donovan.
- <sup>5</sup> To a certain extent, then, Bregenzner’s work seems in keeping with a trend among some late nineteenth-century anti-vivisectionists to view other races—as well as women and animals—as inferior to white men. Yanacek comments on “the unfortunate association of the anti-vivisection movement with anti-Semitism and racism,” but argues that they are not present in *Gemma* (574).
- <sup>6</sup> According to Schwartz, as quoted in Tröhler and Maehle (159).
- <sup>7</sup> Philip Howell observes this trend in late-nineteenth-century Britain (132).
- <sup>8</sup> For example, *Light in Dark Places* (1883) was translated into German as *Licht an dunklen Stätten* by Agnes Egloffstein. I have been unable to find a translation of “The future life of animals.”
- <sup>9</sup> See Cobbe, “The future life of animals” (259), cited by Murrie (267).
- <sup>10</sup> According to Stuart Earle Strange, a similar belief exists in present-day Suriname, where the Ndyuka people believe that, if they are not properly mourned, animals can return as “kunu” or avenging spirits to haunt and punish their killers or to force them to mourn them (139).
- <sup>11</sup> Małecki, Pawłowski, Sorokowski, and Oleszkiewicz write: “The results obtained in our study indicate that narrative empathic concern for animal characters in stories translates into pro-animal attitudes.”
- <sup>12</sup> Presumably the dog who accompanies Tobias in his travels in the book of Tobit in the Apocrypha.
- <sup>13</sup> St. Roch, the patron saint of dogs.
- <sup>14</sup> For further discussion of this legend, see Kete (26–27).
- <sup>15</sup> James Crichton Browne (1840–1938) was a Scottish neuro-psychiatrist who worked in an asylum in Yorkshire.
- <sup>16</sup> For example 6, 9, 29, 30, 37, 46, 49, 53, 76, 82, 96, 112, 186, 192, 209, 225–26, 227, 231–36, 239, 246, 253.
- <sup>17</sup> See Freud.

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**How to cite this article:** Richards, A. "Sentiment and specters: The posthumous influence of animals and women in Marie Espérance von Schwartz's *Gemma, oder Tugend und Laster* (1877) and the late nineteenth-century anti-vivisection debate." *German Quarterly*, 2024, pp. 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gequ.12453>