

The Failed Heroism of Ludwig II of Bavaria

Joana Rita Ramalho

A lifelong committed patron of the arts, Ludwig II of Bavaria (1845-1886) of the House of Wittelsbach, infamously spent inordinate amounts of money to sponsor music and architecture, leaving the Bavarian state on the verge of bankruptcy. He ascended the throne in 1864 at the age of eighteen and, from the early 1870s, devoted most of his time, energy and imagination to the construction of fairy-tale castles. Neuschwanstein, Linderhof and Herrenchiemsee are architectural reveries inspired by Teutonic legends and the work of the king's protégé, German composer Richard Wagner. The cult around the life of the Bavarian king, which grew exponentially after his mysterious death in 1886, lives on today and has originated a torrent of literature. In the extensive and ever-growing corpus of literary works either directly about or inspired by Ludwig II, certain names stand out. Paul Verlaine (1886), Guillaume Apollinaire (1913, 1916) and Fernando Pessoa (circa 1930) remember the ill-fated king in their writings, as do German novelists Karl May (1888), Klaus Mann (1937) and Thomas Mann (1947). Salvador Dalí, in turn, made him the centre of his paranoiac ballet *Bacchanale* (1939) and the king figures in several of his art pieces.¹ Aleister Crowley, in his eucharistic ritual *Liber XV: The Gnostic Mass* (1913), includes Ludovicus Rex Bavariae as one of the distinguished names to be worthily commemorated.² The life of the enigmatic sovereign has also captivated the interest of numerous filmmakers, including Ludwig Trautmann (1917-18), Rolf Raffé (1920), Otto Kreisler (1922), William Dieterle (1930, 1955), Jean Cocteau (1948), Luchino Visconti (1973), Hans-Jürgen Syberberg (1972, 1973, 1982), Donatello and Fosco Dubini (1993) and Marie Noelle and Peter Sehr (2012).

Ludwig was a man torn between reality and dream, sanity and insanity, cruelty and kindness, religious devotion and queer desire, who grew up at a time when Romanticism and Gothicism coincided and intersected. The king's place in the history of Germany, Western music and architecture is well known. His relation to the gothic tradition, however, has so far eluded scholarly criticism. By singling out this historical personage as my research subject, my aim is to formulate a reading of Ludwig II as a unique romantic gothic figure and failed hero. Scrutinising the king's friendship with his cousin, Empress Elisabeth of Austria (1837-1898), or Wagner lies beyond the remit of the present research. Likewise, I am not concerned here with surveying the historical accuracy of works of fiction, a task that could be easily undertaken by Ludwig scholars, historians or enthusiasts. Rather, I will integrate into my approach two distinct dimensions – the real person and the aestheticised legend – which, when combined, allow for a better understanding of Ludwig as Gothic. In so doing, my work offers an innovative, if sometimes uneasy, encounter between historical events, private accounts, literary descriptions and filmic portrayals. While this methodological strategy may seem oddly eclectic, it provides a more complete picture of Ludwig's Gothicism and suits his liminal status, initially acquired and cultivated during his lifetime and later mythologised. My analysis is guided by the interconnected concepts of gothic hero-villain, as defined by Helen

Stoddart, and failure.³ Ludwig's singular persona as an example of failed gothic heroism and kingship will emerge first through an exploration of wilful solitude and then through an investigation of the relation between madness and creativity Ludwig's death frames the final pages, which examine the monarch's life as representative of queer failure and offer further examples of his continued gothicisation.

The distinctive cacophony of an orchestra tuning fills the soundtrack. Framed from behind, we follow a couple as they enter the royal balcony box in the sumptuously ornate theatre of the Munich Residenz. Seemingly happy, the pair heads towards their respective seats. Suddenly, however, the woman comes to a halt and the camera briefly lingers on her astonished face – she is staring at an eerily deserted auditorium. There is a mix of terror and disbelief in her expression. Painfully realising that this will not be a typical night at the opera, she looks at her companion and exclaims: 'Ludwig...!'⁴ Ignoring her obvious discomfort and neglecting to make eye contact, Ludwig tells her they are going to hear Wagner's *The Rhinegold* (1854). He then signals the conductor and they take their seats. The first chords of the prelude to *The Ring of the Nibelung* cycle solemnly engulf all ambient noise. The orchestra plays for their ears only. The young woman immediately turns to Ludwig, but when he does not reciprocate her look, she refrains from speaking. In a medium close-up, followed by a subjective point-of-view shot, we watch as she inspects her surroundings. The haunting Wagnerian music and the sight of the majestic rococo theatre, with its crimson velvet furnishings and gold-plated carvings, virtually devoid of spectators, deeply disturbs her. A mere few seconds into the performance, unable to overcome her initial shock, she confesses: 'I don't understand; it frightens me'. Much to her dismay, Ludwig remains impervious and calm, staring blankly into the darkness. 'Why do you do this?', she asks impatiently. 'I must show you what our life will be like – if you remain with me. Alone, Sophie, with nobody... nobody', Ludwig tells her. 'You see, sometimes I see a light'. 'What kind of light?', Sophie interrupts. 'My light; it's my guide. When people are near, it disappears and lights away no more. It just disappears. Do you understand?'⁵ Sobbing, Sophie admits that she cannot do it; she cannot live without people and begs him to leave. This fictional exchange between King Ludwig II of Bavaria and is then fiancée and cousin, Duchess Sophie Charlotte (1847-1897), as depicted in Helmut Käutner's *Mad Emperor: Ludwig II* (1955), is paradigmatic in its representation of Ludwig as a king who deliberately makes himself a hostage of abandon and solitude. With the twisted gesture of forcing Sophie to make what seems to her an impossible choice, Ludwig succeeds in breaking off the engagement – he is once again free to be alone. Private performances in the Residenz Theatre and the Court Theatre in Munich became a regular feature in the king's life between 1872 and 1885.⁶

Adopting a solipsistic stance is one of the defining characteristics of romantic and gothic heroes. The latter are nonetheless substantially darker, more excessive and more dangerous than their purely romantic counterparts; likewise, they are more extreme when it comes to loneliness. Characters such as the eponymous Count in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) or the more romantic

Heathcliff in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and the Beast in Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* (1946), alone and ashamed in his immense castle of forlornness, patiently awaiting a much belated death, indicate that gothic heroes are not just lonely, but often live in self-imposed isolation. Towards the end of Käutner's film, Ludwig's beloved cousin, Empress Elisabeth of Austria, fondly known as 'Sisi', comes to visit him and he shows her around the island palace of Herrenchiemsee, his latest architectural venture. Modelled on Versailles and intended as a tribute to Louis XIV of France, *le Roi Soleil*, Ludwig takes special pride in its magnificent Hall of Mirrors, whose grandiosity surpasses the one at Versailles. He asks Sisi what she thinks of it. She looks around and replies that it is wonderful. 'But something's missing – people, music...', she remarks. 'I see the people. I hear the music', Ludwig explains. 'The best thing is that the people here don't have shadows.' 'But I mean *real* people, Ludwig. Will no guests come?', she asks. 'Whatever are you thinking, Sisi?'⁷ Ludwig's fascination with what Marina Warner calls 'states of inwardness' and his utter disbelief at his cousin's question confirm the voluntary seclusion of the self, foreshadowing the inevitable downfall of a mind that refuses and refutes the real world at all cost.⁸

In her memoirs, Countess Marie Larisch (1858-1940) attests to Ludwig's withdrawal from social interactions when she recounts a trip she once took to Berg Castle, on Lake Starnberg, with her aunt Sisi. She recalls that before she was allowed to enter the palace, Elisabeth told her to wait and went in alone, 'for Ludwig was even then a man of moods and had to be tactfully handled when an uninvited visitor was in question'.⁹ In the wake of Bavaria's defeat in the Austro-Prussian War (1866), Ludwig's power had waned substantially and he had become a constitutional monarch with little independence. In the years that follow, his political impotence grows, as does his detachment from state affairs. After Prussia's victory in the Franco-Prussian War (1870) and the unification of the German Empire in 1871, Ludwig effectively becomes a king with no kingdom, who reigns but no longer rules. Changes to the Penal Code, introduced by the newly formed German Empire, recriminalise homosexual acts under Paragraph 175, which may have added to Ludwig's already tumultuous internal struggles regarding his sexuality – intensifying, in turn, his 'moods' and his longing for solitude.¹⁰

King Ludwig, I suggest, stands as the epitome of the '*isolato*, or separate one' who, as William Hughes remarks, consigns himself to 'liminal spaces beyond human community'.¹¹ Preferring to retreat to his own oneiric delusions rather than accept the morose and petty reality of the dystopian everyday, the Bavarian king commences a progressive severance of ties with the social world by crafting a dream world for himself – one which materialises quietude and seclusion in stone. In his sublime fortresses of abandonment, hidden away amid scenic mountain peaks, dense forests and crystalline alpine lakes, he can become the kind of king he wants to be: one who privileges culture and the arts above all else and is not tied down by politics, menial tasks, financial constraints or an unwavering sense of duty towards his people. As the years go by, Ludwig confines himself to an ever-greater isolation and skilfully invents ways to shield him from the prying looks of others. In the oval dining rooms at Linderhof and Herrenchiemsee, he has a peculiar table designed, a

'Tischgen deck dich' ('table, set yourself'), so called after the magical wishing table from a tale by the Brothers Grimm (*KHM* 36).¹² By means of a winch, the table lowers directly to the kitchen through a hole on the floor, allowing the king to dine alone, undisturbed by servants. Still, Ludwig's almost uninterrupted privacy is not always lonely, as Theodor Hierneis, who apprenticed as a cook in the royal kitchens, explains:

[T]he king always ate alone, and in spite of this, every dish had to be prepared for four people. At first I accepted this as one of the many inexplicable prescriptions of court etiquette; but I later learned that the king imagined himself to be entertaining guests, that he thought himself in the world of the French kings who were his models and drank toasts and carried on conversations with La Pompadour, Madame de Maintenon and La Dubarry.¹³

In his gothic soirées, Ludwig rejoiced in entertaining ghostly guests, such as Marie Antoinette; Mary, Queen of Scots; Catherine the Great; Julius Caesar; Hamlet, Prince of Denmark; the Emperor Barbarossa and medieval poet Wolfram von Eschenbach, whose thirteenth-century work *Parzival* is represented in the murals of the Singers' Hall in Neuschwanstein.¹⁴ Conversing with dead kings, queens and other distinguished personalities links with the idea of 'the guests without shadows', which Käutner's Ludwig tells Sisi about when she visits Herrenchiemsee. Ludwig's gothic turn becomes increasingly apparent from the late 1870s. In fact, it is not just his reclusive demeanour and introvert disposition that, because excessive, devolve from Romantic into Gothic. Even in terms of physical appearance, Ludwig loses the aura of Prince Charming and moves away from the romantic ideal. Over the span of just ten years, he undergoes a somewhat Hydesian metamorphosis, going from the proverbial tall, dark and handsome hero, admired widely for his striking beauty, to an overweight adult with rotting teeth.¹⁵ These physical changes and resulting health issues parallel and fuel the king's progressive seclusion, heavily affecting his daily life. In effect, McIntosh attributes Ludwig's critical decision to acquiesce to Chancellor Otto von Bismarck's request and propose the Prussian king as the future Kaiser to a painful toothache, which left him in an 'uncharacteristically susceptible mood'.¹⁶ Visconti's cinematic portrayal of the king (*Ludwig*, 1973) depicts this historic moment: Ludwig is adamant about Bavaria remaining independent and not becoming a vassal of Prussia but, tired and unwell, easily caves to pressure and signs the *Kaiserbrief*. Countess Marie Larisch also addresses this regal ailment in an uncanny episode she witnesses when she is at last invited to enter Berg Castle on that day trip with her aunt Elisabeth:

I was ushered into a darkened room, and could discern my aunt seated in an arm-chair close to where Ludwig was lying on a *chaise longue* with his head enveloped in cotton-wool and bandages. The royal sufferer was the victim of a bad toothache, which attacked him periodically, as a result of his over-indulgence in sugar.

A little table, covered with bottles of all sizes, stood at his elbow, and, as I approached, Ludwig feebly waved his hand, but said nothing.¹⁷

Ludwig's melodramatic despondency in Larisch's account and his weakened commitment to crucial royal duties in Visconti's film, all due to such a prosaic malady, frame him as a poignantly pitiful caricature of a king. Larisch's careful description is thoroughly cinematic and wittily theatricalises her illustrious cousin's pain. The reader is treated to a sorry sight, with the taciturn 'royal sufferer' silently and 'feebly' greeting the Countess. The tragicomic element that subtends this family encounter is not lost on Elisabeth or the Countess. As the latter reports, the Empress taps her arm when she enters the room and tells her not to laugh, adding that the king wishes for her to seat at the piano and sing Elsa's music from Wagner's *Lohengrin* (1850).¹⁸ Tired after a two-hour horse ride from Feldafing, the hotel where Elisabeth usually summered, on the other side of Lake Starnberg, young Marie is not overly pleased by this request. Recalling a throat 'gritty with dust' from the ride and the absence of a music sheet, she nervously ventures into the music room and performs 'a Swan Song with a vengeance'.¹⁹ Ludwig is nevertheless 'obsessed by the toothache', she writes, 'and only required to be soothed somehow, and as my aunt was not at all musical, it did not signify much, so I attacked Elsa's score until the King took pity on me and told me I need not play any longer'.²⁰ James D. Wilson's and Wylie Sypher's remarks about the corrosion of the heroic ideal by disheartened romantic heroes resonate especially well with Ludwig's periodical dental predicament as described here. Wilson asserts that the tragic dilemma of romantic characters is that they often pervert the heroic ideal in such a way that it almost shifts into its opposite.²¹ Sypher, in turn, adds that romantic heroism easily collapses 'into tedium, ennui, if not despair or cynicism'.²² Stretched out on a chaise longue, waving his hand awkwardly to the unexpected guest, the king is emasculated, his romantic vitality waning under the weight of bandages, medication and cavity-ridden teeth.

Dieter Fuchs, in his analysis of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922), whose first section is partly inspired by the life of the melancholy king, suggests that Larisch's narration details the 'mock-heroic dimension' of Ludwig's self-fashioning as a modern-day Lohengrin, the Swan Knight of Arthurian literature and the titular character of Wagner's eponymous opera. Fuchs, following in the footsteps of Herbert Knust, advances that Ludwig, with his wounded – or failed – masculinity (here referring to his frail health and the fact that he did not produce an heir), functions more accurately as Fisher King Anfortas (who suffers from a chronic sexual injury) than as the saviour knight of the Holy Grail.²³ Similarly, Larisch's cynical reminiscences offer a clear representation of Ludwig not only as a failed king, but as a Romantic project gone wrong: his unwavering ambition to embody the heroic myths of Germanic legends fails and is the object of ridicule. The sombre royal setting and the excess of pain in Larisch's description accentuate the mock-heroic bearing of the sovereign who, with his self-imposed solitude, faulty heroism and decaying teeth, becomes wholly abject. Any vestiges of Romanticism quickly tip over into the realm of the gothic grotesque with the Countess's playfully sarcastic undermining of Ludwig's would-be heroic posture, which becomes more acerbic as she

continues her retelling of the day's events. After her subpar performance of Wagner's work, she walks back into the darkened room, where

Aunt Cissi [sic] was saying good-bye to the King, who rose from his chair and kissed her hand. I could hardly refrain from laughing, for Ludwig looked indeed an object for mirth. He was the tallest man in Bavaria, and as the bandages which had been tied round his face were left with long upstanding ends, his head looked somewhat like a large white owl's. He graciously extended his hand for me to kiss, and as he did so I was nearly overcome by the mingled odours of laudanum, chloroform, cloves, camphor, and other toothache cures, which it exhaled.²⁴

Larisch's difficulty to follow her aunt's advice and withhold laughter stresses the distinctly parodic gothic atmosphere that envelops this episode. Ludwig, intoxicated with 'toothache cures' and Wagner's music, is reminiscent of a large owl or mummy-like creature, far removed from the valiant Swan Knight he aspires to be. Syberberg's Brechtian production, *Ludwig II: Requiem for a Virgin King* (1972), concurs with this idea of Ludwig as a failed Lohengrin and relishes on theatrics to show how his myth has been damaged and neutralised by the culture industry.²⁵ In succeeding *tableaux*, Syberberg weaves together Wagnerian arias, dialogue, excerpts from old American radio shows and popular music in a complex 'fusion of fracture' – a story where facts, dreams and burlesque overlap, resulting in an extravagant mockery of the king.²⁶ There is one particular low-key sequence, nonetheless immediately striking due to the absence of music, which creatively displays a further element of caricature. The king and his associates quietly observe as servants perform the traditional washing of the feet of the twelve poorest people in the kingdom. As Ludwig moves around the room, the scratching sound of his long leather boots is painfully audible each time he bends his knees. He repeatedly tries to muffle the noise, but to no avail. This scene vividly contrasts Ludwig's deep-seated wish for a Louis XIV-style absolute monarchical rule with his obvious discomfort in his role as king. To Claudio Magris, his monarchy is both a caricature of romantic poetry and a caricatured continuation of it – of the unreasonable want to materialise alternative realities, where dreams, the exotic and the fantastic reign supreme.²⁷

Larisch, Magris and Syberberg reduce Ludwig's would-be heroism to humorous farce and, from their characterisation of the king, we realise that his passage from romantic to gothic hero proper never fully occurs. The 'perversion' and collapse that Wilson and Sypher describe separate, I argue, between a typically romantic Mr Darcy-like figure and a brooding gothic individual, whose rebellious quest (for love, beauty, immortality or freedom) condemns him to everlasting frustration – and often death. Ludwig remains a liminal figure that is no longer entirely romantic, but not wholly representative of gothic heroism either. As a rule, the gothic hero is not only flawed but villainous (an anti-hero), having usually 'fallen' from good to evil, as Victor Frankenstein or John Milton's Satan from *Paradise Lost* (1667). The king does 'fall' and follows a similar route to those prototypical gothic

heroes – a route paved with obsession, transgression and egotism – but his actions are never criminal or hateful, deserving of punishment or in need of repentance. Much like Byron's *Manfred* (1817), Ludwig combines both variants: he is the sensitive romantic hero who loves nature and beauty, but also the cruel gothic hero who abhors socialising, punishes his staff and would beg, borrow and steal to build his expensive personal playgrounds. He is the hero-villain who promotes the arts, but does so by readily squandering his family's fortune, and the king-villain who, despite his ardent anti-Prussianism, resigns to revising and signing the *Kaiserbrief*, thus consenting to the unification of the German states.

Referring back to Larisch's prose, the hint of dignified elegance that Ludwig's hand gesture retains heightens the pathetic effect and points to another key aspect of Ludwig's romantic Gothicism: his flair for performance. In an active effort to avoid having anyone encroach on his craving for peaceful solitude, Ludwig does more than shy away from socialising (with the living) and retreat to his castles, far from the hustle and bustle of the capital. From 1875, he lives by night and sleeps during the day, acting as a suitably gothic counterpoint to his adored Sun King.²⁸ Ludwig, the Moon King, starts breakfasting when others dine and takes up the habit of going on high-speed nocturnal rides in a neo-rococo gilt coach which, in wintry weather, turns into an open sleigh pulled by white horses.²⁹ The *Puttenschlitten*, a state-of-the-art sleigh built in 1872, stands as the first electrically-lit vehicle in Bavaria, if not the world.³⁰ Dashing through the snow-covered mountains, it pierces the surrounding darkness with its electric lights, delighting Bavarian peasants who are sometimes graced with impromptu visits from the king. Ludwig's nocturnal performances meld kingship, science and fantasy, and consolidate the legend of Ludwig II, the fairy-tale *Kini*, much beloved by the alpine people. The splendidous nighttime outings transfer well to film. Syberberg's portrayal of the mystic night travels overlaps image and voice off, reality and fiction, the present and the past, when an old peasant recalls the excitement of seeing and meeting the king during one of his sleigh rides. In a frontal medium shot, we watch Ludwig, in the night and in the snow, rush through the mountains while a hoarse female voice narrates the special moment of unique perfection when her mother carefully poured some water in a porcelain cup with painted roses and served it to the thirsty king. In this mini mockumentary – and, in fact, throughout Syberberg's unconventional biopic – Ludwig is memory and remembrance; he exists through storytelling and recollection, through the voices and testimonies of others, as a curious hand-me-down. The film plays with the ultimate impossibility of Ludwig's portentous dreams and highlights the gothic nuances of the king's character by depicting his life as a performance of inescapable ghostliness.

The monarch's unrelenting passion for the arts enacts both his yearning for isolation and his desire to avoid historical effacement. The Wittelsbachs were known for acting as generous benefactors of the arts, but Ludwig's reign takes this to extreme lengths. 'I want to – and this will sound absurd – but I've always wanted to establish a refuge for artists.' 'Yes, the mortal was created to guard and preserve the immortal', Bismarck replies to Ludwig in Käutner's film.³¹ This interchange

equates sponsoring the arts with divine duty. According to Wilson, the relation between art, ephemerality (the mortal) and immortality derives from the idea that the imagination, through artistic endeavours, provides mortals with their only experience of heavenly bliss.³² In the early years of his reign, Ludwig finds in his patronage of the ill-famed composer Richard Wagner a first outlet for his creative impulses. Rich in mythology, Wagner's music-dramas feed the imagination of the young king, who had spent most of his childhood in Hohenschwangau Castle, whose walls are covered in neo-gothic murals depicting scenes from Tannhäuser, the Holy Grail, Lohengrin and other Germanic legends.³³ The use of art forms in gothic works is a common device to expose the natural predisposition of the heroes to engage in peculiar or erratic behaviours. The trend finds its literary exponent in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) and continues in films such as *The Hands of Orlac* (1924), *While I Live* (1947) or *House of Wax* (1953). In Raffé's *The Silence at Starnberg Lake* (1920), Wagner tries to appease the king by telling him: 'Let the magic of art transport you to Valhalla'.³⁴ As in Käutner's film, artistic production and fruition are mysticised and linked to a sense of peace and godhood. The persistent pursuit of beauty that permeates Ludwig's life would, nonetheless, prove self-destructive. Ludwig's penchant for creating and erecting 'monuments to Bavarian art', as he calls his castles in Raffé's picture, is from the start deemed borderline pathological by many of his ministers, relatives and aides-de-camp.³⁵ Since his propensity to create does not subsume with time and instead his idiosyncrasies intensify, Ludwig acquires the reputation of 'mad king', which would thereafter remain inextricably linked to his image.

For over twenty-four hundred years, the connection between genius and madness has been surrounded by an aura of sublime mystery.³⁶ The 'pathogenesis of art', to use Annette Wheeler Carafelli's expression, attracts particular attention from the last decade of the eighteenth century and becomes even more prominent from the second half of the 1800s, when behavioural and psychological abnormalities are no longer disparaged or deemed the result of demonic possession, but viewed as worthy of scientific inquiry. Following the segregation of the mad by mid-seventeenth and eighteenth-century physicians, what Michel Foucault calls 'the Great Confinement', there appear new ways of diagnosing and controlling mental disorders without completely ostracising the patients, whom some physicians start treating more humanely.³⁷ In the nineteenth century, respected neuroanatomist and psychiatrist Bernhard von Gudden (1824-1886), who oversaw the treatment of Ludwig's brother Otto (1848-1916) and is later assigned to examine and care for the king, introduces a revolutionary no-restraint policy in mental institutions, which some indicate may have contributed to his untimely death.³⁸

A new 'rhetoric of pathology' develops from the mid nineteenth century, whereby the *furor poeticus* (artistic frenzy) of romantic and Victorian novelists, poets and artists, who alternate suddenly – and sometimes violently – between sane and insane patterns of thought comes under medical scrutiny.³⁹ The aetiology of mental illnesses turns into a key scientific and philosophical preoccupation. Members of the medical community start paying closer attention to the hypothesis that the pathologies of the mind and body could indicate an innate disposition for artistic talent – and

madness. This results in the romanticising of insanity, which is disseminated in the later nineteenth century and finds resonance in a series of case studies elaborated by the then emergent science of psychiatry. New theories of how the brain functions, fuelled by the psychiatric investigations of Jacques-Joseph Moreau (1804-1884), Bénédict Augustin Morel (1809-1873), Paul Julius Möbius (1853-1907) and von Gudden's assistant Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), along with studies by criminal anthropologist Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909) and physician Max Nordau (1849-1923), analyse the links between biological anomalies of the mind and artistic genius. According to some medical experiments, the 'artistic vein' could be physiologically detected in the diseased brain and body. Clara Tschudi touches on the pervasive aestheticisation of madness when she writes that 'The Bavarian people had accustomed themselves to Ludwig's peculiarities. Foreign states and peoples still regarded his ways and actions as signs of genius'.⁴⁰ Creativity and insanity went hand in hand.

Ludwig's ambition to crystallise his artistic visions knew no bounds. Towards the end of his life, the unfortunate king tirelessly tries to secure the sum needed to give tangible form to his chimerical castles and pay off his creditors by any means necessary. At one point, this included commanding a bank robbery – an order which was not carried out, but was later submitted as evidence of the king's deranged mind.⁴¹ Throughout most of his reign, Ludwig oscillates between 'moodily taciturn' and 'violently explosive', traits that, Stoddart claims, characterise gothic hero-villains.⁴² Larisch ascribes Ludwig's gradual gothicisation, from an intelligent 'romantic being' into an insane 'gross feeder', to heartbreak, suggesting that after calling off his betrothal to Sophie, the king's usual kindness changes into vicious cruelty towards his servants and he slowly develops into a 'moody creature, a victim to melancholia', 'obsessed' with a severe dislike for untrustworthy women.⁴³ The Countess here echoes Tschudi who also describes the king as a 'slave of melancholia' following his parting from Sophie.⁴⁴ This romanticised and heteronormalised justification for Ludwig's altered demeanour (represented as well in Raffé's film, for which Larisch wrote the script) is highly improbable and such a change is more likely connected to the king's two failed attempts to form a stronger Bavarian government, his brother's undeniable mental deterioration, his loss of authority following the wars, his failure to exteriorise his non-heteronormative sexuality or homoerotic proclivities (Ludwig was a devout Catholic) and the disintegration of his few remaining friendships, culminating in Wagner's death in 1883.⁴⁵ Importantly, however, the terms Larisch uses to characterise her cousin's behaviour – 'victim', 'moody', 'obsessed', 'melancholia' – intentionally medicalise it. Since antiquity, melancholia has been identified as a disease and, in the nineteenth century, it is characterised as an affective disorder whose pathological symptoms are rooted in emotional life. In the studies of Ludwig Snell, Carl Westphal and Wilhelm Sander, it appears as distinct from primary *Verrücktheit* or paranoia, an illness of the mind (reason).⁴⁶ The form of mental alienation designated as 'paranoia' is classified in many different ways, but two strains stand out: degenerative (congenital) and psycho-neurotic (understood as a complication of mania and melancholia).⁴⁷

Morel, who coined the term *démence précoce* (replaced, later in the nineteenth century, by Kraepelin's 'dementia praecox' and by Eugen Bleuler's 'schizophrenia' in the early twentieth century), is thought to have commented on the king's eyes during a trip to Munich in 1868, stating that they 'showed the presence of madness'.⁴⁸ Stoddart and Mario Praz consider 'unforgettable eyes' and 'melancholy habits' to be defining attributes of gothic heroes.⁴⁹ Morel, it should be noted, was a strong advocate of degeneration theory, based on the concept of heredity. Consanguinity, in particular, is held as a decisive factor in the production of mental aberrations, namely in royal families. Tschudi follows this line of reasoning, claiming that Ludwig's and Elisabeth's 'inherited nervous sufferings were the sorrow-laden undercurrent of their lives' and that 'insanity which was inherent in their race was to both of them a threatening spectre, which, sooner or later, would attack them too'.⁵⁰ The Wittelsbachs were widely known for their eccentricities well before Ludwig's accession to the throne. His family tree was rife with colourful characters, including his aunt, Princess Alexandra, who believed she had swallowed a glass piano, and his younger brother Otto, who wasted away in an asylum.⁵¹ It is therefore unsurprising that alienists at the time were quick to uncover 'the presence of madness' in Ludwig's unorthodox temperament and love of reclusion. In effect, heredity figures as a core argument in the documents that laid the dubious foundation for the king's diagnosis and subsequent deposition.⁵²

'Why do you think I am mentally ill?', Ludwig asks von Gudden in Raffé's picture. 'You are all much sicker than I. You saw me as crazy for consciously standing in opposition to an era that strives to take all that is lovely, noble and joyous out of life. You are the ones that are crazy, not I!'⁵³ As depicted in the film, Ludwig appears as a kind of hangover from romantic Gothicism into the age of psychiatric and psychoanalytic discovery. Scholarly articles about Ludwig's psychological and psychiatric traits are many and varied. The diagnoses most commonly put forward concern schizophrenia, autism or some type of neurodegenerative disease, although these works are almost invariably based on both the Commission's report and the coroner's report, whose accuracy has been repeatedly called into question. A mere six years after the king's death, Daniel Hack Tuke uses him as an example to introduce the definition of the condition of 'paranoia' in his *Dictionary of Psychological Medicine* (1892), explaining that it was 'the term employed by Dr. von Gudden in regard to the mental malady under which Leopold II. [sic] of Bavaria laboured'.⁵⁴ More recently, Hans Förstl et al. have advanced that Ludwig's symptoms are consistent with a diagnosis of schizotypal disorder and possible frontotemporal dementia.⁵⁵ D. v. Zerssen adds 'imperial madness' (a syndrome of addiction-like behavioural excesses) and a suspected orbitofrontal brain injury to the schizotypal personality diagnosis.⁵⁶ Other twenty-first-century accounts of the king's mental tribulations concur that the monarch showed no signs of mental illness and that psychiatry was machiavellianly politicised. Heinz Häfner and Felix Sommer have compiled and analysed a wealth of primary and secondary sources regarding the king's purported madness, concluding that there is no reliable information attesting that Ludwig II was mentally ill.⁵⁷ In Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* (1947), a novel that explores the troubled relationship between madness and creativity, the narrator

writes at length about a heated debate he and Rudolf Schwerdtfeger engaged in concerning Ludwig's insanity. To Rudi's interpretation of the events – that the king was 'completely crackers' – the narrator opposes his own view – that Ludwig's dethronement was 'unjustifiable, a brutal piece of philistinism', and a political move facilitated by six compliant professional alienists.⁵⁸ Insanity, he argues, can be used arbitrarily and the construction of 'monuments of royal misanthropy' – 'gilded solitudes in chosen sites of glorious natural beauty' – does not justify the verdict of mental derangement.⁵⁹

Knust writes that the king's life and death were a sacrifice for art and freedom of mind.⁶⁰ Whether some of his peculiarities were mere quirks or otherwise symptoms of an underlying psychiatric condition, the high sums invested in his imaginative projects and his cabinet's decision to depose him are indisputably linked. Whichever the accurate diagnosis might be, four facts remain indisputable: the king fell victim to the vicious machinations of those more powerful, shunned the company of others, loved architecture and the arts and was a visionary in his use of technology. In 1868, he founds the Polytechnic School in Munich, today the Technical University of Munich (TUM), and promotes electrical engineering with his modern projects. Ludwig's castles used the latest technological advances to bring the king's innovative ideas to fruition, as Herrenchiemsee castellan, Veronika Endlicher, notes.⁶¹ Neuschwanstein, Linderhof and Herrenchiemsee are futuristic anachronisms, built in the Romanesque Revival, neo-Rococo and neo-Baroque styles respectively and equipped with sophisticated technology, including especially-commissioned heaters with humidity control, battery-operated bell systems, flushing toilets, food lifts, glass roofs at Herrenchiemsee and the world's first coloured artificial lighting system in Linderhof's Venus Grotto – for which physics professor Wilhelm von Beetz, from the Polytechnic School, lent his expertise.⁶² The use of materials such as iron was relatively new at the time as well. In addition, together with the court engineer, Friedrich Brandt, Ludwig conceived of a peacock-shaped flying machine that would carry him over the Alps. His 'fondest wish', the desire to fly, would later be used against him as evidence of his madness, for even though steam-powered airships were actually in existence at the time, flying machines were nothing more than a utopian idea.⁶³ In bringing together fairy tale and high-tech, Ludwig was, in many ways, ahead of his time.

In the latter half of 1884, Ludwig severs almost all ties with normalcy, meeting only with a handful of people. 'Ludwig', Sisi begs her cousin in Raffé's film, 'do not bury yourself in your loneliness, for if you do...'. 'Elisabeth, there is no way out for me', he replies.⁶⁴ In Noelle and Sehr's *Ludwig II* (2012), Sisi – whom Maurice Barrès calls 'an Empress of solitude' – also establishes a causal effect between isolation and death, telling Ludwig that 'loneliness is a coffin'.⁶⁵ Leo Alexander writes that it 'was known that the King tended to react with impulsive threats of suicide whenever he was frustrated'.⁶⁶ The idea of death as the welcome end of a tormented existence is popular among German Romantics such as Kleist, Novalis and Goethe. As Margaret Higonnet remarks, 'the captain of this century – bracketed by Goethe's *Werther* and Emile Durkheim's *Le Suicide* – is death'.⁶⁷ In

his analysis of the *Todestrieb* in *Werther* (1774), Wilson links death and artistic creation, arguing that 'Werther desperately seeks self-annihilation, to become absorbed in transcendence', stating that only the arts can release him from the abhorrent prison of the self, which, however, does not preclude the inexorable return to solipsistic misery.⁶⁸ Anguished, forlorn and trapped, the self becomes, in Steve Vine's words, 'the cemetery of its own hopes, the graveyard of its own ambitions, the sepulchre of its own desires'.⁶⁹ For this reason, Syberberg's Ludwig falls to his feet, framed by the *décor* of *Parsifal*, to lament: 'I can't take it anymore'.⁷⁰ With this arresting image, which effects the dissolution of the self into pacified beauty, the king symbolically dies, much like a character from the operas he loved in a final act of over-dramatic performance.⁷¹

Media in vita in morte sumus ('In the midst of life, death surrounds us) is the motto of the *Guglmänner*, a secret society in Bavaria whose main focus is to prove that King Ludwig was murdered.⁷² In its formulation, this verse (taken from a Gregorian chant) echoes Portuguese writer Fernando Pessoa when he writes 'Death guides us, death seeks us, death accompanies us. All that we have is death, all that we want is death, and death is all that we care to want'.⁷³ In the first section of 'Funeral March for Ludwig II, King of Bavaria', Pessoa imagines a conversation between Ludwig and Death, in which the latter tries to seduce the German prince to surrender to her embrace. Ludwig figures here as a 'Sein zum Tode' (being-towards-death), painfully aware of his own mortality, his failings and inevitable demise.⁷⁴ Death tells Ludwig that he is doomed to being himself, someone who is 'haunted by phantoms, shadows of things, ghosts of gestures, stillborn desires, the flotsam from the shipwreck of living' – someone who will never find love, attain glory or keep power.⁷⁵ She entices him with promises of everlasting oblivion and the nocturnal beauty of her castle of darkness.

The second section is comprised of a long exaltation to the 'Sovereign King of Detachment and Renunciation, Emperor of Death and Shipwreck, living dream that grandly wanders among the world's ruins and wastes!'⁷⁶ Ludwig is praised as the 'Sovereign King of Despair amid splendours, grieving lord of palaces that don't satisfy [and] never succeed in blotting out life!'⁷⁷ Pessoa concludes, 'Your love for things dreamed was your contempt for things lived. Virgin King who disdained love,/ Shadow King who despised light,/ Dream King who denied life!'⁷⁸ Ludwig is the 'King of Death', who Darkness acclaims Emperor.⁷⁹ Pessoa's words throughout the text emphasise the many wants in the life of the lonely king – particularly the inescapable emptiness that nothing and no one could ever fill – and exculpate him from any shortcomings, for, as the author writes, the house he inherited was in ruins, the lands he received had lost their fruits to frost and weeds had covered the paths and walkways where his feet had never trod.⁸⁰ Pessoa's Ludwig is predestined to fail, his actions and struggles ultimately useless, his life condemned to outsiderdom and to seeing beauty succumb to circumambient unsightliness.

The end of Ludwig's life unfolds quickly, as it should, for the moment he crossed the threshold that stood in between the fantasy world he had so laboriously created for himself and the crudeness of real life, he was already dead. On 11 June 1886, King Ludwig II of Bavaria is forced out of Neuschwanstein, his own private Monsalvat, and led to Berg Castle – one of his habitual residences

and the backdrop of Marie Larisch's uncanny encounter with the frail and toothache-suffering mock-Lohengrin. The previous day, von Gudden and a Special Commission had declared the king insane and unfit to rule. Their diagnosis of 'primary insanity', later renamed 'paranoid psychosis', is based on hearsay, written accounts and interviews conducted with members of the court.⁸¹ None of the medical experts involved actually examined the king in person. On 13 June, two days after being imprisoned at Berg, the castle-turned-asylum, the king is found dead in Lake Starnberg along with his 'doctor-jailer', as Mann's narrator calls von Gudden, having supposedly drowned in shallow waters under circumstances that have remained an entrancing mystery ever since.⁸² Examining the validity of the wealth of arguments about the death of the king is beyond the scope of this work; specific details, however, deserve to be highlighted, as they promote the continued mythologisation and gothicisation of Ludwig II. For instance, the coroner found no water in the king's lungs, which would disprove the drowning theory; there are accounts of bullet holes in his overcoat; reports that those who had witnessed the removal of the bodies from the lake and the autopsy had been sworn to secrecy; and the fact that, on that fateful evening, Sisi was staying at Feldafing, just across the lake. KAUTNER, Dieterle and Raffé portray the king's death as a failed escape attempt facilitated, in the first film, by Elisabeth (a prevailing theory is that the king might have suffered a heart attack while trying to swim across the lake). Visconti is more tentative in his staging, but appears to concur with the murder theory. When night falls and the prolonged absence of Ludwig and von Gudden becomes worrying, Count Holnstein, Grand Master of the Horse – a former confidant of Ludwig's and a member of the Commission who strongly advocated that the king be deposed – says he will fire a warning shot when he finds the king and the doctor. Moments later, we hear two shots, just before the lifeless bodies of the two men are dragged out of the lake. Murder-suicide is the interpretative choice of Noelle and Sehr.

Marie Larisch's memoirs, which have not been subjected to thorough scholarly analysis, provide some of the best examples of Ludwig's gothicisation. Particularly interesting is the episode in which she details the prophetic encounter that supposedly followed her visit to Ludwig at Berg Castle. Shortly after departing, she and Elisabeth are caught in a violent storm, which forces them to seek shelter in an old cottage, where a fisherman's widow lives. The distressed woman tells the unexpected guests about her son, who perished at Lake Starnberg seven years earlier, but who she is convinced will return to her one day when another – who, she says, is not far from the cottage – takes his place. An experienced storyteller, Larisch describes an appropriately gothic setting for her story of death and omens, confessing that the widow's 'uncanny statement' sounded horrible as the lightning flashed, the thunder rolled and 'the wind and the rain beat mournfully against the window'.⁸³ After the prophecy is fulfilled with Ludwig's death, Larisch narrates a conversation with her aunt, in which Elisabeth confesses that she often speaks to Ludwig, whose soul has not found peace, and that he has even appeared to her, his clothes heavy with water.⁸⁴

'Swan King', 'kitsch king', 'Hamlet-King', 'homo mythicus', 'architect of dreams', 'the last of the patrons': Ludwig II of Bavaria exists as a haunting romantic gothic figure in contemporary popular

culture.⁸⁵ His image retains a mystical aura that combines not only the oneiric qualities (and the literal and figurative Disneyfication) of his castles, but also loss, suffering and impotence. As a pop culture icon, he lives on as a beloved mad king, his life often sanitised (read, heteronormalised) or reduced to pitiful mockery, as in Syberberg's film. The king represents, in the early years of his reign, the romantic ideal of the seductive sullen hero with a scarred soul and noble intentions, but, over time, his creative merging of science and art, excessive reclusiveness, self-destructive behaviour and peremptory refusal to capitulate to the mediocrity of mundane existence, no matter the cost, demarcate him as a romantic gothic iteration of Promethean anti-heroism. As René-Marill Albérès explains, self-imposed solitude and an audacious refusal to accept proven formulae define the Promethean anti-hero.⁸⁶ Ludwig's anti-heroism and enduring myth are predicated on the myriad failures he experiences during his 22-year reign. Guy de Pourtalès highlights the monarch's failed kingship and failed heroism, citing as evidence his supposed lack of love for his people and the failure to secure both his crown and his friendships.⁸⁷ As king, he loses the war against Prussia, resulting in the kingdom's subservience to the Prussian prince, Wilhelm I; he signs over Bavaria's independence to Bismarck, effectively creating the conditions that would lead to the rise of *völkisch* nationalism and two world wars; he neglects state affairs; dissolves his engagement; does not produce an heir and, in the end, fails to secure his throne. In perverting the (heteronormative) archetypes of both the romantic and the gothic hero, his journey – his quest – does not lead to the Grail Castle, to heroic marriage or redemption.

Pessoa uses the king's failure against him to persuade him to yield to Death's proposition. She proceeds to offer him that which he lacks above all: companionship and a throne, assuring him that he will 'for ever be the undethronable emperor of the Mystery and the Grail'.⁸⁸ The word 'undethronable' is key here. Perhaps the most fulgurating example of Ludwig's failure – of his inability to rule and transmogrify his dreams of absolutism, independence and queer companionship into reality – is, in fact, the missing throne in Neuschwanstein's Throne Hall. This conspicuous absence is, as Sean F. Edgecomb explains, a metaphor or microcosm for a world in which Ludwig, through incessant scrutiny, responsibility and positionality, would always be the misunderstood and queer other.⁸⁹ Like the castles themselves (Herrenchiemsee and Neuschwanstein), which were left unfinished, the Throne Hall remains incomplete, lacking – its void representing Ludwig's life as a 'vacant interlude' and paradoxically materialising, through absence, the infallible impossibility of the king's dreams.⁹⁰ As a reflection of Ludwig's romantic imaginings, Neuschwanstein is, therefore, as Michael Rozendal observes, 'complete in its incompleteness'.⁹¹ In turn, one of Linderhof's more striking singularities, in turn, is the absence of a Throne Room altogether. Usually the largest and more sumptuous room located at the core of a palace or castle, the place to which all other rooms converge, the fact that the king chose to omit it is telling of his self-fashioning as a failed hero and king. He emerges instead as a hero-worshipper – a worshipper of Wagner with an 'almost servile' admiration for Louis XIV, Marie Antoinette and all the other ghostly guests at his dinner parties.⁹² A 'fanboy of the *ancient regime*' who 'built castles as a form of fan fiction', in the words of Rozendal,

Ludwig is representative of the fallen aristocracy that Eliot describes, through Marie Larisch, in the opening lines of *The Waste Land*.⁹³

A queer man haunted by guilt ('Never again, never again', he repeats in his diaries), Ludwig crystallises the frustrating struggles of a queer subject in a society that attaches deviance, sinfulness and depravity to non-normativity.⁹⁴ J. Halberstam and José Esteban Muñoz theorise queer failure as productive; by 'turn[ing] on the impossible, the improbable, the unlikely, and the unreachable', the queer art of failure 'quietly loses, and in losing it imagines other goals for life, for love, for art, and for being'.⁹⁵ Failure becomes to an extent successful, because it offers an alternative to the norm, representing resistance against institutionalised control and a refusal to acquiesce to the 'dominant order and its systemic violence'.⁹⁶ Reading Ludwig's failure through queerness therefore delineates a poignant socio-political critique, even though the 'kernel of potentiality' within it is not wholly concretised, for Ludwig never accepts his sexuality.⁹⁷ Still, Ludwig's failure as king and queer man directly resists and interrogates (if passively) the treacherous machinations of authority. In this sense, queer failure relates to the figure of the hero-villain, who also 'serves more to throw social and sexual repression into relief than [...] to demonstrate the possibility of legitimate redress or reform', as Stoddart argues.⁹⁸ Ludwig's silent plight is emblematised by the striking image of a tearful child-Ludwig walking hopelessly towards the camera at the end of Syberberg's film, which reminds us that his tragic end at the hands of ruthless statesmen and disloyal members of the Court signifies the death of innocence. Ultimately, then, Ludwig's failure is significant because it encapsulates a Germany that could have been, more invested in the arts than in war.

In the cumulative picture I have built of Ludwig II as a romantic gothic figure, there are many stories and historical details that I have had to leave out. I will end with a most peculiar episode that unearths a final link between Ludwig and the Gothic, confounding even more Ludwig's different facets – the real person, the fictional character and the personified metaphor. In November 1886, five months after the king's death, American journalist and writer Lew Vanderpoole (1855-?) publishes an extensive interview he had allegedly conducted with the monarch in 1882. During the audience, King Ludwig purportedly notices an article about Edgar Allan Poe among the papers scattered on the table, an article that Vanderpoole claims he was writing for *Le Figaro*. A two-hour conversation ensues, in which the king confesses his admiration for Poe, 'that most wonderful of all writers', and expounds on the many similarities between his and Poe's personality. Ludwig, the hero-worshipper, is reported as stating that he would sacrifice his right to the crown to have Poe on earth for a single hour.⁹⁹ He also addresses the question of his own madness, observing that 'much of the phenomenon which is called insanity is really over-sensitiveness'.¹⁰⁰ Vanderpoole, it turns out, was notorious for his forgeries in the 1880s and was even arrested in September 1887 following the sale of fraudulent manuscripts to *Cosmopolitan* magazine.¹⁰¹ Until Luc Roger uncovered this likely literary hoax in 2017, Vanderpoole's piece was studied at length by Ludwig enthusiasts, historians and scholars and relied upon as containing factual information.¹⁰² The interview's historical unreliability notwithstanding, I agree with Alfons Schweiggert (whose 2008 book, *Edgar Allan Poe und König*

Ludwig II, is based on Vanderpoole's article) that 'if it is not true, it is at least well invented'.¹⁰³ In typical gothic fashion, Vanderpoole mixes authenticity and counterfeit, and the result is an uncanny study of the king's romantic Gothicism. As it happens, Vanderpoole was the first person to understand the king as Gothic and his tall tale remains an invaluable curio for scholars.

Notes

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- ⁴ Helmut Käutner dir., *Mad Emperor: Ludwig II* (1955).
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Christopher McIntosh, *The Swan King: Ludwig II of Bavaria*, (London, I.B. Tauris, 2012), 215; Kurt Hommel, *Die Separatvorstellungen vor König Ludwig II. von Bayern: Schauspiel, Oper, Ballett*, (Munich, Laokoon, 1963).
- ⁷ Käutner dir., *Mad Emperor*.
- ⁸ Marina Warner, *Phantasmagoria: Spirit Visions, Metaphors, and Media into the Twenty-first Century*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006), 210.
- ⁹ Marie Larisch, *My Past: Reminiscences of The Courts of Austria and Bavaria; Together with the True Story of the Events Leading Up to the Tragic Death of Rudolph, Crown Prince of Austria*, (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), 65.
- ¹⁰ Robert Beachy, 'The German Invention of Homosexuality', *The Journal of Modern History*, 82:4 (December 2010), 801-838, 807-808.
- ¹¹ William Hughes, *Historical Dictionary of Gothic Literature*, (Plymouth, The Scarecrow Press, 2013), 127.
- ¹² Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, 'Von dem Tischgen deck dich, dem Goldesel und dem Knüppel in dem Sack', in *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Vol. 1, (Berlin, Realschulbuchhandlung, 1812), 161-171.
- ¹³ Theodor Hierneis, *The Monarch Dines: Reminiscences of Life in the Royal Kitchens at the Court of King Ludwig the Second of Bavaria*, translated by Martin Cooper, (London, Werner Laurie, 1954), 19-20.
- ¹⁴ Larisch, *My Past*, 175-176.
- ¹⁵ Werner Bertram, *A Royal Recluse: Memories of Ludwig II of Bavaria*, translated by Margaret McDonough, (Munich, Martin Herpich & Son, 1936), 16, 19, 31 and 57.
- ¹⁶ McIntosh, *The Swan King*, 173-174.
- ¹⁷ Larisch, *My Past*, 65.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 65.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., 66.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 66.
- ²¹ James D. Wilson, *The Romantic Heroic Ideal*, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 170.
- ²² Wylie Sypher, *Loss of the Self in Modern Literature and Art*, (New York, Random House, 1962), 20.
- ²³ Dieter Fuchs, "'Myth Today": The Bavarian-Austrian Subtext of T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land"', *Poetica*, 44:3/4 (2012), 379-393, 385-386; Herbert Knust, *The Artist, the King, and "The Waste Land": Richard Wagner, Ludwig II, and T.S. Eliot*, doctoral dissertation, (1961), 9, 19-20, 39.
- ²⁴ Larisch, *My Past*, 65-66.
- ²⁵ Paul Coates, *The Gorgon's Gaze: German Cinema, Expressionism and the Image of Horror*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991), 121.
- ²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta, (London, Continuum, 2005), 343; Coates, *The Gorgon's Gaze*, 121.
- ²⁷ Claudio Magris, *Journeying*, translated by Anne Milano Appel, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2018), 101.
- ²⁸ Bavarian Palace Administration, 'King Ludwig II: Short Biography', <https://www.schlosslinderhof.de/englisch/ludwig/biography.htm> (accessed 24 July 2019).
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- ³¹ Käutner dir., *Mad Emperor*.
- ³² Wilson, *The Romantic Heroic Ideal*, 35.
- ³³ McIntosh, *The Swan King*, 15.
- ³⁴ Rolf Raffé dir., *The Silence at Starnberg Lake* (1920).
- ³⁵ Raffé dir., *The Silence at Starnberg Lake*.
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Field Code Changed

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- ³⁷ Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, translated by Richard Howard, (Oxon, Routledge, 2005), 36-60; Andrew Harper, 'A Treatise on the Real Cause and Cure of Insanity (1789)', in *Patterns of Madness in the Eighteenth Century: A Reader*, edited by Allan Ingram, (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1998), 175-186.
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- ⁴¹ Philipp Fürst Eulenberg-Hertefeld, *Das Ende König Ludwigs II. und andere Erlebnisse*, (Leipzig, Grunow, 1934), <https://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/das-ende-konig-ludwigs-ii-und-andere-erlebnisse-2359/4> (accessed 10 September 2019); Hans Rall, 'The Life and Death of King Ludwig II', translated by Leslie Owen, in *King Ludwig II: Reality and Mystery*, by Hans Rall, Michael Petzet and Franz Merta, (Regensburg, Schnell & Steiner, 2001), 7-66, 43-46.
- ⁴² Stoddart, 'Hero-Villain', 177.
- ⁴³ Larisch, *My Past*, 173.
- ⁴⁴ Tschudi, *Ludwig the Second*, 158.
- ⁴⁵ Rall, 'The Life and Death of King Ludwig II', 37-43. Frances Gerard, *The Romance of King Ludwig II. of Bavaria: His Relations with Wagner and His Bavarian Fairy Places*, (London, Jarrold & Sons, 1901), 230-231; McIntosh, *The Swan King*, 155-158.
- ⁴⁶ Ludwig Snell, 'Über Monomanie als primäre Form der Seelenstörung', *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*, 22 (1865), 368-381; Carl Westphal, 'Ueber die Verrücktheit', *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*, 34 (1878), 252-257; Wilhelm Sander, 'Über eine spezielle Form der primären Verrücktheit', *Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten*, 1 (1868-1869), 387-419.
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- ⁵¹ McIntosh, *The Swan King*, 277.
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- ⁵³ Raffé dir., *The Silence at Starnberg Lake*.
- ⁵⁴ Tuke, 'Paranoia', 887 ; Förstl et al., 'Case report', 499.
- ⁵⁵ Förstl et al., 'Case report', 502.
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- ⁶⁰ Knust, *The Artist, the King, and 'The Waste Land'*, 17.
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