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Veronal Sleep

White Market Drugs and Public Health in Arthur Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else*

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Abstract Existing scholarship has demonstrated that the literary and medical writings of the author-physician Arthur Schnitzler are inextricably intertwined. Yet very little attention has been paid to problems of pharmacology, although medical substances appear frequently in his works. Based on a discovery in the corporate archives of the pharmaceutical giant Bayer – the finding that the company took notice of (and issue with) the role of the soporific Veronal in Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* – the article proposes a reading that situates this novella in the context of the ›Veronal culture‹ of the early twentieth century. Providing the first reading of *Fräulein Else* with a focus on the soporific, the present article reveals that one dimension of the novella consists in a literary intervention into debates about public health.

Veronalschlaf

Medizinalpoetik und Public Health in Arthur Schnitzlers *Fräulein Else*

Zusammenfassung Die Schnitzler-Forschung hat gezeigt, dass die medizinischen und die literarischen Schriften des Schriftsteller-Arztes eng verflochten sind. Dennoch haben pharmakologische Problemstellungen, wie sie für die ärztliche Praxis der Moderne grundlegend sind, bislang nur wenig Aufmerksamkeit bei der Auseinandersetzung mit Schnitzlers Werk erfahren, obwohl sie dort immer wieder zentral werden. Ausgehend von einem Fund im Archiv des Pharmakonzerns Bayer – die Firma nahm Anstoß an der Verwendung des Schlafmittels Veronal in *Fräulein Else* – liest dieser Aufsatz Schnitzlers Novelle erstmals vor dem Hintergrund der ›Veronal-Kultur‹ des frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts. Dabei erweist sich, dass *Fräulein Else* auch eine Intervention in die Public Health-Diskurse seiner Zeit beinhaltet.

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When Arthur Schnitzler published his novella *Fräulein Else* in 1924, it quickly attracted scrutiny from the pharmaceutical industry. As a memo discovered in the corporate archives of the pharmaceutical giant Bayer reveals, the research officers at the company sensed that the text by the Austrian author and physician had implications for their own core business of innovating and selling drugs.[1] This is so because *Fräulein Else* mobilizes Veronal, the world's most popular soporific well into the twentieth century, to put the novella's protagonist into a somnolent state at the edges of consciousness: Veronal connects pharmaceutical and literary experiments. The article at hand demonstrates that the drug is central to grasping the novella's formal work, contemporary gender politics, and corporate discursive strategies.

In literary history, *Fräulein Else* features as a modernist classic for two reasons: for its dialogue with Sigmund Freud who famously called Schnitzler his »doppelgänger«[2] and for »perfecting«[3] the interior monologue, a narrative technique which relates thoughts, feelings, and sense perceptions of characters without marked auctorial remediation.[4] This technique creates the impression that one can witness all mental events in Else's consciousness, including the Veronal poisoning at the end of the novella. Sweeping studies have examined *Fräulein Else*'s narrational

[1] Bayer AG, Corporate History and Archives, Pharma, Produkte A-Z, 166/8: Veronal, 1924-1926, doc. 5224, Nov 22, 1924. The document is signed by Dr. Lomnitz and Dr. Peiser. All further references to it will appear in the text under the abbreviation BAL: V; references to the archive as BAL. I would like to thank the archivists at Bayer very much. Without their extraordinary openness and support, this article could not have been written. I am also grateful for input by many friends and the thoughtful suggestions of the anonymous reviewers. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

[2] See Freud's letter to Schnitzler, May 14, 1922, reprinted in Sigmund Freud, »Briefe an Arthur Schnitzler«, *Die neue Rundschau* 66 (1955), 95–106, here 96–97. Especially Freud's theories of hysteria have been discussed with regard to *Fräulein Else*, e.g., Elisabeth Bronfen, »1924, October: Arthur Schnitzler's Novella *Fräulein Else* published in *Die Neue Rundschau*«, in: *A New History of German Literature*, ed. David E. Wellbery et al., Cambridge, MA 2004, 738–43. For a general overview of the relations between Freud and Schnitzler (and their works) see Michael Worbs, *Nervenkunst: Literatur und Psychoanalyse im Wien der Jahrhundertwende*, Frankfurt a. M. 1983, 179–258; Michaela L. Perlmann, *Der Traum in der literarischen Moderne: Untersuchungen zum Werk Arthur Schnitzlers*, München 1987, 32–62; Horst Thomé, *Autonomes Ich und »Inneres Ausland«: Studien über Realismus, Tiefenpsychologie und Psychiatrie in deutschen Erzähltexten (1848-1914)*, Tübingen 1993, 598–644; Horst Thomé, »Die Beobachtbarkeit des Psychischen bei Arthur Schnitzler und Sigmund Freud,« in: *Arthur Schnitzler im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*, ed. Konstanze Fliedl, Wien 2003, 51–66.

[3] Jörg Pottbeckers, »Hatte Leutnant Gustl Hunger? Einige späte Bemerkungen zur Entstehung des inneren Monologs bei Arthur Schnitzler und Knut Hamsun«, *Studia Austriaca* 20 (2012), 85–105, here 85.

[4] Dorrit Cohn, *Transparent Minds*, Princeton 1978; Wolf Schmid, *Elemente der Narratologie*, 3., erweiterte und überarbeitete Auflage, Berlin 2014; Michael Niehaus, »Zur Vorgeschichte des ›inneren Monologs‹«, *Arcadia* 29 (1994), 225–39.

[5] Wolfgang Lukas and Ursula von Keitz, »›Stimme‹ und ›Partitur‹: Zu Arthur Schnitzlers *Fräulein Else*«, in: *Textschicksale: das Werk Arthur Schnitzlers im Kontext der Moderne*, ed. Wolfgang Lukas and Michael Scheffel, Berlin 2017, 185-210; Nicola Gess, »Intermedialität Reconsidered: vom Paragone bei Hoffmann bis zum Inneren Monolog bei Schnitzler«, *Poetica* 42 (2010), 139–68; Mario Gomes, *Gedankenlesemaschinen: Modelle für eine Poetologie des Inneren Monologs*, Freiburg im Breisgau 2008, 153–74; Craig Morris, »Der vollständige innere Monolog: eine erzählerlose Erzählung? Eine Untersuchung am Beispiel von *Leutnant Gustl* und F*räulein Else*«, *Modern Austrian Literature* 31/2 (1998), 30–51; Cohn (note 4), 232–46.

[6] Elisabeth Bronfen, »Weibliches Sterben an der Kultur,« in: *Die Wiener Jahrhundertwende: Einflüsse, Umwelt, Wirkungen*, ed. Jürgen Nautz and Richard Vahrenkamp, Wien 1996, 464–80; Bettina Matthias, »Arthur Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* and the End of the Bourgeois Tragedy,« *Women in German Yearbook*

strategies,[5] aspects of gender and sexuality,[6] and the text's historical contexts,[7] but it has never been attempted to read the novella with a focus on Veronal. In which ways does Schnitzler – a physician with the reputation of writing literary case studies that are »›correct‹ from a clinical point of view«[8] – integrate the medical and pharmacological knowledge of his time? How does Schnitzler's use of Veronal inflect the interior monologue and (female) agency in the text? To what extent does *Fräulein Else* present an intervention into public health debates?

Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* includes a critical rewriting of contemporary discussions about Veronal: the text negotiates a public health crisis caused by a »white market drug,«[9] a market that supplied medically and legally approved substances which develop their own agency. Agency is here understood in terms of Thomas de Quincey's definition given in his quintessential drug narrative: »Not the opium-eater, but the opium is the true hero of the tale; and the legitimate centre on which the interest revolves. The object was to display the marvellous agency of opium.«[10] *Mutatis mutandis*, this article centers on Veronal and seeks to shed light on its cultural, medical, and literary agency in Schnitzler's work.

This approach requires both continuing and disrupting existing scholarship. It continues a longstanding scholarly project which demonstrates that the literary and medical writings of the author-physician are inextricably intertwined.[11] Yet it also

18 (2002), 248–66; Gabriele Brandstetter, »Ökonomie und Vergeudung. Performance und Nacktheit bei Arthur Schnitzler und Marina Abramovic,« in: *Transgressionen. Literatur als Ethnographie*, ed. Gerhard Neumann, Freiburg im Breisgau 2003, 287–313; Martina Caspari, »Durchkreuzungen des zeitgenössischen Hysterie-Diskurses,« *Germanic Notes and Reviews* 36 (2006), 5–28; Juliane Vogel, »Hautnähe und Körperhaftung. Kleider bei Arthur Schnitzler«, in: *Arthur Schnitzler: Affairen und Affekte*, ed. Evelyne Polt-Heinzel and Gisela Steinlechner, Wien 2006, 25–33; Barbara Neymeyr, »*Fräulein Else*: Identitätssuche im Spannungsfeld von Konvention und Rebellion,« in: *Arthur Schnitzler, Dramen und Erzählungen*, ed. Hee-Ju Kim and Günter Sasse, Stuttgart 2007, 190–208.

7 Wolfgang Lukas, *Das Selbst und das Fremde: epochale Lebenskrisen und ihre Lösung im Werk Arthur Schnitzlers*, München 1996; Thomé (note 2); Achim Aurnhammer, *Arthur Schnitzlers intertextuelles Erzählen*, Berlin 2013; Franziska Schößler, »Börse und Begehren. Schnitzlers Monolog *Fräulein Else* und seine Kontexte,« in: *Arthur Schnitzler. Affairen und Affekte*, ed. Evelyne Polt-Heinzl and Konstanze Fliedl, Wien 2006, 119–29; Alexandra Tacke, *Schnitzlers »Fräulein Else« und die nackte Wahrheit: Novelle, Verfilmungen und Bearbeitungen*, Köln 2017.

8 Konstanze Fliedl, *Arthur Schnitzler*, Stuttgart 2005, 105.

9 David L. Herzberg, *White market drugs: big pharma and the hidden history of addiction in America*, Chicago 2020.

10 Thomas De Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater and Other Writings*, New York 2013, 77. This use of agency differs slightly from currently prevailing notions of agency propagated especially by the work of Bruno Latour.

11 Schnitzler's medical writings are easily accessible in Arthur Schnitzler, *Medizinische Schriften*, ed. Horst Thomé, Wien 1988. For scholarship on Schnitzler's medical writing see Klara Gross-Elixmann, *Poetologie und Epistemologie: Schreibstrategien und Autorschaftskonzepte in Arthur Schnitzlers medizinischen Texten*, Würzburg 2016; Hillary Herzog, »›Medizin ist eine Weltanschauung‹: On Schnitzler's Medical Writings«, in: *A Companion to the Works of Arthur Schnitzler*, ed. Dagmar Lorenz, Woodbridge 2003, 227–242; Laura Otis, *Membranes, Metaphors of Invasion in Nineteenth-Century Literature, Science, and Politics*, Baltimore 1999, 119–147; Thomé (note 2), 598–722; Worbs (note 2). This scholarship reconstructs Schnitzler's medical training and his ongoing practice, it unpacks Schnitzler's relationship to contemporary psychiatry and psychoanalysis, it tracks the literary transformations of clinical pictures (for example, hysteria, tuberculosis, paranoia, and syphilis), it uncovers the cross-fertilization of practices such as hypnosis, and it illuminates the function of »epistemic genres« such as the medical review and the case

disrupts existing scholarship which has paid too little attention to the role of medicinal drugs in Schnitzler's oeuvre, although they feature frequently in his writings.[12] Veronal in *Fräulein Else*, for example, has been mainly considered a suicide prop; in particular, it has elicited speculation as to whether the ingested dose of Veronal suffices to kill the protagonist.[13] But if one approaches *Fräulein Else* with a main focus on the medicinal drug, it becomes evident that Veronal plays a foundational role for the text (and the culture from which it emerged), and that Schnitzler's engagement with issues of public health was by no means limited to questions of sexual and social hygiene[14] – it also reaches into the social scaling of pharmacology.

Read alongside Schnitzler's medical writings, *Fräulein Else* reveals that the author-physician considers medicinal substances an attempt to provide a »techno-fix« that, on a societal level, cannot address the deeper social issues that have given rise to many diseases in the first place; instead of providing a cure, drugs generate new problems such as addiction or accidents. The large-scale distribution of pharmacological substances effectively covers up symptoms, causes, and social side effects by pushing them into the latency of individual suffering. To unmask these systematic shrouding mechanisms, Schnitzler does not turn to psychoanalysis, but to literature. The interior monologue of *Fräulein Else* serves to render visible the problems associated with Veronal in their social situatedness. The novella therefore reads like a case study that stages them within the framework of a dramatic conflict.

All in all, this approach nuances existing studies: it does in no way encourage or imply a reductive reading that promotes a monocausal pharmacological interpretation of the novella. Veronal is one of many elements in the repertoire of Schnitzler's interior monologue. Still, a sustained focus on the pharmacological dimension of Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* reveals that the text comprises a literary intervention into public health policy. The article at hand unfolds this facet of the text in five steps. Its first and second section provide historical context and situate Schnitzler's novella vis-à-vis newspaper reports about Veronal suicides. The third section sketches the public health theory of the author-physician and situates *Fräulein Else* within other narratives about drug accidents in his work. The fourth and fifth sections weave all

history, as detailed in Gianna Pomata, »The Medical Case Narrative: Distant Reading of an Epistemic Genre«, *Literature and Medicine* 32 (2014), 1–23. See also Nicolas Pethes, Sandra Richter (Ed.), *Medizinische Schreibweisen: Ausdifferenzierung und Transfer zwischen Medizin und Literatur (1600-1900)*, Tübingen 2008.

[12] Pharmacological and medicinal substances appear in Schnitzler's medical writings such as the review of Unverricht's *Über moderne Fieberbehandlung* (1887), the review of Erlenmeyer's *Die Morphiumsucht und ihre Behandlung* (1888), the editorial »Silvesterbetrachungen« (1889), the review of Semmola's *Vorlesungen über experimentelle Pharmakologie* (1890) and in literary texts such as the drama *Der Ruf des Lebens* (1906), the story *Der Mörder* (1911), the *Traumnovelle* (1926), and *Fräulein Else*. The only scholar who has considered this topic so far identifies only three reviews that thematize pharmacological questions, which underestimates its proliferation. See Gross-Elixmann (note 11), 73.

[13] The article reevaluates this discussion in section V. For the controversy in scholarship see Hartmut Scheible, »Arthur Schnitzler«, in: *Deutsche Dichter des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Hartmut Steinecke, Berlin 1994, 11–31, here 28–29; Karin Tebben, »Selbstmörderinnen in der deutschen Literatur des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts – zur poetologischen Signifikanz ihrer Todesarten«, *Colloquia Germanica* 35 (2002), 1–25; Aurnhammer (note 7), 167.

[14] On sexual hygiene in *Der Reigen* see Otis (note 11), 119–47. Eugenics and euthanasia are related topics that come up briefly in texts such as *Der Weg ins Freie* (1908) and *Professor Bernhardi* (1912).

strands together and bring to bear these insights on a close reading of the finale of the novella, which focuses especially on Veronal's literary agency.

I.

Bayer's case officers immediately sensed the significance of Veronal in *Fräulein Else*. The soporific holds the dramatic structure of the plot together as the novella systematically builds up to a lethal overdose of the drug: Set in pre-war Austria, Else, the 19-year-old daughter of a debt-ridden Jewish lawyer from Vienna's upper-class circles, is tasked with fending off the imminent collapse of her family's social and economic capital while she sojourns in the Dolomites. Within a few hours, she must secure a significant loan from the wealthy acquaintance Dorsday. Yet the aging beau does not play along: in exchange for the loan, he solicits a strip show. Feeling betrayed and trafficked by her family, Else decides to provoke an éclat: she disrobes in public, falls into a trance, and commits suicide with an overdose of Veronal.

Schnitzler's narrative has garnered much scholarly attention, which has shed light on a wealth of different aspects. The most incisive readings, however, typically center on Else's disrobement in the music room. This focus has largely eclipsed the text's relation to the drug culture of the early twentieth century, when the consumption of soporifics such as Veronal registered as a normal »expression of popular culture and the social climate.«[15] In the novella, the drug is present almost from the outset. Its first appearance is closely connected to the nervous wait for the announced letter from Else's mother that sets the plot into motion (14);[16] it furthermore serves as a quotidian complement to Else's desire to try »hashish« with a potential lover (14);[17] it counters the onset of her menstrual pain (14);[18] it is called upon as a tranquillizer (35); and Else habitually uses it as a soporific (96-97). Such practices and alleged off-label usages were not unusual. An advertisement brochure preserved in the corporate

[15] »Wenn die Dame der Gesellschaft aufgrund des hektischen Großstadtlebens und der politischen Unruhe der ›Goldenen Zwanziger‹ abends wie selbstverständlich *Veronal*® als Hypnotikum einnahm, war dieser feuilletonistische Topos ebenso ein Ausdruck der Alltagskultur und der sozialen Befindlichkeit der Zwischenkriegszeit wie die Reaktion der US-amerikanischen Medien auf die Einführung der selektiven Serotonin-Reuptake-Inhibitoren Anfang der 1990er Jahre«, Matthias Weber, *Die Entwicklung der Psychopharmakologie im Zeitalter der naturwissenschaftlichen Medizin. Ideengeschichte eines psychiatrischen Therapiesystems*, München 1999, 101. I discovered Bayer's interest in Schnitzler thanks to a hint by Weber who notes in passing that the pharmaceutical company filed a document on the »Schauspiel ›Fräulein Else‹« (110), but does not explore it further.

[16] Arthur Schnitzler, *Fräulein Else. Novelle*, Wien 1925, 136. All subsequent quotations will appear as page numbers in the text.

[17] »Versuchen sollte man alles, – auch Haschisch. Der Marinefähnrich Brandel hat sich aus China, glaub' ich, Haschisch mitgebracht. Trinkt man oder raucht man Haschisch? Man soll prachtvolle Visionen haben. Brandel hat mich eingeladen mit ihm Haschisch zu trinken oder – zu rauchen« (14).

[18] »Freilich, es sind gerade diese Tage. Drum hab' ich auch das Ziehen in den Beinen. Dritter September ist heute. Also wahrscheinlich am sechsten. Ich werde heute Veronal nehmen. O, ich werde mich nicht daran gewöhnen.« (14) Interestingly, the argument about habituation could refer both to the highly addictive Veronal and to menstrual pain. The link between Veronal and menstrual pain has been already noted by Bettina Rabelhofer, *Symptom, Sexualität, Trauma: Kohärenzlinien des Ästhetischen um 1900*, Würzburg 2006, 202.

archives of the pharmaceutical giant Bayer promotes precisely such a use of sedative drugs as a hallmark of modernity:

> In der heutigen, unruhig hastenden Zeit, bei der erhöhten Inanspruchnahme aller geistigen und körperlichen Fähigkeiten tritt an den Arzt häufiger die Notwendigkeit heran, seinen Patienten, gleich welcher sozialen Stellung, ein Beruhigungs- oder Schlafmittel zu verordnen. So vielseitig auch die Ursachen dafür sein mögen, von der einfachen Agrypnie und Unruhe bis zu den schwersten Erregungszuständen, so vielgestaltig, so individualisierend muß auch die Behandlung sein.[19]

The copy in the brochure aimed at physicians insinuates that life under the conditions of modernity deregulates a traditional economy of rest and excitement. Physicians were to attend to the resulting psychophysical tensions with tranquillizers and soporifics. In principle, this is no news – knowledge of sleep-inducing tinctures that contained extracts from the opium poppy or the mandrake goes back to antiquity. With the rise of the pharmaceutical industry in the nineteenth century, however, the magic of sleep-inducing products became a mass-market product and could be had for the price of a meal or less.[20] Yet Bayer suggests that these remedies could enter the physician-patient-relationship as tools of individualization. Tailor-made assemblages of drugs supply the patients, regardless of their social standing, with a sense of incommensurability; they integrate the symptoms into their subjecthood. From this perspective, sedatives and soporifics serve to restore not only social functionality, but also emerge as a »technology of the self.«[21] In contrast to classic technologies of the self, such as the regimes of hygiene and dietetics that demand to reorganize one's life so that the symptoms disappear with their causes, soporifics provide an »enhancement in our capacities to adjust and readjust our somatic existence according to the exigencies of the life to which we aspire.«[22] This is the constellation in which Veronal must be seen.

Veronal constituted the first barbiturate in use as a sedative and soporific. Invented by the Nobel prize-winning chemist Emil Fischer and the acclaimed clinician Josef von Mering,[23] the drug was introduced in collaboration with the pharmaceutical giants Bayer and Merck in 1903 and withdrawn from the market in the mid-1950s. Veronal quickly rose to a blockbuster drug on a global scale and »transformed«[24] the market for sleep medication. This massive clinical and commercial success was

[19] BAL 195 D – Sedativa und Soporifica.

[20] The prices for soporifics are being parsed in Weber (note 15), 95.

[21] The notion of the technology of the self plays a key role in Foucault's late writings but is used here in a more expansive sense. For the French philosopher's own understanding of the term see esp. Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, Amherst 1988.

[22] Nikolas Rose, »Neurochemical Selves«, *Society* 41 (2003), 46–59, here 58.

[23] See Emil Fischer, Josef von Mering, »Ueber eine neue Klasse von Schlafmitteln«, *Die Therapie der Gegenwart* (1903), 97–101. On the connection between Fischer and the pharmaceutical industry see Dietrich Stoltzenberg, »Scientist and industrial manager: Emil Fischer and Carl Duisberg«, in: *The German Chemical Industry in the Twentieth Century*, ed. John E. Lesch, Dordrecht 2000, 57–89, here 66.

[24] Edward Shorter, *Before Prozac: The Troubled History of Mood Disorders in Psychiatry*, Oxford 2008, 19. On the success of the barbiturates also see Francisco López-Muñoz, Ronaldo Ucha-Udabe, Cecilio

due to a confluence of several factors, but it cannot be overstated that on top of the significant pharmacological innovation the narrative packing of the barbiturate played a decisive role for Veronal's success. This is already apparent in the name of the drug. For instance, it was fabled that the inventors had tested the substance during train travel to Switzerland and only woke up when they arrived at Verona, which then gave its name to the drug. Other interpretations see the name of the soporific as a reference to the sleeping potion used by the lovers of Verona – *Romeo and Juliet* – as this drug puts Juliet in a very deep sleep.[25] These well-crafted stories are as important to the success of Veronal as the chemistry itself. As Walter Benjamin put it: »Heute nisten in den Firmennamen die Phantasien, welche man ehemals im Sprachschatz der ›poetischen‹ Vokabeln sich thesauriert dachte.«[26] A magical aura surrounded the phrase ›Veronal‹, an aura that evoked the narrative of the ideal sleep medication and attached it to the soporific, so that it not only had a chemical but also a suggestive effect.[27]

Bayer's advertisement strategy further strengthened this suggestive effect. In brochures sent to physicians, Veronal's manufacturers aggressively claimed to do away with the experiential difference between ›natural‹ and ›artificial‹ sleep that dogged existing sleep medication – then as now, falling asleep on soporifics feels different from simply dozing off, but in the early-twentieth century the phenomenological experience strongly resembled the forced blackout of anesthesia and narcosis with which soporifics shared a developmental history.[28] Veronal, by contrast, promised that one would awake »frisch und ohne das Gefühl einer Benommenheit,« while it induced »einen vollkommen ruhigen, traumlosen, dem physiologischen Schlaf gleichenden, mehrstündigen Schlaf.«[29] In an age in which insomnia had come to count as »die häufigste Klage, die dem praktischen Arzt begegnet,«[30] this promise proved extremely lucrative: Veronal's manufacturers derived up to 30% of their revenue from the drug.[31]

These sale figures were only possible because of extremely lax legal regulations. In the early twentieth century, the German government did not commonly interfere with the introduction of new soporifics: a consensus existed among legislators that »new drugs could […] basically be put to the test in the medical offices of general

Alamo, »The history of barbiturates a century after their clinical introduction«, *Neuropsychiatric Disease Treatment* 1 (2005), H. 4, 329–343.

[25] See Margarethe Hoffert, »Warum ›Veronal‹?«, *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 74 (1958), 147–49; Wolf-Dieter Müller-Jahncke, Christoph Friedrich, Ulrich Meyer, *Arzneimittelgeschichte*. 2., überarb. und erw. Aufl., Stuttgart 2005, 144–45.

[26] Walter Benjamin, »Das Passagenwerk. Aufzeichnungen und Materialien«, in: Idem, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, Band V/1-2 «Das Passagen-Werk«, Frankfurt a. M. 1991, 79–654, here 235.

[27] See Thomas Wegmann, *Dichtung und Warenzeichen: Reklame im literarischen Feld 1850 – 2000*, Göttingen 2011, 61–62. »Im projektiven Akt der Markenbildung werden Dinge mit Eigenschaften ausgestattet, über die sie per se nicht verfügen, um so die Bindung des Subjekts an [die] Waren zu ermöglichen«.

[28] Weber (note 15), 177; Müller-Jahncke/Friedrich/Meyer (note 25), 143.

[29] BAL, Pharma, Produkte A-Z, 166/8: Veronal, 1909-1929, brochure »I«, 6 and BAL, Pharma, Produkte A-Z, 166/8: Veronal, 1903-1908, brochure »Veronal. Neues Hypoticum«, 1.

[30] Karl Lechner, *Die klinischen Formen der Schlaflosigkeit*, Leipzig 1909, 1.

[31] Weber (note 15), 110.

practitioners«.[32] If the industry narrative of Veronal as a quasi-ideal soporific without side-effects dominated scientific and professional communication, a different take on this story began to form in the back pages of local newspapers. The massive reach of the soporific soon triggered media events that did not fit the carefully curated grand narrative of the pharmaceutical industry. Local newspapers started to run infrequent news stories about suicides, overdoses, and off-label use, *faits divers* that were only connected by a single feature: Veronal.

This unsupervised social experiment affected especially women.[33] Their bodies typically required a different dosage than the one suggested on the package, which was calculated with male bodies in mind. The female physique also responded differently to accumulated residues of the soporific in the body,[34] a problem further acerbated in cases of Veronal addiction or simply drug use on successive days, as the long half-life of the drug could increase the effective dose massively. It thus hardly comes as a surprise that even contemporary statistics show that women suffered significantly more often from allegedly accidental overdoses than men.[35] Still, it took German legislators more than five years until Veronal moved from an over the counter-drug to the list of extra-potent drugs such as cocaine. But even when it got designated as »poison,« this classification only meant that one technically required a prescription to buy it.[36] Then as now, many physicians write out prescriptions quickly.[37] In other words, Veronal constituted a typical white market drug – a market

[32] Wolfgang Wimmer, *»Wir haben fast immer was Neues«: Gesundheitswesen und Innovationen der Pharma-Industrie in Deutschland, 1880-1935*, Berlin 1994, 328. See also Roy Porter, Erika Hickel, »Das Kaiserliche Gesundheitsamt (Imperial Health Office) and the chemical industry in Germany during the Second Empire: Partners or Adversaries?«, in: *Drugs and Narcotics in History*, ed. Roy Porter, Mikuláš Teich, Cambridge 1995, 97–113.

[33] »Von den Todesfällen waren überwiegend Frauen betroffen«, Weber (note 15), 103. Moreover, this risk was acerbated as women preferred soporifics as a suicide method, a choice they only shared with male physicians and pharmacists. See Ferdinand Flury, »Statistik der Vergiftungen«, in: *Lehrbuch der Toxikologie für Studium und Praxis*, ed. Max Cloetta et al., Berlin 1928, 52–59, here 56.

[34] »Beim Durchblättern der reichhaltigen Literatur gewinnt es den Anschein, als ob Frauen das Veronal schlechter vertrügen als Männer«, C. Bachem, *Unsere Schlafmittel mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der neueren. Zweite verbesserte und neubearbeitete Auflage*, Berlin 1910, 74.

[35] For numbers and a bevy of statistical data see, in addition to Flury, also Kurt Pohlisch, Friedrich Panse, *Schlafmittel-Missbrauch*, Leipzig 1934, 17. However, this study must be used with caution, as its authors are affiliated with NS health politics and were actively involved in the T4 Euthanasia Program that systematically murdered people with disabilities, as pointed out in Hannah Ahlheim, *Der Traum vom Schlaf im 20. Jahrhundert: Wissen, Optimierungsphantasien und Widerständigkeit*, Göttingen 2018, 250–51.

[36] »Erscheint es infolge der früheren bedingten allgemeinen Freiverkäuflichkeit und der späteren freien Verkäuflichkeit des Veronals im Handverkauf der Apotheken wohl verständlich, dass auch jetzt noch von Seiten der Ärzte hin & wieder die Vorordnung in Form eines Rezeptes nicht für erforderlich erachtet wird [...], so kann es gegenwärtig keinem Zweifel unterliegen, dass Veronal und alle stark wirkenden Arzneimittel [...] nur auf jedesmalig für die einzelne Abgabe erneutes Rezept verabfolgt werden dürfen.«, Sächsisches Ministerium des Innern, »Behandlung von Veronal-Rezepten«, July 19, 1905, BAL 166/8: Veronal.

[37] See, for example, Bachem (note 34), 4. »Bei der immer nervöser werdenden Generation fordert am meisten die Neurasthenie bei Jung und Alt den Gebrauch irgend eines Schlafmittels, zu dem der Laie leider allzuoft und ohne ärztlichen Rat zu greifen sucht; und selbst unter den Medizinern von Fach finden sich manche, die auf Bitten und Drängen ihrer Patienten hin sofort mit dem einen oder anderen chemischen Mittel bei der Hand sind«. Despite the tone of this passage, Bachem approves of soporifics, especially Veronal. Some passages in his book even feature almost verbatim quotations of advertisement materials

for a drug which could not be purchased on the black market, because its distribution was perfectly legal.[38] This is the situation into which Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* intervenes.

When an internal press informant breaks the news that the »prominent author and Viennese physician Dr. Arthur Schnitzler« published a story that culminates into a »›Veronal poisoning‹« (BAL: V),[39] the company responds with horror. Alarmed that a wide circulation of Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* could undermine the »trust« (BAL: V) in their product, Bayer decides to lobby the author to persuade him

> von dieser Anti-Propaganda für unser Präparat doch in Zukunft lieber abzusehen und sich für seine Helden oder Heldinnen, die er aus diesem oder jenem Grunde in ein besseres Jenseits befördern will, eine andere Todesart auszusuchen und den Hinweis auf Veronal in einer vielleicht nötig werdenden zweiten Auflage unbedingt zu streichen (BAL: V).

We do not know whether an emissary from Bayer ever knocked on Schnitzler's door. To be sure, the author's subsequent *Traumnovelle* (1925–26), which also includes a poisoning, drops any references to specific brands.[40] Nevertheless, Veronal continues to feature in all further reprints of *Fräulein Else* and even showed up in a close-up shot when the novella was turned into a silent film a few years later.[41] Veronal's significance is highlighted further by the fact that its appearance constitutes an anachronism – in 1896, when *Fräulein Else* supposedly takes place,[42] the drug was not yet available. Given that Schnitzler knew his medical history and de-

issued by pharmaceutical companies. He thus argues against individual misbehavior, not against systematic structures.

[38] In this analysis, I concur with David Herzberg whose *White Market Drugs* (2020) includes a historical chapter about the situation of Veronal in North America from the 1920s to the 1970s, which he establishes as an important precursor of the current ›opioid epidemic‹ in the US. See Herzberg (note 9), esp. 226-286. For a consideration of the fuzzy boundaries between legal and illegal drugs more generally see David T. Courtwright, *Forces of habit: drugs and the making of the modern world*, Cambridge, MA 2001; Jean-Paul Gaudillière, »Introduction: drug trajectories«, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 36 (2005), 603–611; Annika Hoffmann, *Drogenkonsum und -kontrolle: zur Etablierung eines sozialen Problems im ersten Drittel des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden 2012; Julie Parle, »Obliv[i]on C: Sedatives, Schedules, and the Stresses of ›Modern Times‹: South African Pharmaceutical Politics, 1930s to 1960s«, *South African Historical Journal* 71 (2019), 614–643.

[39] »Veronal-Vergiftung«, quotation marks in blue ink added by hand to the typoscript (BAL: V).

[40] The *Traumnovelle* reports three such incidents, all of which emerge from press reports like those mentioned in the second part of the article: a poisoning with mercury (452), a first anonymous poison (467), and a second anonymous poison: »Fridolin [...] nahm ein Abendblatt zur Hand und las, so wie er es gestern Nacht in einem anderen Kaffeehaus getan, da und dort ein paar Zeilen: [...] In einem vornehmen Hotel der inneren Stadt hat sich heute früh eine Frau vergiftet, eine Dame, die unter dem Namen einer Baronin D. vor wenigen Tagen dort abgestiegen war, eine auffallend hübsche Dame.« (494) Later, the text glosses this event as »Morphiumvergiftung« (498), even though it reflects on the fact that the hero Fridolin is making up at least parts of his statement. Until the publication of the volume in the historical-critical edition see Arthur Schnitzler, »Traumnovelle«, in: Idem, *Gesammelte Werke. Die Erzählenden Schriften*, ed. Heinrich Schnitzler, Frankfurt a. M. 1961, vol. II., 434–505.

[41] See *Fräulein Else* (Paul Czinner, 1929, Germany), TC 44:50. The film used to be available on YouTube, but was removed in 2022. On the film version of the novella in general see Tacke (note 7).

[42] The described events take place on September 3, 1896. See Bronfen (note 2), 738.

liberately set his novella *Sterben* (1894) at moment before a particular therapy was invented that would have impacted the plot, this anachronism cannot be overstated. If Schnitzler has Else consume a drug which was not available at the time, he deliberately blends the interwar period with the prewar Habsburg Empire.[43] But what makes the specific brand name so fundamental to *Fräulein Else*? To what extent does the portrayal of Veronal also include a portrayal of nineteenth-century drugs such as morphine? As we will see, the brand name Veronal is indispensable to the novel, because it links in with newspaper reports about Veronal suicides, but it also updates the theory of public health crises developed in Schnitzler's earlier medical writings, which are indeed based on morphine.

II.

Paradoxically, the nexus between Schnitzler's novella and contemporary newspaper reports on cases of suicides using the drug becomes most evident in the filing system of Bayer's corporate archives – here, the note on the publication of *Fräulein Else* sits among clippings of Veronal poisonings that had appeared in the press.

This conjuncture did not come about by accident. Schnitzler regularly mined the press to find new subjects on which he could write; over the years, he amassed a rich archive of newspaper clippings.[44] *Fräulein Else* emerged from a rewriting of one of these news reports. Schnitzler's diaries show that he took note of several cases of Veronal poisoning; he especially noticed a Viennese case whose text he excerpted from the *Neue Freie Presse*: »Die dreißigjährige Private Stephanie Bachrach nahm ... etc. Morphin und Veronal ... gestorben ... Die Ursache der That ist unbekannt.«[45] This sparse note made a deep impression on Schnitzler because he knew this woman well: she was the girlfriend of a close friend and they had been moving in the same circles for years; Stephanie Bachrach had even provided the model for a character in his novel *Der Weg ins Freie* (1908).[46] Despite his private grief, Schnitzler – an author

[43] This observation nuances existing studies which have discussed anachronisms in *Fräulein Else* with special attention to gender roles. See Gisela Steinlechner, »*Fräulein Else*. Eine Zeitreise zwischen Fin de Siècle und Roaring Twenties«, in: *Arthur Schnitzler: Affairen und Affekte*, ed. Evelyne Polt-Heinzel and Gisela Steinlechner, Wien 2006, 131–41.

[44] Schnitzler's archive of newspaper clippings mostly deals with the critical reception of his work, while he commonly takes jots down notes on his readings of the press in his diaries. On his practices see Lorenzo Bellettini, »Das ›Handbuch des perfekten Rezensenten‹: Arthur Schnitzlers Zeitungsausschnittsammlung als zeithistorisches Archiv«, in: *Akten-kundig? Literatur, Zeitgeschichte, Archiv*, ed. Marcel Atze et al., Wien 2009, 188–200. For a general account of the newspaper clipping as a material object see Anke te Heesen, *Der Zeitungsausschnitt: ein Papierobjekt der Moderne*, Frankfurt a. M. 2006.

[45] See Schnitzler, Diary 5/17/1917, https://schnitzler-tagebuch.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/entry__1917-05-17.html (Nov 4, 2022). The importance of this diary entry for *Fräulein Else* has been documented in scholarship, although Veronal plays no role in these studies. See esp. Arne Karsten, »Ein Urbild ›Fräulein Elses‹? Das Leben und Sterben der Stephanie Bachrach (1887-1917)«, in: *Erzählte Moderne*, ed. Andreas Blödorn, Christof Hamann, Christoph Jürgensen, Göttingen 2018, 204–213.

[46] For details of Schnitzler's friendship with Stephanie Bachrach see Karsten (note 45).

who specialized in covering social hot-button issues[47] – was, however, ultimately less interested in documenting this specific case than in converting it into a »case study«[48] of a Veronal suicide that could circulate more widely and raise societal awareness.

As a seasoned writer of popular books and plays, Schnitzler immediately understood how to get a gripping story out of a reticent press report that resembled an uncounted number of other notes on Veronal suicides: he rewrote the story in the interior monologue. Instead of presenting a narrative *on* Else, the text foregrounds her point of view, which would normally be eclipsed.[49] The novella's interior monologue thus draws on the promise that fiction could render transparent the inmost motives of a person, claiming to reveal the web of delicately interwoven impulses, affects, and social dynamics at play.

Fräulein Else not only introduces the newspaper report as catalyst. When Else incessantly describes her own motives and actions as if print media were to report on them, we see the way a human subject can be mediatized. In her imagination, she stages fictional versions of her suicide that seem to come straight out of an operetta, a cheap novella, or a gossip magazine, genres that she evokes herself to describe her self-fashioning (29, 34, 67).[50] For this reason, one cannot miss the slips into the diction of yellow press captions when she ponders her suicide options. Take, for example,[51] this passage:

> Ich werde Veronal trinken. Nur einen kleinen Schluck, dann werde ich gut schlafen... Aber ich könnte auch vors Hotel gehen [...] und dann weiter, weiterflattern über die Wiese, in den Wald, hinaufsteigen, immer höher, bis auf den Cimone hinauf, mich hinlegen, einschlafen, erfrieren. Geheimnisvoller Selbstmord einer jungen Dame der Wiener Gesellschaft. Nur mit einem schwarzen

[47] Notorious examples include Schnitzler's novella *Leutnant Gustl* (1901) that sparked an outcry in the military and the play *Professor Bernhardi* (1912) which explores Austrian antisemitism and was banned until the collapse of the Habsburg empire.

[48] Case studies received significant scholarly attention in recent years. See, for example, John Forrester, *Thinking in Cases*, Malden 2017; Nicolas Pethes and Susanne Düwell (Ed.), *Fall – Fallgeschichte – Fallstudie: Theorie und Geschichte einer Wissensform*, Frankfurt a. M. 2014; Monika Class, »Introduction: Medical Case Histories as Genre: New Approaches,« *Literature and Medicine* 32 (2014), vii–xvi; Pomata (note 11), Nicolas Pethes, »Telling Cases: Writing against Genre in Medicine and Literature«, *Literature and Medicine* 32 (2014), 24-45; Inka Mülder-Bach and Michael Ott (Ed.), *Was der Fall ist*, Paderborn 2014.

[49] To strengthen this aspect, Schnitzler explicitly transposed *Fräulein Else* from third-person free indirect speech to first-person interior monologue when he was moving from the plotting to the writing stage. For the chronology of the drafts see https://www.schnitzler-edition.net/chronologie/9257 (Nov 4, 2022). See also Aurnhammer (note 7), 176. The 1921 draft (ELS_S^T2, August 12, 1921) contains no references to Veronal and is narrated in the third person; the 1922 draft (ELS_H1, begun on December 14, 1922) contains Veronal and is narrated in the first person.

[50] For a more complete account of these intertextual patterns see Aurnhammer (note 7), 166–213.

[51] Several other passages could also have been selected to support this argument, e.g., »Wie uns aus San Martino gemeldet wird, hat sich dort im Hotel Fratazza ein beklagenswerter Unfall ereignet. Fräulein Else T., ein neunzehnjähriges bildschönes Mädchen, Tochter des bekannten Advokaten... Natürlich würde es heißen, ich hätte mich umgebracht aus unglücklicher Liebe oder weil ich in der Hoffnung war. Unglückliche Liebe, ah nein.« (17).

> Abendmantel bekleidet, wurde das schöne Mädchen an einer unzugänglichen Stelle des Cimone della Pala tot aufgefunden... (109-110).

Set less than 200 kilometers from Verona, Else tries to slip into a different role than that of the bartered bride.[52] She always wanted to go »on stage[53] and she draws on a familiar repertoire of melodramatic role models that speak to her. Else thus turns into the »author«[54] of her own death, not unlike Emma Bovary in Gustave Flaubert's eponymous novel.[55]

Veronal has a highly ambiguous part to play within these fatal self-experiments of becoming glamorous – the soporific comes with the reputation of being the suicide aid of the stars. In the year in which the novella appeared, for instance, a suicide attempt of the »famous film actor Max Linder«[56] made big headlines in Vienna and the German press in 1924. Even years later, Veronal's image of being dangerously glamorous persisted – for example, in the first Hollywood movie with an all-star cast, the Academy Award-winning film version of Vicki Baum's novel *Menschen im Hotel* (1929) (*Grand Hotel,* director Edmund Goulding, 112 min, 1932, USA). Here, Greta Garbo shines in the role of an aging actress who tries to take her life with Veronal but is rescued by a gentle diamond thief. Else grapples with the power and sway of such prefabricated cultural scripts. They open up the possibility that she could leave behind her dilemmatic social position as a »junge Dame aus guter Familie« (32) and model the dazzling role of the diva she would like to become.[57] In other words, the interior monologue makes readers notice what Schnitzler calls Else's »Mittelbewusstsein«[58] – a pre-consciousness knowledge of the extent to which

[52] »Die edle Tochter verkauft sich für den geliebten Vater und hat am End' noch ein Vergnügen davon. [...] Wenn ich einmal heirate, werde es wahrscheinlich billiger tun. Ist es denn gar so schlimm? Die Fanny hat sich am Ende auch verkauft. [...] Nun, wie wär's Papa, wenn ich mich heute Abend versteigerte? Um dich vor dem Zuchthaus zu retten. Sensation –!« (29).

[53] »Zur Bühne hätte ich gehen sollen«, 30; »Theaterspielen«, 78.

[54] Bronfen (note 6), 468.

[55] Schnitzler was well familiar with Flaubert and even rewrote the plot of *Madame Bovary* in the story *Die Toten schweigen* (1897). See Aurnhammer (note 7), 25–52.

[56] See *Neue Freie Presse* (Wien), no. 21355, February 23, 1924, qtd. in BAL 166/8: Veronal.

[57] The glamorous role is evident in Else's phantasies of sunbathing on her imagined future property at the Rivera (8, 78). Her chosen bedtime reading – Guy de Maupassant's novel *Notre Coeur* (1895) – renders this self-fashioning even more explicit; the book associates the glamourous persona of the socialite Michèle de Burne with drug use: »Après les rêveuses passionnées et romanesques de la Restauration, étaient venues les joyeuses de l'époque impériale, convaincues de la réalité du plaisir; puis voilà qu'apparaissait une transformation nouvelle de cet éternel féminin, un être raffiné, de sensibilité indécise, d'âme inquiète, agitée, irrésolue, qui semblait avoir passé déjà par tous les narcotiques dont on apaise et dont on affole les nerfs, par le chloroforme qui assome, par l'éther et par la morphine qui fouaillent le rêve, éteignent les sens et endorment les émotions.« See Guy de Maupassant, *Notre Cœur. Illustrations de René Lelong*, Paris 1902, 56. On the notion of the glamorous persona, see Nigel Thrift, »The Material Practices of Glamour«, in *Journal of Cultural Economy* 1 (2008), 9–23.

[58] Similarly, the interior monologue in *Leutnant Gustl* has been read as an expression of the collective »Mittelbewusstsein« (best translated as subconsciousness or preconsciousness) in *Fin de siècle Vienna*. The term »Mittelbewusstsein« stems from Schnitzler's posthumously published writings in which he critiques psychoanalysis and seeks to offer corrections to perceived shortcomings of Freud's approach. »Mittelbewusstsein« is Schnitzler's attempt to assign greater value to semiconscious states that have the potential to become conscious at any moment, an idea which he prefers to Freud's notion of the inaccessible un-

the privileged young white woman is the product of the conditions under which she lives. Else perceives the world through the internalized norms, scripts, and codes of a society that actively works against her flourishing, even though it has simultaneously inculcated her with a »cruel optimism« about attaining happiness in the future.[59] Veronal embodies this double bind.

III.

All this leads to the heart of Schnitzler's thought about pharmaceutical drugs from a public health perspective. There can be little doubt that the trained physician immediately understood that Veronal presented more than a problem of irresponsible use by individual patients, as the pharmaceutical industry framed the problem. For example, Bayer's case officers argued that *Fräulein Else* had to be purged from the reference to Veronal because it allegedly encourages »charakterschwache[] Personen geradezu zu Selbstmordversuchen mit Veronal « (BAL: V). The company therefore not only mobilizes theories of mimetic imitation – »Beispiel und Nachahmung,« as Ferdinand Flury's has it in his statistic of death by poison.[60] The company also reduces literature to stories of contagion, to socially infectious transmitters that can trigger a ›Werther effect‹, as one calls the notion of a causal relation between a suicide as model and subsequent suicides as imitations.[61] However, for physicians like Schnitzler who opposed pharmacological ›techno-fixes‹ something else was at stake: it was not irresponsible individual users who constituted the core problem of legally and medically approved drugs, but rather the effects of their social scaling and especially the close connection of the medical to the industrial apparatus.

Schnitzler does not explicitly comment on the scaling of Veronal prescriptions. Still, since he has Else consume this drug at a moment before it has historically been invented, the pharmacological anachronism strongly suggests a connection to his earlier medical reviews in which he espouses a public health theory based

conscious. The »Mittelbewusstsein« differs from the individual nature of the unconscious as it focuses on collective patterns of thought and behavior; it pinpoints the »social history of semiconscious thought,« as Walter Müller-Seidel (40) puts it. Horst Thomé (»Die Beobachtbarkeit des Psychischen«[note 2], 61) furthermore stresses the ethical dimension of Schnitzler's preference of »Mittelbewusstsein.« He explains that Schnitzler regards grappling with elusive dimensions of the self via introspection as a quasi-heroic act of overcoming affective resistances to facing the truth. This is closely related to the task of literature, which Schnitzler views as an instrument, which is able to confront »the recipient with the ethical appeal to make conscious what one is actually doing and thinking« (62). See Walter Müller-Seidel, *Arztbilder im Wandel: zum literarischen Werk Arthur Schnitzlers*, München 1997; Thomé, »Die Beobachtbarkeit des Psychischen« (note 2), 20.

[59] Here I concur with Bronfen who states that Else »is in complicity with the very cultural forces that weaken and injure her« ([note 2], 740). The term »cruel optimism« alludes to Lauren Gail Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, Durham, NC 2011. Her short definition is »A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing« (1).

[60] Flury (note 33), 56.

[61] Friederike Reents, »Suicidal Tendencies in Modern German Literature«, in: *Suicidality in the Media. Interdisciplinary Contributions*, ed. Arno Herberth, Thomas Niederkortenthaler, Benedikt Till, Wien 2008, 135–142.

on morphine.[62] A key aspect of these reviews is that they ground the practice of medicine in a deeper social awareness. They sought to further »nicht allein das medizinische Denken der Ärzte, sondern auch ihr soziales Verständnis.«[63] In particular, Schnitzler's reviews of pharmacological works (including the review of a book by the co-inventor of Veronal, Josef von Mering), reveal a stark ambivalence about a medical profession putting treatments with drugs front and center: »[Es] gibt mehr Heilmittel als früher, aber nicht im gleichen Maße mehr Heilungen.«[64] In contrast to physicians like the preanalytical Freud who proposed curing morphine addiction through the prescription of additional drugs such as cocaine,[65] Schnitzler contends that focusing on drug treatments covers up symptoms instead of effectively addressing the problems at stake. For this reason, he generally believes that prescribing drugs instead of considering the situation of the individual patient in detail does more harm than good. For example, his review of a medical book on morphine addiction for the medical journal *Internationale klinische Rundschau* leaves no doubts about this:

> Das Morphium! Noch immer steht es weit oben an, und doch darf zugleich als bestes Beispiel unserer Unzulänglichkeit gelten. Das Morphium, dieser souveräne Schmerzenstiller, ist allzu oft nur ein falscher Freund der Leidenden; es läßt sich seine Gefälligkeiten allzu teuer bezahlen, es fordert mit der Zeit die Freiheit, zuweilen auch das Leben. [...] Es steht aber kaum zu zweifeln, daß uns in der nächsten Zeit noch ähnliche Erkenntnisse werden beschieden sein. In manchen Giften, denen man nach unsäglichen Gedankenmühen ihre versteckte Heilkraft abzuringen verstand, wird der ursprüngliche Genius neu erwachen, und sie werden sich in ihrer wahren Gestalt der betrogenen Menschheit zeigen, als das, was sie sind: als Gifte.[66]

Schnitzler describes a dangerous dynamic inherent in the use of morphine. The drug pretends to be a healing force, yet it develops an agency of its own and tends to drag its users into dependency and even death. In making this argument, Schnitzler recovers the original ambivalence of the Greek term »pharmakon« which contains

[62] Schnitzler penned these texts in the 1890s, when he served as the book review editor of the medical journals published under the aegis of his father, an acclaimed and ambitious laryngologist. In writing his reviews for practicing physicians Schnitzler read and assessed what was new in the medical field; here, he developed the »first formulation« of many ideas to which he would return over and over during his career as a writer. See Herzog (note 11), 232. Herzog draws on hypnosis to discuss the notion of the individual vis-à-vis role playing.

[63] Arthur Schnitzler, »Rezension zu Erlenmeyer, ›Die Morphiumsucht und ihre Behandlung‹«, in: Idem, *Medizinische Schriften*, ed. Horst Thomé, Wien 1988, 141–145, here 143.

[64] »[Es] gibt mehr Heilmittel als früher, aber nicht im gleichen Maße mehr Heilungen,« Schnitzler (note 63), 142.

[65] Between 1884 and 1887, Freud published five papers on cocaine. Notably, one of them was funded by the pharmaceutical giant Merck and one by the American pharmaceutical company Parke, Davis & Co. These papers are easily accessible in Sigmund Freud, *Schriften über Kokain*, ed. Albrecht Hirschmüller, Frankfurt a. M. 1996.

[66] Schnitzler (note 63), 142.

two meanings, both poison and medicinal substance.[67] For ancient thought, the fine-tuning of the dose governs the relation between the poisonous and the healing aspects of the pharmakon; for Schnitzler, it seems evident that an addictive substance will in the long run develop its own agency and transform any potential remedy into a poison. For instance, if a drug is to continue exerting an effect on a body used to it, the dose must necessarily be increased more and more, until it eventually becomes poisonous. One is reminded of Paul Virilio's insight that the invention of the car implies the car crash, the invention of the train implies the train wreck,[68] and – to spell out the analogy – that morphine implies morphine addiction and morphine death. By the same token, Schnitzler predicts that Veronal will necessarily produce Veronal poisonings and Veronal suicides.

Fräulein Else is not the first literary text in which Schnitzler stages fatal drug incidents arising from an alleged misfunctioning of the medical system aided and abated by physicians and pharmacists. The drama *Der Ruf des Lebens* (1906) and the story *Der Mörder* (1911) provide two points in case. In the drama, the physician Dr. Schindler persuades the young Marie Moser to administer morphine to her terminally ill father so that she can go out for a night without having to worry about him. When Marie invertedly overdoses the morphine and kills her father, she explains to the physician that this accident was hardily inevitable given the pharmacological agency of the drug.[69] Schnitzler's drama frames the incident not only as the result of medical malpractice but also as the outcome of too much confidence in pharmaceutical treatments present in the medical system. Schnitzler's story *Der Mörder* (1911) elaborates further on this point, when he extends the responsibility from the physicians to pharmacists. Here, he sends the jurist Alfred »von Arzt zu Arzt, von Apotheker zu Apotheker«[70] in order to procure enough morphine to get rid of his mistress Elisa who has become a nuisance to him. Alfred soon gets hold of the required dose by playing the medical system: »Er [...] suchte [...] nacheinander drei Ärzte auf, gab sich überall als einen von unerträglichen Schmerzen gepeinigten Kranken aus, der, seit Jahren an Morphium, gewöhnt, mit seinem Vorrat zu Ende gekommen sei, nahm die erbetenen Rezepte in Empfang, ließ sie in verschiedenen Apotheken anfertigen und fand sich [...] im Besitze einer Dosis, die er für seine Zwecke mehr als genügend halten durfte.«[71] What Schnitzler writes about morphine, transfers directly to Veronal: countless court cases whose records survived in Bayer's archives demonstrate that it was still common among pharmacists to sell Veronal over the counter; one could also use a single prescription ad infinitum in multiple pharmacies. What is more, many people who »had no suicidal intentions

[67] See Hermann Herlinghaus, »Introduction: Towards a Cultural Pharmacology«, in: *The Pharmakon. Concept Figure, Image of Transgression, Poetic Practice*, ed. Hermann Herlinghaus, Heidelberg 2018, 1–20, here 2–3.

[68] See Paul Virilio, *A landscape of events*, Cambridge, MA 2000.

[69] See Arthur Schnitzler, *Gesammelte Werke in Einzelausgaben. Das dramatische Werk*. Vol. 1: *Liebelei und andere Dramen*, Frankfurt a. M. 1986, 1017.

[70] Arthur Schnitzler, »Der Mörder«, in: *Erzählungen*, ed. Hartmut Scheible, Düsseldorf 2002, 332–352, here 348.

[71] Schnitzler (note 70), 348.

were comforted by the possession of fatal quantities of barbiturates; they felt empowered at times of emotional disablement.«[72] This raises the question: Does Else take her life with Veronal, or does Veronal take Else's life? Schnitzler's text dramatizes a dialectics of agency, in which the same drug that seems to empower Else in a psychologically challenging situation entangles her in a dynamic that ultimately leads to a fatal chain of contingent events.

IV.

Against this backdrop, one must reconsider whether Else will recover from the amount of Veronal she ingests towards the end of the novella. Some scholars argue that a suicide would require a higher dose of the soporific than Else has at her disposal[73] and that she is to wake up again when the interior monologue of the novella breaks off.[74] As a feminist intervention, this reading makes sense, even if it is unlikely: as we have seen, the contextual framing grounds the novella in newspaper reports about Veronal suicides, an implicit theory of pharmaceuticals as a public health issue, and Schnitzler's repeated narratives about fatal morphine abuse. For this reason, one should ask a different set of questions about the novella's ending: To what extent does Schnitzler's depiction of Else's liminal state of consciousness correspond to the symptomatology of fatal poisonings in contemporary medical literature? Does Veronal change the interior monologue, which is, after all, meant to represent Else's state of consciousness directly? If so, does the drug alter how the text is narrated?

To assess whether the novella gives Veronal agency on the level of language, a close reading of its finale is necessary. The passage begins when Else has been

[72] R.P.T. Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Global History of Narcotics, 1500-2000*, London 2001, 259–60. A close equivalent to this analysis can be seen in Else's mediation about the amount of Veronal she has as her disposal: »Gott sei Dank, daß ich die Pulver da habe. Das ist die einzige Rettung. Wo sind sie denn? Um Gottes willen, man wird sie mir doch nicht gestohlen haben. Aber nein, da sind sie ja. Da in der Schachtel. Sind sie noch alle da? Ja, da sind sie. Eins, zwei, drei, vier, fünf, sechs. Ich will sie ja nur ansehen, die lieben Pulver. Es verpflichtet ja zu nichts. Auch daß ich sie ins Glas schütte, verpflichtet ja zu nichts. Eins, zwei, – aber ich bringe mich ja sicher nicht um. Fällt mir gar nicht ein. Drei, vier, fünf – davon stirbt man auch noch lange nicht. Es wäre schrecklich, wenn ich das Veronal nicht mit hätte. Da müßte ich mich zum Fenster hinunterstürzen und dazu hätt' ich doch nicht den Mut. Aber das Veronal, – man schläft langsam ein, wacht nicht mehr auf, keine Qual, kein Schmerz. . . . Vorgestern habe ich auch ein Pulver genommen und neulich sogar zwei. Pst, niemandem sagen. Heut' werden es halt ein bißl mehr sein. Es ist ja nur für alle Fälle« (96–97). Else aestheticizes the Veronal suicide as a potential realization of her volition. She even swaps Veronal's official legal classification – »poison« (101, 130) – for »Medizin, zweimal unterstrichen und drei Ausrufungszeichen« (101). With this rhetoric of total control and safety, Else tries to bolster her agency: »Und wenn ich . . . keine Lust habe, mich umzubringen und nur schlafen will, dann trinke ich eben nicht das ganze Glas aus, sondern nur ein Viertel davon oder noch weniger. Ganz einfach. Alles habe ich in meiner Hand« (101).

[73] For the controversy in scholarship see Scheible (note 13), 28–29; Tebben (note 13), 16; Aurnhammer (note 7), 167.

[74] See esp. Scheible (note 13), 28–29. Scheible's calculation has inherent flaws, because he does not reference the historical debates and thus overlooks individualizing aspects such as gender, accumulation of the drug in the body, as well as individual idiosyncrasies in responding to the substance.

carried back to her hotel bed after her public disrobing and subsequent blackout in the music room. She hovers in a strange twilight state and is being attended to by the physician Paul and his lover Cissy who comment on every change in her condition. When Dorsday, the wealthy man who has originally solicited a strip show, appears in the doorway, Paul and Cissy briefly leave their watch to talk to him. Else immediately gulps down the prepared glass with ten grams of Veronal while she is unobserved.[75] Schnitzler himself insisted that Else consumes the overdose of the soporific only in this very last scene.[76] He was adamant about the sequence, because it generates a contrast between the representation of consciousness in the final scene and two earlier moments of clouded consciousness – Else's daydream on a park bench and the odd twilight state after her disrobement in the music room. The final passage differs from these two scenes insofar as Schnitzler ties the change in Else's condition to her consumption of a pharmacological substance. Thus, Schnitzler treats Veronal not only as a prop for a suicide, but also as the »medium of form.« This term is meant to pinpoint that the soporific affects literary devices and modes of presentation in the interior monologue.

Many scholars have interpreted the last scene of *Fräulein Else*, yet even the most persuasive readings have overlooked the fact that Schnitzler systematically integrates the clinical symptomatology of Veronal poisoning.[77] To ensure that these symptoms are noticed and correctly named, he positions the physician Paul at Else's bedside. If one attends to the clinical picture of Veronal poisoning in the last scene, the passage

[75] It is evident that the scene marks a caesura, because its construction parallels Else's disrobement in the music room in several regards: there Else is exposed to everyone's eyes, here she is removed from everyone's eyes; there, quotes from the partiture of Schumann's *Karneval* incorporate sound into the interior monologue, here the clunky onomatopoesis »Klirr, klirr« (130) incorporates sound; there, Else contends to be conscious despite having suffered a blackout, here she is somewhat conscious, but contends that she is »bewußtlos« (130), even though she has just ingested the Veronal.

[76] Schnitzler responds with scorn when Paul Czinner's film version of *Fräulein Else* shows this moment earlier in the plot, despite the expressed wishes of the author. In the film, Else takes in the Veronal before she leaves for the music room. Schnitzler is not amused about this change in the sequence of the scenes. In a letter to Clara Katharina Polaczek, he writes: »Der Einfall gegen den ich mich bei unserem ersten Gespräch (Czinner Mayer) gewendet hatte: dass Else ›Veronal‹ nimmt, ehe sie unbekleidet unter dem Mantel in die Halle geht – blieb bestehn« (Schnitzler, *Briefe 1913-1931*, 597). On differences between the novella and the film see Henrike Hahn, *Verfilmte Gefühle: von »Fräulein Else« bis »Eyes Wide Shut«: Arthur Schnitzlers Texte auf der Leinwand*, Bielefeld 2014, 101–140; Klaus Kanzog, »Der innere Monolog in der Novelle und in der Verfilmung«, in: *Arthur Schnitzler: Zeitgenossenschaften = Contemporaneities*, ed. Ian Foster, Florian Krobb, Bern 2002, 359–372; Achim Aurnhammer, *Arthur Schnitzler – Filmarbeiten: Drehbücher, Entwürfe, Skizzen*, Würzburg 2015; Thomas Ballhausen, *Die Tatsachen der Seele: Arthur Schnitzler und der Film*, Wien 2006.

[77] My reading builds on their findings: Achim Aurnhammer discovers the intertextual references in the novella's ending; Michaela Perlmann constellates the text with Freud's theories and discusses Schnitzler's techniques for portraying dreams, concluding that the dream of flying relates primarily to a physiological cause. See Achim Aurnhammer, »Selig, wer in Träumen stirbt. Das literarisierte Leben und Sterben von *Fräulein Else*«, *Euphorion* 77 (1983), 500–510; Perlmann (note 2), 114–129. Other (often psychoanalytically inspired) readings are less convincing. They have, for example, approached the finale as a dream of asexual fusion with the father; as an oedipal wish fulfillment; or as a trauma-driven booty call. See Astrid Lange-Kirchheim, »Adoleszenz, Hysterie und Autorschaft in Arthur Schnitzlers Novelle *Fräulein Else*«, *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 42 (1998), 265–300; Margaret Morse, »Decadence and Social Change. Arthur Schnitzler's Works as an Ongoing Process of Destruction«, *Modern Austrian Literature* 10/2 (1977), 37–52, here 49; Rabelhofer (note 18), 225.

can be divided into four sections of varying length that capture the gradual onset of Veronal's effects.

A slight variation of the phrase »Ich habe Veronal getrunken« (131, 131, 132, 132) marks the beginning of each of these four sections – latency, first effects, full effects, and the threshold of death. During the period of latency, the impact of the soporific is barely perceptible, as Else herself remarks »Ich habe Veronal getrunken. Ich werde sterben. Aber es ist geradeso wie vorher. Vielleicht war es nicht genug...« (131). She first registers the effects of Veronal when she is beginning to get tired (»müde,« 131); at the same time, Paul comments on Else's pulse which »geht ruhig« (131) und »ziemlich gleichmäßig« (132).[78] In the next section, the effect of the soporific has become so strong that Paul cannot wake up Else even though he makes no fewer than nine attempts. She enters a state described as dream-like (133). In the last section, Else's body starts to shiver (»zittern.« 135), before she succumbs to a loss of consciousness that causes the interior monologue to break off; in the first printing, Schnitzler additionally marked this moment with the paratext »Ende« (136) so that the text grinds to a halt in three steps: Else loses consciousness, the interior monologue breaks off, and the paratext dissolves any ambiguity about the outcome.[79]

It is clear that Schnitzler integrated what the medical literature and reassuring leaflets from the pharmaceutical industry call the »charaktistische Symptomenbild« of Veronal poisoning: it consists in »[t]iefer Bewußtlosigkeit bei relativ guter Atmung«[80] accompanied by physiological processes such as »Zittern«; interventions such as »Anrufen« can no longer arouse the patient.[81] If one believes the testimony of the pharmaceutical industry, this specific clinical presentation is rarely seen. In their words, Veronal poisonings are »eigentlich recht selten« and »beziehen sich auf Anwendung enormer Dosen, die entweder durch unglücklichen Zufall oder (was noch öfter der Fall ist) in selbstmörderischer Absicht [...] eingenommen wurden.«[82] On that matter, the ten grams of Veronal swallowed by Else correspond exactly to the »tödliche Dosis«[83] established by contemporary medical and juridical cases.

[78] Moreover, the physician senses characteristic changes in Else's pupils and face: »Es ist, als wenn sie sich schon mühte, die Augen zu öffnen.« (132) Er beobachtet auch ein Spiel der Gesichtsmuskeln: »Schau mal her Cissy, scheint dir nicht, daß sie lächelt?« (133).

[79] One might thus speculate whether Scheible's claim that Else was to reawaken emerged from sloppy editing: it is striking that Scheible's edition of the novella omits the paratext »Ende« that appears in the first printing of Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else*. See Arthur Schnitzler, »*Fräulein Else*«, in: Idem, *Erzählungen*, ed. Hartmut Scheible, Düsseldorf 2002, 557–620, here 620.

[80] See Bachem (note 34), 77. Bayer's leaflet (see next note) mentions only »tiefer Schlaf.« Note that Else calls herself »bewußtlos« (130) right after ingesting the Veronal.

[81] BAL 166/8, Pharma, Produkte A-Z, Veronal, 1903-1908, leaflet »Symptome und Behandlung der Veronalvergiftung,« 1.

[82] BAL 166/8, Pharma, Produkte A-Z, Veronal, 1903-1908, leaflet »Symptome und Behandlung der Veronalvergiftung,« 1.

[83] Contemporary medical sources note that »als tödliche Dosis 10,0 anzusehen ist; eine höhere Dosis ist nur dreimal überstanden worden . . . Dosen von 8-9 g haben sich in einer Reihe von Fällen noch als tödlich erwiesen.« Albrecht Renner, »Über Schlafmittel und ihre Wirkungen (einschließlich Nebenwirkungen und Vergiftungen)«, *Ergebnisse der Inneren Medizin und Kinderheilkunde* 23 (1923), 234–336, here 327. The dose of ten grams is also significant, because it serves as the key reference for the judicial assessment of

From this perspective, there can be no doubt that the novella does not end well for Else.

V.

The textual nature of Else's body raises another question: How do the effects of the soporific impact the literary devices of the interior monologue? Linguistic changes in the interior monologue become especially apparent when Veronal comes into its full effects, acting forcefully on Else's consciousness. At the outset, this intensifies structures of displacement and condensation, and gives rise to an even more prominent, associative logic for linking images, similar to the dream scene earlier in the novella where Else is under the impression that she has poisoned herself with hashish (72). Furthermore, fragments of phrases used earlier in the novella flare up in Else's consciousness (such as »Filou,« »Fiala,« »Sträfling,« »Matador,« 133). This generates a kind of temporal regression, which calls up half-coherent quotes and voices from ever more distant moments in Else's adolescence and childhood (134). This culminates in her memories of lullabies (136).[84] When the events take their course, the sixfold repetition of the verb »laufen« (134–35) unmistakably evokes the German idiom »Das Geschehen nimmt seinen Lauf« (to run its course). Similar devices infiltrate Else's language as she succumbs to Veronal; her language seems to warp when, for example, Veronal turns into »Veronalica« (134), a phrase that recalls a female name and assigns Else the role of the *vera icon*[85] of the soporific.

In the final sequence of the novella, the impact of Veronal on the body of language intensifies. Up to this point, the text has only alluded to changes in Else's perception, for example, that the voices at her bedside have registered as mere »Brausen« (142). But now, *Fräulein Else* incorporates such a voiding of semantic meaning at the level of form. These changes foreground the possibilities and limitations of the interior monologue. This literary technique can create the impression of consciousness in the present moment, but it struggles with the representation of temporal lapses and is

Veronal's toxicity. This goes back to a prominent case which is discussed countless times in the medical literature and amply documented in Bayer's corporate archives. In this case (which happened in the town of Holzminden in 1905), the assistant of a pharmacist mistook the name »Veronal« for »Kamala,« a fern extract. Instead of ten grams of fern extract, a man thus took ten grams of Veronal and died. In the wake of this incident, Veronal moved to the list of potent substances that were only sold on prescription. Other literary sources likewise refer to ten grams of Veronal as the lethal dose. For example, Bayer took also issue with the novel *Die Kwannon von Okadera* by Ludwig Wolff, first published in installments in the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, in which a »Glasröhre mit zehn Veronal-Tabletten« serves, in the words of Bayer's case officers Dr. Krüger and Dr. Lomnitz, »als ideales Mittel für Selbstmörder.« They conclude: »Wir halten diese Auslassung [this passage] für ein starkes Stück und möchten im Interesse von Veronal liebend gern auf diese unfreiwillige Reklame verzichten. Vielleicht nimmt einer Ihrer Herren Gelegenheit, einmal beim Verlag Ullstein vorzusprechen oder bei dem verantwortlichen Redakteur Kurt Korff – Charlottenburg, um ihn darauf aufmerksam zu machen, dass derartige Anpreisung eines Medikaments zu ungesetzlichen Zwecken doch etwas weit geht.« See BAL 166/8: Veronal, document no. 477, September 16, 1920.

[84] The references to lullabies have been first observed by Aurnhammer (note 77), 509–10. I discuss the lullabies in more detail below.

[85] Here, I allude to the medieval word play that reads the image ingrained in Turin's Veil of Veronica as the vera icon (true image) of Christ. Of course, one could read the word also as a plural form.

only able to show moments in which the mind appears blank or empty by drawing on typographical devices such as punctuation marks, hyphens, or special characters, and syntactical ellipses. This interplay between *Sprachkörper* and *Schriftkörper* stands out in the last paragraph of the novella (136):

> ›Else! Else!‹
> Sie rufen von so weit! Was wollt Ihr denn? Nicht wecken. Ich schlafe ja so gut. Morgen früh. Ich träume und fliege. Ich fliege... fliege... fliege... schlafe und träume... und fliege... nicht wecken... morgen früh...
> ›El...‹
> Ich fliege...ich träume... ich schlafe... ich träu... träum – ich flie.....

In this passage, the attempts to wake Else fail; the insistent calls demonstrate how the young woman succumbs to the soporific effect of Veronal: her sleep deepens to a point where her interior monologue finally breaks off. The text is shot through with explicit typographic signs that serve to highlight the fact that black print on white paper constitutes Else's voice. Her language crystallizes into signs that act as placeholders for other signs which cannot be uttered; the marked visuality of the ellipses exposes the artificiality of the perspective; a void takes hold within the interior monologue. If Else's consciousness is captured in the *Sprachkörper*, Veronal seems to control the *Schriftkörper*, and the passage shows precisely how typography chips away language.

Consequently, the syntagmatic structures of the text come apart. Else's clauses begin to lose their grammatical objects, and even subjects and verbs. The sentence construction becomes elliptical and fragmented, and the meaning of what remains becomes voided. Enunciations such as »ich schlafe« pinpoint a psychophysical state that troubles language; it also recalls paradoxical phrases from Else's earlier dream such as »Ich habe ja schwarze Trauerkleider an, weil ich tot bin« (73). Thus, her language loses the capacity to produce meaning and only retains a gestural quality, before it peters out in empty repetitions, dots, and dashes.

Finally, metaphors of physical, mental, and somatic activity which had entered the text when Else ingested Veronal drive the prose forward, but gradually flatten into self-referential cues to intertextual references. The assorted verbs »to fly,» »to dream« and »to sleep« clearly stem from a line in a lullaby by Clemens Brentano that reads: »Schlafe, träume, flieg, ich wecke / bald Dich auf und bin beglückt.«[86] Sleeping, dreaming, and flying indicate a strongly aestheticized form of dying, one that is still heavily imbued with romantic fantasies of death. Such fantasies pervade the genres with which Else's imagination has proven to be intimately familiar: operettas and cheap novellas (29, 34, 67). Yet one could also identify ›flying‹ as a reference to the physiological dream-theory of the English psychologist Havelock Ellis whom Schnitzler has read. Ellis contends that dreams involving flying indicate »trouble with breathing and the heart or an anesthesia of skin sensations during

[86] »Schlafe, träume, flieg, ich wecke / bald Dich auf und bin beglückt.« This quotation has been identified but not given a sufficiently strong reading by Aurnhammer (note 7), 213; Aurnhammer (note 77), 509–10. He argues that Else as a figure appears human and yet she is entirely composed out of literary quotations. This reading is convincing, but not specific to the ending of the text.

sleep.«[87] This somatic interpretation suggests reading the metaphors of movement and especially the experience of flying as an effect of Veronal poising. Still, why does Schnitzler quote this lullaby to indicate Else's death? The quotation reminds the reader that Else must be understood as a body made from text. As a displaced soothing mechanism that seems to arise from a flashback of childhood memories, the lullaby also reinforces the cruel optimism of the protagonist who is unaware that she will not wake up the next morning. Most importantly, however, the lullaby with its stress on monotonous repetition empties out meaning; what remains is the breakdown of form that foregrounds the typographic system. All in all, Else's Veronal sleep therefore dismantles the apparatuses of language, and it reveals the technical underbelly of representation implicit in the interior monologue: hermeneutic reading, literary form, grammatical conventions, and the materiality of signs.

VI.

Based on a discovery in the corporate archives of Bayer Inc. – the finding that the pharmaceutical giant took notice (and issue) with the mention of Veronal in the novella – the article proposed a reading that situates Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* in the context of the drug culture of the early twentieth century and reveals that the text makes a literary intervention into debates about public health.

This claim is substantiated in three ways: Firstly, the form of the novella incorporates press reports about Veronal suicides which Schnitzler adapts in a case study format seen from a first-person perspective. Secondly, *Fräulein Else* links in with Schnitzler's earlier stories that update his theories about the inherent dialectics in the prescription of powerful pharmaceutical agents such as morphine: wherever drugs such as Veronal are distributed, he reasons, there will be Veronal accidents as well. From this point of view, the fatal incident staged in *Fräulein Else* can no longer be parsed as ›irresponsible behavior of a feeble female character‹ as the pharmaceutical industry suggests. Rather, the novella showcases the dangers of white drug markets that make legally- and medically-approved substances such as Veronal easily accessible, while underestimating their risks. Schnitzler's novella also highlights that this system especially hurts the female population. Finally, the article focuses on the specific literary agency associated with Veronal. It shows not only that Schnitzler bases the finale of his novella on the symptomatology of a poisoning with soporifics. This also goes hand in hand with an increasing destruction of the textual body of the novella in which its typography comes to the fore. The article therefore highlights that Schnitzler's literary and medical concerns are intimately related.

[87] For Freud, dreams that involve flying (Flugträume) are part of an archetypal regression into pleasurable infantile experiences of movement. For the English psychologist Havelock Ellis, however, dreams that involve flying indicate »Atmungs- und Herzstörungen oder Anästhesie der Hautsensationen während des Schlafes« (Perlmann [note 2], 127). This somatic interpretation suggests reading the metaphors of movement and especially the experience of flying as an effect of Veronal poising that will lead to a mental blackout and most likely to death. Perlmann does not comment on Veronal, but she stresses Ellis's general impact on Schnitzler's notion of how dreams work. See Perlmann (note 2), 123.

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