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STENDHAL'S CONSUMPTIVE HEROINE: *LAMIEL* AND TUBERCULOSIS

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Stendhal's unfinished novel, *Lamiel*, tells the story of the eponymous heroine's early life and teenage years in rural Normandy. Roughly halfway through the second substantial version of the novel, completed between October and December 1840, Lamiel falls seriously ill whilst working as a *lectrice* for the local chatelaine. Doctor Sansfin is called to her bedside, and he makes the following extraordinary proposal to her:

> Je veux […] que vous consentiez à un meurtre horrible: tous les huit jours, je vous apporterai dans la poche de ma veste de chasse de Staub (le tailleur à la mode) un oiseau vivant. Je lui couperai la tête. Vous verserez le sang sur une petite éponge que vous placerez dans votre bouche. […] D]e temps à autre vous cracherez le sang.[1]

Sansfin asks Lamiel to use the blood of a bird to simulate haemoptysis, the dramatic and violent coughing up of bloodied sputum synonymous with the final, and most serious, stage of tuberculosis. However, Sansfin makes the above request of Lamiel even though she seems to suffer from a more benign form of the disease, which raises questions about the metaphorical and cultural significance of deliberately staging a more serious phase of the disease. To explore this question, I build on Susan Sontag's observation that, in the nineteenth century, tuberculosis was imbued with malleable cultural meaning.[2] I elucidate how the metaphors of tuberculosis are manipulated in *Lamiel* to reformulate contemporary tropes of female patienthood and enact the heroine's personal freedom.

Despite Stendhal's known interest in medicine, limited critical attention has been paid to the novel's eponymous heroine's tuberculosis. Jean Théodoridès includes Lamiel's TB in his survey of the novel; however, his comments on her supposed chest condition pertain mostly to Sansfin's own plot to exploit the heroine's illness for his own ends.[3] C. W. Thompson observes Lamiel's dramatic weight loss, a quintessential symptom of tuberculosis, but emphasizes the mental rather than physical aspects of her illness, stating that she suffers from a nebulous combination of 'Anorexie, dégoût, spleen'.[4] This article first aims to clarify this vague

[1] Stendhal, *Lamiel*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, 3 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 2005–14), III (2014), ed. by Yves Ansel, Philippe Berthier, Xavier Bourdenet, and Serge Linkès, pp. 835–1094 (p. 1013). Quotations from the *Œuvres romanesques complètes* are henceforth designated *ORC*.
[2] Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 12–18.
[3] Jean Théodoridès, *Stendhal du côté de la science* (Aran: Éditions du Grand chêne, 1972), pp. 227–28.
[4] C. W. Thompson, *Lamiel, fille du feu: essai sur Stendhal et l'énergie* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997), p. 23.

characterization of Lamiel's disease by comparing her representation to contemporary medical discourse. It emerges that although Lamiel displays some of the symptoms of tuberculosis, her ambiguous status as a *poitrinaire* is of secondary importance to the symbolic staging of the same disease in the novel. More important is the performative and theatrical nature of the scene and how it foregrounds Lamiel's insatiable taste for personal freedom. With its analysis of how Lamiel embraces the abject dimension of the scene, the present article situates her performance of tuberculosis against the backdrop of Romantic tropes of consumption as well as against that of other Stendhalian characters who encounter abject materials. I demonstrate that the theatrical and abject elements of the scene allow Stendhal to construct a character who rejects cultural paradigms of passive female patienthood.

My argument regarding the performative nature of the eponymous heroine's illness has broader implications for how the 1840 version of *Lamiel* is understood. Scholars such as Naomi Schor, who highlight Lamiel's force, tend to focus on earlier versions of the novel written in 1839.[5] Building on Schor's work, Kara Rabbitt has highlighted how, despite some libertine tendencies, the heroine of the later version is less in charge of her own destiny than her earlier equivalent.[6] By contrast, Yves Ansel, whose analysis focuses on passages composed in 1840, argues that Lamiel's role in the novel is greatly reduced due to the increased attention paid to Sansfin, thereby observing an asymmetrical relationship between the two characters: 'L'éducation que donne Sansfin à Lamiel est une manipulation consciente d'elle-même, l'instauration d'un régime de "terreur"'.[7] However, by taking seriously the narrator's assertion that 'Toutes ces aventures, car il y en a eu, tournent autour de la petite Lamiel', I contend that although Stendhal may have reduced the role of Lamiel in this version, he did not diminish her importance.[8] The present article thus disputes the general agreement amongst scholars that Lamiel's persona in the 1840 version is a more 'limited creation' than that of earlier manuscripts due to, firstly, her more marginal role and, secondly, an increased narrative focus on Sansfin.[9] I demonstrate that, in the 1840 version, in which Lamiel's energy is generally overlooked, Stendhal in fact manipulates the medical and cultural meanings

[5] Naomi Schor, 'Unwriting *Lamiel*', in *Breaking the Chain: Women, Theory, and French Realist Fiction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp. 135–45. Schor builds on F. W. J. Hemming's original distinction between the two substantive versions of *Lamiel*, known as *Lamiel* I and *Lamiel* II, composed in 1839 and 1840 respectively; see F. W. J. Hemmings, 'Les Deux Lamiel: nouveaux aperçus sur les procédés de composition de Stendhal romancier', *Stendhal Club*, 15 (1973), 287–316.

[6] Kara M. Rabbitt, 'L'Enfant libertine: pouvoir discursif et volonté narrative dans *Lamiel* de Stendhal', *Nineteenth Century French Studies*, 31 (2002), 66–83 (p. 78).

[7] Yves Ansel, *Stendhal littéral: Lamiel* (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2009), p. 110.

[8] *ORC*, III, 989. Lucy Garnier maintains a similar argument regarding the role and importance of Lamiel in both versions, building on her suggestion that Stendhal may have intended to unite the earlier and later versions in a single manuscript; Lucy Garnier, 'La Femme comme construction dans la fiction stendhalienne' (unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2007), pp. 131, 115.

[9] Maria C. Scott, *Stendhal's Less-Loved Heroines: Fiction, Freedom, and the Female* (London: Legenda, 2013), p. 85.

of tuberculosis in such a way as to foreground Lamiel's daring sense of personal liberty.

Lamiel, consumptive heroine

Although the text leaves the exact nature of her illness ambiguous, Lamiel nevertheless displays some of the symptoms commonly linked to tuberculosis in the early nineteenth century. At fifteen years old, Lamiel is sent away by her adoptive aunt and uncle to work as a *lectrice* for the Duchesse de Miossens. As soon as she enters the castle that is to be her home and workplace, she falls seriously ill and begins exhibiting the hallmark symptoms of tuberculosis, such as extreme paleness, rosy cheeks, and, later, dramatic weight loss.[10] Stendhal's notes from 9 to 17 March 1841 also suggest that Lamiel suffers from consumption: he writes that, once installed at the castle, Lamiel 'tomba malade'; that she is 'malade de poitrine'; and that she 'passait pour avoir un commencement de maladie de poitrine'.[11] Stendhal even sketches out a scene in which Sansfin 'vit la petite Lamiel venant à pied du château, elle qui, malade de poitrine et la favorite de Madame, ne marchait jamais qu'en voiture'.[12] However, the novel itself never goes as far as to confirm Lamiel's illness, particularly as the text's medical character is presented as disingenuously exaggerating her condition. Deeply concerned by Lamiel's poor health, the duchess calls for Sansfin to assess the patient. In his diagnosis he suggests that Lamiel's symptoms are caused by consumption, alluding to 'l'effroyable maladie de poitrine'.[13] Moreover, a few pages later, the narrator refers to the 'prétendue maladie de Lamiel'.[14] The novel thus suggests that Lamiel suffers from an illness whose symptoms align with those of consumption, while it refuses to diagnose her directly.

Before interrogating the performance of consumption in the novel, it is worth examining to what extent Lamiel's symptoms coincide with contemporary medical discourse surrounding the disease. To do so I read *Lamiel* alongside the research on tuberculosis by René Laënnec (1781–1826), which had both an immediate and enduring effect on the medical community.[15] Laënnec's treatise, *Traité de l'auscultation médiate, ou traité du diagnostic des maladies des poumons et du cœur*, was printed seven times in French between 1819 and 1839. It was widely cited by contemporary doctors as the most authoritative text on the disease until well into the 1860s, and was reprinted as late as 1879. Although Laënnec's most important medical contribution was in revolutionizing the disease's physiology via his unitary

[10] *ORC*, III, 1003, 1005, 1082, 1083.
[11] *ORC*, III, 1076, 1082, 1088.
[12] *ORC*, III, 1082.
[13] *ORC*, III, 1004. Sansfin's elliptical allusion to consumption mirrors how the mother of Octave de Malivert in *Armance* refuses to 'nommer cette maladie cruelle'; Stendhal, *Armance*, in *ORC*, I (2005), ed. by Yves Ansel and Philippe Berthier, pp. 85–243, (p. 91).
[14] *ORC*, III, 1012.
[15] See Jacalyn Duffin, *To See with a Better Eye: A Life of R. T. H. Laennec* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 211.

theory, historians interested in his cultural legacy tend to characterize him as an 'essentialist' writer due to the emphasis placed on how illness 'arose spontaneously from internal causes and constitutional predisposition rather than external causes, although external factors could influence the outcome of internal tendencies and predispositions'.[16] According to Laënnec, the most important external cause of consumption was the presence of *passions tristes*: 'Parmi les causes occasionnelles de la phtisie pulmonaire, je n'en connais pas de plus certaines que les passions tristes, surtout quand elles sont profondes et de longue durée'.[17] The physiological shock of *passions tristes*, encompassing a range of emotions including grief, disappointed hope, and unrequited love, would depress the patient's vital energy and thus leave them susceptible to the wasting effects of the disease.[18]

Laënnec identifies limitations on freedom of movement as a key factor in the onset of *passions tristes*. Laënnec refers at length to a Parisian convent whose members all developed consumption due to the austere lifestyle imposed upon them: although their diet was normal for cloistered communities, 'l'esprit dans lequel on dirigeait ces religieuses produisait des effets aussi fâcheux que surprenans'.[19] Laënnec states that not only were the nuns forced to

> [fixer] habituellement leur attention sur les vérités les plus terribles de la religion, mais on s'attachait à les éprouver par toutes sortes de contrariétés, afin de les faire parvenir dans le plus court espace de temps à un entier renoncement à leur propre volonté.[20]

He states that these conditions produced the same effect in all the community's members: after one or two months they would present with amenorrhoea, an absence of menstruation, after which phthisis would take hold. Laënnec observed that sisters who left the order were cured, but that those who remained would eventually succumb to tuberculosis.[21] He notes that the only survivors were the sisters who worked routinely in the kitchens and gardens, and the mother superior, suggesting that they had the greatest opportunity to escape the rigours of the religious community, whereas the others 'paraissaient également devoir l'origine de leur maladie à des chagrins profonds ou de longue durée' that were unbroken by regular labour.[22] In short, then, although Laënnec understood consumption as an internal illness, he foregrounded how the disease could take hold due to unfavourable living situations that restricted free movement and provoked a general depression of spirits.

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[16] David S. Barnes, *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 27.

[17] René Laënnec, *Traité de l'auscultation médiate et des maladies des poumons et du cœur*, 2 vols (Paris: J.-S. Chaudé, 1826), I, 646. Laënnec expanded his 1819 treatise significantly for the 1826 edition and this version was reprinted throughout the nineteenth century. I use it here for its ubiquity in addition to its proximity to the composition date of Stendhal's *Lamiel*.

[18] See Frank M. Snowden, *Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), p. 279.

[19] Laënnec, *Traité de l'auscultation médiate*, I, 647.

[20] Laënnec, *Traité de l'auscultation médiate*, I, 647.

[21] Laënnec, *Traité de l'auscultation médiate*, I, 647.

[22] Laënnec, *Traité de l'auscultation médiate*, I, 648.

There are no indications in *Lamiel* that the eponymous heroine suffers from the *passions tristes* outlined by Laënnec: she suffers from no broken heart, no unrequited love, no emotional shock. Nevertheless, the duchess's castle has much in common with the Parisian convent to which Laënnec refers. Scholars observe that Lamiel's arrival at the castle is tantamount to her entry into a range of interdictions that limit her ability to move freely: Schor characterizes this version of *Lamiel* as driven by the progressive 'binding of female energy'.[23] Maria Scott sees Lamiel in both substantial versions of the manuscript as a 'movement-hungry child', oppressed by the constraints on her physical freedom incurred at the castle.[24] These rules include the duchess's interdiction against walking quickly on the beautiful carpet in Lamiel's room and against running in the garden, and the general rule that 'tout devait se faire lentement'.[25] These strict regulations crush the spirit of the heroine, who becomes a 'gazelle enchaînée'.[26] Beyond the physical limitations that these rules represent, they also affect Lamiel's spirits: as she is about to enter the castle, her adoptive mother tells her that the conditions will be so miserable that she will be happy to leave in a few months' time. The narrator notes that these words 'furent fatals pour Lamiel' and that 'tout son bonheur disparut à l'instant'.[27] Fulfilling this prophecy, Lamiel is later described as 'pénétrée d'un profond découragement' when she sees the serious demeanour of the older women with whom she will live, and after three days becomes so unhappy that she loses her appetite.[28]

After Lamiel fails to abide by the duchess's original interdictions, even more severe ones are put in place to curb her restlessness:

> il fut décidé que Lamiel ne pourrait se promener, même dans le parterre, que dans la compagnie d'une des femmes de chambre de Madame, et ces demoiselles trouvaient toujours qu'il faisait trop humide, ou trop chaud, ou trop froid pour se promener.[29]

As in Laënnec's analysis of the cloistered sisters, the relative physical comfort is not enough to prevent an onset of tuberculosis in Lamiel. Sansfin remarks that she is ill 'malgré le commerce de la duchesse, l'excellent cuisinier, les primeurs, les beaux meubles du château, etc., etc.', demonstrating that relative luxury is no antidote to the effects of imprisonment.[30] The restrictions imposed on Lamiel eventually cause so much physical suffering that she almost loses the desire to move around: 'Lamiel n'avait presque plus l'envie de se promener'.[31] She slowly descends into despair, 'toute la gaieté de la jeunesse avait disparu chez la jeune paysanne', which

[23] Schor, *Breaking the Chain*, p. 142.
[24] Scott, *Stendhal's Less-Loved Heroines*, p. 90.
[25] *ORC*, III, 1000.
[26] *ORC*, III, 845.
[27] *ORC*, III, 1000.
[28] *ORC*, III, 1000.
[29] *ORC*, III, 1000.
[30] *ORC*, III, 1004.
[31] *ORC*, III, 1001.

culminates in her serious illness.[32] The physical toll exacted on her by the duchess's rules thus parallels the experience of the Parisian nuns recorded by Laënnec.

The nefarious effect of the duchess's castle on the heroine contrasts with the personal freedom afforded to Julien by prison in *Le Rouge et le Noir* and to Fabrice by the titular charterhouse in *La Chartreuse de Parme*. The solitary contentment found by both characters can be attributed more to their loss of contact with the outside world, and its expectations: Victor Brombert argues, for example, that Fabrice's retreat into a secluded religious community affords him personal liberation thanks to the severance with the outside world.[33] The harmful effect of the duchess's castle instead foregrounds how Lamiel's life is controlled by the duchess's rules and constant surveillance: unlike her male counterparts in *Le Rouge et le Noir* and *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Lamiel encounters only the depressed spirits identified by Laënnec, and consequent ill health, rather than solace and personal freedom. Indeed, as the next section demonstrates, it is only by resorting to a daring performance of haemoptysis that Lamiel eventually finds personal liberty.

Performing tuberculosis

In her essay on illness, Sontag elucidates the fluidity of nineteenth-century discourse surrounding tuberculosis as part of her argument that illness should be stripped of metaphorical language to afford proper dignity to sufferers.[34] By contrast, in *Lamiel*, although the heroine may have tuberculosis, the disease is deliberately made more symbolic and gestural through the performativity of the *fausse phtisie* scene. Indeed, despite the ways in which *Lamiel* testifies to the eponymous heroine's consumptive status, her illness is of secondary importance compared to the dramatic performance of the disease in the *fausse phtisie* scene.

In his treatise on consumption, Laënnec affords a special place to haemoptysis, characterizing it as the most widely recognized sign of tuberculosis amongst the medical and general population in the nineteenth century: 'L'hémoptysie est communément regardée comme une des causes les plus fréquentes de la phthisie pulmonaire. […] L'opinion vulgaire à cet égard n'est encore appuyée que sur une application peu réfléchie de l'axiome *post hoc*, *ergo propter hoc*'.[35] It is this sign of tuberculosis, the violent coughing up of blood in the later stages of the disease, that Sansfin and Lamiel choose to stage in the *fausse phtisie* scene. I quote this passage again, this time at length:

> Je veux […] que vous consentiez à un meurtre horrible: tous les huit jours, je vous apporterai dans la poche de ma veste de chasse de Staub (le tailleur à la mode) un oiseau vivant. Je lui couperai la tête. Vous verserez le sang sur une petite éponge que vous placerez dans votre bouche. Aurez-vous ce courage? Pour moi, j'en doute. […] Après, […] dans les moments

[32] *ORC*, III, 1003.
[33] Victor Brombert, *Stendhal: Fiction and the Themes of Freedom* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 169–70.
[34] Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p. 3.
[35] Laënnec, *De l'auscultation médiate*, I, 645.

> que vous passez auprès de la duchesse, de temps à autre vous cracherez le sang. Votre poitrine attaquée à ce point, on n'aura plus d'objection à tout ce que je voudrai faire faire pour vous amuser. Je vous l'ai déjà dit: votre maladie conduit au marasme; rien n'est plus dangereux chez les filles de votre âge. Mais, au fond, votre maladie n'était que de l'ennui.[36]

On the level of plot, the reason for Sansfin's suggestion is clear. He believes that, by worsening the appearance of Lamiel's consumption, he can both dominate his patient and guarantee that the duchess will require his services more frequently, thus allowing him to exploit her for his own political ambitions. However, Lamiel's participation in the ruse is more contentious. When considering the metaphorical significance of the *fausse phtisie* scene, some scholars foreground the success of Sansfin's attempt to exercise control over Lamiel, and thus the relatively subordinate role played by Lamiel in this version of the novel. Dennis Porter, for example, argues that in this scene Lamiel is 'disturbed in such a way as to suggest an apprehension inspired by what is, in effect, a parodic but cruel enactment of sexual relations with Sansfin'.[37] Michel Crouzet refers to the 'domptage de Lamiel' by her doctor and Thompson mentions the 'viol symbolique par Sansfin que constitue l'épisode du oiseau'.[38]

However, far from lessening Lamiel's agency in the 1840 version, Stendhal draws attention to it via the character's performance of tuberculosis symptoms. Scholars have pointed out this feature of *Lamiel*: writing on sources for the novel, Jean Prévost foregrounds that the heroine's willingness to adopt disguises and to perform is 'l'un des génies de Lamiel; il est essentiel au personnage de l'amazone'.[39] Scholarly focus on performativity in *Lamiel* tends to foreground the holly-paste disguise from an earlier version of the novel, written in November and December 1839. In this episode, Lamiel plans on running away and purchases some holly paste from an apothecary to disfigure her face and thus render her unattractive to any predatory men she may encounter on her journey to Rouen. When she acquires the holly paste, the apothecary promises her that 'Tant que vous n'aurez pas lavé cette joue, vous serez laide, et pour peu que vous cachiez cette joue avec votre mouchoir, je vous jure qu'aucun de ces hâbleurs de commis voyageurs ne vous ennuiera de ses propos galants'.[40] Later, Lamiel applies the paste again to ward off young men at a Rouennais theatre, the theatrical setting itself drawing attention to the performative nature of Lamiel's gesture.[41] Philippe Berthier argues that it is through this gesture that Lamiel renders herself undesirable and manipulates the conventional ideals of femininity that she, instead, redefines according to criteria

[36] *ORC*, III, 1013.
[37] Dennis Porter, '*Lamiel*: The Wild Child and the Ugly Men', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 12 (1978), 21–32 (p. 26).
[38] Michel Crouzet, 'Le Dépucelage de Lamiel', in *Amicitia scriptor: littérature, histoire des idées, philosophie: mélanges offerts à Robert Mauzi*, ed. by Annie Becq, Charles Porset, and Alain Mothu (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998), pp. 293–313 (p. 302); Thompson, *Lamiel, fille du feu*, p. 117.
[39] Jean Prévost, *Essai sur les sources de 'Lamiel': les amazones de Stendhal, le procès de Lacenaire* (Lyon: Imprimeries réunies, 1942), p. 17.
[40] *ORC*, III, 910.
[41] *ORC*, III, 994.

that she freely chooses herself.[42] Scott connects Lamiel's use of the holly-paste disguise to her expression of personal freedom: Lamiel's 'talent for daring self-transformation is closely linked to her self-affirmation'.[43] Furthermore, Lamiel's use of the holly paste marks her out as unusual or even unique. Just before purchasing the paste, Lamiel is singled out by the apothecary as being the only member of the gathered crowd courageous enough to use the disfiguring paste: 'Auriez-vous de la répugnance, dit-il en s'adressant plus particulièrement à Lamiel, à mettre une de ces feuilles pilées sur une de vos joues?'[44] In this way, Lamiel's adoption of the holly-paste disguise reinforces not only her sense of freedom through the scene's performative aspect, but also the idea that she is uniquely positioned to be able to exploit the ruse.[45]

To the extent that disguise can be understood as a form of performance, since the wearer of a disguise chooses to create and perform a new persona by changing their appearance, the above understanding of the holly-paste disguise throws new light on the role of performativity and agency in the *fausse phtisie* scene. Although the ruse is Sansfin's invention, the doctor emphasizes that Lamiel must consent to participating in it. Sansfin's remarkable proposal is introduced with the subjunctive, 'Je veux que vous consentiez', drawing attention to how this suggestion expresses the doctor's desire, rather than an order, emphasizing that Lamiel is not coerced into the ruse.[46] Moreover, the asymmetrical power dynamic between doctor and patient does not foreclose Lamiel's consent: Sansfin states that it must be given before the ruse can take place. Lamiel gives her consent implicitly, by laughing and exclaiming that Sansfin is 'amusant'.[47]

The emphasis placed on Lamiel's consent repulses Sansfin's attempt at medical manipulation, thus setting the scene apart from other instances of hierarchical and abusive doctor–patient relationships in Stendhal's œuvre, of which a particularly striking example is that between the doctor, Du Poirier, and Bathilde de Chasteller in *Lucien Leuwen*. As part of his plot to force the eponymous hero to flee from Nancy, Du Poirier first attempts to sever contact between Lucien and Bathilde by rendering the latter bedridden: 'Il engagea Madame de Chasteller à souffrir un vésicatoire à la jambe et l'empêcha ainsi de marcher pendant un

[42] Philippe Berthier, *Lamiel, ou, la boîte de Pandore* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1994), p. 86.

[43] Maria C. Scott, 'Performing Desire: Stendhal's Theatrical Heroines', *French Studies*, 62 (2008), 259–70 (p. 265).

[44] *ORC*, III, 910.

[45] Lamiel is not unique in Stendhal's œuvre for her experiments with disfiguring pastes. In *Mina de Vanghel*, the eponymous heroine attempts to change her skin colour to make herself more ugly: 'Chaque jour, Mina se levait de grand matin afin de pouvoir pendant deux heures se livrer aux soins de s'enlaidir', which she achieves by using, like Lamiel, a paste composed of holly: 'Une légère décoction de feuilles de houx, appliquée chaque matin sur ses mains délicates, leur donnait l'apparence d'une peau rude'; Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel*, in *ORC*, I, 294–346 (p. 308). Théodoridès links Lamiel's holly-paste make-up with similar passages in *Le Rose et le Vert*, a reworking of *Mina de Vanghel*; Théodoridès, *Stendhal du côté de la science*, p. 73.

[46] *ORC*, III, 1013.

[47] *ORC*, III, 1014.

[48] Stendhal, *Lucien Leuwen*, in *ORC*, II (2007), ed. by Yves Ansel, Philippe Berthier, and Xavier Bourdenet, pp. 79–970 (pp. 349–50).

mois.'[48] Then, at the end of the novel's first part, the narrator recounts the escalation in the doctor's violence towards Bathilde. Du Poirier stages an elaborate *faux accouchement* scene outside Bathilde's room, knowing that Lucien is hidden 'dans un retranchement en bois peint qui occupait la moitié de l'antichambre de Madame de Chasteller' from which he 'voyait fort bien ce qui se passait dans la pièce voisine et entendait presque tout ce qui se disait dans l'appartement entier'.[49] Suddenly, Lucien hears the cries of a newborn baby and 'vit arriver dans l'antichambre le docteur essoufflé portant l'enfant dans un linge qui lui parut taché de sang'.[50] In a brief discussion with a servant, Du Poirier observes Lucien's prolonged absence from Bathilde's quarters and suggests that 'Après tout, peut-être l'enfant n'est pas de lui'.[51] The success of Du Poirier's *faux accouchement* ploy thus revolves around Bathilde's absence. Lucien reasons that, because the doctor emerges from Bathilde's bedroom with an infant, the child must be hers even though she is neither seen nor heard by the eponymous hero. Moreover, the narrator is entirely silent as to Bathilde's exact whereabouts and the role that she played in Du Poirer's ruse. In this episode from *Lucien Leuwen*, then, Bathilde is marginalized from the novel itself. In contrast with the *faux accouchement* scene in *Lucien Leuwen*, in *Lamiel*, in both the holly-paste disguise and the *fausse phtisie* scene, the narrative foregrounds the importance of Lamiel to the novel through the emphasis placed on her consent.

The silencing of Bathilde by Du Poirier in *Lucien Leuwen* entrenches the hierarchy between doctor and patient; conversely, the *fausse phtisie* scene in *Lamiel* acts as an important turning point in the relationship between Sansfin and his patient, particularly regarding the latter's journey towards understanding the duplicity required in the course of disguise and performance. Testament to the reversal of roles between doctor and patient in this scene is a mysterious line in Stendhal's preparatory notes from 14 March 1841: 'Un événement singulier change tous les rapports de Sansfin et Lamiel.'[52] The *fausse phtisie* scene changes everything insofar as it unmasks Sansfin as a hypocrite and makes one of Lamiel. The performative aspects of the *fausse phtisie* scene, most notably the adoption of the consumptive disguise, resemble the theatricality of mask-wearing and thus the social *masque* closely associated with hypocrisy for Stendhal. According to Crouzet, Stendhalian hypocrisy begins when 'la filiation familiale et sociale reproduit le *masque*' that one wears in society, underlining how the performative nature of hypocrisy is perpetuated by social structures.[53] For Georges Blin, the social mask of hypocrisy can

[49] *ORC*, II, 354.
[50] *ORC*, II, 354.
[51] *ORC*, II, 355.
[52] *ORC*, III, 1083.
[53] Michel Crouzet, *Nature et société chez Stendhal: la révolte romantique* (Lille: Presses universitaires de Lille, 1985), p. 74; original emphasis.

be a form of self-preservation: 'Le masque est protecteur.'[54] Stendhal differentiates between two forms of hypocrisy in *Mémoires d'un touriste*: passive, where the subject pretends to be convinced by something yet in fact remains unpersuaded; and active, where the subject constructs an elaborate performance for their own gain.[55] In the *fausse phtisie* scene, Sansfin encourages the heroine to engage in a form of the latter. However, the scene, as well as initiating Lamiel into this form of social performance, reveals to her Sansfin's own hypocrisy and duplicity. When Sansfin tries to influence and educate her, his hypocrisy is revealed through his bombastic pedagogical style. After explaining the dead-bird ruse to her, he proclaims: 'Voilà ma première leçon donnée, cela s'appellera la règle du lierre.'[56] However, Lamiel explicitly resists his authority and asserts her own superiority by mocking his lesson. The doctor tells her: 'Vous parviendrez à connaître qu'il n'y a pas une des idées que vous avez actuellement qui ne contienne un mensonge'; to which she responds by gleefully exclaiming, 'quand je dis qu'il y a trois lieues et demie d'ici à Avranches, je dis un mensonge! Ah! mon pauvre docteur, quelles sornettes vous me débitez!'[57] Lamiel is immune to the doctor's attempts to control her now that she has seen through his supposed wisdom.

Although Stendhal derides the hypocrisy of those in positions of power, such as Sansfin, he also uses the term to refer to a woman's ability to hide her inner independence and personal strength with what he presents as more feminine charms such as grace and virtue. In his correspondence, Stendhal advised that young women should actively cultivate hypocrisy for these reasons.[58] Scott characterizes women's concealment of their inner strength as the performance of 'a particularly insipid version of femininity'.[59] We see in the *fausse phtisie* scene that Lamiel is taught the possibility of acting in a certain way but believing in something different, providing her with an apprenticeship in theatrical disguise and performance analogus to the social *masque* she must learn to wear. The *fausse phtisie* scene is thus the culmination of Lamiel's progressive understanding of social performance and hypocrisy, allowing her to free herself from the authority of quasi-paternal figures, such as her doctor, by understanding their own hypocrisy. Freedom and perceptiveness are, for Stendhal, thus indissociable. However, Lamiel's foray into hypocrisy is short-lived. As Blin observes regarding her arson attack on the Palais de Justice, Lamiel eventually rejects hypocrisy: 'Avec Lamiel, enfin, le refus de l'hypocrisie se serait élevé jusqu'au cynisme et, si l'on suit le canevas, jusqu'au rejet

[54] Georges Blin, *Stendhal et les problèmes de la personnalité* (Paris: José Corti, 1958), p. 228. Blin also sees Lamiel's holly-paste disguise as a form of social performance or mask, albeit one that the heroine's energy quickly renders superfluous: 'Au train dont elle saute, il n'est masque qui tienne. [… L]'emplâtre fait d'une décoction de feuilles de houx, une vraie comédienne en eût fait fi, et elle-même, elle ne tarde pas à s'en débarbouiller' (Blin, *Stendhal et les problèmes de la personnalité*, pp. 322–23).

[55] Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, ed. by Victor Del Litto (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), p. 388.

[56] *ORC*, III, 1014.

[57] *ORC*, III, 1014.

[58] For instances of such advice between 1800 and 1809 alone, see Stendhal, *Correspondance générale*, ed. by Victor Del Litto, 6 vols (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1997–99), I (1997), pp. 180, 259, 276, 469, 590.

[59] Scott, *Stendhal's Less-Loved Heroines*, p. 8.

de la Loi.'[60] The originality of the novel lies in associating the benefits of feminine performance not with virtue or charm, but with the violent act of coughing up blood.

Stendhal and abjection

Although Sansfin and Lamiel choose to perform haemoptysis owing to its ubiquitous association with later-stage tuberculosis, the violent coughing up of the bird's blood also draws attention to the role and meaning of this vital fluid. Blood is often associated with the abject: Julia Kristeva defines abjection as the feeling provoked when a given subject experiences their own corporeality. The discovery of the limit at which the 'self' meets the 'Other' threatens the integrity and sovereignty of the former: 'Il y a, dans l'abjection, une de ces violentes et obscures révoltes de l'être contre ce qui le menace et qui lui paraît venir d'un dehors ou d'un dedans exorbitant, jeté à côté du possible, du tolérable, du pensable.'[61] The subject's corporeality is primarily confronted through an encounter with a bodily fluid such as blood or faeces, or other repulsive material such as mud. Producing the terror of abjection is the primary aim of the *fausse phtisie* scene: earlier in the novel the duchess is horrified when Sansfin suggests that Lamiel would begin coughing up blood as a result of her neglect, suggesting how she would be 'mourante et pouvait à chaque instant être saisie d'un vomissement de sang pendant lequel elle serait morte dans [les] bras [de la Duchesse]'.[62]

Other scholars observe the prevalence of abject materials in Stendhal's œuvre. Mud, according to Berthier, is 'une obsession chez Stendhal qui, d'un soin méticuleux et sourcilleux de l'impeccabilité de sa personne, ne redoute rien tant que de se voir maculé'.[63] In *Lucien Leuwen*, Lucien is disgusted when he swallows the mud thrown at him by political protestors —'La boue et les tronçons de choux volaient de tous côtés dans la calèche' — which Scott identifies as revealing to himself Lucien's own subjecthood.[64] At the Battle of Waterloo in *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Fabrice fixates on icons of abjection when he witnesses corpses and the mingling of blood with mud on the churned-up battlefield: 'Ce qui le frappait surtout c'était la saleté des pieds de ce cadavre qui déjà était dépouillé de ses souliers, et auquel on n'avait laissé qu'un mauvais pantalon tout souillé de sang.'[65] And, later, emphasis returns to the repulsion produced in Fabrice: 'Ce qui lui sembla horrible, ce fut un cheval tout sanglant qui se débattait sur la terre labourée, en engageant ses pieds dans ses propres entrailles; […] le sang coulait dans la boue.'[66] In *Lamiel*, Sansfin falls into mud whilst arguing with a gaggle of local washerwomen:

[60] Blin, *Stendhal et les problèmes de la personnalité*, p. 323.
[61] Julia Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur: essai sur l'abjection* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), p. 11.
[62] *ORC*, III, 1007.
[63] Berthier, *Lamiel, ou, la boîte de Pandore*, p. 43.
[64] *ORC*, II, 496; Maria Scott, 'Stendhal's Muddy Realism', *Dix-neuf*, 16 (2012), 15–27.
[65] Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*, in *ORC*, III, 137–691 (p. 176).
[66] *ORC*, III, 181.

> Ce mouvement brusque et sec opéra la séparation du docteur et de la selle; le docteur, qui se penchait en avant, tomba net dans le bourbier, la tête la première; mais la boue avait bien un demi-pied de profondeur, et le docteur n'eut d'autre mal que celui de la honte, mais cette honte fut extrême.[67]

The leitmotif of abject materials in Stendhal's novels thus reveals the fragility of the character's sense of self, either through a sense of disgust as for Lucien, horror for Fabrice, or shame for Sansfin.

Although Stendhalian heroes such as Lucien and Fabrice, and anti-heroes such as Sansfin, have in common their encounters with abject material, the interaction between the bird's blood and Lamiel is striking given cultural associations between blood and the female body.[68] According to Mary Douglas, the marginalization of the female body is justified by the supposed poisonous effect of feminine bodily fluids, even though the male body is equally viscous: 'Females are correctly seen as, literally, the entry by which the pure content may be adulterated. Males are treated as pores through which the precious stuff may ooze out and be lost, with the whole system being thereby enfeebled.'[69] Similarly, Jean-Paul Sartre connects feminine viscosity with a threat to submerge the subject in a way that mirrors the threat posed to the self by abject materials, writing that 'c'est une activité molle, baveuse et féminine d'aspiration, il vit obscurément sous mes doigts et je sens comme un vertige, il m'attire en lui comme le fond d'un précipice pourrait m'attirer'.[70]

The threatening feminine sexuality of these abject encounters is also pointed out by Stendhal scholars. Berthier characterizes Sansfin's fall into the mud as an 'éclaboussement sexuel parfaitement assouvissant pour lui', highlighting a link between abject material and feminine sexuality.[71] Regarding *Lucien Leuwen*, Scott sees a parallel between this fear of female sexual desire and Lucien's encounter with abjection: 'Sa peur en matière sexuelle serait ainsi, dans cette logique, entièrement en accord avec son affolement lorsque la foule à Blois lui jette de la boue à la figure.'[72] At the end of the first half of *Lucien Leuwen*, the eponymous hero is repulsed by the sight of the blood that Docteur Du Poirier smears over the front of his apron: '[Lucien] vit arriver dans l'antichambre le docteur essoufflé portant l'enfant dans un linge qui lui parut taché de sang.'[73] The sight of blood, associated with illicit feminine sexuality through the presence of the infant, which Du Poirier remarks must not be Lucien's, provokes sufficient horror in Lucien almost to force

[67] *ORC*, III, 985–86. Berthier also comments that these muddy instances are parallels of one another; Berthier, *Lamiel, ou la boîte de Pandore*, p. 43.

[68] See Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*, p. 20.

[69] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 127.

[70] Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et le néant: essai d'ontologie phénoménologique*, ed. by Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre (Paris: Gallimard, 2017), p. 655. See also Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 194–95.

[71] Berthier, *Lamiel, ou la boîte de Pandore*, p. 43.

[72] Maria Scott, 'Le Réalisme et la peur du désir? Le cas de *Lucien Leuwen*', *L'Année stendhalienne*, 9 (2010), 35–57 (p. 53).

[73] *ORC*, II, 354.

him to flee from where he has hidden himself in the antechamber: 'Il fut sur le point de sortir de sa cachette et de s'enfuir'.[74]

The blood-soaked sponge episode in *Lamiel*, however, is different from these earlier examples from Stendhal's œuvre of abject encounters. Whereas Lucien, Fabrice, and Sansfin all confront abject material by unfortunate accident, Lamiel agrees to placing the blood in her mouth as mentioned above. Lamiel's consent is not easily given since she is not unafraid of the blood. Indeed, her initial disgust at the proposed ruse confirms the sensation of repulsion when faced with abject material, coinciding with the feeling that Kristeva identifies: 'Quoique le sang du pauvre petit oiseau que le docteur apporta à sa malade lui inspirât d'abord beaucoup de répugnance, cependant il parvint à lui faire placer dans la bouche la petite éponge imprégnée de sang'.[75] Here, the use of the imperfect subjunctive draws attention to the fact that Lamiel has overcome her initial disgust: despite acknowledging the repulsiveness of the act, she nevertheless agrees to go through with the tuberculosis performance.[76] Moreover, Sansfin also foregrounds the macabre nature of the act, referring to the ruse as a 'meurtre horrible' and detailing that, although he will decapitate the bird, it is Lamiel who must collect the blood, soak a sponge with it, and then put the sponge in her mouth.[77] The *fausse phtisie* scene thus places Lamiel in direct contact with the repulsive material of the bird's blood and thereby produces the psychological threat to the self that Kristeva outlines. Rather than being subjected to abjection — as in the case of Lucien, who is repulsed by the sight of blood that he believes to belong to Bathilde — by placing the bird's blood inside her mouth, Lamiel deliberately becomes abject.

Moreover, Lamiel's participation in the ruse allows the terror she first experienced at the sight of the bird's blood to be inflicted upon the duchess, since the sight of the blood convinces the latter to accord to Lamiel whatever she desires. Although Sansfin may believe that he has inflicted '*la terreur*' on Lamiel and the duchess,[78] it is Lamiel who overcomes the horror of the abject and grows bolder because of her involvement in the tuberculosis performance. Through the ironic self-Othering of the *fausse phtisie* scene, Lamiel renders herself abject, heightening the sexual threat of her body, and dramatically performs her femininity. Although true emancipation may be impossible for Lamiel, by deliberately placing herself in close contact with feminine-coded abject material Lamiel finds a degree of personal freedom within the otherwise hierarchical doctor–patient relationship.

Reimagining female patienthood

The novel's assertion of a fearless, freedom-loving feminine identity through the performance of tuberculosis can be better understood if we also consider

[74] *ORC*, II, 355.
[75] *ORC*, III, 1014–15.
[76] *ORC*, III, 1015.
[77] *ORC*, III, 1013.
[78] *ORC*, III, 1015; original emphasis.

the cultural context of consumption in the nineteenth century. Sontag outlines how tuberculosis had a strong individualizing quality, rendering the patient special and heightening their singularity. She attributes this to the propensity of consumption to take on qualities assigned to the lungs, the organ most associated with the affliction, stating that '[a] disease of the lungs is, metaphorically, a disease of the soul'.[79] During the nineteenth century, tuberculosis underwent a process of aestheticization that imbued the disease with 'positive and attractive representational qualities' that led it to functioning 'as a disease of the Self rather than the Other'.[80] Sontag attributes this process to Romanticism: 'The Romantics moralized death in a new way: with the TB death, which dissolved the gross body, etherealized the personality, expanded consciousness. It was equally possible, through fantasies about TB, to aestheticize death.'[81] Yet, crucially, any personal agency gained through tuberculosis was largely the preserve of men: Clark Lawlor and Akihito Suzuki argue that male Romantic writers such as Keats '*consolidated* the myth of the hapless consumptive poet of obscure background struggling for recognition'.[82]

The ubiquity of this myth defies Laënnec's own acknowledgement that, although many people were susceptible to tuberculosis, it was primarily a woman's disease: 'Les femmes y sont plus sujettes que les hommes'.[83] Nancy Rogers asserts that French literature from the Romantic period is populated by the incremental, wasting deaths of 'the positive, sweet, worthy female figure who forms one side of the Romantic conception of womanhood'.[84] Rogers argues that the ambiguous but sentimental depiction of these characters' illnesses, themselves unclearly delineated between hysteria and tuberculosis, articulates the authors' emphasis on inner emotional turmoil rather than the physiology of the disease itself.[85] By the 1840s, David S. Barnes suggests, consumptive women were regarded as possessing a heightened sensibility and emotional state, and the redemptive power of consumptive suffering was accentuated.[86]

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[79] Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p. 18.

[80] Clark Lawlor and Akihito Suzuki, 'The Disease of the Self: Representing Consumption, 1700–1830', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 74 (2000), 458–94 (p. 461). Similarly, Thomas Dormandy argues that the nineteenth-century the rise of bourgeoisie, and its cult of the individual, afforded the disease 'an aura of sacrifice and atonement'; Thomas Dormandy, *The White Death: A History of Tuberculosis* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p. 61.

[81] Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p. 20.

[82] Lawlor and Suzuki, 'The Disease of the Self', p. 491; original emphasis. Historians of tuberculosis have largely focused on the Romantic trope of the male consumptive, rather than the female counterpart: see René J. Dubos and Jean Dubos, *The White Plague: Tuberculosis, Man, and Society* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987), pp. 44–58; and Clark Lawlor, 'Consumptive Masculinity and Sensibility', in *Consumption and Literature: The Making of the Romantic Disease* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 85–152.

[83] Laënnec, *De l'auscultation mediate*, I, 652.

[84] Nancy Rogers, 'The Wasting Away of Romantic Heroines', *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, 11 (1983), 246–56 (p. 252).

[85] Rogers, 'The Wasting Away of Romantic Heroines', pp. 252–53.

[86] David S. Barnes, *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 13. F. B. Smith observes the cultural impact of Alexandre Dumas *fils*'s *La Dame aux camélias* in this regard; F. B. Smith, *The Retreat of Tuberculosis, 1850–1950* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), p. 225.

Although some historians argue that the cult of invalidism afforded real-life women a new identity that resisted societal expectations of motherhood, the overwhelming tendency of aesthetic representations of tuberculosis was to objectify, rather than individualize, female invalids and TB patients.[87] Bram Dijkstra argues that by the late nineteenth century the fashion amongst young women for the 'sublime tubercular emaciation', itself based on women's lack of financial independence, contributed to how artists displayed a preoccupation with depicting passive, supine young women who were either asleep, ill, or dying.[88] To take an eighteenth-century example, in Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* Wolmar aestheticizes Julie's death but, rather than granting her the personal agency towards which he gestures, his words in fact reduce Julie to an icon of sacrificial motherhood. He writes: 'Jamais elle ne fut plus tendre, plus vraye, plus caressante, plus aimable, en un mot, plus elle-même.'[89] In comparison to the sentimentalization of male tuberculosis patients, the cultural associations of consumption in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries tended to reduce female sufferers in artistic and literary representation to passive, identity-less images of waste. As Lawlor writes, 'consumptive males were to be more creative, intelligent, poetic: the shapers of representation; women *became* those beautiful images'.[90]

Given the cultural expectations surrounding a female tuberculosis patient, then, it is no doubt surprising that Lamiel engages in the creative process of performance. By placing the blood-soaked sponge in her mouth and coughing up the blood on cue, Lamiel, in the *fausse phtisie* scene, creates a symptom that previously did not exist. Rather than becoming a passive consumption sufferer, the heroine *performs* that role. This performance allows Lamiel to remain an active participant in the scene, as the emphasis given to her consent and mocking of Sansfin demonstrate. This active theatricality contrasts sharply with how female consumptive patients were ordinarily represented as gradually wasting away: by performing tuberculosis, the portrayal of the heroine of *Lamiel* defies falling victim to this Romantic trope.

Furthermore, the *fausse phtisie* scene undoes the aestheticization of tuberculosis characteristic of Romantic literature by reinserting the abject, Othering quality of tuberculosis into the novel through allusions to blood and decapitated birds. These bloody motifs extend the novel's subversion of consumptive tropes by creating a new model of female patienthood, one which suggests that the heroine is emboldened by her brush with criminality rather than cowed by it. Although the narrator observes that 'par le ton de voix qu'il affecta, le docteur donna à Lamiel non pas la conviction mais bien mieux la sensation qu'elle commettait un grand

[87] See Maria H. Frawley, *Invalidism and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[88] Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 29.

[89] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond, 6 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1959–95), II: *La Nouvelle Héloïse. Théâtre. Poésies. Essais littéraires* (1961), pp. 4–745 (p. 730).

[90] Lawlor, *Consumption and Literature*, p. 44; original emphasis.

crime', the *fausse phtisie* scene marks another step on Lamiel's path to increasingly daring behaviour.[91] After the scene, Sansfin becomes engaged in a protracted tussle with the Abbé Clément for control of Lamiel who, in her own way, begins to question Sansfin's authority and becomes more independent of him as she widens her reading tastes and spends more time alone. The idea that Sansfin is overjoyed at the thought that Lamiel has been reduced to his accomplice ('Toute son âme était remplie de bonheur d'avoir réduit la jeune fille à l'état de *complice*'[92]) is thus ironic. Although Sansfin may believe that he has successfully cornered Lamiel into a subordinate position, his naïve delight paradoxically indicates that Lamiel has already slipped from his grasp. Sansfin is but one in a chain of father figures who seek to dominate Lamiel, imitating how, as Peter Brooks reminds us regarding *Le Rouge et le Noir*, 'Julien is set in relation to a series of ideal or possible fathers […] whereby each father figure claims authority, or has authority conferred on him, just at the moment when he is about to be replaced'.[93] From this perspective, the *fausse phtisie* scene marks Sansfin's hubristic sense of his own authority. The performance of tuberculosis in *Lamiel* not only reimagines nineteenth-century female patienthood, particularly in relation to consumption, but also inverts the usual hierarchy of the doctor–patient relationship.

Understanding the heroine as an active performer of illness, rather than a passive sufferer, also allows us to reconsider the status of the January 1840 version of the novel in which the *fausse phtisie* scene appears. Schor famously characterizes the later version of the manuscript as representing the 'unwriting' of *Lamiel* and its rebellious heroine, arguing that this version portrays a tamed heroine and is, itself, a more constrained text.[94] This characterization of Lamiel fading into the background of the novel echoes the archetypal Romantic heroine who slowly wastes away and, eventually, expires. If scholars such as Schor argue that the later version of *Lamiel* is less bold, indeed that the text wastes away like its heroine, then reframing tuberculosis as primarily performative in the novel changes how we may understand the 1840 version. Rather than seeing *Lamiel* itself as a sickly text that wastes away across the substantive versions, the version from 1840 stages a performance of tuberculosis that prevents it from falling victim to the disease thereby allowing its heroine to do likewise.

To conclude, the eponymous heroine of *Lamiel* is framed as finding a degree of personal freedom by subverting the Romantic trope of consumptive femininity and replacing it with a new concept of patienthood that is at once abject and performative. Reading *Lamiel* alongside Laënnec's theory of tuberculosis establishes that the novel is deeply concerned with the representation of the disease. Lamiel's performance of haemoptysis in the *fausse phtisie* scene transforms the novel's

[91] *ORC*, III, 1015.
[92] *ORC*, III, 1015; original emphasis.
[93] Peter Brooks, 'The Novel and the Guillotine; Or, Fathers and Sons in *Le Rouge et le Noir*', *PMLA*, 97 (1982), 348–62 (p. 352).
[94] Schor, *Breaking the Chain*, p. 141.

representation of tuberculosis into a performance, rendering female patienthood not just active but also abject and theatrical. *Lamiel* thus revolves around a complex interplay between literary and medical discourses. Whereas Sontag argues that illness becomes malleable due to the process whereby metaphors are imposed upon it by medical and cultural discourse, in *Lamiel* it is the patient herself who engages with, and manipulates, these metaphors in a way which resists the gendered paradigms with which they are ordinarily associated. After the *fausse phtisie* scene, Lamiel becomes more independent of Sansfin, and the key to her new freedom lies in the manipulation of literary tropes in the scene itself, facilitated by the text's own performance of tuberculosis that saves it from wasting away. More broadly, *Lamiel* provides an important example of literary resistance to the Romantic tropes that largely dictated the representation of tuberculosis in the first half of the nineteenth century. By foregrounding Lamiel's performative genius, then, we can understand the protagonist of the novel as a radical consumptive heroine.